Proceedings of the 50th Annual Adult Education Research Conference

Randee Lipson Lawrence
National-Louis University, rlawrence@nl.edu

Follow this and additional works at: https://digitalcommons.nl.edu/ace_aerc
Part of the Curriculum and Instruction Commons, Educational Assessment, Evaluation, and Research Commons, International and Comparative Education Commons, and the Social and Philosophical Foundations of Education Commons

Recommended Citation
https://digitalcommons.nl.edu/ace_aerc/1

This Other is brought to you for free and open access by the Adult and Continuing Education at Digital Commons@NLU. It has been accepted for inclusion in Adult Education Research Conference Proceedings by an authorized administrator of Digital Commons@NLU. For more information, please contact digitalcommons@nl.edu.
Proceedings of the 50th Annual
Adult Education Research Conference

National-Louis University
Chicago, Illinois
May 28-30, 2009

Edited by Randee Lipson Lawrence
AERC 2009

Proceedings of the 50th Annual
Adult Education Research Conference

HONORING OUR PAST
EMBRACING OUR FUTURE

May 28 – 30, 2009
National-Louis University
Chicago, Illinois USA

Pre-conferences: May 27, 2008

Edited by
Randee Lipson Lawrence
Copyright for all papers is retained by the authors. Those seeking permission to reproduce materials contained in the *Proceedings* should contact the individual authors.
National-Louis University

National-Louis University is pleased to welcome you to the 50th annual Adult Education Research Conference: Honoring our Past, Embracing our Future. As the first AERC was held in Chicago in 1959, it seems fitting that we should be hosting the conference here once again as we commemorate the 50th anniversary. In addition to cutting edge research by seasoned and emerging scholars in the field of adult education, this year’s conference features an opening panel of veteran scholars including Alan Knox, Phyllis Cunningham and Edgar Boone who lead us in a conversation about where we have come as a profession in the last fifty years and where we are headed in the future. The conference ends with a closing dialogue: Reflecting Back/Looking Forward.

Conferences such as these are made possible through the collaborative effort of many. I would like to thank the College of Arts and Sciences and the support of Dean Martha Casazza as well as the Department of Continuing Education, notably Margaret Stemler. I also would like to extend thanks to the Steering Committee for their thoughtful consideration in selecting the papers for this conference as well as their help and support. Our local planning committee spent many hours in preparation for these three days. I personally want to thank Laura Bauer, Scipio Colin III, Sharon Hayes, Tom Heaney, Carrie Johnson, Carole Kabel, Margaret Stemler, Linda Sweeney and Cynthia Vessel for their hard work and dedication.

Finally, I want to acknowledge the significant contributions of Elizabeth Peterson whose vision and persistence was directly responsible for bringing AERC to Chicago this year. We lost Elizabeth in January, but her legacy lives on. I would like to dedicate this book of proceedings to Dr. Elizabeth Ann Peterson.

On behalf of the host committee, I hope you enjoy the conference and take some time to experience the dynamic sights and sounds of Chicago.

Best regards,

Randee Lipson Lawrence
Chair, AERC 2009 Host Committee
AERC Steering Committee 2008-2009

Susan Bracken
North Carolina State University

Kimberly Burgess
Western Governors University

Doris Flowers
San Francisco State University

Esther Prins
Penn State University

Local Planning Committee

Randee Lawrence (Chair)

Laura Bauer
Scipio Colin III
Sharon Hayes
Tom Heaney
Carrie Johnson
Carole Kabel
Margaret Stemler
Linda Sweeney
Cynthia Vessel
# Table of Contents

## Papers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Author</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bryce O. Anderson</td>
<td>New Territories in Adult Education: Game-based Learning for Adult Learners</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Michelle N. Anderson</td>
<td>Predictors and Program Outcomes of Empowering Practices of FFA Chapter Advisors</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thomas A. Taylor</td>
<td>Thinking Inside the Box: Graduate Students’ Perspectives on Hindered Creativity</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kimberly S. Anderson</td>
<td>Teaching with Love and Commitment: The Instructional Practices of African American Facilitators Engaged in Prevention Science Programs</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Michelle N. Anderson</td>
<td>PoZitively Transformative: The Transformative Learning of People Living with HIV</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tracy N. Anderson</td>
<td>Utilizing the Lens of Critical Race Theory to Analyze Stories of Race</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Richard Banz</td>
<td>Guerrilla Girls and Raging Grannies: Critical, Informal, and Performative Pedagogy</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lisa M. Baumgartner</td>
<td>Problem-Based Learning and Clinical Reasoning: An Action Research Study with Occupational Therapy Students</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Keegan N. David</td>
<td>White Lies: A Critical Race Study of Power and Privilege</td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lorenzo Bowman</td>
<td>Christian Education and Constructivism</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tonette S. Rocco</td>
<td>In the “Heart of Indian Country”: The Lived Experience of Native American Adult Learners at a Predominantly White University</td>
<td>66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elizabeth Peterson</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Willene A. Adker</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Susan J. Bracken</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jennifer A. Sandlin,</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Robin Redman Wright</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Karen L. Brady</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Patricia J. Brainard</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trammell Bristol</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E. Paulette Isaac</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tom Buckmiller</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Author</td>
<td>Title</td>
<td>Page</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------------------------</td>
<td>----------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diane M. Burnette</td>
<td>Adult Education in the Segregated Black College</td>
<td>72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Davin Carr-Chellman</td>
<td>Dewey and Habermas: Re-reading Ethics for Adult Education</td>
<td>78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sara Carpenter</td>
<td>Experience, Learning, &amp; Consciousness: Advancing a Feminist-Materialist Theory of Adult Learning</td>
<td>84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bo Chang</td>
<td>Patterns of Knowledge Construction</td>
<td>90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rosemary B. Closson</td>
<td>“You realize that it’s not always as it seems”: What Adults Learn about Management when Writing their own Management Cases</td>
<td>96</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carmeda Stokes</td>
<td>From Careers Adviser to Personal Adviser: Emotion, Ethics, Politics and Learning in a Disrupted Community of Practice</td>
<td>101</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Helen Colley</td>
<td>From Laborer to Learner: The Experiences of Former Factory Workers in a Developmental Education Program</td>
<td>107</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>John M. Dirkx</td>
<td>The Enactment of Hegemony through Identity Construction: Insights from The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life</td>
<td>113</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ngoc Lan Thi Dang</td>
<td>Liberatory Education: Unmasking Apartheid Pedagogical Plunder</td>
<td>119</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mohammed A. Essack</td>
<td>Diversity and Ressentiment in Educating for LGBTQ-friendly Changes in a University</td>
<td>125</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rod P. Githens</td>
<td>Adult Learning for Active Citizenship: Exploring Learning Pathways around Citizenship and Participation in Community Organizations and Governance</td>
<td>131</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Patricia A. Gouthro</td>
<td>Adult Education as Social Education Revisited: The Contribution of John Ohliger</td>
<td>137</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>André P. Grace</td>
<td>Program Planning Principles, Goals, and Evaluation Criteria in the Radical Adult Education Tradition</td>
<td>143</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tonette S. Rocco</td>
<td>Conflict and Collaboration: Providers and Planners</td>
<td>149</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>John D. Holst</td>
<td>Implementing the Workforce Investment Act (WIA)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Author</td>
<td>Title</td>
<td>Page</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------------------------</td>
<td>----------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cheryl Hunt</td>
<td>Seeking Integration: Spirituality in the Context of Lifelong Learning and Professional Reflective Practice</td>
<td>155</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nancy E. Jackson</td>
<td>Creating a Comprehensive Broad Based Curriculum Model for Adult and Alternative High School Education Based in the African Centered Paradigm</td>
<td>161</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jodi Jarecke</td>
<td>A Case Study of National Financial Literacy Programs for Women</td>
<td>166</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Edward W. Taylor</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Juanita Johnson-Bailey</td>
<td>Academic Classrooms and Careers Defined by Race and Gender</td>
<td>172</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ronald M. Cervero</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jeffrey M. Keefer</td>
<td>The Critical Incident Questionnaire (CIQ): From Research to Practice and Back Again</td>
<td>177</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jung-Hwan Kim</td>
<td>Learning and Adaptation of Contingent Workers in South Korea Corporations: A Study of Developmental Relationships</td>
<td>183</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Luis Kong</td>
<td>Moving Without Moving: An Exploration of Somatic Learning as a Transformative Process in Adult Education</td>
<td>189</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jennifer L. Kushner</td>
<td>Wangari Maathai: Righteous Leader of Environmental and Social Change</td>
<td>195</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In Tak Kwon</td>
<td>Building Communities into Lifelong Learning Cities: The Case of the Republic of Korea</td>
<td>201</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fred M. Schied</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kyoung Hwa Lee</td>
<td>Critical Reflection in Workplace: Using Cultural-Historical Activity Theory (CHAT) to Theorize Factory Workers’ Continuous Learning</td>
<td>207</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ming-yeh Lee</td>
<td>Teaching for Transformation: Structured Cross-Cultural Experience in Transnational Contexts</td>
<td>212</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>David Hemphill</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jacob Perea</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carole L. Lund</td>
<td>White Racial Identity Development Model for Adult Educators</td>
<td>218</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Joyce S. McKnight</td>
<td>Twenty-First Century Community Education: Using Web-Based Tools To Build On Horton’s Legacy</td>
<td>224</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Patricia Medina</td>
<td>In Our Counterstories, Race and Ethnicity Trump Gender</td>
<td>230</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Karen Brown</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Author</td>
<td>Title</td>
<td>Page</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------</td>
<td>-------</td>
<td>------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jonathan E. Messemer, Catherine A. Hansman, Elice E. Rogers</td>
<td>Measuring the Satisfaction of Students at the Completion of an Adult Learning and Development Graduate Program</td>
<td>236</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shahrzad Mojab</td>
<td>Learning By Dispossession: Gender, Imperialism and Adult Education</td>
<td>242</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paul J. Moon</td>
<td>Bereaved Elders: Transformative Learning in Late Life</td>
<td>248</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alberta Morgan, Andrea D. Frazier, Jeanne Fredericks, Mitchell Waters, Lisa R. Merriweather Hunn</td>
<td>Hogwash: Coming to Terms with Critical Race Theory in Adult Education</td>
<td>254</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Steven E. Noble</td>
<td>Non-Visibility Within Adult Education: Reading What Lies Written and Breathing Beneath</td>
<td>265</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hleziphi Naomie Nyanungo</td>
<td>The Quest For Peace and Justice: Examining the Nexus between Peace Education and Adult Education</td>
<td>270</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gabrielle Pelicci</td>
<td>Whole-Person Learning: Lessons from Integral Health-Care Practitioners and Their Implications for Adult Education</td>
<td>282</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elizabeth A. Peterson, Wendy B. Yanow</td>
<td>The Life Story of President Barack Obama: Using Critical Race Theory to Analyze Life Experience</td>
<td>286</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ernie Post</td>
<td>Online Learning Effectiveness and Instructor Resistance In Adult Learner Centered Extension Programs</td>
<td>291</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tamara Priestley</td>
<td>Learning to Unlearn: A Case Study of the Initial Rejection and Subsequent Acceptance of Homosexuality by Heterosexuals</td>
<td>297</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adnan Qayyum</td>
<td>Is there a Technology Bias against Adult Learners?</td>
<td>303</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dianne Ramdelholl</td>
<td>Oral Histories to Support Growing Democracy: Stories from the NYC Adult Literacy Community</td>
<td>308</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Author</td>
<td>Title</td>
<td>Page</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------------------</td>
<td>----------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Petra A. Robinson</td>
<td>Personal Transformations: Changes in Self &amp; Literacy Engagement through Even Start Family Literacy Program</td>
<td>314</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dionne Rosser-Mims</td>
<td>The Career Paths of African Americans in the Corporate and Political Arena</td>
<td>318</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Glenn A. Palmer</td>
<td>Unethical Behavior, Academic Misconduct, &amp; Incivility: Does it occur in Adult Education Classrooms?</td>
<td>324</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Michael L. Rowland</td>
<td>Older Baby Boomers Seeking Collegiate Degrees: Developmental Influences on Educational and Vocational Aspirations</td>
<td>330</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jane L. Schaefer</td>
<td>Adult Education &amp; Participant Empowerment for Organizational Transformation: a Learning Organization Case Study Introducing an Integration Model &amp; a Strategic Empowerment Tool</td>
<td>336</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bonnie Slade</td>
<td>From High Skill to High School: The Social Organization of “Canadian Work Experience”, Immigration, and Volunteer work</td>
<td>342</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jennifer Smolka</td>
<td>Adult Learning Communities: Does Self-Efficacy Pre-Determine Participation?</td>
<td>348</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stacey Johnson</td>
<td>Autonomy And Autogenesis: Practitioner Research And The Self-Made Literacy Tutor</td>
<td>354</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thomas A. Glover</td>
<td>The “Many Faces” and Complexities of Continuing Education units within today’s Higher Education Organizations: An Empirical Study</td>
<td>360</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Heather Dodds</td>
<td>The Sacred Cow: Understanding the Role of Culture in the Health-Related Behaviors of Older Asian Indian Immigrants</td>
<td>366</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ralf St.Clair</td>
<td>Critical Public Pedagogy and Michael Moore’s Film Sicko: Creating a National Dialogue for Changing Health Care</td>
<td>372</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kathy Maclachlan</td>
<td>Are Transformation and Power Shifts All or Nothing Events?</td>
<td>378</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sandria Stephenson</td>
<td>Smathi Nath Thaker</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Author</td>
<td>Title</td>
<td>Page</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------------------------</td>
<td>-----------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wayland Walker</td>
<td>The Supreme Court Follows, It Does Not Lead: Adult Education and American Popular Constitutionalism</td>
<td>384</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pierre Walter</td>
<td>Adult Learning in Ecotourism: The Current State of Research</td>
<td>390</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Colleen Aalsburg Wiessner</td>
<td>Creating Learning: A Critical Program Planning Praxis For Collaborative Knowledge Construction and Social Change</td>
<td>396</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Robin Redmon Wright, Jennifer A. Sandlin</td>
<td>You are What You Eat!?: Television Cooking Shows, Consumption, and Lifestyle Practices as Adult Learning</td>
<td>402</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mary Ziegler, R. Steve McCallum, Sherry Mee Bell</td>
<td>Who Volunteers to Provide Reading Instruction for Adults and What Do They Know?</td>
<td>408</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Roundtables**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Author</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Carrie J. Boden, W. Franklin Spikes</td>
<td>Alternate Degree Program Delivery Formats for Adult Students: What is Lost and What is Gained?</td>
<td>414</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jennifer A. Boulanger</td>
<td>Overcoming Barriers to Persistence for First-Generation Adult Community College Students</td>
<td>416</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ruby Cain, Marjorie Treff</td>
<td>Intersecting Cultural Connections for Doctoral Persistence</td>
<td>418</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dana Dudzinska-Przesmitzki, Sandy Bell</td>
<td>“Wow, it’s nothing like I thought!”: The importance of experience in the early stages of the dissertation process</td>
<td>420</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C. Franklin Granger, Lorilee R. Sandman</td>
<td>The Examined Side: The Role of Congregations in Clergy Transitions</td>
<td>422</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Catherine Hansman, Kathryn McAtee</td>
<td>The Multiple Generations in Adult and Higher Education Classrooms: What We Assume, What We Know, What We Can Learn, and What May Be Missing</td>
<td>424</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Susan Imel, Gretchen T. Bersch</td>
<td>Who Were the Women? An In-Depth Analysis of Some Early Women Adult Educators</td>
<td>426</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Donna Mancuso, Dominique Chlup, Rochell McWhorter</td>
<td>How to Stay A.L.I.V.E. in a World of Ever-Changing Technology: Keeping Up with Adult Learning in a Virtual Environment</td>
<td>428</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Author</td>
<td>Title</td>
<td>Page</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------------------</td>
<td>----------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>-------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carol A. McQuiggan</td>
<td>The Transformational Impact of Learning to Teach Online</td>
<td>430</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Raiana Mearns</td>
<td>A Comparative Case Study of GED programs at Four Illinois Community Colleges: Perceptions of Effective Instruction</td>
<td>432</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diana P. Mena</td>
<td>Displaced Mexican American Workers in Retraining Program</td>
<td>434</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mary V. Alfred</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Barbara A. Metelsky</td>
<td>Developing Anti-Racist Scholars: The Role of Adult Education Graduate Programs</td>
<td>436</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thomas R. Easley</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yoshie Tomozumi Nakamura</td>
<td>Global Corporate Executives’ SOCIAL CAPITAL Formation Experiences</td>
<td>438</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sally J. Neal</td>
<td>What I Do Matters, Too: Transformation and Success of First-Generation Adult Women in Undergraduate Education</td>
<td>440</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alexandra A. Bell</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Debora Nelli</td>
<td>“What do future educational leaders know about gender?”: A feminist content analysis</td>
<td>442</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Symposia**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Author</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Matthew A. Eichler</td>
<td>Building Success in Online Educational Programs for Adult Learners</td>
<td>446</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tani K. Bialek</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cynthia L. Digby</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cathy Twohig</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rod P. Githens</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lynn A. Trinko</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sharan B. Merriam</td>
<td>Beyond Andragogy: New Directions in Adult Learning Theory</td>
<td>455</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Edward W. Taylor</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elizabeth J. Tisdell</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tammy J. Freiler</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kathleen Taylor and Annalee</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lamoreaux</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M. Carolyn Clark and Marsha Rossiter</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
New Territories in Adult Education:
Game-based Learning for Adult Learners

Bryce O. Anderson, Michelle N. Anderson, Thomas A. Taylor
University of Tennessee, USA

Keywords: Adult learning, game-based learning, transfer-of-learning

Abstract: The purpose of this paper is to address the different approaches to game-based learning by focusing on applied examples and implications for adult education.

Introduction

Digital game-based learning and traditional game-based learning are having a powerful impact on adult education, social and cultural considerations, as well as the future development of learning. This influence of gaming has brought about a new way of life for adult learners through the use of cell phones, iPods, laptops, pdas, game boys, playstations, Xboxes, and handicams (Prensky, 2001). The use of digital game-based learning and traditional game-based learning in adult education could be beneficial for both learners and facilitators (Merriam & Maugle, 1978; Caffarella, 2002). The purpose of this paper is to focus on how adult educators might utilize game-based learning to address the potential impact this type of technology and experience has on adult learners.

Approaching Game-based Learning from an Adult Education Perspective

In order to understand both concepts of gaming and adult education, it is fundamental to define both areas. By game-based learning, we mean games that have an explicit purpose for educational content and applications. These games can be adopted for various learning situations and should foster different learning processes for individual learners in both formal and informal contexts (Dondi & Moretti, 2007). In relation to the field of adult education, the definition from Merriam and Brockett (2007) of adult education is stated as “activities intentionally designed for the purpose of bringing about learning among those whose age, social roles, or self-perception define them as adults” (p.8). In a similar context, Knowles (1973) posited that the heart of education is learning, not teaching.

Mezirow (2000) and Brookfield (1994) have argued for a greater need in adult education to go beyond the normative challenges of helping learners engage in educational learning. One of the ways this could be encouraged is through the incorporation of newer technologies in the classroom. Jarvis (1995) argued that “Adults who have not been familiar with the computer in their youth and who are not scientifically oriented tend to be a little overanxious about using one...As the computer becomes more commonplace, so more learning packages will become available and it will be easier for educators of adults to employ this approach...[Computer-based learning projects] potentiality for responding to the learning needs of students is great” (Jarvis, 1995, p.134-135).

Game-based learning has traditionally been used in college classrooms to help facilitate an idea or to illustrate concepts to learners to test their knowledge, allow for transfer-of-learning, and to keep the class engaged. The topic of game-based learning received significant focus in the early 1970s and tapered off throughout the last thirty years. Recent articles and papers have
investigated the topic from a new standpoint of addressing how digital game-based learning will be changing our educational systems (Squire, 2006). Educators, however, seem more reluctant to embrace this new way of learning than the millennial students (i.e., born between 1982-2000), who have been more exposed to game-based learning throughout their lives (Taylor, 2006).

Part of the reason for the hesitation to integrate technology into teaching is a lack of understanding about the beneficial uses of games in the classroom. Some issues that educators allocate to the ineffectiveness of game-based learning are: fomenting disruptive behavior or distractions to learning; the game may not have consistent learning objectives; the game’s features such as color, flickering displays, and/or sounds could trigger cognitive and physiological responses; some digital games contain violence; and there is often a lack of clear assessment or evaluation guidelines for grading. However, with the recent development of many new educational games for learning, some of these concerns are falling by the wayside.

Using the term “games” can invoke problematic connotations for some learners. Another approach could be to use terms such as activity, exercise, task, or learning application. Playing games may also imply having too much “fun” or not enough seriousness in the classroom. Citing current research about the use of games in education beforehand can help ease some of the concerns and remind learners that games are one of the foundational methods for learning. Millennial learners who are entering into graduate school have assimilated digital game-based learning into their education. The millennials respond positively to the interaction, collaboration, and peer-to-peer generated knowledge that are key aspects of gaming (Howe & Strauss, 2007).

What does this trend towards technology mean for educators in the college undergraduate and graduate levels? Game-based learning requires learners to think differently about concepts and ways of knowing than traditional learning has required. Research has shown that games can be more effective than traditional methods of instruction for promoting positive attitudes towards learning and memory skills (Kolb & Lewis, 1986). Computer games and traditional games help connect people together in a learning activity that is guided by the participants and is not lecture-based.

Games can be hands-on activities that require active involvement from the whole class. Games also offer the chance to bring about new ideas, change viewpoints, and explore different outcomes free of risk for the participants. They are able to involve a variety of people from various backgrounds and experiences that contribute to the overall learning experience. Finally, a game encourages increased flexible thinking, which is a key concept of program planning since most programs develop and change constantly due to the numerous factors involved with planning a program (Kiili, 2007).

**Applied Game-based Learning**

Due to an increase in the use of digital gaming over the last fifteen years, research indicates that millennials now spend more time playing video games than they do watching television, watching movies, or reading books (Prensky, 2001). As a result of using these games, millennial learners have developed a new attitude towards learning. This new attitude can colloquially be expressed as ‘why read about it when I can just experience it on my computer?’ Educators, however, have been resistant in their acceptance, integration, and use of games and digital games (Beck & Wade, 2004). Many educators fail to see the importance of computer games in the student’s learning process.

Game-based learning seems to be a large part of the future of educational learning. What this means for adult educators is that in the next ten years, we will be facilitating a classroom of millennial students who are accustomed to learning from games, either digitally or traditionally.
There is a clear need for educators to start familiarizing themselves with these games in order to begin implementing them into their teaching strategies. For example, MIT developed a game called Supercharged! to help students apply electrostatical concepts to the learning environment (Jenkins, Squire, & Tan, 2004). Students who participated in the study outperformed the students who did not participate during hands-on experiments in class, demonstrations, and simulation activities.

These activities actively invest learners with a concern for academic practices that could foster future academic success in adults if educators are aware of the analogies. For example, there exists the possibility of developing a game in adult education to help learners understand the concept of program planning in a virtual world where players could interact online during the semester. Potential also exists for a game to help learners understand what the teaching process is like for a new educator. The premise of the game could have a classroom full of students, each programmed with different abilities and needs that the teacher must assess and react to, including environmental elements and school policies.

The use of games in classrooms has shown that as a learner’s self-efficacy increases, pattern recognition and response time becomes better, decision-making skills improve, and the learner’s overall positive emotions for learning increase (Squire, 2006). In other fields, like science or engineering, digital games could offer learners a chance to perform an autopsy or reconstruct an accident and interface with statistical programs as well as other discussion groups. School counselors and therapists have been using digital games to help students with successful treatment of their phobias (Knight, 2003). Additionally, the military has been one of the strongest supporters of using games for instructional and educational purposes for the last ten years (Kearney & Pivec, 2007).

One specific example of game-based learning involved an Engineering Fundamentals course at the University of Tennessee where the students were required to build a virtual truss bridge online dealing with engineering mechanics. The students used principles of engineering mechanics to determine the angles and spans of the bridge segments. The resulting virtual bridges were then analyzed and graded based on the bridge’s maximum loads divided by the cost of the virtual materials used to build the bridge.

Similarly, in a course that dealt with hands-on laboratory exercises, the students were required to design and build devices that would accrue points based on accomplishing certain tasks. One task mandated that a one-story swinging pendulum-type device released a paintball at a certain point in its arc. The paintball had to hit a target on the floor a significant distance away. Points were awarded based on the accuracy of the released paintball relative to the bullseye on the target.

In each of the game-based learning situations, students responded positively to the challenges presented to them. The analytical aspects of the educational material were assimilated more successfully than in the conventional classroom setting heavily focused on lectures and the textbook. The positive response was reflected in the increased retention and higher grade point averages of the Engineering Fundamentals students as they progressed into the remaining three years of their undergraduate curriculum (Pionke, 2001).

Games allow for an active transfer-of-learning opportunity to apply theoretical knowledge to practical experiences and activities. Learners are able to make mistakes and take risks in a safe protected environment surrounded by others who support them and can offer assistance. Educators are able to supply students with direct, immediate feedback to learners as the game proceeds and everyone can reflect on the learning that occurred during the process.
The New Territory

It has been suggested that researchers begin studying digital games as a medium for learning in adult education. Psychologists have referred to this research as digital mediated learning. In this type of research, digital games are more than outlets for fun or escape because they offer the chance to be actively engaged with other players online simultaneously across entire continents. This type of social learning allows players to interact with thousands of people online at the same time while constructing new knowledge (Squire, 2006; Habgood, Ainsworth, & Benford, 2005).

Persistent games allow users to enter into a new type of social realm that has shown to hold as much importance to players as reality holds. The games are complimented with discussion boards, models of game systems, maps, and narratives. This kind of interaction requires learners to read, write, research, analyze, and implement many of their ideas for others to see and helps create self-awareness, reflection, and a concern for accuracy (Black, 2005).

Digital game-based learning could also offer adult learners the chance for collaborative learning that takes place throughout the semester in addition to lecture-based classes. There are more hands-on and practical application-based approaches to using games in education that could allow for more personalization of learning, self-directedness, and team or group learning (Beck & Wade, 2004; Freitas & Oliver, 2006). Educators could think ‘outside of the box’ about games and their functions. Specifically, this could include conceptualizing domains and rethinking the exposure and content of games to a more intelligently designed practical experience for learners. This approach would allow future learners to bring their skills with them into the adult education classroom. It could also allow learners to feel more competent, independent, and empowered to reconnect their childhood form of learning with their adult learning. Many games involve strategic planning, group cooperation and divergent thinking skills to help promote creativity in the classroom. Simulation games in particular offer students a chance to engage in real-life situations, apply and develop their own problem-solving skills and increase levels of awareness of potential problems, interactions, and conflicts.

We believe that computers, the internet, and social learning have only just started to influence learning perspectives in adult education. The research presented in this paper supports the idea that digital game-based learning is changing the way traditional education is being structured. Squire et al. (2005) state that “Games ‘teach’ concepts by immersing players in experiences by providing spaces where knowledge is useful-modeling expert problem solving, calling attention to key features of the problem through cues and structuring problems so that the player builds on previous understandings, all of which are features of our most powerful learning environments” (p.34). As the future of adult education unfolds, game-based learning may prove to be a positive and essential aspect to our social and educational learning environments.

References


Predictors and Program Outcomes of Empowering Practices of FFA Chapter Advisors

Kimberly S. Anderson, Ph.D., University of Georgia, USA
Lorilee R. Sandmann, Ph. D., University of Georgia, USA

Abstract: Adults managing youth organizations strive to build partnerships with students in which the shared leadership process results in a sense of empowerment. This research investigates the predictors and programs outcomes of empowering practices used by FFA chapter advisors. Findings provide implications for preservice and continuing education.

Purpose
Youth organizations are a prominent method for equipping young people with the skills necessary for career success. The partnership between youth and adults in these organizations is instrumental to the personal development of the young people as it prepares them for future leadership opportunities. One of the challenges for adults in youth development work is to understand the dynamics of this partnership in order to determine the factors that foster optimal student growth. This challenge resides in the context of empowerment as an element of shared leadership and youth-adult partnerships. The purpose of this study was to understand the predictors and program outcomes of empowering practices of FFA chapter advisors. The results of this study contribute to the preservice and continuing education of youth professionals as they strengthen their abilities and techniques in developing young people.

Theoretical Framework
According to Yukl (2006), empowerment is the influence of leadership behavior, job characteristics, organizational structure, and personal needs and values on motivation and self-efficacy. The review of several theories of empowerment revealed key aspects and themes that overlapped (Arnold, Arad, Rhoades, & Drasgow, 2000; Bowen & Lawler, 1992; Conger & Kanungo, 1988; Konczak, Stelly, & Trusty, 2000; Spreitzer, 1995; Thomas & Velthouse, 1990). All theories had elements that applied to the youth-adult partnership, but no one theory fit perfectly. Therefore, the measurement framework for this study was a composite theory combining the elements of the empowerment theories to best suit the youth-adult partnership context. The five empowering practices constructs (fostering self efficacy, setting a context for action, structuring the task, creating a sense of ownership, and coaching for performance) comprised the theory developed through the review of the literature and interactions with key stakeholders, particularly agricultural education practitioners.

Research Design
This quantitative study utilized a 51-item survey instrument to examine the predictors and program outcomes of empowering practices of FFA chapter advisors. With the five empowering practices as its central constructs, the instrument also included items to determine personal characteristics, agricultural education program characteristics, and personal views of the program. For the five construct scales, alphas ranged from a high of .85 to a low of .76. Specifically, coefficient alphas ran in descending order as follows: .85 for fostering self efficacy, .84 for setting a context for action, .82 for structuring the task, .82 for coaching for performance, and .76
for creating a sense of ownership. Additionally, coefficient alphas were calculated for total empowering practices and overall advisor satisfaction. The alphas were .95 and .72 respectively.

The online questionnaire was designed as a self-assessment of the frequency of implementing empowering practices in working with FFA members. Three research questions guided this study: (1) which empowering practices are most commonly used by FFA advisors, (2) to what extent can the use of empowering practices be explained by the personal characteristics and program characteristics of the FFA advisor, and (3) to what extent can program outcomes be attributed to the use of empowering practices? Appropriate statistical analyses were selected using SPSS 14.0 to answer the three research questions. In addition to descriptive statistics, the analysis relied on a variety of statistical procedures, including multiple factor analysis and correlation to determine variable relationships.

The 388 agricultural educators of one southeastern state served as the population for this study. From the population, 227 responses were deemed usable, resulting in a 66% adjusted response rate. The respondents ranged in age from 23 to 63, with a mean age of 38.98. The respondents were 71.4% male and 28.6% female. A majority (92.9%) of the respondents were Caucasian. The number of completed years in teaching ranged from zero to 36, with a mean of 11.00.

Findings, Conclusions, Implications

Overall, the study revealed that FFA advisors believe they are regularly implementing practices within each of the five empowering practices constructs. The responses revealed that practices associated with fostering self efficacy were implemented the most frequently. While those associated with creating a sense of ownership demonstrated the lowest frequency. The single most important finding in the study is that years of teaching experience and level of school administration support can be used to predict 9.1% of the implementation of total empowering practices which in turn can be used to explain 15.4% of overall advisor satisfaction. Based on the strongest explanatory predictor and outcome variables for empowering practices, an explanatory model is presented in Figure 1.

![Explanatory Model for the Predictors and Program Outcomes of Empowering Practices](image)

Figure 1. Explanatory Model for the Predictors and Program Outcomes of Empowering Practices

Most Common Empowering Practices

Rank ordering of the 34 empowering practices item means was used to answer the question: “Which empowering practices are most commonly used by FFA advisors?” The means reflected the self-assessed frequency of implementation of each empowering practice on a scale of 1 (never) to 6 (always). The ten highest ranked practices included four of the eight measures for fostering self efficacy and three of the six measures for setting a context for action. The two highest ranking items were measures for coaching for performance. At the other end of the order, five of the six measures for creating a sense of ownership were displayed in the ten lowest
ranking items. When the items were grouped by construct, *fostering self efficacy* exhibited the highest mean item mean while *creating a sense of ownership* demonstrated the lowest frequency.

Overall, the study revealed that FFA advisors believe they are regularly implementing practices within each of the five empowering practices constructs. This is not surprising given that the practices are behaviors one would expect for the human development role of a teacher and FFA advisor. The frequency should also be viewed in the context that this study used a self assessment instrument. Therefore, the ratings depend solely on the teacher’s personal awareness of their practices and may be influenced by social desirability. Regardless, it is positive to find that advisors are using practices within the various constructs that foster an environment for empowerment to occur.

Theories of empowerment clearly point out enhancing feelings of self efficacy as an integral element of empowerment. Conger and Kanungo (1988) specifically describe empowerment as the process of enhancing feelings of self efficacy. To this end, this study revealed that, of the empowering practices constructs, agricultural educators are most frequently implementing practices that foster self efficacy. This finding is positive feedback for the current methods of training and development for agricultural educators.

On the other hand, the practices within the *creating a sense of ownership* construct were consistently the lowest ranking items. This is an important finding to the study as we consider both the empowerment theories and the purpose of youth-adult partnerships. A common thread between the theories of empowerment (Conger & Kanungo, 1988; Thomas & Velthouse, 1990; and Spreitzer, 1995) is the need to create an environment where individuals have control and ownership in decisions and outcomes. This ownership fuels the motivation toward the task which results in empowerment. Interestingly, the ability to share decision making to create a sense of ownership is a critical challenge for implementing youth-adult partnerships (Camino, 2000). Primarily, the challenge in youth-adult partnerships is with adults not viewing youth as partners which limits young people’s ability to influence and control outcomes. This limit in shared decision making results in a lower sense of ownership and ultimately, empowerment. The results from this study signal that FFA advisors align with other youth workers in their need to include youth as partners in managing the youth organization. Given that creating a sense of ownership is central to fostering empowerment, this is an important finding to establish a starting point for training and development of agricultural educators.

*Explaining Empowering Practices*

Simple correlation and multivariate analysis were implemented to answer the second research question: “To what extent can the use of empowering practices be explained by the personal characteristics and program characteristics of the FFA advisor?” Of the twelve predictor variables, only *age, years of teaching experience, and level of school administration support* exhibited significant correlations with any of the five empowering practices scales and *total empowering practices*. The strongest explanatory variable across the five construct scales and *total empowering practices* was *level of school administration support*. A summary of the significant correlation coefficients across the six dependent variables is shown in Table 1.
Table 1. Summary of Significant Predictor Variable Correlation Coefficients (and Percent of Variance Explained)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Predictor Variable</th>
<th>Self Efficacy</th>
<th>Context</th>
<th>Task</th>
<th>Ownership</th>
<th>Coaching</th>
<th>Total Empowering Practices</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td>.14</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>.15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(1.8%)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(2.4%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Years of Teaching</td>
<td>.13</td>
<td>.15</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>.15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(1.8%)</td>
<td>(2.2%)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(2.4%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lev. of School Admin. Support</td>
<td>.21</td>
<td>.18</td>
<td>.23</td>
<td>.20</td>
<td>.23</td>
<td>.26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(4.5%)</td>
<td>(3.2%)</td>
<td>(5.1%)</td>
<td>(4.2%)</td>
<td>(5.3%)</td>
<td>(6.6%)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The variables yielding statistical significance at the individual level (age, years of teaching experience, and level of school administration support) were then entered into multivariate analysis to gain further explanation of the variance. In this analysis, useful models were produced for fostering self efficacy, setting a context for action, and total empowering practices. When variables were grouped to determine the best model for simultaneous influence, the two-variable model including years of teaching experience and level of school administration support demonstrated the greatest influence by explaining 9.1% of the observed variance in the dependent variable of total empowering practices. While statistically significant, this explanation of the observed variance is still quite small.

Even though the shared variance is small, one can still use the findings to consider the influence on the agricultural education program and its ability to create an environment that fosters empowerment. Specifically, years of teaching experience and level of school administration support are consistent with the literature in terms of challenges for the agricultural education profession. Fuller, Parsons, and Watkins (1974) outline three stages of teaching which highlight the influence of years of experience on the ability to release control in order to create a more student-centered environment. Additionally, Thobega and Miller (2003) noted that poor administrative support was a major factor in teachers leaving the profession. This study revealed that empowering practices increased with years of experience and supportive administration. This poses a trial for agricultural education given the issue of teacher retention. The number of qualified teachers leaving the profession early in their career limits the years of experience of teachers in the field therefore limiting the pool of teachers exhibiting empowering practices.

Furthermore, the level of school administration support ties directly to Yukl’s (2006) explanation that empowerment is influenced by three categories: the organization, the work, and the people. The support of the FFA advisor by the school administration can be viewed as a major influence on the organizational context. So the agricultural educator’s sense of support may foster individual empowerment which in turn leads to creating a more empowering environment for students.

*Empowering Practices and Program Outcomes*

Simple correlation and multivariate analysis were implemented to answer the question “To what extent can program outcomes be attributed to the use of empowering practices?” All of the five empowering practices scales and total empowering practices displayed significant correlations among the four outcomes variables and overall advisor satisfaction. The composite
scale of total empowering practices exhibited the strongest predictive power by explaining 15.4% of the observed variance in overall advisor satisfaction. In the multivariate analysis, no models of statistical significance were produced.

The studies of teacher retention in agricultural education reveal the concern for job satisfaction as a key element to teachers staying in the profession. In the empowerment literature, Mundt and Conners (1999) note that the struggle to motivate students is a major test which leads to departure from the profession. Thomas and Velthouse’s (1990) definition of empowerment notes that building motivation toward the task as one of the key elements. Linked together with this research study, one would assume motivated, empowered students contribute to overall satisfaction of the teacher which in turn could result in extended years in the profession.

The literature also revealed that an empowering environment yields a stronger commitment to tasks, greater initiative for responsibilities, higher job satisfaction resulting in less turnover, stronger commitment to the organization, and great outlook for success (Block, 1987; Conger & Kanungo, 1988; Thomas & Velthouse, 1990). The findings of this study support those notions as the factors within overall advisor satisfaction (job satisfaction, sense of reward, impact on students, commitment of students) were positively correlated with an increase in empowering practices.

Based on the findings, three key considerations for teacher preservice and inservice training are: improving the sense of ownership among students, retention of teachers to gain years of experience, and building support from school administration. The literature clearly points out the importance of sense of ownership to foster empowerment and to build youth-adult partnerships. However, the study revealed that practices which create a sense of ownership were among the least frequently used empowering practices. One implication of the findings for agricultural education is the need to provide teacher training specifically addressing the implementation of empowering practices, especially those that foster ownership. These skills lie outside the realm on agricultural content in the array of skills relating to managing the agricultural education program and FFA chapter. The study highlights the importance of intentionally focusing on this skill development that might otherwise be overlooked in teacher training.

This study revealed years of teaching experience as an antecedent to implementing empowering practices. Additionally, satisfaction of the FFA advisor was confirmed as an outcome of implementing empowering practices. Therefore, the study could suggest that the agricultural education profession use teachers with more years of experience to mentor newer teachers explicitly focused on developing empowering practices. Furthermore, developing empowering skills early in the career may lead to more years in the program as teachers are more satisfied in their positions, have a greater sense of reward, and witness students committed to the program.

The third major area with implications for agricultural education is building support from school administration. While the findings are statistically significant but not substantial, there is evidence that the perception that the school administration is supportive of the FFA advisor has an impact on the use of empowering practices. Given this finding, agricultural educators can work to determine methods for engaging the school administrators in an effort to build more support. Associations of agricultural educators might consider offering in-service opportunities to school administrators in an effort to educate them about the program, share best practices between school administrators, and to build the teacher-administrator relationship. Teachers who have a strong sense of support may be able to identify best practices for gaining support and mentor other teachers in building support. These strategies could lead to tools and resources being
developed to educate school administrators in youth-adult partnerships to increase their knowledge and support of shared leadership in youth programming.

In addition to these three key considerations, the framework for this study could be utilized in teacher education and teacher in-service to frame training in empowering practices. The constructs and items could be used as a curriculum framework to provide practical and concrete guidance on practices that foster empowerment in students. Additionally, the instrument items could be used as a self-assessment tool for individuals to gauge their practices over the course of the year and their careers. The items on the instrument would provide concrete examples to create awareness in the teacher's reflection.

Finally, this study raises further questions in the study of adult education. Do these findings hold true in other organizations that rely on youth-adult partnerships? How are the empowerment practices of adults perceived by the youth? What further insight could be gained by qualitative study of exemplar and non-exemplar teachers and administrators? The answers to these questions could yield information for training adults in youth-adult partnerships.

References
Thinking Inside the Box: 
Graduate Students’ Perspectives on Hindered Creativity

Michelle N. Anderson
University of Tennessee, USA

Keywords: Adult learning, creativity, phenomenology

Abstract: This phenomenological study focused on the lived experiences of adult graduate students in relation to creativity. Findings illuminate the influence of professors on educational experiences of hindered creativity.

In spite of their growing prominence in colleges and universities, non-traditional adult learners are typically underrepresented in educational research. This growing population introduces a new complexity to the educational setting as adult learners engage in the reflective process at a level of life experience different from the traditional university student. Adult learners bring with them multiple forms of experience that often influence the learner’s frame of reference for understanding and comprehension (Knowles, 1980). Within adult education, the adult learner’s experience can hold great promise for the development of creativity and according to Torrance (1995), the hindrance of creativity as well. Guilford (1950) viewed creativity as “key to education in its fullest sense and to the solution of mankind’s most serious problems”. However, Torrance questioned whether educational systems lowered creativity through the use of external evaluation processes. The few studies that have focused on hindered creativity in adult education (Amabile, 1996; Kraft, 2005) did not focus on the nature of the experience itself or the implications that this experience has for education in general, and adult education in particular.

Given that educational systems are possibly hindering creativity in adult learners, why should adult educators be concerned? Sternberg (2006) suggests “Our society does not only need people who can analyze and memorize well; even more important are citizens and leaders who are also creative, practical, and wise” (p. 5). Creativity holds potential for new discoveries in multiple domains. It could also be considered vital for individuals and societies in order to advance and influence the future (Torrance, 1995). Creativity, however, is difficult to define and often changes within different contexts making it a challenge to research effectively. For the purpose of this study, creativity is defined as something that is new, novel, or innovative in a social context.

The purpose of this study is to explore what stands out about the hindrance of creativity in the educational experiences of graduate students. This study uses a qualitative phenomenological approach to derive themes that represent the universal essence of the lived experiences. The ultimate objective of this study is to clarify what happens from the learner’s perspective when the creativity is hindered in educational settings and to contribute to a better understanding of educational relationships between educators and students. This research contributes to recognizing hindered creativity as a phenomenon that shapes the educational experience of adult learners.

Existential phenomenology, based on the philosophy of Husserl (1931), served as the theoretical framework for this research. Phenomenology places emphasis on the actual lived experience. In the literature of adult education, Lindeman (1926) states that the “highest value in adult education is the learner’s experience” (p.6). Jarvis (1987) posited that the phenomenological
method holds great potential into the adult learning processes. He stated “all learning begins with experience” (p.16). According to Brookfield (1994), researchers in adult education need to “grant greater credibility to adults’ renderings of the experience of learning from the inside” (p.164). He argued that phenomenology has the potential to bring about new understandings of the learner’s perspective for educators to critically reflect upon. While the experience of creativity is well documented, less is known about the experience of hindered creativity in adult education.

Findings illuminated how adults, who were current graduate students, experience the academic hindrance of creativity and make meaning for their lives.

**Methodology**

Based on the work of Merleau-Ponty (1962), the applied existential phenomenology method developed by Thomas and Pollio (2002) was utilized to understand the essence of meaning and to gain in-depth awareness into the experience of hindered creativity from an adult learner’s perspective. Phenomenology can be understood as both a theoretical framework and a research methodology. The interviews began with the following opening research question: “As a graduate student, tell me about an experience where you became aware your creativity was being hindered in an educational context”.

A purposeful sample of individuals participated in this study based on their self-identification of the following criteria: being an adult graduate student, having experienced their creativity being hindered in an educational context, willingness to share their experiences, and currently active in a graduate program at a large state university. Eight different majors were represented with 7 participants enrolled in Ph.D. degree programs and 5 participants currently enrolled in Master’s degree programs. Participants ranged in age from 25 to 45 years; 5 were female, 7 were male; 1 was Indian, 1 was German-Filipino, 1 was Northern-European, 2 were African-American, and 7 were European-American.

Miles and Huberman (1994) present thematization as the conceptualization of patterns and ideas that can be used to organize the findings of a study. This method of data analysis was applied to this study and each interview was recorded and transcribed by the researcher. The interviews were analyzed to identify meaning units grounded in the participants’ lived experiences of hindered creativity. During this process, the researcher continually related parts of the text to the whole of the text in search of meaning units that would transcend the individual and expand out into a larger context found in all the interviews (Thomas & Pollio, 2002). The researcher identified which experiences formed the ‘ground’ of the experience and which experiences stood out to form the ‘figural’ experiences. Finally, meaning units were compared across interviews and translated into a thematic structure that described the overall lived experience of the participants.

**Findings**

Findings describe the experience of being an adult graduate student who has had their creativity hindered. All of the participants in this study experienced having their creativity hindered in an educational context. Each participant experienced a hindrance to his or her creativity from a professor. The common ground of the experience served as a backdrop against which other figural aspects stood out and attained meaning. Quotes of the adult learners who participated in the study contained the meaning unit for the aspect of the experience that begins each section.

“You Have to Learn to Think Inside the Box”: The Box

*You have to learn how to think inside the box (Eric)*
Participants’ experiences of hindered creativity stand out against a ground of interaction with their professors. A dynamic relationship is created between the professor and the student within the educational setting. The box refers to this dynamic where the professor is in control of the allowance or disallowance of creativity by the students. The box also represents the academic rules, regulations, and guidelines that must be followed by the professor. Within the ground of the box, participants experienced an initial mistrust of the professor who hindered their creativity. This mistrust dominated their experience and influenced their relationship with the professor. Participants used powerful and emotional language to describe their experiences with hindered creativity: “it was a huge slap in my face”, “it took all the wind out of me”, “I felt empty inside”, “they shot me down”, and “it hurt my heart”.

Inside the box, professors’ conventional thinking was found to dominate the hindrance of creativity. Participants described trying to do something that was new or innovative in their graduate work and in turn, the professor would hinder the creativity due to the professor’s taken-for-granted frames of reference and meaning perspectives (Mezirow, 2000). As the participants became aware of the professor’s conventional thinking and assumptions, the participants had to encounter their own assumptions about academia and learning. Eric stated that “I think the danger of the hindrance of the creative process coming from a professor is that they are steeped in traditional ways and conventional thinking and it’s difficult for them to break out of that box.” He had considered himself to be highly creative before his graduate program experience. Over time, though, he developed reservations about expressing his creativity due to the conventional thinking of the professors who hindered his creativity.

This disequilibrium that was created for the students within the hindrance of their creativity has lasting effects upon them as adult learners (Jarvis, 2006; Mezirow, 2000). The unease of the experience has been described by Jarvis (2006) as a “disjuncture…when time stops…when our biological repertoire is no longer sufficient to cope automatically with our situation, so that our thinking harmony with the world is disturbed and we feel unease” (p.16). Unease is what caused the mistrust of professors to be intertwined with professor’s control as well as the interpretations and outcomes for the participants. The ground of the experience, the box, allows for the figural themes to stand out from it and in relation to it.

“A Hard Thing to Deal With”: Interpretations of the Hindrance

The point of graduate school is to be hindered which I can see as a good thing as much as it is a hard thing to deal with (Christina.)

Participants in the study had to interpret the professor’s hindrance of their creativity as either justified or unjustified based on any rationale given by the professors. This was a very ‘hard thing to deal with’ for each participant and the experience was not something they took lightly. Rather, the interpretation was a powerful instrument of meaning making for the adult learner.

Some participants in the study chose to view their interpretation of the hindrance to their creativity as justified if the professor provided a clear and rational explanation. Eric referred to the justification as the professor’s “wisdom” simply because Eric was aware that the professor had more experience than he did in terms of knowing the content and scope of dissertation research. Eric had “bitten off more than he could chew” and was relieved to have the professor tell him to reign in the scale of his research proposal so that the work would be stronger and Eric could finish the program.
Over half of the participants felt that the hindrance to their creativity was unjustified. Most of the descriptions provided by these students focused on the clarity of why the hindrance had occurred and what rationale was behind the professors’ choices. Christina spoke of how no one understood her and no one wanted to take the time to help her understand the reasons for the hindrance. Michael, Travis, Mariah, and Ethan described being confused, upset, and disoriented. Part of the confusion for the participants stemmed from the idea that they were trying to put a part of themselves into their graduate work through their creativity and the professors “shot it down”, thus ‘shooting them down’ in the process.

“Drawing the Line”: The Outcomes

I haven’t really thought about it. I sort of just decided to draw a line and just do it a certain way. Hence, command myself, no complaining about this. This is something you have to do in order to be professional (Cedric).

The second theme that emerges from the interviews is the strong influence that the box and the interpretation have upon the outcomes of the students’ changed mindsets. By outcomes I mean the result of visible effects of the hindrance of creativity. The outcomes for the participants ranged from acceptance to loss of confidence. Participants described their mindsets as being “conditioned”, “trained”, “processed”, “obeyed”, and “shifted”. Due to the impact of their experiences, they were not willing to be as creative as they had previously been in regard to writing papers, creating presentations, delivering lectures, or working on research. This second major theme of outcomes has four sub-themes: change, acceptance, cautiousness, and loss.

One pronounced aspect of the participants’ experiences was that they perceived a slow change within themselves after the professor had hindered their creativity. They were less willing to be creative in their coursework or on their graduate projects, papers, and presentations. Having their creativity hindered produced a change in the participants’ mindset from “thinking artistically” to “thinking scientifically”.

Acceptance also came slowly for the participants. It was difficult for them to let go of being creative, but they were also tired of feeling confused and hurt by the hindrance. By accepting that the professor’s way was the correct way to do things in order to complete the graduate program, they described trying to attain professors’ approvals, learning to understand feasibility, and learning to “think inside the box”.

As the feelings of hurt, shame, and humiliation subsided for the participants, some like Eric spoke of “killing the spirit” and almost burying his creativity so that he would not have to be wounded by anything like that hindrance again. Krisnah found herself limiting her own creativity inside of herself to avoid feelings of disappointment. Ethan had to restrain himself from rebelling against the professor’s rules on hindering his creativity because he believed it would “cost him his chance” for the Ph.D. degree.

One deeply moving aspect of hindered creativity was the feeling of loss mentioned by many of the participants. They described feeling like the hindrance caused them to lose a certain part of themselves: they lost confidence in themselves and their abilities to submit new ideas, and they lost their ability to think creatively. Michael felt like he had to distance himself from his creativity in order to finish his degree under the direction of his professors. Cedric found it more arduous to visualize ideas and draw examples in class. The outcomes of change, acceptance, cautiousness, and loss contribute to the participants’ emotional connection with education and learning as adults.
“A Meeting in the Middle”: Handle Differently

I think you need to look at the constraints and the motivation for the hindrance. It’s very much a meeting in the middle. Instead of saying oh, hindrance is bad, you have to figure out how to construct or offer the advice such that you are not hindering the creative process, but you are trying to shape the idea. (Eric)

Each participant’s experience with hindered creativity led him or her to reflect on how it could have been handled differently. All twelve of the participants found themselves on the other side of the table as the teacher at some time in their career. They had to hinder the creativity of others and were able to offer viewpoints on constructive feedback about hindering creativity.

Eric spoke of bridging the communication gap by meeting in the middle with students and trying to understand why they were being creative, and to help them understand the feasibility of creative ideas. Ethan and Jerome both indicated that a professor’s goal should be to further the development of their students and not to hold them back by obfuscation or lack of clear communication skills. A safe place is needed where the professor can be considerate, critical, and able to communicate effectively to help the adult students understand and learn from the experience in a more positive manner.

Discussion and Implications for Practice

Hindered creativity for adult learners is a powerful force in their educational experiences. Professors may bring their own set of assumptions regarding creativity into the teaching process that could influence the hindrance of creativity. Academic university policies may also contribute to the professor’s ability to promote, control, or hinder an adult learner’s creativity. The dynamic relationships between the three areas of the box rely on communication. This communication is a multiple lane highway of information, listening skills, comprehension abilities, and effective dialogue. Aspects of their experiences support Torrance’s (1995) claim that external evaluation can influence creativity in a negative perspective.

Adult learners bring creativity and life experiences to adult education settings. Educators of adults need to be aware of this desire to be creative and they must be prepared to address the allowance or hindrance of such creativity with the adult learners. Professors also bring their own assumptions, conventional thinking, and mindsets into the assessment process of adult learners’ graduate work. Presuppositions can have an enormous influence on how educators respond to creativity. Recognizing the potential influence these personal assumptions carry would be beneficial for adult learners and educators to be able to meet on a common ground.

The manner in which a professor provides feedback or criticism to adult learners may greatly impact the learning process of students. Taking the time to meet with learners individually, providing explanations for “red ink X’s”, and assisting the learner with understanding the rules, regulations, and guidelines of the university policy could contribute significantly to the relationship between professors and students.

Listening more closely to the rationale that buttress the creative decisions of adult learners could help a professor assist with redirecting the learners’ creative ideas into another area of research or application and encouraging them to think more critically about their own work. Pointing out that creativity can be viewed as a strength in the graduate student’s work could help promote the use of creativity in future endeavors. Brookfield (1987) states “When we encourage critical thinking, it is important that we assure people- through our actions and our words- that we respect and value them for their own selves” (p.72).

The aftermath of hindered creativity is prolonged, multifaceted, and continues to influence most adult learners even after graduation. There is hope that the freedom to be creative will eventually return to the individual and help the progress of diverse fields of study. There is,
however, the reality that hindered creativity, at least in an educational setting, may create a self-imposed hindrance and may have lasting effects for the adult learner in terms of loss of confidence, loss of voice, and feelings of shame.

Since adult learners make meaning out of their lived experiences, it is important for educators to consider the implications of hindering creativity and assess the impact this will have on the learning process of the student overall. There is a desire for individuals to have control over their own creativity, in both the ability and expression of it. It can be a very emotional and potentially life-changing event for someone to say ‘do not do this’ in regard to creativity. There is hope that professors will pause and consider the implications of their words, actions, and feedback in relation to not only the student, but also to the student’s future creative endeavors.

References

Teaching with Love and Commitment: The Instructional Practices of African American Facilitators Engaged in Prevention Science Programs

Tracy N. Anderson, Ph.D.
University of Georgia, USA

Abstract: This paper reports the finding and conclusions of a study on how culture impacts the instructional practices of facilitators in nonformal settings.

Introduction
Prevention science is a growing area of study in the United States as it promises to provide a way that adult educators can positively change and affect many American social ills. Currently, Americans are facing disturbing social issues such as increased crime, violence in schools and institutions of higher learning, poverty, drug abuse, gang activity, teenage pregnancy, and illiteracy. On the health front, obesity is becoming increasingly problematic, which in turn contributes to other chronic diseases such as cardiovascular disease, diabetes, stroke and hypertension (Ogden, Carroll, McDowell & Flegal, 2007). Rates of HIV and AIDS continue to be high; over a million individuals are infected with HIV (as of 2003) and nearly 37,000 individuals with full-blown AIDS (as of 2006) (McQuillan & Kruszon-Moran, 2008). While some of these areas of crises involve national (i.e., governmental) intervention, the social and health issues are beginning to be addressed through the growing arena of prevention science. These issues are address through educational programs that are developed and tested through prevention science research. The inclusion of educational programs opens the door to an exploration of prevention science through the lens of adult education in a variety of ways (e.g., curriculum development, program planning, program delivery). This paper describes a study that explores program delivery, focusing specifically on the individuals who teach the programs.

Review of the Literature
Prevention science is a field of study devoted to developing and testing preventive intervention programs designed to address a variety of health, behavioral and social issues. The value of prevention science is summarized in the work of Kumpfer and Alvarado (2003) who posit that prevention science research and the resulting programs can be powerful and cost-effective tools for reducing social and behavioral problems when implemented properly with the right populations.

Although the “right” population may depend on the issue at hand, African Americans in general are an ideal population to target in prevention science research efforts. The history of African Americans in the United States has been riddled with violence, oppression, discrimination and inequality at all levels which has contributed to the well-documented disparities between African Americans and other ethnic groups, particularly Whites. These racial disparities are widely publicized in a variety of areas, including health, crime/punishment, economics, and education.

While these health and social disparities may make African Americans an ideal population to target for prevention science research, researchers know that African Americans are less likely to participate in research than their White counterparts (Murry et al., 2004; Washington, 2006). African Americans may be reluctant to participate in research because of an
overall distrust of the research process, structural and contextual factors, and a lack of understanding of the cultural relevance of the research and potential benefits for their community (Murry et al., 2004). Despite these barriers, researchers are finding ways to successfully implement prevention research in African American communities. This success is dependent upon involvement from the target population and community stakeholders, as well as collaboration with community agencies and institutions throughout the research (Dittus, Miller, Kotchick & Forehand, 2004; Murry et al., 2004). One strategy for incorporating community stakeholders in prevention science efforts with African Americans is recruiting stakeholders to serve as program facilitators. These teachers of the educational programs can be instrumental in determining any adaptations needed to ensure sustainability in their communities.

Facilitators are particularly important to prevention science research studies because effective implementation of the program is crucial to the overall research, the “test” of the curriculum. In fact, as empirically tested programs increase, scholars have begun to identify characteristics of model programs, one of which is effective implementation and includes the selection and training of program facilitators. Despite this recognition, the prevention science literature has not thoroughly addressed issues related to how the similarities or differences of the facilitators as compared to the program participants influence the facilitator’s teaching practice, or the facilitator/participant relationship. The education literature contains significantly more research on the impact of professional educators’ positionality on their practices and classroom dynamics. Tisdell (2000) asserts that the positionality of teachers and students always affect how classroom dynamics unfold. She goes on to intimate the importance of group identity and worldview, explaining that when teachers enter the classroom, they bring their personality, thought patterns, knowledge, feelings and an entire set of values formed by the communities in which they grew up, including religion, social status and ethnic background. An individual’s worldview is influenced by both their positionality and their group identity and is manifested through expressions of their personality and thought patterns (Shkedi & Nisan, 2006). Because all of these variables influence the teaching process, it is important to consider how group identity, positionality, and worldview of the facilitator affect program success.

Background and Methods

The purpose of the study was to examine the relationship and cultural commitments of African American facilitators of prevention science programs to their African American participants. The study focused specifically on issues of group identity, positionality and worldview and was guided by the following research questions: (1) What is the impact of the facilitator’s group identity on their instructional practices? (2) What is the impact of the facilitator’s positionality on their instructional practices? And (3) What is the impact of the facilitator’s worldview on their instructional practices? The sample included 24 African American facilitators who taught one of two preventive intervention programs. Four facilitators taught an HIV risk prevention program that targeted sexually active African American girls and young women, aged 14-21, who sought care at one of three urban sexual health clinics. The facilitators from this program were all female, aged 28 – 35, with master’s level education and working in professional positions earning $40 - $69,999 annually. The other 20 facilitators taught a program that targeted African American families with a child in the 11th or 12th grade, living in one of eight specific rural counties. The program primarily addressed the future orientation of teens, familial relations and how families and communities can work together to prepare this older teen for the transition into adulthood. This group of facilitators was more
diverse: 15 females and 5 males; age range of 26 – 67; educational attainment with ranges from high school graduate to doctorate; and income ranges from less than $20 - $49,999.

The primary method of data collection involved face to face interviews using a standard semi-structured interview approach. The interview questions addressed topics such as the facilitators’ background (education, occupation, community involvement) and their experiences with implementing their assigned preventive intervention program. The secondary method of data collection was an observation of each facilitator teaching a session of their assigned program. Data organization and analysis was based on LeCompte’s (2000) five-step plan: tidying up, finding items, creating stable sets of items, creating patterns and assembling structures. These steps included reviewing the data to identify items that were relevant to the research questions; organizing the items into groups or categories; combining the categories into related patterns; and assembling the patterns to build an overall description of the data.

Findings

The research questions center on three specific types of influence: group identity, positionality and worldview. The data show that these three influences are interwoven in the ways in which they influence the facilitators’ instructional practices. The influence of group identity and worldview are bolstered by positionality. The study showed that the various group identities increased the facilitators’ ability to build and maintain rapport with participants who were members of their racial group, but who also shared membership in other groups (gender, familial role, religion). These shared identities allowed facilitators and participants to relate more easily because there were associated shared understandings about events, words, symbols, and experiences (e.g., local politics and church). Furthermore, the facilitators assessed their participants’ understanding and made necessary adaptations by using culturally grounded communication. These communication patterns included call-response, story telling and group sharing. The use of these methods allowed for active participation by the participants and aided in the creation of community among participants and between facilitator and participant.

In reference to positionality, the study showed that the shared experience of being African American was a powerful influence on how the facilitators approached the teaching context. The facilitators entered their classrooms armed with high racial regard which was manifested in their teaching through confidence and self-awareness. They realized that they embodied these traits because of the care and love of other African Americans in their own lives and saw it as their responsibility to continue this tradition to their participants. The way in which they taught their classes was a reflection of this value. As the facilitators taught their respective curricula, they did so in a way that edified and celebrated the participants. The facilitators worked towards creating a protected and insulated community in their classrooms – a place where the participants could be honest, share their experiences, questions and frustrations without the fear of judgment, condemnation, or ridicule.

Although the classroom was an insulated and relatively “safe” community, the facilitators and the participants entered with experiences associated with being Black in America. The shared history of discrimination and oppression that has been, and continues to be experienced by African Americans, served as another point of unity for the facilitators and their participants. Specific experiences might have differed, but the ability to relate and understand the anger, fear, pain and humiliation was universal. The facilitators and participants were able to share these experiences and in turn receive validation and support to move forward with hope. Finally, with regard to worldview, the study showed that the facilitators entered their teaching contexts with a
sincere concern for the well-being of the individuals in their groups. This concern was instrumental in the facilitators’ ability to build rapport and gain the trust of their participants.

**Discussion**

The study resulted in three major conclusions: (1) the facilitators considered the act of implementing their assigned preventive intervention programs as another way to demonstrate their commitment to serving and improving their communities; (2) the facilitators’ teaching demonstrated a sense of resiliency born of their lived experiences as African Americans raised in insulated and protective communities; and (3) the facilitators used their cultural identities to adapt their assigned curricula so that the programs would be more relevant to their African American participants. First, prior to the opportunity to implement preventive intervention programs, the facilitators were already demonstrating this commitment by the career paths they chose and their active involvement in the community. Twenty-two of the facilitators were employed in, or retired from, agencies and institutions that provide services to the community, and all of the facilitators were involved in formal or informal groups that participated in community service events (e.g., fraternal organizations, church groups, civic and political groups).

This commitment to community is an indication that the facilitators identified closely with the general communities in which they live. Within this larger community, facilitators also identified closely with their familial groups, their racial group, and their religious group. These group identities influenced the facilitators’ instructional practices by increasing their ability to build and maintain rapport with participants who were members of their racial group, but who also shared membership in other groups (gender, familial role, religion). The facilitators had a worldview that demonstrated a commitment to the greater good, a desire to serve and help members of their community, and a sense of commitment and empathy. They demonstrated a commitment to working for the greater good of the community and expressed a desire to serve and help members of their community.

Secondly, the facilitator’s sense of resiliency was evident from the stories the facilitators shared about their childhood, family, schooling and work experiences. These stories included economic hardship, experiences with racism and discrimination, struggles with single parenthood, teenage pregnancy, deaths of significant loved ones, and family experiences with alcohol and drug abuse. Despite these various obstacles, the facilitators were able to overcome with the personal determination and support from their family and community. Personal determination was instilled in the facilitators during their childhood – a sense confidence in self and racial pride. Many of the facilitators recollected memories of the words of wisdom passed on to them from their parents, grandparents and other significant individuals in their lives. These family and community members also provided other types of support that included financial support, housing and other resources, words of encouragement, and help in caring for children. Although the facilitators’ stories included adversity, hardships and heartbreak, there were no hints of bitterness.

The facilitators also recognized that some of life’s difficulties would be related to their status as a “minority” in this country, particularly the nine facilitators who lived through the Civil Rights Movement. These older facilitators were raised in tight-knit communities that provided a place of safety and refuge during those turbulent times. The younger facilitators, a generation removed from the Civil Rights Movement, benefited from this value as their parents and grandparents continued to ensure a place of safety and refuge for subsequent generations. The facilitators were part of the classroom community as well, contributing to the collective by sharing their own experiences. All of the facilitators expressed that their lives had been positively impacted by their experience as a member of their classroom community. Finally, facilitators
were able to draw on their understanding of culturally based communication to assess whether their learners were grasping the curricula content and to make necessary adaptations using culturally grounded methods to bring about understanding (e.g., reciprocal talk/call and response, story telling, and group sharing).

**Conclusion**

The intent of preventive intervention programs is to use educational methods to positively impact a specific issue in the lives of the program participants. The facilitators’ interviews revealed that in addition to forming a connection with their participants, they also felt connected to the curriculum content. This combination led to a unique way of delivering the overall program. Participants received the intended content of the curriculum, but also received real life lessons from “teachers” who opened their own lives to the participants. In this sense, facilitators in this study gave of themselves to their participants in such a way that their lives and experiences were also part of the delivered curriculum. This reciprocal relationship between facilitator and participant is an example of how the facilitators approached their participants with honor and respect. Ultimately, this kind of teaching – teaching with honor and respect - is teaching with love. This finding is reminiscent of hooks (2003), who summarizes her thoughts regarding this way of teaching, “Love in the classroom prepares teachers and students to open our minds and hearts. It is the foundation on which every learning community can be created” (p. 137).

This study has implications for the field of adult education as well as prevention science. The findings inform the approach to working in ethnic minority communities. The study confirmed that positionality (race in particular) shaped the facilitator’s worldview (Tisdell, 2000). As has been suggested, the facilitators did not seem to consciously recognize that their worldview and positionality affected their practice, but these factors, along with their various group identities had a strong influence on how they delivered their educational programs (Sheared, 1999; Shkedi & Nisan, 2006). In terms of community-based education a cultural match is indeed important and beneficial to the participant. Although the facilitators in the study taught programs designed specifically for African American participants, they still found it necessary to use culturally grounded forms of delivery. This need for adaptation during the delivery speaks to the importance of employing facilitators who understand the cultural background of the participants if a cultural match is not possible.

The literature regarding the role of instructors provides suggestions on how to teach in a culturally sensitive manner. Several authors suggest that instructors be aware of and recognize different ways of knowing and expressing, re-evaluate educational norms, and creating classroom spaces that reflect the learner’s educational needs (Alfred, 2002; Guy, 1999; Johnson-Bailey, 2002; Sheared, 1999). As part of the cultural community, the facilitators in this study instinctively incorporated these methods of culturally sensitive teaching. Adult education has a wide variety of literature on multicultural education, culturally competent instruction and positionality and power. This study contributes to this body of literature. Additionally, in a field that focuses primarily on formal types of community education, the study also validates the passion and ability of lay or nonprofessional adult educators as important contributors to the field.

**References**

Alfred, M.V. (2002). The promise of sociocultural theory in democratizing adult education. In


Abstract: Grounded in humanistic philosophy, this basic-interpretive, qualitative inquiry explores self-directed learning (SDL) within the museum environment. Investigation is conducted into the Personal Responsibility Orientation (PRO) Model as a conceptual framework for understanding SDL within museums and discoveries are revealed into SDL from the perspective of the museum learner.

Purpose of the Study
Self-directed learning (SDL) has been described as a way of life for many adults (Brockett & Hiemstra, 1991). Museums attract and serve countless self-directed learners, yet very little attention has been placed on SDL within the museum literature. SDL was introduced to the museum field during the early 1980s in which select adult educators collaborated with the American Association of Museums (AAM) to produce an educational guide (Collins, 1981). Nonetheless, recent research into adult learning within museums has instead focused on free choice as introduced by Falk and Dierking (2000). Although sharing certain similarities, free choice differs considerably from SDL and does not provide an adequate framework for which to understand self-directed adult learners (Banz, 2008). Consequently, we can learn more about SDL and how it occurs within a museum setting.

In contrast to the museum literature, the concepts and foundations which comprise SDL have long been recognized within adult education. However, recent interest in SDL in adult education has greatly waned (Eneau, 2008). A possible reason for this decline has been the abundance of conceptual perspectives and models of SDL as compared to the actual empirical exploration of such ideas. A major dilemma in SDL research has been the inability to formulate a consistent and mutually accepted theoretical base or framework (Candy, 1991). Knowles (1975) was the first to attempt it; devising andragogy on SDL ideals and concepts. By the 1990s numerous models had been developed. Unfortunately, none of these received any mutual acceptance. In most cases, such models were not followed by any empirical research, thereby leaving the adult education literature filled with various dormant SDL conceptual possibilities.

Therefore, the purpose of this study is twofold: first, to explore the possibilities of utilizing the Personal Responsibility Orientation (PRO) Model (Brockett & Hiemstra, 1991) as a model for understanding how SDL occurs within a museum environment and second, to gain insight into SDL within a museum setting from the perspective of the learner.

Conceptual Framework
The PRO Model, devised by Ralph Brockett and Roger Hiemstra in 1991, was used as the conceptual framework for this study. The model is grounded primarily in humanistic philosophy. At the heart of the PRO Model lies the concept of personal responsibility. Learning is centered upon the individual who exercises control for learning while assuming accountability for their actions (Hiemstra, 1994).

According to the model, learners utilize their personal responsibility through characteristics of the teaching-learning transaction along with their own personal learning characteristics to achieve self-direction in learning within a greater social context. The model builds upon previous concepts within SDL research including the notion of responsibility as a
personal characteristic (Guglielmino, 1977) and the necessity of understanding environmental circumstances in the learning process (Spear & Mocker, 1984). It allows for a view of SDL as occurring on a continuum, that knowledge, skills and experiences learned are transferable to other situations, and that learning may or may not occur in isolation (Hiemstra, 1994).

The PRO Model has received minimal attention. In exploring the learning episodes of four physicians in a qualitative case study, Newell (1995) found the model to be a useful tool for directing an analysis of learning. An instrument has been developed and validated by Stockdale (2003) to measure personal responsibility in SDL within a higher education setting which indicated a connection between the success of students and their degree of self-direction.

**Research Design**

The research design used for this study was basic-interpretive. A combination of observations and semi structured interviews were used to collect data. The constant comparative method served to analyze the data collected from the observations and interviews.

The study engaged a purposeful sample of four museum sites with a basic set of criterion for adult participants. These institutions included the North Museum of Natural History and Science, the Baltimore Museum of Art, the State Museum of Pennsylvania and Walters Art Museum. These institutions were accredited through AAM and had environments which allowed for self-direction through a self-guided exhibition that was adult or family appropriate.

Sixteen participants were selected from random visitors over the age of twenty-five. Nine were male and seven female. All had successfully completed a minimum of a four-year college program. Most were of white ethnic background with two participants classifying themselves as being of another ethnicity. Participants were not associated with a class or credited activity connected with an institution of higher learning.

**Findings**

Study data emerged naturally and was not limited within the constructs of the PRO Model. The model merely allowed for an initial starting point for posing questions and subsequent observations. Once participants were engaged in discussion, their interests, experiences, and perceptions provided the direction of conversation and established the foundation for the findings of the study. Seven themes emerged including a) personal reasons for learning; b) exhibit as educator; c) unquestioning approach; d) happening upon unexpected discoveries; e) making connections; f) learning in a social context; and g) outcome of visit.

A significant reason for attending a museum for learning was for the purpose of enrichment. For example, one learner said: “I wanted to know about this region. I’m new to this region so it’s basically exploratory.” Others were inclined toward entertainment. For instance, one participant stated: “something on a Saturday that was close by that would be interesting to all of us,” while another commented: “it’s all fun.” Still others perceived their visit as an opportunity to engage and share the experience with other adults. For instance, “we do it for the enjoyment of… each other’s company and conversation,” remarked one learner. While another explained: I’ll tend to go to more museums when someone comes in from out of town”

A fourth reason was related to the environment, as the study was conducted during the summer months, specifically the contrast in temperatures. As described by one learner: “today it’s ninety-seven degrees outside, you want to come in a nice cool place.”

In this study the environment was completely self-guided and the exhibition served directly in the capacity of educator. The exhibit was found to accommodate learning through effective presentation and textual support of objects and when participants were able to make connections to the exhibition components. Objects represented “the identity of the museum” according to one learner and were vital to the information being presented. In describing
effective text labels, one visitor said: “It was clear; you knew where to find it you didn’t have to
search for it, it was well done.” In an example of connecting with the exhibit, two visitors who
were reading Jane Austen’s “Pride and Prejudice” were delighted to come across horse drawn
vehicles similar to those in the book. “When we saw the actual vehicles in the museum; that of
course triggered an association... when I read about them riding in the phaeton I will have a much
stronger visual of that.” Open and visually appealing physical space contributed to “the pleasure
of being in a museum” and served to aid learner “focus.” Barriers to learning within the
exhibition were most frequently associated with limited information provided in correlation to
specific objects in which learners preferred “more in depth” or when in large museums, the
immense physical space resulted in fatigue. As explained by one of the participants: “I find I tire
easily at museums in about three hours, four hours in a museum is about it for me.”

Participants generally did not question or challenge aspects of the exhibition. Most were
observed to frequently adhere to a linear path as they moved from one object to another within
the exhibition, while others toured in random fashion. It was their goal to finish all aspects of the
gallery or as one visitor explained: “even if I was bored out of my mind I’d probably read just
about everything and go through.” The one area that participants freely challenged was modern
art. They presented this criticism not from the perspective of museum presentation or accuracy,
yet rather from the viewpoint of the artistic merit of the works and objects themselves. For
example, one visitor exclaimed “I do not like modern art… I think I have the tendency, maybe
it’s my lack of understanding of it, that many people have of saying I can do that.”

Visitors often described coming across unexpected discoveries during their museum
experience. Whereas adults visit museums for various reasons, the manner in which they plan out
their time and objectives within the museum is best described as an open agenda. Even when
participants visit to see a specific exhibition they are often left with, even anticipate, ample time
to explore additional galleries. For example, one learner explained: “We really don’t have any
objectives when we come to a museum we just want to see different things and learn a little,
experience different stuff.” The extent of learning varied among participants with the most
engaged and perceptive learners revealing a process by which they were “learning to unlearn” or
hoping “to see in a different kind of way.” One participant explained: “to be able to walk into a
gallery and see things that are different forms of beauty or different ways of looking,” while
another described “to connect with your memories and forgotten feelings, to see things you
previously ignored, to see things where you didn’t know there was anything to see.”

Participants made connections to their museum experience through personal experiences
and invoking emotion. These connections came from within and were quite personal to the
participant. One learner explained previous experiences helped formulate connections by
“selecting bits and pieces from one museum I’ve gone to in the past and another into the museum
I’m visiting at that time and just building upon general knowledge of the subject.” The role of
emotion was revealed by participants and pertained to general feelings that they encountered
across various museum sites. However, the examples cited by participants were more common to
engagement with artistic pieces or works. For example, one visitor described: “I could feel her
pain. The picture was something; she was blind, she recently lost her husband...And I could just
feel when I looked at her, I felt sadness.”

The social context played a significant role in the experience of participants in the study.
Participants constructed their own social context as well as encountered social context. Thirteen
of the participants in this study toured the museum with another person or persons. Participants,
with one exception, indicated that it was unusual for them to visit a museum alone and only do so
in extraordinary cases, or as one learner stated: “I’m not sure that any of us go to museums by
ourselves.” They generally tended to avoid times of large visitation and quite often avoided others during their tour. The social context also allowed for group meaning making and as one participant said: “a need to connect and also to say, hey I want to share with you.” However, in contrast, interaction rarely occurred with unfamiliar adults also touring the museum. For example, one participant commented: “I don’t want necessarily someone else’s experience.” Participants were also at times “distracted” by other adults. “There’s something to me that’s sacred about that space and so people need to be, need to shade on the side of reverence,” explained one learner. Consequently, participants adhered to an unwritten code of social etiquette, which they uniformly revealed to include quiet tone, sense of space, and respect, or as one visitor summarized as: “quiet, respectful, don’t walk in front of people!”

Participants revealed various actions of outcome to their visit. They remembered and reflected upon the obvious; including those facets of the visit that had originally garnered their interest, became relevant in an ensuing situation, or which were perceived as unique or unordinary. For instance one learner declared: “That Degas still really sticks out in my mind.” Some participants pursued questions and discoveries they had experienced during their initial visit while others did not. Those who did pursue inquiries utilized several resources including the internet, books, photographs, and continued discussion. A majority of participants followed their study experience with visits to other museums or similar cultural institutions; one even “came back” to the same institution the following day. Several outlined relationships between the initial study site visits with tours of subsequent museums. “I relate one museum visit to another one,” remarked one learner. Many spread the word to others concerning their museum visit. For instance, one participant said: “We made some new friends at the pool and I said to the parents, if you’ve not been to the museum you should go!”

**Discussion**

Participant reasons for learning were typical of traits traditionally associated with self-directed learners (Candy, 1991), as well as adult museum visitors (Bitgood, 2002). The principle educational component for participants during their experience was the museum, usually the exhibition. While learners were free to contemplate and select which exhibitions to tour, which components to engage, and the direction by which to navigate their path; the exhibitions provided a basic curriculum and body of knowledge for the learning experience (Sutton, 2007). Within the museum environment, self-direction is largely influenced by the learner’s curiosity for experiencing the context and content of the galleries.

However, while most learners adhered to a linear method of touring common for adult museum visitors (Bitgood, 2002), there were those who preferred random methods. The differences in how these learners approached galleries begin to reveal the complexity of SDL within the museum. Participants exhibited tendencies associated with that of field independent learners (Brookfield, 1986), such as ability to analyze, independence in learning, and firm inner-direction. However, in conjunction with these characteristics, each learner has also developed a specific learning style, with the majority selecting a manner which is highly linear in approach, thereby reflecting two types of self-directed learners as suggested by Bonham (1989). Adding to this complexity were participant desires of “learning to unlearn;” a nebulous concept which occurs over the course of a lifetime. It is indicative of the more advanced stages of self-direction by which adults have mastered the ability to learn on their own (see Knowles, 1975) and are in greater control of their own learning (see Brockett & Hiemstra, 1991; Candy, 1991).

Past experiences were often used to produce personal correlations for learning. These connections varied by individual and situation as mirrored in the literature (Candy, 1991). Learners also discussed emotion as a way of making personal connections which is common
among adult museum visitors (Sandell, 2007). The post-visit actions of these learners closely resemble findings of typical museum studies (Falk & Dierking, 2000) by which learners display basic reflection, pursue questions and discoveries through other museum visits, books, and the internet, as well as general discussion, recommendation, and spreading the word to others.

These learners purposefully planned and pursued activities that were very social in nature. However, a dichotomy becomes apparent as to what exactly this social experience was to entail. While learners demonstrated a flurry of social interaction with those adults with whom they were familiar, participants were generally detached from engaging in interaction with others outside of their constructed group. The inference to SDL was that these learners preferred “personal” social experiences within the museum. To maintain this atmosphere, participants adhered to unwritten social codes of etiquette, which can be understood as the “domain-specific” (Candy, 1991, p. 303) characteristics of nonformal museum SDL. These skills were acquired through informal transactions among visitors who frequent museums; similar to information exchange among self-directed learners in informal settings as described by Brookfield (1984).

The PRO Model provided a sound conceptual framework for understanding the various processes and elements that occurred in SDL within the museum. Personal responsibility and accountability were firmly in the control of learners within museum scenarios of SDL. Consequently, this study provides further evidence toward the importance of personal responsibility in SDL as depicted by Brockett and Hiemstra (1991) within the PRO Model.

Within the museum, the teaching-learning transaction of the PRO Model was largely fulfilled by the exhibition in the role of non-human facilitator. Although limited in its capability of intercession with learners as traditionally understood from the actions of human facilitators; within this dimension learners were provided with a basic curriculum for learning, a suggested outline or path to follow or customize, and numerous resources consisting of objects, artifacts and presentation with accompanying textual support. Learners engaged this dimension while using their own characteristics of learning to determine their own pace and to decide which elements of learning to pursue, revisit, skip, or simply disregard.

A weakness of the PRO Model involves its underdeveloped depiction of social context, which remains vague and undefined within the model. Study findings indicate a highly significant social context to SDL within the museum setting, which can be defined from the viewpoint of social interaction within the physical museum environment. Social dimensions were paramount to the learning experiences of participants. They largely pursued SDL within a social setting that provided and supported important motivations toward learning, allowed for group meaning making, and resulted in a socially bonding experience. The social context interceded in filling gaps left unfilled by the teaching learning dimension by providing learners with a means of validating their learning and for social feedback concerning outcome of the experience. Therefore, the social context is better understood as a prominent dimension equal to the teaching learning transaction and characteristics of the learner as opposed to an “arena in which the activity of self-direction is played out” (Brockett & Hiemstra, 1991, p. 33).

**Implications for Practice**

A major implication for practice for expanding possibilities in accommodating SDL within museum education is the recognition of the complexity of self-directed learners. Self-directed learners are not generic; some individuals will have need of more guidance and support from the museum while others will require less. The two basic differing styles of self-directed learners as offered by Bonham (1989) present challenges for museum educators.
and curators to design exhibits that can be approached from a linear or random perspective with the end result producing satisfaction for both styles of learning. Another implication is the social significance of learning in SDL. Given the nature of the museum experience and the interdependence these adults have on one another for constructing meaning and validating learning this is an important part of understanding self-direction within the museum.

References


PoZitively Transformative: The Transformative Learning of People Living with HIV

Lisa M. Baumgartner and Keegan N. David
Northern Illinois University

Abstract: The purpose of this study was to investigate meaning making in People Living with HIV (PLWH) as a chronic illness. Findings confirm those of Courtenay, Merriam and Reeves (1998) who examined meaning making in PLWHAs when HIV/AIDS was a terminal illness. Contextual factors that mediate meaning making were uncovered.

HIV is considered a manageable chronic disease in the United States because people have access to life-extending medications (Teague, 2007). The number of people living with HIV in the United States was estimated at 1.2 million in 2005 (UNAIDS, 2006) which is an increase from 850,000-950,000 in 2002 (Centers for Disease Control, 2004).

Individuals have to make sense of living with HIV as a chronic disease. Researchers explored the meaning making process of those diagnosed with HIV/AIDS when it was considered a terminal illness. Guided by Mezirow’s (1991) theory of transformative learning, Courtenay et al. (1998) interviewed 18 participants and concluded that for them meaning making was a five-step process. First, they experienced an initial reaction that included “cognitive, affective, and behavioral responses” (¶ 17). Next, a catalytic experience “helped the respondents begin to view their diagnosis in a new way and make decisions about how to live” (¶ 24). Third, they took stock of their lives, critically examined their priorities, and modified their activities in accordance with their new priority of helping others. Fourth, in a phase called the “consolidation of new meaning” (¶ 40), they “help[ed] other HIV-positive individuals” (¶ 40). Fifth was the stabilization of their new perspective, which included a heightened their sensitivity to life and the need to make meaningful contributions in the service of others.

Follow-up studies with 14 of the original 18 participants concluded that participants’ perspective transformation held over time and there were new changes in meaning schemes (beliefs and attitudes), but not new changes in perspective (worldview) (Mezirow and Associates, 2000). The new meaning schemes included a future-oriented perspective, a greater attention of care to the self, and a greater integration of HIV/AIDS into who they were. (Courtenay, Merriam, Reeves, and Baumgartner, 2000). A third study with 11 of the original 18 participants confirmed the stability of the perspective transformation. The previous meaning-schemes were also evident. New meaning schemes included an increased appreciation for the human condition and an expanded view of intimacy (Baumgartner, 2002).

It is possible that the meaning making process could differ for people currently diagnosed with HIV since it is not the death sentence that it was prior to the advent of protease inhibitors. Therefore, the purpose of this study is to investigate the meaning making process of people diagnosed HIV-positive 1996 or later when the disease was considered chronic in the US because access to life-extending medications was widespread.

Theoretical Framework

Mezirow and Associates’ (2000) conception of transformative learning is the theoretical framework for this study. Mezirow (1991) delineates a 10-step process, which begins with a...
“disorienting dilemma” such as a divorce, the death of a loved one, or the diagnosis of an illness (p. 168). Such a dilemma might cause individuals to reflect critically on their assumptions about the world. This critical reflection can lead to a “perspective transformation,” or changes in “habits of mind,” or modifications in one’s worldview, leading to a “more inclusive, discriminating, permeable and integrative perspective” (Mezirow, 1990, p. 14). People talk to others about their new perspective and eventually integrate it into their lives. They also might experience changes in meaning schemes or “sets of immediate beliefs and expectations, beliefs, feelings, and attitudes” (Mezirow and Associates, 2000, p. 18).

Methodology

Fourteen volunteer participants were selected by criterion sampling (Patton, 2002) from AIDS Service Organizations (ASOs) in the Midwestern U.S. The criteria were: (a) age 18 or older, (b) HIV-positive for a year or longer, (c) diagnosed HIV-positive in 1996 or later and with access to life-extending medications, and (d) no AIDS diagnosis. Those diagnosed HIV-positive for less than a year were excluded, as they might not have had adequate time to make sense of their HIV-positive diagnosis. As it was imperative that all participants had experienced HIV as a chronic illness, only those diagnosed after life-extending medications were widely available in the U.S. were included. Last, we suspected that those diagnosed with AIDS might have incorporated the diagnosis differently than those diagnosed with HIV because those living with AIDS have a more compromised immune system.

The sample consisted of 14 adults. Respondents ranged in age from 25 to 52 years old. There were 3 African American men, 3 African American women, 5 White men, 1 White woman, 1 Latino man and 1 African American male-to-female transgender. Participants’ education level extended from high school graduate to some graduate coursework.

Data collection consisted of 14 1 ½ to 2 hour interviews using a semi-structured interview guide. Areas investigated included the process of identity incorporation, the nature of learning that occurred during that process, and questions concerning how other identities were affected by HIV.

Data were analyzed inductively using the constant comparative method (Glaser and Strauss, 1967; Strauss and Corbin, 1990). Interviews were conducted and transcribed and we read, re-read, and coded the transcripts and looked for themes within and across transcripts. As a result, themes emerged. These themes addressed the questions about identity incorporation, the nature of learning, and how HIV affects other identities.

Findings

The nature of learning was transformational. The process of transformative learning largely replicated the findings in Courtenay, Merriam and Reeves’s (1998) study that examined the centrality of meaning-making in the lives of People Living with HIV/AIDS (PLWHAs).

Initial Reaction

Namely, participants had an initial reaction to diagnosis that included cognitive, affective, and behavioral reactions. Shock, numbness, and believing that death was near were cognitive responses participants experienced. This replicates the reactions of participants in Courtney et al.,’s (1998) study. Enrique thought he was going to die. He stated, “The first thing that [came] to mind was ‘I’m going to die. I’m going to die.’ [That] was in my mind 24 hours.” This fear of death occurred although most participants knew that there were life extending medications.

Anger, sadness/depression, and fatalism emerged as affective reactions to the diagnosis. Brian showed depression. Brian stated, “I was very sad. I was sedated for about a week. I didn’t
go to work. I sat in bed. My partner had to bathe me, clean me, feed me. I didn’t do anything.”

Last, two participants had a rather fatalistic attitude toward what they thought was their impending death. Jason said, “When I was finally diagnosed there was part of me saying, ‘This was kind of what you wanted all along. An easy way out.’” Behavior included using drugs, seeking information about HIV and talking to others.

*Turning Point/Catalytic Experience*

Eleven participants remained in the initial reaction phase from several days to a year. The time spent in this phase was generally shorter for participants in this study than for those studied by Courtenay et al. (1998), who stayed in the initial phrase from 6 months to 5 years. This phase was followed by a turning point, or catalytic experience, which forced respondents to start making sense of the disease. The turning point fit into one of three categories: (a) learning about HIV, (b) support from others, and (c) medical intervention.

Observing others with HIV and talking with medical personnel served as a turning point and precipitated a need to get educated about HIV. Terry, as with many others, thought he was going to die from HIV until he went to his doctor. He related his turning point, “I go in and see the doctor …and he tells me that he can keep my alive for ten years…. I decided then I was going to live and just live my life to the fullest.” When Clinton started taking medication for HIV it was a “real slap in the face.”

*Phase 1: Exploration and Experimentation*

Just like participants in Courtenay et. al.’s (1998) study, participants in the current study took stock of their lives and made adjustments in activities. Taking stock meant questioning priorities and re-creating their identities. Rich “became [his] own man.” Eleven of the 14 respondents felt a connection to others they had not experienced before. They became more empathic and felt closer to others.

*Phase 2: Consolidation of New Meaning*

All the participants realized that people were the top priority in their life. Unlike in Courtenay et al.’s (1998) study, HIV was not the central identity of most respondents, nor were they immersed in the HIV/AIDS community. However, many fulfilled a need to give back to the community through HIV/AIDS-related service work. Randy co-chaired a group for those living with HIV and recovering from chemical dependency. Christina attended health department advisory meetings and lobbied her senators for funding of HIV/AIDS medications. Clinton worked at a local ASO where he did “an array of things from testing to counseling to case management to prevention to education and outreach.”

*Phase 3: Stabilization of the New Perspective*

Like the participants in Courtenay et al.,’s (1998) study, the participants in this study made meaning of the disease by gaining new worldviews. Participants saw HIV as a way to make a meaningful contribution and all of them wanted to be of service to others.

*Service to others.* Twelve of 14 respondents made sense of their HIV diagnosis by reaching out to help others. This was the most common perspective change for the group. Niecy lobbied at her state capitol for money for HIV-related causes. She said, “My state representative, H___, [We] sit up there. You would think we were buddies. I sit up there and cross my legs and talk to him. When I go to [the capitol city] he’s like, “This is my favorite person.” Enrique recognized a need to provide current information about HIV to those who speak Spanish. He noticed that much of the information written in Spanish was outdated so he is translating information at his ASO into Spanish.

*Heightened sensitivity to life.* Several people appreciated what life had to offer.
Linda’s change in attitude and her sensitivity to life is apparent. She confessed, “I have a chair. In the beginning it was my ‘Looking at my life pass me by’ chair because I have a garden apartment and it faces right out to [a street] and over to the park and it’s beautiful…I didn’t think it was pretty for the first part of my illness….Now I call [that chair] my ‘inspiration chair’ because now I see all the beauty out there. I kind of see the things that are out there and I didn’t see before.”

*Increased self-esteem.* Blackberriz is a male-to-female transgender individual. Her acceptance of her gender identity and HIV went hand-in-hand. She stated, “What got me out of denial was at the time accepting myself for who I was. Once I accepted me for being me and started to love myself more then I think that’s what it was.” Terry, Blackberriz, and Clinton came to terms with being gay and with being HIV-positive around the same time. Acceptance of themselves and their sexuality helped them begin to make sense of their HIV.

**Changes in Meaning Schemes**

In addition to changes in perspective regarding the value of people and relationships and the subsequent need to be of service to others, participants experienced changes in meaning-schemes including an increased appreciation of the human condition, reevaluation of work, increased spirituality, growth of an advocate identity, and integration of HIV into the self-concept.

*Appreciation for the human condition.* Lee recognized that people were on their own journeys and had their own battles. He was less bothered by homophobic people than he used to be. He stated, “There are good and bad people…some of whom are homophobic…those that are homophobic—they don’t bother me… I don’t let them get to me the way I used to. I realize they have their own issues to deal with. Many of the most rancid homophobics are usually closet cases.” Blackberriz stated, “I just learned to accept people for who they are.”

*Reevaluation of work.* Nine of 14 participants reevaluated the importance of work in their lives and sought personally fulfilling work. Brian’s comments were typical. “Living in New York, you identify yourself with your job …. I needed a wake-up call. This is not real. It’s what you do, it’s not who you are!” Brian found the fashion industry unfulfilling and found he needed to “do something that is going to make me happy at the end of the day.”

*Increased spirituality.* Half the participants claimed spiritual growth. Clinton’s journey to spirituality was typical. Clinton, who was spiritually “absent” prior to contracting HIV said, “I’m in a 12-step program now. It’s a spiritual program basically. It led me back to church …. I didn’t talk about God, but I can do that now.”

*Growth of advocate identity.* Eleven of the 14 participants became HIV/AIDS advocates. Brian, a fundraiser for HIV/AIDS-related causes, stated, “I think [my job] has helped me grow. And be more passionate about what I’m doing and actually go back to the political …. I’m a big social advocate.”

*Integration of the HIV identity into the self-concept.* The prominence of the HIV identity depended on context. It was integrated well into the self-concept but it became more prominent in dating situations.

**Mediating Factors in the Meaning-Making Process**

Meaning-making does not occur in isolation. It is influenced by participants’ sociocultural context.

*Social Interaction.* Whether one-on-one or in a group setting, social interaction was a necessary part of meaning making, because it occurred when they saw others in the same situation. Information they received from others about living with the disease was a turning point for some participants. ASOs and support groups provided a place to enact their new meaning
perspectives and give back to the HIV/AIDS community. A lack of social interaction, represented by the inability to find an appropriate support group, impeded meaning making. The education and support that people received in the group provided the turning point from the initial reaction to the diagnosis, and participants started to make meaning.

Stigmatization. Although much as been learned about how HIV is transmitted, people still have inaccurate information and it is still a stigmatized disease. This stigma affected the meaning-making process because it delayed entrance into a support group that served as a turning point for some from dealing with emotions to beginning to make sense of the disease. Further, it prevented disclosure to others who could have been a part of the meaning-making process. People also avoided information seeking about the disease because of stigma. Had people received accurate information about the disease sooner, they could have moved from their initial reaction to meaning-making more quickly.

Contextual factors affecting incorporation of an HIV identity. Time, health, and economics affected the incorporation of HIV into the participants’ identities. With the passage of time HIV became more a part of participants’ self-definition. Health scares made HIV/AIDS more prominent and economics, namely concerns about affording HIV medication kept HIV in the minds of many.

Discussion

The results of this study confirm that participants’ meaning making process is similar to those diagnosed with HIV/AIDS when it was a terminal illness (Courtney et al., 1998). The initial reaction, emotions and a catalytic event are important in the meaning making process. In addition, participants experienced a change in meaning perspective and meaning schemes.

Unlike previous research, participants reevaluated the role of work in their lives. They sought work more personally meaningful to them and considered work a less salient identity. In addition, few every held HIV as a primary identity. Because HIV is a chronic illness and people are living longer, participants have the privilege of engaging in full-time employment. However, the HIV diagnosis precipitated a change in the value of work in people’s lives.

This study adds depth to the important of context in transformative learning. The interpersonal context (e.g. social support or lack thereof) affected meaning making. In addition, the sociocultural context (e.g. stigmatization and economics) affected information seeking about HIV and the salience of the HIV identity. Likewise, the situational context, living in a large city, meant increased access to HIV/AIDS resources and social networks. Likewise, the fact that the HIV/AIDS identity was never a central identity for most participants is due to the temporal factors. HIV is a chronic disease in the US, and although people initially feared death, they quickly realized that they could live with the disease.

HIV/AIDS educators need to recognize that HIV is still a stigmatized disease. Because it is stigmatized, people might not seek the information they need. In addition, assigning people to appropriate support groups based on a person’s developmental stage in life (e.g. childrearing stage vs. retirement) and stage of living with the disease (1 year vs. 12 years) is important for meaning making to occur.

References


Utilizing the Lens of Critical Race Theory to Analyze Stories of Race

Lorenzo Bowman, Tonette S. Rocco, Elizabeth Peterson, and Willene A. Adker

Abstract: In this paper the authors analyze three personal stories of race using Critical Race Theory (CRT). The analysis reveals common themes which speak to the tragic impact of racism on the lives of African Americans.

An analysis of the processes that replicate injustice and racism form the basis of critical race theory (CRT) (Delgado & Stefanic, 2001). One of the key tenets of CRT is that racism is ordinary and pervasive. The ordinariness of racism means that all those who hold power or privilege (Rocco & Gallagher, 2004) are racists and do not acknowledge their views or actions as racist but normal, typical and part of the status quo. The status quo is reinforced by the interest convergence of “white elites (materially) and working-class people (psychically)” (Delgado & Stefanic, 2001, p. 7) who work together by consensus to maintain the status quo. Interest convergence maintains that Whites are only willing to change the power differential when there is a clear benefit to the interests of Whites. The power held by the White elite results from control of material resources and capital. Although working class people do not share these resources, they derive psychic benefit from the existence of a subordinate racial group.

CRT scholars argue that race not only matters, but it will always matter. Racism is a fundamental characteristic of American life. CRT starts with the premise that racism and race are endemic and permanent in our society. CRT looks at the social, political, and economic inequity among groups acknowledging that race intersects with other characteristics such as gender, sexual orientation, and class (Yosso, 2005). As an example of the ordinariness of racism when a Black man with a white girlfriend was found dead from a gunshot wound to the groin and bled to death it was ruled a hunting accident (Witt, 2005). It is nonsensical to believe hunters would abandon an accident victim and not get immediate medical attention. In another case, a Black man dating a White woman was found hanging from a tree. Local officials ruled it a suicide, despite the persistent doubts of the family and civil rights officials (Witt, 2005). People of color know this pre civil rights and modern history, and live its impact in silence. Even those who would dare to speak up are told that these events are ancient history and are not relevant today. When in reality these events are relevant because they speak to the continuation of racism in modern times. CRT asserts that “members of this country’s dominant racial group cannot easily grasp what it is like to be nonwhite” (p. 22). In CRT, storytelling and counter storytelling is powerful because it reveals the racist acts people of color face daily while challenging the beliefs universally held by the majority. The interpretation of the experience of racism is very different based on the degree of power and authority a person holds in this society. To change our future, these stories and lived experiences need to be told, listened to, and analyzed in a way that connects the stories to CRT. This means that once the story is told an examination of the key elements of the story should be based in the tenets, propositions, and legal arguments developed in the CRT literature. This analysis must also be based on an evident understanding and portrayal of CRT as a form of critical legal analysis. In this paper, Elizabeth, Willene, and Lorenzo share their personal stories related to race.

Elizabeth’s Story: A Reflection on a Racial Incident. Elizabeth shares a story that chronicles her childhood experience of having a cross burned in her yard after her family moved to the suburbs when she was nine years old. She described how her family sought to protect her by blocking her view of the burning cross and refusing to talk about the incident. She came to feel
that she should have been ashamed of what happened to her family. Elizabeth also discussed the experience of entering elementary school in her new neighborhood and striving to blend in. She was initially considered a novelty by her classmates, then invisible as they eventually did not notice that she was Black. She later acquired friends who knew she was Black and accepted her; however, race was never discussed.

**Willene’s Story: The Family Secret.** Willene shares her story about witnessing her Uncle Adam being lynched in front of her house by the Ku Klux Klan. She noted how the memories are still vivid: the white man in a choir robe with the gun as her Uncle hung from the tree. Silence followed this incident. There was never any discussion or even a funeral. Willene also shared her experience of being bused to a White high school and being surprised at registration when a White teacher said “Nigra, speak up!” She was suspended on the first day of school for speaking back to a White woman in a disrespectful tone. She never returned to school and instead obtained her GED.

**Lorenzo’s Story: The Creation of Racial Distrust.** Lorenzo shares a story that chronicles his childhood experience of repeatedly being told of the deaths of his maternal grandmother and grandfather. He recounts how his grandmother was apparently killed for the sport and entertainment of a White ferry driver and how his grandfather was beaten to death by the Ku Klux Klan because the Klan believed that his wife was White since she often “passed” when she went into town. As a consequence of these experiences, Lorenzo’s parents often warned him not to trust White people. Lorenzo also shared his experience of being transferred to the White elementary school in his neighborhood following desegregation. He discussed how he was suddenly conscious of his race since he was now the only person of color in his 5th grade classroom. Suddenly his inner voice was now louder that his outer voice.

**Analyzing the stories using CRT**

We are living out the tenants of CRT through these stories. We read and reread the stories to move the work forward as a piece of writing. As we tried to stay on task issues, concepts, and additional stories emerged. Some we followed into in depth discussions thinking we had gone off task, returning to the editing task only to return to our discussions. Eventually, we realized that the conversations were in fact part of CRT – the exploring of the stories, the telling of new stories, and the unpacking of race in the stories, in our own experiences and in the experiences of those close to us. From this process, several themes emerged: isolation in the midst of the American Dream; watching through the night – the loss of safety; blending in, forced out, and being visible; “Nigra speak up” – keeping people of color in their place; shame in silence; and “you can’t trust white people.”

**Isolation in the Midst of the American Dream.** In 1931, “the American dream,” was introduced in Adams’ *The Epic of America*. While Adams maintained that circumstances of birth or position did not impede the dream of a social order where people were judged by their abilities the lived reality of African Americans stands in direct opposition to the American dream. Thirty years later, Dr. Martin Luther King (1963) dreamed that his children would “not be judged by the color of their skin but by the content of their character.” As opportunities opened up and the Black middle class grew, there was a sense that “King’s Dream” had been realized. Therefore, it was shocking when Derrick Bell (1981) first proclaimed the permanency of racism, declaring that racism had not gone away, but had become so ordinary in our society that it often went unrecognized until some abhorrent event brought it to the fore.

Elizabeth’s family was able to buy property and eventually build their family home. The American dream was not to include “Racial slurs, bomb threats – we were to get out or else - all
from an anonymous caller” recalled Elizabeth. Elizabeth’s family was quickly reminded that no matter how successful and prudent they may have been in working and saving money to accomplish the American dream, they could never obtain the version of the American dream that is experienced by Whites because of racism. Racism rears its ugly head even in the face of economic and professional career success for Blacks to remind them that race still matters in American society and that even in the midst of their success; they are still subordinate to Whites.

Watching through the night – the loss of safety. The dream which Elizabeth’s family pursued by moving to the suburbs to have a better life for the children in the family includes a sense of safety and being safe. Instead as Elizabeth shares, “That night, and for several nights afterward, my father and uncles kept watch. My father with his rifle and my uncles with their flashlights stayed up listening and watching to make sure we were safe.” Pursuit of the American dream includes a place for children to grow, be nurtured and be safe. While most Whites take for granted that their neighborhoods are safe for their children to explore and homes are secure when their children sleep for many Blacks this sense of security is nonexistent. The lack of security and safety is so prevalent it extends to all aspects of Black life.

The illusion of safety was shattered for Willene when she recalled that “we stood on the porch crying with mama who was holding daddy trying to keep him from being killed by the Klan.” Hate crimes are twice as likely to be perpetuated against Blacks as Whites according to the FBI statistics (Leadership Conference on Civil Rights Education Fund, 2004), churches are burned (General Board of Global Ministries, 1996), and Blacks are targeted by law enforcement. Indeed, many Blacks become conscious of their whereabouts in urban areas and even fearful because of the reality of “driving while Black” phenomenon in which people of color are targeted by law enforcement primarily because of the color their skin (Harris, 1999). There are places Blacks do not go because of fear of racial reprisal in large cities across America. This information is passed on to new arrivals to a city and to the next generation.

Blending in, forced out, and being visible. Gotanda (1995) provides a critique of the Constitution that challenges the color-blind nature of the document and therefore challenges the ability of laws, based upon constitutionality, to be color-blind. He explains that the Supreme Court uses race to cover four distinct ideas: status-race, formal-race, historical-race, and culture-race (p.257). Status-race is the traditional notion of race as an indicator of social status, or more simply put the belief that some racial groups are inherently inferior to others. Formal-race refers to socially constructed formal categories. Black and White in this context are seen as “apolitical descriptions, reflecting merely skin color or region of ancestral origin” (p. 257). Historical-race, however, goes further in that it encompasses all past and continuing racial subordination. Culture-race refers to the broadly shared beliefs and practices of a community and can serve as a bridge for building cultural diversity. Gotanda points out that no matter which racial idea you are referring to “. . . race is considered a legitimate and proper means of classifying Americans” and “While the social content of race has varied throughout American history, the practice of using race as a commonly recognized social divider has not” (p. 258).

Elizabeth experienced the classification and use of race as a social divider. She described her experience with school friends, “with classmates I was first a novelty (many stares), then invisible (colorblind-they did not even really notice that I was Black) and then eventually I acquired a group of friends that knew I was Black, but were ok with it. Nevertheless, even with my friends that were ok with me I did not talk about race. I never talked about being Black . . .” The white students treated Elizabeth in a relatively nonthreatening way seeing her primarily as an exotic other (Williams, 1998).
Lorenzo’s experiences differed from Elizabeth’s because his race became the central focus of interactions and as in the historical race category, his skin color made him subordinate. Lorenzo became aware that his color and race denoted an inferior status recalling, “I remember my first day of classes vividly. My race which had been invisible to me when I attended a segregated all Black school was now suddenly, visible. I was the only person of color in the class. My inner voice was now louder than my outer voice. I was now reminded of my race on a daily basis.”

“Nigra speak up” – keeping us in our place. When Willene’s teacher called her “Nigra” she reminded her of her “place.” Most people of color have at one time or another been called a racial epithet or they’ve seen it scribbled on the walls of restrooms, dorm rooms, or on the side of their churches. So every time a White woman clutches her purse as a Black man walks by or steers clear when a group of Black or Latino youths approaches she sends out a signal that says, “You are dangerous and something to be feared by all “decent” people.” And yet historically, more violence has been directed at African Americans (both physical and emotional) than the other way around. These are acts of overt racism, which have a powerful impact on the psyche. Over time, however the subtle insensitive remarks and actions of White folks build and have a greater impact on the psyche of African Americans. Subtle acts of microaggression are often unconscious reactions on the part of White perpetrators and therefore unintentional, but over time they are no less damaging because they undermine the self-concept and well-being of those they are directed against. Solorzano, Ceja, and Yosso (2000) found that microaggressions, “the subtle insults (verbal, non-verbal, and/or visual) directed at people of color,” are experienced in both the academic and social spaces on college and university campuses” (p. 60).

Shame in Silence. Stories of what happened to a relative who stood up, spoke out, or in some other way offended and paid for it dearly are passed on from generation to generation, sometimes as a warning or a whisper and sometimes as a celebration of strength and courage. Stories also serve a powerful psychic function for minority communities. Many victims of racial discrimination suffer in silence or blame themselves for their predicament. Stories can give them voice and reveal that others have similar experiences. Stories can name the type of discrimination, once named, it can be combated (Delgado & Stefanic, 2001, p. 43).

The lynching of Willene’s uncle was burned in her memory even though she was only two when it happened and there was no funeral and the incident was never discussed. But “daddy changed” speaks to the devastation that her family experienced. In a similar fashion the overt threat embodied in the cross burnings that Elizabeth shared was powerful becoming a vivid memory of a young girl. The act itself caused fear, but the silence that followed brought confusion and a sense of uneasiness. For her parents to talk about the incident let people know that it meant something to them and was an admission that White people had gotten to you and had power over you. For them, it was just best to forget it, but for a young girl it was difficult to forget.

You can’t trust white people. Racism and memories of racism are woven into the Black experience in a way that most Whites can never fully understand. Each of the stories presented here represent a moment when the storyteller encountered racism in such a profound way that the memory of the incident(s) not only endured, but also in many ways created the lens through which later racial experiences would be viewed and filtered.

Tensions that have built up from decades of aggressions and microaggressions (Solorzano, Ceja, & Yosso, 2000) have conditioned people of color to expect racist behavior from Whites and to recognize it when it occurs. Whites who commit unintended slights are often
stunned when their actions are deemed racist and wonder how their actions could be seen as such. For people of color it is easy – they’ve been victims of racism enough to know it when they see it. They know it because they’ve been taught to expect it. Lorenzo’s story points out how he was taught not to trust White people. This lack of trust was born from the stories of what had happened to his grandparents at the hands of White people and was supported when he enrolled in a White school and his race was suddenly visible in a way that it had never been before. What happened to Lorenzo’s grandparents was an act of hate, what Lorenzo experienced was microaggression, both were damaging.

**Conclusion and Implications**

The field of adult education from its very beginning held a strong connection to the promise of democracy and commitment to social justice (Heaney, 1996). Telling the story of “the people” is at the heart of social justice work. It is easy to dismiss what happened to Elizabeth, Willene, and Lorenzo as isolated events that happened in an era long past. Consider the tragic death of James Byrd Jr. who was beaten and dragged by a truck (Cropper, 1988) and the death of a Black woman who was shot in the head at a stoplight in Louisiana – her assailant stated that God would bring her back as White (Southern Poverty Law Center, 2008). In the last seven years, the civil rights division of the Department of Justice brought forty-one cross-burning prosecutions (United States Department of Justice, 2007). These stories reveal a deeper societal issue.

The memories of racial subordination, humiliation, and violence that African Americans have suffered still impact them today. As painful as it was for each to share her or his story, the stories need to be told to challenge our collective understanding of the myth of the “end of racism.” If people remain silent, it is impossible to dismantle the myth and for real healing and reconciliation to take place.

**References**


Guerrilla Girls and Raging Grannies: Critical, Informal, and Performative Pedagogy

Susan J. Bracken, North Carolina State University
Jennifer A. Sandlin, Arizona State University
Robin Redman Wright, University of Texas at San Antonio

Abstract: This paper offers two important historical examples, The Guerrilla Girls and The Raging Grannies, as ways to explore, experience, and better understand the value of embodied learning through culture jamming and critical performative pedagogy.

Keywords: culture jamming, women’s activism, performative pedagogy, critical pedagogy

Introduction

There are many widely known historical narratives regarding women’s activism and informal critical public pedagogy that have repeatedly appeared in adult education course syllabi, conference papers, and publications. For example, the Bryn Mawr Summer School for Women (Heller, 1986), the story of Ida B. Wells (Bogues, 2003), and the Jane Addams Hull House (Addams & Hurt, 1990) all are important icons in the study of adult informal learning, gender, race and class. We discuss in this paper two historical examples of groups of women activists whose activities can be defined and understood through a lens of critical performative pedagogy and culture jamming. The selected examples are the Guerrilla Girls and the Raging Grannies.

Theoretical Frameworks: Culture Jamming as/and Critical Performative Pedagogy

Culture jamming is a form of critical performative pedagogy that has been defined as an “activity aimed at countering the continuous, recombinant barrage of capitalist laden messages fed through the mass media” (Handelman, 1999, p. 399). Culture jamming uses tactics such as creating counter-advertisements (“subvertisements”), place-jamming (wherein public spaces are reclaimed), billboard liberation, activist theater, and other forms of critical public spectacle to counter-act the numbing spectacle created by the mass media (Lasn, 1999). Culture jamming involves turning mass-produced, “normalized,” widely accepted popular culture messages on their head—in the hopes of creating moments of reflection, juxtaposition, or re-examination. While some authors have critiqued culture jamming for as being ineffective as a means of countering the neoliberal politics of the mass media and, in fact, for being complicit in those politics (Haiven, 2007), and while we definitely recognize some of the negative aspects of culture jamming (see Sandlin & Milam, 2008 for a discussion of how culture jamming can act to “shut down” conversations), we also see culture jamming as holding potential to counteract hegemonic culture. Following Ellsworth (2005), Duncombe (2002), and Sandlin and Milam (2008), we believe that the experiences of creating, enacting, and analyzing culture jamming as performance art can bring about new experiences for learners. As a form of critical public pedagogy, culture jamming as a pedagogical force can go beyond what we can create in more traditional classroom or educative settings. We build upon a Gramscian cultural studies framework that defines culture as a performative public space where struggle occurs on a day-to-day basis between people from dominant and subordinate groups (Sandlin, 2007; Sandlin & Milam, 2008). In addition to examining film, television, music, story, or other forms of cultural media, a Gramscian cultural studies perspective theorizes that people, as participants in creating and consuming culture, are
capable and actively engaged in producing and reproducing cultural and political ideas or meanings. Culture jamming rests upon the idea that when hegemonic cultural messages are (re)created and (re)presented to audiences in a fresh or “turned around” way, participants and audience members can experience what Ellsworth (2005) calls “pedagogical hinges,” which are moments where something “clicks” in differently than its normal state or traditionally accepted meaning. Popular examples of culture jamming include Adbusters (which creates “counter” advertisements, hosts “Buy Nothing Day,” and publishes Adbusters magazine), and Reverend Billy, a New York City-based performance artist and anti-consumption activist (Lane, 2002; Sandlin & Callahan, 2009; Sandlin & Milam, 2008). Following Sandlin and Milam (2008), we theorize culture jamming as having an ability to (1) open “transitional” spaces for jammers and audience members through creativity and culture production, (2) create a sense of community, (3) engage with learners corporeally (that is, in an embodied way), and (4) offer entrée into and enact collective political participation (Sandlin & Milam, 2008).

This paper is also located within the broad methodology of critical performance ethnography/pedagogy (Denzin, 2003). Critical performance ethnography/pedagogy resides as a part of a long history of performance ethnography, which uses theater and public performance to highlight cultural politics in order to create in both the performer and spectator a reflective awareness that has the potential to generate positive social change (Alexander, 2005). To accomplish this, action is a crucial element. Critical performance pedagogy includes an “active body doing; the active mind knowing, and an active civic responsibility that collectivizes and promotes democracy and human rights” (Alexander, 2005, p. 426). Denzin (2003) explains that critical performance ethnographies involve researchers enacting stories of oppression and resistance, though which they seek to eventually engage members of a community (the community can be transitory/temporary or more fixed) to become co-performers in a “drama of social resistance and social critique” (p. 196). This paper and accompanying presentation enact this performative pedagogy on two levels: we, the authors/performers will tell the stories of two groups of activists working for positive social change, who in turn tell stories that focus on labor rights abuses; environmental, social, and cultural consequences of over-consumption; and of cultural consumption. These activists emphasize holistic, embodied ways of reflecting and re-defining cultural constructs. Through critical ethnographic performances, voice is given, politics are enacted, and people are moved to action. Denzin (2003) further suggests that these types of performances, called “political theater,” help shape subjects, audiences, and performers. He argues that these “performances interrogate and evaluate specific social, educational, economic, and political processes. This form of praxis can shape a cultural politics of change. It can help to create a progressive and involved citizenship. The performance becomes the vehicle for moving persons, subjects, performers, and audience members into new, critical, political spaces” (Denzin, 2003, p. 198).

An important part of critical performance ethnography/pedagogy involves not simply enacting the performance, but understanding how the performers and audience members emotionally, intellectually, and politically experience their learning (Alexander, 2005). This type of pedagogy incorporates “engaged discourse” (Alexander, 2005, p. 430). Ellsworth (2005) examines what she calls “anomalous places of learning,” that she believes hold great pedagogical force, in that they provoke us to “think or imagine in new ways” (p.5). These provocative sites of learning include public events, parks, and public artistic performances—spaces not always traditionally considered to be pedagogical. We see performative activist work, including the work of culture jamming, as constituting these kinds of “anomalous place[s] of learning.” As a form of critical performance pedagogy, culture jamming has the potential to open new spaces for
audience members and presenter/performers alike, in a loosely scripted, critical community learning experience. Our paper is by necessity transmitted via a written proceeding. The presentation will be situated within the broad methodology of critical performance ethnography/pedagogy (Denzin, 2003). Generally, it uses theater and public performance to highlight cultural politics in order to create in both performer and spectator a reflective awareness that has the potential to generate positive social change (Alexander, 2005). Performance art is a serious, educative challenge to audience members to become more reflectively aware of the subject of the performance (Groh, 1981).

**Culture Jamming in Action: The Guerrilla Girls and the Raging Grannies**

The Guerrilla Girls (Demo, 2000) established themselves as an activist group dedicated to opening and improving access for women in arts communities. Their establishment was at a critical time during the 1960s when art activism and the second wave women’s movement were at a peak. They coincided with other performative women’s groups at the time including WITCH, Women’s International Terrorist Conspiracy from Hell, a group that dressed as crones (witches) to protest women’s subordination. The Guerrilla Girls literally take an “I dare you” approach to activism—they use public information and settings that are accepted as normal, and “perform” or shape those spaces differently in order to create awareness and an impetus for social change. Their name, the Guerrilla Girls, is based upon the political reclamation of the word “girls,” combined with wearing Guerrilla/Gorilla masks that obscure the individual identity of the activist. Surprise and timing are key elements to their work.

Based on an analysis of their website, writings, and videos of their performances, the Guerrilla Girls employ three core strategies as a part of their embodied public pedagogy: *mimicry, re-visioning of history, and strategic juxtaposition* (Demo, 2000). For example, one popular Guerrilla Girls action involves a group of women wearing Guerrilla/Gorilla masks collectively making an entrance and storming public art galleries and showings. After entering the venue, the women plaster the walls and other spaces with billboard-type posters containing hard-hitting statistics about the abysmal situation for women in the art world. Another popular action involves taking existing advertisements or posters for featured exhibits and superimposing feminist statements such as:

*The Advantages of Being a Woman Artist*

- Working without pressure of success
- Seeing your ideas live on in the work of others
- Getting your picture in art magazines by wearing gorilla suits
- Only 5% of the featured artists in this exhibit are women, but 85% of the nude art subjects are women. (Demo, 2000, p. 142)

The Guerrilla Girls also perform popular culture by turning on its head the objectification of women and dressing in hyper-feminine or objectified manners (fishnet stockings, cleavage), and juxtaposing that image with the Guerrilla/Gorilla masks. One media poster distributed by the Guerrilla Girls strategically re-visions Clarence Thomas hearing testimony and his assertion that a person’s sex life is private and not government business. The poster states, “Supreme Court Justice supports the right to privacy for gays and lesbians” (Demo, 2000, p. 147). Their in-your-face approach; juxtaposition of policies and practices, statistics, and facts (“I dare you to explain these facts away”); clever, interruptive use of popular culture; relentless commitment to
anonymity; and use of mimicry, have a place in the adult education world and our understanding of how people come to accept, challenge and change what is in our midst (Roy, 2004).

The Raging Grannies (Kutz-Flamenbaum, 2007; Roy, 2004) were founded in Victoria, British Columbia, in 1986 or 1987 and are activist groups (known as “gaggles”) who use strategies of street or public performance, satire, theater, humor, and song to share their messages for social change and peaceful protest. While they were founded in Canada, groups now exist in the United States, Israel, Japan, Greece, and the United Kingdom. Their mission is to encourage mid-life and older women to express their social justice aims through laughter, performance, and self-examination. While the Raging Grannies are inherently political and focused on issues of environmentalism, war, poverty, and diversity, they are also considered to be non-partisan. They often attend public events—hearings, town meetings, and protests—as invited or as surprise guests, turning public events into sites of cultural examination and learning. One of their core guiding principles is the notion that being a “granny” does not mean having diminished capacity or participation in community life; instead, it means embracing that role and using it to build capacity and positive social change. Part of a traditional granny song, reproduced below, expresses their notion of aging and wisdom:

Here’s to older women
All the things they do
Nurturing, supporting, caring
Their lives through
Wisdom comes with aging
Every grey hair won
Years unfold and still we feel
We’ve just begun. (Narushima, 2001, p. 31)

In contrast, the grannies juxtapose societal stereotypes of women and aging and build them into their social protest performances. For instance, groups of grannies dress in bonnets and long old-fashioned dresses, intentionally cultivating a look of little old-fashioned ladies. They publicly “stage” tea parties with tea, cookies, and genteel “womanly” settings at war protests, encouraging speakers and audience members to partake in sipping tea and to be strategically playful while simultaneously engaging in hard-hitting skits or dialogues regarding globalization and armed conflict/war. Part of their message is that “nice people protest too” and you, too, as community members can engage in discussions of what we accept as normal community life, as well as collectively shape those lives. Overall, the strategies they use include strategic humor, absurdity, creative self-expression, cultivating lifelong learning and participatory orientations, and culture jamming. The culture jamming takes place in the form of public displays of song, skits, and other types of performance to express and encourage expression of dialogue surrounding sensitive political issues. The ethos of the group is to create a supportive atmosphere, where women are able to develop “being brave in public” and challenge cultural understandings of what is and is not acceptable for our communities.

**Discussion**

What does it all mean? Have you ever happened upon, observed, or participated in a performative social change event? How do we integrate our understandings of informal adult learning, embodied, holistic learning, and concepts of social movement framing, strategy, and change?
In a 2003 essay on feminist coalition politics, Shauna Butterwick explored the notion of making space for participatory theatre, and learning to navigate the emotional, logical, and experiential dimensions of coalition building through public speaking, listening, participation, and performance. Her essay tackles difficult issues that are embedded in the subject of culture jamming theories and get to the heart of the notion of creating transitional space. Through re-creating experiences (performing) we renegotiate and redefine what is taken for granted as normal, challenge, and reform the meaning we take from the everyday. Being playful is a way to allow for disagreement and healthy conflict, which is something that often is not thought of as “nice” and is particularly challenging for women’s groups founded on core values such as cooperation, collaboration, mutual support, and solidarity. This type of event happens in public spaces, and there is the added dimension of our cultural understandings of “what happens in public”—from the individual level of public persona to the prescribed behaviors and discussion topics that are considered acceptable in art galleries, museums, libraries, town halls, etc. Changing the script, so to speak, temporarily disrupts our shared understandings, and gives us the opportunity to allow our emotions, bodies, and minds to experience new ideas and form a sense of community. These moments constitute the “pedagogical hinge.” Some adult educators argue that, indeed, learning cannot occur without these disruptions. Jarvis (2006), for example, argues that feeling “off-balance” is necessary for learning to occur. These moments of disjuncture create experiences that start our processes of learning; disjuncture occurs “whenever harmony between us and our world has been broken... when the flow of time is interrupted and we are not able to do what we would do in an unthinking manner—the external world has changed or we have changed internally. Immediately we feel unease, we are no longer in harmony” (p. 180).

Performance is a serious, educative event in addition to being fun. Critical performative pedagogy is more than just an entertainment-based medium (Groh, 1981). It is not fully scripted; it is contextual and allows for the performance to be shaped by both participants and observers. It is aimed at disrupting habits—habits of thought, behavior, and reflection. When audience members are presented with something “normal” from everyday life that is reframed in political terms, they are confronted with an opportunity to step back and also to step forward. Butterwick (2003) writes of her own struggle with realizing how difficult it is to create a space that challenges the self while allowing room for the other—and yet honors solidarity without squashing difference. As critical educators, we must continue to take up this challenge.

References
Problem-Based Learning and Clinical Reasoning: An Action Research Study with Occupational Therapy Students

Karen L. Brady, D.Ed. OTR/L
The University of Scranton
Scranton, PA, 18505, USA

Abstract: Framed from a social constructivist perspective this action research study explored a problem-based learning approach and its relationship to occupational therapy students’ clinical reasoning skills. Rich text provide support for the key qualitative findings. An independent t-test performed on the pre-post test yielded statistically significant improvement at the p< .018.

Introduction

Over the past several years, formal settings of higher education (colleges/universities) have seen a greater number of adult students enrolling in their undergraduate classes. Recent statistics from the U.S. Department of Education show that adult students are the fastest growing educational demographic, and these numbers are steadily increasing. Institutions of higher education have an obligation to provide sufficient preparation to their students so they can perform the role for which they are being educated. It has been documented, however, that students’ reasoning skills are less than adequate. According to the 1998 report from the Boyer Commission on Educating Undergraduates in the Research Universities, students graduating from these institutions are often unable to think logically, learn independently or solve problems by integrating and applying learned information. The Commission’s report is disappointing, and is even more disturbing in light of the fact that many of these students, and especially adult learners, are preparing for critical careers in the human health care professions.

While logical thinking, independent learning and problem solving initiative are critical to numerous professions, these traits are especially necessary in healthcare fields. Logical reasoning and problem solving are vital components of the clinical reasoning process that healthcare professionals at all levels use on a day to day basis. Clinical reasoning in occupational therapy practice refers to the thinking, decision-making and ‘know-how’ that therapist use in the process of collecting client data. It is the process of planning, directing, critically thinking, performing and reflecting on client care (Mattingly & Fleming, 1994)

The extent to which a therapist is able to use clinical reasoning skills effectively determines the quality of care given to a client. It is therefore essential that the professional preparation of occupational therapy students include pedagogies that encourage the development of clinical reasoning skills. One extremely promising pedagogy mentioned by both the World Federation of Occupational Therapy and The Boyer Report, is problem-based learning (PBL). According to Barrows (1986) PBL is simply learning that results from the process of working towards the resolution of a problem. Limited evidence exists in the occupational therapy literature on the effectiveness of PBL and clinical reasoning. It is critical that further research be undertaken to glean greater insight into the relationship between PBL and clinical reasoning skills. Therefore the purpose of this classroom action research study was to explore the practice of problem based learning with occupational therapy students and the relationship of PBL to the students’ clinical reasoning skills.
Methodology

The methodological design of this study involved an action research study. Action research inquiry includes learning about the practice from those involved in it, planning for changes in the practice, implementing those changes, and evaluating the success of the changes. The direct result of action research is the generation of practical knowledge that has the potential of improving a particular system (Carr & Kemmis, 1986; Denzin & Lincoln, 2000). Because this study sought to explore the relationship of PBL on occupational therapy student’s clinical reasoning skills, the course I chose, Activity Analysis II was directly related to the practice of occupational therapy. A convenience sample (consisting of 36 occupational therapy students enrolled in the course) was used. The eight week PBL assignment engaged students in a complex case study with an actual client. The methods of data collection included a pre-post test, participant observation, three informal focus groups, document analysis (field notes, student blackboard postings, student reflection papers and projects), and post semi-structured interviews. The qualitative data was analyzed using a constant comparative method (Denzin & Lincoln, 2000). Furthermore, to enhance the trustworthiness of the findings member checks and peer reviews were conducted.

Findings

The key qualitative findings from this study are presented in four distinct phases: Orientation to PBL; Case Study Introduction; Meeting the Client; and Final Reflections. Phase one and two presented findings that focused primarily on how the students initially experienced and adjusted to the implementation of PBL pedagogy. The third phase presented key findings on the nature of clinical reasoning used by the occupational therapy students as they met and collaborated with the client on treatment interventions to address presenting problems. The findings from the fourth phase provided insight to the students’ feelings and reactions following the completion of the PBL experience, as well as their perception of the relationship between PBL and clinical reasoning. An independent t-test performed on the pre-post test yielded statistically significant differences. The following section offers a brief overview of the four phases and their key findings.

Phase One: Orientation to PBL

In this first phase of the study, students were introduced to the concept of PBL. This was accomplished by having them address a ‘practice’ PBL problem. This practice problem was intentionally constructed to promote student learning about PBL while simultaneously actively engaging them in the PBL process. Three main themes surfaced from this phase: Contrasting Perspectives, PBL as a Relevant Approach for Occupational Therapy Students, and Positive Attitude Towards Group Learning.

Contrasting Perspectives. Students’ initial reactions to PBL were diverse and sharply contrasting. They ranged from ecstatic to indignant. There were also some students who avoided the extremes; offering instead a more tempered response to their first encounter with PBL. The students who wholeheartedly and unreservedly embraced PBL did so for varying reasons. Marcy clearly appreciated that in PBL, the locus of control shifts from the teacher to the student. In her reflection paper she states:

In a PBL environment you and your group are your own teachers. You have to decide what to do with your class time, when to do your work and assign homework to yourselves. When I initially learned this I thought wow that sounds great; you get to do what you want, when you want!

In sharp contrast to the sanguine feelings espoused above, some students had distinctively negative reactions to their PBL orientation. Lola was unhappy with PBL’s requirement to explore and analyze information and to identify her own learning needs:
PBL is very different from the conventional methods of teaching that I am used to, so at first I found it to be very frustrating. I did not want to go and do research on my own outside of class to learn the material, I just wanted to be lectured to. I felt lost because I was not sure if what I was researching was the correct material to be studying. Also, I did not want to work in a group, I just wanted to work alone. I felt like working in groups was a slow and inefficient method, and it was frustrating because there were six different points of view that we had to work with.

As previously stated, several students avoided the emotional extremes discussed above. These student responses showed that, despite some hesitation and uncertainty with PBL, they were open to its possibilities and excited to begin the process. Their reactions could be described as cautiously optimistic.

Relevance of a PBL Approach for Occupational Therapy Students. While students’ reactions to PBL varied, most students identified PBL as a relevant and effective learning approach because the process mirrored skills needed in the real world of practice. Rae observed that PBL emphasizes the ‘construction of knowledge’ over the transmission of knowledge’ and also stresses the application of knowledge to resolve issues:

Although traditional methods of teaching may be less time consuming, PBL guides students in constructing their own knowledge through problem solving and experience. It is more appropriate for us as OT students to learn to apply the knowledge we obtain rather than being able to recite it.

Positive Attitude Towards the Group Learning. Group work is an integral part of the PBL process. However, for students accustomed to learning in a traditional lecture format, group work is atypical. At the end of the PBL orientation period, the vast majority of students voiced a positive attitude towards group learning. Various reasons for this attitude were cited by the students: it more accurately represented the clinical setting, it provided opportunities for hearing different perspectives and it offered a social dimension to the learning experience.

Phase Two: Case Study Introduction

Simulating the process used by occupational therapy practitioners, the Case Study Introduction phase involved the PBL student groups preparing for their client’s initial evaluation. Three main themes surfaced from this phase of the study: Swimming Upstream but with the Shore in Sight, Emerging Interdependence with Group Learning, and Emerging Connections to Clinical Reasoning.

Swimming Upstream but with the Shore in Sight. Students are recognizing and respecting the complex thinking process required in a PBL environment, but quick to point out it isn’t necessarily an easy or comfortable process. Their comments reflect an implicit understanding that the student-driven learning (so highly valued in PBL) goes against the current of the traditional teacher-centered learning (privileged in many educational settings). Students concede that going with the flow (traditional learning) is less frustrating, time consuming and less arduous that PBL which one student characterized as “swimming upstream.” Nevertheless, they are voicing that the rigor involved with PBL is resulting in an infinitely more rewarding learning experience. Students see where they want to be, and even though they are caught up in the struggle of swimming upstream, they don’t feel as if they are drowning. For example, Ann provides a salient example of this when she shares “It’s a little frustrating researching topics and trying to find answers to questions I don’t even know, yet when I feel like I’m on the right track I get so much more excited because I feel like I got to that point on my own.”

Emerging Interdependence within Learning Groups. There is a growing sense of interdependence of learning within groups. Students are (with increased frequency) referring to
themselves as a team. This is seen in their excitement about their fellow group members and in the development of friendships, sharing different perspectives, having fun with each other and thinking of PBL as a game. For example, one group nicknamed themselves Team Casey (a fictitious name they gave to their [as yet] unknown client). Tiffany shares:

Hi girls! I just wanted to say great job today. I think we are really working well together and coming up with some very interesting ideas about ‘Casey’. I am enjoying brainstorming with all of you. I think some of our ideas were a little out there, but overall we made good progress. We have already seen other trains of thoughts and our research helped us understand possible connections between the 3 diagnoses. Learning more about the lobes of the brain and hypertension will help us. Go Team Casey!

Emerging Connections to Clinical Reasoning. Students are beginning to think in ways that make for a more effective clinical practice. Some students explicitly stated how they used clinical reasoning to design and evaluate their initial assessments. Casey indicated that the evaluation experience will test their clinical reasoning. She wrote, “I think we will be ok if we are good at thinking on our feet.”

Phase Three: Meeting the Client

Meeting the client phase required the PBL student groups to conduct an evaluation, design and implement meaningful treatment interventions, document services provided, and identify and evaluate outcomes. The findings related to this phase are thematically categorized as: Authentic Involvement in the OT Process, Practicing Technical Skills, and Engaging in Multiple Aspects of Clinical Reasoning.

Authentic Involvement in the OT Process. The authentic involvement in the OT process presented students with the uncertainty, ambiguity and conflicting perspectives that comprise client treatment. Student postings indicated the authentic involvement allowed them to make connections with prior learning, deepen their knowledge base, and provided a context for them to practice their skills. Shannon indicated that the real-life client experience brought the concept of clinical reasoning from “text to life.” She writes. “Reading about clinical reasoning I learned how to define the types: basic memorization. It did not enlighten me as to how the types of reasoning are actually applied and come to life.”

Practicing Technical Skills. Occupational Therapist must be able to think critically, analyze and synthesize information, and design creative and meaningful treatment activities for their client. However, it is also critical that they are technically competent when carrying out specific assessments and treatment interventions. Students indicated that this PBL assignment provided them with opportunities to address their interviewing skills, documentation skills, and their technology skills.

Opportunity to Engage in Clinical Reasoning at Multiple Levels. Students were engaged in the process of interpreting the data they had collected during their evaluation with their client and attempting to use it to make decisions about treatment; in effect they were clinically reasoning. It was evident from their postings and intervention papers that as they moved through the OT process, they employed various types of clinical reasoning including procedural, interactive, pragmatic, narrative, and ethical (Fleming, 1991, 1994b, Mattingly, 1994b, Rogers, 1983, Schell & Cervero, 1993). These various types of reasoning were identified under the following subcategories: Building on Formal Knowledge, Connecting to the Client through Interactive Reasoning, Constructing a Client Story through Narrative Reasoning, and Connecting Client to Context. The various aspects of clinical reasoning discussed in these subcategories rarely occur in a linear fashion. Rather, the students continuously interacted with and questioned
their evaluation and treatment data and that which they had accumulated from prior learning in
their efforts to bring meaning to their client’s situation.

Phase Four: Final Reflections
The three main themes that surfaced from this final phase of the study were: Growing Pains,
Greater Self-Efficacy, and The Relationship of PBL to Clinical Reasoning. Additionally, the
findings from the modified SACRR pre-post test are presented here.

Growing Pains. Growing Pains alludes to a natural and healthy process (albeit painful at
times) wherein students were able to see that the stress, confusion, frustration, and increased
responsibility associated with their PBL experience contributed positively to their maturing
process. For example, Ann writes, “PBL forced us to raise our eyes above our limited horizon and
stretch and grow by constructing new knowledge – it was both rigorous and rewarding.”

Greater Self-Efficacy. Self-efficacy is an individual’s level of confidence and self-
judgment regarding ability to organize and implement actions needed to perform effectively
(Kielhofner, 2005). Many of the students indicated their PBL experienced contributed to an
increased level of professional competence and identity. “PBL provided us with a real world
problem that motivated us to use our hands, minds and emotions to learn. I now have a much
stronger identity as an OT.”

The Relationship of PBL to Clinical Reasoning. The overwhelming majority of students
indicated they saw a relationship between PBL and clinical reasoning. For example, one student
stated:

PBL gave me new insight in how to, in simple words, think…Since we did not have the
answers given to us directly, it was vital to learn how to carry out our activity and the
process following the intervention on our own.

Another student states the connection between PBL and clinical reasoning this way:
The self-directed learning in PBL brings you into contact with an enormous amount of
information. You learn to filter information, separating the relevant from the irrelevant.
Clinical reasoning requires the therapist to view the client holistically. In coming to
understand our client, we gathered a lot of information. We then had to think about the
information and decipher what was most relevant given her current situation.

SACRR Results. Data from The Self-Assessment of Clinical Reflection and Reasoning
(SACRR) developed by Royeen et al (2001) were analyzed using an independent t-test.
Of the 36 study participants, 33 (91.6%) responded to the pre-test, and 31 (88.5% )
responded to the post-test. The results showed a statistically significant improvement at
the p < .018. Cronbach's alpha was .762 for the pre-test and .846 for the post-test, which
suggest that even with the slight modifications made to the instrument for this study; the
SACRR has high internal consistency.

Discussion and Implications
The findings of this study focused on the students experience with problem based learning and its
relationship to clinical reasoning. Learning in a PBL environment was captured metaphorically
by one student as “swimming upstream but with the shore in sight.” As implied by this metaphor,
students immediately recognized that learning in a PBL environment presented challenges they
had not previously experienced in more traditional classroom settings. This necessitated that
students re-conceptualize their approach to learning. Doing so required them to not only adjust
their own learning style, but also to redefine their roles in the learning process. While students
described the process of adjusting to PBL as challenging, students also voiced positive attitudes
and feelings towards some characteristics of PBL; these characteristics reinforced the assumption
that PBL though challenging, was do-able! Relevant findings related to PBL included how students reacted to PBL, the importance of collaboration in PBL, how the facilitator reacted to the use of PBL within her classroom, and the significance of the relationship between the students and the facilitator.

Overwhelmingly, participants in this study indicated that they gained a deeper understanding of clinical reasoning and its application to the occupational therapy process. Relevant findings related to clinical reasoning emphasized that the students thinking processes exceeded what typically is called ‘textbook’ learning. Using the metaphor ‘panning for gold’, participants discussed how clinical reasoning was a process; it included trial and error, shifting through information and determining relevance and priority. Quantitative data from The Self-Assessment of Clinical Reflection and Reasoning Pre-and Post test (were analyzed using an independent t-test. Of the 36 study participants, 33 (91.6%) responded to the pretest, and 31 (88.5%) responded to the posttest. The results showed a statistically significant improvement at the p < .018. Cronbach’s alpha was .762 for the pretest and .846 for the posttest.

Findings relevant to the relationship between PBL and clinical reasoning showed that students found PBL to be an ideal setting to foster their clinical reasoning skills. Students in this study recognize that both PBL and clinical reasoning require them to use some of the same thinking processes. Additionally, students readily identified that both PBL and clinical reasoning are collaborative processes.

The findings of this study are quite significant, such that it demonstrates both a quantitative and qualitative link between PBL and clinical reasoning. Additionally, the use of PBL may, in fact be highly suited to the diverse needs of an adult population. While some adult students may still bring to the classroom their view of the teacher as the authority figure; it can be argued that most students will bring to bear their relevant experiences within a wide range of work environments. In workplaces today, employees at all levels are increasingly expected to be problem solvers (despite sometimes imperfect information). In short, their work experiences often embody PBL at all levels.

**Partial Reference List**


White Lies: A Critical Race Study of Power and Privilege

Patricia J. Brainard
National Louis University, USA

Abstract: This is a phenomenological study, grounded in Critical Race Theory, of White privilege as experienced through the stories of White people who have struggled to become more racially aware and socially active in dismantling racism and racial privilege.

Introduction

I am teaching a class of young moms who want an alternative high school credential. We have a new student in class and we go around the room to introduce ourselves. We have four White women, one Latina, and one Native American. After one White woman introduces herself, the new student turns to her friend in class and says, “I thought she would have an Indian name like Pocahontas or something.” Silence falls on the class and the students look at me. I know that I must address this while maintaining everyone’s dignity. Heaviness encompasses my heart as I try to navigate this racialized incident. I wish there were a manual that I could turn to that would direct me and tell me explicitly, “When faced with this racialized incident in class, White teacher, do this.” I have had no White role models to fill me with the words and wisdom to address a racialized comment or microaggression (Solorzano, Ceja, & Yosso, 2000). I yearn for a play-by-play book.

Adult education is a space in which we immerse the entirety of ourselves – our past and present experiences, feelings, attitudes, and behaviors. Kincheloe and McLaren (2005) state that “…no one is ever completely emancipated from the sociopolitical context that has produced him or her” (p. 308). It seems, then, that the dynamics and tensions of racism and White privilege present in society are present in our adult learning spaces. These are contested ground as truth, reality, ideas, and knowledge are expressed and interpreted by people with multiple cultures and heritages or “sociopolitical contexts.”

White people have created divisions in our country using the constructs of race since its inception. We, White people, appear to view racism as a problem of not being White, seem to deny responsibility for the status of race relations, and seldom admit or acknowledge the privilege associated with Whiteness. The issue of racism is further complicated because of the benefit inherent to the White majority. We, White people, have a pivotal role we have not yet fulfilled in the deconstruction of racism. “White privilege thus demands the serious attention of every race scholar” (Delgado, 2006, p. 1271).

The purpose of this study was to expand the body of research and literature that explores, explains, and inspires social action that alters the dynamics of racial oppression. More importantly, however, I think its goal was to advocate that White adult educators find additional ways in which to address topics of White privilege and racism explicitly in adult education settings. To identify areas within a field of study that need attention is a challenge. It is looking outside of conventional lenses and shifting a paradigm of thought to search for what might not be there. Delgado (2006) notes that recent race scholarship, “…devote[s] scant attention to two issues that ought to be on the agenda of every serious treatment of race: white privilege and the
place of nonblack groups such as Latinos and Asian Americans in the civil-rights equation” (p. 1271). This study was devoted to the examination of White privilege from within the White community and exploration of what implications the phenomenon of this privilege has for adult education.

My study focused on the lived experiences of White people as they became aware of their privilege and acted in ways to deconstruct or dismantle it. Specifically, my research questions were:

1. How do White people experience being a member of the racially privileged?
2. What are the essential characteristics or elements of an experience that cause a change in consciousness about White privilege?
3. In what ways or to what degree does a change in consciousness regarding White privilege serve as a catalyst to action?

The significance of this research involves the potential to inform and shape pedagogical practices of adult educators. The examination of the phenomenon of White privilege for purposes of describing how White people become conscious of their racial privilege has not been fully explored. The present study will contribute in filling that gap in research. Feagin and O’Brien (2003) support the existence of this gap in research as they write specifically about White men, “…the views, perspectives, and proclivities of this group [White men] have received relatively little detailed attention in research literature or in popular magazines and periodicals” (p. 1).

**Theoretical Framework**

No research can be free of the experiences and personal history, the *positionality*, of the investigator. The best one can do is to frame the study in such a way that both the value and limitations of one’s experiences are acknowledged and expressed. As I consider my own racial privilege and the privilege of White people in general, I tend to examine social interactions through a specific perspective. That orientation is best described through the principles of Critical Race Theory, which put “race at the center of critical analysis” (Roithmayr, 1999, p. 1). Racism is so entrenched within our society that it is unnoticeable to White people. Therefore, it is useful to question White people who have addressed this obliviousness within themselves and who pay attention to race to find out why and how they do this.

Critical Race Theory grew out of a movement known as Critical Legal Studies. Civil rights cases flourished after the Civil Rights Movement as the country began to challenge school integration, housing and other forms of discrimination. “New approaches and theories were needed to deal with the color blind, subtle, or institutional forms of racism that were developing and an American public that seemed increasingly tired of hearing about race” (Delgado, 2003, p. 125). These new Critical Legal Studies scholars began to define or construct those new approaches.

By the mid-seventies, “The norms of racial integration had become so powerful that they were taken to define the difference between being enlightened and being backward” (Crenshaw, Gotanda, Peller, & Thomas, 1995, p. 2). Enlightenment or innovation and perceived ignorance regarding the best course of action for equal education were powerful divisions in separating civil rights legal strategists. Bell (1976) explored, or perhaps exposed, two significant contradictions in civil rights litigation regarding *Brown v Board of Education* Supreme Court decision and the due haste with which states were to comply.

Bell (1976) questioned that integration served the best interests of children of Color. At the time, this was perceived as pro-segregationist, or as Crenshaw, et al., (1995) noted, a backward, non-enlightened position. “…[It] was thus dramatic that he would take on the liberal
ideology of the mainstream civil rights movement by criticizing the effect of the enforcement of *Brown* on the black community” (p. 2). In his own words, Bell argues, “Now that traditional racial balance remedies are becoming increasingly difficult to achieve or maintain, there is tardy concern that racial balance may not be the relief actually desired by the victims of segregated schools” (pp. 471-472). He questioned whether a lawyer in the cases of desegregation could serve the interest of the individuals while at the same time serving the group represented in the class action. He gave personal examples of cases he worked on where the civil rights organizations funding the suit, most notably the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, would not fund a suit that did not involve integration.

In most instances of injustice, the general public is accustomed to identifying victim(s) and perpetrator(s). We punish the perpetrator(s) and assign retribution for the victim(s). As our justice system has evolved we have expanded our understanding to recognize that an entity, such as a corporation, can be a perpetrator to an entity, such as a community. Freeman (1978) explored the dichotomy of victim and perpetrator and the impact these had on *Brown v Board of Education* Supreme Court decision. Within these two perspectives, Freeman is distinguishing between a systemic stance of victim and perpetrator and an individual one. If we view discrimination as single, individual acts, then it allows us to escape a collective or a societal responsibility. We identify a single victim and we search out the perpetrator(s) and punish them. The risk of this view, Freeman writes, is that “the perpetrator perspective presupposes a world composed of atomistic individuals whose actions are outside of and apart from the social fabric and without historical continuity” (p. 1054). This view also serves the White majority in that it reinforces an individual racist ideology, rather than a systemic definition of racism.

Critical Race Theory challenges three of our fundamental beliefs about racial injustice. The first “…is that ‘blindness’ to race will eliminate racism” (Valdes, Culp, & Harris, 2002, p. 1). These authors argue that this blindness generates from the individualism many scholars have that leads to resisting group identity. The second challenge is that racism resides in our social systems rather than in individuals, although certainly individuals can and are racist, Critical Race Theory challenges that it resides only in individuals. Additionally, it challenges the premise that “one can fight racism without paying attention to sexism, homophobia, economic exploitation, and other forms of oppression or injustice.” In other words, we are more than just our racial identities.

**Research Design**

This was a qualitative inquiry and was exploratory and descriptive in nature. It built on the context and setting of the participants’ lived feelings, actions, and beliefs in an attempt to search for a deeper meaning of the phenomenon of White privilege and its relationship to racism. As a phenomenological study of White privilege, I examined the elements that formed that experience with participants in the United States. Moustakas (1994) describes that phenomenology “involves a return to experience in order to obtain comprehensive descriptions that provide the basis for a reflective structural analysis that portrays the essences of the experience” and “the aim is to determine what an experience means for the persons who have had the experience and are able to provide a comprehensive description of it” (p. 13). Just as it is important that people of Color be the authority on their own experience of oppression, White people can be one authority on perpetuating the circumstances, systems, and socio-political structures that continue the oppression that results in the privileging of White people.

I interviewed seven White people for this study. Purposive sampling targeted those White people who acknowledged their racial privilege and were actively working to dismantle or diminish this phenomenon. Participants ranged in age from 38 to 81; two were males and five
were females; four lived in the Northeast and three in the Midwest; and all were college educated, had graduate degrees, and were middle to upper class.

**Discussion of the Findings**

There are seven significant findings in this study. These are in respect to participants’ growth and development of racial awareness, White privilege, and potential for social action.

*Black/White Binary*

Participants talked about their White identity and understanding of privilege by beginning with stories of their experiences with Black people. There are historical and social roots for this phenomenon. Much of our K-12 education history content focused on White European contributions to the formation and stability of our country. In contrast, when other cultures or races were studied the focus was primarily on African Americans, and on their suffering as opposed to contributions; they were portrayed as victims, not actors. In addition to describing experiences with Black people, participants spoke of incidents when they noticed they were White by noticing when others around them were *not* White.

*Limited Contact*

Participants in the study grew up in predominantly White settings with little contact with people of Color. Their critical incidents involved directly or indirectly experiences with people of Color. They did not grow in their understanding of racial privilege through theoretical applications or abstractions. They learned primarily, sometimes painfully, when they were in direct contact with people of Color. In many cases, it was a person of Color who taught them. This mentorship was critical to their understanding. I’m not suggesting it is the responsibility of people of Color to teach White people about racism, but participants attributed much of their learning to their level of engagement and deep relationships they had with a few people of Color.

*Convergence of Critical Incident Elements*

Qualitative researchers engage in study to learn or discover, generally through inductive methods, rather than confirm what they already know or suspect, through deductive methods. Although I entered into the research with the qualitative ideal, I did imagine that I would find separate elements of racialized experiences that could be combined to magically bestow on White people a level of consciousness needed to impede or eradicate racism. Of course I found no magical or miraculous solution. I did find common elements within participants’ stories that contributed to and influenced their growth and development in their understanding of racial privilege. More importantly and perhaps surprisingly, I found that these elements did not exist in isolation. Instead, there seemed to be a convergence of these elements that, when combined, fostered growth. These elements were: 1) a critical incident that seemed transformative in nature and challenged the participants previous assumptions; 2) each involved a mentor-type relationship with a person of Color; 3) participants experienced some kind of moral or ethical anguish or regret; and 4) each participant had a relational nature and deep commitment to the growth of themselves and others.

*Deep Reflection*

These participants were deep thinkers and observers. They reflected not only on their own behavior, but on the impact their behavior had on others around them. This was not accidental; they deliberately engaged in a reflective routine. Each created a different kind of
process but a deliberate and learned routine was the common factor. One participant seemed to have the most developed process and described it as “going to the mirror.” When a situation happened in which she felt inadequate to respond, she would go to a mirror and practice responses until she found one she could live with and then practiced it over and over until it was second nature to her. All the other participants share, in some degree, the reflective process. The reflection was repetitive, explicit, involved dialogue with themselves or someone else. These emanated from a deep, inner place, and ended with a change in future behavior. Reflection was not limited to racial privilege and in fact started as they evaluated their own behavior in other aspects of their lives. It was applied consciously to the critical racialized incidents they experienced. This reflection is noteworthy because of its deliberate and pervasive nature.

**Deep Empathy**

As participants reflected about the critical racialized experiences they had, they began to imagine what it would be like to not be White. The act of thinking and placing themselves in a person of Color’s circumstances was the way in which they learned empathy. It was in imagining the struggle of another person that they began to appreciate how circumstances shape other realities. It was in feeling discomfort, pain, and/or sadness that they began to appreciate how circumstances build upon each other to create resentment and pain that can’t be explained by a single experience. It was in questioning the normalcy of their own experiences that they began to believe that multiple realities can co-exist, and to believe that no reality is less valuable than another. Participants developed empathy with their hearts, not their minds.

**Growth is Ongoing**

Awareness and action built upon each other and grew over time for these participants. Although the stories did not unfold in a linear fashion, patterns that emerged for participants aligned with my own experiences in that I have gone back and forth between times of great awareness and social action to naïveté and obliviousness. As participants became aware of their own racism and privilege, they could not go back to not knowing. This pattern of growth seemed erratic, unpredictable, and inconsistent; this wasn’t a smooth process. The nature of this growth may have been because of the reflection and support from people of Color the participant received after the critical incident. Although some participants were able to reflect on their behavior when they were involved in the critical incident, most reflection took place afterwards. Sometimes it was years after. The real significance here is that the growth was fluid and always in a more enlightened or evolved direction.

**Good, Good, Good Intentions of White people**

Does intention matter? In the long run, does my intent to do no harm somehow make up for the harm I do? Participants demonstrated moral distress in some of their stories. In fact some stories continued to be emotional as they retold them. Some felt shame about past actions or inactions and some felt great regret and a desire to go back and make things right. One participant spoke about how she believes that most people want to do the right thing and the implication was that the right thing was not to be racist. Most White people don’t want to be labeled racist and the participants in this study were no exception. Most of the participants acknowledged that this was a difficult subject to talk about and those that had not met me before said that it was particularly difficult to tell some of their stories to a stranger.
Implications for Adult Education

This research has implications for adult educators who teach towards anti-racism and social justice. Critical Race Theorists (Delgado & Stefancic, 2001) suggest that we can no longer wait for White people to learn about racial privilege through the natural course of their lives; we must do more. Additionally, White people, with an interest in dismantling or exploring White privilege have few models to draw upon when navigating racialized experiences. By explicitly constructing instructional activities that build in the opportunities for dialogue and relationships, building awareness and experience, developing empathy, and practicing reflection related to race for White adult learners, we can accelerate the dismantling of racism. Through this explicit and directed instruction, White adult learners can learn techniques necessary to take action to change their personal social interactions and learn how to influence and model this for others. As White adult educators, we can be the role models and assist in the construction of the “play-by-play book.”

References

Christian Education and Constructivism: Learning through the Adult Sunday School Class

Trammel Bristol
E. Paulette Isaac, University of Missouri – St. Louis

Abstract: Religious education has been the foundation of the Christian church. Sunday school has been an integral part of the teachings in the Christian church. However, little research exists, which examines adults’ learning in Sunday school classes. In this paper, we use the constructivist learning theory as a framework to examine learning experiences of adults in Sunday school.

Introduction

Christian education can encompass a variety of topics. Commonly, Sunday school and Bible study serve as the foundation for Christian education. Although research exists on Christian and religious education, our review of the literature found no studies which explored Sunday school learning from the context of constructivism. The purpose of this study was to examine African Americans’ learning experiences in an adult Sunday school class.

Christian Education and Sunday School

Historically, Christian education has been a source of religious development in the Christian church. Christian churches are often affiliated with a larger religious body—a denomination. Elias (1993) reported, “Religious bodies are organizations with goals and purposes of providing personal growth, interpersonal support and fellowship, and societal improvement and change (p. 177).” Academically, the term Christian education was a “label for writing and speaking about religious education for those who proposed a more theologically oriented religious education” (Elias, 2002, p. 172). As for the purpose of Christian education, White (2004) states it “is to make disciples or learners of all ages” (p. 4). She further explains, from an African American perspective, the purpose is to “correct history” and empower people and help them flourish by providing “honest dialogue and relevant teaching” (p. 4). Undoubtedly, Christian education has expanded from its early beginnings. For African Americans, Christian education has not only been useful for spiritual growth, but as a means to address societal injustices.

As part of their mission to assist followers of Jesus Christ in their development, Christian churches provide some form of religious education. Commonly, educational programming in the church falls under the auspices of a Christian education department. Often a Director of Religious/Christian Education oversees the entire educational programming in the church, or in some instances, an entire denomination. The Christian Methodist Episcopal Church (n.d.), an African American denomination, has a department of Christian Education whose primary goal is to “make disciples through events that form and transform” (para. 1). The Congress of Christian Education of the National Baptist Convention USA (2009), another African American denomination, edifies its “students with Biblical truths, creative ideas, and practical solutions to the dilemmas that confront our world” (para. 1).

The extent of educational programming varies from church to church. There are several factors that impact adult education in the church. Within the African American church, they include the church’s history and tradition, internal and external influences, church leader, and
resources (Isaac, 2002). By nature, the church is a conservator of existing values (Lincoln, 1999). Thus, the values that a church places on its religious beliefs can deter a church from providing “secular” education (i.e., financial management). Societal issues confronting members or a community, such as AIDS, may result in a church providing health education. Lincoln and Mamiya (1990) found that better-educated pastors had the most innovative and creative ministries and were more resourceful. A church’s resources can determine the number and type of learning opportunities available to members and the community. Isaac (1999) examined three African American Baptist churches in Atlanta, Georgia, whose membership ranged from 1,200 to over 9,000. She found that combined they offered almost 300 courses, workshops, and seminars in one calendar year. Interestingly, all three pastors were seminary trained and two of them held terminal degrees. Stark contrasts exist among churches’ educational programming. However, one common educational thread is Sunday school.

Most, if not all, Christian churches offer some form of Sunday school. Sunday schools were first organized in London in 1780 (Watkins, 1978) and began as a way to educate children and the poor and provide religious and moral instruction. According to Palmer (1880), the early Sunday school had several purposes including serving as a “medium for the spread of the biblical instruction” (p. 45), and bringing “the clergy and laity together,” and creating an interest in the “latter in church work” (p. 48). It was believed that knowledge of the Bible, would teach people “the duty required of them as social, rational and accountable beings” (The Origin, n.d., para. 7). Sunday schools became the most generally accepted means for teaching Christian principles to the young (Watkins). Today, of course, both children and adults participate in Sunday school. Sunday school is a place where people can network and meet new friends, gain a sense of belonging, and grow in their spiritual journey.

**Adult Learning and Constructivism**

According to Merriam, Caffarella, and Baumgartner (2006), adult education is comprised of various types of educational activities which enrich the lives of its learners. These activities can include formal as well as informal learning programs (Kim, Hagedorn, Williamson & Chapman, 2004). The type of learning one chooses to pursue depends on his or her own needs and/or motivations. For instance, some people participate in adult education for the sake of learning. On the other hand, an employer can require its employees to take a management training program prior to advancing into management. Ironically, work-related learning has become more significant due to the numerous changes in technology and the marketplace (Merriam & Clark, 2006). Therefore, “adult education both reflects and responds to the forces prevalent in the sociocultural context” (Merriam & Caffarella, 1999, p. 23).

While there are numerous theories which explain how adults learn, for purposes of this discussion, we explore learning from the context of constructivism. Constructivism, according to Taylor (2006), has developed from the work of Kelly (1955), Piaget (1954), and Vygotsky (1978). The framework asserts that learners construct meaning or knowledge based on their interaction with and reaction to life’s experiences (Taylor, 2006). As a result, knowledge is something that is constructed based on one’s prior experiences and the new learning becomes filtered through his/her perceptions. In the teacher-student exchange, the instructor and student are encouraged to participate in “an active dialog (i.e., socratic learning)” (Kearsley, 2009, para 2). Furthermore, the “instructor is to translate information to be learned into a format appropriate to the learner's current state of understanding.” In addition, curriculum “should be organized in a spiral manner” so students “continually build upon what they have already learned” (para. 2). In
order to best understand the constructivist framework, we utilize Hein’s (1991) interpretation of the constructivist learning theory; below, we outline several guiding principles.

First, learning is an active process and requires the learner to use sensory input to construct meaning. Second, learning is a social activity and is associated with our connection with others (especially the individuals with whom we interact). Learning “in connection with others [is] good practice” (Merriam & Clark, 2006, p. 42). The dialogue that transpires in a community of learners facilitates learning. Learning in connection with others can be profound and enable learners to engage in rational discourse and gain confidence in their belief system (Merriam & Clark).

Third, learning is not instantaneous and requires a learner to reflect upon the material. This reflection occurs through exposure and meditation upon the material. According to Merriam and Clark (2006) reflection is the process we use to make sense of the world in which we experience life. “Reflection is fundamental to learning—without it we would simply be bombarded by random experiences and unable to make sense of any of them” (p. 39). Reflection then is a cognitive process which requires individuals to examine their beliefs and responses and integrate the new learning or understanding into their knowledge or experience.

Fourth, the learner must be motivated to learn and must be self-directed. Self-directed learning (SDL) has been noted as a cornerstone of adult education; Caffarella (as cited in Taylor, 2006) stated that SDL is “critical to survival and prosperity in a world of continuous personal, community, and societal changes” (p. 197). SDL therefore, is a process where learners assume primary responsibility for how they learn the material and incorporate it into their knowledge base. Taylor suggested that SDL includes learning pursuits which can be isolated or independent such as investigating a historical event. SDL can also include programmed instruction or correspondence classes with “a more formal approach, given that learning objectives and perhaps a structured learning plan would have been provided (p. 197). Nevertheless, learners control what they learn, when they learn, and how they learn. Lastly, learning occurs in context; learners incorporate and relate material to what they know and what they have previously learned.

Methodology and Findings
The purpose of this research was to examine adults’ learning experiences. More specifically, we wanted to explore adults’ learning through Sunday school. Using convenience sampling, one-on-one interviews were conducted with two men and two women regarding their learning experience in their respective Sunday school class. The participants where from three different Sunday school classes at two predominantly African American churches. Participants ranged in age from 40 to 70. Three of the study participants are married. One has a bachelor’s degree and two have some college. Two are retired and another works full time. Each of the participants’ Sunday school classes used a book that consists of weekly lessons. A different topic is examined each week.

Both churches were located within large metropolitan areas. Linconia Tabernacle Christian Center was established in 1936 to serve a mainly suburban community of African American professionals. Today there are approximately 250 members and several Sunday school classes are held each week. The pastor, Bishop White, holds a master’s degree. Prior to becoming a full-time pastor he worked in social services. Unlike Linconia, New Mt. Zion Missionary Baptist Church has a small congregation of about 40 people. It was established in 1890 and its current building at one time served as the only school in which African Americans in the city could attend. Mt. Zion only has one Sunday school class which is attended by
approximately 15 people. Rev. Robinson has been pastor of the church for approximately five years and has a Ph.D. He served as a department chairperson at a university.

Using thematic analysis, several themes emerged which explained adults’ learning; however, due to space limitations we will only discuss two of them—social interaction and self-direction. The themes are reflective of “individual and connected learning” (see Figure 1) among the participants. In addition, learning is cyclical. Self-direction lends itself to social interaction and vice versa. While in Sunday school, they learn from the instructor and other class members. However, they also engage in individual learning, self-directed learning, in preparation for class. Each participant reported that their instructor used a combination of instructional techniques including discussion and lecture.

![Figure 1 Sunday School Learning](image)

**Social Interaction**

All four participants discussed the significance of classroom discussion to enhance their knowledge of the Sunday school lesson. Based on the books used in the three Sunday school classes, a premise is to have the learner read the material on his or her own and complete the related questions. Each participant reportedly, came prepared to discuss the material and dialogue with the instructor and other learners in their classroom. Annie stated, “I favor discussion because you get more input that way.” John, who has been attending Sunday school for 20 years, indicated his instructor “leaves the door open for you to come in to ask various questions that . . . you feel relates to you at that set time.”

**Self-direction**

Participants indicated they reflected on the upcoming Sunday school lesson throughout the week. They used their Sunday school book to guide them in their reflection upon the material. For example, Mary, an unemployed medical records clerk, indicated that she read the recommended daily scripture and sometimes she read the lesson as well. John, who attends the same class as Mary, also indicated he reads and reflects on the daily scripture. Like Mary and John, David, a full-time employee, takes time daily to reflect upon the Sunday school material, but reviews it more thoroughly on Saturday.

**Discussion and Conclusion**

Christian education in the church allows participants to grow in their spiritual walk. In the African American church, it can also serve to correct history. As a component of Christian education, Sunday school is by one of many vehicles for transferring Christian principles (Watkins, 1978). The two churches in the study epitomize how diverse Christian education programming can be in a church. One church only offered one Sunday school class, while the other provided several classes.
In many instances, adults who participate in Sunday school have some knowledge of the Bible and Christian beliefs. Such was the case of the participants in the current study. However, most attend Sunday school to deepen their biblical comprehension and grow in their Christian walk. According to Hein (1991) new knowledge cannot be assimilated “without having some structure developed from previous knowledge to build on” (para 16). This was manifested by John who stated, “Sunday school opens the Bible a lot more to me; it allows me to understand it a little bit more.” John has been attending Sunday school for over 20 years, so there is the inherent assumption that he has some knowledge of the Bible. The findings support the notion that learning through a Sunday school class is a social activity and is associated with our connection with others. Discussion, as an instructional technique, “encourages active, participatory learning” (Brookfield, 2004, p. 212). Although the participants were self-directed during the week, on Sunday they enhanced their knowledge because of their interaction with others in class. Clearly, these participants valued Sunday school as a means to strengthen their Christian faith; they appeared to be motivated to learn in order to become more knowledgeable of the bible. Learning was not instantaneous, as the learners reflected upon the material throughout the week. This reflection occurs through continued exposure and meditation upon the material. According to Hein (1991), their reflection makes them active learners. The study results also demonstrate that learning occurs in context. The participants incorporated and related the Sunday school material to their Christian beliefs. Thus, their participation in the class not only encouraged them to reflect upon the material, but also build upon their previous knowledge.

This research is significant for researchers and practitioners. There is a lack of adult education research that has been conducted within the African American church. And, as Isaac (2005) points out, adult educators often overlook the impact that the African American church has on adult learning and adult education in general. The research findings broaden our knowledge relative to informal learning contexts. The findings highlight the significance of constructivist learning for these adult learners. Social interaction and self-direction was paramount for these learners to be able to incorporate the material in their daily lives. Discussion is an important instructional technique. For the participants in this study, it enabled them to further enhance their biblical knowledge. Studies on the use of discussion and dialogue in the Sunday school class can broaden our knowledge on instructional techniques. Future studies could examine the application of other learning theories in Sunday school and other Christian education classes. Additionally, the learners valued an instructor who was well-prepared and could answer their lingering questions. Therefore, adult educators need to consider their role in the learning process as facilitators and how they can enhance and promote adults’ learning.

References
September 12, 2008, from
http://www.exploratorium.edu/ifi/resources/constructivistlearning.html


In the “Heart of Indian Country”: The Lived Experience of Native American Adult Learners at a Predominantly White University

Tom Buckmiller
Penn State University, USA

Abstract: Native Americans are the least likely to enroll and persist to graduation at the university. Further, the confluence of being a Native American and being an adult learner is a phenomenon that needs further examination. This qualitative research studies the lived experiences of three Native American adult learners at a predominantly white midwestern university.

Introduction

The university has not typically been a site conducive to the needs of Native American students, as it has been oriented toward the problematic goal of assimilation (Brayboy, 2006). Pavel (1999a) identifies Native Americans as the least likely to enroll in public four-year institutions and the least likely to persist to graduation in those institutions. Tierney (1992) says that of the Natives who do find their way to the university, an alarming 85% will not finish. A conscious, sustained, and informed effort will hopefully lead to an education that respects Native American students for who they are, that is relevant to their worldview, that offers reciprocity in their relationship with others, and that helps them exercise responsibility over their own lives (Kirkness & Barnhardt, 1991).

Previous Research

Beaulieu (2000) says that Indian students, in comparison to all others, are still the most disproportionately affected by poverty, low educational attainment, and limited access to educational opportunities (as cited in Grande, 2004). They exhibit the highest dropout rates, the lowest academic performance rates, and the lowest college admission and retention rates in the nation (American Council on Education, 2002 as cited in Grande, 2004, p. 5).

While there exists a modest yet insightful amount of research detailing the challenges that traditional aged Native American students face in college, it should be noted that Native American adults have not yet received the research attention that other minority groups, such as African Americans, have (Imel, 2001). For a further discussion on previous research see (Buckmiller, 2008).

Theoretical Framework

Lowe (2005) says “Qualitative research takes time, but already too much time has gone by without an adequate volume of research on the experiences of Native American students. Native students need to be asked about their experiences and given the opportunity to tell their story” (p. 39). Therefore, the theory that guided this inquiry came primarily from what is known as Red pedagogy. Red pedagogy has roots in critical theory and critical pedagogy but has advanced to encompass various Indigenous principles. Linda Tuhiwai Smith (2005), Devon Abbott Mihesuah & Angela Cavender Wilson (2004), and Sandy Grande’s Red pedagogy (2004) all contributed to a framework that challenges educators of Native Americans to reflect and recognize the
controversial intersection of traditional Native knowledge systems with mainstream Western knowledge systems (Begaye, 2004).

Red pedagogy seeks to enable education and pedagogy to extend beyond the classroom and institution and allows Indigenous communities to theorize their own lives and connect their past histories with their future lives (Marker, 2003 as cited in Smith, 2005). This framework provides inquiry and analysis that exposes, challenges, and disrupts the continuing colonization of Native land and resources and seeks greater political, intellectual, and spiritual sovereignty for Native peoples (Grande, 2004).

Methodology, Design, Researcher Identity, and Sample

I used hermeneutical phenomenology because this methodology clearly fit with my curiosity about the lived experience of the participants. For instructors reflecting upon pedagogy, acquiring a phenomenological sensitivity to the lived experience of the learner can be useful. Phenomenological questions are meaning questions that can aid in a better way of understanding that may cause teachers to act more thoughtfully, more tactfully, and more responsively with regards to pedagogy and relationships.

The faculty of the Department of American Indian Studies at the “University of the Great Plains” (UGP) suggested various participants for this study. UGP is located in a midwestern state that is home to nine American Indian reservations and has a statewide Native population of 10%. At UGP, however, the Native population comprises only 1% of the total population.

I interviewed three Native American adult students enrolled at UGP: Stanley (age 43), Mato (33), and Sam (30). All three participants grew up on different reservations in the Great Plains region. Interviews ranged in length from 50 minutes to 2 ½ hours. Data were collected through in-depth interviewing grounded in the theoretical genre of phenomenology. An interview guide with open-ended, semi-structured questions was used in order to focus on key areas, yet allowing for flexibility. Phenomenological analysis required me to approach the texts with an open mind, seeking meaning and structures that emerge. I used inductive analysis and a constant comparative method of data analysis though which key themes from the interviews were identified. The final step was the validation of the analysis by checking with the participants to see if they agreed, extended, or disputed my judgments of what was important and interesting.

Ultimately this interpretive study will be conducted through the eyes of a white male, who had many educational privileges and opportunities afforded by being in the mainstream of a predominantly white place. Even though this research is a co-construction, bracketing, as much as possible, my white mainstream educational assumptions will be an important part of this study. I do not bring the claim of being an objective researcher to this study, as I believe it is inevitable that all researchers bring various biases, opinions, thoughts, and feelings to a study as a result of their personal socio-cultural and historic past.

It should be noted that although many of the core traditional values permeate the lives of Native Americans across Tribal groups, Native Americans are not a completely homogeneous group, differing greatly in their level of acceptance of and commitment to specific tribal values, beliefs and practices through a variance of customs, language, and family structure (Garret & Pichette, 2000). Thus, it is dangerous to stereotype or make broad generalizations regarding Native peoples.

Findings

The Disorienting Effects of Being at University of the Great Plains
Sam’s childhood education experiences ranged from a predominantly white elementary school when he recalls being called a “prairie nigger” to a Tribal high school that according to Sam, “provided a space to concentrate more on being Dakota, and an environment that was healthy and more comfortable.” But even this wide range of childhood education experiences probably could not have prepared him for life at the university. Discrimination, racism and ignorance all compound the complexities of attending a university located off the reservation. Sam reflects on what it was like,

> When I first started out I hardly would talk (in class), it was a big learning curve. I think for any student it is difficult, but I think Native students are at a little bit of a disadvantage, especially when you add on the small disadvantage academically and the cultural difference and the difference in racial composition. Add in all those factors plus any problems that may come from home—which often is things dealing with health, alcoholism, drug abuse the things that often go on at reservations, I guess things tend to be more complicated. Bringing all that baggage to school and plus the feeling that you really don’t belong there. It’s really difficult.

According to Tierney (1992a), “In the case of American higher education we find that colleges and universities reflect the culture of the dominant society. In America, that dominant culture is white” (p. 608). Mato confirms, “there is culture shock coming from the reservation to the university. I mean walking into a classroom full of a hundred non-Native students, it’s intimidating.” Mato eventually learned to cope with this culture shock by confronting the prejudice. Mato explains, “but how I use it now is that, it’s not my shortcoming if someone has a prejudice or maybe it goes all the way to racism, it’s not my problem…its theirs. I’m here to do something and I am going to do it.” Sam continues,

> Coming from a Tribal school, when I got to the university it was like seeing a sea of white people. And not because it is different, but because of what you’re used to and what you’ve experienced with the white people from where you’re from and how racist (this state) is.

Along those lines, Stanley explains, “there are still some very closed minds here. Ignorance is a comfortable place to be.

**Cultural Conflicts and Classroom Contradictions**

Native students often will face contradictions and conflicts in the classroom. As Sleeter (1993) pointed out, white teachers often have a knowledge of race based on their own life experience and vested interests, and the idea of what is “correct” comes from the white perspective (as cited in Pewewardy, 2002). Sam reflects on this one-way idea of teaching:

> Because their idea of relevancy within the classroom and curriculum of what’s supposed to be taught and understood and what’s given from the teacher to the student is supposed to be this one way for basically this monolithic group of white Christian American young people and its supposed to go from professor to student like a certain prescription.

The perspective some white teachers have about race is what Joyce King (1991) defines as “dysconscious racism,” a form of racism that accepts without cultural awareness the dominant white norms and privileges (as cited in Pewewardy, 2002). These perspectives, when manifested in educational practice, are located somewhere between racism and assimilation and are detrimental to the Native learner. The negative impact of historical and contemporary discriminatory policies and practices on Native peoples has devastated their standard of living and created major cultural conflicts (Herring, 1999).
Using a lens from critical theory helps to investigate conflict, not only when someone speaks up because of an injustice, but also when there is silence on the part of the voiceless (Tierney, 1992b). Stanley reflects on the response to the Native perspective or way of knowing in the classroom or academe,

A lot of times I think that it (the Native perspective) is not widely accepted. Actually, it’s heard, but not really listened to. And sometimes I think it’s exploited or taken out of context and changed around to a certain degree. That is something that I’ve struggled with the most in my experience thus far.

Sam shares, “it’s hard because a lot of times people don’t react, you’ll say something in class that you feel is important like ‘what about this?’ and they’ll say ‘yeah’ and then keep going like I wasn’t even there.” The work of Semali and Kincheloe (1999) seem to confirm Stanley’s and Sam’s thoughts, “ways of knowing and action could contribute so much to the educational experiences of all students; but because of the rules of evidence and the dominant epistemologies of Western knowledge production, such understandings are deemed irrelevant by the academic gatekeeper.” A critical study of how knowledge is valued/not valued in the classroom looks at the hidden barriers that exist for the Native American adult learner. Implicit in the structure of academe is a system that seeks to exclude some individuals and reward others because of the lack of “cultural capital,” or the accumulation of it (Tierney, 1992b).

Native students often must grapple with the notions of not only navigating a system that seems to come natural for their white counterparts, but also how these ideals, many of which are contradictory, are to be negotiated within an Indian framework. Stanley’s experiences seem to occupy a similar position,

It can be difficult at times and it can be eye-opening. And by difficult I mean that I find myself in this unfamiliar territory having to compromise the way I’ve been raised, my beliefs, and the cultural integrity that I was raised with of very specific protocols of how to be a Native male, a Native man and trying to do that in light of how academia has interpreted my culture, that’s pretty difficult to do. I find myself questioning it on occasion, not ready to quit by any means, but questioning the validity of academic structure based on that, and if I’d have to compromise myself in some areas, it can be kind of difficult.

Sam has found that sometimes the most valuable knowledge doesn’t come from the content of the classes. “I really can’t stand (the content) a lot of the times. I guess school has helped me understand that it’s not maybe understanding for myself the knowledge that I feel I need, but rather where the understanding of where the Western world is coming from.” For Mato the wisdom gained from the university may sometimes not be the most obvious, “My Native instincts tell me to be humble, to listen, and maybe that there’s more teaching in there and maybe what they’re trying to teach me isn’t really what’s on the surface. My culture tells me that there’s always a teaching underneath.”

Sam acknowledges that for many students, dealing with the contradictions of the university are detrimental to the student’s academic pursuit, “It pulls people apart inside and so many people are like ‘I’m not going to do this’ and go back home. It almost feels like something ugly gets inside you and starts sleeping inside you.”

Using University Knowledge and Cultural Knowledge at Home

Champagne (2006) says that ideally, Western education forms, skills, and knowledge will be critically assessed and if appropriate and necessary, combined with Native forms of education, skills and knowledge in order to find culturally unique solutions to contemporary and future
social, economic, and cultural conditions. Stanley’s long-term goal is to continue his education, earn his Ph.D. and teach in a university or college, and “mold the minds of the young”. He indicated an openness to teaching at either a Tribal College or non-reservation university.

Although Sam’s degree will be in American Indian Studies and English, he is interested in making documentary films. He said he was heavily influenced by the many Native American, African, and African American authors he read in college and wants to do work that makes a difference. Sam’s calling to make documentary films is fueled by the fact that there aren’t very many Natives doing this work and yet there are plenty of Indian issues that need attention from a wider audience.

Wilson (2005, p. 77) says, “Fortunately there seems to be a growing number of Natives who are less concerned about their status in the white world and more concerned with helping their respective Nations with long-term survival.” Mato, who has overcome battles with alcohol and drug use, will have a degree in drug and alcohol counseling which will ultimately help him when he goes home to the reservation,

_I have to go home. If anything it’s just to instill some hope. I mean, I’m not going to say I’m better or worse that anyone, but I lived a crazy life. There’s a lot of my relatives and a lot of my friends and a lot of my people who choose to struggle and I like to say that if I can do it there’s hope for a lot of them._

Conclusions

The university is filled with contradictions and conflicts for the Native American learner. In a context where knowledge is valued, epistemology, or “ways of knowing”, becomes a contested space. Additionally, where there is contested space, issues of power are also inherently manifested. The burden of this conflict is cast upon the Native American learner, as the Native “ways of knowing” or worldview is often incongruent with that of institutional and/or mainstream “ways of knowing.” These contradictions often lead these students to believe that their worldview, stemming from Native American culture, religion, traditions, and heritage, are wrong and unvalued, thus having no place in the mainstream world of the university.

It is clear that higher education does not yet provide a hospitable environment that attracts and holds Native American students at a satisfactory rate (Kirkness & Barnhardt, 1991). One of the paradoxes of educational institutions is that they are assumed to be providers of opportunity, yet Native Americans do not always perceive the university in that manner (Tierney, 1992). From a university perspective, it makes good sense to broaden the personal and professional perspectives and range of understanding about the complex web of human relationships that make up the higher education enterprise (Tippeconnic Fox, 2005). Further, if the university hopes to recruit and retain Native American learners, it must be able to present itself in ways that have instrumental value to Native students; that is, the programs and services must connect with the students’ own aspirations and cultural predispositions sufficiently to achieve a comfort level that will make the experience worth enduring (Kirkness & Barnhardt, 1991).

References


Adult Education in the Segregated Black College

Diane M. Burnette, Ph.D.
Board of Regents, University System of Georgia
United States of America

Abstract: The purpose of this essay is to examine adult education in the Historically Black College and University (HBCU) during the 1940s, highlighting major social and political interests of programs for African American adults within this context.

Introduction

One of the most compelling aspects of African American education history is adult education within the Historically Black College and University (HBCU) during the mid-twentieth century. In an interesting analysis chronicling the history of African American adult education, sociologist Ira. D.A. Reid noted Historically Black Colleges and Universities were among the varied Black social institutions that provided civic and literacy education for African American adults (Reid, 1945). McGee and McAfee (1977) argue that Black public colleges and universities “staged a massive effort in providing extension education for all Black Americans—farmers in particular” (p. 50). Indeed, the accomplishments of Tuskegee University’s adult education programs for Black farmers during the late 19th century are well documented throughout the literature on African American adult education and agriculture history (Gyant, 1988; James, 1971; James, 1990; Jones, 1975; Potts, 1996).

Juxtaposed against the fight for democracy on the international front, the 1940s represented a unique period for the emergence of Black college social activism in the form of adult education. Thus, this essay provides an overview of HBCU adult education during the 1940s highlighting its divergent forms within this context and social and political challenges.

Literacy, Civic Education, Vocational Training and Social Skills

HBCU adult education programs included courses in adult literacy, citizenship training, vocational education, job training, and social skills development (Caliver and Wilkins, 1945; Cooper, 1945; Jackson, 1945). The National Survey of the Higher Education of Negroes: General Studies of Colleges for Negroes, authored by Ambrose Caliver, is the seminal study of Black higher education in the 1940s and includes an examination of HBCU adult education programs. Caliver reported that 17% of all adult education classes offered by Black colleges were related to social skills or leisure courses, 13% were vocational training classes designed to prepare Blacks for manual labor jobs and 13% were classes to retrain public school teachers as adult educators. The remaining 43% were public school teacher in-service programs.

Black intellectuals believed African Americans could overcome their marginalization by becoming more politically astute. Robert Clements, president of Atlanta University argued that “Negroes will not be able to make much improvement in his social status until he is able to make intelligent use of the bloodless weapon of true democracy--the ballot” (Clements, 1936, p.477). Citizenship training classes provided instruction in voting requirements such as the payment of poll taxes, completing voter registration forms and ballots (Jackson, 1945; Oldendorf, 1990). Additionally, the citizenship training programs stressed the fundamental correlation between the social status of African Americans and governmental actions at the federal, state, and local levels. Black faculty at HBCUs supported citizenship training for African American adults and helped
organized voter leagues. Among these faculty were Luther Jackson, Virginia State College; Charles Gomillion, Tuskegee University; Clarence Bacote and Rayford Logan, Atlanta University (Jackson, 1945).

While the New Deal adult education programs of the 1930s were transitioning to training for jobs in the defense industry, findings from studies of HBCU adult education courses during the 1940s indicate that vocational courses continued to be a main focus of job training (Caliver and Wilkins, 1945; Cooper, 1945; National Survey, 1942). Examples of courses offered by the People’s College, an adult education program at Atlanta University included Building Management and Maintenance, First Course in Printing, Public Welfare Administration, Secretarial Practice and Office Management. Yet many African Americans still could not find work in the defense industries due to discriminatory hiring practices (Grant, 1990, Reid, 1943). Moreover, courses directed towards improving social and personal skills appeared in class bulletins (The Peoples College, nd). The titles of these classes included Conversation, Manners, and Etiquette, Language in Everyday Life, Discovering Your Personality. The description of the Manners and Etiquette is most telling, -“The simple arts of social behavior, how to converse, what to say, and how to act in association with others” (The People’s College, nd). A few courses were offered that embraced an Afro-centric perspective such as the People’s College radio lecture on Africa and World Freedom and Africa: Yesterday and Today, presented by Atlanta University professors (The People’s College, nd; Reid, 1943).

Despite these efforts, many Black college adult education programs struggled to remain viable. Common problems reported by institutions were insufficient funding, a paucity of available instructors and a lack of classroom facilities (Cooper, 1945; Grant, 1990; Reid, 1943; Wilkins, 1942). In 1943, Atlanta University had not appropriated funding to cover the administrative expenses of the adult education program which reached approximately 400 participants during the first year (Reid, 1943). It was not uncommon for the same instructors who taught regular college classes to teach the adult education classes in the evening (Wilkins, 1942). This practice severely taxed the instructional resources. The following excerpt from a report filed by an Atlanta University adult education instructor entitled Description of Adult Education Class Taught by Thelma Barnhart-1947-1948. The report provides a vivid example of the physical surroundings of a typical adult education classroom.

The location of the class is Ebenezer Baptist Church, at Auburn Avenue and Jackson Street, Atlanta, Georgia. The room is of a seating capacity of approximately fifteen with arm chairs (regular classroom chairs), a table with a[n] armless chair, a black board (about 3’ X 5’), and a piano.

Instructor Cecil Hickerson described the classroom facilities in a report entitled Atlanta University Adult Education Project: Report of classes and class activities for the year 1947-48.

The Carollton school is located near the town of Carollton [Georgia] and near the busline. The working facilities are good, the lighting system is adequate for teaching purposes. Villa Rica school has similar working facilities. The location is a little different and it is not as easily reached, nor is the transportation from the bus to the school as convenient. The College Park [Georgia] set-up was most inadequate for teaching adults. The location was good but the lighting system and the working conditions were very poor. We later moved to the Laster Chapel M.E. Church. The McDonough set-up was almost ideal with
exception of poor roads in rainy weather. The distance some students lived from the school made a transportation problem.

Struggling to Meet the Demand for Black Adult Educators

In a study of teacher education training programs at Black colleges, 14 institutions offered a total of 21 courses to prepare teachers in adult learning instructional methods, which Black adult educators believed to be woefully inadequate considering high rate of illiteracy among African Americans (Caliver and Wilkins, 1945). Although adult learning theory and methods was not taught included in teacher education pre-service curriculum, the same would be true for most higher education teacher training programs during the 1940s. In fact, principles of adult learning in university extension would not become evident until the 1950s (Knowles, Holton, and Swanson, 1998).

To meet the demand for African American adult educators as well as to provide job training for unemployed Black public school teachers, HBCUs offered adult education teacher training programs funded by the Emergency Education Program (EEP). HBCUs such as Fisk University, Atlanta University, and Livingston College participated in the EEP training programs which varied in length from two days to a maximum of two weeks during the summer (Grant, 1990). According to Grant (1990) and Jackson (1945) the tone and character of the EEP funded teacher training classes were carefully controlled to avoid any appearance of social agitation. In fact, the NAACP was characterized as being troublemakers and teachers were encouraged to comply with voter registration requirements such as the prompt payment of poll taxes (Reddick, 1945). Grant (1990) noted that while Black teachers complained of poor instructional materials and outdated equipment, some of the best equipped classrooms were in the home economics area that trained African American women for jobs as domestics.

To further support the training of Black adult educators organized philanthropy provided funding to support the Adult Education Project for Negroes. In a letter from Ambrose Caliver to Robert Clement, June 1947, Caliver informs the president of Atlanta University that the Carnegie Foundation had provided a grant of $50,000 to support the project. The funding was used to assist Black land-grant and private colleges to train African American adult education teachers and to offer literacy education and civic training classes. Teacher seminars were offered on adult learning methods and discussions included strategies on participant recruitment. Black teachers complained that the content of the reading materials were inappropriate for adults and therefore organized committees to develop reading and other instructional aids. Atlanta University, Hampton University, Fort Valley State University, and Virginia State College were among the HBCUs that participated in the project.

Dr. R.O. Johnson, professor of Education at Atlanta University, taught a course in adult teaching methods which was offered as a part of the teacher education academic program. Additionally, two fulltime instructors led adult education teacher in-service classes. However, two years into the project, the Carnegie Foundation reduced its support by one-half to $25,000, citing competing priorities and limited funds. Subsequently, Atlanta University 1947-48 allocation was only $1,250 which was used to supplement a meager adult education program budget of $1,950. A letter from President Clements to Ambrose Caliver in September 22, 2947 informed the project director that Atlanta University would continue to offer the adult education classes, but Dr. Johnson’s adult education methods class were discontinued.¹

¹
Conclusions

HBCU adult education during the 1940s was present in various forms and reflected the different and often conflicting social and political interests of its stakeholders. Government and organized philanthropy viewed HBCU adult education as a tool to maintain the status quo and guard against the growing threat of communism. Gasman (2007) argues that industrial philanthropist became involved in supporting Black higher education causes such as the United Negro College Fund during the 1940s as a strategy for preserving capitalism and averting social unrest resulting from the “Negro problem”. Thus, adult education programs that trained African Americans for “their proper place” as manual laborers were in line with White supremacists ideologies of Black inferiority. Citizenship training classes that engendered respect for the American system of democracy and government was the capitalist “bloodless weapon” to subdue the spread of communism.

From an educational perspective, vocational education and personal development adult education programs reflected a progressive philosophy that trained Black adults for jobs as laborers and taught them the rudiments of proper social etiquette, reading, and writing. Similarly, the training programs for Black adult educator teachers reflected this orientation. This perspective is also closely linked to the industrial education movement of the late 19th century (Anderson, 1988) which promoted Black inferiority and suggested African Americans required re-education in social graces that were acceptable to western society. It is placed at the extreme opposite of the Afrocentric adult education espoused by Marcus Garvey (Collin, 1996), but correlates with Johnson-Bailey’s (2006) African American adult education theme of cultural assimilation.

Regardless of political intent, HBCUs viewed adult education as a liberatory practice. Educational social activism was intended to improve the lives of African Americans living in the 1940s. Rather than challenge the discriminatory practices of the system, HBCUs sought to work within the system of power and politics to advance an agenda of social change through adult education. These differences in the purpose of HBCU adult education “demonstrate that in the struggle for the distribution of knowledge and power in social and organizational contexts, educational programs are not a neutral activity” (Cervero and Wilson, 2006, p.16). Indeed, they are a reflection of the power inherent in the social fabric of humanity.

\[\text{\textsuperscript{1}}\text{Dr. R.O. Johnson resigned from the faculty at Atlanta University to accept a position on Caliver’s staff at the U.S. Office of Education. Dr. Caliver of September 22 indicated that the departure of Dr. Johnson had inconvenienced the Atlanta University program to a considerable extent.}\]
References
Reid, I. D. A. (1943). Departmental Reports. (Rufus Clements Papers, Box 264, Folder 3). Atlanta University Center. Robert W. Woodruff Library, Archives/Special Collections, Atlanta, GA.


The People’s College, Third Session Catalogue, November 8, 1943 - February 18, 1944 (Rufus Clements Papers, Box 279, Folder 16). Atlanta University Center. Robert W. Woodruff Library, Archives/Special Collections, Atlanta, GA.

Dewey and Habermas: Re-reading Ethics for Adult Education

Davin Carr-Chellman
Pennsylvania State University, USA

Abstract: The relevance of Dewey and Habermas's ethics for adult education is grounded in epistemology and learning, in particular delineating the centrality of ethics -- normative conceptions of right and wrong -- to how we come to know and understand the world, generate meaning, and hence, learn.

There has been interesting and important research into how we learn about ethics: from Kohlberg to Brookfield. An important corollary to this scholarly pursuit, and one of particular interest to adult education, focuses instead on the ethics of learning: understanding better what happens when we learn, while also fleshing out the relevance of ethics for the quality of that learning. My argument is that the heart of the relationship between ethics and learning is intersubjectivity and the moral demands that flow from that intersubjectivity -- an ethics of intersubjectivity, perhaps. Dewey and Habermas both have ethical theories that are grounded in epistemological intersubjectivity, or the notion that our knowledge of the world and ourselves is social in origin, the upshot being that our capacity and opportunities to learn are directly tied to the nature of our social relations. Learning, then, is clearly important to ethical development in that we do learn how to be ethical. What we should also consider is how the ethical character and quality of our intersubjectivity directs our learning. Theorizing learning in this way has implications for the moral and emancipatory potential of our social institutions.

The initial entry into the nexus of Dewey and Habermas' ethics and adult educations is intersubjectivity. "It is this that is Hegel's great idea since it reveals how ethical life matters independent of any particular moral norms, laws, ideals, principles, or ends. Ethical life is not, in the first instance, about moral principles, but about the ways in which both particular actions and whole forms of action injure, wound, and deform recipient and actor alike; it is about the secret bonds connecting our weal and woe to the lives of all those around us" (Bernstein, 2003). Intersubjectivity is a core notion in late 20th - early 21st century social theory, perhaps the core notion (Lotz, 2006). Questions at the heart of this inquiry into intersubjectivity include, for example, 'who is the other?,' 'What is the other?,' and 'Does the other precede me?,' and any serious approach to social philosophy must reckon with the content of this area. The argument around which these questions revolve declares that concepts such as consciousness, self, and subjectivity only make sense if they are viewed as social concepts: the colloquially solipsistic characteristics of consciousness, i.e. I have consciousness of the turkey dinner in front of me; self, i.e. I understand my-self as an empathetic creature; and subjectivity, i.e. I have subjectivity because my interpretation of events is most powerful in my world view; are only useful and ameliorative to society if understood as primarily generated through other things. For Dewey and Habermas, experience -- generated through other things -- is mediated (not immediate), causing Copernican turns in our epistemological foundations. In other words, coming to know things about ourselves (consciousness) and coming to know things about the world requires an-other to read back to us the meanings of our actions. The common thread between Dewey and Habermas is Hegel and the mediated nature of self-consciousness that he outlines in the Phenomenology of Spirit (1979). This common thread constitutes the ethics of intersubjectivity. For Habermas, the Hegelian influence of the dialectic of intersubjectivity is well-documented and foundational to his approach to communicative rationality and ethics as a direct antidote to
instrumental rationality. J.M. Bernstein, a prominent scholar of Habermas and Critical Theory, makes this apparent,

Whereas the validity of rules of instrumental action has an empirical backing, the validity of social norms 'is grounded in the intersubjectivity of the mutual understanding of intentions and secured by the general recognition of obligations.' In the domain of instrumental reason, then, the world is constituted in terms of a polarity of subject and object, where what makes something an 'object' is precisely the application of instrumental rules and reasoning to it; while in communicative action there is always an assumption of reciprocity between self and other, ego and alter-ego. According to Habermas, all human subjectivity, that is, all experiences by individuals of themselves as distinct persons, is grounded in intersubjectivity. Self-awareness does not arise through isolated, private acts of introspection or self-reflection. Rather, one begins to see oneself only through becoming aware of how others see one. This complex accomplishment occurs above all through language. The framework of communicative action is that within which human beings are constituted as self-conscious subjects (1995, 42-43).

As opposed to Habermas, Dewey was not part of the tradition of critical theory that guided Habermas, and he did not inherit the notion of identity thinking and instrumental rationality as a primary ethical problem. Another important difference is that, while Habermas and Dewey share a common intellectual forebear in Hegel, Dewey struggled throughout his long professional life to become an anti-dialectical thinker, working to overcome dualities rather than engage them. Consequently, the intellectual relationship between Dewey and Hegel, and also Dewey and Habermas is more complicated. But the relationship is there, and does carry significant potential for theorizing emancipatory adult education. There exists a common phenomenological beginning -- Hegel's *Phenomenology* -- which highlights the Hegelian movement at the heart of Dewey and Habermas' ethics: the causality of fate which pushes ethics into the primary position -- ethics as first philosophy. This means that what Hegel had to say about knowledge, reason, and objectivity, for example, must be read through the dynamics of ethical life. The Hegelian causality of fate lives on in Habermas and Dewey via the central notion of the intersubjective construction of self-consciousness.

John Dewey's ethical theory, often maligned as narrowly instrumental and consequentialist (Aiken, 1962, p.83), provides remarkably provocative and fertile ground on which to base a fresh interpretation of the learning transaction such that human subjectivity is enhanced rather than diminished. "The problem," says Dewey, "of restoring integration and cooperation between man's (sic) beliefs about the world in which he lives and his beliefs about the values and purposes that should direct his conduct is the deepest problem of modern life. It is the problem of any philosophy that is not isolated from that life" (Dewey, 1960a, p. 255). At an important juncture in his development as a scholar, Dewey fell under the influence of William James' *Principles of Psychology* (1952), marking the final point of departure from Hegelianism. James showed that all mental activity is purposeful, originating in and guided by the efforts of a living creature to adapt to changing environmental conditions. For Dewey, this marks the beginning of his mature ethical philosophy in which a detailed analysis of the actual processes of inquiry lead to the formation of particular moral judgments. The ultimate goal for Dewey was to conceive of ethical theory, indeed all theory, as something generated from within practice and in response to practice. He wished to illuminate the human situation as *radically experiential* such that the inherent resources and constraints of such experience could be located and utilized. The result would be individuals and communities better equipped to solve their own problems. As such, theory is no longer imposed on practice from the outside, but becomes instead a genuine part of the means for the intelligent amelioration of practice. Dewey’s prescription is that one cannot determine what an adequate ethical theory will be without examining what kind of moral theory works better in our actual lives. Dewey did not prescribe universal moral imperatives,
rather he elucidated and explained forms of behavior most beneficial to human beings in coping with problematic situations. "To find the guidance for rectifying a particular situation, it is necessary to give up looking for a universal theoretical formula and get on to the difficult task of studying, 'the needs and alternative possibilities lying within a unique and localized situation' [Dewey, 1930, p. 196]" (Pappas, 1998, p. 105). Dewey thus advocated an approach to moral decision-making that may be termed 'situational.' The implication is not that we ignore or deny any ethical knowledge or guidance (because experience is intellectually cumulative -- there are stabilities in experience, something Dewey referred to as continuity), but that this prior experience alone does not have normative force: it must meet the demands of the current problematic situation. Pappas characterizes Dewey's ethical theory as advocating a moral life that is intelligent because it educates itself, aesthetic because it proceeds in a meaningful mode of engagement, and democratic because it engages a certain kind of community and communication (1998, p. 116). The ultimate goal for Dewey was solving the genuine problems of human beings by increasing opportunities for growth: "The central factor in moral judgment is the growth of the self: the cultivation of habits and dispositions that will sustain the capacity for intelligent choice" (Johnstone, 190). Conduct is understood as a product of the self. "The real moral question is what kind of a self is being furthered and formed. And this question arises with respect to both one's own self and the selves of others" (Dewey, 1960b, p. 159). Johnstone goes on to explain the moral imperative of Dewey's notion of 'the growth of the self':

The self is formed, Dewey argues by the choices it makes and by the experiences that flow from them. … Choice also forms the self by determining the nature of the experience to which it will be led by its own acts. On this view, any choice can give formative impulse to the developing self, and thus can have moral import. When we attempt to remake the world in ways that will institute our values, we remake ourselves. Because growth is the 'only moral end,' the obligation attending any attempt to respond to the problematic in life is to look for methods of doing so that will respect the demand for growth (Johnstone, 190).

The moral imperative of growth, as it is pursued through inquiry and the method of intelligence, is also inescapably social: problematic situations are by nature social situations. Dewey, especially in his educational writings, constantly emphasizes that the growth of the personality and the generation of the conditions most conducive to that growth is fundamentally a social quest: "Morality is social [because] the formation of habits of belief, desire, and judgment is going on at every moment under the influence of conditions set by men's [sic] contact, intercourse, and association's with one another" (Dewey, 1930, p. 295). Clearly Dewey's radical empiricism necessarily entails intersubjectivity, but we can really see it working in the social nature of morality. Intersubjectivity is the mutual constitution of subject and object on the social level. Implicit in Dewey's understanding of experience as radically empirical is the mediated and social formation of intelligence. The upshot is that Dewey focuses on communication as necessary to maximizing our potential as learners, and, consequently, as ethical creatures. This characteristic, with remnants of the Hegelian dialectic, had direct influence on George Herbert Mead. In turn, Mead and American pragmatism carried great influence on the ethics of Jurgen Habermas.

Jurgen Habermas is arguably the most influential philosopher and social theorist of the last 30 years. His ideas, particularly the notion of communicative rationality and ethics, have been adopted by scholars in nearly every sphere of the human and social sciences. In the field of adult education, his influence on Mezirow's theory of transformational learning has been prominent, but, in the last decade or so, Habermas's influence has moved beyond transformational
learning -- even as that focus within adult education has also broadened significantly -- to other scholars seeking to open pathways to emancipatory education. Perhaps the most well-known and representative product of this Habermasian movement in adult education is Michael Welton's edited text, *In Defense of the Lifeworld: Critical Perspectives on Adult Learning* (1995). Welton's own essay in the text offers some explanation of Habermas' significance to adult education: "Habermas' work is of central importance for critical educational theory and practice. Of all contemporary theorists, Habermas is the one person who has consistently and consciously placed individual and social learning processes at the core of his massive project" (p. 136).

Writing more recently, Stephen Brookfield argues that adult learning is an integral part of Habermas' move beyond Marx in reconstructing society in the twenty-first century, "Here the centrality of learning -- particularly adult learning -- clearly emerges. If a distinguishing characteristic of humans is their capacity to learn, then social science and educational theoreticians need to focus much more centrally on how adults learn to create a more moral, just democracy" (2005, p. 223). Characteristically, Welton makes this notion more concrete by arguing that, "Habermas' sociological theory (his dualistic model of the system and the lifeworld) and theory of rationalization (his view of the historical unfolding of learning potential in modernity) provide us with the necessary boundary frame and constituent conceptual elements for the study of social learning processes" (1995, p. 134). Not to be confused with Bandura's social cognitive theory (Bandura, 1986), Welton's notion of social learning is very Deweyan/Habermasian in scope: "The new, or emergent social learning paradigm, would construct the boundary of the field as wide as society itself, and would include everything that forms the outlook, character, and actions of communicative agents in space and time. All of society is a vast school" (1995, p. 134).

Accordingly, much like Dewey, ethics is central to Habermas' entire philosophy, which makes it both difficult to tease-out, and also tremendously important to adult learning. "For Habermas, then, 'a critical theory of society can no longer be constructed in the exclusive form of a critique of political economy' [quoting Habermas, 1970, P. 120]. It must broaden its concern to investigate matters of morality and communication and how a democratic society might organize itself to promote the fullest and freest communication possible among its members. . .This has led him to engage with American pragmatism. . ." (Brookfield, 2005, P. 224). Sounding very much like Dewey, it has also led him to affirm the possibility of reestablishing reason to serve the creation of humane democracy. "In *Postmetaphysical Thinking* (Habermas, 1992b. p. 114), he states as his aim, 'to defend and make fruitful for social theory a concept of reason that attends to the phenomenon of the lifeworld and permits the consciousness of society as a whole. . .to be reformulated on a basis of a theory of intersubjectivity. . . Habermas' view of critical theory' retains a concept of reason which asserts itself simultaneously against both scientific mutilation and existentialist downgrading, and which is furthermore also critically applied to itself' (Habermas, 1992a, p. 55)" (Brookfield, 2005, p. 227). Using a theory of intersubjectivity, Habermas develops his communicative rationality and discourse ethics as the primary method of rescuing the 'lifeworld' from the deadening force of instrumental reason.

Interestingly enough, it is precisely the 'call and response,' 'pitch and catch' characteristics of communication that Habermas identifies as the motive force in individual moral development: the development of the Habermasian "moral point of view" -- largely coterminous with Kohlberg's third and final stage of moral development called post-conventional interaction (Kohlberg et al., 1983) -- describes individuals capable of recognizing the fallible nature of their convictions even as they continue to act on them, always enlightening their own self-understandings with the perspectives of others. This is the very same intersubjective core
operating in Dewey's ethics, resulting in a very strong sense that, for Dewey and Habermas, to the extent we are able to act with a constant reference to mutuality, recognition, and reciprocity in our communication, we will learn/grow most effectively.

Welton and Brookfield each point to Habermas as opening doors for truly emancipatory institutions within a more moral democracy. I argue that Dewey, properly interpreted and creatively applied, stands shoulder-to-shoulder with Habermas in this work. To illustrate more precisely how their ethical theories open these doors and why adult learning is the engine driving the process, let's look at an ethical problem; an ethical problem that is, at the same time, a learning problem. As adult educators, I will argue that this ethical problem is among the most pernicious and debilitating of any we currently face -- the broadly experienced ignorance or avoidance of acts of genuine human subjectivity.

Genuine human subjectivity is risky, and our efforts to avoid it are well documented. The stakes are high: denial of this risk is at the very source of the dehumanizing tendencies so prominent in late modern or post-modern existence, as exemplified by the bureaucratic rationalization and commodification of nearly every slice of contemporary life. "The world is not made up of certainties (2003, p. 361)," Freire says, but the urge to harness and tease some certainties out of our uncertain human raw material -- the urge to eliminate the risk of living a human life -- brings us to a blind reliance on science, technology, and statistics (for example), as well as an uninformed dispassionate acceptance of existing, reified power structures. Maybe this drive to overcome human entropy is ingrained in our DNA, but I don't think so. Certainly, we are constantly striving to better understand the world, to make sense of the apparently arbitrary events that happen to us, e.g. a bout with cancer, a car accident, or even a student's refusal to engage classroom material. But this honest striving to understand has morphed into deterministic scientism, creating for us lives and social contexts that, while appearing entirely rational, in fact only serve to alienate us from each other and ourselves. Walker Percy describes this alienation saying, "science cannot utter a single word about an individual molecule, thing, or creature insofar as it is an individual, but only insofar as it is like other individuals" (1975). Put another way, he means that your cancer is only understandable and, thus, treatable, to the extent that it is statistically like other episodes of cancer. Your particular and individual cancer is meaningless. This logic has useful results for some things and purposes, but certainly not all -- or even most -- things and purposes, and most certainly not most human things and purposes. This logic represses the idiosyncratic nature of the best of what we call human, performing a dangerous ideological violence on all upsurges of genuine individuality or genuine subjectivity. Never mind that it attempts to overcome a fundamental reality of human existence: change, uncertainty, risk, or what Freire describes when he says that "the world is made of the tension between the certain and the uncertain" (2003, p. 361). This logic is called instrumental rationality, and, while it has generated economic wealth and scientific advances, it has done so at great cost. At the risk of overstating the case, in this situation, the irrationality we associate with something like fascist totalitarianism is already present within the action of subjective rationality and self-expression. Genuine subjectivity is impossible because we are all already subsumed by ideological subjectivity, which consequently, precludes forms of reason that empower individuals to imagine deep notions of democracy and justice. This is an ethical problem with an educational solution.

Those of us curious about what might be called an emancipatory adult education practice need to understand this important ethical challenge to learning, theorize the learning transaction in a way that recognizes and seeks to ameliorate the ethical challenge of instrumental rationality, and develops practices that reassert the uncertainty of human existence. Freire has coined an apt phrase for what kind of learning must happen: we must "learn to read the world before learning to
read the word" (Freire, P. & Macedo, D., 2003). By learning to read the world, we can make explicit the history of cultural production and reproduction that has arbitrarily constructed a particular social position based on race, class, gender, or sexuality. Reading the world in this way communicates a sense of agency to those who have been arbitrarily, yet systematically, disempowered by the reified social structures created by enlightenment rationality.

The work of Habermas in developing communicative rationality -- as opposed to instrumental or enlightenment rationality -- has been the primary theoretical move to locate 'a more encompassing reason grounded in being.' In this way (and in many others), Habermas remains a product of the Frankfurt School, an intellectual heir to Horkheimer and Adorno, and a (perhaps the) luminary in contemporary Critical Theory. But Habermas has also moved in broader directions to aid his search for a new type of rationality: appropriately enough, he came to the new world for a fresh theoretical perspective, relying on a Chicago Pragmatist as foundational to his vision -- George Herbert Mead. Consequently, the groundwork has been set for a strong ethical antidote to our fear of genuine human subjectivity. Through the interstices of Deweyan and Habermasian ethics we can arrive at a Freirean emancipatory adult education: it is precisely a Freirean "reading of the world," that Dewey and Habermas' ethics can help us approach. In this direction, a solid beginning point is the recognition that emancipatory education is about communication. Freire's pedagogy of freedom is an elegant and humane form of communication that seeks to provide some substance to our claims of emancipation. For Freire, critical, emancipatory pedagogy is both a producer and a product of democracy, while communication is the modus operandi through which the dialectic of "learner" and "teacher," and "subject" and "object" operates and constructs the genuine subjectivity required for substantive democracy to be realized. Freire says, "To think correctly implies the existence of subjects whose thinking is mediated by objects that provoke and modify the thinking subject. Thinking correctly is, in other words, not an isolated act...but an act of communication...something that belongs essentially to the process of co participation" (1998, p. 42).

Communication understood this way involves us constantly in a "permanent process of social and historical construction and reconstruction" (Freire, 1998, p.38). This process is critical self-reflection, and, accordingly, its participants understand that it can only be realized, not simply through other people, but through other people necessarily regarded and respected as 'subjects,' equal participants in the creation of knowledge and the educative experience. The "...mutual adjustment and coordination whereby a vague or indeterminate situation becomes clearer," as Alexander paraphrases Dewey, is the product of a critical and emancipatory pedagogy; the very same pedagogy that Freire calls a pedagogy of freedom. The designation 'freedom' is earned when the participants in this process can look back on their pedagogical intersubjective transaction and see that they have made the world better by communicating in a non-authoritarian, mutually beneficial way; a way that, by default, recognizes and respects the deeply contextual nature of learning. This pedagogy of freedom can't help but add some substance to our formal democracy, chipping away -- perhaps -- at the ideological edifice of instrumental rationality.
Abstract: This paper theorizes from the literature of feminism, sociology, historical materialism, and adult education to advance a feminist-materialist approach to the long-standing debates regarding individual and social dimensions of learning and the relationships between experience, learning, and consciousness.

Feminists have a long history of questioning the presuppositions of the field of adult education. These interrogations have ranged from the questioning of patriarchal biases and practices in adult education to the development of feminist epistemologies and pedagogies. The most recent feminist interventions have drawn heavily from post-structural theories of identity, difference, voice, and critiques of Enlightenment rationality. The influence of post-structuralist feminism on adult education appears to make sense given its emphasis on positionality, experience, and the self, all of which are particularly salient issues to adult educators. However, there remains an important conflict between post-structuralism and the critical tradition of education, particularly in regards to a critique of capitalist social relations and a vision of social transformation. Further, post-structuralists advance understandings of the self, the social, experience, and identity, which are rooted in the circulation of language and detached from the material world. The purpose of this paper is to reconsider the notions of the individual and social dimensions of adult learning and their relationship to experience as a central component of learning and consciousness from an alternative feminist framework.

I want to argue that a feminist-materialist framework, which is explicitly a Marxist-Feminist approach, adds a necessary dimension to on-going debates concerning the individual, the social, experience, learning, and consciousness; debates which remain active in our field as we struggle against a pervasive, psychologized focus on the individual. Marxist-Feminist scholarship attempts to develop the philosophical tradition of dialectical historical materialism as it relates to questions of race, gender, difference, identity and experience. The articulation of these categories by Marxist-Feminists is essential to the theory and practice of adult education, in a manner that radically departs from the political limitations of post-structural feminism. Feminist scholars in our field are already developing this analysis by examining educational practices such as mentoring (Colley, 2002), informal learning (Gorman, 2007), and learning in diaspora and under conditions of war (Mojab & Gorman, 2003; Mojab, 2009).2

Marxist-Feminism is, to me, not simply a set of theoretical constructs that I use to guide my interpretation of the world around me. Marxist-Feminism is a framework for inquiry, the production of knowledge, and political struggle; it has provided for me a way of looking at how the world is put together through the everyday activity of people and a way to understand how certain forms of knowledge come to dominate our consciousness and activity. In embracing the analytic foundations of Marx, my colleagues and I work from a particular strain of Marxist

---

2 I want to acknowledge and express my gratitude to my colleagues who have worked over the past few years to develop our thinking on this issue. In particular, Shahrzad Mojab, Amir Hassanpour, Paula Allman, Helen Colley, Bahar Biazar, Nadeen El-Kassem, Sheila Wilmot, Sheila Gruner, Bonnie Slade, Bethany Osborne, and Soheila Pashang.
theorizing, typically known as dialectical historical materialism, characterized by Marxist authors such as Derek Sayer, Bertell Ollman, and Martin Nicolaus, and tirelessly promoted in the field of adult education by Paula Allman. These theorists have directed our attention towards Marx’s critique of idealism and ideology, his development of the notion of dialectics, his understanding of the objectification of the social world, and his method of historical materialism. They deviate from positivist political economists in that they help us to understand how Marx himself learned to understand the social world and thus, how to go about conducting inquiry into its messy organization. They help us to understand Marx’s critique of idealism as an ideological method of thought that reifies the social world outside human activity, distorting our understanding of the relations of domination and exploitation that characterize our everyday lives. These authors impress upon us the importance of understanding dialectics as a method of seeing social relationships as composed of mutually determining forces; “opposites” that cannot develop outside of their relation to one another. They have guided us to the foundation of Marx’s thinking; the social world not as a structure or system, but as human activity and forms of consciousness, as intricate forms of human social relations. In this way, we come to understand Marx and Engels’ emphasis on “the material world” as a focus on the production and reproduction of our lives, which they characterized as a double relationship, both natural and social. (Marx & Engels, 1888/1991).

However, I move beyond the analyses of these authors by looking to feminist scholars such as Dorothy Smith, Himani Bannerji, Teresa Ebert, and Silvia Federici for a more thorough articulation of “material” and “social” relationships. From Dorothy Smith I draw a unique re-articulation of Marx’s ontology as a way of conducting social inquiry and as a way of understanding individual and institutional arrangements. Smith has demonstrated the contemporary forms through which the social world and our consciousness become objectified forces outside the individual. Himani Bannerji gives us a profoundly thorough articulation of the “social organization” of the material through the social relations of gender and race. Contrary to post-structural articulations of gender and race as discourses, Bannerji provides a Marxist-Feminist understanding of race and gender as “no less than active social organization” (2005, p. 149). Race and gender, she argues, are logics we use to organize our world, the ideas and knowledge we circulate, the ways in which we labor and produce. The social formations of race, gender, and class cannot be disarticulated from one another, but rather continually shape and influence how our behavior and consciousness of each develops and changes.

The Marxist-Feminist framework that I am proposing for adult education will focus on at least these aspects of the feminist extension of Marxist thought: the social world as socially organized racialized and gendered human relations; ideology as an epistemology for the reification of the social and the abstraction of the individual; and “praxis” as an articulation of the dialectical relationship between experience and consciousness, with particular emphasis on how experience is formed through material and social relationships. With this important project in mind, I limit my discussion here to revisiting a central relationship of adult learning theory: the individual, the social, and experience.

Revisiting the Individual and the Social in Adult Learning

The conceptual grounds of Marxist-Feminism, as articulated above, constitute the foundation of my understanding of the relationship between the individual and the social in adult learning. Historically, our theory of learning has been based on a very different understanding of this relationship. Early scholarship in the field of adult education emphasized, almost exclusively, the individual dimensions of learning. By individual, I mean that the focus of inquiry was on how
individuals change in the process of learning, specifically, how their behavior changes. There was little or no attention to the influence of the social on the individual. As has been widely noted, these behaviorist conceptions of learning limited our understanding of this complex phenomenon to its cognitive, and explicitly psychological, dimensions. As we have recognized the limitations of these purely cognitive approaches to learning, pragmatism came to dominate our understanding of learning. This scholarship, perhaps exemplified by the traditions of Dewey and Kolb, brought us to a point of understanding learning as a necessarily social activity, although they have been rightly critiqued for treating the social as flat context unconnected to contestations of power.

More recently, scholars in the field have attempted to widen our understanding of learning by promoting the importance of the social in adult learning theory. The importance of social context in learning process, particularly informal learning process akin to socialization, have been substantively discussed by Jarvis and Foley among others. On the whole, these authors have argued that learning is both an individual and social process. They have demonstrated how learning is necessarily cooperative, how it is deeply influenced by the social context in which it takes place and by the cultural constructions that dictate its parameters. Some feminist and anti-racist scholars have regarded this work as pseudo-social, arguing that it ultimately relies on a highly individualized conception of the “autonomous adult learner” (Gorman, 2007). The developments of transformative learning theory have directed attention to learning as a process of social construction, or meaning making. However, these articulations, which vary significantly from theorists such as Mezirow to Cunningham, have relied on an implicitly discursive understanding of the social. These various analyses have taken great pains to elaborate the importance of the social and in doing so have often neglected to say exactly what they think constitutes “the social.”

I would argue that adult learning theory is beleaguered by an ambiguous understanding of the social, and thus the individual, which often privileges one at the expense of the other. We have seen a recent resurgence re-naming of the problem of reducing the social to the individual and an increased sense that we can no longer account for certain social relations, such as capitalist patriarchy, through this myopic focus. Some authors, such as Jarvis, have rigorously established this relationship by, for example, drawing on Ponty’s phenomenological ontology. Other theorists have found inspiration in Habermas’ work. The common thread here is either an implicit or explicit objectification of the social. The social is understood, almost always, as something that exists outside the individual and with which the individual interacts. Our reaction to this problem has been to rely on a post-structuralist rejection of ontology, which at the same time embraces an understanding of the social world as the circulation of meaning. This is not a problem unique to adult education. It constitutes one of the oldest, and still most rigorous, debates in social theory.

For Marx, the problem of the individual and the social is intricately connected to the debate between idealism and various forms of materialism as philosophical frameworks. Briefly, Marx rejected idealist philosophy, which posited that human consciousness dictated social reality. The genius of The German Ideology is his proof that the exact opposite of idealism, a crude, deterministic materialist philosophy that argues that reality dictates consciousness, is in fact a repetition of idealism. For both of these perspectives, reality was only considered as “the object of contemplation, but not as sensuous human activity, practice, not subjectively” (Marx & Engels, 1888/1991 p. 121 emphasis in original). Marx and Engels argued that social theorists were thinking about social reality as merely forms of consciousness that exist outside of people; or in the language of adult educators, as knowledge or culture that is objectified outside the learner. Marx argued that social reality is human activity; the social world is made up of all the labors we
perform in cooperation with one another and the way we think and make meaning of this work. The relationship between reality and consciousness is not linear, but dialectic, and thus the relationship between the individual and the social is not static but cooperative. By this I mean, that if the social world is composed of our activity, then we cannot be separated from it. We are always active participants, at once leaders and followers, in the everyday world around us.

From a Marxist-Feminist perspective, the individual can only be understood through her/his relation with the social, as the two cannot be disarticulated from one another. It is for this reason that I use the language of “social relations,” as it guides me to constantly think about the social world as a complex of human activity and relations. The contribution of Marxist-Feminists to this Marxist ontology is to expand our understanding of “the material” as all human activity and organization that is gendered (generally) and “differenced” (specifically) through particularly salient relations of race, religion, ethnicity, caste, language; any axis upon which humanity is divided against itself (Bannerji, 2005). Adapting this sense of the social, and thus the individual, to the field of adult learning theory has vast implications, particularly for how we theorize epistemologies of racialized and gendered populations and approach our base assumption of learning as the acquisition of new knowledge or “meaning making.” However, to begin we must revise our understanding of the notion of “experience.”

A Revised Notion of Experience

If we work from this understanding of the social and the individual, then we must consider the messy relationship it posits between experience, learning, and consciousness. This relationship is significant for many theorists, but adult educators have paid special attention to it over the years. I glean my understanding of consciousness from Paula Allman’s work, particularly her excellent discussions on the dialectical relationships between experience and consciousness. However, Mojab has critiqued Allman’s work for limiting her discussion of the dialectic between materiality and consciousness to forms of labor power and not considering the ways in which labor power is racialized, gendered, and enacts embedded colonial relationships. Allman and Mojab’s work points us in the direction of an important revision of our notion of “experience” in adult learning.

Since the advent of Dewey’s work on experience and education and Lindeman’s influential assumptions about the nature of experience and learning, adult education theorists have held that “learning,” as opposed to “education” or “instruction,” is best theorized as some conceptualization of experience, reflection, behavioral change and/or changes in the interpretive domain, meaning that, through learning, we “make meaning” differently. How, then, do we understand experience? Dewey argued that experience can only be understood as “educative” if it contains the two principles of continuity and interaction. Following this logic, experiential learning theorists have pursued the theoretical and pedagogical implications of reflection and context, particularly in theories of reflective practice and situated cognition. This position lends itself to an emphasis on the individual processes of meaning-making and an examination of how those processes are mediated through the social. Often, the notion of experience is itself left alone; experiences are just something that happens. Jarvis (1987) has taken pains to elaborate on the philosophical, sociological, and psychological dimensions of experience and argues that experience “involves relationships between people and their socio-cultural milieu” (p. 164). This interactionist logic results in an “all the world’s a stage” argument that again separates the

---

3 Mojab has articulated this critique is a forthcoming book chapter on adult education and imperialism.
individual out from relations in the social and simultaneously fails to tell us anything more about experience. Post-structuralist critiques of the interactionist argument have left experience at an ambiguous location between meaning, representation, and identity. The inability of post-structural theorists to explain experience, rather than just describe it, is largely attributable to their refusal to ground meaning in materiality.

I want to propose that in the field of adult education we have largely relied on a reified notion of experience as the basis of learning theory. By reification I do not mean commodification; this is a relationship that has been profoundly misunderstood and misarticulated in our field. By reification I mean, simply, “mistaking abstract concepts for real entities” (Sayer, 1987 p. 54). This is part of the process Marx refers to as ideology and which Dorothy Smith argues are procedures that mask and suppress the grounding of a social science: ideological procedures fix time in an abstract conceptual order. They derive social relations and order from concepts...They substitute concepts for the concerting of the activities of people as agents and forces in history (Smith, 1990 p. 34).

As adult educators, we have largely theorized experience as something that comes from somewhere else. This conceptualization is subtle and pervasive; we can see it in the ongoing positing of the social world as structures systems, or discourses that impact us, rather than as human relations in which we participate in active, but contradictory ways.

If we follow a Marxist-Feminist ontology, “experience” is our participation in disjointed social relations (Dorothy Smith, 1988). This means, we do not attempt to understand experience as a pre-reflective, sensory driven phenomenon. Instead, we focus on the “particular historical forms of social relations that determine that experience” (p. 49). In this way, we move beyond understanding “the ideas, images, and symbols in which our experience is given social form as that neutral floating thing called culture” (p. 54). Instead, we focus on how we construct knowledge from our experience in relation to delineating the historical and material relations that condition it and which constitute the social world in which our experience takes place. From a Marxist-Feminist perspective, the notion of experience must consider the complexity of these material appearances and forms. This is something that as adult educators we have struggled to do and have recently fallen back on notions of subjectivity and difference to understand experience. But, as Himani Bannerji has argued, the self is not a “found object on the ground of ontology, nor are they to be seen only as functions of discourses” (2001 p. 3). By this Bannerji is referring to the Marxist epistemological notion that individuals and their practice in the world are the embodiment of the dialectical relationship between forms of consciousness and the active human social relations that make up our everyday experience.

**Moving Forward to Learning and Consciousness**

A Marxist-Feminist notion of adult learning begins where every constructivist theory of adult learning begins, with an assumption of who individuals are in the social world and what constitutes their experience. However, rather than posit the individual as an autonomous subject that interacts with a swirling world outside them and beyond their powers, Marxist-Feminists approach everyday people and their learning as an active human project based in human agencies. This implies an extremely dynamic relationship between learning and consciousness, one in which we may be able to expand the notion of dialectics as the ongoing movement of contradictions in the social world to learning as the ongoing movement of consciousness through the movements of contradictions between experience and meaning. The efforts by Marxist-Feminist educators to revise our notion of adult learning are not limited to reworking our
theoretical paradigms for the purposes of new descriptions of social phenomenon. Rather, a Marxist-Feminist notion of adult learning pushes us to consider the relationship between active social organization, re-organization, and learning; while consciousness moves in unconscious ways, the outcome of educational efforts will not be just new ways to make meaning, but transformed human relations and practice.

References
Patterns of Knowledge Construction

Bo Chang
Department of Lifelong Education, Administration and Policy, the University of Georgia

Abstract: Based on Berger & Luckmann’s (1967) social constructionism framework, the purpose of this study is to identify the knowledge construction patterns and the conditions for these patterns to occur in a learning community in Shanghai, China.

In an effort to address recent social problems, China is engaged in building a harmonious society through many strategies, one of which is to develop a lifelong learning society. Influenced by the lifelong education movement, from 2001 to 2008, 114 national community pilots (Notice of the fourth list of the national community education pilots, 2008), and hundreds of local community pilots were established in China to radiate knowledge from small social units such as learning salons and learning clubs to the local communities, and further to the whole society. This kind of collective learning is gradually becoming an important topic nowadays. In collective learning, learners are immersed in the local learning context, are shaped by it and learn to improve themselves and the local community by radiating the individual knowledge to the public. Few studies examine the topic of how to learn and construct knowledge collectively in the local community. The purpose of this study is to understand how knowledge is constructed in a learning community in Shanghai, China, with two research questions (1) what are the patterns of knowledge construction? (2) Under what conditions do these patterns occur?

Methodology

I targeted one of these 114 Chinese national community pilots: the Zhabei Learning Community (the Zhabei District, one of the administrative districts of Shanghai, China). Based on the epistemology of social constructionism, an embedded case study was employed to examine learning in the Zhabei district and its nine learning cells. Administratively, the Zhabei District is divided into eight streets (the administrative divisions, similar to wards) and one town. To represent the general features of the Zhabei Learning Community, I selected nine learning cells from the northern, the middle, and the southern parts of Zhabei. Those nine learning cells, consisting of two programs, three clubs, one salon, and three organizations selected from six streets, are the embedded sub-cases. Then from within the nine learning cells, I selected four learners representing each of the following five groups: elderly people, migrant workers, unemployed workers, white-collar workers, and leaders. Participants ranged in age from 20 to 80 years old. Their education levels ranged from those having only attended middle school to those having college degrees. Observation, document, and semi-structured interviews were employed to collect data. Twenty qualified participants were interviewed for one to two hours according to a list of open-ended questions about their learning and life experiences. Data was analyzed inductively using the constant comparative method. By comparing data from those five groups of participants, six knowledge construction patterns emerged.

Findings

Six patterns of knowledge construction emerged from the data of 20 interviewees: radiation, circulation, simulation, socialization, contextualization, and composition. Based on Berger & Luckmann’s (1967) theory about how reality is constructed, circulation, simulation,
socialization, contextualization, and composition mainly emphasize the process of knowledge creation. While radiation especially targets how created knowledge spreads to a larger social unit.

**Radiation**

Radiation refers to how knowledge is shared among learners and radiated from the individual learners to the public through certain tools (see figure 1). In figure 1, the dots in the inner circle refer to the individual knowledge in its learning cells. The outer circles refer to the local community and to the other outside communities. Learning experiences from Jiang, Lin, Hong, Wan and Hao showed that this pattern appeared in their learning cells. Lin, from the Ground Calligraphy Salon, described how they wrote the ground calligraphy in front of the parks and also how they expanded the ground calligraphy knowledge from the individuals to the public.

*Chang:* “I know that your ground calligraphy group also performed for non-profit events. I guess there must have been many interesting stories.”

*Lin:* “Ha-ha, yeah. Too many. For example, some Chinese from England, America, and Canada told me: ‘Oh, Old Mr., we saw you on TV. Oh, you are writing here. ..’ Our activities were also reported in the newspaper. Some foreigners asked me to teach them how to write. Now I am the mentor of a student from America.”

Lin himself and his members extended their learning circle not only to people from a larger area in Shanghai and to people from other parts of China, but also to people from other countries as well. Lin said: “It does not matter if your calligraphy is good or not. The most important thing is that you can make friends. When I saw them (people passing by the parks), I always asked them to write. It is good.” On June 3, 2008, I observed the Ground Calligraphy activity in front of Zhabei Park. I saw some calligraphers writing down some traditional Chinese classical poems and the traditional Hundred Family Names. One calligrapher there asked the people passing by the park to write on the ground. Some people did write and bought the oversized calligraphy brushes to practice. Ground calligraphy is like a bridge that connects learners and the public.

Like any other learning activities provided for the elderly, Baoshan Photography Salon in Zhabei provides a communication platform for senior citizens who are interested in photography to share their photographic knowledge with others. Jiang, the team leader of the Salon, told me they used their cameras as tools to record historical heritage and important local events, and to transfer a message of societal love and care to the disadvantaged people in a local community, and even to the people outside of the community (omit the evidence, below I only use “omit”).

A migrant who married a Shanghainese, Hong from the Sisters Club, excitedly described her special experience of learning the Shanghai dialect. To learn the Shanghai dialect is not just to learn a survival skill in the competitive Shanghai society. Her learning experience was broadcast via TV, which significantly influenced her view about the future. Through the medium of TV, she realized how important knowledge could be in her development process. She felt that knowledge could change her social status, and could help to increase her quality of life. Hong’s learning experience is not only an individual activity; it was shared with the public through a TV report. This motivated more and more migrants to learn. Many migrant workers in China do not have ambitious dreams for their future. Living in big cities like Shanghai, they work hard for their living. Hong’s story about how her learning experience changed her life was broadcast on TV and influenced other migrants too. Some migrants realized how important knowledge could be in improving their lives and would like to follow Hong as their model.

The three examples above show how individual learning not only enriched the individual learners’ lives; it also radiated to the public and became a collective activity influencing the people in or outside of the community. Culture products such as ground calligraphy, newspapers,
photography, and television play an important role in radiating a new belief, a new message, and new knowledge from individuals to the public. This radiating process binds the individuals and the public together and creates an atmosphere of trust and harmony in the local community.

Conditions: In order for this pattern to occur, there are four requirements: (1) free access to the local learning resources; (2) public communication platforms and tools; (3) a shared theme or topic connecting the learners and the public together; (4) a loose and open learning structure.

Circulation

Circulation emphasizes how people gain certain knowledge by accessing all of its dimensions/profiles and circulating around its multiple mini-knowledge bases. In figure 2, the dots refer to the multiple dimensions/profiles of knowledge. The arrows refer to the process of going through every dimension/profile of the knowledge. Learning experiences from 10 participants show that this pattern occurred in their learning cells.

Figure 1: Radiation Figure 2: circulation Figure 3: Simulation

In Zhabei, the government organized a free one-day trip to Shanghai for migrant workers as part of the activities to get the migrants involved in Shanghai life. This excursion provided a good opportunity for the migrant workers to get to know Shanghai from different angles. Hong, from the Sisters Club, described how she got to know Shanghai through this type of one-day trip (omit). This one day trip enabled these migrant workers to imbibe Shanghai’s history and also facts about modern Shanghai by going sightseeing and visiting different areas of the city. Every area of Shanghai, such as the Bund Sightseeing Tunnel and The Shanghai Urban Planning Exhibition Hall embodies one particular knowledge base of Shanghai. For example, the Bund Sightseeing Tunnel represents high technology and the modern style of metropolitan Shanghai. The Shanghai Urban Planning Exhibition Hall deposits the historical documents of Shanghai. These field trips are like a living knowledge that is directly and strongly presented in front of these migrants who seldom have an opportunity to involve in the society of Shanghai. More important is the fact that the organizers connected this entertainment trip together with a purposeful interpretation, which enabled the migrants to better understand the background knowledge behind all of the sightseeing.

Shen, a male migrant worker attending the New Shanghainese Club, told me how the Dragon Dance, one part of their activities in the club, took him to different places in Shanghai and increased his knowledge about Shanghai and his confidence to live in Shanghai. He said: We were invited by a boss from Wenzhou to perform the Dragon Dance to celebrate the opening ceremony of his enterprise... Even if he would not have paid me, I still would have wanted to go. For us migrant workers, we may never have such an opportunity in our life to visit such a place. .. When we fist stepped into this city, we got totally lost. Sometimes we felt scared.

For Shen, the Dragon Dance as an interaction tool enabled him to visit different places such as luxurious hotels, various exhibitions, and to experience the social life that the upper class society enjoyed. These experiences of traveling around to different places and experiencing the social life of Shanghai introduced the different profiles of Shanghai to the migrant workers. Migrant workers like Shen not only know Shanghai better now, but have increased their confidence in being a part of this metropolis that was once out of reach from their world.

Wan vividly described how she learned a whole package of policies about employment through dealing with a large employment case that occurred in a complicated situation. This case was like a knowledge database of employment that covered most of the relevant employment
policies. After Wan finished this case, she said she had gone through most of the policies on employment and gained the systematic knowledge about employment policies.

**Conditions:** (1) focus on the same theme to organize a series of learning activities and to address the multiple dimensions of that certain knowledge; (2) the similar activities can be re-organized to help learners access to the multi-mini-knowledge base of the new knowledge.

**Simulation**

Simulation emphasizes how people gain knowledge through a process of observation, imitation, and adaptation. In figure 3, No. 1, 2, 3 and 4 on the left side refer to a whole package of imitated knowledge. No. 1, 2, 3, and 4 on the right side refer to a whole package of new simulated knowledge. The arrow refers to the process of observation, imitation, and adaptation to the new context. This pattern occurred in the learning cells that 13 participants attended. Xing and Qiong mentioned that they improved their professional skills by observing the other professional teams, and adapting their skills according to their own situation. Qiong said that after he observed the catwalk by the Elderly people from the Jing’an district, he finally understood why he could not make a good turn in some catwalks. He said everyone is different; and that the instructor could only give one the general rules about the walk, which sometimes might not be appropriate for some learners. Observing other groups’ catwalk enabled him to see clearly what steps he missed. In order to simulate knowledge well, Qiong said that the learners should have a similar level of knowledge as the observed people. Xing’s experience reflected this point. She said that she had a very good ability to imitate. However, she still could not understand why she failed to imitate some steps sometimes, the cause of which might be her misinterpreting some steps and imitating some steps in the wrong direction. It is necessary, therefore, for the learners to have a similar level of knowledge as those whom they are imitating. If not, communication is necessary to solve the problem of misunderstanding.

Some strategies are required for good communication. Xing said because of the yearly competitive evaluation of the Chorus groups in Zhabei, the Chorus groups in different streets rarely communicate with each other. Thus, they had to learn from the other groups through observation. Hu told me that she has no problem in communicating with her colleagues from other streets because they are from different organizations and there is no conflict of interest between them. Gu said that his mentors happily showed him their tacit knowledge because they have complimentary knowledge and they feel comfortable “imitating” knowledge from each other. Chau provided another take on this issue. He said in order for mentors to voluntarily communicate their special tacit knowledge with their apprentices, the Shanghai H.B. Power Co. would reward the mentors when their apprentices gain the special knowledge, and would cancel the mentors’ bonus if their apprentices worked poorly. Usually the mentors were much older than the apprentices were and would retire soon. They would feel much more comfortable sharing whatever they know without perceiving threats. Chau also used his experience to indicate that trust, respect, and love are the important factors which enable mentors to show their apprentices their tacit knowledge. He said, “I treated my mentor like my father, and he treated me like his son. Which father would not like to impart to his son the special skills that he has?”

**Conditions:** (1) have similar structures between the imitated object and the new simulated object; (2) understand the whole package (for example, 1, 2, 3 and 4 in figure 3) of the imitated objects instead of only part of them; (3) make sure that the observers have a similar level of knowledge as that of the observed; (4) ensure sufficient communication (4) provide a safe and trusting learning environment.

**Socialization**
Socialization emphasizes how people are involved in, adapted to and accepted by the changed socio-cultural context, and are molded by certain directions through selectively learning specific beliefs, attitudes, knowledge, perceptions, skills, and certain experiences. In figure 4, the first figure refers to the learners in their original context. The second figure refers to the learners in a changed context; the third figure refers to the learners that have already adapted to a new context. The arrows refer to the influencing factors imposing on the learners. When the context changes dramatically, the influencing factors will become dramatic and will direct or even “force” the learners to change.

Nine participants experienced socialization. It was especially dramatic on Sun, Hong, and Shen. Sun, who worked for nine years at one company in Shanghai before the 1992 Business Reform, told me how he has been pushed and shaped by the quick social changes since 1992.

Sun: Based upon my personality, I wanted to work (within one field) until I become old.
Bo: Then why did you job-hop?

Sun: The national system reform (1992 business reform)...In 1992, those who had worked for less than ten years were totally laid-off, no matter whether you were excellent or not....1992 was a big social change, a turning point...in the past two years, the pace of reform has become quicker and quicker, like a wheel, which started to turn in 1992, and that is now turning quicker and quicker until now.

Before 1992, Sun enjoyed a stable career at one company. Like many other Shanghainese of his age, he did not think it was necessary for him to get a college degree. After 1992, he was laid off due to the business reform in Shanghai and was tired of chasing after the changed society. He worked for one and a half years in a real estate company ran by a friend, then he left to help his brother run an international business for another one and a half years. Then he changed jobs again and worked for the N.J. Restaurant for six months. He felt he was drifting along the flood of the reforms and could not find his own position in society. He said, “It is not what I want to do, but what I can do,” which vividly described how he attempted to adapt to the changes in society. “It is just not going that smoothly. When you walk in this direction, it seems there’s something missing; when you walk that way, another thing is missing too,” he said. He could not find the key to adapt to this changed society. Social reforms broke Sun’s stable life and his previous knowledge base. He tried very hard to dance with the rhythms of the social changes, and he changed his jobs from one field to another. He did not find out what kind of knowledge or skills he needed to learn in order to adapt to this new, changed society. Basically, he lost his way in his socialization process without participating in the supportive learning programs.

Hong, a shop assistant, especially mentioned how she used the language she learned from the Sisters Club as an important tool to be involved in Shanghai society:

“When you go shopping, they hear what you say (in Mandarin). Oh, they know you are outsider, they will rip you off, and the price will be higher. If they hear you speak Shanghai dialect, they will treat you better...Even if they know you are a migrant, if they hear you are speaking the Shanghai dialect, they know you have lived in Shanghai for quite a long time, and know you know things well, he dares not cheat you, right? This is from a very practical point of view. I said: A’La (Shanghai dialect for “I am”) Shanghainese. (Laugh), I pretended (to be a Shanghainese), right? Some people just want to bargain the prices with you and flatter you. Oh, I tell you!”

Shanghai society, which developed its own institutionalized norms and culture, differentiated outsiders from the local Shanghainese through the use of the Shanghai dialect. People speaking the same language are included in the same cultural community and share the similar tacit knowledge embedded in the daily life practices. Participating in the Shanghai dialect program and other migrant programs provided by the Sisters Club enabled Hong to become
successfully involved in Shanghai daily life practices. She was informed of the Shanghai culture and norms embedded in those daily life practices and was proud of being one of the Shanghainese. The urge to be involved in Shanghai society, to be adapted to it and finally to be accepted as one part of it, directed Hong to learn the Shanghai dialect and to use the new language as a tool to reframe her new social roles and positions in Shanghai. However, not every learning program aiming at socialization resulted in a positive outcome. (omit) Sheng’s negative impression about traditional bureaucracy occurred after he experienced some bureaucratic learning activities, which spoiled the good image of Shanghai he had built up through a series of previous socialized activities. Basically his socialization process backfired.

**Conditions:**
1. The learners should be involved in the new context
2. The learners should identify the gap between their previous knowledge and the knowledge required by the new context, and be able to fill this gap;
3. The message of socialization should be consistently supported in the learning process.

**Contextualization**

Contextualization refers to learning or creating new knowledge by engaging in and adapting to the authentic resources, materials, and the culture of the local context (see figure 5) (omit).

**Conclusion**

The aim of the Zhabei learning community is to create a lifelong learning environment for its local people. Focusing on the discourse of creating a harmonious lifelong learning community, the government built the administrative and professional networks from the top down, nurtured the non-governmental organizations, the learning groups and the learning cells from the grassroots, and guided the direction of the learning community through multiple strategies such as evaluation, project bidding, and community services. To explore the local knowledge, the Zhabei Learning Community embraced the community issues, community heritage and resources in the learning activities and formulated the core learning activities. Six knowledge construction patterns occurred in this lifelong learning community, which in return contributed to the local community development.

**References**

“You realize that it’s not always as it seems”: What Adults Learn about Management when Writing their own Management Cases

Rosemary B. Closson, Ph.D. University of South Florida
Carmeda Stokes, University of South Florida

Abstract: The purpose of this study was to understand student’s perceived learning outcomes in a program management course employing the seldom used process of “learner case writing” as a teaching-learning technique.

Experiential learning, cognitive scaffolding and narrative as a means to extend consciousness (Scheckly & Bell, 2006) serve as primary lenses for understanding our learner case writing technique (LCW). We frame the technique within the broad and amorphous arena of experiential learning. Implied in the constructivist model of experiential learning (Fenwick, 2000) is the capacity to narrate and reflect on one’s life experiences. LCW and related forms rely on learner narratives that seem to be unexamined except by Carter (1999) and Merrill (2004).

Case study is one of seven (Barrows, 1986) PBL approaches that could be arranged on a continuum of learner-centeredness. On one end of the continuum the learner is most active and the problem is least structured—action learning might be an example and on the opposite end might be the case study technique—a circumstance where the learner’s involvement is limited to analyzing the case, primarily a passive activity (Lohman, 2002). Learner case writing (LCW) falls somewhere near the middle.

Learner Case Writing Literature Review

Learner case writing is related but different from case study. Case study typically means that learners analyze a pre-written case; in case writing learners research and write about a critical management incident from their own work history or an incident in their own organization. We found three studies that researched LCW, two from undergraduate programs (56 teacher preparation students; a business school human relations course of 165 students). The third study described research with physicians in continuing medical education (CME). A similarity across the outcomes of the three studies’ was an increase in the learner’s ability to tie theory to practice. According to the researchers, pre-service teachers moved from “naïve generalizations to sophisticated, theory-based explanations” (Hammerness, Darling-Hammond & Shulman, 2002, p. 219) which the researchers attribute to numerous cognitive scaffolding techniques embedded in the course. Undergraduate business students also reported they were better able to apply course concepts as a result of the activity giving it a mean rating of 4.12 on a 5-point scale (Bailey, Sass, Swiercz, Seales and Kayes, 2005). Business students agreed that writing a case drawn from personal experience better enabled them to apply course concepts to “realistic situations” rating this item 4.24 (Bailey et al., 2005). Ryan and Marlow (2004) used learner generated cases with family and general practice physicians in CME. Their goal was to enhance learner engagement with content and also to reflect “the contextual nuances of individual and collective practices” (p. 117). Similar to Bailey et al. the physicians used their experience (professional practice) to collectively build a case during the program. Research findings indicated that reflective dialogue during the case building process was the primary benefit to attendees.

Cognitive scaffolding and coaching were not consistently cited as parts of the case writing activities described but it is clear that multiple drafts, peer-reading (Hammerness et al., 2002) and...
instructor/content expert feedback (Hammerness et al., 2002 and Ryan & Marlow, 2004) were central supports. Each LCW activity described here makes constructivist assumptions about the nature of learning from experience in other words that adult learners can, to a certain extent, objectify their experience.

**Method**

The epistemological undergirding for this study is constructionism—the belief that students construct their learning through engagement with the learning environment. Therefore, we took a phenomenological approach in order to study the student’s subjective learning experiences through the case writing activity.

All participants in the study were graduate students enrolled in an adult education master’s program management course taught during the spring and summer 2008 semesters. Seventeen students participated in our study. Electronic student journal submissions and student responses to online discussion board questions were recorded/collected through the university’s Blackboard system throughout the semester. At the end of the semester, students were asked to provide process feedback and to participate in group and individual interview conducted by the researchers to capture students' overall perceptions of the case writing process as well as case-based learning. Researchers independently reviewed student journals, discussion board entries, and transcripts of group and individual interviews for reoccurring themes and identified the key themes that emerged from the data collected. Finally, researchers developed a matrix containing major themes and excerpts from journal entries and interviews to manage the data collected and assess how frequently themes occurred.

**Learner Case Writing Process and Findings**

The process we used for LCW is described in the following table.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>LCW Process</th>
<th>Student Actions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Case Story (Maslin-Ostrowski &amp; Ackerman in Galbraith, 1998)</td>
<td>Wrote a short story about a management dilemma student experienced or observed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Case Analysis</td>
<td>Reviewed, analyzed and received feedback on a pre-written case.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Modification of Rubric</td>
<td>Reviewed and suggested revisions to the rubric</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Field Research</td>
<td>Based on guidelines in the syllabus, outlined their case story, developed interview questions for relevant parties, requested permission to conduct the research.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Case Construction</td>
<td>Constructing their own case by synthesizing case story, field research, feedback and rubric</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Guiding Questions/Prompts</td>
<td>Instructor feedback focuses learners on course concepts and prompts them to consider organization of their case.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feedback</td>
<td>During data collection students submitted drafts of their case for peer and instructor feedback.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Case Study Presentation</td>
<td>Synthesized course concepts across cases.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Having participated in the LCW process students have consistently projected an increased ability to be reflective about management issues. For example one states: “I learned to dissect the case and think about it from the outside looking in.” And another, “As you do this case …throughout the day or throughout the week…it kind of helps you think about what your next step might be…
And finally, “I realized that the [manager] I wrote about … how he might have felt and his perspective on the whole ordeal.” Revisiting a real workplace issue to which the student either was a part or personally observed allows them during their field interviews to listen to key parties reflect on the management decisions they made and how they might have handled it differently. This opportunity to listen to the reflections of others seems to aid our students in appreciating the value of reflection because they can see how often their initial impression of the incident was very different from the perspective they were now privy to. The most exciting finding is that the LCW seems, in some instances, to operate similar to action research and has resulted in long-term outcomes. For example, in one instance the student’s field interviews conducted resulted in a campus committee being established with our student as chair to further examine the problem and to seek potential solutions.

Reflection on past experience pointed some learners towards revised understanding of self. Several of our learners commented about increased self-awareness that they linked to the LCW. For example, one student who even though he struggled with course concepts said that he “learned how to get feedback from my environment.” Another student indicated that as she interviewed and synthesized her LCW assignment she was able to analyze what aspects of her work she did and did not like and could use that going forward to her next position.

LCW is inherently a reflective process but reflection as a theme was more pronounced in the spring face-to-face course than in the summer online course. On a slightly different note, it was surprising how often students in both semesters noted the usefulness of claims, grounds and warrant as analytical tools when considering management choices. We have strongest evidence for the transferral of this tool than any other concept in the course. Here is a sample: … “I tried to, basically attempt to make a change in some of the programs and one of them has been used now and its working. … And, we sat down and actually wrote what would be the risk, claims, grounds and warrants and discussed them and decided what would be the best motive to attempt to try and go forward with it” (RI, 24:10).

Overall themes based on student’s case writing seem to be positive. Students indicate that the case writing provides rich context for the management concepts we teach in our program management course. Further, the students appear to be transferring important management skills back to their workplace.

**Discussion**

Because learners research familiar management dilemmas they have the opportunity to gain multiple perspectives on an issue that they thought they understood. This provides an element of cognitive dissonance that draws the learner’s attention to the importance of multiple perspectives. The act of management is one that requires the manager to take on varying roles and perspectives in order to succeed. The LCW activity seems to provide students with that opportunity to see in more than one way and as we heard above in the student’s voices this was beneficial to them on a professional level, as managers or prospective managers, as well as on the personal level. An unexpected outcome was that students found the activity revealing on a personal level. For example, the student who said he “learned how to get feedback from his environment” was locked in a bitter battle with his principal concerning military leave. After conducting interviews he realized the considerable constraints the principal operated under in trying to locate a replacement for him. He gained greater insight about the delicate balance managers/principals have to set between meeting client needs (parents and students) and meeting employee needs. So when he said he learned how to get feedback he means he now knows not to assume he understands the management perspective, not to immediately make a management dilemma a personal issue but to ask questions.
Among all of the concepts addressed in the course the concept most prominent for students was that of claims, grounds, and warrant (Quinn, Faerman, Thompson, McGrath, 2007) which is presented in the course as ways to frame and analyze an argument. It was a concept students seem to find immediately useful and it was a frequent theme within our data. And although this theme presents a clear indication that some students were able to transfer course concepts to their work fewer students were able to make linkages between management concepts and program management in adult education.

Scaffolding is important in LCW especially because of the widespread response from students that engaging in any type of case study activity was a first time experience for them. They identified the helpfulness of reading and analyzing a case study before writing one as a key support in the process. Reviewing and providing feedback on or, as one class did, constructing the case writing rubric was also identified as helpful.

In closing this discussion we want to draw in the value of personal narrative and its relationship to the change of body state (COBS) that Sheckley and Bell (2006) describe when explaining the neuroscience of the brain. The authors posit that the feelings and sensations that change the state of the body become part of the neural path that can form durable neural circuits aiding us to remember the experience (p.43). In the field of adult education it is conventional wisdom that learning is enhanced when we move from the known to the unknown and these authors provide neurological support for this learning strategy. They explain that new concepts will adhere best to prior change of body state experiences. Our LCW process seems to parallel strategies Sheckley and Bell suggest. Their Strategy One is to begin with the baseline of prior experience. On the first night of class we ask students to write their case story based on a management dilemma they have experienced. Strategy Two is to extend learner’s consciousness. In this step the adult educator’s goal is to help the student “to remove the blinders of their prior experiences” (p.48) which we accomplish when students are exposed in the course to various management strategies and ways of framing problems. Strategy Three: enriching consciousness entails choosing experiences that “have a high probability for prompting COBS episodes” (p.49). We have students conduct field research on a “live” management dilemma where one goal is for them to show how course concepts inform their case.

Implications

Case writing uses real life situations and requires active participation of adult learners and thus seems a beneficial addition to the education of adults. And like Ryan and Marlow (2004) we found that students believe it promotes reflection on practice. The effectiveness of this activity in our courses suggests that case writing is a worthwhile activity for adult education students because it provides needed context to the learning of management skills and grounds abstract management concepts in a workplace environment familiar to students. However, we also find that a good deal of scaffolding is required to assist the students in creating their own case.

Based on this, implications for practice are that LCW has a significant place in the adult education classroom but that a variety of supports are required to assist the students to learn how to create their own case. We suggest the following: assessment rubric for creating a case, doing a case study analysis early in the course so that students read a professionally written case, outline the steps to conducting the required field research and provide several opportunities for faculty and peer feedback.
References


From Careers Adviser to Personal Adviser: Emotion, Ethics, Politics and Learning in a Disrupted Community of Practice

Helen Colley
Manchester Metropolitan University, UK

Abstract: This paper discusses recent policy reforms in career guidance for young people in England. It offers a case study of disruption to an established community of practice; presents evidence of its emotional, ethical and political effects; considers the implications for workplace learning and reconsiders theoretical conceptualisations of ‘communities of practice’.

Communities of Practice, Learning as Becoming, and the Dynamics of Social Participation

In recent years, interest has grown among adult education researchers in using the concepts of situated learning and ‘communities of practice’ (Lave & Wenger, 1991; Wenger, 1998) in order to understand workplace learning. Such a perspective treats learning as a process of becoming and belonging, of membership and identity; that is to say, as a process of social participation. Novices are viewed as engaging initially in ‘legitimate peripheral participation’ alongside experienced ‘old-timers’, and moving over time towards ‘full participation’ themselves.

Understanding of the dynamics of participation in communities of practice is, however, far less developed. They are usually assumed to be unidirectional, and studies within this theoretical framework have focussed predominantly on initial entry to professions, on ‘becoming’ and then ‘being’ (Colley et al., 2007). Lave & Wenger’s (1991) original focus on novices’ learning has since been extended to consider processes of exclusion for would-be entrants (Wenger, 1998; Colley, 2006b); boundaries between multiple communities of practice (Fuller & Unwin, 2003); and the impact of already-experienced adults entering a new community of practice (Hodkinson & Hodkinson, 2004). However, any alternative dynamics, such as the outward movement of full members from a community of practice, have largely been neglected.

One exception is a previous study (Colley et al., 2007) which explored the decisions of tutors in English colleges of further education (similar to community colleges in the US, or TAFE colleges in Australia) to quit their profession. These decisions were often taken, very painfully, as the implementation of national and local policies based on economic competitiveness eliminated the space which tutors had fought to preserve, in order to enact pedagogies to which they had a deep commitment, such as those based on a politics of social justice. This paper reports a more recent study, funded by the UK Economic and Social Research Council. It investigates the case of a community of practice that has experienced a high level of disruption as a result of national and policies and their local implementation: the career guidance profession working with 14-19 year olds in England.

14-19 Career Guidance in England: a Disrupted Community of Practice

14-19 career guidance in England has undergone several major restructurings over the last 15 years. From 1973, a national careers service, based in local education authorities, had provided a universal service to all young people in schools and colleges. In 1994, this service was privatised and fragmented into over 70 competing local companies. Following the election of the New Labour government in 1997, careers companies were expected to ‘refocus’ their resources on ‘disaffected’ youth. In 2001, they were incorporated whole scale into a new youth support service, Connexions. This was a generic service, nationally co-ordinated, but delivered locally in
different ways. It also included youth workers, social workers, education welfare officers and others, who were seconded from other ‘home’ services to which (unlike careers advisers) they could return. It was strongly targeted at young people who were not in (formal) education, training and employment (NEET), or at risk of so becoming. Without discrete careers services in England, there was no longer a core specialist infrastructure for the profession, nor any national organisation within the 14-19 system that had career guidance as its main remit (DfES, 2005a; Watts, 2006b). The most recent reforms, in April 2008, abolished the national Connexions service and devolved its funding back to local authorities’ Childrens’ Trusts (responsible for all forms of 0-19 provision), re-fragmenting it into a variety of ownership and delivery models that is still proliferating.

At the same time, the role of English careers advisers has substantially changed. Policies claim to promote a more holistic and personalised approach to youth support, and all practitioners working in Connexions, including careers advisers, have been re-designated as ‘personal advisers’ (PAs), supposedly creating a ‘new profession’. PAs’ role was supposed to centre on mentoring young people through long-term, caring relationships in order to engage them with formal education and training systems. Government-set targets focus on working with young people in or at risk of entering the ‘NEET’ group, and dealing with issues such as drug abuse, teenage pregnancy, and mental health issues alongside career-related issues. The service is tiered, and clients are prioritised through processes of triage and tracking. Most resources are devoted to young people deemed to need ‘intensive support’, then to those with ‘medium’ support needs; far fewer resources are allocated for work with ‘mainstream’ youngsters deemed to need ‘minimum support’. However, findings from a national survey conducted at the start of our project show that, at best, only half of the promised number of personal advisers have been employed in Connexions, leaving it drastically under-resourced (Lewin et al, 2009); and public spending on career guidance in this sector has been reduced by 15.5% not accounting for inflation (McGowan et al., 2009).

Many concerns have been raised about the reduced capacity of Connexions to provide career guidance, and to offer the universal service to which all young people are still legally entitled (see, for example, NAO, 2004; Mulvey, 2006). However, so far little research attention has been paid to the impact of these reforms on the career guidance profession itself, although the location and status of the career guidance profession have shifted in an unprecedented way. The study focuses, therefore, on what these changes mean for the professional roles, identities and practices of careers advisers and – more broadly – for the dynamics of professional participation in communities of practice; that is to say, for practitioners’ own learning and for the capacity of the profession as a whole.

**Methodology**

The study primarily used narrative ‘career history’ interviews to investigate the experiences of 26 practitioners who had trained as careers advisers and had subsequently been employed as personal advisers (PAs) in Connexions. All were volunteers. Participants were selected in equal numbers from three different ‘eras’ of training and lengths of experiences. Two thirds were still working as personal advisers in three local Connexions services (these also kept time-use diaries for two weeks), and one third had chosen to leave Connexions and seek employment elsewhere. Reflecting the overall gender balance in this caring profession, about 80% of the sample was female. This paper draws on narrative syntheses (Moustakas), or emplotments (Polkinghorne) constructed from these career histories. We present narratives
which typify different dynamics of participation in the community of practice of career guidance – becoming, unbecoming, and not-becoming – that emerged from the data.

**Yvonne: From Being to Unbecoming**

Yvonne trained as a careers adviser many years ago. She now works in Connexions as an ‘education PA’, but resists that designation. She still regards herself as a careers adviser, and tries to ensure that she is viewed as such by clients, parents, the schools in which they worked, and other youth support professionals. She is employed in a service strongly led by the management of the former careers company, which resisted the national policy emphasis on targeting young people who are ‘NEET’. It is located in an affluent borough, with many high-achieving schools, and a very low rate of non-participation by young people. Headteachers continue to express a strong demand for a universal career guidance service for their pupils, and the Connexions service has been committed to meeting this demand.

Although Yvonne feels that her role in Connexions has widened, she also feels that it has been undermined. A very high caseload means that she now cannot see all the young people in her schools, compromising the universal service, yet she believes that all young people have a need for career guidance. (The exclusion of this need from policy definitions of young people’s needs was a recurrent theme in many of our interviews with ‘education PAs’.)

Liaison with schools now focuses more on the triage of each cohort, to identify priority clients, rather than on supporting curriculum development, and careers education programmes have often been much reduced. As a result, pupils do not have access to information about educational and career opportunities, and are sometimes misinformed by teachers. This makes it difficult for Yvonne to practice in-depth guidance with individual pupils, as she has to spend most of her time with them explaining the basics of their options, or correcting misconceptions. In addition, while she feels better equipped to ‘broker’ other services to meet young people’s health and social needs, there seems to be confusion in those services about the role of Connexions PAs. They often resist or refuse her referrals of young people, expecting her to deal with issues that she does not feel qualified or competent to address.

Yvonne is concerned about the fact that in Connexions, careers advisers no longer have a remit for working with employers and visiting workplaces. She feels de-skilled by this loss of local knowledge, and believes it weakens the guidance she can give. Paradoxically, it may be increasing the risk that they will drop out of placements and enter the ‘NEET’ group. Since reincorporation into the local authority, she is particularly concerned, like others in her service, about proposals to break up the Connexions infrastructure and place one or two PAs in a series of area-based multi-agency health and social care teams, which are most likely to be led by managers with no knowledge of career guidance. She is worried that this isolation will further undermine her professional practice, since colleagues and managers qualified in career guidance play a vital role in her continuing professional development (CPD). Yvonne’s narrative of gradual unbecoming resonates very strongly with many others from our interviews.

**Not Becoming**

Beth is a younger ‘community PA’ who trained as a careers adviser two and a half years ago, knowing that she would seek employment with Connexions. She came to work for a service with a strong reputation for embracing the ethos of a more holistic and innovative youth support service, which she supports. Although she views career guidance as important, she sees her role in Connexions as very different from the one for which she trained. In fact, she claims that she has not become a careers adviser at all, but more of a ‘social worker’. She is glad to have found
herself in this role, and feels it is very positive and rewarding. This process of ‘not becoming’ a career adviser, although having trained for the role, is echoed by other respondents who moved straight from their initial training into work as a ‘community PA’.

Whilst enjoying her job, Beth also believes that it is in many ways ‘impossible’, because of a mismatch between targets for reducing ‘NEET’ and the lack of resources available. She finds it hard when she cannot devote the time she knows is needed to help a young person. With very large caseloads, PAs are constantly forced to make difficult ethical decisions about which young people they can help. They often prioritise youth who are likely to move more quickly into EET destinations, so that they can meet their targets; but this happens at the expense of those needing more intensive and lengthier support. Thus, a service supposedly designed to focus on the most vulnerable young people actually has the opposite effect.

Sometimes Beth tries to resist these pressures; for example, she spent most of her time one week trying to support a young man who was homeless, without being able to find him shelter. Like Yvonne and others, she found that other services would not accept her referral, in this case because they claimed difficulties in engaging the young man on previous occasions. This makes Beth feel that there is confusion within and beyond Connexions about the role of PAs, and unrealistic expectations that they will deliver all the support required for the hardest-to-help young people. She is frustrated that PAs have to record young people’s problems, and spend a great deal of time in surveillance and monitoring – even to the point of physically ‘chasing’ them – whilst the resources to solve their problems are not available. Her role, she says, has more aspects of social control or ‘fire fighting’ than empowerment.

This also makes the work very emotionally draining, resulting in anxiety and sleepless nights when problems such as homelessness cannot be solved. Beth feels that there is no official support mechanism for these emotional pressures. (Although ‘support and supervision’ is formally provided for Connexions PAs, many of our respondents told us that it is provided by their line manager, and tends to focus on progress towards targets, sometimes with a disciplinary aspect to it.) She explained that PAs rely on each other for peer support, leaving mobile ‘phones on overnight and at weekends, and helping each other out with their caseloads. She has seen a colleague suffer emotional ‘burn-out’, and is aware that her own resilience and enthusiasm for the job may be compromised when she has been in the job longer.

**Deeper Becoming, then Unbecoming**

Wanda had worked for many years as a careers adviser. At the time of her research interview, she had already quit Connexions once, returned because she could not find satisfactory alternative work, and was again trying to leave. In the former careers service, she had always been committed to working with disadvantaged young people, but was often frustrated by the lack of resources for this, and by weak links with other youth support services. When introduced in her area, the Connexions service provided other youth support directly, but subcontracted the delivery of career guidance to a former careers company. The latter retains its independent infrastructure, but careers advisers’ work in the field was co-located with other Connexions PAs. Wanda therefore welcomed the founding of Connexions, the additional resources it promised, and the closer collaboration it facilitated between herself and other professionals. Indeed, she argued that it enable her to focus more strongly on career guidance than ever before. She was able to maintain and develop her career guidance expertise within a close-knit community of careers
advisers at the careers company base, and to draw on networking and expert support from other professionals in her work with clients.

Wanda’s later disillusionment and decisions to leave were prompted by an ever-increasing institutional emphasis on meeting policy targets to reduce the number of young people classified as ‘NEET’ by getting them as rapidly as possible into formal education, employment or training (EET). She felt that this militated against their best interests, and against an appropriate professional relationship with her clients, especially the time and sensitivity needed to engage with them. Her distress at this situation this is compounded by the lack of adequate opportunities, whether in education and training, or in housing, drug rehabilitation or health care, to meet the needs of young people facing serious social and economic problems. Like Beth, she feels the job has become impossible, and wants once again to get out.

Similar issues to all those discussed above – loss of expertise and status, confusion about individual and service roles, excessive caseloads, lack of resources to meet young people’s needs, individual resistance, emotional distress and burn-out, and ethical dilemmas – were also raised by other careers advisers who had chosen to leave Connexions (usually to enter career guidance in another sector such as further or higher education).

Discussion and Conclusions

This case study of the career guidance profession has major implications for policy and practice relating to adults’ learning in the workplace. Firstly, it provides evidence of de-skilling and the inhibiting or diminishment of expert knowledge, which are of particular concern in a profession that requires up-to-date knowledge of constantly changing qualifications systems, opportunity structures and labour markets in order to be of high quality and effectiveness. This gradual process of ‘unbecoming’ can derive in part from changes in the practitioners’ role itself (e.g. ending employer liaison work, school liaison focused on client triage rather than curriculum development). It may also result from insufficient formal CPD; and from the disappearance of less formal learning opportunities, if the loss of a dedicated infrastructure prevents regular networking among other colleagues and managers with career guidance expertise. Wanda’s case, however, offers evidence that a specialist infrastructure, combined with co-located multi-agency working in the field, provides an environment in which each particular profession might find support and development, and client needs might be served most effectively.

Secondly, there is evidence that some practitioners, though trained in career guidance with public funding, do not go on to become expert careers advisers, but develop into a pseudo-social work role through their job allocation within Connexions. Not only does this ‘not becoming’ represent a loss of capacity for the career guidance profession in the 14-19 sector, and further restrict universal access by young people to career guidance which they sorely need. It also raises questions about the appropriateness of such practitioners to undertake such practice with young people who face considerable problems. In the UK, social work is a restricted profession, and practitioners must undertake specialist training, hold an appropriate qualification, be registered, and have regular clinical supervision. Not all ‘Community PAs’ in Connexions meet the same requirements, yet – questionably – they are handling complex cases, some of which social services themselves have failed to resolve.

Thirdly, as discussed by Colley (2001, 2003) in the early days of Connexions, the rhetoric of a holistic support service for young people, founded on the notion of a ‘personal adviser’ who would build long-term, trusting relationships with young in their care, appears to carry significant emotional costs for practitioners in a context where the service is severely under-resourced. This
presents risks to the practitioners and to their clients, and we have some evidence that ‘burn-out’ is leading some to quit the profession.

Fourthly, in order to manage excessive caseloads and meet targets, practitioners must engage in constant triage and surveillance of their clients. They face daily ethical dilemmas about which young people will receive help and which will not; and also about engaging in practices which go beyond the boundaries of their own professional competence and service resources – ethical anathema to anyone trained in guidance and counselling. More in-depth research is required to understand how, and on what basis, such decisions are made, but we already know that practitioners feel under pressure both to support the more tractable youth in their care, and to place young people in destinations which they fear are not suitable or sustainable.

Fifthly, this raises issues about the socio-political purposes of career guidance (Watts, 1999). Whilst respondents appear to be deeply committed to a liberal or sometimes more emancipatory notion of supporting young people, some fear that policy imposes a purpose of social control, and that ‘NEET’ reduction targets in particular engender this approach. As in the previous study of further education tutors by Colley et al. (2007), along with ethical objections, such political objections can create disillusionment and loss of expert practitioners from the profession.

Further theoretical analysis of the findings is still to be done. We are drawing on Smith’s (1987, 1999) Marxist feminist standpoint epistemology to connect interpretive methodology with critical theory, and to articulate situated practices, discourse and social structures (Holstein & Gubrium, 1998). This is useful not only because the career guidance profession is highly feminised, but also because Smith’s notion of standpoint offers a point of access for going beyond individual accounts to map and critically analyse the regulatory apparatus of the field and its relationship with practice.

However, we can already point to some important implications for our understanding of workplace learning as situated in communities of practice. Changes to the field of youth support, education and training, driven by ideological concerns of social control, and leveraged by infrastructural change, may severely disrupt the membership, knowledge capacity, and learning of a community of practice. When the emotional, ethical and political consequences are resisted only on an individual basis, and when the most experienced ‘full participants’ are susceptible (like the further education tutors) to extreme disillusionment, or removed involuntarily through restructuring and de-layering, there is a danger that the core of the community of practice may be weakened through exit from the profession, and that new entrants’ legitimate peripheral participation will also be insufficiently supported to ensure their transition to full participation. There is a need, then, to consider the ways in which dominant discourses and ‘regimes of ruling’, and the texts that they engender (in this case, for example, targets to reduce ‘NEET’ couched in a rhetoric of holistic care) not only serve to co-ordinate the activities of a community of practice (Smith, 2005), but also to shape the inclusion and exclusion of novices and established members, and – potentially – to undermine the learning of individuals and the capacity of the profession as a whole.

Notes
1. This study was funded by a grant from the UK Economic and Social Research Council, reference number: RES-000-22-2588.
2. Thanks to Charlotte Chadderton for her work on the data synthesis.
3. A full list of references can be obtained from h.colley@mmu.ac.uk
From Laborer to Learner: The Experiences of Former Factory Workers in a Developmental Education Program

John M. Dirkx & Ngoc Lan Thi Dang
Michigan State University, U.S.A

Abstract. This study reports on a qualitative, case study of a learning community approach to developmental education for dislocated workers. The findings suggest that participants rework a sense of themselves as learners, mediated by their experience of liminality and the emergence of communitas within the group.

Larry was one of 24 so-called dislocated workers participating in a workforce development program designed to help them retrain for new careers. Three months prior to our meeting him, Larry worked as a millwright for a large manufacturing company in an American Midwestern state. Although employed with this company for almost thirty years, Larry was let go because the company, citing competition from foreign corporations, closed the factory at which he worked. Through information disseminated by the local workforce development agency (WFD), Larry learned about an opportunity to pursue additional training or education in certain designated areas of need. However, Larry knew he hadn’t seen the inside of a classroom in almost three decades. High school had not gone well for him and he barely squeaked by with a diploma. He got his first job while in high school and continued with that company for several years after finishing school, until gradually developing his skills as a millwright. Now, like the twenty-three other former factory workers in his group, he was beginning an educational program to help him prepare for the academic requirements of college, especially in the areas of reading, writing, math, and computer applications. With unpleasant memories of high school classes flooding his awareness and convinced he would not make it through the semester, Larry enrolled primarily to extend his unemployment benefits until something else came along.

In this paper, we report on a case study of the community college developmental education program in which Larry and his 23 colleagues were enrolled. We were interested in understanding more deeply the nature of their experiences in this program and the ways in which it contributed to their evolving sense of self as a learner.

Background and Rationale

The downsizing of the manufacturing industry within the United States has displaced millions of men and women from well-paying jobs that they had held for many years (Hansen, 1988; U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2008). These individuals often went to work in factories right after or often before high school graduation. Now, at midlife, they find themselves without livelihood and without means to support themselves or their families. For over 40 years, federal and state governments have been providing some assistance to these workers. The Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA), first established in 1962, provides benefits to dislocated workers if they lost their work due to free trade agreements or because their companies relocated some or all of their operations overseas. These benefits include extended unemployment and tuition for education and training up to two years in certain fields of need (Bernard, 2005).

Many dislocated factory workers struggle with a lack of academic preparedness for college level work and the need to transition from a career worker identity to the identity of a
learner. To pursue mid-skill or high-skill jobs, they need a solid foundation in math, reading, and writing but, based on college placement exams, a large proportion of these workers require developmental work in these areas. Traditional postsecondary developmental education (DE) programs are intended to provide such foundations to entering students, and to help individuals negotiate the psychosocial and academic transition necessary to being a college student (Boylan & Bonham, 2007; Kolajo, 2004). But they are usually targeted to traditional-aged learners. Dislocated workers have often worked for 15 – 30 years in factories and are often parents of adult children and even grandparents. Negotiating the demands of college represents a critical step in the journeys of these individuals to pursue education and to re-claim a livelihood. Moving from the very structured and often highly regimented life of the factory requires them to learn to learn, and to adjust to the demands and responsibilities of the college student role.

But college student development theory, upon which many traditional DE programs are grounded, has little to say about development of a learner identity among production workers returning to school after 15 – 30 years of an economically stable career. Furthermore, few studies of developmental education examine outcomes such as students’ experiences of these programs or their influence on the students’ sense of self as a learner (Smith, Dirkx, & Amey, 2002).

A cohort or learning community approach offers promise for increasing the effectiveness of developmental education (Moreno, 2004; Tinto, 1998). In this study, we focused on a community college experimental developmental education program that was based on this approach and created specifically for dislocated workers. We were interested in this program because of its very high levels of student retention and anecdotal reports of positive, affective gains, as well as academic progress, for participants. Using self-formation theory (Chappell, et. al., 2003; Gee, 2000; Townley, 1995) and learner identity (Hirano, 2008; Rayner, 2001; Smith, Dirkx, & Amey, 2002), we explored students’ perceptions of their DE experiences, changes in self-perceptions attributed to the program, and program aspects that may be fostering change.

Methods

Our study was informed by a qualitative, case study method, focusing on a cohort-based, developmental education program designed and implemented for dislocated workers. The dislocated worker developmental education (DWDE) program consisted of two cohorts of students who attended classes from 8:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. four days a week for 16 weeks, closely mirroring the schedule of their prior work-life experiences. The entire program and its support services were conducted at the new technical education center located several miles away from the main downtown college campus in a gritty, industrial area. The math, writing, and reading teachers were all adjunct faculty members who also taught in other locations. One of the two computer application teachers, one of the two life skills teachers, and the counselor were fulltime employees of the college, and were assisted by two student tutors from the college. The WFD case workers were fulltime employees of the college. With the exception of one case worker and the counselor, all program staff members were White. All but two of the teachers, their tutors, and the case workers were in their late 40s or older. All DWDE students were former employees of manufacturing companies that were qualified under TAA by the WFD agency. Of the 24 students, the majority were women. Three of the students were African American, one African, and one Dominican. The remaining were White. The students ranged in age from 25 to over 50 but most were over 40. Of the 24, one chose not to be interviewed, one left the group prior to completion, and one was not available to be interviewed during the time scheduled.

Data collection consisted of observations of orientation, class meetings, study labs, breaks, and the graduation ceremony, and interviews with students and staff. Classroom
observations consisted of half-day and whole-day observations one to two times per week for the duration of the program. We mingled and talked informally with the students before classes in the morning and during breaks and lunch periods. Within the last two weeks of the program, semi-structured interviews were conducted with students. Following the conclusion of classes, we also conducted semi-structured interviews with teachers, WFD case workers, and administrators. Interview transcripts were subjected to categorical content analysis and observational and staff data were used to triangulate findings from analysis of student interviews.

Findings

Developing an understanding of the experiences of these former factory workers in a community college developmental education program requires a sense of their biographical contexts. Their early family experiences, prior schooling, and work experiences contributed to the frames of reference that they brought to the program. Their childhoods seemed a mirror image of many of their present circumstances. Most reported their parents separating early in their lives. For job-related reasons, their families moved around a lot. Most of the participants described prior educational experiences in elementary or high school, such as “bad treatment from teachers” or “limited abilities,” that alienated or marginalized them from the academic focus of these institutions. For various reasons, such as fears of violence, sexual assault from gangs, early pregnancies, or other personal issues, a number of the students dropped out of high school. Some returned later and struggled to achieve their diploma or equivalency through the GED test. Many of these students starting working early in their lives in low-paying jobs, often during high school. Some were fortunate to eventually land positions within manufacturing, many of which tended to pay better and provide benefits. Many of these students, however, lived again and again the nightmare of plant closings or reductions, finding themselves on the street seeking something to replace what they had lost. But most of these students favorably recalled these contexts because of the pay, their relationships with their colleagues, or opportunities to develop themselves. They perceived themselves as “factory workers” but not without specific skills. The older students were especially effective in communicating their memories, perceptions, beliefs, and feelings about their life journeys, and in speaking up in class.

With this background of early family life, schooling, and years of work in the factory, these individuals entered into what was effectively, for them, a form of transition, from life in the factory to life as a middle-aged college student. But getting there was often shrouded in uncertainty and self-doubt. We summarize their collective story in this program in three phases: (a) Working through the shock; (b) Finding voice; and (c) Becoming a student.

Working Through the Shock

For several weeks, the participants seemed like the proverbial “deer in headlights.” In the words of one student, there were, in the beginning, “lost souls.” They could not go back to what they had been doing for years because it was no longer there. But they also had difficulty envisioning themselves as being in school and pursing a new career. Almost to a person, participants described their early feelings of being in the program as “scared to death.” Because of the length of time since they had been in school and not feeling very well prepared academically, many feared they would fail. The classrooms and teachers were painful reminders to participants of prior, unpleasant or difficult educational experiences. At first, their involvement was limited to answering teachers’ questions with very brief and often muted responses. Interactions with each other were limited, stiff, and awkward both in class and during breaks. Gradually, this early silence gave way to frequent expressions of confusion around policies and paperwork required by
the WFD agency and, to a lesser degree, around homework. They learned what the WFD agency required and what teachers expected of them.

Strengthened by what seemed a powerful sense of shared experience within their cohorts, participants began to push back, expressing concerns with regard to the curricular demands, as well as the idea of being groomed to be a “college student.” These concerns, bubbling up in class and during breaks, eventually precipitated an unprecedented meeting with the administrative staff. In this meeting, participants expressed concerns mostly about how much time was required by all the courses. It was clear that many expected no homework or for it to be able to complete it during the school day. “No one told us,” one participant angrily remarked, “how much time this would involve.” “Why doesn’t she slow down?” another asked about the math teacher. “She goes too fast for us.” Most seemed surprised by the rigor and time demands of fulltime study in college and struggled to balance its requirements with existing life commitments.

Finding Voice
After several weeks, however, the participants seemed to become more comfortable in this new environment, seeming to settle into their new roles, working hard on their assignments and studying for tests. Most indicated that the rocky period lasted about six weeks, after which they felt more comfortable. It seemed to help that their class schedule, four days a week from 8:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m., mirrored their former work schedules. Their fear of failing gradually diminished, though they seemed quite conscious of points and grades for the whole semester. They seemed less confused and more accepting of the curriculum as it was, although perceptions of unnecessary overlap also persisted. They grew more accepting of the curricular content and the particular techniques and idiosyncrasies manifest by different teachers.

During this period, participants became more vocal in class, asking questions of the teachers and occasionally challenging their statements or explanations, as well as responding more readily to their questions and those of their peers. In-class participation seemed more relaxed and spontaneous. While their interactions with each other during class did not increase demonstrably, they interacted with each other during breaks and lunch much more frequently and for longer periods of time. While relatively few knew each other at the start of class, they quickly became a tight knit group, providing both material and emotional support for one another and planning meals and small parties together. As one woman said of the consistently odd and quirky classroom behavior of another group member, “That’s Jack! But what can I say? You gotta love ‘em. He’s one of us.” They looked out for each other, such as developing a calling tree so that each person had someone to call if they missed class for some reason.

Becoming a Student
With few exceptions, the participants described the single most important outcome of their experiences within the program as an increased sense of self-confidence, an observation echoed by the teachers, caseworkers, and administrators. At about ten weeks into the course, participants began to see themselves completing the program. The large majority of participants had, by this time, finished numerous homework assignments and passed many tests in math, reading, writing, and study skills. They had learned keyboarding skills and the rudimentary elements of word processing, spreadsheets, and PowerPoint. They had written and read aloud in class several essays which, for many, were the first times they had ever written anything beyond a few sentences. Their initial, almost paralyzing fears of school had given way to a sense that “I can do this.” As one participant put it, a “dark soul” at the beginning of the program gradually “gave way to a bright light, a very bright light.” As the course drew to its inevitable conclusion, they seemed
more certain about what they wanted and needed to do. For some, this meant even questioning
the need to go on with more training. One woman in her mid-sixties who had worked in factories
her entire adult life, told us, “This course helped me realize that academics are not easy for me,
and perhaps continuing in a training program is something that I should not do. I learned to be
okay with simply retiring, and knowing that this was the right path for me.”

Discussion and Conclusion

The dislocated workers’ perceptions of themselves as learners change dramatically over
the course of the 16-week program, as evidenced by their self-reports, perceptions of the program
staff, and researchers’ field notes. This shift is characterized by a growing sense of agency and
control in matters related to their schoolwork, a firmer confidence in their abilities to meet the
demands of college-level courses, and increased knowledge of the responsibilities and
obligations, as well as the privileges, of the college student role. Once alienated from and
marginalized by the academic community, they now see themselves as legitimate members of
that community. Most would agree that significant challenges remain, but their experiences
provided them with a reconstructed sense of themselves as learners (Chappell et., al., 2003).

From a modernist, humanistic perspective, one might argue that this reconstructing of the
self that occurred reflects the healing of wounds to the self incurred through their early childhood
and schooling experiences. Neither our observations nor the interview data provide substantial
evidence of this occurring within the program. The life-skills course represented the only aspect
of the program that in any way directly addressed aspects of the participants’ selves, and this
approach was fairly prescriptive and didactic. But neither does this change reflect the power of
social structures in shaping one’s consciousness. Consistent with self-formation theory (Chappell,
et., al., 2003; Townley, 1995), the self-change observed among the participants suggest the
influence of ways of speaking and writing that are different from their lives in the factories, in
school, or in their families. That is to say, this change in their learner identity reflects changing
ways in which they think and talk about educational institutions as social structures and
themselves as active participants or subjects within these institutions. That is to say, “the ‘subject’
and the ‘social’ [are] jointly produced through discursive practices” (Chappell, et., al., 2003, p.
15). This notion is supported by the observations among the participants of both an emerging
deference to authority and an evolving sense of self-directedness and freedom.

This reconstruction of themselves as learners is mediated through their initial sense of
liminality and the consequent development of communitas (Turner, 1974). In rites of passage,
individuals often experience feelings of being neither of the group from which they came nor to
which they aspired. The participants came to the program feeling quite lost, knowing they could
not return to that from which they had come but also not knowing much about the context and the
community of college for which they were being prepared. This "liminal" status seemed to act as
a powerful, leveling influence within the group, allowing its members to at least partially
transcend individual differences in ability, style, needs, background, and experiences, and to help
one another regardless of who they were or what they needed. The sense of marginality within the
collective provided for a strong social dynamic, which Turner (1974) refers to as a sense of
communitas, an intense sense of solidarity and togetherness. It represents a leveling of social
status within the group, providing members with an opportunity to explore new social roles or
self-identities. The cohort, as a container for this sense of communitas, significantly contributed
to the workers’ ability to entertain and engage a learner identity.

Near the end of the program, Larry became aware of a possible job opportunity, creating
for him a deep sense of conflict. He needed the job but he was also looking forward to continuing
his education and training, and the possibilities of a new career. The conflict reveals how Larry’s sense of himself has changed.

References


The Enactment of Hegemony through Identity Construction: Insights from The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life

Brendaly Drayton and Esther Prins
The Pennsylvania State University

Keywords: adult education, hegemony, identity construction, literacy

Abstract: This paper uses Goffman’s dramaturgical analysis to examine how hegemony maintains its power and influence in the life of the individual. The analysis reveals that the power of hegemony lies in the construction of particular identities that shape our interactions and limit our imagined futures.

The social justice tradition of adult education has long sought to understand how hegemony works, the means of counteracting its influence, and the role of adult education in this process. The increased interest in identity as a political position for challenging systemic oppression (Hall, 1997), as a means for understanding and engaging learners (Sheared, 1999), and as a product of hegemonic forces (Butler, 1988) suggests the need to better understand how individuals and social structures are intertwined, especially in the perpetuation and contestation of hegemony. As Brookfield (2005) notes, “hegemony saturates all aspects of life and is constantly learned and relearned throughout life. If anything can be described as lifelong learning, it is this” (p. 97).

Hegemony, Education, and Identity

The purpose of this study is to use Goffman’s (1959) dramaturgical lens of identity construction to explore how hegemony maintains its power and influence in the life of the individual. Goffman uses techniques of theatrical performance to show how interactions within a given setting shape social structures through the construction of particular identities. In this paper, hegemony is defined as the process by which individuals are made subject, and subject themselves, to a system of beliefs and practices that is detrimental to their well-being but supportive of the interests of those in power over them (Brookfield, 2005; Hall, 1997). Hegemony is power, such as the power to create “a corpus of knowledge, techniques, [and] ‘scientific’ discourses” that promotes inequitable social relations as the natural order of everyday life (Foucault, 1995, p. 23). Gramsci (1971), in his quest to understand how hegemony worked, recognized the social institution of education as a critical means for promulgating dominant ideologies and fashioning the populace for assigned roles in society. For instance, the prevalence of the technical-rational discourse (Mayo, 1999) in adult education is underpinned by capitalism and neo-liberal ideology that privilege efficiency and marketability at the expense of social justice. Moreover, technical-rational thought—codified, for example, in accountability measures for adult education programs—fosters particular identities, including skills, behaviors, and ways of thinking and being (Gee, 2000), thereby creating learners, workers, and citizens ready to comply with an inequitable socio-economic order. However, adult educators can also foster other types of identities, such as citizens who are emboldened to challenge injustice.

Goffman’s dramaturgical analysis is useful for understanding hegemony because it captures the technical, cultural, political, and structural aspects of social organization that collectively promote the dominance of a particular discourse and identity. These aspects
correspond to work, preservation of moral standards, power over others, and social distance, respectively. Although performance is often interpreted as the enactment of identity (Butler, 1988), in this case it provides a useful way to examine the enactment of hegemony, that is, the ways in which people play roles that serve to maintain an inequitable social order. This analysis reveals that the power of hegemony lies in the construction of identities, as taken-for-granted beliefs and norms shape the possibilities we imagine for ourselves, the scripts and roles available to us, and our daily interactions. Identity theorists such as Goffman adopt a social psychological approach that foregrounds roles as the key construct of identity and predictor of behavior, downplaying the importance of larger group categories such as race/ethnicity, class, and gender (Hogg, Terry, & White, 1995). This theory speaks to the enactment of identity and presents the individual as an actor instead of an object that is acted upon. For example, in performing the role of mother, the individual establishes her mother identity through the behaviors she associates with being a mother.

By contrast, social identity theory is anchored in a socio-cognitive approach that conceives of identity as internalized social behavior resulting in an interest in “conformity, collective action, stereotyping, group solidarity and ethnocentrism” (Hogg et al., 1995, p. 266). This approach emphasizes individuals’ position within social structures such as race, class, and gender. Thus, social identity theorists seek to understand how societal structures, individual agency, and language contribute to the construction of identity. In construing hegemony as a group identity, we seek to demonstrate the interrelatedness of identity and social structures. That is, group identity is “intensely personal,” yet also a historical and cultural construct that shapes “norms, values and beliefs” (Reicher, 2004). Group identity is a collective manifestation of “thinking, feeling, doing, talking, and belonging” (Wenger, 1998, p.56). However, the degree of identification with a particular group will determine the level of adherence to group norms and practices. Hall’s (1997) definition of identity as a location from which we speak captures both the personal and social dimensions of identity.

**Hegemony and the Performance of Identity**

In *The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life*, Goffman (1959) presents the enactment of identity as a performance people use to control situations for their benefit by means of impression management. He notes that the actor can define the situation by providing the kind of impression that will lead the audience “to act voluntarily in accordance with his plan” (p. 4). This impression elicits the desired response from the audience, in this case, marginalized groups, through the performance of the dominant group. At the micro level, enactment involves speaking, behaving, believing, dressing, doing, and using various tools to convey a particular identity (Gee, 2000). At the macro level, enactment involves strategies, such as institutional policies, to promote a particular identity as the norm. For example, school literacy, underpinned by White middle-class values, is valorized through testing, accountability measures, a discourse of its necessity for success, and the negation of other types of literacy as valuable. By viewing hegemony as the valorization of a particular identity that is lived out in our daily interactions, practices, and values at the expense of other identities (Brookfield, 2005), we see that impression management serves to orchestrate hegemonic identity. The latter refers to the establishment and dissemination of the dominant group’s identity (White, middle- or upper-class) as the norm against which all others are compared, through the enlistment of media, educational systems, government policies, and other means. However, this is only successful if the intended audience receives and accepts these messages as self-evident truths. The performance, then, is the expression of the dominant group’s ideology, legitimated through institutional and communicative practices.
Central to Goffman’s framework is the performer’s ability to “define the situation,” which results in anticipated audience responses. Indeed, “the key factor in this structure is the maintenance of a single definition of the situation, this definition having to be expressed, and this expression sustained in the face of a multitude of potential disruptions” (p. 254). Thus, if we construe the “structure” as society, the “situation” as encounters between dominant and marginalized groups, the “single definition of the situation” as the world view and value system of the dominant group, and the sustenance of the single definition as forms of co-optation, manipulation, and coercion, then maintenance of dominant social positioning hinges on the perpetuation of their world view. Defining the situation, then, maintains the existing social order. For instance, in adult basic education the situation is being defined from a technical-rational perspective through testing that supports a functional, skills-based view of literacy, through the implementation of accountability measures that shape how adult educator and learners see themselves and are seen by others, and through a public and professional discourse that implies individual, communal, and national well-being hinges on the acquisition of these skills.

Goffman defines performance as “all the activity of a given participant on a given occasion which serves to influence in any way any of the other participants” (p. 15). Therefore, the performance of hegemonic identity is achieved through the various actions it takes to shape the views and behaviors of other groups. The “front,” as in the front part of the stage, refers to the part of the performance that is regularly seen and repeated in the same manner, conveying the reality of the performance. Goffman refers to this technique of staying in character as the “technical nature of the performance….the “expressive equipment of a standard kind intentionally or unwittingly employed by the individual during his performance” (p.22). The expressive equipment includes the tools used to convey a particular impression or view of the world. As Freire (1970) notes, every practice of education implies a concept about the individual and the world.

According to Goffman, the “front” includes setting, appearance, and manner. The setting is the scenic front, the geography or environment in which the performance takes place, such as the classroom. The context determines the role-identity that will be displayed, such that a teacher will display the technical characteristics that define him as a teacher in the classroom. The “personal front” denotes the “other items of expressive equipment…that most intimately identify with the performer himself and that we naturally expect to follow the performer wherever he goes” (p. 24). These are the identity markers that to a lesser extent characterize personality and to a greater extent categorize group identity, including race and gender. “Appearance” refers to a person’s status, for instance, middle-class or poor. “Manner” usually aligns with appearance and indicates the interactional behavior of an individual in a situation. Hegemony is maintained, in part, because individuals expect deference, or lack thereof, in accordance with their social status or authority. Goffman notes that the components of the front do not always align, reflecting the varied, conflictual nature of identities. For instance, class may allow certain privileges while race and gender may limit them. The roles assumed in the situation are anchored in socio-historical understandings that shape meaning, behavior, and expectations within a given situation.

**Socialization Processes**

Maintenance of the social order requires the perpetuation of mutual understandings, which in turn are supported by socialization processes. First is the presentation of abstract and general information to promote generalized characteristics of performance (hegemonic identity) across contexts, regardless of the specificity and uniqueness of the routine (p. 26). This is a key characteristic of the “front.” Goffman suggests that this strategy establishes standards that the
audience begins to expect, even though they are not founded on truth. Consequently, the hegemonic identity takes on a meaning separate from individual acts and becomes a fact of collective identity. For example, the White middle class is positioned as the norm in the U.S. Thus, poor and low-literate persons are often vilified for not having middle-class values such as independence and a strong work ethic, a perspective anchored in the ideology of meritocracy. This myth not only ignores the presence of these qualities in all socio-economic classes but also the structural factors that systematically limit opportunity and access.

The second component of socialization is “dramatic realization,” or the enforcement of myths or grand narratives as truth through the use of signs and symbols (e.g., the acquisition of consumer goods associated with White, middle-class values, success, education and corresponding levels of employment). The display of material wealth promotes a positive correlation between middle-class values and wealth, and educational credentials and employment. These signs are part of the expressive equipment of the front. Goffman points out that an identity associated with status or social place is concretized through doing: “It is a pattern of appropriate conduct [that is] coherent, embellished and well articulated” (p. 75). Bourdieu’s (2001) concepts of cultural, economic, and social capital are relevant here because they help to delineate facets of a particular experience or habitus. Through the accumulation of material resources and the establishment of social ties, the dominant group is able to promote its way of being, or cultural capital, as the norm. For example, dramatic realization occurs through teacher expectations and testing that rewards schooled literacy, the forms of oral and written communication (e.g., storytelling style) that are prevalent among White, middle-class families (Heath, 1983). Children with different home literacy practices are at a disadvantage because their literacies—their use of signs and symbols—are ignored or devalued.

The third aspect of socialization is an idealized view of the situation. Anything that would detract from the image is downplayed such as structural barriers such as racism and sexism. Thus, the myth of hegemonic identity becomes a social value and ideal that is embodied by the dominant group. In turn, individuals outside the dominant group are ascribed an inferior, undesirable status. Identity is built on difference and so requires the presence of the other (Hall, 1997). The ideal is only acceptable if there is an audience—a group that can be assigned a lesser identity. The characteristics of both groups are seen as inherent instead of being shaped by social, economic, and political factors. While success is symbolized by the White male, the illiterate person is symbolized as African American, stupid, poor, and lazy (Quigley, 1997; St. Clair & Sandlin, 2000), negating the diversity of experiences within these groups. These formulations mediate the interactions, policies, and practices in the educational setting, thereby creating an unproblematized view that promotes a sense of “rightness” while deterring the pursuit of alternate perspectives and solutions. Brookfield (2005) notes, “whatever a society accepts as knowledge or truth inevitably ends up strengthening the power of some and limiting the power of others” (p. 136).

“Maintenance of expressive control” is the fourth dimension of socialization. Social control hinders the actor from giving a different definition of the situation than the official one (p. 52). Hegemonic identity is maintained through both internal and external restraints that hinder contradictory individual expression. External restraints entail the imposition of penalties against the offending member, whereas internal constraints reflect Foucault’s panopticism, or the internalization of social norms that makes overt coercive action unnecessary. Indeed, “It is the fact of constantly being seen, of always being able to be seen, that maintains the disciplined individual in all his subjection” (Foucault, 1995, p. 187). In adult education, surveillance is achieved through “audit technologies” (Shore & Wright, 2000). The policies undergirding
accountability measures define program purposes and provisions and shape adult educator and learner qualifications and eligibility. In seeking to be recognized as professional and literate, adult educators and learners, respectively, may adopt practices that convey those identities. In essence, technical-rational discourse is perpetuated through funding criteria and institutionalized practices that act as coercive tools to promote a particular concept of adult education.

The last component of the socialization process is the control of information through social distance or regions, that is, “any place that is bounded to some degree by barriers of perception” (Goffman, 1959, p. 106), such as the separation of social classes. Goffman describes this separation as a process of “mystification.” In equating contact and communication with a form of perception, he suggests, “control over what is perceived is control over the contact that is made” (p. 67). In addition, control over the setting such as an adult education site allows for the introduction of “strategic devices for determining the information the audience is able to acquire” (p. 93). Thus, the audience is kept at a distance to ensure credibility of the performance. Arguably, the technical-rational approach maintains the social order by limiting access to curricula that question the way things are. In essence, it prepares more “cogs for the wheel” of the free market.

Social stratification, or the region accorded to the dominant class, is guarded by control of information that would dispel the myth of dominance. Therefore, it is advantageous to control access to that knowledge. For example, the invisible ceilings of racism and sexism have historically limited access to good education and professional mobility that would engender economic independence. Institutional barriers work to limit the vision of the marginalized within the ascribed framework of the dominant. The myths perpetrated by the dominant group become a reality in the lives of the marginalized, whose actions are shaped by circumscribed expectations of who they can be rather and what they can accomplish rather than their hopes and aspirations for a better life (Gould, 1999).

**Conclusion**

The deployment of expressive equipment in the form of particular practices, beliefs, and ways of being constructs identities that support hegemony. Daily interactions and performances, shaped by legitimized discourse and practices, serve to maintain hegemonic identity. Individual acquiesce is achieved through the silencing of alternate perspectives and the deployment of economic, social, cultural, and political presentations of the rightness of hegemonic identity. The strength of hegemony is the often unconscious complicity of members of both dominant and subjugated groups in the domination process. Goffman’s analysis reveals that actors are sometimes unconscious of the purpose and consequences of their actions.

This study indicates the need for continued vigilance in recognizing the influences that shape adult educators’ worldviews and practices to avoid complicity in oppression. For example, adult educators might consider how the federal and state policies construct particular professional and learner identities and how our the roles we perform shape our perceptions and interactions with learners and each other. In being alert to hegemony’s various forms, adult educators are better positioned to envision counteractive strategies. In sum, Goffman’s analysis provides adult education scholars with a multi-faceted vision of the mechanisms of domination. It can help researchers and practitioners to understand how micro-level interactions and choices about identity may perpetuate or challenge hegemony.
References
Liberatory Education: Unmasking Apartheids Pedagogical Plunder
The South African Liberation Struggle (1912 – 1990)

Mohammed A. Essack
National Louis University, Chicago, Illinois, USA

Abstract: This study creates the possibility of providing a template for an interactive and participatory resource where activists, scholars and the general populous can converge into a dialogue highlighting the role of ordinary citizens in the formulation and conception of their own history and how this historicity has informed the development and trajectory of the South African (and other) National Liberation Struggle/s.

Introduction

A Man and a Lion traveled together through the forest. They soon began to boast of their respective superiority to each other in strength and prowess. As they were disputing, they passed a statue carved in stone, which represented “a Lion strangled by a Man”. The traveler pointed to it and said: “See there! How strong we are, and how we prevail over even the king of beasts”. The Lion replied: “This statue was made by one of you men. If we Lions knew how to erect statues, you would see the Man placed under the paw of the Lion” (Aesop’s Fables).

On April 22, 1845, the following excerpt appeared in a letter to Frederick Douglas from Wendell Phillips:

“My Dear Friend:
You remember the old fable of “The Man and the Lion,” where the lion complained that he should not be so misrepresented...I am glad the time has come when the “lions write history”. In a sense, I characterize my work as a situation of the lion reclaiming and assuming unequivocal inquiry and authorship of its own history - A history framed by Africentricism as intellectual tradition.

Background

This research project approached Liberatory Education within the context of the South African Liberation Struggle and explicitly embraced the positionality expressed in the Movement’s (1955) Freedom Charter. The Charter essentially was a part of the broad and encompassing architecture of the Liberation and Democratic Movement covering all areas and sectors of South African national life, mobilizing the efforts and energy of all into one great national effort. The educational sector was thus a key area in the Resistance Struggle as well as reconstruction planning. The mobilization of key stakeholders in confronting the might of the apartheid state during the most intense periods of resistance was central in rendering the apartheid state unworkable. The study examined three key elements, viz.: 1) the historical legacy and relevance of the Solomon Mahlangu Freedom College as a center of adult education and a site of Struggle conceived out of the goals and commitments of the South African Liberation Movement; 2) explored the degree to which an element of a people’s “alternative education” countered the constructs of mis-education, propaganda, “baasskaap” (white domination), inferiority and indoctrination that characterized the apartheid regime’s Bantu education policies, particularly, the significance of the role played by civil society through this process; and 3) while no experience can be transposed onto another situation with the expectation to have similar results, important lessons continue to be drawn from the South African Liberation Struggle. Its wider implications for the growing challenges in the development of adult education practice are
The study further intends to contribute toward the discourse that critically engages and problematizes Eurocentric educative and theoretical models while fully embracing and not romanticizing the Africentric paradigm. The primary theme of the Africentric philosophical tradition is the idea that one’s individual identity is never separable from one’s socio-cultural environment. Philosophically then, the Africentric philosophical tradition stands in sharp contrast to the rationalist and transcendentalist valorization of “pure intellectual activity”. For example, former President of Tanzania, Julius K. Nyerere describes socialism as an attitude of mind rather than any adherence to standard political pattern. Since the dawn of time, Africentric philosophy has engaged ways in which intellectual inquiry and philosophy can be directed toward the redemption of society and thus the improvement in the quality of life for those it seeks to address.

Adding utility to the study is the possibility that it provides a template for an interactive and participatory resource where activists, scholars and the general populous can converge into a dialogue highlighting the role of ordinary citizens in the formulation and conception of their own history and how this historicity has informed the development and trajectory of this and other National Liberation Struggles. Thus, Liberatory Education, as is presented in this study, is an interpretative frame for a people’s alternative educational quest that ultimately releases them from the deliberate infusion of racial oppression, religious bigotry and the hegemonic norms often embedded (overtly or covertly) in Eurocentric education schemes.

**Research Rationale**

This study is in many ways a conversation about identifying and applying Revolutionary Liberatory Theory and Struggle strategy as a means of reframing the discourse, particular to the integration of the Africentric Paradigm. There is a dualism at play here. While it espouses a Liberatory Education sample, viz. the South African Liberation Movement, it simultaneously proposes an agenda for changing the tone of the adult education discourse so that there is an unambiguous understanding of Africentricism, particularly in relation to its andragogical space and its sometimes contested and suppressed historical validity. To that end, this study proposes “Historical Rescue”.

In addition to the Freedom Charter, four Struggle Texts: *Long Walk to Freedom; Part of My Soul Went with Him; Let My People Go* and *I Write What I Like* were entwined into the study so that they could continue to generate the kind of dialogue that critically engages and interrogates the systematic deficiencies and contemporary inequities various communities face from day to day. The relevance presented by these texts is at the core of contemporary South African radicalism. Not only do they serve as more than just historical and scholarly artifacts but in an era of globalization such as the one we have, they continue to serve as relics of naturalistic struggle. Their insights transcend the particulars of this time and might help us make sense of today’s political and economic tensions. So, by serving as another site of Resistance and Struggle, these texts were implanted, in part, to serve as the evolving consciousness as well as the conscience of the profession. Thus, their overarching themes serve as a bases and gateway toward facilitating a multidimensional analysis confronting the historical fictions, perceived data deficiencies and institutional and institutionalized problems that continue to plague the field. These texts poignantly shatter those myths claiming “hallucinatory theoretical voids” which are often moaned about at conferences and practice “talk shops”.

As critical observers in the analysis of education systems and policy, it is essential that research endeavors identify areas requiring continued engagement. To this end, this study
assists in an increased understanding of the broader context of adult education. It identifies weaknesses in the adult education practice, clarifies intersecting realities, points out obstacles to achieving a better world, while proposing and not prescribing suggestions for tackling them in future studies.

**Historical Inquiry as Research Methodology**

Changing political and socio cultural relations based on the ownership and control of information systems and communication raise important questions: What is history? Who are the agents of history? Who bears the promise and pain of history? To what end are ALL histories open to contestation? How do we begin to address issues of public amnesia?

Through a process of historical inquiry this study illuminates the contribution made by the South African Liberation Struggle toward the advancement of the field of Liberatory Adult Education.

**Interpretive Models**

The study draws from the following interpretive lenses so as to add texture and further harmonization to its tone: 1) Model of Africentric Curriculum Orientations, specifically the second orientation, viz., the “Selfethnic Liberatory and Empowerment Orientation”; 2) Formulation of Critical Reflection and “Considerations for White Adult Educators to racialize the adult education discourse”; and 3) Marxism - Leninism without which any socio political analysis of South Africa would be rendered incomplete.

**Instrument of Evaluation**

Any educational endeavor is evaluated by some or other measure. To that end, this study committed itself to two things: 1) It illuminates the scholastic genius of Kelly Miller’s (1914) Theory of Binocular Education; and 2) It exalts the basic *Afrikan Systematic Philosophical* tenants as enshrined in *UBUNTU* and the *Nguzo Saba* as its intellectual and spiritual anchor. My work therefore, is grounded in an explicit political stance and a clearly articulated value base.

**Tentative Conclusions**

This study does not gloss over issues. Pending a further analysis, the following are some of the salient issues that emerge from the study:

*Internalized Colonialism and the Psychology of Liberation*

What emerged out of the South African Higher Education Revolutionary experience exemplified the real difficulty that working bilaterally with even the most sincere Whites posed a moral dilemma for Black students, who were the last to want themselves labeled racist. Yet for Steve Biko and others, for example, the need for exclusive Black organizations was very clear, something Ben Khoapa referred to as the need for “regroupment”, (1973). Blacks were considered to be an interest group, like workers in a trade union or teachers fighting their own battles. The collective segregation and oppression based on skin color therefore provided an eminently logical basis for self-assertion and independent organization. Blacks would no longer allow themselves to be objectified in the negative image of “nonwhites” -- instead they would reconstruct themselves as Blacks, as self-defining initiators. Gone were the days when they appealed to Whites by seeking to convince them that Blacks too had civilized standards. The Black Consciousness Movement (BCM) was therefore, one of the most significant developments in South Africa between 1968 and 1976. This, not only because of the self-confident protest and rebellion that it unleashed but also “because of the questions it posed about the nature of oppositional politics in South Africa and its relation to the nature of South African society”, (Nolutshungu, 1982). Black Consciousness was about pressuring Whites through contesting the
self-definitions of their opponents (Adam, 1973). Accusations that this was a racist act were dismissed on the grounds that “one cannot be a racist unless he has the power to subjugate”, (Stubbs, 1988).

Later, when Black Consciousness developed a socialist tinge, cooperation with White liberals was rejected, not because of race or privilege, but because these would-be compatriots were seen as representing a bourgeois class enemy. Collaboration with representatives of racial capitalism would amount to betrayal. “Black Consciousness,” writes George Frederickson, an American historian, “had evolved from an effort to overcome a Black sense of inferiority through independent, nonviolent action into an explosive combination of race and class revolutionism”, (1990). Whatever the meaning of the latter phrase, Black Consciousness remained above all, an awareness-raising movement, rather than an organization that practiced revolutionary violence. What was distinctive about the BCM was “its originality in elaborating an ideology of hope rooted in a Theology of Liberation which emphasized the solidarity of the oppressed regardless of race”, (Fatton, 1986).

The Necessity of Armed Struggle

In the 1960’s the African National Congress (ANC) was not alone in preaching violence as the only way out of the apartheid monster’s grasp. Malcolm X, Mao Tse Tung and Che Guevara amongst others, also made it unequivocally clear that to solve the problems besetting mankind, there was an urgent need to eliminate completely the exploitation of the dependent countries by the developed capitalist countries. This loud call to arms explains the triumph of violence throughout Africa in the 1960’s, 70’s and 80’s. In his “ballot or the bullet” speech (1970), Malcolm maintains that the strategy utilized by the oppressed has to be dictated by context (contextual analysis/treatment), specifically by the severity of the oppression and the character of the oppressor’s response to legitimate demands for social justice. This is simply not a question of violence for the sake of violence, nor is violence advanced as a first response to the plight of the oppressed. Conversely, Mao affirms the inevitability of violence. He tells us that the focus of the problem is not the untroubled conscience of the oppressor but his superior might and weapons. Accordingly, it is extremely erroneous to believe that the imperialists, for example, will become Buddhists overnight if there’s a dent in their conscience rather than their firepower. In sum, the oppressor will only lift his foot from the neck of the oppressed if there is a gun barrel, bigger than his own, aimed at his defenseless head. Furthermore, the eventual success of liberation forces in Africa lent credit to Frantz Fanon’s dictum that “only violence pays”, (1961). Even the Organization of African Unity (OAU), the continental body formed in 1963 to free the continent from colonial rule recognized the need for violence by establishing a Liberation Committee. Its task was to use every means possible, including violence to end colonial rule. And this it did.

Thus, the ANC through its underground military wing “Umkhonto we Sizwe” (Spear of the Nation), had no choice but to resort to armed struggle. It asserted moral legitimacy for resorting to violence on the grounds of “necessary defense” and “just war”. In a 1963 statement, the ANC National Executive Committee stated that implicit in the language of a revolutionary armed struggle is the idea of a political struggle which includes the use of military force. It is important to emphasize this because the movement rejected all manifestations of militarism which separates an armed peoples struggle from its political context, (Strategy and Tactics of the ANC). From the very beginning, the ANC emphasized that armed resistance took place within a political context, and was one of a number of inter-related methods of struggle. From the outset, it conducted an intensive education campaign in which Cadres had to fully understand the basic
policy positions of the ANC, the first step in military training and that they were at all times guided by and subordinate to the political leadership of the ANC.

*Paternalism*

Official attitudes toward African education remain fraught with paternalism. In the editorial introduction to the 1972 annual *Black Viewpoint*, Biko, referred to the absence of black writers in the media: “So many things are said so often to us, about us and for us but very seldom by us”, (Biko, 1972). Biko deplored the images of dependency created for Blacks by the White press and expressed the need to deconstruct the implicit interpretive connotations, underlying values, attitudes, and interests of both the financial supporters and the readership of those newspapers. Articulated here is a general insight into conquest: that defeat for the losers has always meant more than physical subjugation. It means, as two historians of the Soviet Union have described in other circumstances, “that the conquerors write the history of the wars; the victors take possession of the past, establish their control over the collective memory”, (Heller & Nekrich, 1988). In short, the victors’ definition of reality becomes the dominant explanation.

*Badge of ‘Shame’*

The oppression of apartheid society was overt and blatant; all opposition had been silenced, and institutionalized racism flourished triumphant. Centuries of exclusionary practices led to what might be described as the “inferiorization” of Blacks. Blacks were portrayed as innately inferior, accustomed to dehumanized living, sexually promiscuous, intellectually limited, and prone to violence. Blackness symbolized evil, demise, chaos, corruption, and uncleanness, in contrast to whiteness, which equaled order, wealth, purity, goodness, cleanliness, and the epitome of beauty.

Inevitably, these racist stereotypes were at least partially internalized by South African Blacks, although their self-doubt never seemed to have matched that prevalent among Blacks elsewhere in the Diaspora, where the official proclamations of equality misled many Blacks into blaming themselves, rather than discrimination, for any miseries they experienced.

Undoubtedly, apartheid society produced a self-hatred. The limited range of opportunities open to Blacks gave rise to rationalizations in favor of the status quo, and self-doubts and self-accusations led some Blacks to accept their oppression as legitimate. In short, Blacks blamed themselves. In addition, the fragmentation of the three Black groups through differential privileges and incorporation led to a reinforcement of an intra-Black hierarchy.

*The thin line between Religious Fervor and White Supremacy*

Mirroring the experiences of the African Diaspora in the United States, apartheid education was also based on trusteeship and segregation. Black education was not supposed to drain government resources away from White education. Apartheid education merely force fed South Africans an educational diet which they could neither digest nor assimilate.

Any system of education, by whatever name it may pass, is seriously faulty unless it touches the vital needs of the people for whom it is intended, (Miller, 1899). What is often overlooked is the fact that two of the architects of Bantu education, Eiselen and Verwoerd, studied in Germany and had adopted many elements of National Socialist (Nazi) philosophy. The concept of racial “purity”, in particular, provided a rationalization for keeping Black education inferior. In addition, Afrikaners were generally members of the Dutch Reformed Church who followed the teachings of John Calvin. Calvinism, as we know, was characterized by a militant, religious authoritarianism. In Calvinist Christianity, the will of the ancient patriarchal God of the
Jews was rigidly imposed on its members. Dutch Calvinists believed that, by the twin doctrines of ‘predestination’ and ‘election’, they were the chosen race or people of God. Thus, the Dutch regarded South Africa as their ‘Promised Land’. This special religious identity had to be preserved through separateness. Unfortunately, the Dutch Calvinist, unlike his reformed brothers in South Africa and elsewhere, misconstrued religious separateness with ‘race’ or ‘color’ separateness. Twentieth century Afrikaner churches were foremost in their support of Apartheid. Church leaders were at pains to find so-called ‘Biblical’ evidence for the ‘sinful’ practices of apartheid. Apart from many other doctrines, Calvin was scathing in his rebuke of unbelievers, the heathen, the infidels, who dared to occupy and defile all that was sacred to the Christian, (Du Pre, 1990).

**Undoing Racism**

As the often long, complex and arduous task of undoing racism sets in, Cornel West (1993) insists that we begin not with the problems of Black people but with the flaws of society – flaws rooted in historic inequalities and longstanding cultural stereotypes. The manner in which we set up the terms for discussing racial issues shapes our perceptions and responses to these issues. As long as Black people are viewed as “them,” the burden falls on Blacks to do all the “cultural” and “moral” work necessary for healthy race relations. Of course, the prevailing racist ideology, which defines people of African descent as less than or subhuman, is simply a distortion within the realm of ideas based on real and systematic efforts to deny Black people their rightful status as human beings. Racism in itself is an alienation from the human condition, a violation of humanity that distorts both parties - oppressed and oppressor. More importantly, any racist act fundamentally alienates the oppressed from the freedom and liberty to which every human being has an undeniable right. This alienation can remain unacknowledged and unchallenged, or it can be recognized in such a way as to provide a theoretical impetus for a practical thrust in the direction of freedom and liberation.

I’ve learnt that both the strategy employed by the South African Liberation Movement as well as the sum of what seems to tentatively emerge from the analytical and interpretive frames, endorse a kind of Du Boisian view (1940), acknowledging that intelligent propaganda, legal enactment and reasoned action are key ingredients required to attack and disarm the conditioned reflexes of race-hate and change them. How else do we endeavor to reconceptualize that “vast” historical project and continue to reconstitute our role within the academy so that we arrive at the “scientific truth” we so ardently desire?

**End Note**

Any educative endeavor or reeducation project specific to the Psychology of Liberation must have, at the core of its curriculum, **Transcendence** as a conscious strategy. Upon completion, therefore, this study will include Transcendence as a key recommendation. Oppression cannot be shocked out of a person, (Asante, 2003). Each person must be allowed to manage their own change so that the cognitive process is more than simply managing socio-cultural crisis or psychic collapse, but that it becomes one of spiritual cleansing and healing. This is indicative of creating new growth opportunities and spaces for others by constructing and communicating new concepts of power, love, relationships and ideology.
Diversity and Ressentiment in Educating for LGBTQ-friendly Changes in a University

Rod P. Githens
University of Louisville

Abstract: Within universities, lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer (LGBTQ) individuals have used education to seek equitable policies and improve campus climates. In this project, I examine the approaches to diversity education by LGBTQ activists seeking domestic partner benefits within a major state university system.

Throughout the last 20 years, lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer (LGBTQ) individuals have sought domestic partner benefits (DPBs) as part of a larger movement to make universities hospitable to all students and employees, regardless of sexual orientation or gender identity. Using the nearly 20-year effort to attain full domestic partner benefits (DPBs) within the University of Illinois system, I sought to understand “What approaches to diversity education were used to attain DPBs within this university system?”

Diversity and Ressentiment

The term “diversity” is contested and definitions vary. Within workplaces, it oftentimes serves as a more palatable term for Affirmative Action. In other cases, it describes a “melting pot” approach in which assimilation is sought. In this section, I describe other common perspectives on diversity education, ranging from functionalist to socially critical approaches.

Harmonious Diversity

In an increasing number of organizations placing less emphasis on normalization of diversity, the goal is to “understand differences.” Under these approaches, recognition exists that everyone is different, but the end goal is to focus on getting along. Nemetz and Christensen (1996) provide a functionalist approach to diversity in which conflict is discouraged in order to seek organizational harmony. They conclude that diversity education efforts should not result in confusion, vulnerability, or anger, but instead should result in bias reduction, harmony, inclusion legal compliance, creativity, productivity, and approval. However, the model fails to acknowledge that diversity efforts might result in “negative” responses initially before “positive” action occurs. Additionally, recognition of differences and a striving for harmony can be inadequate. There is real prejudice and bias that persists through individual, institutional, and structural discrimination (Pincus, 2000). Focused action is needed to overcome these barriers.

Identity-Critique Approaches

Diversity efforts sometimes emphasize education efforts that result in members of the majority feeling guilty for the injustices that have been committed. Brown (1996) explains that this can be understood through the concept of ressentiment in which a member of a minority group externalizes problems and seeks to transfer problems to someone else. However, members of the majority group oftentimes facilitate diversity education with this same result. Brown contends that this process results in an individualistic investment in one’s own subjugation, which fails to critique the societal structure that created this need for a focus on individual needs. In other words, she argues that the need for individuals to transfer individual problems to others has
resulted from other societal factors (e.g., capitalism, consumerism) beyond issues related to group identities based on race, gender, sexuality, or disability.

Brown (1996) acknowledges that these ideas have their limits, given our current situation. It is difficult to ignore the real historical legacy of racism, sexism, and heterosexism and pretend that they never existed. Instead, she advocates more focus on a “democratic political culture” (p. 163) that avoids the tendency toward individualized therapeutic discourse. This new political culture would focus on “desire” and “wanting” rather than on “being.” Brown contends that “being,” in which people focus on group identity and dwell on their current condition, presents a fixed position that results in the Nietzschean concept of ressentiment and seeks punishment. For example, a gay man dwells on the injustice inflicted upon him and wants straight people to feel guilty for these injustices. Instead, Brown advocates a position that acknowledges current location and history, but presses forward in forming coalitions that employ ideas of “want, hope, desires, dreams” (p. 166) among disparate groups.

Identity Without Ressentiment

Bramen (2002) disagrees with Brown’s perspective on ressentiment and views it as an attack on identity politics. In particular, she criticizes Brown for presenting the use of identity as victims’ wallowing rather than as an assertive or affirmative stance. She concludes that both Brown and the conservative right believe that “minority constituencies do not believe in healing, but instead squeeze all the pus they can from the wound” (p. 4). Bramen concludes that identity politics is not a barrier to working on common ground and that actions are needed that rethink the universal while not attempting to transcend particularity.

West (2001), in considering the African American experience, explains that the history of African American victimization cannot be ignored, as is advocated by conservatives focusing on “pulling oneself up by the bootstraps.” However, he rejects the liberal position of solely focusing on structural issues in which political solutions are the primary focus of betterment. He advocates a self-affirming confrontation of the nihilism and self-destruction that he sees in large pockets of black America. Hayes (2001) expands on those ideas by explaining that this nihilism results in ressentiment, of which revenge, hatred, jealously, and spite are associated. However, ressentiment is broader and longer-lasting; it leads to a long-term self-poisoning attitude. The danger with ressentiment is that it “masks a self-imposed helplessness” (p. 250) which leads to a self-pitying rather than working toward solutions. Through vital grassroots efforts, West calls for working across racial boundaries toward progressive goals, while building on the best of identity approaches. While calling African American activists to embrace blackness, West envisions race-transcending coalitions that seek social change and avoid the risk of separatism.

When considering diversity education under conditions of guilt and ressentiment, it is possible to slide into the tendency to focus on individual development in which members of the majority are pushed into a self-righteous position that can result in minorities continuously doing the educating and members of the majority seeking to redeem themselves for reasons of personal development (Ellsworth, 1989). Ellsworth advocates having conversations and building coalitions in which action is taken among individuals who have multiple interests. In other words, most of these scholars advocate moving beyond a self-interested focus and moving toward more expansive approaches that are broadly inclusive in bringing positive changes.

Setting and Methodology

In order to understand the approaches toward diversity education and the presence of ressentiment, this study occurs within two primary organizations. One is a large institution and the other is a loose-knit coalition of activists. Most events occurred among trustees,
administrators, employees, and students at the University of Illinois (U of I). The U of I has three primary campuses at Chicago, Springfield, and Urbana-Champaign. Activists at Chicago and Urbana-Champaign began working for domestic partner benefits in the late 1980s. Eventually, much of this work occurred through the U of I Ad-Hoc Domestic Partner Benefits Task Force. As of March 2008, DPBs have been partially, but not fully, implemented.

This paper is part of larger study that resulted in a qualitative, historical case study (Appleby, Hunt, & Jacob, 1994; Stake, 1995) that sought to understand the long-term process of implementing DPBs within this university system. Primary data sources were 21 interviews with activists, administrators, and other decision makers, analysis of university documents and memos, and archived email correspondence from the activist listserv.

Findings

Primary findings include: (a) education about DPBs occurring against a backdrop in which the university was embroiled in a long-term, high-profile social justice issue that resulted in activists censoring their approaches to education, (b) contradictory and complicated approaches to using coalition for education efforts, and (c) success in using testimonials.

Self-Censoring of Approaches

During the same time period as the administration began taking behind-the-scenes steps to lay the groundwork for proposing DPBs to the Board, the activism and impatience on the campuses reached one of its highest points. One of the new members of the task force heavily advocated public education efforts. One of her first moves was to organize people to speak during the public comment portion of the Board meetings. After recruiting people for this task through the listserv, task force members sent a barrage of emails, such as, “I think that this is a very bad idea at this time and likely to jeopardize the work that has been done over the past ten years. Please reconsider.” After heated deliberation, the group agreed that polite speeches could be effective in persuading Board members to act. However, the initial overreaction to speaking to the Board illustrates the cautious atmosphere in which this DPB effort occurred.

During this period, the administration and Board were addressing two other larger, more visible issues. These efforts utilized tactics of nonviolent resistance and sometimes-raucous tactics. First, opponents of the Urbana campus’ Native American mascot were protesting regularly and using very heated rhetoric in addressing the Board. For example, opponents of the mascot regularly interrupted Board meetings and accused Board members of being racist. Second, members and supporters of the graduate employees union utilized similar techniques in seeking recognition. For example, they held a sit-in at the campus administration building that resulted in the building’s employees being blocked from entering.

Given this volatile context, the cautious activists may have had a reason to be patient in deliberately working with the administration, even after years of delays. There was a fear that overly aggressive tactics would result in members of the Board becoming entrenched in their positions. Former Chancellor Susan Rozen (who was opposed to the mascot) explained,

I think Illinois is a place that doesn’t like to respond to pressure. And many places are, so I don’t mean that negatively at all. But, I think, the most effective changes that I saw, happened through a kind of give and take collaborative process. So the domestic partner issue was a good example of it working well, I think, eventually.

In considering the approaches to diversity education, some members of the task force advocated behind the scenes collaboration with the administration, while others desired public education campaigns. Regarding DPBs, I found little evidence of members desiring pity from decision makers and the campus community. Instead, they wanted this policy changed.
Contradictory and Complicated Coalition Building

Throughout this effort, there were numerous examples of coalition building. Some were successful and others were not. One of the best examples was a card drive organized by the academic professional union at the Urbana campus. In my analysis, the effort was largely responsible for reinvigorating the DPB movement throughout university system after a period of stagnation. The card drive provided a mechanism through which members of the campus community could be educated about the issue. The effort spread to the Chicago campus and hundreds of cards were presented to the Board. Additionally, the effort provided visibility to the union by displaying the union’s name prominently on the card, which helped the union in its effort to organize on campus. The card drive seemed to be an ideal example of coalitional efforts—a campaign for same-sex and opposite-sex benefits originating from a group working to improve working conditions for employees. Although the union provided a platform from which to work and resources for printing materials, the organizer of the card drive concluded that the effort was organized by LGBTQ individuals, with no substantial effort by others. In considering that opposite-sex benefits were eventually dropped from the DPB proposal, she said,

“If you want opposite-sex domestic partner benefits, get your ass out there and work, and don’t just sit there and complain. … And I know that’s a stupid way to drive wedges. … To me, that was just another example of heterosexual privilege. Like, you all have the option to get married, and you may not believe in the institution of marriage. That’s fine. But if you want things to be different, then work for it.”

Activists became impatient at multiple points with heterosexuals who wanted opposite-sex partner benefits, but were unwilling to work for it. Activists rejected resentment by working to take action and create changes; however, there were limits to the amount of work they were willing to undertake for opposite-sex DPBs without reciprocation from heterosexuals.

Success in Using Testimonials

Testimonials served a central role in the attainment of DPBs in this university. Evidence showed that decision makers were convinced of the significance of this issue as a result of public, written, and one-on-one testimonials. I explore both the promises of testimonials, as evidenced in this study, as well as the dangers inherent in relying upon such techniques.

Queering the university space and changing minds. In universities, cerebral messages dominate the discourse. However, administrators and Board members heard a combination of rational equity/economic arguments and the use of emotion as advocates spoke publicly about the need for DPBs. As I spoke with decision makers, I was repeatedly told that the most effective arguments came as a result of LGBTQ individuals meeting with administrators and giving public comments during meetings of the Board. Personal familiarity was crucial in winning allies. However, it is also valuable to consider Raeburn’s (2004) contrast between the “queers” and the “professionals” in corporations. In her study, executives happily dealt with professionals who were part of LGBTQ employee resource groups, when they considered the alternative of dealing with radical queers in the 1990s. In my interviews, decision makers repeatedly complemented DPB advocates on being professional and collaborative. In meetings of the Board, meetings with administrators, and in other conversations, advocates were perceived as respectful, poignant, and personable. Discussions with decision makers always returned to the contrast between DPB advocates and the opponents of the Native American mascot, who were perceived as raucous, brash, and disrespectful. I conclude that the mascot’s opponents helped the DPB cause by allowing DPB advocates to serve as a contrasting group. The Board and administrators were
willing to engage with calm DPB supporters, when the mascot’s opponents were engaging in civil disobedience and calling them “racists” during Board meetings.

In considering Hill’s (1996) and Grace and Hill’s (2004) ideas about initiating LGBTQ-friendly changes through adult education, I found that LGBTQ employees effectively educated Board members and administrators about the troublesome heterosexist policies they were perpetuating. Decision makers and administrators spoke with sincerity about the respect they had for the people who spoke out in support of DPBs. The act of “putting a human face” on the policy was repeatedly mentioned as being effective in changing minds. The DPB activists performed adult education through efforts that eventually brought larger societal change (Grace & Hill, 2004). This education resulted in widespread press coverage, letters to the editor, and positive support from politicians. Additionally, other universities in Illinois offered DPBs after the U of I offered them, perhaps in part because of the U of I’s move to offer them first. The collective action within one institution resulted in education of multiple parties, who then took actions that affected a larger culture.

In addition to queering the spaces in which administrators and Board members were located, public proclamations of sexuality can result in a sense of camaraderie and safety for other employees who may not be out (Ward & Winstanley, 2006). Although some LGBTQ employees were not involved in the public effort, they were spurred to act in behind the scenes ways due to the queering of university space allowed by this effort. In one case, the DPB effort resulted in an employee becoming involved in the wider LGBTQ movement and in other social causes. Therefore, this queering of university spaces potentially lead to benefits beyond the LGBTQ rights movement and beyond the confines of the institution.

Becoming a spectacle. Although apparently successful, the public addressing of DPBs can be problematized by using Mayo’s (2007) argument that LGBTQ people enable laziness by heterosexuals when passively presenting stories of oppression. In her critique of anti-homophobia education, Mayo explains that these sharing sessions assume that audiences have no knowledge of LGBTQ issues or heterosexism. Instead, she advocates using a method of accusation, in which others are called into accountability and spectatorship is minimized. These ideas complement Ellsworth’s (1989) call for white people to stop asking people of color to continuously do the educating on issues of racism. In settings in which issues of oppression are addressed, we see endless respectful dialogue and “sharing of experiences” by oppressed individuals. After all the effort, inaction often results. An additional danger exists when considering the effects of such proclamations on one’s career. For example, Taylor and Raeburn (1995) illustrate the career risks for sociologists who publicly advocate for LGBTQ issues.

When considering the DPB advocates’ use of the public speaking time at Board meetings, I found that most of the speakers did engage in a public coming out. But, they also called the Board into action and oftentimes accused members of being indifferent to heterosexism. At the same time, public Board meetings are not a two-way conversation. The former VP of Administration explained that Board members almost never engage with speakers, or even comment, during the public comment session. In that sense, the LGBTQ speakers were a spectacle. Although the speakers continuously attempted to educate “unknowledgeable” decision makers about this issue, Board members continued claiming the issue was out of their hands or that more information was needed. The major exception was a new trustee, Todd Ritter, who acted quickly to pass the DPB proposal after hearing two strongly worded speeches in which one frustrated advocate accused the Board of ignoring the university nondiscrimination policy and another said the university was at risk for lawsuits and grievances. After securing passage of the DPB proposal among Board members, Ritter met with LGBTQ employees to discuss the serious
problems with DPBs. In this meeting, Ritter was presented with the significant problems faced by these employees and he was asked how he would help resolve the issues. This meeting is an example of an accusational conversation, rather than a case of LGBTQ people being the spectacle. Additionally, the interactions with Ritter displayed a call to action rather than transference of problems, as happens with ressentiment.

**Conclusion**

Throughout much of this nearly 20-year effort, activists adopted approaches like West’s (2001) and Ellsworth’s (1989), in building coalitions focused on action. By their very nature, efforts geared toward identity-oriented policy changes call for identity groups to call others into action rather than focusing on “being” or desiring pity. The more complicated task is to continue the call for action when seeking culture and climate changes after policies have changed.

**References**


Understanding what motivates adult to engage in various learning endeavours across the lifespan often involves tracing multiple complicated and interconnected factors. Both formal and informal educational contexts determine how individuals will be politically involved through different stages in their lives. In a current study on lifelong learning, citizenship, and participation in community-based organizations in Canada, the possibilities and challenges of developing a more networked approach towards governance to support an active and engaged citizenry is explored. This study is funded by the Canadian Council on Learning (CCL) and builds on previously completed research around women’s lifelong learning trajectories in adult and higher education in Canada funded by the Social Science and Humanities Research Council of Canada, as well as a previous CCL study on life histories of women as active citizens. The findings reveal a complex meshwork of factors that shape decisions around participation in both formal and informal learning contexts to become “active citizens”. Differing perspectives are explored around the role of government, community-based organizations (CBO’s), and volunteer participation as these relate to governance. Critical discourses in citizenship are used to explore how localized factors are often influenced by the effects of globalization and neoliberalism.

Overview of Research Study

The study began with a content analysis of related academic literature and policy documents around citizenship, governance, and the significance of learning within community-based contexts. Six case studies of “grassroots” [initiated through citizen involvement] community-based organizations (CBO’s) across Canada were conducted to examine citizen participation within communities, as well as interconnections between CBO’s and government. The case studies involved personal interviews with two or three members of each organization, an examination of websites, annual reports, and other printed materials, and a site visit. In addition, interviews with “key informants” – individuals working in government, the policy sector, and the volunteer and funding sector were conducted in three different regions in Canada; the Western, Central, and Eastern provinces to provide insights into policies, practices and resources to foster active citizenship. The “grassroots” organizations selected were chosen to represent as broad and diverse types of community based organizations as possible, from different geographic areas, and they include a hospice in Chilliwack, British Columbia, an organization that supports individuals with disabilities in Calgary, Alberta, an immigrant association in Windsor, Ontario and a food back in Oakville, Ontario, and an Acadian (francophone) cooperative in Cheticamp, Nova Scotia as well as a local branch of Oxfam, in Halifax, Nova Scotia. The key informants were also from diverse geographic locations across Canada, and included politicians and policy makers at different levels of government as well as representatives from administrative positions in the volunteer and non-profit sector.

Interviews from both key informants and the community organization participants were transcribed and sent back to participants for review. An additional feedback loop was included in the study whereby a summary report of initial findings was circulated to participants for their
assessment. In addition, a workshop was conducted to provide additional feedback from other community groups to explore in greater depth the issues of active citizenship and participation in governance.

The Findings

Numerous pathways lead to citizen involvement in both community-based organizations and in governance. A personal crisis, such as a family member’s illness or a personal disability, may lead to involvement with a particular community-based organization, such as a hospice or the Ability Foundation. One person said, “I wouldn’t be where I am if it weren’t for volunteering after my accident.” Another participant said, “I saw an ad in the paper, and my mother had just been diagnosed with dementia and I wanted to do something -- I didn’t want to go to the Alzheimer’s Society as that was too close to the issue and the hospice just intrigued me.”

Transition points in life, such as a move to a new area or retirement may also spark an interest in volunteer involvement. One volunteer explained, “as life progressed and my kids are now grown and we’re in a position where I have retired now. I can spend more time doing volunteer work”.

The nature of volunteer commitments seems to be changing because of stress around time commitments. Many citizens choose short-term, intermittent volunteer commitments, such as fundraising for a particular event to accommodate busy schedules. One participant said, “I don’t want to go to a meeting every Thursday or every month, but give me tickets and tell me to sit at a table and sell tickets or be an usher at a theatre … sure, I’ll do that for that one night… or even for the weekend…but not on an ongoing basis.” One member of a different organization reflected on the volunteers that they had and explained, “What attracts people to us verses a lot of places is we have a minimal commitment because if you’re interested in volunteering for Computer Ability all we require is an hour a week. A lot of places…it’s five hours a week. That’s a big commitment when you’re working fulltime or you’re a student, or you’re here on a visa and just want to do something for the community.”

Concerns were voiced by many participants about the difficulty in getting sufficient volunteers, and worries that volunteerism may be declining. One key informant explained

Everybody is struggling with this loss of volunteer participation…and I’m not sure what the problem is, and none of us really are sure. Why are communities and almost every non-profit group struggling to find volunteers or people to step forward? From churches … the declining participation rates in many of them, not all of them. Community associations…most of them but not all of them having trouble getting board members, people to come out and participate. … People don’t seem to be as connected with issues… It’s almost as if they’re not engaged in public life or citizenship.

Many people who do volunteer also choose to spend their time with activities that benefit people that they are closely connected to, such as coaching their children’s sports teams, rather than assisting with organizations that serve the broader community.

The relationship between different CBO’s varies, and is often tenuous because of the scarcity of resources, both in terms of recruiting volunteers and seeking government funding or engaging in fundraising events in the community. As one of the key informants explained, when it comes to allocating grants, “it’s a competitive process”. Another key informant stated, “There’s a competition for dollars in the community for fundraising. There’s only so many golf tournaments you can do.”

CBO’s vary in their interest in government support and involvement. Short-term funding, involved paperwork, and lack of interest in supporting administrative capacities were some
concerns linked with dependency upon government financial support. A member of one organization explained, “Funding, whenever you say funding, it’s always a challenge. You always have this knot in the pit of your stomach because you never know from one year to the other how much money you’re going to get… Because we’re so dependant on funding we sometimes find ourselves always waiting … it’s always till the last minute … We cannot plan beyond the year.”

One organization, a food bank, decided to completely opt out of appealing to government for assistance. As one of the members noted dismissively, “Well the government pretty much messes up a lot that they get involved with.” Instead, they chose to go directly to the community for support.

Another was striving for financial independence by developing a social entrepreneurship model for service delivery. A participant explained, “We wanted to just break out of that and, let’s see, in those days, we were 100 percent dependent on traditional sources of income. Three years ago we were probably 60 percent dependent, today about 90, 92 percent of our revenues are self-generated.” In a social entrepreneurship model, the organization is often still connected to government, but as an organization that provides needed services that the government contracts out.

Within Canada, a large number of community-based organizations remain almost completely dependent on government support. Often the focus on meeting short-term, localized goals, as well as dependency upon government assistance, meant that advocacy was not perceived to be a part of the mandate of many local CBO’s.

This difficulties around sponsoring organization involved in advocacy work were noted by one key informant involved in the funding process:

*we don’t really fund something that would strictly be called lobbying or advocacy as defined by Revenue Canada and that presents a challenge for us, especially in the environmental sector, because a lot of what environmental groups do is … there are the ones that go plant trees; but a lot of them are there trying to lobby for the elimination of pesticides …Where does education stop and advocacy start? I don’t know. So there’s a fine line….*

From the perspective of the organizations, one person explained that [we] “will not endorse one candidate or the other mainly because we are dependant on funding. Time is also an important constraint. At the Multicultural Council, one person explained,  

*we would like to work with immigrant policymakers, or the Immigration Minister, and sometimes we have petitions and we have sent out letters, we have tried to link with various politicians on certain issues. But we haven’t had the time to take it on as a regular board. It’s been just too busy to do anything else….The staff is just completely overwhelmed. You talk to the staff and they don’t have a single minute.*

Some members of organizations simply did not see that advocacy was part of their organization’s mandate, often because they were too busy meeting localized needs at the grassroots level. One participant stated, “our volunteers are not lobbyists. They’re not interested in that.” Engaging with government and policy might be seen as more appropriate, if the organization was linked with a larger network, for offices at the provincial level. For example, the hospice in Chiliwack explained that while their own role in terms advocating or lobbying on behalf of clients was limited, “we do have a provincial organization, BC Hospice and Palliative Care, who do advocacy work for care of patients and families.”

Participation in governance seems to be linked in some instances with active participation in CBO’s, but often other factors (ie. keeping busy in retirement) were stronger motivators.
Decisions around participation were often linked with individualized motives and personal experiences rather than broader social objectives.

This was not true of all volunteers, however. Some individuals were conscious of the possibilities for political engagement through their work with community-based organizations. For example, a volunteer at Oxfam, suggests an alternative way of thinking about relationships between government and community-based organizations. He argues that,

My notion is that government is a good institution, at local, national, and international levels, and part of being a good institution is an obligation to engage in social policy such as poverty and social justice issues. So it is appropriate to engage in social policy and engage with community-based organizations for that purpose.

Analysis

Drawing upon a critical feminist analysis, it is clear that there are numerous ways in which adult learners determine their learning pathways around participation as citizens. Family, work, and community, as well as different expectations according to life stages all shape the types of involvement that individuals engage in and their participation in both formal learning and informal learning contexts (such as volunteer organizations and community groups).

Critical and feminist adult educators note the way in which neoliberalism is shaping discourses around learning and citizenship. Jarvis (2002) argues that within a neoliberal context there is a need for adults to understand the complexities of the broader global and social forces in order to participate fully as citizens. Oolsen (2006) and Teghtsoonian (2004) point out that the impact of neoliberalism can be seen in the way that factors that shape and differentiate individual experience are screened out of consideration, and competition for scarce resources is intensified. Lister (2003) argues that education for citizenship often addresses preparing students to become future workers rather than taking wider social and political concerns into consideration.

In terms of actual citizenship participation in the volunteer sector, the impact of neoliberalism can be seen in how it places greater emphasis on individual responsibility, competition, and the values of the marketplace. Within this climate, volunteerism may be eroded, and often becomes a fragmented and incidental activity. The identity of what it means to be an “active citizen” is often taken up differently by government, organizations, and individual Canadians. It is unclear whether many citizens become aware of broader social and political concerns through localized volunteer work, unless the organization has an advocacy mandate. Instead, the reasons for being engaged in volunteer work are often linked with personal reasons rather than an interest in political engagement.

At the same time, the effects of neoliberalism also impact upon grassroots types of organizations. CBO’s must develop an assortment of strategies to survive within an increasingly difficult environment, ranging from reliance on government funding to social entrepreneurship. The intensification of competition erodes opportunities for cooperation, and the sense of uncertainty with a lack of core government funding for most organizations makes it difficult to engage in long term planning or visioning. While some individuals would like to see stronger linkages between government and grassroots organizations, and acknowledge the importance of advocacy around policy development, this does not seem to be a central focus for most CBO’s. Unless, as in some instances, particular forums are set up to encourage dialogue between government, policy makers, and community-based organizations, there are few opportunities for these types of conversations to take place. In addition, there is a lot of fear that being too vocal or
critical may impact detrimentally upon funding for organizations that are primarily dependent upon the government for financial support.

As my previous research on women’s lifelong learning trajectories and on women as active citizens indicates, gender is an important variable that shapes individual life courses. Women’s lives often do not follow the same pathways as male lives. Yet with the increasing level of participation of women in the paid labour force, many women who often served as the mainstay of volunteer organizations are now pressed for time and unable to contribute the number of hours of labour that they did in the past. Women are still responsible for most of the unpaid labour in the home, and often have the same demands in the paid workplace. Although women often feel a strong sense of commitment to community, they may not be able to be as actively engaged as they would like because of these gendered expectations on their labour. As a consequence, they are more likely to make short-term commitments that involve fewer hours of work.

Lack of time seems to be a factor that impacts on both men and women in regards to citizenship participation. In the current neoliberal context, people are often driven to work extensive hours. This may undermine both the willingness and ability of people to contribute volunteer hours to the broader community and to become politically involved as “active citizens”. Many of the people who do commit a large number of volunteer hours to grassroots organizations, unless the organization have a strong advocacy orientation, often seem to feel removed from the arena of governance and political decision making. This indicates that the notions of “active citizenship” may be taken up in a variety of ways. While many citizens may be willing to contribute a limited amount of time to supporting organizations in their community, this does not necessarily lead to engagement with the broader political sphere.

**Implications of Research for Adult Educators and Policy Makers**

Unlike our European and British counterparts (Martin, 2003; Lister, 2003) there has been limited empirical research around citizenship, governance, and lifelong learning within Canada. Initial results from this study indicate that creating a more networked approach towards governance is complicated by different organizational mandates, local interests, and effects of neoliberalism. While some individuals and organizations see advantages and benefits to creating partnerships and exploring opportunities for collaboration, all too often competition for scarce resources makes it difficult for organizations to establish close networks. The relationship with government is complicated by the issue of funding and concerns around whether this might be adversely affected if an organization becomes overtly engaged in advocacy. At the same time, the lack of time for many people is limiting their willingness to volunteer, particularly if the work involves a long term or time consuming commitment.

An aging and increasingly diverse population, as well as shifting economic, social, and cultural trends, impact upon citizen participation in communities and in governance. Understanding the learning journeys of “active citizens” requires a critical assessment of educational experiences connected to the homeplace, workplace, and community as well as considering personal learning experiences that may occur during individual life courses.

**References**


Adult Education as Social Education Revisited:  
The Contribution of John Ohliger

André P. Grace, University of Alberta, Canada  
Tonette S. Rocco, Florida International University, USA

Abstract: In this paper we turn to the scholarship and grassroots educational, social, and cultural work of John Ohliger to suggest that his politics of adult education provide useful insights for revitalizing adult education in neoliberal times when lifelong learning is advanced as the more desirable commodity.

John often joked that an adult educator was someone who knew how to arrange chairs in a circle. Of course, that is symbolic of what he did best: create an environment in which people felt inspired and free to talk about any topic as self-directed and collegial learners. John often told me that he was not a good teacher, which meant that traditional lecturing was not his best skill. He certainly did not like things like grading either. Still, his students really loved him and learned so much, I think, because he encouraged them to question and explore the subject before them. He made learning joyous, individual, and voluntary. By individual, I do not mean solitary. I mean that each person found his or her own path in exploring a topic.

Chris, John Ohliger’s wife (Wagner, 2009, pp. 323-324)

Since the early 1990s, the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) has spearheaded educational policy initiatives focused on lifelong and life-wide learning (Grace, 2004, 2005). These initiatives emphasize a new instrumentality and vocationalism, both of which are tied to advancing the knowledge and global economies that have emerged in recent decades under neoliberalism. Within these economies, knowledge is reduced to information, thus devaluing it and making it variously transferrable, replaceable, and disposable. In this milieu, the space and place of adult education appears tenuous. Indeed, in a global learning culture that has become preoccupied with the OECD’s buzz phrase lifelong learning for all, adult education faces the challenge of clarifying and fortifying its parameters at a time when the field requires renewal of its direction amid the educational new wave of interest in lifelong learning (Grace, 2006). In this paper, we turn to the scholarship and grassroots educational, social, and cultural work of John Ohliger to suggest that his politics of adult education, variously grounded in liberal, radical, and critical perspectives, are useful to revitalize adult education as a field of study and practice in neoliberal times when lifelong learning is advanced as the more desirable commodity. As we celebrate the fiftieth anniversary of the Adult Education Research Conference, it is timely and appropriate to draw on the work of Ohliger to think about possibilities for adult education as a field of study and practice. His fifty-year career in the field is largely synchronous with the emergence of the conference as a site to discuss matters of context, disposition, and relations of power affecting education and learning for adults. From the late 1950s when he completed a Master of Arts in Adult Education at the University of California until his death in 2004, Ohliger was a social theorist, educator, activist, practitioner, cultural worker, and prolific writer who provided theoretical and practical lenses to examine the emergence of North American adult education (Grace & Rocco, 2009).
As Ohliger provided perspectives on what he felt ought to constitute adult education as a field focused on learning for adults, he offered critiques of mandatory continuing education and professionalization as he proposed what adult education and lifelong learning ought to be about as democratic and ethical learning sites (Rocco, 2009). Ohliger wanted these educational formations to remember the history of social education and its emphasis on voluntary learning. He also wanted them to focus on meeting the holistic—instrumental, social, and cultural—needs of ordinary citizens mediating the intricacies of life, learning, and work. Ohliger’s work has meaning and value today as education struggles in the wake of the effects of neoliberalism (Giroux, 2004). As neoliberal governments meld the social and the economic, usually placing fiscal responsibility before public responsibility, education is constricted and often reduced to instrumental, commodified forms (Grace, 2004, 2005, 2006). In this milieu, engaging Ohliger’s contributions to theorizing and practice can help us to interrogate privatized forms of adult and higher education tied to corporatism and fulfilling economic agendas (Grace, 2009). This engagement can also help us to problematize contemporary formations of adult education and lifelong learning within a politics of hope and possibility. Such a politics challenges us to develop pedagogical projects that intersect instrumental learning intended to help advance economies with social and cultural learning intended to help build community, create space and place, and revitalize education for citizenship. To cast these projects as learning for adults that recalls the historical as it revitalizes the social and the cultural, we can glean much from Ohliger’s longstanding political and pedagogical project to challenge citizens as educators, learners, and workers who need to clarify social and political options in relation to life, learning, and work (Grace & Rocco, 2009). Taking Ohliger’s radical liberal project into contemporary times can assist adult learners to make basic choices that have meaning in neoliberal times when systemic and institutional forces aid and abet dominant political and economic interests (Grace, 2004, 2005, 2009).

Knowing John: Writing Challenging the Professionalization of Adult Education

In 2003 we began a journey that was not only an intellectual odyssey to capture what John Ohliger contributed to adult education as a field of study and practice, but also a personal and meaningful encounter in self-directed social learning for each of us. John would be pleased that we engaged his life as an organic intellectual, a social advocate, and a cultural worker in this way. He always believed that learning had to be a contextual and relational experience that mediated disposition—attitudes, values, and beliefs—toward learning and was close to the ground (Grace & Rocco, 2009). He had little time for intellectualizing that disconnected the study of adult education from its everyday practice. This is not to say that John was indifferent to theory building. In fact John was passionate about theory both as a builder and a de-constructor of its formations and meanings (Ohliger, 1980). However, when he turned to theorizing, he placed theory in dynamic equilibrium with practice. He also brought the social, historical, political, and other foundational aspects of adult education to bear on practice and possibilities for its transformation. In all his work to engage adult education in the intersection of theory and practice, John focused on the plight of ordinary people who mediated life, learning, and work amid social, cultural, political, and economic change forces over which they had little or no control. From this perspective, he offered this critique of academic adult education, problematizing both its radical and mainstream constituencies:

If academic adult education overlooks the manner in which its “clients” are structured by the socio-economic order, then advocates of some of the radical alternatives are
sometimes guilty of believing that by fostering education as an institution less dependent on that order, people can thereby be liberated from the effects of that order. But the fact remains that so long as people must earn their livelihood in this society, regardless of what kind of exotic education they may seek, they are still subject to many of the same kinds of pressures and conditioning that force adults back to school for certification, lead them to the endless pursuit of courses in self improvement, and support their continued dependence on specialists. Like a specter over the cultural horizon, the pervasive technological and economic order clouds even the most Utopian aspirations for education. … Unfortunately, in their search for legitimacy [in this order], many [mainstream] adult educators translate their desire to do a good “professional” job all too easily into the desire to make their clients into professionals; that is, to help adults acquire the credentials to “make it” in the system or to fulfill the institutional requirements of society. (Ohliger, 1980, pp. 51-52)

John was a realist who understood the power of ideology and economic change forces and the limits of adult education in their wake. He did not have blind faith in adult education as a panacea for people’s problems and a conduit to end oppression. He detested the professionalization of the field as adult education’s will to power, and he was critical of advocates of specialist and optimists who saw a turn to techno-scientism as a cure-all for addressing the ills of society as well as the ills of adult education in its undervalued institutionalized form. John wanted adult education to be holistic education that attended to instrumental, social, and cultural learning needs so people could not only eat, but also have the potential to live full and free lives. In striving to create a more encompassing field of study and practice, John hoped that adult educators would evolve as humble, caring cultural workers and advocates for ordinary people as they shaped a field composed of self-directed, socially conscious learners. John practiced a politics and pedagogy of radical liberalism soaked in hope as he did his part to create this field (Grace & Rocco, 2009). His politics and pedagogy challenge us to take this task into the present moment so we, as adult educators, are there for every learner.

How did John shape a transgressive brand of social education within his politics and pedagogy of radical liberalism? He turned to history to learn from John Dewey and Eduard Lindeman, both liberals who valued education as a social project. He also turned to contemporaries whom he considered mentors: Ivan Illich, Everett Reimer, and Paulo Freire. These intellectuals deeply influenced Ohliger’s (1974) politics of adult education, shaping it as a politics of resistance whereby adult educators “within standard brand institutions … need to resist, and to loosen, the economic and bureaucratic controls that stifle us all” (p. 55). Following Freire, Ohliger believed that adult educators “outside the establishment, or at its fringes, … need to work with individuals and groups who are moving toward an awareness of political and economic oppression and are acting against it” (p. 55). Following Illich and Reimer, Ohliger valued cultural education as a way to mediate political forces. He described cultural education as “living/learning as individuals, in small groups, or new communities as examples of, or seeds for, a future society in which what is now called ‘less’ will be recognized as ‘more’” (p. 55). Ohliger’s politics of education, influenced by radical and critical thought, valued ordinary people:

We are not inadequate, insufficient, or inferior losers, although political, economic, and educational institutions so define us and their leaders try to convince us that we are impotent in the face of rapid change and must adapt to it. We are working perhaps in different ways for a radically new society, directed toward individual freedom without
Turning to the Social Activism, Cultural Work, and Scholarship of John Ohliger to Challenge the Professionalization of Adult Education

John Ohliger was a prolific writer, bibliographer, and archivist who contributed to field scholarship as a graduate student and academic adult educator. Perhaps more importantly though, he continued to contribute during the decades after he left academe and co-founded Basic Choices (Grace & Rocco, 2009). Ultimately, John moved forward solo with Basic Choices, which he developed as a public pedagogical project in which he assumed roles including social educator, writer, bibliographer, collaborator, networker, social activist, and cultural worker. Fortunately for our field of study and practice, John left an encompassing record of his life and educational and cultural work. His archive includes personal correspondence, personal papers, his unpublished memoir, and a rich personal research-and-practice database informative to academics, graduate students, policymakers, educators, and practitioners interested in a holistic social practice of adult education. It also includes his published work, which is voluminous and includes journal articles, monographs, and bibliographies on diverse topics of value to those with interests in adult education and lifelong learning. His eclectic contributions to field scholarship include his critiques of mandatory continuing education as a tool of the establishment, of lifelong learning as a mechanism for controlling citizens as learners and workers, and of critical adult education as an idealistic project that he felt was out of touch with modern practice (Grace & Rocco, 2009).

Ohliger’s body of work and range of interests are explored and analyzed in our book Challenging the Professionalization of Adult Education: John Ohliger and Contradictions in Modern Practice (Grace & Rocco, 2009). Contributors comprise an eclectic group of adult educators, social activists, and cultural workers who knew John personally or who came to know John through his scholarship and work as a popular educator. Each knew the man that his wife Chris described in the quote that opens this paper. All grappled with the complexities and idiosyncrasies that marked the man as a multi-faceted, caring but sometimes contrary organic intellectual and radical social educator who passionately shared his social philosophy, pedagogy, and practice of social education; ethical perspectives on field practices; critiques of mandatory forms of adult and continuing education; critical and alternative educational practices; and holistic and inclusive social forms of adult education (Grace & Rocco, 2009). Collectively, contributors to the book provide a complex and multifocal lens for analyzing our contemporary roles as adult educators as we investigate how John operated in the fray of institutional and other sociocultural contexts that shaped field agendas and priorities over the decades in which he practiced.

In sum, Ohliger’s perspectives and ideas have the potential to help a new generation of educators and learners to (a) theorize historical and contemporary designs of adult education and (b) implement a socially conscious practice of adult education. His critiques have a timeless quality and value to them. Collectively, they provide a solid underpinning for making basic choices about learning for life and work in contemporary times when advanced techno-scientism, individualism, neoliberalism, competition, privatization, and globalization constitute cultural change forces dictating what learning has most worth. We contend that Ohliger’s body of work provides educators and learners with a rich and layered resource for critical analysis and communicative learning. A turn to his work can help us scrutinize the study and practice of adult education in our broadly construed field with its multiple sources of knowledge and competing...
interests. It can help us investigate the space and place of lifelong learning as an entity with two faces: one as an instrument of social control and one as a focal point for social education and cohesion. And, for those of us concerned with adult education’s current value in institutional and community settings, a turn to Ohliger’s work provides much food for thought as we take up an important contemporary question: In a learning-and-work world driven by economic and instrumental concerns, how might adult educators also address social and cultural concerns to provide more holistic and inclusive social education for adults? Ohliger was concerned with this more holistic provision of adult education throughout his career. For Ohliger, true adult education could be nothing less.

**Toward a Durable Better Society**

John’s work under the auspices of Basic Choices, which he started as an adult-learning forum in Madison, Wisconsin in 1976 to enable his work as a free-lance adult educator and independent researcher, is not known like the work of those he considered mentors including John Dewey, Eduard Lindeman, Ivan Illich, Everett Reimer, and Paulo Freire. Hopefully, *Challenging the Professionalization of Adult Education* will be a medium for helping adult educators and learners to discover the work of this social democrat who became an eclectic organic intellectual who relished dialogue about people, politics, and ideas shaping adult education and lifelong learning. Like his mentors, Ohliger worked to make a better world. This is evident in the following proclamation that he and his Basic Choices’ colleagues issued valuing voluntary learning and living for a free society (Basic Choices, 1982).

To work toward the durable better society, which we seek, and to counteract these trends, we therefore propose to join together, and invite others to join us in these activities:

- Research on the extent of these trends and the structural basis for their growth through new forms of critical analysis, examining especially the links between the political, economic, technological, and cultural dimensions.
- To search for, encourage, and work with positive alternatives for human learning at every level: individual, friendship, family, neighborhood, institutional, local, state, national, and international.
- To engage in collective political action and work with others. This action should include raising basic issues for public discussion in these and other contexts: 1. Opposing laws and pressures for mandatory continuing education in general, and certification, credentialing, and professionalization in adult education. 2. At the same time, working toward true public accountability and the growth of genuine personal and social competence. (p. 274)

**References**


Program Planning Principles, Goals, and Evaluation Criteria in the Radical Adult Education Tradition

John D. Holst & Stephen D. Brookfield
University of St. Thomas, USA

Keywords: Radical Adult education, Program Planning, Social Movements

Abstract: The purpose of this paper is to present what we consider to be essential principles, goals, and evaluation criteria, for program planning in the radical adult education tradition. The paper is based on historical and philosophical inquiry into the pedagogical practices of numerous social movements and social movement organizations.

When asked what makes for a radical education, co-founder of the Highlander Folk School Myles Horton (as cited in Horton & Freire, 1990) responded with the following:

If I had to put a finger on what I consider…a good radical education, it wouldn’t be anything about methods or techniques. It would be loving people first. If you don’t do that, Che Guevara says, there’s no point in being a revolutionary….And then next is respect for people’s abilities to learn and to act and to shape their own lives….The third thing grows out of caring for people and having respect for people’s ability to do things, and that is that you value their experiences” (p. 177)

These ideas by Horton are important to us for two reasons. First, it is noteworthy that Horton puts the principle of love before methods or techniques. We agree with this idea and believe that principles such as love not only come before technique, but, as is implied in Horton’s response, lead to certain methods and techniques over others.

The second reason we find Horton’s ideas important is that he invokes the Argentine-born Cuban revolutionary Che Guevara when discussing program planning. When one analyzes the work of Che Guevara from a pedagogical perspective, one finds a comprehensive set of principles he developed for his own program planning and development. Moreover, he was very conscious of the fact that much of his planning work involved informal, nonformal, and formal education. Recognizing that most of us do not live in revolutionary societies, we will ground the program planning principles we derive from Guevara in contemporary and historical social justice-oriented education and activism in the United States. The principles we identify in Che Guevara’s work, are present, for example, in the history of the African American freedom struggle and contemporary popular education programs in the US. What Che Guevara provides us with is a comprehensive set of principles for program planning for democratic socialism, which we believe are applicable to many different contexts and settings.

After outlining the principles we find essential for guiding program planning, we will turn to a discussion of the goals of program planning. By goals we refer to the idea of what we believe should be the outcomes of educational program planning for a democratic socialism. For this section, we will draw upon the work of Antonio Gramsci. Gramsci’s work is prevalent in adult education. Here, however, we want to use Gramsci’s work to help us formulate goals of program planning appropriate for democratic socialism. In the last section, we will present a list of criteria for evaluating programs aligned with the principles and goals we outline.
Principles of Program Planning

The idea of principles for program planning is not alien to the field of adult education. It could be argued that principles derived from the praxis of Ernesto Che Guevara and social justice movements in the US limits the relevancy of these principles. Nevertheless, with careful consideration of the different historical and social contexts of our own and that of the movement leaders and activists we drawn upon, these principles can be seen as a framework to guide any adult education planning interested in maintaining the historic affinity between our field and the goal of social justice.

By way of summary, we find the following principles as essential for democratic socialist program planning: internationalism, anti-imperialism, intrinsic motivation of love and empathy, discipline, honesty, self-criticality, flexibility in thinking, audacity, a willingness to sacrifice, a rejection of privilege, and an orientation toward service. In what follows, we will detail the presence of these principles in social justice-oriented education and activism in the US, and relate them to program planning.

Internationalism and Anti-Imperialism

Despite the United States’ historical emergence as an imperialist power, there is a long standing anti-imperialist and internationalist tradition within the US. Nineteenth-century literary figures Henry David Thoreau and Mark Twain, for example, opposed imperialist wars against México and the Philippines respectively. From an organizational perspective, the Women’s International League for Peace and Freedom (WILPF) founded in 1915 in opposition to World War I with Jane Adams as its first president is an example of an organization whose US branches have educated and organized in opposition to US imperialism and in favor of internationalist principles of social justice and peace for nearly a century. In the history of the African American freedom movement prominent leaders such as W. E. B. DuBois, Paul Robeson, and Malcolm X, often to their own personal detriment, have linked the struggle of African Americans to the international struggle against colonial and imperial subjugation.

Intrinsic Motivation of Love and Empathy

Motivation is a topic of great interest to educators. It is at the heart of many educators’ laments of student disinterest and the agenda for education theory and research. For Ernesto Che Guevara, motivation for social justice must come from within. This is not, however, for Guevara an innate characteristic. Programs must be organized in such a way that they instill people with a disposition for social justice that intrinsically motivates them to act.

The principles of love and empathy as motivating factors can be found in the best of social justice movements in the US. Involvement in such movements, itself, often sparks a humanistic, intrinsic motivation. In adult education we often refer to these experiences as examples of transformative learning. When people organize, there is a dialectical relationship that emerges between personal and collective power that motivates individuals and collectives to push forward on demands as victories build upon one another or as people see others making gains in similar contexts. Intrinsic motivation for social justice takes root when people no longer see engagement in movement activity as a choice; it becomes something they have to do.

Discipline

Along with internal motivation stemming from ideals, Guevara (1985) also believed that an internal discipline “spring[ing] from a carefully reasoned internal conviction” (p. 153) was essential. More generally, we can say that when one learns to be internally driven by humanistic love and empathy, one also gains an orienting framework to guide and propel one’s action. External motivators and orienting mechanisms are decreasingly necessary if program planning
gives people the personal and social space and institutional support in order to pursue actions and
further learning guided by deeply held ideals.

Strict discipline of a military nature found in the guerrilla units led by Che Guevara can be
found in the history of armed struggle-oriented US social movements. Beyond examples of a
more military nature, training in social movements instills people with a discipline, confidence,
and conviction that only through their own efforts things can change.

**Honesty, Truth, and Self-Criticism**

Self-criticism is a pedagogical tool for learning and teaching that should be a principle of
program planning. In order to be effective, however, it requires honesty and an environment in
which people can express their assessments of their strengths and weaknesses in a collective spirit
of improvement. To engage in honest and open self-criticism is to teach others through example
the ability for self-assessment, self-awareness and the desire for self-improvement. While self-
criticism is essential for the individual, this is also essential at the level of groups, communities,
and institutions to avoid bureaucratic stagnation.

**Creative, Flexible, Non-Dogmatic Thinking and Audacity**

Given the growing national and global economic inequalities, our programs should
develop students disposed to a critical, non-dogmatic understanding of the political economy of
exploitation with the analytical flexibility to understand how this plays out in different ways and
in different areas in today’s globalized society. We can see this being done in contemporary
popular education-oriented organizations such as Project South based in Atlanta, Georgia and the
School of Unity and Liberation (SOUL) based in Oakland, California.

The historical levels of migration and immigration today are part and parcel of neoliberal
globalization. The recent waves of immigration to the US, have been accompanied by innovative
social movement activism among immigrant workers. These workers are some of the most
vulnerable and oppressed sectors of US society, and yet they have exhibited an audacity that has
put them at the forefront of community, citizen rights, and labor activism. The principle of
audacity is embodied in the popular slogan “Sí, se puede [Yes, we can]” of the immigrant rights
movement in the US. Fundamentally this is a pedagogical stance—to show through your own
audacious example that people are capable of things well beyond their oftentimes limited self
image—and should be a part of program planning for a democratic socialism.

**Service, Sacrifice, and Opposing Privileges**

Sacrifice imbued with love and empathy transformed into service was a central part of the
hegemony that Guevara believed ought to permeate the new Cuban society. The permeation of a
society with hegemony is an educational process. Guevara understood this very well and argued
forcefully for the power of what he called direct and indirect education in the formation of the
new man and woman guided by the principles we are outlining. In the new society, sacrifices
would not seem as such, but would be the ‘natural’ way of being and acting in a society oriented
toward social justice. The principle of service was of particular import for professionals with
whom Guevara frequently spoke during his time in Cuba. Professionals were products of the
hard work and advances of the society to which they should be committed. Echoing the ideas of
Freire that the educational professional cannot be neutral, Guevara extended this argument to all
professionals.

Program planning should develop service-oriented people willing to make sacrifices for
others. Aptheker (in Du Bois, 2001) comments that central to Du Bois’ educational philosophy
was “the demand for sacrifice, for a life of service, and an insistence that while such a life will
bring hardships and temptations it also will bring fulfillment” (p. xiii). The best of social activists
have always embodied this principle. Activists rarely attain personal benefit from the risk taking
involved in organizing and educating for change, which, more often than not, results in personal sacrifice.

Goals of Program Planning
In this section we will present what we consider to be the most important goals of program planning for a democratic socialism.

Political Independence of Working Class People
To begin, we should clarify that by working class, we are not referring to an early 20th Century, industrial-based definition of the working class. In defining the working class, we draw on the work of Zweig (2000) in considering the contemporary make up of the working class in the United States. Following Zweig, working-class people are those who, when they are employed, work for someone else and have a minimum amount of control over the conditions of their work, regardless of the color of the collar they wear on the job. By this definition, the working class constitutes about 63% of the US population. For a democratic socialism to be successful, program planning should work to achieve political independence for the working class. In the U.S., this will need to be manifested in the formation of a multiracial, multiregional working-class political organization. This organization will need to clearly identify a working class in the U.S. as the majority class with distinct interests from the class in power. In addition, an organization of this nature will need to articulate the demands of the so-called new social movements (issues of race, gender, sexuality, identity, and the environment) from a working-class perspective. In other words, it will need to reflect the interests and demands of the working class as it actually is: majority female, disproportionately formed by people of color, and disproportionately affected by environmental disasters and degradation.

Understanding the Line of March
It is essential that program planning help working class people understand and anticipate the trajectory of socio-political economic change; Marx and Engels call the line of march. This is a fundamental aspect of leadership at the individual and organizational level, without which a person or organization must merely tag along with rather than guide political action. People must be able to understand the complexities of their socio-political economic context in order to consciously work to change it in the direction of a democratic socialism.

Understanding Social Change as an Historical Process
Gramsci (1994) understood that social change emerges as an interrelated process of economic, social, and political transformations. We tend to only consider political upheavals as indicators of social change, and in this way, we fail to understand the interconnectedness of economic, social, and political transformations.

To see social change as an interrelated process involving economic, social, and political transformation, allows people to understand how there are transformations of an objective nature like the mechanization of agriculture over which working class people have little say, that transform the playing field upon which people fight for their demands. These objective changes can make social and political change more or less likely. If one is to be successful, educational planning for a democratic socialism should have as a goal, helping people understand social change as a process involving enabling or disabling objective changes in relation to their demands for a more socially just society.

Understanding One’s Place in History
Today we are witnessing national and global economic polarization of rich and poor which is transforming the nature of social classes. Any program planning endeavor for
Democratic socialism should have as a goal an understanding of the nature of the particular epoch one is working in, the prospects for change, the nature of that change and the likely agents of that change.

*Working with and from the Movements of Working-class People*

We need theory to understand the socio-political economic epoch through which we are moving and the prospects for change in this period. As much as we need theory, however, education must also be based in the spontaneous struggles of working-class people around their real needs and interests. For Gramsci, radical praxis of an authentically educational nature does not consist of preaching a dogma, but rather, working in a dialogical, pedagogical, and directive way with the real needs of those most negatively impacted by unfolding socio-political economic changes; those for whom a new social order is a vital necessity. Therefore, education planning should have as a goal to work with and from those most severally impacted by socio-political economic transformations.

**Criteria for Evaluating Programs**

Given the principles and goals that we have outlined thus far, how do we know if programs are helping build a movement for democratic socialism? In order to address this point, we will present eight criteria with which we can assess our program planning. While these criteria are framed in terms of yes/no questions, the answers to these questions will be on a continuum. Individual planners and planning collectives or groups, given their specific contexts, need to consider if they can move their work further in an affirmative direction on the continuum for each criterion. Moreover, program evaluation should be the responsibility of all those involved in the educational process; a process through which everyone takes responsibility for their own role in achieving the aims of the educational program.

*Does our work begin with the pressing demands of the marginalized?*

This is important for two main reasons. First, in any given situation, the most marginalized have the least at stake in the prevailing relations of power that maintain a given society. Moreover, the marginalized can often represent the future for sectors of the society not yet on the losing end of prevailing relations.

*Does our work help the marginalized understand the historic nature of their existence, and does it expose the growing contradictions (polarization) and the inability to resolve these contradictions within existing socio-political economic relations?*

These interrelated criteria are particularly important today, given our assumption that we are in a period of fundamental transformation characterized by a growing polarization of wealth and poverty on a global scale. In other words, today’s poverty is unique since it is an expression of the growing inability of prevailing relations to satisfy the needs of the poor in the midst of surpluses of the basics of life (food, clothing, housing, etc.).

*Does our work allow people to understand the interconnectedness of their own local situation and the broader context?*

Isolated, people rarely see their problems as social problems. When people come together, however, they are much more likely to see how their own problems are not individual problems, but social problems rooted in prevailing asymmetrical power relations. Program planning should insure that people can come to an understanding of the interconnectedness of themselves, their social reality, and the wider society.

*Does our work build an active and engaged political independence of the growing marginalized sectors of society? Does our work build unity among the marginalized?*
Program planning for a democratic socialism must be based on the centuries old adage that the working class (as broadly defined above) must be in charge of and responsible for its own emancipation and education. While this is a tenet of socialist movements, it also resonates in many other social movements.

*Does our work build organization through which the marginalized can exercise power?*

Program planning for power is a long-term project, yet short and medium range planning should also keep this criterion front and center. All social change runs along the lines of reform. In other words, movements for fundamental social transformation must work for demands raised by people that call for reforms. Reform-oriented work, however, is also of a more fundamental or revolutionary nature when it helps expose the contradictions of society we discussed above and when it helps people exercise power in extracting victories (reforms) from the existing power structure.

*Does our work develop the skills and knowledge which allow people to lead?*

Serious program planning for democratic socialism must be more than political education aimed at raising people’s understanding of the interconnectedness of social reality. If we are serious about people exercising power and decision making capability over the social, political, and economic forces impacting their lives, then people need knowledge and skills in order to make informed decisions and to be able to lead. Youngman (1986), in his book on socialist pedagogy, is one of the few within radical adult education to emphasize this point. Beyond political education, Youngman, identifies general education and technical education as key dimensions for democratic socialist program planning.

**Conclusion**

As we look out on a world where about half of the world’s population lives on less than two dollars per day, the program planning principles we have outlined with the goals of educating people in order to create and take advantage of a democratic, participatory, and cooperative society seem less and less like politically charged phrases and more like planning that meets the needs of a growing majority of the world’s population. Planning guided by the principles and goals outlined in this paper should not be seen as putting programs on the margins of the field, but rather as anchoring them within the best of our own traditions.

**References**

Conflict and Collaboration: Providers and Planners Implementing the Workforce Investment Act (WIA)

John L. Hopkins                        Catherine A Hansman    Catherine H. Monaghan
Lorain County Community College                        Cleveland State University

Abstract: This qualitative case study investigated the impact of WIA funding on the providers and planners of programs for incumbent workers in one Midwest WIA region, examining the collaboration and power conflicts that are part of planning and implementing this legislation. The study applied Matland’s (1995) ambiguity/conflict framework to WIA implementation.

Introduction

As with many adult education initiatives, policy implementation and program planning may be influenced by power and collaboration. Federal policies are a driving force in the collaboration of adult education providers (Hawley, Sommers, & Meléndez, 2005). One federal policy that requires close collaboration is the Workforce Investment Act (WIA). Since passage of the WIA in 1998, adult educators have worked to implement this act in ways that are beneficial to the learners who need skills to become and remain employable. One of the goals of the WIA is to help businesses and incumbent workers retain their competitiveness in a global economy. Incumbent workers are those currently employed in the labor force that may need additional skills or training to remain employed. Workforce development for the incumbent workforce is vital to the continued success of the U. S. Economy. While the WIA specifically provided for the inclusion of incumbent workers (Patel & Strawn, 2003), few resources have been directed to upgrading the skills of this group of workers. Incumbent workers may be served by WIA funds in three ways: through the regular employment and training services available at one-stop centers, through on-the-job training or special employer-based curriculums provided by the local WIA system, and through state-reserve funding that allows the states to provide innovative services directly (Barnow & King, 2003; Savner, 1999; US Department of Labor, 1999; Workforce Investment Act, 1998).

The incumbent worker aspect of the WIA act has received little attention in research and the literature, and as this study revealed, even in practice. Thus, the problem this research examines is the lack of research focusing on conflict and collaboration among program providers and implementing agencies for incumbent workers since the passage of the Workforce Investment Act of 1998. The purpose of this research was to investigate the impact of the Workforce Investment Act (WIA) funding allocations on the program providers and implementing agencies for incumbent workers in one specific WIA region in the Midwest. This research paper presents the findings of a case study investigating the impact of the Workforce Investment Act (WIA) funding allocations on the providers and planners of programs for incumbent workers in one specific WIA region in the Midwest. It further examines the collaboration and power conflicts that are part of implementing this legislation.

Cervero and Wilson (2006) explain that educational programming is a political process that defines at the macro level, “who is at the planning table making evaluative judgments” and at the micro level the “political dynamics that occur at the table” (p. 230). WIA’s effects on program planners for incumbent workers can be better understood by asking what the decisions reveal about stakeholders’ political objectives, how their spoken objectives conflict with their
actions, and how both hinder or advance the explicit program objectives.

**Literature Review**

The literature review covers two key areas. The first focus is a review of the WIA and the related studies. The second focus is on the importance of critical theory and educational program planning in understanding the relevance of the research questions to implementation of the WIA. The literature review found that the WIA System intended to include incumbent workers; but the literature did not address how WIA implementation influenced the providers and planners of programs for incumbent workers (Hopkins, 2006). Critical theory provides adult educators and program planners with a theoretical framework for understanding the role of power “in maintaining the hegemony of privileged individuals and groups, existing class structures, access to limited resources, and control of productive capacity” (Cervero & Wilson, 2006, p. 176). Critical theory leads researchers to ask whose interests are served and can illuminate how these interests and relations serve as a catalyst for social change (Monaghan & Cervero, 2006).

The study also applied Matland’s (1995) ambiguity/conflict framework to frame the WIA implementation, using it as a lens to consider policy conflict and ambiguity. Matland, as well as Cervero and Wilson (2006), emphasize the political nature of planning. Matland’s (1995) ambiguity/conflict framework categorizes policy implementation conflict into jurisdiction conflict, which involve disagreements over the roles that participants play, and interpretation conflict, which is conflict that arises from differences in the interpretation of a policy.

**Methodology**

This research utilized a qualitative case study approach (Merriam, 1998). We chose the case study approach because it allowed us to gain understanding and knowledge about the conflict and collaboration that occurs among program providers and implementing agencies for incumbent workers in one specific WIA region in the Midwest. In particular, the qualitative approach lends itself to “understanding a phenomena in all its complexity and within a particular situation and environment” (Maykut & Morehouse, 1994, p. 13). According to Merriam, a case study is an “intensive, holistic description and analysis of a single unit or bounded system” (1998, p. 12). Our research involved a bounded system because of the finite number of participants from which the information and understandings could be gathered. Trustworthiness’ (validity) was ensured through multiple methods of data collection, building an audit trail, working with a research team, and utilizing member checks.

Six participants were purposively selected and interviewed to create a cross section of both state and local people involved with the WIA implementation process in the region. The participants were Mary, a current one-stop local center director; John, a local business representative and former Workforce Investment Board member; Jane, the Midwestern county’s manager of service and performance for workforce development; and Dan, Ann and Dave, three upper-level managers at the state’s workforce development office. Interview data were analyzed through the constant comparative method, using Matland’s (1995) ambiguity/conflict framework. Matland’s framework divides policy implementation conflict into jurisdiction conflict and interpretation conflict. Jurisdictional conflict involves disagreements over the roles that participants play. Interpretation conflict is conflict that arises from differences in the interpretation of a policy. Matland divides ambiguity into two types: goal ambiguity and means ambiguity. Goal ambiguity refers to a lack of clarity on a policy’s intended results—the goals of the policy. Means ambiguity refers to a lack of clarity on the process by which a policy is to be
implemented (Cohen, Timmons & Fesko, 2005; Matland, 1995).

**Findings**

Participants in this study shared an understanding of WIA’s two-fold goal of creating a seamless, locally tailored workforce development system and of developing the skills of the incumbent workforce. They agreed that the intent of WIA was to ensure that the training needs of business influenced the workforce development system. They also agreed that WIA requirements called for a system that emphasized job placement for the unemployed. This emphasis required everyone who sought WIA-funded career training to undergo job placement and general-literacy and job-skill development before accessing training. However, an incumbent worker could not access training unless the first two services failed to provide them an increase in income. These requirements presented obstacles to incumbent workers seeking the additional skill development they needed to maintain their current employment and improve their ability to contribute to the competitiveness of the local workforce.

Analysis utilizing Matland’s (1995) framework revealed four themes in the data. *Change Agent Conflict* relates to conflicts about what the roles should be under the WIA system and who should foster implementation of the new policy. *Power Broker Conflict* corresponds to who had the real power irrespective of the assigned change agent roles. *Policy Interpretation Conflict* revolved around the participants’ interpretation of the intention of the legislation toward incumbent workers. Finally, *Ambiguity of Means* addresses the clarity (or lack thereof) of the process for carrying out the programs to help incumbent workers.

*Change Agent Conflict*

This conflict centered on whom had the power to promote change. In this instance, the conflict was one that showed that the local level stakeholders had very different perceptions about the roles than did the state level stakeholders. The power structures from the previous JTPA legislation, existing prior to WIA implementation, continued after implementation, blocking substantial changes and favoring maintenance of the previous system. Both local level participants, John and Mary, cited strong resistance to the role of a change agent by those in power under the old and continuing legislation bureaucracy. John stated that the reality was that “though we were led to believe that there was going to be a change…there was a bureaucracy in place and it was not going to change.” Mary’s perception echoed Johns’, as she explained the initial enthusiasm for change that did not take place: “Strategic calls were made by people [to say] this is different, this is not the bureaucracy…this is a chance to influence the training that’s happening for people who are coming up… And some very important business people agreed to step up and make this be different. And, it wasn’t. It wasn’t.”

*Power Broker Conflict*

This second jurisdictional conflict involved a disagreement in the perception of who had the real power to be a change agent. Local-level study participants perceived the state as maintaining control over the redesign of the workforce development system while, paradoxically, state level participants said that the power to redesign the system had moved from their hands to the local level. Mary stated that, “there was some politics with the old JTPA board that really forced the chairman who had the potential to drive this differently to say I’m not doing this, and walk out of a meeting, and the rest was history.” The chairperson resigned and vowed not to be involved with the county-level workforce investment.
This jurisdictional conflict involving the disagreement in the perception of power between the local and state levels was demonstrated in the development of the state “option” system for WIA. Participants from the local level viewed this option as a state initiative to diminish local power. This evidence suggests that while the state administrators saw power over the system design moving to the local level, the participants at the local levels perceived the state as retaining and using that power, working to create a consistent state system when the legislation clearly was designed to include local administrators.

Policy Interpretation Conflict

This conflict centered on how participants interpreted WIA’s language regarding the incumbent workforce: some study participants’ interpretation was that the purpose of the legislation was to focus on incumbent worker training, while others interpreted incumbent workers as a minor concern of the legislation. Mary questioned whether incumbent worker training was an acceptable interpretation of WIA: “There have been several communities that have found ways to use these resources for incumbent workers but I would push that somebody might question whether that was legitimate.” Dave who summed up the state level participants’ interpretations, “I think that it was for incumbent worker training….What it did was it told the locals they could use their money for incumbent worker training, but it didn’t give them any extra money for it.”

Mary pointed out that early in the WIA process, all the participants interpreted the legislation to include incumbent worker training. However, there was conflict among the participants in the perception of the importance of the incumbent workforce in the achievement of the goals of WIA, the definition of incumbent worker, and interpretations regarding the supply or lack of resources to fund the incumbent worker portion of WIA.

Ambiguity of Means

This theme revealed that participants who were planners and providers did not find clear guidance on the process for providing incumbent worker development. Instead, they found guidance only on developing a system for serving youth, the unemployed and very low-income workers as individuals, independent of their workplace. Jane, the local legislative expert, made it clear that WIA did not provide much guidance about incumbent worker training. She explained, “If you look through [the guidelines] there’s really not a lot…in terms of providing services to employers, although you are expected to…help employers [with] incumbent worker kind of training.” The state level administrators agreed that trying to apply a fair standard in incumbent worker training is a major challenge, raising the issue of how to decide whose employees receive such training. As was made clear from the comments of the participants in this study, the legislation did not have any clear means, funding, accountabilities, or even incentives, for addressing incumbent worker training needs.

Discussion

The two conclusions drawn from this research reveal that the WIA affected planners and providers in ways that are contrary to the stated goals of the legislation. First, the WIA created a systematic structure that inhibited providers and planners from collaborating and engaging in incumbent workforce development. Second, the WIA implementation disempowered business representatives, which then lead to them becoming disengaged in supporting government-based workforce development efforts.

WIA Structure Prevented Incumbent Workforce Development

Several legislation issues contributed to WIA creating a system that supported services to
only unemployed and new workers, while effectively preventing providers from addressing incumbent workers. Although WIA included incumbent workers in its goals, it laid out specific tasks and requirements for serving the unemployed without providing similar guidance for addressing the incumbent worker. The study participants indicated that the resulting WIA system did not have the issue of incumbent workforce development as a goal, and further, it did not offer the structure, services, or expertise necessary to address incumbent worker issues. This is evident in their descriptions of how the system required a quick increase in individual income for incumbent workers as the criteria for both eligibility and for program success.

**Disempowering and Disengaging Business Representatives**

WIA’s language emphasized incumbent worker development, local decision making, business influence on implementation, and services to employers. This created an expectation that local business representatives would be empowered to change the county workforce development system significantly to help employers provide incumbent worker training. However, WIA made no provisions for that training. As reported by some participants in this study, many businesspeople lost hope that the system was willing or able to collaborate with businesses and actually address workforce development.

Several forces contributed to this. First, even though businesspeople were brought into the system for guidance on how to address their workforce needs, the mandated one-stop structure did not provide a way to offer employer-based workforce development. Second, participants described a system that resisted change. Efforts to direct the system toward incumbent worker development were blocked by the power structures that existed prior to WIA implementation. Those in power used WIA’s explicit requirements to defend these decisions. Because of these issues, trust between business representatives and public sector bureaucracies broke down. Businesses must be able to anticipate changes in the economic environment so they can respond quickly. Failure to do so can result in devastating effects to the businesses. Conflict in this area contributed to the breakdown in relationships between the public and private sector while disempowering and disengaging business leaders who had been highly motivated and committed to contributing to the workforce development system with the passage of the WIA legislation.

**Conclusion**

Economic development considers improved competitiveness of the workforce as a whole as one basis for evaluation, in addition to the benefit provided to each individual, making economic competitiveness a driving force behind decision making. While the services to meet individual needs are still primary, local employers’ workforce needs play a much greater role in determining what skills are addressed and how they are addressed. Similar to Alfred’s (2007) study examining how welfare reform legislation failed to adequately address black women’s economic development, our study concludes that the WIA system design did not consider the context of incumbent workforce development from either the employers’ perspective or the incumbent workers’ perspective.

Including adult education practitioners at the planning table is a way to ensure well-planned programs (Cervero & Wilson, 2006; Hansman & Mott, 2001; Hansman, 2005) and informed policy development that meets all stakeholders’ objectives. Adult educators as program planners can link employers with workers by addressing and eliminating assumptions about skill needs, identifying the skill gaps between a particular workforce and the job-skill demands of their workplace, thus closing that gap in a way that facilitates the transfer of learning to the workplace. Finally, if business is to rely on the government for support in workforce development, trust must be rebuilt among all the WIA stakeholders and attention paid to the timeline conflict.
It is impossible to separate power dynamics and the need for collaboration from policy implementation and program planning. Too often, adult educators focus on a small part of our own pond and avoid moving upstream to find the source of the problems or engage in work of policymaking that directly affects adult learners. It is important that adult educators recognize that program planning in many contexts is constrained by public policy and become active in policy development and implementation to further the development of adult learners.

References
Seeking Integration: Spirituality in the Context of Lifelong Learning and Professional Reflective Practice.

Cheryl Hunt      University of Exeter, UK

Abstract: This paper links two models - one of orientations to reflective practice, the other of an holistic epistemology - with empirical evidence from seminars exploring spirituality as a dimension of lifelong learning. It highlights a need for better integration within adult education and other professions of spiritual knowledge and understanding.

A Spiritual Turn: Embracing Our Future?

This paper seeks to integrate studies in the fields of adult education, lifelong learning, professional reflective practice and spirituality. As English, Fenwick and Parsons note, adult education and training began with leaders who believed their very work was, in itself, spiritual. Our historical mentors did not separate their spiritual sides from their work. … Somewhere in the past fifty years adult education and training have become more about teaching techniques and learning styles than about inspiration, aspiration and consecration. Separating the spiritual from the educational might be a safer approach to practice, but it is short-sighted in terms of human need and innate human understanding. (English, Fenwick and Parsons, 2003, p. 19)

Over the past decade there has been a revival of interest in spirituality and its implications for adult education and the professional practice of adult educators (a search of AERC Proceedings brings up 19 references to spirituality in this context, all since 1999). More generally, there is now considerable evidence of a ‘spiritual turn’ in Western societies. For example: drawing on data from the World Values Survey (1981-2000), Houtman and Aupers (2007, p. 305) demonstrate that ‘a weakening of the grip of tradition on individual selves stimulates a spiritual turn to the deeper layers of the self’. In an editorial to The Edge, a journal published by the Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC) in the UK, Smith (2006) points to a range of on-going research suggesting that ‘While conventional religions are in decline, the search for “spirituality” is on the rise’. Forman (2004) and Tacey (2004) both provide extensive empirical evidence of this trend. As I write, Google produces more than 68,800,000 references to spirituality (10,000,000 more than when I checked a year ago!); Wikipedia hosts an extensive, multi-linked entry on the topic; and most High Street bookshops feature large displays labelled ‘Mind, Body and Spirit’ (in one North American store alone, English, Fenwick and Parsons [2003, p. 5] counted 38 different categories for ‘spiritual’).

The need to address spiritual matters is also evident within other professions besides adult education. Thus, in England there is a statutory requirement on schools to ‘promote pupils’ spiritual, moral, social and cultural development’ (DfEE/QCA, 1999, p. 11); the Standards of Proficiency of the Nursing and Midwifery Council explicitly require nurses to have skills to meet the ‘spiritual needs’ of patients (NMC, 2004, p. 5); there is a growing body of literature relating to spirituality in, for example, social work (Moss, 2005), counselling (Moore and Purton, 2006) and healthcare practices (Robinson, Kendrick and Brown, 2003); and the uses and abuses of workplace spirituality are well-documented (e.g. Fenwick and Lange, 1998). Dearey points out that:
The study of spirituality as a dimension of professional practice … has emerged since the mid-1980’s. The challenges vary from fundamental questions of how to think about and study spiritualities, to more practical problems of how to identify and provide for the spiritual needs of service users. (Dearey, 2006, online)

In adult education, ‘service users’ potentially include those many adults involved in the so-called ‘Grassroots Spirituality Movement’: ‘a huge far reaching yet largely disorganised body of ordinary people all over the world’ who are seeking a new form of spirituality ‘focused on the personal, experiential and transcendental’ (Forman, 2004, p. 2). Like a number of other contemporary writers, Forman argues that this movement is an attempt to ‘integrate consciousness, soul and spirit into our societal dialogues’ (p. 4). He does not address adult educators specifically but his message will resonate with many: by engaging with this movement ‘we have the opportunity to sculpt and give birth to a new, holistic and far more deeply humane way to see, think and live. It can be one element of our learning to live together on our small, small planet’ (p. 5).

In this paper I want to suggest that, by engaging in a particular form of reflective practice, we may be able to enter more easily into dialogue about our own understandings of ‘consciousness, soul and spirit’ - and this may better equip us, as adult educators, to facilitate the ‘search for “spirituality”’ that already seems to underpin many of the informal educational processes and practices that are characteristic of the present time.

My title is Seeking Integration and I shall seek to integrate two models: one of ‘orientations to reflective practice’ (Wellington and Austin, 1996), the other of an ‘holistic epistemology’ (Heron, 1996). I shall also try to ‘practice what I preach’ by indicating the relationship between these models and my own approach to spirituality.

Professional Reflective Practice

I have worked alongside many different professionals who have been formally required to engage in reflective practice as part of a qualification and/or as a statutory requirement of their job. In consequence, I now firmly believe that reflective practice can/should involve much more than a functional examination and enhancement of what we do professionally. Besides helping to identify how we might become ever-more ‘effective’ in the exercise of our respective professions, reflective practice can also be a means of exploring our own personal processes of meaning-making, enabling us to state clearly, for ourselves and others: “This is where I am and what I do now; this is how I got here; and these are some of the reasons why I think/feel/act as I do”. I am well-aware, however, that some people regard this as too ‘psychological’ an approach, lacking in either political analysis or a drive towards action.

Wellington and Austin (1996, p. 307) propose that, within the field of education, there are five different orientations to reflective practice: immediate, technical, deliberative, dialectic and transpersonal. These can be represented as endpoints on a three-stage decision pathway on which the key questions are: (1) ‘Does the practitioner engage in reflective practice or not?; (2) ‘Does the practitioner believe that education ought to be domesticating or liberating?’; and (3) ‘Is the practitioner systems-oriented or people-oriented?’.

The first question determines whether the practitioner is conscious of using reflection in her/his practice. For those who do engage in reflective practice, the second question determines how they conceive of education and the relationship between individuals and society. Practitioners holding a ‘domesticating’ view believe it is appropriate for a dominant culture to replicate itself through education: depending on their answer to the third question, the endpoint of the pathway will suggest they have a ‘technical’ or ‘deliberative’ orientation.
Table 1: Orientations to reflective practice (text shown within quotation marks is taken from Wellington and Austin, 1996)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Characteristics</th>
<th>Table 1: Orientations to reflective practice</th>
<th>Manifestation in educational establishment</th>
<th>Efficiency/Effectiveness</th>
<th>Potential outcome</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>View of education</td>
<td>Orientation</td>
<td>Beyond the work context</td>
<td>Context</td>
<td>the work context</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal</td>
<td>Personal</td>
<td>Beyond (inner/outer) experiences</td>
<td>Self-directed change in the work context</td>
<td>Personal/inner experiences</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Empowerment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- Characteristics
- Table 1: Orientations to reflective practice
- Manifestation in educational establishment
- Efficiency/Effectiveness
- Potential outcome

(text shown within quotation marks is taken from Wellington and Austin, 1996)
Practitioners holding a ‘liberating’ view regard education as a tool for personal and/or social transformation: answers to question three will suggest either a ‘dialectic’ or ‘transpersonal’ orientation. The purpose of question three is to determine whether the practitioner’s values and interests are associated more with organisational structures or with personal meaning-making. Wellington and Austin (1996, p. 314) point out that these orientations do not represent a ‘simple classification scheme designed to pigeonhole people and practices’, nor are they hierarchical. Rather, they are intended to facilitate understanding of different points of view, thereby enabling practitioners to identify their own predominant mode of reflection/practice; to respect the modes in which others prefer to work; and to re-view personal values and beliefs and professional practices in the light of those of others.

Table 1 illustrates key elements of each orientation (the ‘immediate’ orientation is not included since it does not consciously involve reflective practice). Text drawn from Wellington and Austin (1996) is shown in quotation marks. The shaded section of the Table highlights the key words that represent my own understanding of the potential outcome of reflective practice undertaken with each orientation.

Significantly, while Efficiency/Effectiveness, Self-development and Empowerment are familiar goals within many work contexts, the notion of Integration - whereby the links between individuals’ ‘inner life’, including their spirituality, and the enactment of their working life are made explicit - is much less common. My own leaning is towards Wellington and Austin’s ‘Transpersonal orientation’ (Hunt, 1998). However, it is not simply a personal preference which leads me to believe that Integration needs to become a more familiar, acceptable – and therefore talked-about – outcome of professional reflective practice. This view was heavily reinforced by an ESRC-funded seminar series entitled Researching spirituality as a dimension of lifelong learning [Ref: RES-451-26-0008] that I convened between 2004-2006.

Seminar Series

The seminar series involved more than 200 academics, practitioners and adult students. We sought throughout to ground discussion in participants’ own experiences and not to get immersed in a purely intellectual debate about definitions of spirituality (Hunt and West, 2006; 2007). The following comments are typical of the concerns raised by numerous participants about the relationship between academic/professional knowledge and practice and something ‘deeper’.

We need more spaces like this where people can be open and honest, touch deeper levels. (Comment in plenary session, April, 2005)

How do we re-establish contact with deeper levels of what it means to be a professional – express a ‘calling’ and connection with what it means to be human? (Feedback: College lecturer, July 2004)

I left feeling very excited that I'd found a way to unite all parts of myself and my work. I discovered that the connection was 'me'! I also left feeling inspired to draw explicitly upon my spirituality in my teaching and my research, rather than to hide it as something not 'valid' in academic/professional space. Hearing from other people who are doing similar has definitely increased my knowledge and confidence. (Feedback: University teaching fellow, February 2005)

Such comments give a clear sense of the fragmentation that people often seem to feel in their lives, and of a yearning to ‘unite all parts’ of their life, work and studies and/or to access some deeper meaning: in other words, to seek integration. Because the seminars were explicitly about ‘Researching spirituality’, it is likely that many participants will have come with an existing ‘orientation’ towards integrative work. Nevertheless, as was frequently pointed out, few
academic or professional contexts actively encourage discussion of ‘deep’ or integrative issues. Participants used words like ‘nourishing’, ‘inspiring’, and ‘energising’ to describe the seminars, often commenting upon how refreshingly different the meetings had been from those in their places of work or study. For example:

*It has been very energising – most research and professional development is not about that deeper sense-making process.* (Comment in plenary session, November, 2005)

Exploring what we felt had been so remarkable about the nature of these seminars, the core group acknowledged that, although the *content* had been incredibly rich, it was the *process* of each seminar that seemed most significant. We had tried to make this congruent with our own understandings of spirituality as a search for meaning, situated experience and an expression of interconnectedness/community. In consequence, the seminars appeared to have provided spaces in which participants had felt free to re-view and to share their own embodied knowledge; and, with others, to co-create new meanings. The only boundaries had been those of mutual respect, which included attentive listening. We wondered whether the seminars had unconsciously involved working spiritually as we tried consciously to engage with understandings of spirituality. (Hunt and West, 2007)

In terms of theory, we acknowledged that Heron’s (1996) concepts of ‘co-operative inquiry’ and an ‘holistic epistemology’ had been especially important in shaping the seminar process. The former because ‘It sees inquiry as an intersubjective space, a common culture, in which the use of language is grounded in a deep context of non-linguistic meanings, the lifeworld of shared experience …’ (Heron, 1996, p. 11); the latter because it actually gave us a language with which to refer to ‘non-linguistic’ understandings, and a framework in which to locate them. *An Holistic Epistemology: Honouring Our Past?*

Heron postulates four kinds of knowledge: ‘Experiential’, ‘Presentational’, ‘Propositional’ and ‘Practical’. He depicts their relationship as a pyramid within which ‘Experiential’ knowledge is the base, ‘Practical’ the apex. Practical knowledge is knowing related to doing; propositional knowledge operates at the level of language/concepts; presentational knowledge encompasses art, music and imagery of various kinds; experiential knowledge is that in which something is sensed but not yet expressed. Thus:

Experiential knowledge and unrestricted perceiving is the ground of fourfold knowing, intentional action is the consummation of it, with presentational and propositional knowing mediating between them. Each kind of knowing both emerges from its ground and has its own relatively autonomous form. (Heron, 1996, p. 165)

Heron’s model also includes a dimension beyond experiential knowledge which he calls ‘a delicious void ... an infinitude within’ (p. 188). For him, this is the locus of creation from which everything we understand of the world derives, including ourselves as created beings. The ‘void’ underpins, and is integral to, the four kinds of knowledge. In itself, it is unmanifest but it becomes, literally, real-ised in the manifest world of everyday living through the agency of individuals. In terms of spirituality, this is essentially a ‘transcendental’ spiritual perspective since it includes that which lies ‘outside’ the known and knowable universe (see Hunt and West, 2007, for further explanation). It is a perspective that I share though I acknowledge and respect that, for many people, their spirituality is entirely founded and expressed ‘within’ the universe.

In Heron’s holistic epistemology, experiential knowledge arises out of ‘direct, lived being-in-the-world’ (p. 33). It encompasses the *non-linguistic meanings* which ultimately give shape to the *images* that underpin the *theories* that determine our *practice*. Adopting Wellington and Austin’s ‘Transpersonal orientation’ to reflective practice seems to me to be a way of
understanding the relationship between, and integrating insights from, these different ‘levels’ of knowing, including how they culminate in professional practice. Adopting other orientations may result in institutional efficiencies, enhance student learning or challenge the institutional/political status quo – all of which may be desirable in different circumstances and times. However, if integration becomes better understood, and sought, as an outcome of reflection this will surely enable us to address more purposefully the issues to which I have drawn attention above, namely: (i) Dearey’s (2006) ‘practical problems of how to identify and provide for the spiritual needs of service users’; (ii) how to bring into the professional practice of adult education the attempts to ‘integrate consciousness, soul and spirit into our societal dialogues’ that Forman (2004) identifies within the informal educational processes of the grassroots spirituality movement; and (iii) how to take account of the yearning to ‘unite all parts’ of their life, work and studies expressed by many adult educators, students and other practitioners (Hunt and West, 2006; 2007).

By seeking integration, I believe we can not only embrace the spiritual turn that may define our future but we will also honour our past, including (as English, Fenwick and Parsons [2003] have reminded us) our ‘historical mentors’ - the pioneers of adult education - who ‘did not separate their spiritual sides from their work’.

References


NMC. (2004). Standards of Proficiency for Pre-registration Nursing Education. NMC: London.


Creating a Comprehensive Broad Based Curriculum Model For Adult and Alternative High School Education Based in the African Centered Paradigm

Nancy E. Jackson
National Louis University

Abstract: In this session we will explore the history of challenges to the African centered paradigm, and how to design a comprehensive curriculum model and lens for use with African American adult student’s ages 17 years old and up.

Interests in the African Centered Paradigm Manifest in my Work and Life

My interests in designing curriculum is manifest in my life through several important channels, first I learned about the Africentric paradigm as part of my professional preparation in the field of Adult Education. I completed an eight month research study involving interviews, literature review, classroom observations, and examination of historical documents for my dissertation and this paper presents some of what I’ve learned.

In this session we will explore some of what I have learned and time will be available for interaction and discussion about what other scholars can contribute or expand on the curriculum.

Commitment to African American Values

The values I admire and seek to live by and encourage in young people include the following: hope, hard work, determination, respect, dignity, preserving our cultural heritage, restoring Africa to its rightful place on the world stage of history, building today for a better future for our children in the next generations, overcoming racial oppression, race stigma, reversing hegemony while creating space for equality, working toward the eradication of class oppression and white privilege, patriarchy, and gender equity.

Purpose of this Paper

The purpose of this Paper is to present the steps that I followed in creating a comprehensive broad based African centered curriculum model and to expand on Asante’s concept of an African Lens by which teachers and other educators can analyze material for inclusion in the teaching materials that they use with Black students in secondary education. “The term curriculum model refers to a conceptual framework and organizational structure for decision making about educational priorities, administrative policies, instructional methods, and evaluation criteria. Although they vary in their underlying premises, curriculum models provide well-defined frameworks to guide program implementation and evaluation.” Goffin, 2001

Research Study

The research study that I completed over an eight month period involved interviews from 90 minutes to two and half hours with the following educators: City Councilwoman Mrs. Joann Watson, Anjua Nafatari (teacher), Marvis Cofield (Detroit School Board Member), Steve Jackson (parent), Pa Joof (principal), Jamillah Kareem (principal), Dr. Cynthia Felton (Educational Consultant), Mukasa Willie Riggs (SNCC Activist), Taki Raton (principal), and Phillip Jackson (Executive Director African American Mentoring Program).
I interviewed each participant with a series of more than 20 questions, recording most of the discussions with digital recorders and two using video and audio equipment. I had the transcripts professionally prepared by a corporate service, and maintained hand written notes as well. I maintained my recording on disks, on the hand held digital recorder, my lap top and desk top computers.

Findings

One element of misunderstanding that often occurs is the perception that African Centered Educators and scholars wish to do away with the western educational system wholesale. In reality what African centered Educators wish to promote in educating Black students, is the idea that not only should these students study the concepts of the western educational system, but additionally on top of this knowledge base should be included an African center to the overall body of study.

The main problems identified through this paper exist at three levels, Systemic level, Teacher level, and Student level. The problems which follow below were identified and researched through a Literature Review, Field Interviews, Student Observation, scholarly analysis, and reporting of Findings.

Systemic Level

The current education system is built on the idea that western ways of knowing (including right to criticize other theories) are superior to all others and that any challenges are “not bound to be respected.” Just as in the famous case of Plessey vs. Ferguson, there were no rights due a Black man, “bound to be respected” by white men. African centered educators or scholars spend so much time defending the right to have such a paradigm that they don’t get to the contents, materials, and substance of African principles. From this lack of respect for the paradigm grows the related notion, though often unspoken, that there is also no right to criticize other western educational systems by people of color.

Teacher Level

Over the course of many interviews repeatedly the educators mentioned that their teaching staff members did not have enough knowledge to teach the curriculum and integrate elements of the paradigm into the subject areas in which they were already trained. Several of the principal’s also mentioned that efforts to promote staff development were hampered by a lack of commitment on the part of school districts to provide sustained professional staff development training programs extending beyond three years or more.

Student Level

Under the current education system, by the time most students reach high school resources are being focused on much younger children in grades kindergarten through eighth grade. For example, The Chicago Public School system has launched a ten year initiative to open 100 new schools to counter the dropout rate, increase academic achievement, reduce the number of students at risk of academic failure, and alleviate overcrowding. This initiative has funded a majority of schools which are elementary sites for grades kindergarten through eighth grade.

The main problems identified by means of the Literature Review included the reality that currently so much time is spent by African Centered Educators introducing and re-presenting the
paradigm as a legitimate “field of study” and defending the “right to exist” of the paradigm that there is little room for an academic discussion about material resources. Continuous need to defend the paradigm is closely related to four concepts: western domination of all educational material and structures, lack of respect for Black African educators as a group of scholars capable of scholarship or criticism, and the lack of respect for the revision of western history in an effort to reclaim Black-African and other people of color- contributions to the universal knowledge base historically.

Problems brought out by the Field Interviews with educators included having large pools of teachers that want to teach Black students in African centered schools, but these teachers lack the academic background knowledge to educate Black students based upon centering in the paradigm; teachers lacked access to ongoing classes and information that would support the development of an African Centered Lens by which to judge or critique and review academic material that they can use in order to teach Black students from their center.

Student Level problems observed were very low self-esteem, poor self-concept, lack of confidence, poor academic skills, little or no study skills, very low reading and math skills usually at least two years behind their age group, record of very few academic credits earned prior to dropping out of regular high school, and very low academic comprehension skills.

Another painful reality observed, especially amongst African American male dropouts was that most had contact with the criminal justice system, either had been arrested, were on probation/parole, awaiting trial/sentencing, were wearing court ordered monitors, and were regularly reporting and paying for probation office services, had served time in juvenile or adult detention or had served time for 60 days or more.

Components of an African Centered curriculum include the following elements:

● African philosophy respect, honesty, honor, ethical behavior, selflessness, self motivation, valuing the community over the self, compassion, grace, and dignity. African philosophies integration of the principles of Kwanzaa, Maat, and other ancient wisdom concepts naturally should be included in any curriculum model.

● Creation of African inspired visual aesthetic including pictures of continental landscapes, African art primitive, ancient, and contemporary, community based murals documenting local “strivings” and struggle, portraits of Black hero’s/inventions/literature, teaching of African languages, incorporation of dress, music, cultural aesthetic, food/recipes, forms of entrepreneurship, dance forms, and dramatization of wisdom lessons.

● African American community organizing tools used throughout social movements: Use of small group and large group village-style teaching groupings, focus on identifying their own human condition, realizing the causes of their condition, formulating a strategy to understand the problems that they face as well as those faced by their family and community, story telling and counter story telling in an effort to better analyze conditions, and move toward political action to seek transformation and become better educated in order to achieve higher level of education for the uplift of the race.

● Promotion of students developing sense of history, a sense of self-esteem, self reliance, self-reflection, personal commitment and responsibility for care or stewardship of their community and all of its members young and old.
Commitment on the part of educators to differentiated instructional or teaching strategies including the following: teacher acting as a facilitator in a student-centered learning environment, student peer teaching/tutoring, implementing multiple ways of assessment, students participate in curriculum development, identifying and building upon student differences, maintaining high expectations of students, scaffolding lessons, using transparent teaching methods, recognize and using different student learning styles, and integrating real world or lived experiences of the students into everyday instruction.

The action required under the African centered paradigm is part of what I suspect makes it as a form of cultural criticism, so threatening to its critics. Whenever people of color develop an independent set of ideas or ideals and begin to act in their own self interest it seems that the “old guard, keepers of the western tradition” view it as a threat to modern society. In my opinion the real danger is not to western society, but the threat is the possible dismantling of white supremacy and hegemony.

Components of an African Centered Lens:

“If we can, in the process of materializing our consciousness, claim space as agents of progressive change, then we can change our condition and change the world.” (Asante, 2003 )

The purpose of creating a Lens is to assist African Centered educators in reading texts and locating there origins in relationship to the Africentric method. The steps in the process of analysis include the following:

1\textsuperscript{st} Locate the text in time and space (chronologically determine) where it originated, who the author is, and what place it was written in;

2\textsuperscript{nd} Is the text centered in Africa or is it dislocated, disoriented or de-centered;

3\textsuperscript{rd} Is the text grounded in personal or conceptual myth:

4\textsuperscript{th} Does the text, involve concrete realities of lived experiences;

5\textsuperscript{th} Does the text involve historical experiences:

6\textsuperscript{th} What is the author’s attitude, direction and language (results in uncovering the imagination of the writer) and;

7\textsuperscript{th} Where does the author stand in relation to his or her own text (centered or marginalized).

I am claiming this space as an Africanist and by my action as a researcher and educator, proclaiming progressive change as my goal in reforming the western educational system of which I and my students are a part. Through the development of my study, my emersion into the research, and centering of my activities in the African paradigm I have operationalized the dual collection model articulated by Asante. Africanists can claim space, mark our areas off and attack white supremacist doctrine, through the development and use of a broad array of intellectual tools then we can dismantle western hegemony. Having the territory or area marked, and understanding where in human space and time students are situated will empower them by giving them the tools with which to analyze their own economic, academic and political condition. If Black students can analyze their condition and reflect at a very deep level the elements that are destroying their own communities then they can design the changes that must be made to improve their own condition and we will have created a force most powerful. (Asante, 2005)
Conclusions

I have designed the curriculum model and expanded the Lens in an effort to begin executing my findings as a means of taking action as required by the African centered paradigm in order to further the education options, strategies, and teaching and learning in the classroom that will ultimately assist Black adult and alternative education students wherever they find themselves being educated by progressive school systems and educational reformers.

References

A Case Study of National Financial Literacy Programs for Women

Jodi Jarecke & Edward W. Taylor
Penn State-Harrisburg
Tahira Hira
Iowa State University

Abstract: The purpose of this research study is to explore (case study) in-depth the pedagogy of financial literacy programs for women and how these programs address their educational needs.

There is a need in society today for people to be financially literate considering the alarming increase in home foreclosures, bankruptcy rates, high consumer debt levels, and low savings rates (Anthes & Most, 2000; Delgadillo & Green, 2007). Much of this is a result of an inadequate understanding by individuals of how to effectively manage personal finances. Financial literacy provides “individuals with the knowledge, aptitude, and skill base necessary to become questioning and informed consumers of financial services and manage their finances effectively” (Mason & Wilson, 2000, p. 5). Despite an amplified need for financial literacy, research suggests that Americans in general lack the basic financial knowledge and are often poor managers of their personal finances (Anthes, 2004; Chen & Volpe, 2002). Low financial literacy, in particular, impacts women who, have a tendency to know less about financial management than men, are less likely to seek out financial education, and have less confidence about managing money (Goldsmith & Goldsmith, 2006; Lusardi & Mitchell, 2007). In addition, financial challenges women face are often a result of income disparities among the sexes, shorter employment tenure, fewer opportunities to save, the financial impact of care giving, and the fact that women are often financial enablers (Anthes & Most, 2000).

A response to this lack of financial literacy has been a growing personal finance education industry. There are a host of financial education programs, predominantly nonformal, located in workplaces, community and faith-based organizations, cooperative extension agencies, community colleges, military services, and the private sector (Consumer Bank Association, 2005; Vitt et. al, 2000). Most research about these programs focus on who is participating, the impact on financial behaviors, and program evaluation. Although important, there has been little attention about the educational practices of the financial education programs (Braunstein & Welch, 2002) and most significantly their relationship to the pedagogical and personal finance needs of women. Furthermore, research has shown that when learning about investment practices women seem to have particular learning preferences, such as, for example, a partiality for learning with an expert and in concert with others (Hira & Loibl, 2007). Further compounding the challenge of educating women in personal finance is that the traditional approach of teaching finance, economics, and/or investment topics are often counter to these learning preferences. They are generally teacher-centered where the educator assumes the responsibility for developing and delivering the course content, using a didactic method, where the educator talks and learners listen, allowing little opportunity for interaction between learners and the teacher (Becker & Watts, 2000; Vihtelic, 1996). Furthermore, most financial literacy programs are “canned” with a standardized curriculum relying on the transmission of financial information.

Recognizing the challenges women face in traditional financial literacy programs, research is needed to understand how national financial literacy programs specifically designed
for women are responding to their financial and education needs. To accomplish this objective, this project sought to investigate in-depth several financial literacy programs that have as a part of their mission assisting women in becoming financially literate. More specifically, it meant exploring questions, such as: How do these programs address the pedagogical needs of women when teaching about financial literacy? What is their educational philosophy about educating women? What is the instructional design of the program? By addressing these questions and others, this study begins a process of identifying best practices for educating women in financial literacy and starts to address a major objective the National Endowment for Financial Education (2000) Conference, that of advocating for the exploration of “alternative ways for women to learn about money management” (p. 24). Therefore, the purpose of this research study is to explore (case study) in-depth the pedagogy of financial literacy programs for women and how these programs address their educational needs.

**Theoretical Framework**

Two theoretical lenses inform this study about the pedagogy of financial literacy programs. One is provided by Pratt and Associates (1998) who identified five teaching perspectives offering a framework and discourse to various pedagogical approaches in the teaching of adults. These different teaching approaches are rooted in beliefs (epistemic, normative, and procedural) about teaching, which are the truths constructed by people that act as guides for behavior and lenses for assessing present and future actions. The five perspectives of teaching include: a) transmission (a commitment to subject matter and content mastery, with an emphasis on lecturing); b) apprenticeship (emphasizes enculturation as a way of knowing through modeling); c) developmental (focuses on adapting knowledge to each learner’s level through questioning leading to more complex forms of thinking); d) nurturing (emphasizes relational ways of knowing promoting a climate of caring, trust, and encouragement); and e) social reform (emphasizes a collective approach to questioning the status quo). Although very helpful, this framework lacks an appreciation for positionality and how it shapes pedagogy. Since this study focuses on gender and financial literacy, the second framework engages the literature of feminist pedagogy (Tisdell, 1998; Hayes & Flannery, 2000), which identifies three forms of feminist pedagogy: psychological models, structural models, and post-structural models in relationship to four themes (construction of knowledge, voice, authority, positionality).

**Methodology**

A case study design was the methodology of this study. Consistent with the purpose of the study, this design allows for “an examination of a specific phenomenon such as a program, an event, a person, a process, an institution, or a social group” (Merriam, 1998, p. 9). In turn, using this design, it involved an in-depth analysis of three financial literacy programs that foreground the financial education of women. The selection of cases involved conducting an in-depth literature review of financial literacy education research, internet searches, and conversations with numerous researchers and practitioners in the field of finance. After reviewing data gathered, three programs were selected for inclusion in this study. Each program has existed for a number of years, provides face-to-face courses or workshops open to the public, and seek to serve a broad and diverse population of women. Data collection involved interviewing six key informants, including program administrators, curriculum developers, and instructors. Data collection also involved conducting a content analysis of individual program curriculum and additional resource material, including program websites, course materials. Each case was analyzed separately to
determine what pedagogical techniques were employed to meet the educational needs of women. Following the analysis of each case, a cross case analysis was conducted using a constant comparative method across all three cases.

**Overview of Programs**

The programs included in this case study are: Wi$eUp: Financial Planning for Generation X & Y Women, Women’s Financial Education Series, and Financial Education for Women (pseudonym). The Wi$eUp program, developed and offered through the U.S. Department of Labor Women's Bureau, appears to have the most regularly scheduled courses conducted nationwide by contracted instructors. The program is based upon an eight-module curriculum outlined in the Wi$eUp Handbook; topic areas focusing on money basics, credit, saving, insurance, investing, and achieving financial security. The course can be taken in both face-to-face and online contexts. Second is the Women's Financial Education Series, which is based upon a course originally developed by the AARP and distributed through Cooperative Extensions. The course is currently offered through select Cooperative Extensions. The program offers multi-session workshops based upon the curriculum outlined in the text, *Money Talk: A Financial Guide for Women*, with topic areas in financial basics, insurance, investing, retirement, and financial planning. The third case, Financial Education for Women, was established by a local university from a sponsorship by a large banking institution. It offers courses/workshops in the east coast region. The program does not have a structured curriculum but rather a constantly changing array of workshops with topics about money and debt management, insurance, tax planning, home ownership, and investing.

**Finding**

Three significant themes emerged from the data: a purpose of personal empowerment; a climate for sharing and networking; and an emphasis on providing information.

*Purpose of Personal Empowerment*

Each of the programs professed an overarching purpose to empower women in financial decision-making. Doing so, primarily involved accomplishing two things: helping women to take control of their finances; and preparing women for future life stages and/or life events. These criteria were often discussed in conjunction with one another, as is evident in one’s program purpose to “help women understand and take control of their financial lives to create financial security and well-being for the future.” Accordingly, for women, taking control of finances means not being “afraid to plunge in and take charge of their money,” and “understanding how to take care of themselves.” Doing so, entails being equipped with the “knowledge and skills” needed to avoid relying on others. This is critical, according to one administrator, who stated, that “too often it has been that women have left that up to men or to their husbands or to their fathers, or their mothers left it up to their fathers and then when a situation changes they know nothing and are very vulnerable.” Programs also emphasized a need to prepare women for future life stages and, in particular, for potential situations that could arise, such as divorce or widowhood. One program workbook, for instance, suggests, that “from a financial perspective, it is important to anticipate at least some life stages in order to prepare financially for those stages when they do happen.” An administrator of another suggested that her program “empowers women to actually take charge of their financial lives so that they will be able to survive whether they are single or married or divorced or widowed,” she continued, “because we find that there are so many women, very
smart women, who know nothing about personal finance. And they can be just cut off at the knees when some kind of tragedy happens in their lives.” Thus, overall each of the programs professed a need to empower women, so that they may be able to “survive” the potential financial pitfalls to which women are particularly “vulnerable.”

*Climate for Sharing and Networking*

In order to empower women, the programs emphasized the importance of establishing a climate conducive to women’s learning needs. This included creating a space that: recognizes the importance of relationships; provides opportunities for sharing financial concerns and asking questions; and is primarily (and ideally) gender exclusive. Each program emphasized the importance of women being able to “participate and network” with another, “because relationships are important to them,” and because this allows them to “hear the human side of financial literacy.” One administrator referred to courses as a “meeting of peers” while another suggested, it’s all about “women relating to women.” As such, much of the success of the various programs was attributed to the long-lasting relationships that developed as a result of sharing stories. They also noted the importance of providing a forum for women to ask questions and share their financial challenges. One instructor, for instance, suggested, “it’s great in this group setting because they are not afraid to ask questions. They will ask in front of each other… And so this, it’s like a camaraderie, we’re in this together type thing…. Similar, another noted that “they feel comfortable sharing stories…so it’s delivered in an environment where women feel comfortable talking about the issues.” As these comments suggest, part of establishing a climate that provides opportunities for sharing, is an overarching belief that women feel more open when speaking to other women about their financial situations and concerns; thus, it was seen as ideal for the audience to consist of exclusively women. For instance, one administrator suggested, “they’re not intimidated because they’re in a room with other women” while another stated “being with other women, they have comfort level to speak up.” Even further, it was noted that if the class were to consist of both women and men, that women would be more likely to defer to men; one administrator suggesting, “... if they were in a mixed group or primarily men, they would probably tend to be quiet and let the men answer the questions;” another stating, “they learn better, I think, in this surrounding rather than in a mixed class, because very often the women will defer to the men, they don’t want to appear stupid.”

*Emphasis on Providing Information*

Each of the programs give greatest attention to providing information/delivering content to course participants. The emphasis on content delivery was discussed in three unique ways: as a way to meet program goals, as a responsibility of the instructor; and as a means to share expert knowledge. The sharing of information was seen as critical to meeting the program goals, in other words, it was the content that made it possible to empower women and provide them with the knowledge and skills to take charge of their finances and prepare for the future. In fact, much of the success of the programs was attributed to the content being provided. One administrator, for instance, attributed the success of her program to the “sound-based curriculum that…keeps on topics that women have interest in and need the information on.” Similarly, another suggested that her program’s curriculum, “rounds out exactly what almost every individual is going through when it comes to their finances.” While it was suggested by each of the program administrators that program instruction varied based upon the individual instructor, it was agreed that the main responsibility of the instructor was to “make sure all the key things in the curriculum are
covered.” In order to do so, generally instructors used PowerPoint Presentations as the primary teaching tool. In addition, two of the programs provide instructors with outlines and/or speaker’s notes so that the instructors of the various workshops “would know what they are supposed to cover” as one administrator noted, or as another stated, so that they “would all be on message.” Furthermore, there was an underlying assumption among some that various topics should be delivered to participants by experts within the field of finance. As one administrator who brought in experts to teach particular course components, stated “we’re [administrators] not experts, so we would look out there to see who could deliver that.” Another stated that by having experts deliver course content, participants would not “have to worry about whether the information was correct or was there bias or what have you.” Further, one administrator noted that previously her course had been designed to incorporate small group sessions, but that she discontinued the activity because “nobody really knew anything” and “they [participants] much preferred to get the information from the horses mouth, you know, from the professional.”

**Discussion**

Findings suggest that the financial education programs share similar practices (e.g., expert, and learning in concert with others) and their approaches are consistent with the research on women’s learning preferences and financial literacy (Hira & Loibl, 2007). Theoretically, these approaches seem to fall within two teaching perspectives (Pratt & Associates, 1998) that of a transmission (emphasis on content delivery) and a nurturing perspective (opportunities to build relationships and share personal experiences). Despite this apparent symmetry between approaches and preferences, there seems to be an assumption by the programs as well as by many of the participants, that women have little experience with finance, which further supports the rationale for content to take precedence. Like a continuous loop, the emphasis on content also seems to imply that best practice is through transference of information, not necessarily a constructivist engagement with the financial interest of women participants. Yet, at the same time, there appears to be an understanding that women value being able to share stories with one another and ask questions relevant to their personal experiences. Thus, the programs appear to make an attempt at incorporating constructivist ideals by creating a climate conducive to relationship building while maintaining and delivering a structured, content-centered curriculum.

From a critical perspective, however, it is important to recognize that the content itself is instrumental in nature, focusing on financial issues associated with life stages and life crises within a market-driven economy located primarily within traditional familial roles; often viewing women’s life experiences through the lens of marital status. Also, the emphasis is about empowering women (who lack financial knowledge) to work and live more successfully within the present economic system. More specifically, although these programs emphasize a need for financial education for women due to the fact that this population is particularly vulnerable as a result of societal factors (e.g., women earning less money than men), the programs seem predominantly concerned with both technical understanding and “psychological developmental emancipation” (Tisdell, 1998, p. 141) rather than developing an awareness of structural forces (e.g., patriarchal norms, deregulation) in society that contribute to the financial illiteracy of the women. Furthermore, this approach reflects a gender exclusive (white, middle-class women) unit of analysis, with little awareness of positionality (race, class, ethnicity, sexual orientation) in the instructional design and how it impacts learning about financial literacy. The implications of these findings are significant, particularly during these contemporary times of economic strife. Potentially, educating others about financial literacy should also consider a social reform (critical)
approach, where participants are not seen as lacking something and instead are given the technical knowledge of how to be more informed financially, but also are provided the opportunity to develop a conscious awareness of the social forces that contribute to economic decline and the need for “financial literacy.” In addition, they need assistance in understanding their financial rights and responsibilities so they can legally advocate for themselves and others in making the economic system more responsive (ethically, socially) to those who have less monetary resources and who have been historically marginalized by the market economy.

References


171
Abstract: The collective classroom and career experiences of a Black woman and White male professor are examined of the last twenty years are examined. It is revealed, that despite the presence of diversity classes and increases in diversity, as regards student and faculty presence, the circumstances of the faculty in this critical examination were defined by the student, faculty, and institutional reactions to their postionalities. Predictably, the White male faculty member had the more positive experiences, while the Black woman’s circumstances were more negative.

Introduction

Power relations that exist in the wider social context are played out in the teaching and learning dynamics of adult education classrooms. This paper combines and synthesized the results of two separate qualitative research studies, resulting in a new and separate effort which provides a holistic picture of the teaching and career experiences of a Black woman and White male professor.

In the first study (Johnson-Bailey & Cervero, 1998), there was a qualitative comparative case study of two courses taught by the authors in a university setting. Data sources included students’ evaluations, the teachers’ observations, and interviews with students, interviews with both teachers, and conversations with similarly situated faculty members. The themes of mastery, voice, authority, and positionality found in previous research were used to organize the results.

In the second study (Johnson-Bailey & Cervero, 2008) two professors examined their careers using a personal and scholarly, basing their study on journal entries, notes from formal mentoring committee meetings, personal dialogues, feedback from joint presentations, email correspondence, and time spent individually and jointly researching and writing publications on race, gender, and power in the academy. For the second study, cooperative inquiry (Reason, 1994) directed the narrative dialogue and retrospective, as the participants are active members of the academic community being discussed and they engaged in analysis and participation in each other’s narrative. In this study, the Black woman’s work emerges as a testimonio (Beverley, 1993); the White male’s role and perspective was that of an ally and, as is necessary for a testimonio, he was a witness (Beverley, 1993).

In the merging and synthesis of the two studies, a separate and more holistic picture emerges of how the classroom and career experiences of two professors of adult education has affected their career behaviors and career perspectives. The findings from the current study being presented here were augmented by an ongoing dialogue between the Black woman professor and the White male professor.

Review of the Literature

Nearly all discussions of teaching in adult education simply avoid the question of whether adult education classrooms are the real world (Knowles 1980). Such a script presents the domain of ivory towers where all students are equal and all teachers are unbiased. We are presented with the unspoken assumption that the activity of teaching and learning must happen in a parallel
universe to the real world because the power relationships that are omnipresent in the social and organizational settings of everyday life have been obliterated. By stripping learners and teachers of their place in the hierarchies of social life, this view assumes that we stage adult education where the politics of everyday life do not operate or matter. This view asks us to see teachers and learners as generic entities, unencumbered by the hierarchies that structure our social relationships.

Are adult education classes the real world? Another answer to this question is that adult education is not exactly the real world and this is precisely what contributes to its effectiveness. The idea of the teacher as a facilitator is a hallmark of adult education (Apps 1991; Brookfield, 1995; Knowles, 1992). This central principle charges adult educators to go beyond the role that the teacher takes in traditional classroom settings and stipulates the need to treat adults as equals in the classroom. Yet, it is clear that facilitation does not occur on a neutral stage, but in the real world of hierarchical power relations among all adults, including teachers and learners. When adults, learners and teachers, enter classrooms they bring with them their positions in the hierarchies that order the world, including those based on race, gender, class, sexual orientation, and disability. Because the social context is duplicated in the microcosm of the classroom (Johnson-Bailey & Cervero 1996; Tisdell, 1993), enacting the facilitation role will reproduce the power structures that privilege some, silence some, and deny the existence of others (hooks, 1994; Maher & Tetreault, 1994). If all learners are to thrive, adult educators must go beyond the facilitator’s role to directly negotiate the power dynamics in the classroom. Some theorists have recognized these issues (Brookfield, 1995; Tisdell 1995), and others have begun to call for reconstructing the image of the adult educator as facilitator (Boud & Miller, 1996; Johnson-Bailey & Alfred; 2006; Shor 1996).

The literature shows that common themes in academic lives of Black women professors is lack of respect and under-respect (Turner, 2002), which are sometimes manifested as student resistance, stereotyping, a questioning of credentials, and suspicions of research on “otherness.” In contrast, the major theme for White male professors is a sense of being valued and of being a member of “the club” and the benefits of privilege of being part of the norm group of White males whose numbers dominate the academy (McIntosh, 1995; Smith, 1999; Vargas, 1999). Black faculty report psychological stress not experienced by White faculty (Thompson & Dey, 1998; Turner, 2002), including blatant disrespect; Myers, 2002; Rakow, 2000; Thomas & Hollenshead, 2001). Faculty of color also report that positional power does not lessen their negative experiences (Thompson & Louque, 2005). Again in contrast, a search of the literature did not reveal empirical or anecdotal accounts of negative existences of White males in the academy, but overall the literature casts the collective experiences of White males in the academy as typically ideal and or privileged, in that they represent the majority of the academic elite and academic leaders (Harlow, 2003; Menges & Exum, 1983; Ronstein, Rothblum, & Solomon, 1993).

**Conceptual Frame and Methods**

Critical race theory is the frame this study that combines and synthesizes the two earlier studies. Race is centered in the all phases: research, analysis, and discussion, with an awareness of and resistance to how racism drives our society (Bell, 1992; Du Bois, 1903/1953; hooks, 1989; Outlaw, 1983; Williams, 1991; Wing, 1997). Black feminist thought has been particularly important to the Black woman researcher in this study, “…a body of knowledge which asserts that the daily living of Black women in a society that is racist and sexist has produced a collective
consciousness that resists being defined as ‘less than,’ resists being stereotyped as undesirable, and seeks to define and empower its members by interpreting existence as a triumph,” (Johnson-Bailey, 2001, p. 98).

This qualitative case study used tradition data collection (Merriam, 2000): document analysis, journal excerpts, notes from mentoring committee meetings, classroom evaluations; interviews, with students and conversations between the two case participants. The data was analyzed using the constant comparative method (Patton, 2001). The researchers used cooperative inquiry (Reason, 1994) to direct the narrative dialogue and retrospective, as we are active members of the academic community that we are discussing, and because we are engaging in analysis and participation in each other’s narrative.

**Findings and Conclusions**

There many complex ways in which power relations based on race, class, gender, disability, and sexual orientation played out across all four themes and how these dynamics directly influenced the teaching and learning processes. The positionality of the teachers and learners, in particular the racial category of whiteness, emerged as a key power relationship mediating classroom dynamics. We suggest that the facilitation model of teaching does not account well for these dynamics and that further efforts are needed to better understand how societal power relations affect teaching and learning efforts and what responses adult educators can make to negotiate these issues.

The depiction of the Black woman and White male professor’s collective forty years in academia reveals that White men and Black women are regarded and treated differently by colleagues and students. Manifestations of this disparate treatment are evident primarily in classroom and faculty interactions. An examination of: the professors’ relationships with people and with their institution reveals that overall, the Black woman is relegated to a second class existence that flows along a continuum of hostility, isolation, and under-respect, while the White man lives an ideal academic life as a respected scholar who disseminates knowledge, understands complexity, and embodies objectivity.

These two faculty members’ varied academic experiences illuminate common issues and dilemmas regarding how race/gender can affect one’s existence in academia. As their academic lives are different, so are the themes that loom large in their academic lives. For the Black woman, a major sub-theme for relationships with colleagues and students is lack of respect and under-respect (Turner, 2002), which are sometimes manifested as student resistance, stereotyping, a questioning of credentials, and suspicions of research on “otherness.” In contrast, the major sub-theme that runs through the White male’s relationships with colleagues and students is a sense of being valued and of being a member of “the club.”

A second major theme that is evident is the role of authority or positional power. The Black woman’s journal entries relate how her positional power often fails to make a difference in her dealings with others. While the White male’s data shows an assumption of positional power was accorded to him, even when he was functioning in a where he did not have authority.

Both understanding the institutional climate and being able to function within it are seen as important keys to job success (Alfred, 2001) and these faculty members’ relationships with their institution is another major category in this research examined in the findings. How well do you fit in? What is your place and connection to the institution? Are you recognized as belonging? The ultimate connection of faculty to the institution is the achievement of tenure and
promotion. And so the circumstances and careers of the Black woman and White male faculty member are examined in relation to their professional experiences.

In comparing and synthesizing data from both studies, and in conducting an ongoing dialogue between the participants, it is revealed in this summative third study that the collective classroom and career experiences of the two participants has had a profound affect: the participants have separate ideas of their place and importance in academia (hooks, 1989), despite their deceptively similar positions as professors and their apparent career successes. The Black woman has been shaped more by battle fatigue (Smith, 1999) and can be characterized as more cautious and pessimistic in her association with her colleagues, students, and institution, viewing her future as bound by a glass ceiling and a continued lack of acceptance (Ronstein, Rothblum, & Solomon, 1993). The ongoing theme in her academic career can be summed up as, *Seeing the Glass as Half Empty*. While the White male is more optimistic about his continued success and place in the academy and the ongoing theme for his academic career can be summed up as, *Seeing the Glass as Half Full*, with this future being driven more by the glass escalator (Budig, 2002; Williams, 1992).

**Implications for Adult Education Theory and Practice**

This study showed the many complex ways in which the power relations in the larger society not only play out in adult education classrooms, directly influencing the teaching and learning process, but revealed the cumulative affect on the lives and careers of professors. It was noted that students are very conscious of how the classroom is organized around power relationships, monitoring teachers’ behaviors and exchanges with other students. The adult education classroom was not seen as a neutral educational site referred to in the literature. Instead the classroom is a duplication of the existing societal relations of power replete with hierarchies and privileges conferred along lines of gender, race, class, sexual orientation, and other status markers. It was further noted that the teachers’ perspectives were impaired by their own viewpoint, with them practicing cultural therapy (Banks 1994) by examining and discussing their own cultural assumptions and by providing an analysis of what was occurring in the classroom. This would suggest that positionality is a critical lens for interpreting adult education classroom and professional experiences. The facilitation model does not account for the many power dynamics in these classrooms. We suggest further efforts are needed to better understand how societal power relations affect teaching, learning, and academic careers (behavior and perspectives).

**Selected References:**


The Critical Incident Questionnaire (CIQ):  
From Research to Practice and Back Again

Jeffrey M. Keefer  
Visiting Nurse Service of New York / New York University

Abstract: This paper reviews ways the Critical Incident Questionnaire (CIQ) has been used, adapted, and developed over four years of near continual organizational and academic use. It explores how the tool is implemented, the issues that led to its adaptation, and the current working version. Future research areas are also suggested.

Keywords: Critical Incident Questionnaire, CIQ, reflective practice

Introduction
Has Stephen Brookfield’s Critical Incident Questionnaire (CIQ), so widely used as a post-class formative assessment tool, ever been critically evaluated itself? You may know this instrument that Brookfield introduced in his 1995 work, Becoming a Critically Reflective Teacher. On a single page, it seeks to capture the critical moments, experiences, or “vivid happenings” (Brookfield, 1995) that occur in a learning episode for the purpose of informing the class instructor or facilitator about how the learning experience is proceeding.

Originally intended for use with carbon paper so the student can keep a copy with another being submitted at the very end of class to the instructor, there are basic instructions on the top of the form (see Table 1). The questionnaire is comprised of five questions, with space between each for the responses (see Table 2). After its submission at the end of class, the instructor reads the responses and looks for common themes that indicate problems or confusions. The main themes are hand coded, with the major responses presented to the class at the beginning of the next session. This is intended to demonstrate to the learners that the responses were read and taken seriously. The process seeks to be transparent, promote trust, and encourage ongoing self-reflection and reflective practice.

In many ways, the CIQ seems to thread throughout everything Stephen speaks about in his research and teaching. He uses it in all his classes, and having studied with him on more than one occasion, I have experienced it both as a learner and as a scholar-practitioner. I use it with my own classes, and even introduced and implemented its use in the organizations where I work. While Brookfield has further detailed the how’s and why’s of using the CIQ with his students in more recent works (2006), there is little evidence that the tool itself and its use has received some of the same attention that the class experiences have had.

Problem
There is evidence that the CIQ is widely used in various levels of education, yet there is more limited evidence for how the tool itself is assessed. How much have the questions in the CIQ been reviewed or revised? Is there evidence that the process of receiving this ongoing formative evaluation and assessment translates to improved learning outcomes and, ultimately, more critically reflective and satisfied learners? Do the feedback mechanisms work in all situations? How about if there is suspicion that the use of the tool can be manipulated by the learners for their own perceived purposes, an internal power struggle? Do the results always capture an honest snapshot of the learning experience, and in the process promote participatory learning and feedback? What role does trust and transparency play, especially if the class facilitator (or other
learners themselves) gets unpleasant or outright negative feedback? All of these questions have been faced by this researcher over the four years since incorporating the CIQ with the doctoral, graduate, undergraduate, continuing, contact hour, organizational, corporate, and professional populations and environments. With so much use, there has been an increasing need to critically evaluate and assess the CIQ itself. How can the CIQ develop along with its audiences?

The Literature

How much do we really know about the CIQ in the literature? While the tool is familiar with any of Brookfield’s students, readers, and colleagues, and while the use of the tool may have spread widely, there is surprisingly little research examining, using, measuring, or assessing the tool itself. Using ProQuest, EBSCOhost, WilsonWeb, Sage, Emerald, Informaworld, and Google Scholar, a literature review was conducted to explore how much research exists on the CIQ. The search phrase used was “critical incident questionnaire,” and the results were reviewed to omit any use of the term outside of its use in conjunction with Brookfield’s emphasis (namely something that referenced his five questions in some capacity). The result included fewer than two dozen applicable pieces of literature. References to works within practice were located, though they were excluded from consideration as there was little basis to consider they would add anything to a theoretical inquiry.

It is clear that Brookfield’s Critical Incident Questionnaire has been used around the world as a qualitative instrument within a variety of research and classroom projects, both face-to-face and online, where learner reflection and feedback were sought (Adams, 2001; Buchy, 2004; Glowacki-Dudka & Barnett, 2007; Hedberg, 2009; Nicol & Boyle, 2003). Many of these studies used the CIQ within the context of exploring how and what learners perceive as significant in learning episodes, and how students critically reflect on the process itself (Gilstrap & Dupree, 2008). While not an extensive research base for using the CIQ, there is sufficient evidence that the tool is used and the results increasingly inform research findings and teaching.

There is, however, less in the literature to suggest that the tool itself has received its own critical evaluation, nor has there been a great amount of acknowledgement or addressing of some of the issues and problems raised in the practice of using the CIQ. For a tool that seeks to find out “how students are experiencing their learning and your teaching” (Brookfield, 2006, p 41), there is little research exploring the adaptation (Gilstrap & Dupree, 2008; Oxford Learning Institute, undated; Taylor, 2008, undated) and challenges around the tool’s implementation.

Significance of the Problem

Educators who want to cut through the hegemonic influences in adult and organizational learning by promoting democratic education and inclusivity of learner voice and perspective (Brookfield, 2005, 2006; Cervero & Wilson, 2001; Freire, 1998, 2003; Ledwith, 2001; Newman, 2006) need ways to determine if their teaching works. This is an issue I and the organizations where I work struggle to integrate. We want to better understand the experiences and perceptions of the student learners, for the more we can understand them, the more we can teach in ways that may meet their needs. With little to guide how adaptations can be made while still maintaining the integrity of the CIQ tool, where can a scholar-practitioner turn other than critical and reflective practice itself, based on learner and instructor feedback?

Purpose of This Study

If the literature is not present, then a fitting place to begin is through considering problems of practice, how they were addressed, and then possible directions for future research. This study will review ways the Critical Incident Questionnaire has been used, adapted, and developed over four years of near continual organizational and academic use. It will seek to demonstrate that the
tool, its implementation, and its review can develop based on learner and educator feedback and need. Recommendations for future research will be suggested.

**Implementation and Problems in Practice**

Many educational events have a final evaluation of some sort. It is not always clear when or if the instructors receive them, nor is it clear whether the information contained is useful for improving future learning events. In many ways, it is too late to receive feedback at the end of a class if the needs of the current learners were not met or if ongoing and hidden problems existed. What is the benefit for the current students to provide feedback that could have improved their experiences had it happened earlier? This is one of the reasons for an emphasis on the CIQ.

Within the organizations where I work, there have been concerns that learning about preventable problems at the end of a course was not acceptable. Likewise, in the university classes I teach, I became interested in the same issue—how can I learn more about where the students are along the way so I can better meet their needs as they occur? In both situations, I introduced the Critical Incident Questionnaire into all the learning events with which I was associated. It was a rocky beginning. What happens if the students give poor feedback? How about if they don’t seem to respect the instructors? What happens if their grievances are aired to everybody in the department? Feedback is often personal, and here the CIQ makes it public.

Guess what I suggested? The learners are already saying these very things to everybody BUT you! Isn’t it better for us to bite the bullet, face what they have to say, and work to improve the learning before the final evaluation? Just because we may think everything is going well (especially if we don’t ask the right questions in the right way) does not make it so. Wouldn’t we rather know?

After implementing the CIQ, using it, and discussing it with educators and the students themselves for several months, it appeared we were not getting to some of the underlying issues that were there, nor were we adequately giving voice to some of our learners’ experiences and needs. This came as a realization during our first implementation of the CIQ, when we learned from a focus group at the end of a course that the learners thought we spent too much time on some topics and too little on others. When examining the CIQ, we realized that spending too long or too short on a topic was not easily answered by any of the five questions. The students were often literal with the questions, so if they were not broad or open enough (or were just the opposite—to broad), experiences remained private and at times unexplored. With countless meetings to discuss, other issues around the original five questions were raised. Many students did not reply to Question 2, as it seemed there was general confusion over the term “distanced.”

How do we handle harsh or embarrassing learner criticism if the transparent CIQ is wielded as a reversal of the teacher / learner power relationship? We also learned that team-teaching, guest speakers, and demands for scant time resources meant that while our instructors liked the information they got from the tool, they struggled to find the time for coding the responses. Concerns were even raised around trying to identify some of the more critical learner responses, which could be done if handwriting and ink styles were compared with other documents. This last concern prompted an ongoing request for a neutral party (in this case, the researcher), to handle the coding and the presenting of the feedback the following week directly to the learners.

More than anything else, all involved wanted to give voice to the learners’ experiences, something we have never been able to do in this manner before. With a neutral coder protecting the anonymity of responses, we are fairly satisfied we have the best we can get. Questions were added. Then changed, edited, and combined. The questions went from five to seven and then back to five (see Table 2). This process continued for six different versions of the CIQ, with the current
version now being used for the past year with relative agreement by all involved that it works. This process occurred using a PDSA (Plan, Do, Study, Act) Cycle for improvement, where we planned our work, implemented it in a small way, studied the results, and then made changes to it as before beginning the process again to see if it would produce the outcomes we wanted (Langley, Nolan, Norman, Provost, & Nolan, 1996). While the questions changed, the instructions on the form also developed (see Table 1). First longer, then shorter. The same happened with the manner in which the results were presented back to the learners. They were summarized (too brief), then condensed (perhaps something was missed?), and then presented word-for-word literally (a large job every week), and finally hand-coded (trust in the process seems to have been negotiated for this to occur). The instructors analyzed and then stopped doing it due to time constraints, so the neutral researcher, who in many cases did not engage in the teaching and thus was removed enough for all involved to be satisfied that the process was kept honest due to distance. The results at times became problematic (how should responses to guest speakers or class visitors be handled, especially if it were somewhat critical?), or what should be done if learners are perceived as intentionally providing responses to “skew” the results? All of these issues occurred with face to face classes, which then only became more confusing when online classes were introduced and the issue of anonymity and even small class size were raised (the online tool, Survey Monkey, with anonymous tracking and a single weekly url link, was finally selected for this purpose).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 1 – Critical Incident Questionnaire Instructions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Original</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Please take about five minutes to respond to each of the questions below about this week's class(es). Don't put your name on the form - your responses are anonymous. When you have finished writing, put one copy of the form on the table by the door and keep the other copy for yourself. At the start of next week's class, I will be sharing the responses with the group. Thanks for taking the time to do this. What you write will help me make the class more responsive to your concerns.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**The Developing CIQ**

With so many changes and developments in the form, it became evident that a new model of the CIQ, an adaptative one, be developed. We were beyond research evidence, and in the arena of improvement work and constant data-gathering. With several years of implementation experience, we started to understand what worked best across the variety of audiences, while maintaining records of implementation in practice. Adapting the CIQ to meet the needs of a wide-range of learners has taken years and numerous versions, yet the current version (Version 6, cf. Table 2) seems to work best across education and population levels without the need for extensive instructions, while still getting results that seem indicative of the learner statuses. It is interesting how small changes in terminology have brought major changes in the results. Version 3 of the CIQ was the most comprehensive, though the length of it became a challenge for the learners to complete at the end of a day of training. Likewise, while it was acknowledged that the original form did not have anything to indicate what, if anything, was too long, Version 3’s direct asking about it almost encouraged the learners to think about the length of the education, rather than simply seeking whatever perceptions of the learning that impacted them. Likewise,
asking something about content (question 4, Version 6) enabled the tool to have more of a course-related feel that helped to validate the instructors’ desires to understand the what that was learned, with the other questions about the how it occurred. Five short questions seem to be the maximum for generating results while understanding the student perceptions of their learning and critical reflection. This reflective practice brings the lesson to closure.

Table 2 – Critical Incident Questionnaire Question Development

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Original (Version 1)</th>
<th>Version 3</th>
<th>Version 5</th>
<th>Current (Version 6)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. At what moment in class this week did you feel most engaged with what was happening?</td>
<td>1. At what moment in today’s class did you feel most engaged?</td>
<td>1. At what moment in today’s class did you feel most engaged and/or least engaged?</td>
<td>1. At what moment in today’s class did you feel most engaged and/or least engaged?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. At what moment in class this week did you feel most distanced from what was happening?</td>
<td>2. At what moment in today’s class did you feel least engaged?</td>
<td>2. What action anyone (instructor or student) took did you find most affirming/helpful?</td>
<td>2. What action (if any) did anybody take that you found most affirming/helpful?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. What action that anyone (teacher or student) took in class this week did you find most affirming or helpful?</td>
<td>3. What action anyone (instructor or student) took did you find most affirming/helpful?</td>
<td>3. What action anyone (instructor or student) took did you find most puzzling/confusing?</td>
<td>3. What action (if any) did anybody take that you found most puzzling/confusing?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. What action that anyone (teacher or student) took in class this week did you find most puzzling or confusing?</td>
<td>4. What action anyone (instructor or student) took did you find most puzzling/confusing?</td>
<td>4. What was the most important thing you learned during today’s class?</td>
<td>4. What was the most important information you learned during today’s class?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. What about the class this week surprised you the most? (This could be something about your own reactions to what went on, or something that someone did, or anything else that occurs to you).</td>
<td>5. Do you have any recommendations that may improve the class?</td>
<td>5. Do you have any questions or suggestions about today’s class?</td>
<td>5. Do you have any questions or suggestions about today’s class?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Versions 2 and 4 were substantially the same as the previous versions, so were omitted here as adding little. Beginning with Version 3, underlines of key terms were added to the tool to help focus the learners. Coded responses have always been presented on PowerPoint slides for timely learner and instructor review.

Next Steps for Research and Practice

The author hopes that these issues will encourage others to consider their use of the CIQ and test this model in real situations. While the CIQ as Brookfield envisioned it has remained the same, there is evidence in practice that the particulars may need to develop. As the CIQ is a qualitative tool, it seems it should be adaptable based on learner and instructor needs. To what extent this can occur while still maintaining the integrity of the form itself and still being called the Critical Incident Questionnaire, should be explored. Additionally, the effects of the CIQ responses on the instructors, especially their perceptions of their students and their own teaching abilities as
evidenced on the CIQ, would make for interesting research. Finally, it may be useful to compare how the changes initiated by the CIQ responses compare to the final course evaluations, especially if a correlation were explored and demonstrated. Whatever the situation, it is up to each instructor whether she or he would rather know their impact on their students along the way, or merely hope all goes well without any tool to help gather the evidence.

References


182
Learning and Adaptation of Contingent Workers in South Korea Corporations: A Study of Developmental Relationships

Jung-Hwan Kim
PhD candidate, Adult Education
The Pennsylvania State University

Keywords: contingent workers, developmental relationships, developmental network, learning, adaptation

Abstract: Developmental relationships have been considered an important factor for leaning and adaptation of workers. This paper aims to discover how the learning and adaptation of contingent workers differ from those of regular workers and focuses on developmental relationships in South Korea corporations.

Purpose and Problem Statement
Developmental relationships exist in formal and informal forms, and play an important role in the learning and adaptation of early career workers. Developmental relationships are defined as various relationships individuals form at work that help them grow by providing information and psychological support related to the organization and work in the process of learning. The workers establish a developmental network as a collection of such relationships (Higgins & Kram, 2001; Kram, 1985). Prominent international companies and Korean corporations have been making an effort to promote workers’ adaptation and learning by recognizing the importance of learning through these relationships that exist in informal forms within the company. The companies have attempted to make these relationships formal, and to connect them to organizational outcomes. The representative cases are the implementation of mentoring programs and the operation of communities of practice (CoP). Mentoring may be defined as formal and informal relationships between mentor and mentee to support individuals obtaining necessary knowledge in order to function effectively in the workplace. Meanwhile, CoP may be described as formal and informal groups for facilitating learning and further practice through sharing knowledge and information among participants that have matters of common interest. Mentoring programs and CoP have common value based on developmental relationships (Joo & Kim, 2004; Na et al., 2006; Wenger et al., 2002). In spite of the fact that there have been diverse discussions and implementations of these programs, not many studies have been done that systematically examine the effect of formal programs, such as mentoring programs and CoP, and informal developmental network of workers.

The type and influence of developmental relationships can appear differently depending on the workers’ employment status. In recent years, although the number of contingent workers has steadily increased and they almost work similar matters in common with regular workers, most discussions have been limited to regular workers. This paper focuses on the developmental relationships within business organizations and how learning and adaptation of contingent workers differ from those of regular workers by examination of the following questions. Are there differences between contingent workers and regular workers in the way they participate in ‘learning through formal relationships (formal developmental relationships)’? How do the developmental network’s attributes and functions of contingent workers differ from those of
regular workers? How is the way learning and adaptation of contingent workers influenced by their participations in formal developmental relationships and their developmental network compare with that of regular workers?

Existing Studies

Existing studies consistently report that participating in mentoring programs and CoP affect early career workers’ learning and adaptation. First of all, mentoring programs exert positive influence not only on the organizational socialization and career development of new members, but also on the organization level as well (Viator, 2001; Wilson & Elman, 1990). New workers who participated in mentoring programs were actually affected more positively than those who did not in terms of acquiring job skill and satisfaction, organizational knowledge, as well as organizational commitment and turnover intention (Kim, 2003). Therefore, participation in mentoring programs provides early career workers with valuable help and affects them positively in learning and adaptation.

Participation in CoP also benefit newly hired employees because they can gather information needed for individual learning and life in the organization more comprehensively. Through their relationship with other members, they receive help in adapting to the organization, as well as become a positive influence on the community and the organization (Wenger et al., 2002). In fact, it has been shown that participation in CoP has been a positive influence on role understanding, learning work skills, organizational commitment and reducing turnover (Chang, 2005).

In light of this, obtained legitimacy of participation among members is a premise for promoting learning in the workplace and an important inducement for learning (Lave & Wenger, 1991). Accordingly, allowing contingent workers to formally participate in relational learning results in their legitimate participation that will exert positive influence on their learning and adaptation.

Meanwhile, the attributes and functions of informal developmental network also influence the learning and adaptation of early career workers. Morrison (2002) examined 154 new employees of accounting firms and showed that there was a correlation between the variables that produce organizational socialization and network types. He classified relationship networks as informational ties and friendship ties according to function, and found that as informational ties grew in number, density, and strength, they exerted a more positive influence for obtaining organizational knowledge, task mastery, and role clarity within the organization. Specifically, the range of informational ties showed a positive correlation with organizational knowledge, and position influenced role clarity and task mastery. As the strength of friendship ties increased, so too did their social integration and organizational commitment.

Higgins & Thomas (2001) performed a comparative analysis on traditional mentoring relationships and developmental network, and reported that developmental network exerted influence on long-run career outcomes and intentions to remain with one’s firm. Specifically, the range of developmental network positively affects work satisfaction and intentions to remain. In addition, the authors asserted that psychological support positively affects work satisfaction, and career support positively affects intentions to remain.

Higgins & Kram (2001) classified the types of developmental network into entrepreneurial networks, opportunistic networks, traditional networks, and receptive networks, focusing on the strength and range of relationships. Entrepreneurial networks, which have high relational strength and a wide range, positively affect career movement. For individual learning,
traditional networks, which have a narrow range but high relational strength like entrepreneurial networks and are composed of a small number of supporters, also exert a positive influence. On the other hand, opportunistic networks, which have a wide range but low relational strength, exert a negative influence. Regarding adaptation, traditional networks showed a positive correlation with organizational commitment. Opportunistic networks and receptive networks, which have a narrow range and low relational strength, showed a negative correlation with work satisfaction.

The attributes and functions of developmental network can affect the learning and adaptation of early career workers in different ways. Unfortunately, the results of these studies are mainly limited to regular workers. Contingent workers also think that it is important to have the opportunity to develop their own abilities just like regular workers, and smooth relationships with their coworkers as contributing their learning and adaptation (Kim et al., 2006; Hall & Schneider, 1972). Nevertheless, it is difficult for contingent workers to have adequate opportunities for obtaining information related to work and professional learning and to form smooth relationships with coworkers, due to their unstable positions and separation from regular workers (Feldman et al., 1994; Rogers, 1995). These characteristic differences suggest that learning and adaptation through developmental relationships will not be accomplished as smoothly with contingent workers as with regular workers.

**Research Design**

The research subjects were selected from early career office workers currently working in 34 large corporations located in Seoul, Korea and the surrounding metropolitan area who have been working for longer than three months and less than five years (Feldman, 1988). The selection of contingent workers was limited to workers whose duties were most similar to those of regular workers in terms of their work quantity and quality. A self-reported questionnaire was used as the survey tool to measure such items as participation of learning through formal relationships, the characteristics and functions of developmental networks, learning, and adaptation. A total of 532 questionnaires were retrieved, a retrieval rate of 59.99%. Surveys of people who were not suitable as research subjects and surveys with missing responses were excluded and produced a final total of 417 surveys (contingent: 157; regular: 260) for the analysis.

Participation in learning through formal relationships and the attributes and functions of developmental networks were set as independent variables, and learning and adaptation were set as dependent variables. The study tools were as follows. First, in the section related to learning through formal relationships, questions concerning experience of participating in mentoring programs and CoP activities were asked. Second, as developmental network attributes, such as range (size), department / work / gender homophily, status, duration, frequency, intimacy, degree of overlap with learning through formal relationships, and contents were selected. The network range indicated the number of people who have developmental relationships. Other variables were measured by asking respondents to list seven developmental supporters in the order of their importance using a self-reporting method, and answering questions appropriate for each of those supporters (Cross & Parker, 2004; Higgins & Kram, 2001; Morrison, 2002). Third, the developmental network functions were assessed through seven questions regarding career support and fourteen questions regarding psychological support, only information provided for the four most important people of the seven listed in the study (Noe, 1988). Fourth, the area of learning and adaptation (five-point scale) was composed of representative variables that have been mentioned in organizational socialization studies. Questions for learning were composed of five
questions each regarding work mastery, organizational values and knowledge, and belonging to the organization (Chao, et al., 1994). Questions for adaptation were composed of seven questions regarding job satisfaction (MSQ), five questions for organizational commitment (Mowday et al., 1979; Price & Mueller, 1986), and three questions for turnover intention (Higgins & Thomas, 2001). Lastly, matters on demographic statistical variables were asked. The reliability of the survey tools was measured through a pre-survey and survey questions were adjusted accordingly. After the conducting survey, factor analysis and reliability analysis were carried out to reformulate variables. To examine the significant correlations and multicolinearity between each of the variables, a correlation analysis was also carried out. In the case of variables in which multicolinearity was suspect, all the values of standard deviation, changes in t-value sign, variance inflation factor (VIF), and tolerance were examined together if problems were identified, those variables were excluded. Descriptive statistical analysis and hierarchical multiple regression analysis were used to verify results.

Findings

Analysis revealed that regular workers participated in mentoring and CoP programs more than contingent workers. Second, the developmental network for early career workers was found to be comparatively strong and intimate. However, contingent workers had a smaller developmental network, a higher level of identifying with their work, department and gender homophily, and a deeper intimacy with people who supported their development than regular workers. In addition, they established developmental network more readily with low status workers they met during learning and through formal relationships than regular workers. Furthermore, although there were no significant differences in learning and adapting according to work status, contingent workers had a higher level of learning in areas such as positive self-understanding, sense of belonging to an informal group, and work mastery.

Third, the results of multiple regression analysis on the variables participation in learning through formal relationships and developmental network that influence learning and adapting show that the two groups formed different types of relationships according to the learning and adaptation contents.

From these results, the following conclusions were derived: The formation of developmental relationships for contingent workers is in many ways limited compared to regular workers. This can be explained by the fact that contingent workers’ participation in learning through formal relationships is lower than that of regular workers and that, in forming

---

4 Revised variables (the number of items / cronbach α) were: 1) The functions of developmental network - psychological support (7/.923) & career support (5/.862) 2) Learning - positive self-understanding (4/.831), organizational value & knowledge (3/.766), attachment to a group (3/.695) & work mastery (2/.671) 3) Adaptation – work adjustment (6/.833), turnover intention (3/.808)

5 Finally, the variable regarding contents of developmental relationships was excluded because respondents replied multiple and the responds almost overlapped the functions of developmental network. Age, tenure, and frequency of contingent workers and tenure and frequency of regular worker had biased. So, the values of variables were transformed to the values of natural logarithms. However, frequency still had biased excessively. In this case, although the variable of ‘the strength of ties’ could be made through combining mean values of frequency and intimacy (Morrison, 2002), a frequency variable was excluded in final analysis because it is possible to interrupt original value of each variable and intimacy was generally used in the study of network as the variable for estimating strength of tie (Cross & Parker, 2004; Higgins & Kram, 2001; Morrison, 2002).
developmental network, contingent workers have a tendency to depend on people who are similar to themselves and thus form a more closed relationship network. This limitation has a high probability of functioning as a factor that obstructs their smooth learning and adaptation. Accordingly, contingent workers must make the effort to form relationships with many other people who are regular workers and others who are different from themselves, from whom they can receive more concrete help and support. Companies should provide help and support to enable contingent workers to overcome limitations to form developmental relationships.

Second, participation in learning through formal relationships, mentoring and CoP programs, affects the learning and adaptation of contingent workers more than regular workers. Both groups showed noticeable changes in their learning and adaptation when they participated in a CoP program or mentoring and CoP program in spite of the fact that contingent workers' participation in learning through formal relationships is lower than that of regular workers. Companies should provide learning through formal relationships opportunities to contingent workers at the organizational level and promote their active participation.

Third, a different approach needs to be taken in forming and inducing developmental relationships for individuals and businesses according to the learning and adaptation content. Early career individuals and companies that want to hire them need to take different approaches to forming and promoting developmental relationships based on the kind of learning and adapting needed for each employment status.

Lastly, in learning and adapting, both contingent and regular workers need to form intimate relationships with people who support their development and actively seek their assistance. This intimate relationship positively affects adaptation to work and turnover. In the case of acquiring job skills for contingent workers, however, intimacy actually produces a negative influence because of the limited developmental network formed by contingent workers. Contingent workers must form various developmental relationships with people who can help them with learning related to their work and must make an effort to generally maintain an intimate relationship with them.

**Implications and Recommendations**

The results of this study may assist in mapping out the learning and adaptation strategies of early careers according to their employment status. At the company level, this study may assist corporations in developing concrete plans and promotional policies for early career workers' learning and adaptation. Finally, this study may assist in expanding leaning opportunities of contingent workers and changing the preoccupied perspectives of corporations and peers about them. For better research results, homogeneity among research subjects needs to be obtained for comparison and the range of subjects needs to be expanded. Concerning the latter, particularly in the case of contingent workers, research on workers other than temporary workers who work by the hour or non-standard workers needs to be carried out.

**References**


Keywords: Somatic learning, movement, martial arts, non-western perspective, images, metaphors, transfer of learning, social construction.

Abstract: This study explores the impact of body movement and vocalization as a transformative and creative somatic learning process. It investigates the ways Shintaido, an expressive combination of martial arts and moving meditation, is transferred by adult martial arts practitioners into their everyday life experiences.

Introduction
The process of continuous inquiry is embedded in somatic learning and in action research. This same process of discovery, non-neutrality of the observer, and exploration of the unknown are elemental aspects of body movement. Somatic learning in adult education provides a cyclical framework for learning and reflection, and it serves as a deep well into learning and knowing in adult education. The movement experience provides an organic and non-rational way to tap into the body and mind’s wisdom to engage in investigation and to envision the inquiry process in a unique and expressive way. This study explored the transformative and creative learning process using body movement and vocalization and it investigated the ways this somatic learning process is transferred into everyday experiences by adult practitioners.

This research study investigated the experiences of Shintaido practitioners. Shintaido is a martial arts and body movement form related to Aikido that translates as - A New Body Way. Founded in the 1960’s by Hiroyuki Aoki with a group of Japanese martial artists, musicians, actors, visual artists and other practitioners, it is an expressive combination of martial arts and body movement that has been called “moving meditation.” It provokes in the practitioners a sense of openness, enhanced perspective, as well as a challenge to go beyond imposed limits and conventional approaches to knowing and learning about the life energy in the body, nature and all that surrounds us.

Theoretical perspective
This research focuses on social constructivism as the main theoretical perspective. As recipients of a socially constructed set of codes or language, we are constantly embarking in critical reflection of our learning, not just what is learned, but how and for what purpose we learn. The vessel for social knowledge is embedded in historical and social forces that emerge over time.

By resisting and in turn socially constructing our own set of codes and language through dialogue and action, and through the creation of social, cultural institutions, people can promote a sustainable self identity, manage a more complex view of themselves, and participate as active citizens in social change. The challenge is to be able to generate new meanings through the uses of metaphor and imagery that can mobilize and support beliefs and hopes for a better life. Some
codes serve a system of privilege, while other codes resist such attempts at control and at marginalization of a community’s own stories, by the exploration and the celebration of their stories. Storytelling enriches the imagination and serves as a vehicle for cultural survival.

We can tell stories and create positive images therefore constructing an expanded sense of self and the world through a repertoire of body movement and posture. This process translates into a way of being in the world that enhances relationships with others and with nature, and encourages fluidity and reflection in a way that cannot be attained through intellectual process alone. (Lawrence, 2005).

Maxine Greene (1995) emphasizes the need to provide an alternative perspective through the use of our imagination and metaphor as a way to create new meaning in situations where the current paradigm forces us to conform with the status quo and the codes that perpetuate it. Alternative ways of learning and imagining enriches the way we view the world around us. Shintaido provides a rich source of metaphors and positive images that translates into everyday action.

Randee Lipson Lawrence (2005) writes, “Incorporating various arts forms–poetry, drama, music, literature, visual art, and others–into the practice of adult education provides tremendous potential to enhance both teaching and learning. For these learning opportunities to occur, educators need to take risks by venturing out of their comfort zones and in turn encourage their students to take similar risks” (p. 10). Shintaido practitioners use body movement as a tool for learning how to learn, and as an encouragement to include somatic dialogue between learners and with the learning community as a whole.

By exploring learning in alternative ways, we are resisting the educational mainstream’s tendency towards a limited way of thinking and learning. Therefore, the act of opening and liberating multiple ways of learning and engaging in the exploration of knowledge through body movement, ventures beyond our limits in the way we chose to learn and the way we chose to act as engaged citizens and adult learners.

Methodology

This ethnographic research focused on a group of ten Shintaido Martial Arts practitioners. Open-ended questions were used to engage participants in a conversation about how and in what ways did their somatic learning provided a rich space for learning and building a community of practice. The interviews were recorded, transcribed and coded. Some information was acquired through participant observation and field notes. The guiding questions for this research are: How has Shintaido movement translated into practitioner’s everyday life experiences? How does movement engages learning and reflection?

Findings

Shintaido is an alternative way of tapping the wisdom of knowing and learning through liberation and expansion of the body and the mind. Together with educational research, this expressive movement is a kind of somatic exploration into multiple ways of knowing using the intelligence of our bodies, voice and breath to engage in inquiry through self-discovery, by reconnecting with community and imagining possibilities beyond our conditioned scope.

Participants felt very strongly that the practice of Shintaido helped them open up the sky of their minds. The physical and mental discipline of the body movement and the experiences of going beyond their physical limits allowed them to see how the mind constructed barriers that
limited their performance. Kumite, or pair practice focuses not on defeating the opponent but on opening up their center so that they can both move without moving, both can give and receive effortlessly. Kumite is an essential part of the Shintaido community of practice whether training with the Bokuto, sword technique, Tenshingoso, the five fundamental movements, or pushing beyond limits with Eiko Dai Kumite while running at top speed and moving as if cutting the sky with your whole being. This experience translated into an understanding of relationships and a curiosity to explore the wisdom of the body until attaining complete unification called Kokyu, a vital, living energy.

According to Lawrence (2005), the opening up of intellectual expression is possible by incorporating “other ways of knowing into our teaching practice, as expressed through metaphor, dance, poetry, visual art, or dramatic expression, we draw on the effective, somatic, and spiritual domains. (p. 4). The community of practice formed by the interaction of Shintaido participants supports the enrichment of dialogue, the sharing of common experiences and the unifying call to use their practice for the improvement of a larger common good. The act of giving one-self and giving fully was a powerful theme that permeated the interviews.

The sense of Kumite, partner exchange, from the dojo to the street or work, was a image that many participants used to refers to the building of relationships, and their ability to choose to receive or give by acting as a grounding force with conflicts and with every day life. Mark, who is a hospice social worker, says, “there is a lot of partner exchange that goes on sitting with people, talking, listening, being in silence. The idea of leading and following and trying to be sensitive to where to go with the client.” Mark related an experience with a 94-year-old patient who was terminally ill. They would sit together and hold hands. His hands were very grounding to her. He said, “she told me that. Sometimes we talk or I initiate a conversation. It flows like life, a wakame (seaweed) feeling where you don’t care at certain point who is the wave and who is the fish. You are just in the moment.” Mark finds his experience with Shintaido useful as an image that is applicable to his work and as a way to be in relationship with others. Bob, a foreman, uses Shintaido Kumite to help him get centered and maintain an awareness of his surrounding, particularly on the construction site. He says, “when I do work as a foreman, I use it as how to get people to do things. It becomes a Kumite because you have to deal with them verbally.”

Mary, on the other hand, describes her use of metaphor and imagery as a way to walk along side her patients who are seriously ill. Kaishoken (open hand) and Musoken (soft hand) are two techniques that engage an opponent. The techniques were metaphors used by Mary as a “means to cut into their world, into their pain and into what they are experiencing, so I in turn can be beside them.” She continues, “I need to cut away, release, get rid of, so I can be fully present.” The creation of a ritual space in order to come closer to clients was attainable by Mary through her positive imagery and her understanding of the need of the client and his family. Cooperrider (2001) explains that this affirmative competence is an imagery technique acquired through discipline and practice that athletes chose when they want to increase their performance. He writes, “paradoxically, while most in our culture seem to operate on the assumption that elimination of failures (negative self-monitoring) will improve performance, exactly the opposite holds true, at least when it comes to learning new tasks” (Chapter 2, p. 13). Mary says, “to me Shintaido really ends up being the place where I can use metaphors to daily life, and to some extent to see something in a new perspective and maybe gain a better understanding.” She envisioned an opening by the image of cutting through in order to competently care for her clients as well as to care for herself.
The participant’s responses gravitated to the creation of openness in relationships and a sense of giving and receiving when interacting with people or nature. To them, the concept of Kyosei no Eichi or holistic wisdom lies in the body and in the Eastern philosophical metaphor of Ten-Chi-Jin which situates humanity in the axis of heaven and earth. This concept, according to Michael Thompson (1987), a Shintaido senior instructor, is a major goal of keiko (practice), “to realize the vertical Ten-Chi-Jin relationship in our bodies and to express the result in technique, movement and kumite.” He concludes by emphasizing the importance of the Shintaido community and the members whose experiences serve as a laboratory for practice of Shintaido’s basic philosophy: “love your God and your neighbor as yourself” (Thompson, 1987, p. 46).

**Implications for Adult Theory and Practice**

Alternative forms of expression, in addition to cognitive modes, provide opportunities to expand the learner’s intellectual curiosity and focus by harvesting the metaphors and images that creative activity can inspire. Shintaido practitioners showed a keen ability to transfer their somatic awareness to daily life situations. They were able to use imagery and metaphor as key elements of affirmative competence that integrated their personal values with the principles of their martial arts practice resulting in positive actions or choices in their communities and at their workplace. McHugh described body movement as an opportunity to “explore and increase your range of choices for feeling, perceiving, thinking and sensing as you move from self-consciousness to self-awareness” (2005, p. 1).

By opening to the improvisational nature of kumite or partner exchange, and to other core martial arts movements, Shintaidoists improved their personal and work relationships, became more open in their learning habits, more fluid and grounded in their engagements, more reflective and expansive in their choices, and more aware of their bodies as a source of holistic intelligence capable of guiding their path through their multi-cultural lifeworld. Their ability to imagine and express the non-linear and non-Western concept of Ten-Chi-Jin through movement, allowed them to create an active body and an awareness of their inner energy that supported their giving and receiving in their daily life practice. The Shintaido practitioners benefited from learning experientially, engaging in reflective moments to discuss their practice, and being able to transfer their experiences to real life situations. By embedding a set of core movements in their practice, they facilitated an understanding of affirmative competencies resulting in positive attitude and an openness to listen to the body’s ability to learn, give and receive.

Aoki Sensei (1992), the founder of Shintaido, wrote, “creativity is not the exclusive province of artists and artistic expression. If we stop the automatic acts of daily life, surrendering yesterday’s happenings and separating ourselves from the old self of one day ago, through the act of our will we will discover a new life of continuing satori (understanding). By pursuing a new mind we will approach our real self, step by step, and discover the deeper meaning of a truly creative life” (p. 61). There is much more to be learned from this somatic process and about the learning that goes on in movement instruction.

**An exploration of action research using Shintaido movements**

I have found that the cyclic Shintaido practice called Tenshingosho can be utilized as a platform for constructing a process of inquiry for a research study or in developing projects geared for personal or organizational change. It is a process similar to action research. Tenshingosho, a core Shintaido movement meaning the five heavenly movements, provided a
foundation to interpreting each stage of the five distinct phases of the Cycles of Inquiry design I’ve created. This basic movement served as a container for meaning making in the same way a text requires the infusion of experiences by the reader and her imagination in order to come alive. Shintaido practitioners use somatic learning as a way to inquire about themselves and those around them. They use the movement process as a vessel for learning.

The five Tenshingoso movements and vocal sound associations, A, E, I, O and Um, can be used as stages for inquiry. These movements are core phases in a research process with each phase representing a cycle that builds upon the previous phase.

The Movement

Tenshingoso is a circular movement made with the arms that starts in a meditative pose with hands gently clasped in front of the body. The hands and arms open wide with fingers fanning out. Arms reach behind and rise above the head pointing to the sky. Then, the hands “slice the sky” while coming down to waist level. The hands and arms push forward and reach out over the horizon. They circle above the head towards the back and with palms facing down the arms move forward reaching the horizon again. The hands return to the meditative position where they started at the beginning. The cyclical nature of the movement represents in non-verbal terms the five expressions (Goso) of universal truth (Tenshin).

The Cycles of Inquiry

The action research process that I have developed, the Cycles of Inquiry, consists of five phases: **Origin, Conception, Learning, Knowing and Doing.** I’ve connected each Tenshingoso movement phase and sound with a research stage, for example the sound of Um with Origin and A with Conception. I used the Tenshingoso movements as a metaphor to help me conceptualize each phase of this research process.

UM - Origin: Every person sees reality with his or her particular lens; there is no such thing as a neutral observer. I begin to sort my origin (i.e., race, class, culture, life experiences) by settling into my place of stillness or “UM,” focusing on the self with questions such as – Who am I? What is my story? What are my significant memories? How do those remembrances influence my life today? This stage is about going back to the source. Origin is a place of discovery.

A - Conception: Conception is about pursuing one’s dreams and asking sustaining, life-giving questions. The reality people create is preceded by the questions asked. I experienced the “A” in Tenshingoso as a creative opening and a chance to envision my dream for this research. What questions did I need to ask? By reaching behind me and by trusting in my past experiences and knowledge, I could look upwards into the creative heaven for inspiration on ways to explore the world.

E - Learning: In research, this step comes about in the form of interviews, conversations, focus groups, observations, field notes and publications. I am reaching out and exploring the world by using the research design created in the conception phase. The participants are learning about my purpose and intention in pursuing research and in turn, I am learning about them. This is a significant phase where relationship plays an important role.
I – Knowing: After I reach out and explore the world by asking questions, engaging in inquiry, and connecting outward, I bring back that information for evaluation and reflection. In a matter of speaking, I reach out in “I” to expand and enrich my interpretation of what I have learned. This type of initiative and collective knowledge helps me regain a connection with reality, and was repeated several times in my research until I was satisfied with my findings. The cycle of “E” and “I” can repeat as many times as it is needed to gain a deeper understanding of what has being inquired about and to begin to design a course for leadership and action.

O – Doing: This research phase unifies what has been learned from critical reflection and dialogue on the themes and topics of the findings, and brings them back to creative action. In Tenshingoso, I reach up with “O” embracing all that I know and then acting on that knowledge to make an impact on the world by giving back to it. This is a circular process that touches on all previous phases. I am using what I know to make an impact in society through social and organizational change. Doing is about realizing a destiny through leadership in action that brings about change.

The Mirror
Tenshingoso is a mirror to the action research process involving both the researcher and participants in the cycle of inquiry and action. Tenshingoso kumite or partner practice could be said to have this quality, as everyone involved is an active part of the research process and where participants give and take. By immersing myself in learning through the phases of investigating my origin, discovering and conceiving my dreams, learning from inquiry, critically reflecting on the deeper knowledge of what I am studying, and finally, acting on that knowledge, I can make an impact in an organization, a relationship, and the world.

References
Wangari Maathai: Righteous Leader of Environmental and Social Change

Jennifer L. Kushner
National-Louis University

Abstract: This Africentric historical inquiry introduces Wangari Maathai, 2004 Nobel Peace Prize recipient, as a visionary adult educator and leader of the liberatory environmental movement known as The Green Belt Movement. The study describes Maathai’s philosophy and how it informed her leadership of adult education for environmental, political, and social change.

Introduction

“Today we are faced with a challenge that calls for a shift in our thinking so that humanity stops threatening its life support system. We are called to assist the earth to heal her wounds. And in the process, heal our own... In the course of history there comes a time when humanity is called to shift to a new level of consciousness. To reach a higher moral ground. A time when we have to shed our fear and give hope to each other. That time is now.”

-Wangari Maathai’s Nobel Peace Prize acceptance speech, 2004

Wangari Maathai, 2004 Nobel Peace Prize recipient and internationally renowned Kenyan activist, is a visionary adult educator who is not present in the discourse of the field. The movement she started, The Green Belt Movement, addresses decades of mis-education through a variety of grassroots and culturally grounded adult education activities. These programs help communities understand the linkages between environmental degradation and poor governance, and educate people to participate in democracy. As well, the programs address root causes of environmental and social problems by teaching about relationships between colonialism, poverty, racism, and capitalism.

The purpose of this study was to introduce Wangari Maathai to the field of adult education. Maathai was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize for her work linking just and sustainable care of the environment with issues of peace and governance. In 1977, Maathai started a grassroots tree planting campaign with rural women in Kenya that eventually grew into a multifaceted environmental, social and political movement. The study focuses on Maathai’s philosophy, and how that philosophy informed adult education and leadership within The Green Belt Movement. As an Africentric historical study, its primary goal is to add to the knowledge base of adult education history with regard to the lived experiences of Africans and members of the African Diaspora. This is important, as sociocultural and intellectual racism has led to the exclusion and marginalization of these histories. The study adds to Africana philosophy in how it draws on and evolves this tradition in current times. Hord and Lee characterize philosophy within this tradition as essentially an intellectual power of mediation,

It is the philosopher’s role, for example, to mediate the desires and expectations of the individual with the interests of the social collective, interests that the philosopher will be quick to acknowledge are themselves largely responsible for the particular contour of the individual’s desires and expectations. Given the historical facts of European slave-trading, colonialism, and postcolonialism as dominant features of the history of Africa and the African Diaspora, the philosopher’s mediating role takes on a second dimension: not only must the
black thinker work out systematically ideals that help shape the individual’s relation to the life of his or her community, but this thinker must also help mediate the complex relationships between colonizer and colonized, between European cultural demands and the authentic interests of black culture. In short, philosophy is here is called upon to evaluate and counter the dehumanization to which people and ideas of African descent have been subjected through the history of colonialism and of European racism. (1995, p.5)

Given this history of colonialism and European racism, it is useful to understand the Eurocentric worldview that informed that history, and which created the conditions necessitating the founding of the Green Belt Movement. Eurocentrism is rooted in dualistic understandings of reality, and thus creates artificial binaries such as the construction of race and the positioning of humans as ‘above’ and separate from nature. The problem with duality is that by making something ‘the other’ we can more easily distance ourselves from its suffering, degradation or demise. As a result, exploitation and domination of people and nature have gone hand in hand as Europeans and non-native Americans have colonized the world.

Conceptual and Theoretical Framework
This study was grounded in Africentrism, which Asante defines as, “… a mode of thought and action in which the centrality of African interests, values and perspectives predominate” (2003, p. 2). In the study all constructs, perspectives, and units of analysis were grounded in Africentrism. Within this paradigm, racism is viewed as the primary impact factor, or in the language of Wangari Maathai, racism is a “root cause.” The study draws on the African philosophical framework of Maat as a lens through which to view Maathai’s philosophy, and which provides conceptual grounding for understanding that philosophy. While Maathai does not speak specifically of Maat, her practice as an activist and educator reflects ideals inherent to this philosophical and moral ideal. Thus, Maat provides the historical antecedent to a philosophy born of Maathai’s lived experience. A key principle of Maat is holism and an orientation toward unity between humans, nature, and the divine. As described by Verharen,

This holism is simply a commitment to join together what has been split apart. In their infancy, humans have radically separated whole categories of beings from one another: heavens from the earth, humans from animals, men from women, Africans from non-Africans, and spirit from matter. (2006, p. 960)

Following Verharen, the concept of ‘right relationship’ is central to fostering harmonious and reciprocal relationships between humans, nature, and the divine. As a philosophical and moral ideal, Maat calls for action and the living of principles such as ‘right relationship’. Thus, fostering relationships in which there is no domination or exploitation becomes a practice in living justice. As described by Asante, “This idea of Ma’at is the idea of justice not merely in legal terms but in terms of the proper relationship between a human person and the universe, between the person and nature, between the person and another person” (1990, p. 90). The Green Belt Movement reflects a commitment to this notion of justice in how it connects the well being of people to the well being of nature.

Maathai’s commitment to this deep manifestation of justice is exemplified in her practice of Righteous Leadership (Karenga, 2006). Righteous Leadership involves the modeling and pursuit of ‘right relationship’ regardless of the outcome. Through her leadership Maathai fosters agency, which from an Africentric perspective is the capacity to act and speak in one’s own
name. Maathai, through liberatory adult education in the movement, fosters agency by renewing and restoring African knowledge and values.

The Green Belt Movement embodies the Africentric values reflected in the Nguzo Saba through its approach to community development and adult education. For example, at a structural level, the movement’s organization is rooted in the principle of Kujichagulia, or self-determination. Likewise the principles of Ujima (collective work and responsibility) and Ujamaa (Cooperative economics) are employed in the approach used by women working for the tree planting campaign. These women share financial risk and profit and maintain collective ownership of tree nurseries and related resources.

This study employs Africentric Postcolonial Theory as the primary lens through which to view the history and impact of racialized imperialism. In particular, it speaks to the experiences and perspectives of Africans and members of the African Diaspora who have been de-centered, exploited and dominated by Europeans and non-native Americans in pursuit of white supremacy and capitalism. The exploitation of natural resources for commodities to manufacture and sell was central to colonialism in Africa, as many other places around the globe. Environmental racism was a commonplace within colonialism, from the stealing of fertile lands to the clear-cutting of indigenous forests. The entire capitalist enterprise upon which colonialism was built, and which neocolonialism still is, rests on the availability of natural resources at the cheapest costs. Extraction or unsustainable use of these resources not only results in their demise, but the infrastructure need to support these activities incurs huge environmental and social costs as well. Social inequity is perpetuated through the non-negotiation of who controls these resources and the access to them. Activists like Maathai recognize the ways liberation is contingent on freedom within all realms of experience: the physical, the psychological or spiritual, the social, and the political, and the role for adult education in helping people understand how these are connected.

Methodology

This Africentric historical inquiry relied almost exclusively on primary sources. These sources included two books written by Wangari Maathai; her autobiography Unbowed (2006; 2007) and The Green Belt Movement: Sharing the Approach and the Experience (2003; 2006), a documentary film entitled, “Taking Root” (2008), produced by Lisa Merton and Alan Dater of Marlboro Productions, Inc., as well as speeches, interviews, articles, an original training manual, and position papers.

Discussion

Before the Europeans arrived, the people of Kenya did not look at trees and see timber, or at elephants and see commercial ivory stock or even at cheetahs and see beautiful skins for sale, but when the country was colonized and we encountered Europeans with all their knowledge, technology, religion and culture, all of it new, we converted our values into a cash economy like theirs. Everything was now perceived as having a monetary value. As we were later to learn, if you could sell it, you can forget about protecting it. (Richards, 2007)

Colonialism in Kenya, as in most places, resulted in tremendous destruction of both environment and culture. Within her lifetime, Maathai was able to witness much of this destruction. She saw fertile lands, virgin forests, biodiversity, and clean water disappear. She was a subject in the reformation of social relations and marginalization of culture. Yet her early formative experiences grounded in Kikuyu culture provided a strong foundation for the
development of a holistic and harmonious worldview. This, coupled with the positive experiences she had with education throughout her life, laid a foundation for the development of a philosophy of education intended to foster agency and liberation. As a person committed to the collective good, she used her understanding of education and her scientific training to help people learn how to identify and address root causes of the problems they faced.

Salient Elements of Maathai’s Philosophy

While Maat generally offers a historical lens through which to view the philosophy behind Maathai’s leadership and adult education practice, the Maatian principle of serudj-ta (repairing, renewing and restoring the world) provides a more precise organizing construct for examining what is common across her actions.

Maat in its most expansive sense as rightness in and of the world is the philosophical locus in which all the critical questions in ancient Maatian and modern Maatian thought converge and ground themselves. Maat thus insists on a holistic view of the moral ideal, one that gives rightful and adequate attention to self, society and the world as component parts of an interrelated order of rightness. The on-going quest, then, is to maintain, renew, repair, and enhance this order as self-conscious creators and bringers of the good in the world in a process and practice called serudj-ta- restoring, repairing and renewing the world. Such a world-encompassing concept of moral practice invites us to move beyond narrow notions of self-, national and even species interest and understand and assert ourselves as members of an interrelated order of existence in the world. (Karenga 2006, p. 408)

The ethic of serudj-ta informed the development of the first activity of The Green Belt Movement, which was planting trees. This program fostered restoration and renewal of the world in the physical realm, by focusing on the growing of ‘life support systems’. As well, this adult education activity fostered cultural restoration and repair as it re-centered local, indigenous and women’s knowledge related to the environment. The program was culturally grounded in its design and therefore was restoring education to its appropriate cultural center. Embedded in this approach was an understanding of the world as “an interrelated order of rightness” which equally valued and saw the connections between humans, nature, and the divine. Other programs evolving out of the tree planting campaign, such as Civic and Environmental Education, reflected a commitment to serudj-ta in using education as a vehicle to restore participatory democracy, collective welfare, just management of natural resources, and agency. These programs focused on repairing the world by teaching people to identify and address root causes of problems rather than symptoms.

Adult Education in the Green Belt Movement

The Green Belt Movement started with a seed, literally and figuratively. The first adult education activity of the movement was a tree planting campaign created by Maathai in response to rural women talking about the problems caused by deforestation. From the beginning, Maathai encouraged women to draw on their own knowledge and experience, and to teach each other, saying, “I don’t think you need a diploma to plant a tree…Use your woman sense” (Maathai 2007, p. 136). As the tree planting effort grew, it became clear to Maathai that unless the root causes of the problems were addressed, symptoms would continue. She began to understand the
need to educate people about the connections between corrupt governance and sustainable management of natural resources.

As the Green Belt Movement developed, I became convinced that we needed to identify the roots of the disempowerment that plagued the Kenyan people. We had to understand why we were losing firewood; why there was malnutrition, scarcity of clean water, topsoil loss, and erratic rains; why people could not pay school fees; and why the infrastructure was falling apart…Why were we robbing ourselves of a future? (Maathai 2007, p. 173)

She began teaching people about the history and legacy of colonialism and how it set the stage for the conditions they faced. In the process, she taught about the role of culture and how destruction of culture contributed to these conditions.

Culture is coded wisdom, wisdom that has been accumulated over thousands of years and generations. Coded in our songs, dances, and values…there was something in our people that helped them preserve those forests. They were not looking at trees and seeing timber. (Merton and Dater, 2008)

Over time, Maathai’s efforts at teaching and organizing people to stand up for their rights became formalized through a program called Civic and Environmental Education. This program addressed the ways sustainable and equitable management of natural resources is related to issues of governance and human rights. A primary focus of the program was on teaching people how to participate in democracy and on the centrality of culture in that effort.

In addition, I saw how important culture was to the larger goals of the Green Belt Movement and to managing our natural resources efficiently, sustainably, and equitably. Many aspects of the cultures of our ancestors practiced had protected Kenya’s environment…we integrated the question of culture into our seminars and eventually wondered whether culture was a missing link in Africa’s development. (Maathai 2007, p. 175)

The program operated primarily through community-based, culturally grounded seminars. The program became a primary site for liberatory adult education in the movement. Other key sites of adult education included food security and water harvesting, the Pan-African Network, women’s advocacy, and Green Belt Safaris.

**Righteous Leadership**

Maathai’s commitments to the restoration of environment, democratic governance and culture, led her to take actions that challenged those with power. This did not come without sacrifice. Much of her work as an activist, organizer, and educator was done from the margins. Although she had a formal education, as an African woman she did not have much money, power, or status on which to draw. Yet she led peaceful protests, educated citizens to stand up for their rights, challenged oppressive regimes with corrupt governance practices, and advocated for the marginalized and the common good. At first she was discriminated against, publicly humiliated, and ostracized. Later, more serious threats to her safety and indeed her life were an indication of the perceived threat she posed to those in power.

**Implications**

Maathai employs adult education as the central vehicle for manifesting environmental, political and social change within the context of culturally grounded community education. Her key message, that equitable and sustainable management of natural resources is inextricably
bound with issues of governance and social justice, suggests the consciousness that allows exploitation and domination of people is the same consciousness that allows exploitation and domination of nature. Adult education is central to the project because of its role in helping people deconstruct their own lived experience and the roots causes of injustice, in all its forms.

Maathai’s philosophy, adult education practice and leadership are relevant to those in the field of adult education who are concerned with the actualizing of agency within communities. Place is an important concept to community and can be understood in temporal or spatial as well as geographic terms. In fostering agency and self-determination, communities must be able to define themselves on its own terms. Therefore the work of community based adult education must address the political, economic, physical, and social domains, all of which relate to some shared understanding of place. Within the field of adult education, movements have the potential to provide a structure for this work. They do this by bringing together people to learn and act in ways that improve the conditions or places they inhabit. Liberation movements do this by re-centering people in their own story, intellectual and cultural traditions, and meaning constructs. The field of adult education should be especially interested in liberation movements for what they have to teach us about the role of education in challenging racism and other forms of oppression, but also for how they can foster the reclamation of environment and place.

Maathai’s success at mobilizing thousands of people at the grassroots, many marginalized, to both challenge oppressive systems and affect environmental change one tree at a time at the local level speaks to the power of culturally grounded adult education. Through the Green Belt Movement, Maathai employed adult education as a decolonization process, to foster the revitalization of indigenous culture, selfethnic identity, women’s empowerment, and participatory democracy. For activist-scholars in the field of adult education concerned with the environment, Maathai’s work teaches us that we must not isolate our work in that domain from the larger, systemic and root causes of environmental problems.

References
Building Communities into Lifelong Learning Cities:
The Case of the Republic of Korea

Dr. In Tak Kwon
Associate Professor, Chonbuk National University
Dr. Fred M. Schied
Associate Professor, Penn State University

Abstract: The purpose of this paper was to explore the implications and strategies for building Lifelong Learning Cities in Korea by 1) examining the rationale behind the movement; 2) reviewing the results and accomplishments; and 3) drawing lessons for constructing Lifelong Learning Cities in other parts of the globe.

Introduction

Since the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) funded a project to create 'educating cities' in the 1970s (IAEC, 2008; Longworth, 2006), the idea of creating Lifelong Learning Cities has expanded throughout the world. According to the International Association of Educating Cities (IAEC), 335 cities in 36 countries have organized and are taking part in the IAEC (IAEC, 2008).

Nowhere has the Lifelong Learning Cities movement (hereafter LLCM) taken hold more than in South Korea. By 2007, 76 out of 232 local autonomous entities (cities/counties/districts) have been named Lifelong Learning Cities. Even more impressive, in 2004 learning cities of Korea, invested a total of $40,000,000 to fund the creation of nineteen Lifelong Learning Cities (Byun, Kwon, Kim, Yang, B., & Yang, H., 2005). By now, $144,000,000 is invested to fund because the lifelong learning cities increased in seventy-six cities in 2008. The Korean Lifelong Learning City for 2007, Chang Won, a city with a population 550,000, held its learning festival under the theme “learning citizenship rights, building positive citizenship, and building community.” The festival held on September 26-28, 2007 attracted a total of 1.42 million people (Republic of Korea CONFINTÉA VI Report, 2008) to its various activities. It is clear from the above data that the idea of creating a Lifelong Learning City has become a central and vital part of Korean society.

According to much of the literature on lifelong learning, constructing a learning society with an emphasis on citizenship, human rights, and human resource development is crucial to meeting the challenges of the 21st century (Field, 2006; Jarvis, 2007; OECD, 2002; UNESCO, 2008). The establishment of a Lifelong Learning City would, according to its original intent, contribute to developing regional human resources, expanding learning opportunities for the residents, forming a regional community through small, organized learning study circles, thus forming a society of democratic citizens (IAEC, 2009). The European Lifelong Learning Initiative sees the Lifelong Learning City as a learning community and defines it as “a city, town or region that mobilizes all regional resources to abundantly develop the citizens' potentiality for prosperity, maintenance of a unified society, and to promote personal advancement” (Longworth, 2006, p. 23). The Lifelong Learning City movement in Korea is one of the regional units of lifelong education organized as a "learning town", "learning region", or "learning community" (Kim, 2004, p. 5).

However, the political, social and economic rationale for the South Korean Lifelong Learning Cities movement has not been adequately addressed. Nor has the impact on society been adequately dealt with. Relying on the data produced by the Korean Ministry of Education,
Science, and Technology; Korean academic analysis; UNESCO Institute for Lifelong Learning documents; studies from OECD and IAEC, this study analyzes both the theoretical underpinnings of the Lifelong Learning City movement in Korea and the movements impact on Korean society (Buyn et al, 2005; IAEC, 2009; MOE/HRD 2006; OECD, 2001; Park, 2007; UNESCO, 2008). The study then provides suggestions for building on the Korean experience in North American and European contexts.

Concepts and Background of Lifelong Learning City

There are several definitions around the concept of lifelong learning cities. Concepts of lifelong learning cities are differently defined by European Lifelong Learning Initiative (ELLI), Learning City Network (LCN), JAPAN, and Korea. ELLI defines Learning Cities as follows:

A learning city, town or region recognizes and understands the key role of learning in the development of basic prosperity, social stability and personal fulfillment, and mobilizes all its human, physical and final resources creatively and sensitively to develop the full human potential of all its citizens to understand and react positively to change (Longworth, 2006, p. 21).

The Korean Ministry of Education, Skill, & Technology (hereafter MOEST) defines a lifelong learning city as follows:

A lifelong learning city is a general city restructuring movement designed to establish a learning community where learning can be enjoyed anytime, anywhere, and by anyone. At the same time, it is a lifelong education movement of the local society by the local citizens, for the citizens, of the citizens trying to form a learning community network with all educational resources of the local society in connection with organizations, local societies, and countries (Official Document of MOEST, Lifelong 81700-501, Jun 8, 2001).

Definitions of lifelong learning city basically include in the contents as follow: First, in the method aspect, lifelong learning city is fully utilizing all resources in local region. All facilities including public institutions and NGO without stipulating LEA as well as lifelong learning facilities can be participated in lifelong learning city projects. Second, in goals and directions, lifelong learning city is related to the development of local society. It has commonly goals and directions to self-actualization, social inclusion, and economic competitiveness (National Institute for Lifelong Education, 2008, p. 20).

Idea for Lifelong Learning City

LLCM in Korea follows the idea for lifelong learning city on the base of learning region model studied by OECD (2001). Individual learning and organization learning occur in the region. Both are themselves to some extent, dependent upon the level and nature of the institutions or the regions. Individual learning will make it possible to accumulate human capital in institutions or regions, and organizational learning can form social capital in them. Human capital accumulation through individual learning will contribute to economic competitiveness (and the growth it makes possible) in the regions and the institutions, and social capital formation through organization learning will contribute to form social inclusion. As the model for realizing lifelong learning city idea in Korea, conceptual relationships between human capital and social capital is depicted in Figure 1 (Buyn, et al., 2005).
Types of Korean lifelong learning cities were invested on the base of classification for learning city types in EU and lifelong learning cities in Japan.

First, citizen community building type reinforces self-autonomous learning community for building lifelong learning city. This typology operates programs corresponding to citizen’s need and is linked strongly with NGO/NPO. This category could be found in four cities including Geumsan county.

Second, vocational competency development emphasizes individual ability and self actualization for building the lifelong learning city. It focuses on residents’ own vocational competency development and operates professional education and vocational training. This category could be found in Cheongju city and Chilgok county.

Third, regional society integration emphasizes the public good more than individual benefit for building the lifelong learning city. It reinforces social inclusion and welfare through operating programs for the unprivileged classes and establishing the lifelong learning infrastructure. There are nine lifelong learning cities including Jinan county which belong in this category.

Forth, industry based innovation emphasizes individual ability and self actualization for building lifelong learning city. This reinforces regional industrial innovation by civil groups and private corporations, and focuses on inducing companies and cultivating regional manpower through learning.

**History and Background for LLCM**

In Korea, the LLCM was first initiated at the local by city/district and not lead by the government at the central level. In 1995, Chang Won City first established ‘Regulation of Establishment and Management for Chang Won City Lifelong Learning Institute’ but did not use the term of lifelong learning city at that time. In order to meet residents’ learning needs, the city has first established a lifelong learning center each village and supported lifelong learning programs by consigning the management of centers to NGOs in the region (KEDI, 2002). Also, Gwang Myeong City first declared the lifelong learning city on March 9th, 1999 before the Korean government introduced and supported the lifelong learning cities project in order to maximize the expected effectiveness for LLCM(LEE, 2002). The Korean government did not to regulate the LLCM until the Lifelong Education Act was amended on Lifelong Education Act in February 29th, 2008.

**Framework for LLCM**

Most of lifelong learning cities are implementing projects and programs by setting up the vision, objectives, strategy, and base for LLCM.
Vision

A lifelong learning city ultimately aims to establish learning community in the region. A lifelong learning city is a city that widely promotes learning, a city that effectively develops local partnerships with all sections of the local society, and a city that supports and motivates the participation of individuals, organizations, corporations, and enterprises to learning. The vision for LLCM in cities/counties/districts is established and emphasized based on a motto such as individual life & self actualization, learning sharing, community building, regional development, making an ecological region. They can be illustrated as follows:

Building human oriented lifelong learning society (Gwangmyeong City), Improvement of citizens’ life through learning: Always Learning community(Jeju City), opening the future through learning with citizen(Yeonsu District), Citizen growth and regional development(Changwon City) ecological, historical, and tourist region leading acknowledge based society(Iksan City)

Objectives

The objective of the lifelong learning city policy is the environmental composition of a learning community. The objective of the lifelong learning city policy promotion is first, to construct a better local environment, second, to build a learning environment to enhance the quality of life, and third, to create a city where people learn, grow, and live together.

Strategies

Strategies for LLCM in cities/counties/districts are promoted by means such as providing ubiquitous opportunities for learning, categorizing learning region zones according to each village, networking & partnership, etc. They can be explained as follows:

- Gwangyang City – city administration concentration for lifelong learning, partnership strategy, categorizing and dividing learning region zone. Downsizing for practicing projects and business, providing ubiquitous opportunities for learning.
- Gwanak District – resident participation, networking, and information-oriented strategy
- Jeonju City – learner centered strategy for LL, region centered strategy, information-oriented strategy, partnership strategy.

Base for LLCM

Lifelong learning cities movement is implemented by participating positively in learning groups, lifelong learning institutions, and lifelong learning facilities in the region. In order to operate various programs within the local society, lifelong learning centers of lifelong learning cities operates lifelong learning projects by utilizing university continuing centers, schools, NGO/NPOs, cultural centers, industries and companies, resident municipal centers, libraries, social welfare centers, research institutes, volunteer centers, women’s education institutions, juvenile groups and museums

Korean lifelong learning cities movement is focused on the revival of a region and regional human resources development, and has been promoted as a means to expand the lifelong learning opportunities of local residents through the enhancement of local lifelong education activities as well as the formation of local learning communities. Simultaneously, cooperative planning exists between lifelong education facilities and organizations through formation of partnerships between the district and regional education office (Kwon, 2005).

Promoting System and Mechanism for LLCM

LLCM are implemented and promoted by various systems and mechanisms related to human and physical infrastructure in lifelong learning cities/counties/districts. Systems and mechanisms for LLCM can be explained by elements such as regulations and rules, the lifelong
learning centers, manpower, networks, study groups, and special mechanisms for promoting LLCM, etc. Networking between agencies, institutions, and other facilities centered by lifelong learning center in lifelong learning city is depicted in Figure 3.

![Network Structure of Lifelong Learning Center in City/County/District](image)

**Figure 2** The Network Structure of Lifelong Learning Center in City/County/District

**Conclusion and Implications**

Future realization of a lifelong learning society depends on how the regional community is established as residents freely enjoy the learning in their lives that is based on the region. Therefore, there is a need to prepare a lifelong learning location for the development of the local society in this localization period and for the enhancement of quality of life of the local residents. This is precisely the lifelong learning city construction movement.

The Korean Lifelong Learning Cities movement has provided opportunities for many local autonomous entities to strengthen administrative organizational structures with regard to citizen education. Moreover, residents in a Lifelong Learning City play an important role in building local learning communities by voluntarily organizing study groups under the support of local governments. There are also an increasing number of citizens acquiring college degrees through the Academic Credit Bank System operated as part of the Lifelong Learning City movement.

In some regions, the Lifelong Learning City Movement takes the form of local autonomy in order to solve community problems with residents' collective efforts. This was achieved by making full use of the local resident autonomous facilities and organizations in fostering lifelong learning. For example, many Lifelong Learning Cities have been operating various lifelong education programs while utilizing general administrative local autonomous centers as residents' lifelong learning facilities. Some Lifelong Learning Cities changed their resident autonomous center into the local autonomous learning center, and placed lifelong educators within so that they could plan local lifelong education projects, offer various lifelong education programs, and hold various lifelong education events (Republic of Korea CONFINTEA VI Report, 2008).

While a similar movement seems problematic in the North American context, aspects of the movement can be adopted to the Western context. Building on the Korean example, closer relationships can be forged between local governmental and popular education projects in urban communities. Building on the current interest in citizenship education, such cooperative projects may go a long way towards beginning to build a learning society in Western countries.
References
Critical Reflection in Workplace: Using Cultural-Historical Activity Theory (CHAT) to Theorize Factory Workers’ Continuous Learning

Kyoung Hwa Lee
Ph.D. candidate in Adult Education, Penn State University

Abstract This study investigated workers’ critical reflection on the shop floor through analyzing The Toyota Way (Liker, 2004) from the perspective of adult education using Cultural Historical Activity Theory (CHAT) as a theoretical framework.

Introduction
This study aimed to suggest the importance and possibility of workers’ critical reflection on the shop floor through analyzing The Toyota Way (Liker, 2004) from the perspective of adult education. This book examines successful management methods that emphasize long-term support for workers’ learning. The management philosophy resulted in making Toyota one of the most successful corporations in the world. The key idea of this study was to view critical reflection as an educational practice incorporated in the 14 management principles of The Toyota Way, although the principles focused not on education but management. Moreover, it is an educational method that can be understood analyzing using Cultural Historical Activity Theory (CHAT) as a theoretical framework.

Critical Reflection
The idea of critical reflection in adult education was largely initiated by Mezirow (1990), Welton (1995), Brookfield (1990) all prominent theorists in the field. Mezirow suggested critical reflection could be seen as an adult learning theory that explains transformation in peoples everyday life, largely based on the critical theory of Habermas (Brookfield, 2005). According to Habermas, critical theory is connected to “the human striving for emancipation with a version of ideology critique that is forced specially on patterns and structures of communication”(cited in Brookfield, 2005, p.1133). That is, critical theory aims to critically understand and challenge to continuous reproduction of social or political domination which has been formed in this society.

Through the emancipatory view, Mezirow argued that critical reflection “involves a critique of the presuppositions on which our beliefs have been built”(Mezirow, 1990, p.1). Namely, critical reflection is to occur through escaping from dominant perspectives – assumptions that are taken-for-granted and then to create new assumptions that are posed against old ones. The concept of critical reflection corresponds to adult educators’ ultimate purpose; at least as that purposes are articulated by Mezirow and his followers. Critical reflection is a practice by which adults critically examine their own assumptions, thus reinterpreting their own political, social, and cultural life. In fact, numerous adult educators and theorists have emphasized that critical reflection inspires human beings to form their political, social, and cultural life, as ‘a critical learning theory’. They have highlighted the importance of adult educators’ role in exhorting people to critically examine the contemporary societal climate (Welton, 1995).

However few academic adult educators and theorists have focused on how adult learners’ critical reflection is executed or what outcome is implemented through critical reflection. The difficulties of interpreting philosophy undergirding critical theory have limited its usefulness. However, in order to be useful, adult educators need to examine how to apply critical reflection to
the practice of adult education. Thus, this study focused on the critical reflection as an educational ‘method’, i.e. ‘how is it possible to implement critical reflection’ and then approached this question within the area of workplace learning. The Toyota Way is an excellent example for analyzing critical reflection because Toyota is a corporation that has applied workers’ personal learning, as well as learning in groups, to the shop floor for a long time. In this study, critical reflection was analyzed using Toyota’s management strategies that have encouraged workers learning on the shop floor.

The Toyota Way

The Toyota Way is a book that consists of 14 principles created by Liker with materials and data embedded in the management philosophy of Toyota Corporation. In the 1930s, Toyota Motor Corporation started by making simple trucks. In the early years, Toyota managements needed to improve their manufacturing management and to move beyond their primary product line. However, after World War II and into the 1950s the social and economic climate was very unfavorable to them. Nevertheless, Toyota management visited U.S. plants, including Ford Motor Corporation, with the plan to enter the U.S. market. In the plants, they quickly realized that there were no fundamental changes from the process of mass production since the 1930s. Especially, in Ford plants they saw lots of equipment making large amounts of products that were then stored as inventory, resulting in large amounts of material and product sitting in inventory (Liker, 2004, p.21). Toyota management recognized the ineffectiveness of Ford’s mass production system and began to realize the importance of ‘continuous flow’. Thus, they could establish the foundational philosophy of management that: “flexibility required marshaling the ingenuity of the workers to continually improve processes”(p.22). According to Liker, the success of Toyota stems from “a deeper business philosophy based on its understanding of people and human motivation” and more concretely based on “its ability to cultivate leadership, teams, and culture, to devise strategy, to build supplier relationships, and to maintain a learning organization”(p.6).

Liker suggested four high level categories – Philosophy, Process, People/Partners, and Problem solving – to understand the 14 principles (p.6). These elements were merged into ‘Lean Production’, which is the representative product system in Toyota. Lean Production is “shortening lead time by eliminating waste in each step of a process leads to best quality and lowest cost, while improving safety and morale”(p.25). Lean Production has been the dominant manufacturing trend, along with Six Sigma, for the last 10 years and has become the object of benchmarking from other companies. However, Toyota management has emphasized not only such techniques under Toyota Product System but also “a company’s management commitment to continuously invest in its people and promote a culture of continuous improvement”(p.10). This is connected to Hansei-Kaizen (reflection-improvement), which is their central management element. Hansei is really deeper than reflection and is about aware of one’s own weaknesses and feeling deeply sorry, as a traditional Japanese cultural view (p.258). Kaizen is continuous improvement and is the process of making incremental improvements (p.24).

The two representative elements – Lean Production and Hansei-Kaizen – are linked directly to two principles among the 14 principles: Principle 2: ‘Create continuous process flow to bring problems to the surface’, and Principle 14: ‘Become a Learning organization through relentless reflection (Hansei) and continuous improvement (Kaizen)’. And also these principles could be regarded as principles that emphasized the importance of workers learning on the shop floor. Thus, this study dealt with chiefly these two principles to analyze workers learning as critical reflection with CHAT.
Analyzing Critical Reflection in The Toyota Way with CHAT

Cultural Historical Activity Theory was developed through three generations: the first generation was initiated by Vygotsky. He developed the idea of ‘mediation’ as a cultural tool into human actions (Engeström, 2001, p.133) in order to explain that the individual could not exist without society and vice versa. Through evolving this idea, he overcame the dichotomy between individual and societal structures and thus, in great detail he could suggest the idea that object lies in equal position to subject (p.133). The second generation was developed by Leont’ev. He explicated “the concept of activity by explaining the role of mediating cultural tools within broader social dimensions of practice” (Park, 2008, p.31). A third generation approach, largely conceived by Engeström developed the notion of expansive learning and then showed “how practice undergoes the type of change that defines the learning process” (p.32). This study used the third generation to analyze workers’ learning as critical reflection in The Toyota Way.

According to Engeström, there are at least two activity systems (Engeström, 2001, p.136) and “the subject forms the object through the mediation of the instruments against the backdrop of the rules, division of labor, and the community and, in turn, the object forms the subject”(Lord & Schied, 2007, p.6). Between elements of the activity systems, there are contradictions that drive the learning outcome. When focusing on workers learning in The Toyota Way, there are two activity systems based on principle 2 and principle 14: (a) ‘creating continuous process flow’, and (b) ‘becoming a learning organization’. In the two activity systems, the subject is the same, factory workers, and although each activity system has its own motive and object, there are several interactions and contradictions between various elements of both of them.

To begin with, the object of activity (a) is ‘eliminating waste’. The purpose of principle 2 is to create ‘one-piece flow’ in order to decrease waste on the shop floor. In the Lean Production, the core task of workers is to produce the best quality, lowest cost, and shortest delivery time through creating continuous flow (Liker, 2004, p.88). The factory workers as the subject in this activity system could have eliminating waste as the object through other elements (see below).

First, they have several rules: (1) they have to lower the ‘level’ of inventory problems, (2) they have to identify inefficiencies that demand immediate solution, and (3) they have to create ‘one-piece flow’ by constantly cutting wasted effort and time that is not adding value (pp.88-9).

Second, these rules are applied to other staffs in corporation i.e. the division of labor, which includes horizontal, as well as vertical power relationship (Lord & Schied, 2007, p.15): the division of labor in this activity system includes engineers. They have to measure the flow of actual product for creating value-added productivity on the shop floor as well as office tasks. The suppliers are another factor in the division of labor and are a part of the product flow. The one-piece flow is started by obtaining raw materials and then they flow immediately to supplier plants and fill the order with components. For continuing the flow, the suppliers could never be excluded from the activity system.

Third, the community in this activity system is autoworkers from other plants and corporations. Each corporation has its own philosophy and culture for successful management. Fourth, the mediating instruments for eliminating waste in this system are ‘Lean Production’, ‘one-piece flow’, and ‘Takt time’ (which is used to “set the pace of production and alert workers whenever they are getting ahead or behind”(Liker, 2004, p.94)). These are special instruments to support Toyota management philosophy. Factory workers, engineers, and managements are all trying to use these instruments in order to achieve the objective of ‘eliminating waste’.

Next, the object of activity (b) is ‘doing continuously Hansei-Kaizen’. The purpose of principle 14 is to lead continuously workers’ Hansei-Kaizen (reflection-improvement). The
Hansei view of feeling worried and admitting shame is a traditional Japanese view. It is really much deeper than reflection and really being honest about one’s own weakness (p.258); “without Hansei it is impossible to have Kaizen” (p.257). The Kaizen as Japanese term for continuous improvement is the process of making incremental improvements, no matter how small (p.24). It is “an attitude of self-reflection and even self-criticism, a burning desire to improve” (p.252). The factory workers as the subject in this activity system could be transformed by Hansei-Kaizen as the object through other elements in this activity system (see below).

First, in this system they have rules – learning from mistakes, determining the root cause of problems, providing effective countermeasures, empowering people to implement those measures, and having a process for transforming the new knowledge to the right people etc (p.251). Second, they are sharing these rules with others. The division of labor includes overseas managers and factory workers in U.S. who are not familiar with Hansei-Kaizen as a part of Japanese culture. Third, community of this activity system is autoworkers from other plants and corporations because each corporation has its own philosophy and culture for successful management. Fourth, the mediating instruments for doing Hansei-Kaizen are ‘learning organization’ which does not only adopt and develop new business or technical skills but also learns the new skills and knowledge as second level of learning, and ‘5-why’ a process by which one determines the root cause, and ‘the ability to learn’ including adaption, innovation, and flexibility (pp.250-3). There are also different instruments for implementing Hansei-Kaizen, so workers in U.S. plants as well as in Japan learn to acquire Hansi-Kaizen.

However, there might be workers’ contradictions in the process of implementing the two principles (the two objects) because workers are required to engage in thinking and problem solving on the shop floor and to employ Hansei-Kaizen, which is embedded in Japanese culture. In the activity system (a), it is not easy for workers to adapt to continuous system on the shop floor because there are few connections between their tasks and the system employed in the Ford system. The workers had to move away from the Ford system and employ Toyota’s Thinking Production System. In addition, in the activity system (b), there were some contradictions between U.S. workers and Hansei-Kaizen. It is not easy to allow for workers to do continuously self-reflection (Hansei-Kaizen). In activity system, such contradictions arise when different interpretations, understandings, or meaning exist in one of context (Lord & Schied, 2007, p.7).

However, according to Engeström “the role of contradictions within an activity system is what drives the learning outcomes” (cited in Lord & Schied, 2007, p.7) with different histories and positions that are implied in several elements-division of labor, rules, etc (Engeström, 2001, p.136). Thus, this study could discover the learning outcome from various contradictions in two different activity systems with different histories and positions are constructed by the backdrop of the rules, divisions of labor, implements, and the community. The learning outcome stemmed from two different activity systems in this study was the ‘critical reflection on the shop floor’.
Conclusion
This paper suggests that CHAT can provide a means to analyze workers’ critical reflection at work. The approach has the potential to show how critical reflection occurs in everyday environment. While this is a hypothetical case, it does suggest the possibilities for using CHAT to understand how critical reflection occurs on the shop floor.

References
Brookfield, S. (2005), Learning democratic reason: The adult education project of Jürgen Habermas, Teachers College Record, Vol. 107, pp.1127-1168.
Teaching for Transformation: Structured Cross-Cultural Experience in Transnational Contexts

Ming-yeh Lee, San Francisco State University
David Hemphill, San Francisco State University
Jacob Perea, San Francisco State University

Abstract: The purpose of the study was to explore transformational learning in the context of cross-cultural, transnational study. In particular, it explored the ways in which a short-term study abroad program facilitated transformational learning opportunities for its adult participants. Data were collected through narrative surveys, students’ research projects, and researchers’ field notes to investigate promising program components and strategies.

Introduction

As our world has become increasingly globalized, international education in the form of study abroad programs has become increasingly prevalent, and students in higher education are often motivated to participate in short-term or longer-term study abroad programs. In addition to providing learning opportunities in students’ respective subjects, such programs are also expected to challenge and expand students’ worldviews by allowing them to be fully immersed in substantive cross-cultural learning experiences.

For the past two years, the authors have designed and implemented a two-week study abroad program for graduate students majoring in Education. The program aims to explore the impact of globalization on the Chinese Diaspora through lectures, discussion, individual research projects, a factory visit, and comprehensive visits to different types of schools in Hong Kong and Southern China. The entire program occurs in a transnational space, where students are constantly encouraged to observe, reflect, compare and contrast the educational and socio-economic experience of the Chinese Diaspora on both sides of Pacific Rim, the West Coast of the U.S. as well as the Southeastern Coast of China. Although the program is relatively short, the structured cross-cultural learning experience it provides is meant to strongly challenge the lenses that students use to view the world and themselves. The majority of program participants voluntarily wrote in program evaluations or in their research projects, or verbally expressed to faculty members that they had gone through “transformations”, “paradigm shifts,” or “life-changing experiences” as a result of their journey. Therefore, it seems likely that many of the program’s participants collectively or individually went through varying aspects of a transformational learning process as a result of participating in the program.

Theoretical Framework

The process of transformational learning has one of the most commonly-discussed areas within the field of adult education in recent decades. Mezirow defines transformational learning as a process by which individual critically challenges one’s perspectives to allow for “more inclusive, discriminating, [and] open” perspectives to emerge and to guide revised behaviors and actions (2000, p.8). Since transformational learning was initially theorized by Mezirow in the late 1970s, a great deal of work has been done to explore, document, expand, as well as critique the concept (Taylor, 1997, 2005). Although experience, critical reflection, and adult development are described as common conceptions underlying all kinds of transformational learning (Merriam,
Caffarella and Baumgartner, 2006), the process of transformational learning itself has, in fact, been redefined and expanded over time to become more comprehensive and multi-dimensional (Taylor, 2005). Components such as one’s context, biography, emotion, collective experience (class, race, culture etc.), it is now agreed, need to be factored into transformative learning to present a more holistic view of what the experience entails (Baumgartner, 2001; Johnson-Bailey & Alfred, 2006; Tisdell, 2003).

In addition to its theoretical dimensions, discussions of transformative learning have also concentrated on strategies adult educators can apply in their classrooms to facilitate the process of transformative learning (Cranton, 2002). Strategies recommended to enhance various phases of transformative learning have included materials representing multiple perspectives, critical incidents, critical debate, reflective journals, and support groups, to name a few (Cranton, 2002). Beyond these suggestions, however, it is also evident that few studies have documented how structured cross-cultural experience in transnational contexts may also be used to facilitate transformational learning.

Taylor’s research (1994) has portrayed how sojourners, such as international business persons and diplomats, may gain intercultural competence as a form of transformational learning. In contrast, our program participants reported that their structured cross-cultural experience actually enabled them to develop more integrated perspectives and deepened beliefs about their professional capacities, including their roles as educators with increasing confidence to serve their students. Our questions then became, for those participants who have experienced transformative learning through a structured cross-cultural experience, what does the process look like? How is their process similar to or different from those discussed in the existing literature (Taylor, 1997)? Further, in what ways and through what components might structured cross-cultural experience trigger and facilitate the process of transformative learning?

Given that the purpose of this study was to explore ways in which a structured cross-cultural experience provided through a short-term study abroad program in a transnational context facilitates transformational learning among adult students, the research questions used to guide the study included the following:

1. How did the transformational learning process unfold as perceived by the adult learners in this study abroad program?
2. How did the design and curriculum of the study abroad program trigger or facilitate transformational learning process?
3. In what ways did adult learner’s identities (including race, class, gender, nationality etc.) contribute to their process of transformational learning?

**Methodology**

To understand and capture the thoughts, beliefs, emotions of the research participants, a qualitative study design was adopted as being most suitable for this research purpose. A purposive sampling strategy was used to recruit research volunteers from study abroad participants who went through a transformative learning as a result of their participation (Merriam, 1998). Moreover, the researchers made an effort to recruit participants of different races, genders, cultural backgrounds, and nationalities to maximize diversity. Data were collected through an open-ended, emailed survey with 6 research participants, content analysis of student research projects, as well as researcher field notes. In-depth narrative responses to the survey questions were coded and analyzed along with students’ research projects and researchers’ field notes to allow for themes to emerge.
Findings and Discussion
Based on data analysis, three main themes emerged that addressed our research questions. These themes included the following:

Integrated Views or Deepened Awareness as Result of Transformational Learning
All of the research participants described their transformational learning in similar ways. Such terms as “eye-opening”, “life-changing” experience were common. Others reported that they had developed “a fresh perspective” or learned to “lean into discomfort,” which in turn led to more self-reflection. All reported that they had either acquired more integrated and expanded views or developed deepened awareness in their professional domains. Two female and two male participants who were currently working as classroom teachers spoke of being able to view themselves as more confident educators, redefining the meaning of teaching for each of them. As Joe, one of the male teachers reported, “Prior to the trip, I could not imagine myself teaching kids…. The opportunity to engage with different teaching techniques in China allowed me to understand more about my abilities as a teacher. I now understand the strengths I possess in working with children”. A female teacher, Patti, described herself to “have gone through a process of transformational learning in the form that my eyes are open to newer ways of teaching… [they] have changed my conception of what education is and what education should be.” Chris also claimed that, professionally, he could “better understand not only the Chinese American students I serve, but also the global context of education that affects all my students…. [I have] expanded the scope of my analysis to include more issues of globalization and transnationalism in education”.

In addition to more integrated and expanded vision as educators, students’ narratives also demonstrated deepened awareness about the transnational social inequities they observed as a result of the learning experience. Jeff said this most eloquently:

Prior to this trip, I was able to notice inequities and cultural capital being used in ways that perpetuated various levels of hegemony. Race, class, ability, gender, [sexual] orientation, etc. all played a part. Seeing these inequities in Asia allowed me to step back from experiences in the U.S. and catch a glimpse from an outsider’s point of view. At the end of the day, there were many differences, but I think the idea of ‘global commonalities’ really stood out.

Echoing Jeff’s words, Levine summarized her observations in Southeastern China: “It showed how much similar global poverty is across the board and how marginalized people face similar struggles and experiences across borders and continents.”

Overall, all research participants seemed to have gone through some degree of transformation, since many developed more integrated views and deepened awareness in their professional domains. However, Chris, himself a Honduran immigrant, was the only participant who portrayed a complete process of perspective transformation, comparable to the stages highlighted by existing literature (Merizow, 2000). His ongoing process of transformational learning, as he noted, “involves taking in new information to challenge already held beliefs, assumptions, or practices” This journey, in fact, altered his academic, professional, and personal trajectory, since it resulted in his being accepted as a Ph.D. candidate in Hong Kong University. It
thus appears that all of the program’s participants demonstrated impacts of transformational learning in different domains and to various degrees.

**Individual Biography Shapes the Transformational Learning Process.**

This finding supports the claims of previous studies (Lee, 1999; Johnson-Bailey & Alfred, 2006) which suggest that the role of individual biography shapes the transformational learning process. During the program, some of the participants began to reflect on how their identities (racial, cultural) and lived experience shaped the process of how they made sense of their learning experience. Renee, a Chinese American female teacher, pointed out that this program allowed her to reflect on why her culturally grounded teaching philosophies differed from many of her White peers:

> Now I understand why I have the philosophies and expectations that I do and why I often feel like I was swimming against the tide in my attempt to establish the culture and norms needed for my style of teaching in the classroom…. I have also learned how much important cultural beliefs, traditional philosophies etc. have on teaching and learning

Another example was articulated by Kattie, a Latina female participant, who shared her own experience of baby-sitting white children in New York City when she observed White and Chinese children in the wealthy parts of Hong Kong being cared for by darker-skinned nannies from the Philippines and Indonesia. Reflecting on her own racial identity and lived experience, Kattie not only made sense of her experience but also helped the group contextualize and analyze issues of transnational labor. It was her racial identity and lived experience, through collective critical reflection and discourse, that challenged everyone to recognize patterns of globalized migrant labor.

**Both Formal and Informal Learning as Significant sites for Transformational Learning**

When asking our participants to identify those components of the program that triggered and facilitated transformational learning, many responded with the answers the researchers had anticipated: substantive, rigorous research materials; daily critical discourse and reflection; in-depth visits to schools serving students from different socioeconomic backgrounds; and individual research projects, to name a few. Confirming the researchers’ expectations, many participants agreed that the theoretically substantive course materials and readings they were provided prior to departure, as well as their participation in seminars by faculty of Hong Kong University, enabled them to develop a rich theoretical vocabulary to draw upon in order to interpret their transformational learning experiences. Some also discussed the significance of being able to visit schools of all kinds, not just the first-tier schools originally recommended by our host. All of the participants commented on the benefit of synthesizing theory and practice (through use of teaching demonstrations and observations) in the program. Based on this feedback, the multiple components of the program seemed to have worked together effectively to facilitate participant learning.

What was surprising to the researchers was the role of informal learning opportunities embedded in the program that also triggered transformations. Three types of informal learning were mentioned by participants: (1) informal interaction with local students and teachers in various contexts: (2) self-directed learning opportunities pursued by different individuals to serve
their distinctive learning needs; and (3) their participation in critical incidents (Merriam, Caffarella, Baumgartner, 2006). Levine described her transformational learning occurred in unexpected places:

[These] experiences took place in the time spent outside of our daily routine. Spending time in the markets, downtown, discussions with fellow students, sitting and catching up to our readings at cafes, interacting with people visiting and living there… this is where we saw the migrant workers, the tourists, the investors, the community, students, etc.

Joe concurred with Levine, noting that “…the exchanges with teachers and students at the schools we visited contributed the most to my transformative experiences.” Jeff talked about his conversation with teachers from Guangzhou during one dinner. He considered their conversation to be “…informal but so real. Those candid conversations left a far greater impression than all the ‘happy happy propaganda’ combined”. On the other hand, several participants structured their own self-directed learning activities by engaging in focused discussions with faculty, staff, and students to ask for additional guidance and resources relevant to their individual research interests. Many participants made special mention of the generosity and efforts that their local contacts demonstrated to facilitate their learning processes.

Finally, many participants specifically pointed out their attendance at the annual Tiananmen Square Memorial held in Hong Kong’s largest park on June 4th as a particularly powerful transformative learning experience that should be highlighted as an essential part of the program. The Tiananmen Square Memorial is an annual candlelight vigil, organized by a broad range of Hong Kong community-based organizations to memorialize the student protesters who were murdered on June 4th, 1989 in Tiananmen Square in Beijing, China. The ceremony was not a mandatory part of the program, and was originally suggested serendipitously by a Hong Kong University colleague, but the researchers strongly encouraged students to attend. As a result, this moving event, by demonstrating a local community’s concerns for social justice and human rights in Chinese society, became one of the program’s most empowering events as well as a profound learning site for the participants.

Conclusion

A short-term study abroad program in a transnational space with program components that encouraged adult learners to constantly reflect, compare, and contrast their cross-cultural experiences through discourse, research, and writing proved to be a supportive context for transformational learning. While cross-cultural experience alone may or may not help facilitate transformational learning (Hemphill, 1994), a rigorous and structured learning context, as well as in-depth local site visits, personal biographies, self-directed learning activities, informal learning opportunities, and critical reflection of transnational experiences can constitute valuable learning sources for transformational learning.
References


**White Racial Identity Development Model for Adult Educators**

Carole L. Lund, Ed.D.
Alaska Pacific University, USA

**Abstract:** The white racial identity development model has implications for educators wishing to address racism. There are six pathways an adult educator might explore to understand where they are in the white racial identity development process—status quo to ally.

Inadequacy in addressing racism paralyzes many from taking any action. The white racial identity development process leads one to progress from the status quo to become an advocate or ally. Frow and Morris (2000) addressed the identity of scholars: “Questions of identity and community are framed not only by issues of race, class, and gender but by a deeply political concern with place, cultural memory, and the variable terms of these scholars’ access to an ‘international’ space of debate” (p. 319). The international debate would not be possible without reflection on one’s experience within our diverse, racial community. The identification of our background and how that background influences our daily perceptions and actions feeds our racial identity.

The discussion of white racial identity development is particularly important when discussing racism; it takes into account the complexity of who we are. Messages by those around us whether they are teachers, mentors, or colleagues shape our identity; they are the messages by which society represents us or does not represent us. White professors and students rarely mention being white; they have no need to even think about where they are in their identity development process. Identity development models, in general, provide an avenue for whites to explore where they are developmentally in their interactions with peoples of color. White racial identity development provides a summary of the process of moving from racist to advocate or ally for white adult educators. It outlines the intersection of racism and white privilege. As adult educators a deeper understanding of our developmental response to peoples of color; how we are socialized to interact with peoples of color; and how we can seek to change our identity as it relates to peoples of color are pivotal in practice and professional associations.

Pope-Davis and Ottavi (1992) examined the influence of the white racial identity attitudes on racism among faculty members. They selected a sample of 250 white college faculty members from a large Midwestern university; 61% (158) of the returned questionnaires were used for the study. Participants ranged from 29 to 70 years old; 29% were full professors, 36% were associate professors, and 35% were assistant professors. All participants had either doctorates or professional degrees. This study did find “faculty members’ racial identity attitudes to be predictive of racism” (p. 393). The researchers indicated there is a need for faculty to openly discuss their own racial identity and the impact it may have on their racial attitudes. Only when educators have reached cultural or ethnic identity clarification can they provide appropriate and needed leadership for students around such issues as racism. (p. 393)

**White Racial Identity Models**

Identity development models have been around since the 1970s; many were designed specifically for peoples of color. One of the early models of Black identity development was...
Cross’ (1995) Nigrescence theory originally written in 1971 and revised in 1991. The revised stages of the model included: Stage 1) Pre-Encounter; Stage 2) Encounter; Stage 3) Immersion-Emersion; Stage 4) Internalization; and Stage 5) Internalization-Commitment. Cross’ (1995) Nigrescence theory was foundational to five white racial identity models investigated in this paper: Hardiman (1982), Myers, et al. (1991), Helms (1995), Sue (2003), and Howard (2004). During the same period, both Helms (1995) and Hardiman (1982) independently applied the stages to models designed for white racial identity development, but there were also similarities in the Myers, et al. (1991) and Sue (2003) models. The orientations or stages in Howard’s model are not similar to any of the others; however, there are similarities in the descriptions of the orientations.

**Hardiman’s White Identity Development Model**

In 1982, Hardiman developed the generic stages of social identity development from examining the prevailing sex-role identity and racial identity constructs. For sex-role identity she researched Block (1973), Pleck (1975), and Rebecca, Hefner, and Oleshansky (1976); sex-role identity had been researched more than racial identity. For racial identity development models, she reviewed Thomas (1971), Cross (1973), Jackson (1976), Hayes-Bautista (1974), and Kim (1981). These racial identity development models discussed the identity development of racially oppressed groups, but did not discuss the development of racially dominant groups. From these constructs, Hardiman (1982) developed the following White Identity Development Model: no social consciousness; acceptance; resistance; redefinition; and internalization.

**Sue’s White Racial Identity Development**

Sue (2003) began his work in the early 1970s with research on personality categories. Hardiman (1982) mentioned the work of Sue and Sue’s (1973) analysis of Chinese-American personality categories as one of two research projects focused directly on Asian Americans’ identity development. She described Sue and Sue’s identity types as static with Chinese-Americans falling into “one of three personality types: traditionalist, marginal man and Asian American, as a means of coping with minority status in America” (p. 109).

Sue (2003) described a new awareness and interest in “Whiteness,” including conferences and gatherings designed specifically to explore what it means to be white. As a number of writings on white privilege have indicated, it is not a new revelation that there is a need for white Americans to understand their racism. Sue outlined the following phases in his developmental model: naivety; conformity; dissonance; resistance and immersion; introspection; integrative awareness; commitment and antiracist action.

**Myers, et al. Optimal Theory Applied to Identity Development (OTAID)**

A primary aspect of optimal theory and other worldviews is that the spiritual and material aspects of reality are not separate. “Within optimal theory, the unity of humanity is acknowledged culturally and historically as spreading from Africa; thus, the presence of spiritual-material unity is a pan-cultural phenomenon” (Myers et al., 1991, p. 58). As one moves deeper into the more expansive levels of identity development, there is a switch in perception. Our purpose in living is to increase the knowledge of ourselves; eventually, our identity development becomes a primary attribute of being. In knowing who and what we are, “individuals can integrate all apparent aspects of being into a holistic sense of self” (p. 58). Self-knowledge is the exploration of oneself and not necessarily learning new information.

Although this model was developed primarily for peoples of color, the stages are relevant for comparison. The sequence of the phases is predictable; however, the amount of time one spends in each of the phases varies depending upon external pressures. This model is not
described as linear but as a spiral with the beginning of the process similar to the end. The following outlines the six phases of optimal theory applied to identity development (OTAID): absence of conscious awareness, individuation, dissonance, immersion, internalization, integration, and transformation.

Helms’ White Racial Identity Ego Statuses

Helms (1995) originally examined the stages for the identity development process but changed them to statuses; stages were viewed as static instead of fluid. She looked at how the identity developmental process differed between racial groups primarily due to the differences in power. She believed that the “issue for whites is abandonment of entitlement, whereas the general development issue for people of color is surmounting internalized racism” (p. 184). The task of white Americans is to relinquish factoring out racism on others. She divided her white racial identity process into two status areas; the first three statuses are the contact status, disintegration status, and reintegration status. These three statuses involve recognizing and relinquishing white racism. The final three statuses are pseudoindependence status, immersion/emersion status, and autonomy status. The last three statuses require work to reframe one’s identity into a nonracist identity.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Contact</td>
<td>Lack of Social Consciousness</td>
<td>Conformity</td>
<td>Individuation</td>
<td>Fundamentalist White Orientation</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Disintegration</td>
<td>Acceptance</td>
<td>Dissonance</td>
<td>Dissonance &amp; Immersion</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Reintegration &amp; Pseudo-independence</td>
<td>Resistance</td>
<td>Resistance &amp; Immersion</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Immersion/Emersion</td>
<td>Redefinition</td>
<td>Introspection</td>
<td>Internalization</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Autonomy</td>
<td>Internalization</td>
<td>Integrative Awareness</td>
<td>Integration</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>Commitment &amp; Antiracist Action</td>
<td>Transformation</td>
<td>Transformationist White Identity</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Howard’s Authentic Multicultural White Identity

Howard (2004) developed the only identity model dealing directly with educators. He personalized his own developmental journey along with other educators. He felt that “as white educators, we are collectively bound and unavoidably complicit in the arrangements of dominance that have systematically favored our racial group over others” (p. 50). His concern was how this dominance played out in the classroom. Howard elaborated on the ways of being a white educator: fundamentalist white orientation; integrationist white orientation; transformationist white identity.

The summary Howard (2004) provided for his identity process provided the foundation for his model and rationale for exploring identity development:

White educators have a choice to grow beyond our ignorance, denial and guilt. There is a journey, which I envision as a river that carries us through many confusing currents and treacherous rapids, but which eventually can lead to a place of authentic multicultural
White Racial Identity Development for Adult Educators

The previously described white racial identity models: Hardiman (1982), Myers, et al. (1991), Helms (1995), Sue (2003), and Howard (2004) influenced the racial identity development model for educators. There are six pathways an adult educator might explore to become an ally. The process is not linear, but a fluid one where an educator might go through all of the pathways, only some of them, or repeat some any number of times. The white racial identity development model has implications for educators wishing to address racism. “Early studies, for example, have found that the level of white racial identity awareness was predictive of racism: the less aware you are of your white identity, the more likely you are to exhibit increased levels of racism” (Sue, 2003, p. 170). The six pathways an educator might be in or go through include:

Status Quo
The status quo pathway is a belief that being white is right and that whites are superior to others. Normally role models and family influence the values and identity and may reinforce stereotypes. The educator might not be exposed to other perspectives and be oblivious to racism and one’s participation in it. The world is seen through a single lens with isolation from other perspectives.

Questioning Beliefs
The educator might question the beliefs held by his or her own social group and reject thoughts, feelings, and behaviors expected by role models and family. Unresolvable racial moral dilemmas force one to choose between one’s own group loyalty and humanism; there can be anxiety experienced during situations involving racial dilemmas. There may be awareness of whiteness along with feelings of anger, sadness, guilt, helplessness, and confusion. One may also rationalize one’s behavior regarding racial situations. Critical reflection may occur during this pathway, as experiences are re-examined and a new consciousness is developed; there is recognition of one’s racial identity and the ownership one has in the racial group.

Commitment to Racial Group
During this pathway, one might develop a commitment to one’s own racial group and rediscover one’s heritage. An educator might acknowledge and tolerate differences; racism becomes noticeable. This acknowledgement of racism might follow with a paternalistic and condescending attitude toward peoples of color followed by a desire to help other groups. At this time an educator selects what one accepts and rejects what one believes through a critical review of one’s social identity.

It is during these first three pathways that white professors perpetuate racism. The next three pathways are indicative of coming to terms with racism and accepting the fact that white educators can and do perpetuate racism.

Acknowledge Participation in Oppression
The acknowledgement of one’s participation in oppression forces one to redefine what it means to be white. It is important that one realizes and acknowledges that racism is a part of society. The inclusion of other social groups allows one to develop an understanding of those in
one’s racial group in the previous stages of development. It is difficult to confront and do something about being a racist if a person is in denial.

**Deeper Understanding of Self**

A deeper understanding of oneself and inner peace changes the way one views the world; it allows one the capacity to relinquish the privileges garnered by racism. The true nature of oppression is reflected in one’s worldview. Feeling connected and comfortable around culturally diverse groups, students and colleagues, allows one the ability to engage in discussions of race. The nonracist white identity begins. One feels responsible for effecting personal and social change without relying on persons of color to lead the way. There is a shift from trying to change peoples of color to changing oneself and other whites. You believe it is possible to become an ally.

**Seeks Alliances with Persons of Color**

Actively seeking alliances with persons of color and other nonracist white professors characterize this final pathway. Educators need moral fortitude and courage to take action against individual, institutional, and cultural racism. One becomes an ally, advocate, and nonracist.

A deeper understanding of our developmental response to peoples of color; how we are socialized to interact with peoples of color; and how we can seek to change our identity as it relates to peoples of color are pivotal. It is a way to understand our feelings of guilt, shame, embarrassment or inadequacy about racism and about our responses to it. . . . Because racism makes a mockery of our ideals of democracy, justice and equality, it leads us to be cynical and pessimistic about human integrity and about our future. (Kivel, 1996, p. 37)

Enforcements are in place to maintain the status quo regarding racism. If we ignore or challenge the messages, roles, and assumptions in place, there may be consequences for our colleagues or us. “People who conform (consciously or unconsciously) minimally receive the benefit of being left alone for not making waves, such as acceptance in their designated roles, being considered normal or ‘a team player,’ or being allowed to stay in their places” (Harro, 2000, p. 19). It is time consuming and difficult to seek an understanding of or create a new identity. Tatum (2000) was eloquent in explaining why it is important: “Our ongoing examination of who we are in our full humanity, embracing all of our identities, creates the possibility of building alliances that may ultimately free us all” (p. 14).

**References**


An anthology on racism, antisemitism, sexism, heterosexism, ableism, and classism (pp. 15-21). New York: Rutledge.


Twenty-First Century Community Education: Using Web-Based Tools To Build On Horton’s Legacy

Dr. Joyce S. McKnight
Assistant Professor
Academic Area Coordinator/Community and Human Services
Center for Distance Learning
SUNY/Empire State College

Abstract: This qualitative, participatory paper focuses on the use of participatory research to facilitate the teaching/learning experience in a formal online academic environment while enabling positive social action in two very real target communities.

Participatory Research

Participatory action research as used in adult education is the largely self-directed use of accepted social science research techniques by participants in grassroots organizing to implement and evaluate self-defined objectives (Cadena, 1984, Conchelos, 1983; Conti, Counter, Cadena, 1981, Cunningham, 1993; Fals-Borda, 1984; Fernandez and Tandon, 1981, Hall, 1975; Horton and Zacharakis-Jutz, 1987; Jacobsen, Pruitt-Chapin, and Rugeley, 2009; Loh, 1989; Mayoux and R. Chambers, 2005; McKnight, 1995; McTaggert, 1991; Newell and South, 2009; Parjuli and Enslin, 1990; Perez and Tredwell, 2009; Vella, 1994)

The participatory research paradigm as it is used in adult education was first articulated by Bud Hall (1975) and is based on the idea that the control of knowledge is an important form of power. Hall (1975) noted that in many poor countries (referred to at the time as the “third world”) community development research, planning, and implementation were largely the prerogative of members of privileged “first world” consultants. In some ways this is still the case. (Hayward, Simpson, and Ward, 2004; Mayoux and Chambers, 2008: Pain and Francis, 2003). Most of the money and all of the prestige associated with community development were flowing to educated, privileged outsiders rather than to those most in need. Ironically, many of these plans and implementation schemes had (have) little to do with the actual needs or desires of the target populations (Hall, 1975). After reflection on these contradictions Hall (1975) proposed that the typical applied research paradigm be “turned on its ear” and that real people be taught to identify their own problems, pose research questions, identify needed data, use accepted research methods to collect data, consolidate and interpret information, and use the information to develop, plan, initiate, and continuously reflectively evaluate initiatives with minimal help from academic or applied researchers.

The participatory research paradigm has grown and changed in the more than thirty years since it was first proposed by Hall (1975). It has been used and adapted to many circumstances throughout the world, but its defining characteristic is that it still turns the accepted applied research paradigm “on its ear” and transfers power from outside experts to the people themselves. (Cadena, 1984, Conchelos, 1983; Conti, Counter, Cadena, 1981, Cunningham, 1993; Fals-Borda, 1984; Fernandez and Tandon, 1981, Hall, 1975; Horton and Zacharakis-Jutz, 1987; Jacobsen, Pruitt-Chapin, and Rugeley, 2009; Loh, 1989; Mayoux and R. Chambers, 2005; McKnight, 1995; McTaggert, 1991; Newell and South, 2009; Parjuli and Enslin, 1990; Perez and Tredwell, 2009; Vella, 1994)
The Highlander Model

I was first introduced to participatory research and popular education in a summer seminar with Phyllis Cunningham at Penn State in 1985 and have been attempting to apply its principles to my research and practice ever since. Along the way, I encountered the work and writings of Myles Horton of the Highlander Folk School (Adams, 1975; Horton, 1989; Horton and Freire, 1990). Myles Horton was primarily a “do-er” rather than a writer/researcher but rather late in his long, eventful life, he reflected on the educational processes used at Highlander (Horton, 1989; Horton and Freire, 1990). Highlander does not do direct community organizing. It provides a space and resources for motivated community people to make their own social action plans and pursue their own dreams. Highlander provides the space and the participants themselves do the work. (Adams, 1975, Horton, 1989, Horton and Freire, 1990; View from the Hill: Highlander Research and Education Center, 2009) Horton said of the “classic” Highlander approach:

“There were no given answers to the problems we dealt with and we didn’t pretend to give any. They have to be worked out in the process of struggling with the problem. The knowledge needed for the solution has to be created. The Highlander workshop is part of a continuum of identifying a problem and finding other people who are willing to deal with it. The people who come to the workshops have a lot of knowledge that they don’t know they have. Highlander gives them a chance to explore what they know and what some people we bring in as resources can share with them. Then they may go back home and test what they learn in action. If they have learned anything useful they can teach others because it is now part of their knowledge and not something merely handed to them. Highlander has been a stop in the continuum of defining and trying to solve an important problem, a place to think, plan, and share knowledge.” (Horton, 1989, p.148)

Taking the Highlander Model On-line

In 2003 when I became Academic Area Coordinator for Community and Human Services at the Center for Distance Learning of SUNY/Empire State College I resolved to experiment with developing ways of adapting Highlander principles to a web-based learning environment. I asked myself how best to give my students, all of whom are adults and most of who are first generation college students, the opportunity to have a chance to explore what they know about the realities they encounter in their own communities, learn from the resources the college and I can provide, and then go back home and test what they learn in action. I hoped to give them “a stop in the continuum of defining and trying to solve an important problem, a place to think, plan, and share knowledge” (Horton, 1989) only in a virtual environment. In short I dreamed of developing an online version of Highlander.

The result has been a continuously evolving course based in action and reflection that is now in its fifth year, two extensive community projects based on pre-existing grassroots initiatives, and an evolving “online retreat center”. The upper level undergraduate online course has two major parts: a theoretical component in which students apply a variety of community organizing and community education techniques to initiatives of their own choosing and a “virtual-real” component in which students work with community residents and me in one of two real communities: Hadley-Lake Luzerne, NY a rural community in the Adirondacks or the Vale neighborhood in inner city Schenectady, NY. The real communities were chosen intentionally because the majority of my students hail from either struggling rural communities or struggling inner city communities and because I have natural connections to both places. The choice of focal areas gives students an opportunity to link the work being done in the focal communities with their hopes and dreams for their own. An added bonus has been that many times the students’ experiences in their own communities have resonated with the needs of the target
communities in an unpredictable but rewarding networking process. Participants in these "virtual-real" meet on a weekly basis in an online chat room. Until recently the chat room has been within the online course platform and has, therefore, been relatively inaccessible to outsiders because of confidentiality issues. However, one of the current students has made room for a private chat space on his server. This has opened up the opportunity for current students, past students, and community members to join together in real time to conduct participatory research projects together, and the beginnings of an "online retreat". While folks are encouraged to join together on a weekly basis, the realities of adulthood for both the online and community participants sometimes prevent weekly participation. Since some of the online students live as far away as India and are unable to participate synchronously because of time differences, all of the online conversations are logged so that students can read them and add comments if they wish.

The course as originally conceived had strenuous requirements. The students wrote bi-weekly papers on individual projects in their own communities using accepted participatory research techniques as well as being expected to participate in the "virtual-real" community projects on a weekly basis. The cries of students and my own perspective as an adult educator convinced me that students needed to be given some freedom to design their own learning. Students now have three options. They can concentrate on individual community-based projects and only "visit" one of the virtual-real communities a few times during the semester. They can concentrate on one of the "virtual-real communities", attend almost every online meeting, and use the virtual community as a focus for their papers and final project, or they can do a combination of both. Their choices have been interesting. Last semester, for instance, one student who lived in California decided to do her project (an advocacy based initiative focused on returning school nurses to their posts) independently while another student who lived in Spokane Washington became very involved in the Schenectady project. Both asserted that they had learned what they had hoped to learn from participation.

"We Make the Road by Walking"

I have always found the title of the Horton-Freire dialogues (1990) evocative because it succinctly defines my interior experience of over forty years of community organizing and community education. The students, community folks, and I are "making the road by walking" as we work together in the process of "virtual-real" community building.

In rural, Hadley-Lake Luzerne in rural upstate New York a broad community scan showed four areas of need: cooperation among towns and across socio-economic barriers in a rural school district that spans four New York towns and parts of two counties; economic development that provides a high quality of life for everyone while preserving the environment; services for an increasing aging population; and connection with increasingly discouraged teens and young adults. The students have chosen to work with the needs of teens in part because many of them have identified similar issues in their own home communities and frankly, teens are more interesting than sewers. There have been at least two false starts. An initial proposal from a community leader for a brick and mortar teen center failed when the prime site, an abandoned bowling alley, was donated to the Town to be used as a new town hall and much needed senior housing. A second attempt by my students to use the popular MySpace site as a "virtual teen center" was aborted when we discovered that we just could not overcome the many negatives of the MySpace environment itself. As of this writing, we have been able to successfully engage local people, current students, and former students in developing a "Teen
Connection” a teen-center- without- walls in which teens will plan activities and events and an adult support team composed of local people and some of my adult students and former students will assist them. Communication in this project is a mix of online chat and face-to-face meetings. The teen component will have a web-site donated by one of the online students and regular meetings during the activity period at the local school. In addition to meeting the needs of Hadley/Lake Luzerne the project has spun off at least six similar projects in the communities represented by the adult college students.

The Vale project in inner city Schenectady is more complex because the social and cultural reality is more varied. The Vale project is a semester behind the work in Hadley/Lake Luzerne. The Vale project has a similar design in that adult students who wish to focus on the needs of their inner city neighborhoods are linked with community activists. The project is primarily connected to the Vale Community Organization (VCO), an Alinsky-style project that was very successful in the late 1990’s but for various reasons lost its energy in the early 2000’s. Vale became one of the “virtual-real” communities through the efforts of one of the students who is a resident there and is now a driving force in the resurrection of the Vale Community Organization. Currently, work centers on transitioning leadership within the VCO and the development of an effective block club structure.

Participatory research is important in both “virtual real” communities and both communities have the same multi-level communication as the online students and those in the target communities contribute ideas to each others projects and to the focal places. Both communities are in a constant state of kaleidoscopic change so that this research is a work in progress that relies on a process of action and reflection mostly mediated by the online environment.

**Challenges and Rewards**

The students, community members, and I periodically reflect on both the process and concrete accomplishments. The current consensus seems to be that the major challenge in the online component is “making it real” for everyone. Even though the course space provides photographs of the target communities, links to various web-sites, a variety of documents that have been generated, online from community members and occasional face-to-face visits by students to the target communities, it is still hard for the online students to truly visualize the “real” communities. Likewise, it is hard for the community participants to visualize adult students who care about them, but may live many thousands of miles away. As the facilitator, I am the major link among everyone and yet, I strive at all times to use the Highlander model. Through the college and the internet, I provide resources, expert consultants, and a virtual space for decision making as well as some of the logistical arrangements for both projects, but like Myles Horton I make every attempt not to actually do anything except provide tools and “space”. The students do the rest in their own projects and the community people do the rest in the “real” communities.

It seems to be working. Although I sometimes long for the rustic mountaintop comfort of Highlander, the weekly online chats can be equally comforting and have the advantage of enabling people to participate who might never be able to leave their homes to travel. For instance, one young mother made our Wednesday night meetings “cuddle time” for her four year old. She would settle in a big chair at her computer, gather her son close, and chat with the rest of us online. She made extremely valuable contributions to the teen project and was able to bond with her son at the same time. She told us that they would both miss “mommy’s meeting”.

227
Students have made friends among themselves. Students have joined with the community residents beyond the confines of the course. Community people are beginning to know the students and I get to know everyone! Both communities are improving their quality of life and almost everyone involved has experienced a re-birth of hope. It will be interesting to see what evolves as we continue to “make the road by walking” and will be equally interesting to hear your feedback at this conference.

Works Cited
Hall, B. (1975) “Participatory research: an approach for change.” *Convergence*. 8:2


*View from the Hill: Highlander Research and Education Center* (March 7, 2009) #31
In Our Counterstories, Race and Ethnicity Trump Gender

Patricia Medina, Karen Brown
Buffalo State College

Abstract: Data from dialogue journals, audio-taped conversations, and written life narratives of an assistant professor and graduate student of color reveal that racism has permeated their lives. This study is grounded in CRT and also depicts how bias based on race and ethnicity has had distinct affects on them versus bias based on gender.

Purpose
This research study began by accident. Patsy was a newly hired assistant professor of Puerto Rican descent teaching an online graduate course on Workforce Development when she received an e-mail from one of her students, Karen, an African American woman studying for her degree in the Adult Education Masters Program that included the following statement: “It’s the first time in college I’ve had a professor of color.” This initial e-mail sparked continuous verbal and written dialogues between them. At some point they realized that their written and verbal conversations were data and a formal research study ensued with the purpose of exploring the experiences of a professor and a student of color as they navigate the corridors of academe and beyond. Although there are several findings in this study, the one that is elaborated upon in this paper is that race and ethnicity trump gender.

Theoretical Framework
The theoretical framework utilized was Critical Race Theory (Ladson-Billings, 2004; Solorzano & Yasso, 1998; Valdes, McCristal Culp & Harris, 2002). CRT fit appropriately with the narrative analysis style of this research study. According to Ladson-Billings (2004) four tenets encompass CRT. One of them proposes that in order to deal with racial hegemony storytelling is used to challenge the dominant construction of race via the voice of experience of people of color and is a legitimate means of scholarship to critique the accepted social order. Delgado (2000) maintains that storytelling is part of the cultural capital of many people of color and in the CRT literature is referred to as counterstorytelling. Those who are marginalized can counter the accepted knowledge of the dominant culture by “creating a new narrative that is visible to all and, perhaps, alters perceptions in their community and in the larger culture” (Williams, 2004, p. 168).

Methodology
Data consisted of e-mail messages which evolved into dialogue journals, audio taped conversations and written biographical essays. The form of qualitative research utilized during this study was biographical narrative analysis (Ellis & Bochner, 2003; Merriam, 2002). This type of approach allowed for their stories to be “analyzed in terms of the importance and influence of gender and race, family of origin, life events and turning point experiences” (Merriam, 2002, p. 287). Furthermore, this methodology permitted them to utilize their “life experiences to generalize to a larger group or culture” (Ellis & Bochner, 2003, p. 737).

They began data analysis before they had established that CRT was the theoretical framework utilized and while they were still collecting data, which is a common approach in qualitative research (Merriam, 1998). They first developed categories that delineated the topics...
they had discussed which led to them to understand to the extent that their data were revealing that race and ethnicity were overriding factors in their dialogues. Using race and ethnicity as an overarching category, they then developed broad categories (Merriam, 1998), and as they further analyzed the data those categories were narrowed and revealed the different venues where they encountered racism.

**Searching for a Theoretical Framework**

Settling on our theoretical framework was an adventure. They did not begin this endeavor as part of a formal research study, but once it was evident that they were heading in that direction, they needed to envelop their data in theory to keep them from merely being the ruminations of two women of color. Initially they assumed that they would frame the findings by drawing on Black feminist theory (Collins, 1998, 2000; hooks, 1989, Wing, 2003) and on the Latina feminist literature (Anazldua, 2007; Arredondo, Hurtado, Klahn, Najera-Ramirez & Zavella 2003) because they assert that class, race and gender intersect. Moreover, those frameworks allow researchers to situate themselves within their scholarship (Fries-Britt & Turner Kelly, 2005). Yet, as they examined the data, it was clear that they were sublimating their experiences as females and highlighting those that were linked to racial and ethnic discrimination.

They were quite surprised by this finding because they have no qualms with the proposition that race, class and gender intersect. Once it was clear that in the counterstories that were generated revealed that their most painful experiences with bigotry illustrated that race and ethnicity were at the forefront rather than gender, Karen and Patsy decided to explore this quandary more fully. Hence, they decided to deliberately respond to the following question: When have you experienced discrimination as a female?

They reflected and wrote narratives and participated in tape-recorded dialogues responding directly to that question. They compared those narratives and dialogues side-by-side with the previous ones that focused on race and ethnicity. Below they differentiate between the two sets of counterstories.

**Counterstories: Race and Ethnicity**

That CRT was the appropriate theoretical framework was clearly confirmed when they began to write their autobiographies. They wrote their first recollections of experiencing racism. Karen’s story was particularly painful and demonstrated the callousness of bigotry.

The first time that I have memories of discrimination was when I was about 8 or 9 years old. It is odd, because I remember it so vividly. I was in Brownies and the troop that I was in was made up of all little Black girls from my little dirt road community. I am not sure how it transpired, but our troop had a joint meeting with an all White troop at their church to make crafts for some kind of Christmas bazaar they were having. We were all so excited and had been admonished to be on our very best behavior, which naturally we were. When we arrived we learned that we were going to paint ceramic Santas and Mrs. Clauses. We painted with all the energy and passion of Picasso. Our leaders helped us paint and made sure our samples were perfect. I remember thinking that they were simply beautiful and wonderfully showcased our likeness. My troop painted our figures’ hair black, their skin brown, and their eyes brown. If we made a mistake our leader would repaint them, touch them up. We were so thrilled with our work! We were in one part of the room, and the White girls were on the other side, so we never really saw what they were doing and they never really saw what we were doing. When we completed all of ours, we laid them out to dry on a table with all the White girls’ creations. Well, ours were
black, and theirs were all white. The White leader looked at ours and started laughing and said to the other White troop leaders, “These will never do; nobody would buy anything that looks like a darkie.” She and the other leaders laughed and laughed, then picked all of our figurines, and threw them in the trash. Our leader said nothing to them, but told us to get our coats, and get ready to go home. We cried all the way home and asked what we had done wrong? Her only response was, “It is nothing for you to worry about it. That is just how some people are.”

Patsy’s recollection about her initial encounter with prejudice was not as compelling as Karen’s, but she has come to realize that it was the first time that she became aware that institutionalized racism existed and that she had been othered.

I was about 7 years old and my brother was very sick—had a high fever and was vomiting. We walked the few blocks to Flower Fifth Avenue Hospital. Although the hospital was located in the midst of Spanish Harlem, there were never any Spanish speaking personnel at the intake desks. My brother and I had become accustomed to translating for my mother who only spoke and read Spanish at that time. My brother, who was older than me by 11 months, generally translated the written forms, but he was ill, so on this day that task was left for me. We quickly filled out the first few lines of the form where I showed my mother where she should write her and my brother’s names, our address, age of patient and other such information until I encountered a checklist that I did not understand. Next to each little checklist box were the following four categories: Black, White, Puerto Rican and other. I asked my mother, in Spanish, “Mommy, what should I put here? She told me that although we were white, we should check the box next to Puerto Rican. I asked why and she told me, “Because we are Puerto Rican.” I continued to ask her questions, but she told me that we needed to fill out the form and once that was done, she tended to my big brother, disregarding my confusion. Until that day, I had believed I was a little White girl.

The written narratives related experiences with racism chronologically and could fill a book. Karen recalled that in high school she was know as the “Black cheerleader” and remembers a teacher saying that there “would be an uproar” if there wasn’t at least one African American girl on the squad. Karen concluded, “I never knew if I made the squad on my ability or if I was just a plain token.”

Patsy revealed that when her family moved from the projects in East Harlem to another in the Bronx where the inhabitants were primarily Caucasian, they were met by a White woman at the elevator who wanted to spray their furniture with the roach spray she was holding. More recently, after conducting a training workshop for adult literacy providers in Colorado, she was sent a letter from one of the participants who was not satisfied with the training and wrote that although her boss should be “commended for allowing a minority to conduct national training, he should make sure that the person is capable of performing the task.”

**Counterstories: Gender**

When they decided to delve into the data and deliberately investigate if gender was at all central in the counterstories, Patsy questioned Karen about the following passage which they had coded as an example of race discrimination. She had described a situation that occurred when she worked in the corporate world in a male-dominated technical support department.

I wrote an article for the department bulletin. When I showed it to my boss, he liked it very much although I felt that he seemed surprised that I had written it. When it appeared...
in the newsletter, it had his name as the sole byline. I was furious. When I asked why, he responded that the information would be better received from someone who was just like him.

Patsy asked Karen if this was an example of gender bias. She responded,

I just assumed when he said, “someone just like me,” he meant someone who was White. It never occurred to me that it was because he was a man. My lens has always been Afrocentric. I always feel like I am being judged due to my race!

They both concluded that both variables played a role. Yet, what was particularly interesting in documenting their experience as females was that Patsy could related numerous occasions when she felt discriminated as a female—especially when she was a child.

In Puerto Rican households, when a female is born it is common for the parents to say that they now have a “chancleta.” That’s a slang word for slipper, an item that makes one feel good—I happen to love my furry slippers—but is not really a necessity. Every time a female was born in my family the word chancleta was bandied about. It always felt like, “Whoa is me. Now I have a burden on my hands.” On the other hand, when boys were born the main topic of conversation was the size of their genitals.

Patsy’s narratives were full of instances when her mother was trying to mold her into what she perceived was the role of a woman. The following is an illustration:

I could rarely go outside to play without some conditions being placed on me. For example, I often had to iron my brother’s clothing before I could go out and play. So, there I would be, gloomily ironing while my brother was enjoying himself in the playground. I eventually rebelled and would not iron and just found a way to entertain myself in the apartment.

Yet, Karen insisted that she could not think of occasions when she was discriminated as a child because she was brought up in a female-dominated household and community. She said, “I observed strong Black women in my house and neighborhood all the time. Patsy concurred that she was raised in a household where it was clear that a man was the head of the household and perhaps her gender-biased issues were more apparent. Nonetheless, she could not believe that Karen had not experienced any bias due to her gender. A key phone conversation took place when Patsy called Karen and challenged her:

Karen, you could not attend last year’s AERC to present a paper with me after we had already made plans to attend, because your husband decided to attend a training workshop and childcare defaulted back to you! Wasn’t that an example of gender bias?

Karen pondered the question and said she would return Patsy’s call. When she did, she said, “Well, when you put it that way…” They both agree that we have to continue to explore this issue.

Discussion

Patsy and Karen acknowledge that their decision to focus almost exclusively on race and not gender does not correspond with modern Black and Latina critical feminist ideologies (Collins, 1998, 2000; hooks, 1989; Latina Feminist Group, 2001; Wing, 2003). Yet they realize that a single-axis framework that does not take the intersectional relationship between race and gender cannot accurately address the manner in which woman of color are subordinated (Williams Crenshaw, 2003). However, this journey that they are undertaking is just that—a journey—and the location where they are presently positioned compels them to explore issues of race and ethnicity rather than gender. Karen and Patsy embrace their “otherness” in relation to the White-
dominated culture (Alfred, 2001) and for them that is what bears examining at this time. They acknowledge, however, that as they continue with this endeavor issues of gender may play more prominent roles in our counterstories. Moreover, they cannot forget the nature of the triple oppression of race, gender and class in which they exist in this society (Segura, 1990). Patsy concludes:

I’ve begun thinking why I have this need to explore this construct as opposed to that of being female. I guess that being Puerto Rican is what makes me oppositional to being White—not being a female. And the oppression, or the bigotry that has been overtly directed at me has had to do with my ethnicity—not my gender. Sure, I have suffered personal oppression because I was a female—but that has taken place within familial or other personal relationships. For example, during my doctoral studies, I was mentored quite well by men.

As they stand now, their counterstories, especially the written narratives where their most painful memories emerged, demonstrate the menacing remnants of racism. They have been marginalized for much of their lives, yet in terms of their present economic status in society, they are quite mainstream. Karen says, “We are two women of color who live in neighborhoods surrounded by White people, and here we are, obsessed with race.” That is the point. Their experiences are not mainstream and counter the race-neutral perspective that posits that there is no distinct privilege to being White (Merriweather Hunn, Williams, 2004). Moreover, as Johnson-Bailey (2001) established in her study of Black reentry women, gender was not advanced “as a restraint to their lives or educational endeavors (p. 109), but was a factor in how those women approached their lives. This is also the case for Karen and Patsy.

References


Measuring the Satisfaction of Students at the Completion of an Adult Learning and Development Graduate Program

Jonathan E. Messemer, Catherine A. Hansman, and Elice E. Rogers
Cleveland State University, USA

The purpose of this empirical paper is to discuss the level in which the students nearing graduation from an adult learning and development graduate program were satisfied with their learning experience. Historically, colleges and universities have been regulated by accreditation agencies, such as the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools, for the purpose of assuring that the adult learners will receive the level of education necessary to perform effectively in professional practice. Colleges of education are further regulated by agencies, such as NCATE. However, state departments of education are now requiring state institutions of higher learning to justify the need for academic programs and the level of training that is being administered in the classroom (Brand, 1997). Colleges and universities are being micromanaged from the state-level similar to the market driven model described by Kotler and Fox (1995). Faculty are now finding they are responsible for assuring the success of their educational program through numerous factors such as program enrollment, recruitment, student retention, student learning gains, and student satisfaction (Brand, 2000). Donaldson and Graham (1999) developed a model suggesting that college outcomes are dependent upon the five elements of (1) prior experience, (2) orienting frameworks (e.g., motivation, self-confidence, and values), (3) the adult’s cognition (e.g., declarative, procedural, and self-regulation of knowledge structures and processes), (4) the “connecting classroom” (e.g., avenue for social engagement and negotiating meaning for learning), and (5) the life-world environment (e.g., family, work, and community). Edwards and Usher (1997) examined the understanding of knowledge and education, the place of the university, and the responsibilities for adult educators with respect to economic, social, and cultural dimensions. A study of graduate students found that the academic programs’ level of program integration, responsiveness to change, and leadership explained 26% of the predicted value in the change of student enrollment (Milton, Watkins, Spears-Studdard, & Burch, 2003). The literature does illustrate studies that address many contextual factors between the adult learner and higher education. However, the studies do not address the degree to which the academic program is meeting the needs of the adult learners and the demands from governing accreditation agencies, state departments of education, and the administrators of higher education. The purpose of this study was to understand the level to which our graduate students were satisfied with their learning experience while pursuing a master’s degree in adult learning and development.

Methods

The researchers developed the Adult Learning and Development Student Satisfaction Scale (ALDSS Scale) to measure the level of student satisfaction. The ALDSS is a 36-item scale designed to measure the level of student satisfaction among the following six factors: (1) curriculum, (2) learning format, (3) course materials, (4) program access, (5) faculty and instruction, and (6) faculty advising. The ALDSS scale asked the students to rate on a scale of 1 (strongly disagree) to 6 (strongly agree) how well they agreed with each of the items on the survey. The students were also asked to rate on a scale of 0 (no need) to 10 (very strong need) the seven subject areas that they would like to see additional elective courses added to the master’s degree program. The seven subject areas include: (1) adult learning theory, (2) adult literacy, (3) correctional education, (4) educational technology, (5) higher education
administration, (6) human resource management, and (7) multiculturalism. The ALDSS scale asked students to list the various modes of learning (e.g., traditional, weekend, and/or distance) that they participated in for their master’s degree. Finally, the ALDSS scale asked the students to describe themselves with respect to numerous personal characteristics, such as age, race/ethnicity, gender, marital status, number of dependent children, professional title, years of professional experience, and annual income. The primary focus of this study sought to address the following research questions:

1. What extent are the graduate students satisfied with their learning experience as it pertains to the six-factor groups?
2. What are the areas of study that the graduate students would like to see additional elective courses added to the curriculum?
3. How do the personal characteristics of the graduate students influence the rating of the six-factor groups?
4. How do the personal characteristics of the graduate students influence the rating of the need for additional elective courses?

The sample for this study was generated from those students in the adult learning and development graduate program who where nearing graduation. The ALDSS scale was administered to 76 graduate students enrolled in the internship course. The internship course is one of the final two courses that the students enroll in for their master’s degree. This group of students was chosen because they would have been in the program long enough to be able to effectively rate each of the items on the ALDSS scale. The personal characteristics for the sample are shown in Table 1. The sample consists of graduate students who had a mean age of 38.7 years and 11.5 years of professional development. The overwhelming majority of this sample (88.2%) where female graduate students. The sample consists of an even-split between the White graduate students and the graduate Students-of-Color. The majority of the sample was non-married (56.6%) and/or had no dependent children (55.3%). The majority of the graduate students (55.3%) in this sample had an annual salary range between $20,000 and $49,999. However, it is important to note that a large number of our graduate students (25%) earned less than $20,000 annually, with 10% earning less than $10,000 annually.

Table 1. Sample Characteristics (N=76).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age:</th>
<th>X=38.7 years</th>
<th>Min.=23 years</th>
<th>Max.=59 years</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Professional Experience:</td>
<td>X=11.5 years</td>
<td>Min.=0 years</td>
<td>Max.=36 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender:</td>
<td>n %</td>
<td>n %</td>
<td>n %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>9 11.8</td>
<td>No Children</td>
<td>42 55.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>67 88.2</td>
<td>1-Child</td>
<td>14 18.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Race:</td>
<td>n %</td>
<td>2-Children</td>
<td>17 22.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White</td>
<td>38 50.0</td>
<td>3-Children</td>
<td>2 2.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>African-American</td>
<td>37 48.7</td>
<td>4-Children</td>
<td>1 1.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hispanic/Latino</td>
<td>1 1.3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marital Status:</td>
<td>n %</td>
<td>$0-$19,999</td>
<td>19 25.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Single</td>
<td>35 46.1</td>
<td>$20,000-$49,999</td>
<td>42 55.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Married</td>
<td>33 43.4</td>
<td>$50,000 or more</td>
<td>15 19.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Divorced</td>
<td>7 9.2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Widowed</td>
<td>1 1.3</td>
<td>ALD Program Format:</td>
<td>n %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Traditional (evening</td>
<td>46 60.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>weekday)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Accelerated (weekend)</td>
<td>30 39.5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The findings of this study suggest that each of the six-factor groups measured a strong rate of reliability, with alpha values ranging between .71 and .91. The rank-order among the six-factor groups with respect to the rates of reliability, include: learning format ($\alpha=.91$), curriculum ($\alpha=.85$), course materials ($\alpha=.85$), program access ($\alpha=.84$), faculty and instruction ($\alpha=.79$), and faculty advising ($\alpha=.77$). The data for this study was stored in an SPSS 14.0 dataset. In analyzing the results for this study, the authors used a t-test for determining the level of statistical significance between the mean scores.

**Results**

First, the findings suggest that each of the six-factor groups had positive mean values that ranged between 4.87 and 5.39 (see Table 2). All of the factor groups had mean values of 5.01 or greater, except for the learning format factor which had a mean value of 4.87. The two highest rated factors represented the faculty and instruction factor ($X=5.39$) and the faculty advising factor ($X=5.29$). The two highest rated items among the curriculum factor suggested that the core ALD courses (e.g., required courses) increased the graduate students’ knowledge of the adult learning and development theories ($X=5.51$) and the internship course increased the graduate students’ skills for professional development ($X=5.24$). The lowest rated item among the curriculum factor suggested that the elective courses somewhat represented the graduate students’ interest in professional practice. The two highest rated items among the learning format factor suggested that the course papers ($X=4.99$) and the in-class group discussions ($X=4.95$) were applicable to the graduate students’ professional practice. The lowest rated item among the learning format factor suggested that the course lectures were somewhat applicable to the graduate students’ professional practice. The highest rated item among the course materials factor suggested that the course syllabi were clear with respect to the course objectives ($X=5.38$). Additional highly rated course material items suggested that the additional course readings ($X=5.17$) and the textbooks ($X=5.03$) increased the graduate students’ knowledge of adult learning and development theory. In contrast, the graduate students suggested that the textbooks ($X=4.79$), the additional course readings ($X=4.82$), and the course handouts ($X=4.91$) were somewhat applicable to their professional practice. The highest rated item among the program access factor suggest that the web-based ALD courses allowed the graduate students to participate in coursework that did not conflict with their work schedule ($X=5.51$). However, five of the six items among the program access factor had mean scores greater than 5.10, therefore suggesting that the in-class and/or web-based courses offered to the graduate students did not conflict with their work and family needs. However, the lowest rated program access item suggest that the ALD elective courses could have been offered more frequently in order to meet their academic needs ($X=4.64$). The highest rated item among the faculty and instruction factor suggested that the ALD faculty had a strong understanding of the course topics ($X=5.68$). However, four additional faculty and instruction items pertaining to faculty clearly stating the course requirements, offering multiple modes of learning, providing a quality critique of student course work, and stimulating student interest in the field of adult learning and development had mean scores greater than 5.30. The lowest rated faculty and instruction item suggested that the graduate students would have liked to have seen the ALD faculty participate a little more frequently in the web-based discussions for on-line courses ($X=4.71$). The two highest rated items among the faculty advising factor suggests that faculty effectively explained the ALD exit strategy requirement ($X=5.57$) and the overall requirements for the ALD master’s degree program ($X=5.53$). Three additional faculty advising items pertaining to the faculty responding to advisee telephone/email messages, the scheduling of appointments, and effectively explaining the
requirements for the ALD internship course requirement, had mean scores that ranged between 5.09 and 5.38. The lowest faculty advising mean score suggested that the graduate students would have liked for their advisor to have recommended more frequently specific elective courses that would have prepared the student for professional practice ($X=4.83$).

**Table 2: Ranked Mean Scores for the Six Factor Groups (6-point scale)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Factors</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>Variance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>V. Faculty and Instruction</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>5.39</td>
<td>.66</td>
<td>.43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VI. Faculty Advising</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>5.29</td>
<td>.69</td>
<td>.48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IV. Program Access</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>5.19</td>
<td>.92</td>
<td>.85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I. Curriculum</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>5.16</td>
<td>.87</td>
<td>.76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>III. Course Materials</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>5.01</td>
<td>.75</td>
<td>.57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>II. Learning Format</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>4.87</td>
<td>.89</td>
<td>.80</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: All mean scores greater than 3.50 represent a positive response.

Secondly, the findings suggest that the graduate students would like to see additional courses developed in each of the subject areas, except for the subject area of adult learning theory (see Table 3). The graduate students rated the subject area of adult learning theory with a mean score of 4.86, which is below the 5.00 threshold necessary for warranting a positive rating. The two highest rated subject areas by which the graduate students would like to see more elective courses developed for the master’s degree program was in the areas of higher education administration and multiculturalism. However, the findings suggest that the graduate students would also like to see additional elective courses developed in the areas of educational technology, human resource development, adult literacy, and correctional education.

**Table 3: Ranked Mean Scores for the Seven Subject Areas that the Students Recommend Developing Additional ALD Graduate Courses (10-point scale)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Factors</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>Variance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Higher Education Administration</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>7.75</td>
<td>2.82</td>
<td>7.92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Multiculturalism</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>7.24</td>
<td>2.76</td>
<td>7.62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Educational Technology</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>6.92</td>
<td>3.23</td>
<td>10.45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Human Resource Development</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>6.59</td>
<td>3.04</td>
<td>9.23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adult Literacy</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>6.55</td>
<td>3.12</td>
<td>9.74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Correctional Education</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>6.47</td>
<td>2.96</td>
<td>8.79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adult Learning Theory</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>4.86</td>
<td>3.76</td>
<td>14.13</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: All mean scores greater than 5.00 represents a positive response.

Thirdly, there were a number of graduate student characteristics that influenced the ratings among the six-factor groups. The findings suggest that the male students ($X=5.65$) had statistically significant higher ($p < .01$) curriculum mean scores than did the female students ($X=5.10$). The study suggest that the Students-of-Color ($X=5.57$) had statistically significant higher ($p < .05$) faculty instruction mean scores than did the White Students ($X=5.15$). The findings suggest that the students participating in the accelerated weekend program had statistically significant higher ($p < .05$) mean scores for both the learning format ($X=5.23$) and faculty and instruction ($X=5.66$) factor groups than did the students participating in the traditional master’s program, with mean scores of 4.44 and 5.17 respectively. There was no significant difference between the mean scores for the six-factor groups and the students’ marital status.

Fourthly, as stated earlier, the graduate students strongly desired more elective courses added to the ALD master’s degree program in the areas of higher education administration and multiculturalism. However, there was no significant difference in the mean scores for higher
education administration courses with respect to the student characteristics. In contrast, Students-of-Color ($X=8.50$) had a statistically significant ($p < .01$) higher mean scores regarding the need for additional multicultural courses than the mean scores for the White Students ($X=6.00$). In addition, Students-of-Color ($X=7.50$) had statistically significant higher ($p<.01$) mean scores regarding the need for correctional education courses than the mean scores for the White Students ($X=5.45$). In contrast, the White Students ($X=7.68$) had statistically significant higher ($p<.05$) mean scores regarding the need for additional educational technology courses than for the Students-of-Color ($X=6.16$). The male students ($X=8.56$) had statistically significant higher ($p<.05$) mean scores than the female student mean scores ($X=7.06$) suggesting the need for more courses in the area of multiculturalism. Likewise, the male students ($X=9.22$) had statistically significant higher ($p<.01$) mean scores than the female student mean scores ($X=6.61$) suggesting the need for additional coursework in the area of educational technology. The non-married students ($X=7.12$) had statistically significant higher mean scores ($p < .05$) for courses on correctional education, than the married students ($X=5.64$). Finally, the information identifying the typology of graduate students with respect to the six-factor groups will be discussed in the final paper. There were no statistically significant differences between the graduate students participating in the traditional and accelerated weekend format for learning and the areas of study by which students would like to see additional courses developed for the ALD program.

**Discussion**

The findings from this study provided the faculty a clear understanding that the graduate students completing the ALD master’s degree program was by and large satisfied with their overall academic experience. Each of the six factor groups were rated very positively by the graduate students. The findings did suggest that some graduate students believed that a slight adjustment to the learning format might need to be looked at by the faculty, as this was the lowest rated factor. However, the learning format mean scores were much higher for the graduate students participating in the accelerated weekend program than in the traditional middle of the week evening program. In order to better understand this statistic, the faculty would need to more thoroughly investigate whether the process for learning was different between the two programs sites or if the result was due to a difference in the graduate student population. The findings from this study suggested that that the graduate Students-of-Color were more satisfied with the faculty and instruction factor, which is good since the equal number of the ALD students were Persons-of-Color. This result suggest that the faculty in the ALD program are making a strong effort to meet the needs of the adult learning community when it comes to providing instructional plans with respect to race.

The findings did suggest that the graduate students would like to see more elective courses developed for the ALD program that related to the areas of higher education administration and multiculturalism. This result could suggest that many of the graduate students in the ALD program had aspirations for working professionally in higher education. With regard to the multiculturalism result, this finding could be in part due to the nature of the graduate student population in the ALD program, which consisted of 50% Persons-of-Color. However, it was interesting to find that the male graduate students in this sample saw a greater need for more multicultural courses than the female graduate students who represented more than 88% of the sample. In order to better understand this finding between the need for more multicultural coursework and graduate student gender, this would require a more extensive investigation with the graduate students in this study. The study also found that graduate Students-of-Color were more likely to see the need for courses to be developed in the area of correctional education than
the White graduate students. The answer to this result could be that the graduate Students-of-Color could have a greater likelihood of knowing a friend or family member who has or is currently in prison, because of the vast racial disparity among inmates in prison (Messemer, 2006). When more than 65% of inmates in U.S. prisons are Persons-of-Color (U.S. Department of Justice, 2005), then for the graduate Students-of-Color, they may view the need for correctional education courses in order to develop their knowledge and skills for the purpose of teaching inmates in prison and/or to develop programs for the purpose of reducing the rate of recidivism among adult learners in prison. In addition, this study found that the non-married graduate students saw more of a need for correctional education courses to be added to the ALD program which could suggests that married graduate students may be more worried about the safety of working in a prison and what this could mean for their family.

Finally, the findings from this study provide adult education faculty an additional framework by which to evaluate their own graduate programs. This study goes beyond the typical measurements of enrollment numbers, retention, and graduation rates, in which faculty members often have little control. This study provides adult education faculty six factor groups to measure that pertain to their own practice of course delivery and advising, which are factors that faculty often have a direct-line of control. The ALDSS Scale will serve as an additional evaluation tool for faculty to use for accountability studies required by higher education administration, state departments of education, and accreditation agencies. The goal is to provide faculty another avenue for protecting themselves and their programs during this era of market-driven adult and higher education.

References
Brand, M. (1997). Some major trends in higher education. *An address delivered by the President of Indiana University to the Economic Club of Indianapolis, Indiana on February 7.*
Learning by Dispossession: Gender, Imperialism and Adult Education

Shahrzad Mojab
Ontario Institute for Studies in Education (OISE/UT)

Abstract: This is a Marxist-feminist theoretical study of ‘democracy training’ projects delivered among Iraqi women as part of ‘post-war reconstruction’ efforts of the US. This frame of analysis can assist us in dialectically understanding the ideological practice of these training projects and conceptualizing consciousness/praxis in order to explain adult education, gender, and imperialism.

An Encounter

In 1997 I first attended the meeting of the Women in Conflict Zones Network, a consortium of researchers, activists, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), representatives of UN organizations, humanitarian aid agencies, and human rights groups (for an overview of the objective and history of the Network check the following website: http://www.yorku.ca/wicz/). Each one of us, located in a different region of the world, was trying to make sense of women’s experiences of war, militarization and violence. In this meeting, half-way through going around introducing ourselves, a woman representing an NGO started her remarks by calmly saying, “…before continuing further, I need to pause for a moment and ask the woman who identified herself as an adult educator to explain to me what does it mean to be an adult educator and what do they do?” I was both perplexed and intrigued by the question. I tried my best to define our ‘elusive’ field. She interrupted me and continued, this time in a frustrated voice, “in my organization, we have been inundated with flashy consultancy products which all claim to use adult education principles and philosophy to provide training programs on conflict resolution, peace education, team building, participatory decision-making, creating consensus in war-torn communities, participatory human rights fact-finding missions, community need assessment, planning, evaluation, and much more.” In brief, she was wondering what adult education had to do with “managing conflict in war zones,” as she put it. This encounter put me path for discovery; to search for new places and spaces where adult education acts in unison with imperialism to create the ideological conditions for the perpetuation of the social relations of submission.

The US wars in Iraq and Afghanistan provided an opportunity to study relations between imperialism and adult education in a contemporary and concrete context. The 2003 American project of ‘regime change’ in Iraq was violent and destructive, and led to more violence and destruction. The war has continued to this day, and it is difficult to talk about ‘post-war reconstruction.’ The US has in fact launched a number of projects ranging from (re-)training security and armed forces to ‘democracy training’ of elite women activists. In this paper, I will analyze ‘democracy’ training programs in Iraq as the ideological practice of the ‘post-war reconstruction’ of an imperialist power. I will argue that a careful analysis of the pedagogy, practice, and politics of ‘democracy’ training programs could direct us to indistinct places where adult education ideas and practices converge with imperialist relations of domination. My goal is to make visible the process of this convergence and, thus, to contribute to the theorization of the relationship between ideological practices of adult education and capitalist social relations in the age of imperialism. The Marxist dialectical-historical-materialist approach, as is articulated in the work of educators such as Allman (1999; 2001; 2007), Au (2007), Colley (2000), Rikowski (2001; 2002), and Youngman (1986) inform my analysis. The Marxist-feminist analysis of
genderized and racialized imperialist social relations constitutes the conceptual core of this paper. This perspective is being articulated by a critical adult educator collective based in my department at the Ontario Institute for Studies of Adult Education at the University of Toronto (this collective is working on a forthcoming book to be co-edited by myself and Sara Carpenter and it is tentatively entitled *Contesting Knowledges: Reading Adult Education through Marxist-Feminism*).

**Tracing Adult Education, Mapping Imperialist Social Relations**

My research in the Women in Conflict Zones Network was focused on the impact of war, militarization and occupation on Kurdish women’s learning, resistance and survival. The Kurds constitute one of the world’s largest national populations without a state of their own. Their territory, called Kurdistan, has been divided between Iran, Iraq, Turkey and Syria. The Kurds captured the attention of international media in both the US-led 1991 Gulf War and in the 2003 US occupation of Iraq. I have followed, for three decades, the formation of various masculine nationalist political alliances in this region and the role of Western powers, led by the United States, in constructing, destructing, and reconstructing these alliances. This complex process of shaping and re-shaping the social and political order often has had adverse impact on the lives of women (my website, www.utoronto.ca/wwdl records and archives most of my published work and research activities in this area).

Gender relations before the 1991 and 2003 US wars on Iraq were patriarchal, although the traditional exercise of male power was regulated through the dictatorial “law and order” imposed by the secular Ba’thist state. The two wars, especially the 2003 war, disrupted this order and unleashed unprecedented male violence under the banner of religion, tribalism, nationalism and in the context of full lawlessness (for an excellent overview of the source of the funding of women’s NGOs in Iraq see El-Kassem, 2007; Al-Ali and Pratt (2009), Mojab (forthcoming), and Zangana (2007). While the US did not invade Iraq in order to promote democracy, the Bush Administration claimed democracy as a goal. The target of democracy training was the elite, well-educated, adult Iraqi women, who were trained in order to educate other Iraqi women and men to act as a social base of support for a pro-American polity. Whereas this war has been critiqued from a variety of political positions, educators have not examined the pedagogical project of ‘democracy training’.

While the brutality of war has made it difficult to conduct academic research in the ‘field’, the challenge in this study is primarily theoretical. We already have a body of theory, rooted largely in Marxism and feminism, which confers on education a powerful role in (re-) producing capitalist relations. Concepts such as ‘dominant ideology’ and ‘hidden curriculum’ point to the conformism of educational practice in capitalist democracies. However, while capitalism changes incessantly, there has been less interest in distinguishing between early stages of (mercantile) capitalism and its contemporary stage of (post-)industrial monopoly capitalism conceptualized, in this paper, as ‘imperialism.’ This study conceptualizes contemporary US capitalism as ‘imperialism’ to be distinguished from the popular meanings of the term, i.e. globalization, expansionism and conquest. Comprehending the ideological practice of adult education in the context of ‘post-war reconstruction’ requires the understanding of the dialectics of the internal relations of imperialism and patriarchy.

A critical understanding of the ‘democracy training’ project calls for other theoretical and methodological tools, such as dialectical understandings of ‘appearance’ and ‘essence’. For instance, can the stated ‘liberatory’ appearance of ‘democracy training’ be the expression of an
oppressive essence? Why do Iraqi and Kurdish nationalists, targets of US political engineering, see no distinction between this essence and phenomenon in ‘democracy training’? Are there deeper or more complex relations that cannot be readily comprehended? In her articulation of Marx’s dialectical conceptualization, Paula Allman (2007) states:

... to discover and then expose the truth of capitalism, Marx employed a specific type of critical thinking—actually, a new paradigm of critical thought. Marx’s dialectical conceptualization is not a method, in the strict sense of the word. In other words, it is not an abstract, formal, step-by-step approach but rather a manner of intellectually grasping the truth, or the internal structure/essence of any real phenomenon, which is not transparently obvious or observable (p. 4).

Another theoretical issue is the dialectics of consciousness and practice. Allman argues that it is the internal relations of knowledge/knowing and being/becoming, which constitute our consciousness/praxis. She differentiates between critical/revolutionary praxis and uncritical/reproductive praxis. This is indeed a central theoretical question for all educators. I hope that this study will contribute to raising this old philosophical question again by focusing on the dialectics of consciousness/praxis through the unpacking of one of the lessons in the ‘democracy training’ teaching material.


democracy training in practice

I visited Iraqi Kurdistan in August 2005. I began my research by visiting women’s NGOs in order to understand and analyze their inner political, financial, and cultural dynamics and to make sense of their activism under conditions of war, militarization and occupation. At the time of my visit, almost all women’s NGOs were preoccupied with the discussion on the draft of the Iraqi Constitution. They complained about ‘being workshopped out’ of the constitution. The concept of ‘workshop’ was used as a borrowed English word, and everybody seemed to understand its tiring and frustrating connotation. While visiting women’s NGOs, I was astonished at the presence of vast US-based funding agencies, all preoccupied with the ‘post-war reconstruction’ of Iraq. I collected documentation on the funded projects as well as the curriculum of diverse training programs for women. My intention was to review the content of their training curriculum in order to probe into the ideological underpinnings of the “democracy training” project. One of the documents, Foundations of Democracy: Teacher’s Guide, was intended as a reference for democracy and civic education training in Northern Iraq. This curriculum is produced by the Center for Civic Education based in the US and funded by a grant from The Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP) as well as a grant from the Danforth Foundation. The OJJDP works from the premise that ‘Juveniles in crisis—from serious, violent, and chronic offenders to victims of abuse and neglect—pose a challenge to the nation’ and that they have to be policed and controlled (http://ojjdp.ncjrs.org/about/about.html). This pathologising logic of the individual as the source of social problems has been problematized in the work of Colley (2000), Eccelstone (2004) and Pupavac (2001). This logic serves to reproduce social inequalities by separating the individual from the objective social reality of inequality.

The curriculum is organized around four concepts of authority, privacy, responsibility, and justice. It instructs teachers to promote compromise and consensus. The “Bible, Koran, or Torah” are presented as examples of sources for moral authority (Foundation of Democracy,
These religious texts have, however, been critiqued for their promotion of patriarchal models of authority and for offering a blueprint for the subordination of women. The gendered, orientalist, and colonialist ideological underpinning of the training manual, *Foundations of Democracy*, is best manifested in one of the lessons it offers -- the story of “Bill Russell and Red Cloud.” In this story, Bill Russell and Amy Clark, two ‘pioneers’, are sent to ‘negotiate’ with Red Cloud and Morning Sun, two indigenous persons from the Cheyenne tribe. Following the story, there is a set of questions about where each of the four characters derived his/her authority. It is interesting to note that the only person who derived authority from consent is Bill Russell, representing the white-male-rational thinker. In other words, the settler or occupier is presented as the authority. The other pioneers ‘consented’ to send him to negotiate. His female counterpart derived her authority directly from Russell who chose her as an assistant. In other words, she derived her authority from the male authority with power over her. Red Cloud, derived his authority from ‘custom’ and Morning Sun derived her authority from ‘morality’ because ‘she possessed great wisdom’ and was the spiritual leader of the tribe. This portrayal of legitimate female authority is consistent with the patriarchal, feudal, religious nationalism that perceives women’s role as the pillar of moral strength in the family and nation. The story normalizes the genocide of the indigenous peoples of North America carried out by European settlers by labeling it as ‘conflicts created by the westward migration’ (p. 37). It portrays the ‘conflict’ as one between two groups having equal say and power to negotiate as opposed to the disparate power relations that characterize colonialism and occupation. In the story, consent is associated with the colonizer and custom with the indigenous man [sic]. In this context, the occupier is represented as the mediator of conflict and the occupied as the guardian of old conflicts.

The curriculum also describes how one should use authority. It states, “we use authority (1) to protect our safety and our property; (2) to help manage conflict peacefully and fairly; (3) to distribute the benefits and burdens of society; and (4) to maintain order” (*Foundation of Democracy*, 2001, p. 39). “Authority” in this context is constituted as the arbitrator of equality. This is a characteristic of the capitalist notion of democracy. “In this form of democracy,” Allman explains, “citizens alienate their political power and capacities by handing them over to elected representatives, over whom they have little or no day-to-day influence or control” (Allman, 2007, p. 36). In order to establish this bourgeois model of democracy in Iraq and Afghanistan, occupation was soon followed by setting up an election process. Allman compares this bourgeois model of democracy with the revolutionary democracy of the Paris Commune of 1871 where “... citizens ‘reabsorb’ their political powers rather than alienating them in the state or political representatives” (Allman, 2007, p. 36). In this regard, Ellen Meiksins Wood (2006) in her chapter “Democracy as Ideology of Empire,” raises a pertinent question. She asks: How is it that freedom, equality, and universal human dignity can seem a convincing justification for imperialism and war? Her response is in what she calls the co-existence of economic and non-economic powers (political exploitation). In other words, she argues that both capital and labour can have democratic rights in the political sphere without completely transforming the relation between them in the economic sphere. Capitalism can, therefore, coexist with the ideology of freedom and equality in a way that no other system of domination can.

Iraqi women are expected to use the Guide in training their constituents for the cause of ‘democracy;’ they are expected to be both the subject and object of imperialist restructuring of a country devastated by tribal, feudal, religious, and nationalist conflicts. Kurdish women
experience these relations of domination and re-domination all at once in an ideologically assembled way: I have called this process ‘learning by dispossession.’

**Learning by Dispossession: Implications for Critical/Revolutionary Social Transformation**

Some critical education theorists have recently started focusing on the link between critical pedagogy and the struggle against capitalism, imperialism, and globalization. This body of theorization does not provide us with the tools to explain how education, or more specifically ‘democracy’ training, acts as an active component in the (re)production of the imperialist order. Paula Allman, Glenn Rikowski, Wayne Au, as were listed above, and others like Mike Cole (2004 and 2008) put at the core of their analysis the fundamental contradiction of capitalism, that is, the relationship of labor and capital, and the significance of consciousness in resolving this contradiction. Indispensable as this body of theory is, it does not distinguish between capitalism and imperialism, and more significantly, it does not give us enough analytical tools to understand patriarchy, racism, and colonialism.

In the analysis that I have outlined above, I am tentatively leaning toward an understanding of how democracy promotion projects end up disconnecting and dislocating both the trainers and the participants from their material reality of war, militarization and occupation. I have named this process “learning by dispossession,” based on David Harvey’s conception of ‘accumulation by dispossession’ (Harvey, 2006). I see ‘learning by dispossession’ as a learning process by which something other than ‘learning’ (which can be measured, evaluated, or assessed) is happening. That, much like primitive capital accumulation, learning, too, has a dual character, that is, it produces learning as well as something ‘outside of itself’, that is deeply entrenching self/mind/consciousness into the perpetual mode of capitalist social relations. To put it differently, ‘learning by dispossession’ refers to the ways learning produces new skills and knowledge as well as alienation, fragmentation of self/community, and confuses learners with the idea of capitalism and imperialism. Allman articulates this process ‘ideological thinking’ and explains (Allman, 2007, p. 39):

… For Marx, ideological thinking/consciousness, at least the type that he calls ideology, is historically specific to capitalism; it is produced by people’s sensuous experience of capitalist reality, within uncritical/reproductive praxis. Ideology serves to mask or misrepresent the real contradictions that make capitalism possible, and, therefore, by helping to perpetuate capitalism, it serves the interest of the dominant class (capitalist/bourgeois)... The only thing natural about ideological consciousness is that it conforms to the actual separations and inversions of capitalism’s real contradictions because consciousness and experience are an internally related unity, praxis.

The American project of ‘regime change’ was a conscious intervention in a country already torn apart by civil war (1961-91), Iraq-Iran war (1980-88) and the two US wars of 1991 and 2003. The end result, by 2009, is a fateful disintegration of the polity in extraordinary ways. While the US trains Iraqi women in ‘democracy’, the fragmentation of political power into blocs of religious leaders, tribal lords, feudal blocs, and numerous ethnic, political and military factions has denied women safety even within the confines of their homes. Clearly, understandings of this situation will be as conflictual as the situation itself. I find Marxist-feminist frames of analysis more adequate in making sense of democracy and dictatorship, and consciousness and praxis as unity.
of opposites. Adult education, as a conscious intervention in reality, enters into conflictual relations with imperialism; this relationship, too, seems to be a unity of opposites.

**Bibliography**


Bereaved Elders: Transformative Learning in Late Life

Paul J. Moon, Ph.D.
University of Georgia, USA

Abstract: The purpose of this qualitative study was to understand older adults’ transformative learning through bereavement in late life. Nine participants were engaged in semi-structured interviews. Data analysis affirmed that perspective transformation can occur through late life bereavement characterized by an oscillatory process shaped by biographical and life stage developmental contexts.

Background and Statement of the Problem
Bereavement is considered to be a principal source of distress in the human condition (Schaefer & Moos, 2001). Older adults (aged 65 and over) face bereavement amid the backdrop of a greater accumulation of death events than younger adults, leaving them with an elevated susceptibility to bereavement overload (Moss, Moss, & Hansson, 2001). Further, evidence exists of excessive suicide ideation in bereaved elders likely causing them to be at a “heightened risk for suicide relative to younger groups (Leenaars, 1995)” (Fortner & Neimeyer, 1999, p. 404).

Yet other studies indicate that bereavement may also induce positive personal transformations (Hogan, Morse, & Tason, 1996; Tedeschi & Calhoun, 2004). Transformative Learning (TL) theory recognizes how paradigmatic shifts can occur as a result of crisis-like promptings (Mezirow, 1991). Indeed, Mezirow (1991) claimed death to be a stimulus towards epistemological changes in the learner. Moreover, Merriam and Clark (1993) point to how the more sudden accounts of personal transformations experienced by adults from their study were linked to painful experiences such as the death of a loved one. Though bereavement and grief have been considered in relation to TL (Danforth & Glass, 2001; King, 2003), the age of participants in these studies have ranged mostly between young to middle adulthood. This is significant in that the nature of TL in older adulthood is little understood. In fact, Taylor (2000), as part of a comprehensive review of empirical research employing TL theory, posited “whether age is a factor in transformation is not known and needs to be better understood” (p. 289).

The purpose of my study was to understand older adults’ TL through bereavement in late life. Research questions guiding this study were: (1) What do older adults specify as being transformed within them as a consequence of late life bereavement? (2) How does TL impact older adults’ ongoing lives? (3) How do older adults describe the process of transformation? (4) What late life factors shape the TL process?

Method
A qualitative research approach was used to delve into older adults’ epistemic alterations prompted by bereavement in late life. Purposeful sampling (Patton, 2002) was applied to locate individuals who richly informed the intent and aim of my study. Eight women and one man were interviewed. The oldest person was 82 years old and the youngest 71 years. All participants were Caucasian with the exception of one African American. Deaths included spouses, siblings, adult children, and parents, with time lapses since the date of death ranging from two to eleven years. There was also a mixture of gradual illness and abrupt loss. Deaths were reported to have occurred at home (some with hospice care) or in a hospital. Data collection was through semi-structured interviews with open-ended questions. Interviews lasted between one to two hours and...
audio-tape recorded, accompanied by my field notes taken during sessions. Verbal narratives were transcribed and analyzed via the constant comparative method (Glaser & Strauss, 1967).

Findings

Findings concerning elders’ perspective changes and associated evidences included themes of greater consciousness of death issues, reprioritization of goals, and reevaluation of social relationships. Findings on the transformative process encompassed four major components (outlined below). And, findings on late life factors shaping the transformative process entailed issues of accumulated learning and life stage circumstances.

Greater Consciousness of Death Issues

This category manifested via older adults (a) responding to death issues with less dread, (b) admitting poignant awareness of personal mortality and the afterlife, and (c) expressing sensitization to the preciousness of life.

Response to death issues with less dread. Greater consciousness of death issues included changes in perspective and reaction to death itself. Josephine reported, “I am no longer surprised if someone else dies suddenly.” Maureen expressed, “My feeling is that if I die tomorrow that’s fine, it doesn’t bother me, and I don’t believe I felt that way beforehand.”

Poignant awareness of personal mortality and the afterlife. In close relation to, yet differentiated from, responding to death issues with less dread is the poignant awareness of personal morality. Eve, upon her sister’s death:

I changed a lot in the way I look about life and I try to stay ready to go because you never know, I may be the next one going…I focused on that a lot…I used to think nothing will ever happen to me.

Gary pithily stated, “(My sister’s death) made me more aware of my own mortality.” Some elders emphasized poignant awareness of the hereafter or afterlife. Heather mused:

I hadn’t given too much thought to…heaven….But now I have to believe that because I want to see these two guys (son and husband) again, and I have to believe there is some other plan for our lives…I have to believe there is and that came as a result of losing two people that were very, very close to me.

Sensitization to the preciousness of life. Elders reported a perspective change in values based on a greater consciousness of death. Betty professed, “Life’s more precious to me now. I’ve learned to live everyday to the fullest because I may not have that opportunity again!” Gary expressed, “I think it (sister’s death) just made me more conscious of how fortunate I’ve been…to get an education, have a career, married, have a child, grandchildren and so forth, which she did not.”

Reprioritization of Goals and Activities

An outcome of transformation was a reprioritization of goals and activities. Betty reported, “I don’t plan for tomorrow…anything can happen if we plan it and it’ll fall through so I just don’t believe in planning nothing.” Eve’s materialistic valuation shifted: “You’ve seen people that just focus their life on money…I used to be that way but not anymore; money’s just another thing.”

Reevaluation of Intra-/Inter-Personal Relationships

The vast majority of the elders transformed towards perceiving human relationships differently. Eve:

It has made me realize what life is and how to treat other people; it made me change completely….Now, I have feelings for people and I give the shirt off my back to anybody
who needed me but, you know, before then I didn’t think about other people. Heather strongly sensed self-development through her late life bereavement:

I just grew and so I never want to go back to that space again…although I don’t welcome…going through what I went through with my husband it was a growing place for me, it made me stronger….I can take care of myself emotionally, physically, financially, you know, that’s the growing place; I think I’m still growing.

Process of Transformation

Four major components of the transformative process emerged from the data. The initial component was acute distress experienced by elders typically around the time of death. An ensuing component concerned elders reflecting upon selective life events such as past bereavement and particular aspects of the deceased. Other components were an emerging sense of change in perspectives and new behaviors.

Acute distress. All nine elders expressed significant distress due to deaths. Descriptive phrases included: "a shock type of reaction,” “a real emptiness,” “I was real lost,” “it’s just like something heavy hit me,” “it was just like a dream,” and “numbness.”

Reflection. Past memories played an important part in elders’ somber reflections in terms of assisting meaning-making of new death events. Reflection on past bereavement concerns comparing current bereavement with past bereavement. Reflection on particular aspects of the deceased describes elders’ experience of being prompted with reflections that might be construed as fundamentally poignant, surfacing salient recollections related to the deceased symbolic of a broader set of meanings.

Emerging sense of change in perspectives. This component encompasses much of what was presented above. For elders to articulate these perspective changes came with some difficulty. Betty stated, “It’s just a feeling you can’t explain, there’s no way you can explain it.” Josephine exclaimed, “I believe there are some things I’ll never forget…” and yet “I can’t really put it into words I don’t think….that’s really hard to put it into words.”

New behaviors. With the birth of altered views upon life the elders’ actions changed accordingly. Heather expressed, “I think about things – “You need to do them now!”– I don’t know whether if I’ll have time later; I need to do it now if I’m going to do something.” Marcie described, “Every time I speak with my children (now)….I’m very conscious that maybe this will be my last time to speak with them because we don’t know what tomorrow brings and I talk with them about that.”

Late Life Factors Shaping Personal Transformation

Accumulation of learning from earlier life experiences and life stage issues evidenced to further inform the TL dynamic. Identified issues could be interpreted as enriching or hindering elders’ learning.

Accumulation of learning from earlier life experiences. This undeniable tenet of learning dynamics in old age overlaps with elders’ comparative reflection upon past bereavements noted above. Heather’s example:

“I’ve been down this road, I know how hard it is….I’m very well aware of the process and the things that go along with it, and I just didn’t want to do it but I knew I had to…I knew that there was no escaping grieving.

Others, like Gary, recounted a series of events that may have contributed to changes prompted by late life bereavement: “My mother died about 83…father died thereafter, so I had to take more responsibility for my sister….visiting her more and paying her bills….prior to then I wasn’t mature enough to really take much responsibility or interest in her.” An intuitive connection may
be made between earlier life losses, the subsequent necessary alteration in responsibilities, the life experiences encountered through that time, and the fund of knowledge and recollections one brings to circumstances in later life.

**Life stage issues.** The complexity of a person’s life stage positioning integrating with perspective shifts was seen in various modes, including differentiated social constellation and family role in late life. Holly remarked, “When you get old most of your friends…most of your relatives are gone…there are times when you want to talk to someone (about grief) but you don’t want to talk with your kids.” Elders’ role in family progressed toward grandparent-hood, for example, situating them during grief in a family context different from earlier life periods. Proximity to personal death also seemed to provide existential urgency amid late life bereavement. Heather admitted, “I’m realizing I don’t have much life ahead as I have behind.” This stark realization appeared to have fostered reprioritization of elders’ limited set of attention, hence shaping their TL.

**Discussion of Conclusions**

Three conclusions are made from the findings: (1) TL can occur in late life bereavement, (2) TL is a fluid and oscillatory process, and (3) TL is shaped by biographical and life stage developmental contexts.

**TL can occur in Late Life Bereavement**

TL through bereavement in late life was comprised of view changes of death-related issues and greater valuation of life. Death-related issues sparking transformation is not new (Courtenay, Merriam, Reeves, & Baumgartner, 2000; King, 2003; Kinnier, Tribbensee, Rose, & Vaughan, 2001). Increased valuation of the preciousness of life is also supported by existing literature (Tedeschi & Calhoun, 2008). My study, however, did not show unidirectional movement towards preciousness of life but rather amid ongoing grief pangs was there significant re-consideration of the worthiness of life. Others confirm this sentiment of diversely relearning the world while grieving (Attig, 1996; Parkes, 2001).

**TL is a Fluid and Oscillating Process**

My study revealed a TL process differing from extant models that are rather linear and phasic. Elders’ change process inhereed a fluid dynamic congruent with other grief studies (Braun & Berg, 1994; Danforth & Glass, 2001). An oscillatory pattern was found resembling Stroebe and Schut’s (1999) Dual Process Model of Coping with Bereavement. In my study, however, the oscillation concept arose from elders’ lingering ambiguities and ambivalences. Though elders evidenced perspective transformation it was not without being tethered to ‘baggage’ from former ways of knowing. This oscillatory process seems to confound the notion of TL being irreversible in nature (Clark, 1991; Courtenay et al., 2000; Mezirow, 1991).

A further contestable point concerned rational discourse – an assumed notion and considered a fundamental tenet of TL (Taylor, 1998). Majority of elders in my study indicated a substantial lack of social dialogue in their transformation. Rather a proclivity towards in memoriam dialogue was discovered: elders conversationally engaging with memories of the dead. Stroebe, Gergen, Gergen, and Stroebe (1992), referring to another work, argued that “such dialogue serves the positive function of helping the bereaved clarify thoughts, deal with unfinished and emergent relationships, and prepare for the future” (p. 1210).

**TL is Shaped by Biographical and Life Stage Developmental Contexts**

The importance and strength of accumulated life experiences to late life are well supported (Aldwin, Sutton, Chiara, & Spiro, 1996; Schaefer & Moos, 2001). Tedeschi and
Calhoun (2004) note that development of an individual’s personal narrative and stress-induced growth may work in mutually fostering ways. The foundational necessity of life experiences is already recognized in TL (Mezirow, 1995). This aspect was seen in elders’ comparative reflection juxtaposing past bereavement to those in late life. Such comparisons provided a frame of reference that served as experiential markers to assist in sensemaking of more current grief plights.

Life stage issues deemed to be particularly influential included a dwindling social network in old age (Coleman, 1990). This reduction of social opportunities redounds upon the dialogic exercise with caring others, in turn accentuating more solitary mechanisms of meaning-making (i.e., in memoriam dialogues). Proximity to elders’ own death also shaped the contextual urgency of late life bereavement via increased mortality salience. This tensional component of old age has been mused upon by others (Erikson, Erikson, & Kivnick, 1986; Havighurst, 1948). Elders’ TL cycled between deaths of others cueing them of their own death and an augmented sense of their own death imbuing their perception of bereavement in the province of late life in various ways.

Implications, Limitations and Recommendations
Adult educators may use this study’s results to expand their knowledge base on the commodious capacity of older adult learners to engage in TL and to construct learning programs for elders taking into account their oscillatory processing and reflecting patterns. Integrating death issues into learning activities for elders may be considered by educational gerontologists without fear. My study informs and challenges systemically held notions of how bereavement “ought” to look for elders. Further, older adults, and those who care for them, may find encouragement from elders’ transformative experiences through bereavement in late life.

Recommendations for future research include broader sample diversity (gender, race, belief systems, etc.), along with longitudinal (for enduring factors) and cross-sectional (for comparative factors) study structures. Future research may also employ focus groups or group interview paradigm that may evince issues important to TL and grief theory, such as rational/social discourse, types of cognitive reflection, and benefit of support groups.

References
References:


Hogwash: Coming to Terms with Critical Race Theory in Adult Education

Alberta Morgan, Andrea D. Frazier, Jeanne Fredericks
Mitchell Waters, Lisa R. Merriweather Hunn
Ball State University
USA

Abstract: Today’s adult and community education classrooms and sites of practice are increasingly diverse. As adult educators, we have a responsibility to appropriately meet each student at their level of need. Critical race theory provides a non-hegemonic lens for understanding and meeting the needs of our diverse student population.

Background

During the Summer of 2008, I facilitated a course on critical race theory (CRT). I am an African American junior faculty member at a predominately White regional university in the Midwest. Four students signed up for the course. Though small, the group was diverse across a number of demographics: race, age, sexual preference, political ideology, class, and academic discipline.

Critical race theory was relatively unfamiliar to all of the students but all entered the course with great anticipation of learning something useful to take back to their respective sites of practice. Much to the surprise of everyone, including the instructor, the course resulted in learning across multiple domains - cognitive, emotive, personal development. As we grappled with the material, we began to appreciate the immense possibilities for how CRT could be used as a pedagogical strategy to meet the needs of diverse learners and better understand our respective academic discourses.

In addition to learning that CRT has four guiding tenets - (1) Racism is endemic and central to understanding classroom relationships; (2) Racism challenges dominant classroom ideology such as white privilege; (3) CRT moves the discussion to that of social justice; and (4) Experiential knowledge is key to exploring race, racism and its impact on classroom discussion, workplace, and society at large (Yosso, 2005) - we experienced the power of the CRT as a method. Through the medium of the story, a hallmark of CRT, our class moved past pleasant surface conversation to deep meaningful dialogue about the emotionally charged and, at times, cognitively dissonant course material. When one student exclaimed the material was “Hogwash”, we knew we had moved to a place where raw discussion could take place. This depth of discussion helped us to understand critical race theory on many levels.

By the conclusion of the class, we felt like we had experienced something quite extraordinary. In this paper, the students share their stories of their experience with CRT. The collective experience, as told through the stories, highlights the power of CRT as a pedagogical strategy.

Our Stories

Jeanne’s story: Nearly a year has elapsed since my introduction to Critical Race Theory. It is difficult to remember clearly my experiences in this class. The mind so quickly compresses expired time into a movie of the mind that, when played over, may alter one's perceptions of that reality. Reality, after all, is egocentric and victimized by the stories we tell ourselves. This
reflection, then, is an accounting of the directional shifts in my thinking and the development of a disruptive propensity to rewind and replay old thinking through a new lens prescribed with critical race theory. I now find myself more attuned to events, beliefs, and dialogue that marginalize people because of their color, alternative sexual orientations and lifestyles, differing social classes, age, physical appearance, and gender. At times I find myself attempting to suspend time in order to unearth personal biases that shape the way I perceive the world. I cannot let this reflection proceed further without first setting the context for our small learning community.

A snapshot of our learning community reveals a fair amount of diversity within the group despite its small size, featuring differing perspectives that lent to enriched discourse—once the walls built by a colorblind and polite white society were cast aside. A physical description of seminar members included two African American heterosexual females (the professor and a student), one Native American heterosexual male, one Caucasian lesbian female, and one Caucasian heterosexual female. Cognitively and socially, the learning community included five individuals seeking to understand the societal implications of a country founded on a culture that privileges the white race, particularly white males. Understandings emerged as we came to better know one another through our stories, beliefs, emotions, and reflections of past experiences.

Despite the lapse of a year's time, one revelation continues to stick with me more than any other. Our instructor stated her race precedes her into a room. It was at that moment I first realized the impact another's appearance has on my perception of who and what I judged them to be. As a result of Lisa's statement, I at times play a game where I study a person's face and try to remove all my socially constructed, preconceived notions and biases. I look at the individual physical features of people and try to remove all the definitions I have learned over a lifetime associated with race, gender, appearance, and age that our society projects...that I project...on others. It is nearly an impossible task, but one that mitigates the prejudices that have long held me captive growing up white and female in America.

I cannot end this reflection without stating the now obvious heightened degree to which the study of critical race theory has changed the way I think and behave, not only in my personal life but in my professional life as well. As a result of the time I spent with my colleagues in EDAC 698 and the opportunity to hear their shared personal stories, I now think and act differently. Someone once said that the world is changed for the better one person at a time. Hopefully, the study of critical race theory through this course of study has done that through me.

Dawn’s story: I participated in a class exploring critical race theory during the summer of the democratic primaries. I am currently writing this reflection piece about the class in the aftermath of the discussion concerning the incendiary cartoon in the New York Post and Eric Holder’s statement that America is a “nation of cowards” for not being more open in talking about race. I will linger with Holder for a moment. I believe it is true that Americans shy away from substantive conversations about the social construction of race. It can be a difficult weight to lift in the name of real dialogue about life experience. Case in point, for those who disagreed with Holder, the predominate critique seemed to be that he did not acknowledge the strides that our country has made. We do have a president of African descent, and Holder is the first African American to hold the office of Attorney General. Holder did not know what he was saying, he was being unwise. Others got caught up in the word choice. How dare he call Americans cowards? Americans have been in wars to spread democracy, for goodness sake. That is as far from cowardice as you can get.
But Holder is a smart man…who has been witness to the ramifications of race on our legal system up close. I believe he was very intentional in his comments, and the media’s holler in reaction to his quiet certainty about the nature of racial discourse in this country only confirms the accuracy of his observation.

But I digress. With the primaries as the backdrop, I was allowed the opportunity to unpack racism with a cadre of four other fearless souls. They were fearless because over time we started getting down and dirty about what we really believed about the nature of race in this country, and we listened to each other openly and without judgment. We absorbed and tussled with work from critical race theorists, and, though the temptation was there to retreat into our smiley-faced masks and make nice about some tough aspects of reality, we resisted false platitudes. I did not end the class in wholesale agreement with the tenants of critical race theory, but I did find some voices that captured and reflected a lot of the angst, anger, and defiance I had been feeling vis-à-vis scholarly work in my discipline. And I was moved by the passionate, soulful work we were engaged with on each other. I will never forget it.

**Berta’s story:** I signed up for this class expecting just another summer class with an enormous amount of reading crammed into five short weeks. I had no idea that this class would change my view of society, the world, and myself. This subject required a trip deep below the surface layers of my conscience, character, and worldview to the place in my mind that only I know about – a place that even I am only vaguely aware exists as a part of me. The most difficult part of the class for me was the discussion of “whiteness” and white privilege. I had to put the readings down and walk away from my anger and guilt many times during this part of the class. I began to feel hopeless: no matter what I do, it is wrong. I read about white people taking over the conversation and wondered if I do that. I spent most of this class coming to terms with my own use of white privilege and trying to understand and recognize whiteness. Although we only met a few hours a week, the class never really ended. My email was overflowing with articles and examples of racism in all aspects of society. These “aha” moments led us to crossroads where we recognized our personal racism as well as that of society. This CRT class may not have changed the world, but it changed my world and now I am better equipped, and more useful as an adult educator and citizen of the world.

**Mitch’s story:** As a student in EDAC 698, I started on a journey of which became the enlightenment of my education regarding Critical Race Theory. As an American Indian/Caucasian, I had never looked at myself as being of a race in the context of color, therefore I never allowed race or its culture to enter into my educational experiences until now. Learning from a tilted perspective that race was nothing I should be concerned with became disheartening to me as I struggled through this class to be open-minded in regards to the diversities within the classroom. Every race, culture, socio-economic class, educational level, and sexual orientation was represented giving me no choice but to be critically aware of the need for a restructuring of the way I had been raised and taught to believe were inferior to me if different than myself.

By classifying people as poor, uneducated, and of lesser value in society because of color, gender, class, or ethnicity, we have allowed ourselves to promote an ideology of hatred and a concept that it is acceptable to hold certain groups at bay for the pursuit of happiness and educational advancement. Being prejudiced is a way of thinking or feeling towards another person or group. By giving ourselves the authority to think and feel negatively about someone because of differences in race or culture, we have placed ourselves in a class of bigotry. In EDAC 698 it became a stretch for my mind to wrap itself around some of the theories and ideas boldly
emblazoned in others. I suspect my upbringing, and the era I grew up in, along with my spiritual beliefs, stalemated my acceptance of some of the ideologies set forth in the class.

Stepping back with retrospection upon the beliefs I held fast to before entering this class was the most frightening experience which came from the knowledge I gained from my fellow learners/educators. I quickly realized my status in life was no greater or less than theirs, and that I too was as diverse in race and culture as all of my class peers. The beliefs which I had grown up to hold as truth suddenly became as dust whipping about in the breeze and forming a new truth in not only my mind but in my heart. Understanding the diverse human connection in regards to education, this class has left me with a heart for all classes, cultures, genders, and sexually oriented people, knowing that regardless of these differences we are all created equally. All deserve the respect of others, and the opportunities of a racially and culturally balanced educational system in which we can learn through the incorporation of our individual experiences and lifestyles, thus learning from one another, making our education and experiences from it even richer.

Racism is universal and plays out as division on all sides. Whether the expression of prejudice is on the side of any race, an educated America should never tolerate this kind of behavior in our society. Extensive education, promoting rights for all races, including the right to non-discrimination, and teaching our children from birth the ethical and moral obligations of tolerance without setting aside their own belief structure, are places to start the process of unity among all races in our world, and the world of the educator.

Common Threads

Having systematically undergone this exploration, we feel that we are better equipped to see inequity, offer an alternative analysis for why it exists, and to work for social justice based on that knowledge. While we each walk away with our own unique way of integrating CRT into our personal lives and practice, we gained some common understandings of how CRT can be operationalized. We discovered the ways that power and privilege work to mask racism and discrimination in our society. This heightened our awareness of the permanence and the prevalence of race as an unspoken influence in society as we witnessed, week after week, evidence of this in the popular media, in the workplace, and in our daily interactions.

Contemporary racism occurs subtly and is much less likely to be demonstrated in overt ways such as lynching and blatant discrimination at voter polling locations. This notion is also exemplified in the characterization of racism as normalized in our society (Bell, 1992; Delgado & Stefancic, 2001; Ladson-Billings & Tate, 1995) and, as such, is embedded in core ideals, like meritocracy and democracy, which shaped our nation. We confronted ourselves through the challenges raised by both the readings and our class members. We were each being held accountable for the assumptions and biases that we held and that invariably influenced the interactions in the class and in the larger society. For instance, the European American students acknowledged the multiple ways they have benefited from white privilege and the heterosexual students conceded the hidden privilege derived from sexual orientation. Each student spoke of being more attuned to how his or her biases and privilege may negatively impact her or his respective spheres of influence.

For each of us, this was an intimate journey. As we listened to each others’ stories, we challenged and were challenged through the process of dialogue. We developed new ways of understanding our past behaviors and new ways of informing our future actions. The story, often crafted as a counter-narrative in CRT, was a key mechanism for promoting honest and often emotionally charged discussion. Bell (1992) was one of the first to advance the use of storytelling as a methodological tool for addressing issues surrounding racism that were often enveloped in the
majoritarian story, the story constructed by those reaping the benefits of power and privilege for the purpose of maintaining power and privilege.

The strength of the story lies in its ability to make public the experiences of non-dominant cultural groups and to authenticate the voices who tell them. Solórzano and Yosso (2002) defined the counter-story “as a method of telling the stories of those people whose experiences are not often told (i.e., those on the margins of society). The counter-story is also a tool for exposing, analyzing, and challenging the majoritarian stories of racial privilege. Counter-stories can shatter complacency, challenge the dominant discourse on race, and further the struggle for racial reform” (p. 32). To the class’ credit, we listened, processed, critiqued, and digested these stories in ways that demonstrated respect to the storyteller. In doing so, we became aware of the insidious power of the majoritarian story to dominant the space, and we worked to actively create space for all stories in the classroom.

A call to action was also voiced. Change being not only necessary but also possible was a theme that surfaced. Though we were confounded by how we would use CRT to make large-scale change, we were empowered to do so at the individual level. There was widespread agreement that the awareness of Critical Race Theory was leading to the conscious augmentation of everyday behaviors. We developed a new understanding of how we unconsciously construct our ideas about people and society. As a result we had a greater awareness that in turn sparked us to reevaluate how we react, respond, and behave in our daily interactions, in the workplace and in the ways we implement practice. These efforts were small but necessary steps in the march toward social justice.

Conclusions
Having systematically undergone this exploration, critical race theory provided a new lens through which we could grapple with everyday experiences at our respective sites of practice and in our daily interactions. Based on the analysis of our stories, we found the CRT was a useful tool for explaining what happened in our classroom that summer and what we witness happening in society at large. Issues of White privilege were evident as well as remnants of the impact of race as both a historic and contemporary phenomenon. Our individual histories, which reflect our race, our class, our educational background, our sexual preference, all played a vital role in creating our nuanced understanding of what transpired two days a week for five weeks over the course of the Summer semester. We were quite surprised to see the ways that theory came to life in this setting and in workplace settings that we practice.

References
“Social Learning” for/in Adult Education?
A Discursive Review of What it Means for Learning to be “Social”

Kim L. Niewolny  Arthur L. Wilson
Virginia Tech, USA  Cornell University, USA

Abstract: Our paper reports on a critical discourse analysis of “social learning” in the literature. We not only emphasize the kinds of investigations that have focused on social forms of adult learning but exemplify what it means for learning to be “social” in the field of adult education.

Introduction and Purpose
“Social learning” has been recognized as an important perspective for understanding and problematizing the relationships between learning as a social process and social contexts in the areas of adult, extension, and community education for several years. Literature ranging from Jarvis (1987) and Brookfield (2005) to Fenwick (2000), Foley (1999), and Usher, Byrant, and Johnston (1997) has emphasized a wide range of societal conditions, structures, and practices as defining characteristics of social forms of adult learning. Historically, several groups of learning theories have been identified as “social learning” theories in adult education scholarship including experiential learning (e.g., Fenwick, 2000), cultural-historical activity theory (e.g., Sawchuk, 2003a), situated cognition (e.g., Lave, 1988), social learning theory (e.g., Bandura, 1977), and transformative learning (e.g., Mezirow, 1991). Other influential dimensions of “social learning” include emancipatory learning (e.g., Hart, 1990), distributed learning (e.g., Lea & Nicoll, 2002), informal learning (e.g., Field & Spence, 2000), lifelong learning (e.g., Edwards, 2006), and participatory learning (e.g., Leeuwis, & Pyburn, 2002). According to Jarvis (2006) and Merriam, Caffarella, & Baumgartner (2007), this extensive literature has become fairly visible as a foundation for exploring the societal dimensions of adult education in a variety of formal, non-formal, and informal learning settings.

Despite what appears to be a welcomed move toward increasing our understanding of those social aspects and circumstances in which people learn, conceptual clarification of “social learning” remains scarce in adult education scholarship. We argue that this lack of elucidation not only limits our understanding of the ways in which adults learn in/with the social world but enables the (re)production of asocial, individualistic conceptions of adult learning, as explained by “psychologism” and its parent discourse, individualism (Usher, Byrant, & Johnston, 1997, p. xiii). Individualism is a modernist framework best explained by the “Enlightenment ideal of the autonomous subject-person” (Finger & Asún, 2001, p. 117). A major premise for adult educators critical of the prevailing discourse of individualism is that learning does not occur “just inside the head.” “Social learning” has become a catch phrase used by adult educators to demonstrate how learning is something more than a psychological activity characterized by individuals accumulating knowledge and skills to be transferred across time and space (Niewolny & Wilson, in press). But what does it mean when adult educators say learning is social? Put another way, what is “social learning” for/in adult education? We argue that “social learning” should be viewed less as a particular learning tradition and more like a discourse of learning that is framed by relations of power that constitute its formation. Our paper is, therefore, focused on the discursive construction of “social learning” to better understand this emerging discourse and its significance for organizing and developing adult education as an alternative to the discourse of individualism.
Methodology

We refrain from reviewing the “social learning” literature as a distinct tradition of theory and practice in adult education; instead; we (re)locate the literature within a discursive framework by drawing upon the project of critical discourse analysis (CDA). While it is difficult to treat CDA as a unified framework, it is often explained as a form of discourse critique influenced by the techniques of applied linguistics and theoretical insights of (post)structuralist theory (Niewolny & Wilson, 2008). According to Gee (1999) and Fairclough (2003), CDA enables us to critically reveal larger formations of discourse and power in our everyday educational settings. Our approach to CDA is grounded in the scholarship of Fairclough (1992) and Foucault (1972). A key assumption of CDA in this view is that discourse and social practices are linked together and to wider social structures by taking into account the heterogeneous and historicized nature of discourse (Foucault, 1972), and the textual, discursive practice, and social practice dimensions of discourse analysis (Fairclough, 1992). For Luke (1995), this form of discourse critique is described as a bridging together of the “macro approaches to discourse with more microanalytical text analyses” (p.10).

Following Foucault (1972) and Fairclough (1992), we examined the discourse of “social learning” for its underlying structure of meaning which, in turn, constitutes regimes of truth about what it means for learning to be “social” in adult education literature. This approach not only emphasizes the kinds of investigations that have focused on social aspects of adult learning but exemplifies what Foucault (1972) would describe as an underlying uniformity of meaning despite the apparent diversity of what has been said about “social learning” for/in adult education. Our analysis involved paying careful attention to the ways in which meanings of “socialness” are constructed and legitimated in some ways while not in others. We identified several themes of “socialness” from the literature to frame the analysis: nature of context, experience, mediation, social action, social purpose, and social positioning (Edwards, 2006; Fenwick, 2000; Foley, 1999; Jarvis, 1987; Lave, 1988; Lea & Nicoll, 2002; Salomon & Perkins, 1998; Sawchuk, 2003a; Usher, Bryant, & Johnston, 1997).

Building on earlier insights (Niewolny & Wilson, 2006, in press; Wilson, 1993), we examined empirical and conceptual writings in the areas of “cultural historical-activity theory,” “distributed learning,” “emaniparoty learning,” “experiential learning,” “lifelong learning,” “situated cognition/learning,” “sociocultural learning,” “social learning,” “informal/non-formal learning,” “participatory learning,” and “transformative learning.” In the tradition of CDA, we acknowledge that this corpus of literature is a discursive construction embedded in our own assumptions and perspectives. We further recognize that while the corpus comprises the bulk of the adult “social learning” literature, it does not capture all that has been written about “social learning” theory and practice.

Mapping the Discourse of “Social Learning”

“Social learning” is nothing new to educators. According to Salomon and Perkins (1998) and Wenger (1998), research in the field of education has shed a good deal of light on the ways in which learning—as a social phenomenon—is constituted by social behavior, experience, activity, mediation, postionality, and context. Adult educators have actively contributed to the “social learning” conversation. An initial reading of the “social learning” literature in adult education illustrates how “this” kind of learning is, on the one hand, many things to many people, depending on perspective. On the other hand, however, if viewed as a discourse of adult learning, we begin to see how “this” construction of power and knowledge is actually a discursive strategy employed by adult educators to challenge the established promotion of psychological theories of adult learning that understand learning as something that occurs “inside” the mind of the individual. Yet we argue that this discourse is too susceptible to misappropriation and
consequently circumscribed by the larger discursive construction of individualism currently circulating in adult education scholarship. That is to say, our findings begin to reveal that while adult educators are increasingly investigating adult learning as a social or sociocultural phenomenon by drawing upon several frameworks and concepts rooted in “socialness,” this discourse is actually a weak manifestation of resistance to the discourse of individualism, as exemplified in behaviorist, cognitive, and constructivist psychology. For the purpose of this paper, we limit the remaining discussion to two discursive positions that begin to illustrate the insecure nature in which the discourse currently operates. Before we share those crucial points, we briefly sketch the discursive configuration of the literature that frames the discussion by following Fairclough’s (1992) notion of “conditions of discourse practice.”

Focusing on the discursive ways in which literature emerges in adult education circles, our analysis demonstrates how the discourse appears to be broadly constituted though an array of conceptual camps and venues. First, we found that adult educators have liberally appropriated “social learning” to designate everything from the kind of learning that occurs through modeling behavior (Bandura, 1977), to group learning (Imel, 1999), to participatory learning in and for community organizing and sustainable development (Falk, 2001; Leeuwis, & Pyburn, 2002), to learning as a situated and/or sociocultural experience (Alfred, 2003; Sawchuk, 2003a; Wilson, 1993), to a kind of learning that characterizes the in/non-formality of adult learning (Field & Spence, 2002), to learning that has transformative power for purposes of social action and emancipation from oppressive conditions (Foley, 1999; Mezirow, 1991; Hart, 1990; O'Sullivan, Morrell, & O'Connor, 2002), to learning that falls within the purview of mobility and distribution as explained by globalizing processes and postmodernism (Edwards & Usher, 2008; Usher, Byrant, & Johnston, 1997). Second, we located explicit and implicit meanings of “social learning” in numerous journals, texts, and edited contributions in the general areas of adult learning, adult and community education, lifelong learning, and community development; therefore, we argue that the discourse is widely circulated in adult education literature. Third, we learned that these meanings are variably characterized with such terminology as context-based learning, emancipatory learning, experiential learning, distributed learning, informal/non-formal learning, participatory learning, sociocultural learning, situated learning, social learning, and transformative learning. Finally, our point is amplified by the way in which the discourse is anchored in a diverse range of theoretical traditions including behaviorism, constructivism, feminism, Marxism, and postmodernism (Fenwick, 2000; Jarvis, 1987, 2006; Sawchuk, 2003b).

Drawing specifically upon the notion of “interdiscursivity” (Fairclough, 1992; Foucault, 1972), two discursive positions stand out from our analysis that indicate how the literature is poorly situated to challenge the (re)production of asocial, individualistic conceptions of adult learning. First and foremost, we revealed that not all social theories of adult learning operate outside of the prevailing psychological perspective. For example, it is no secret that Bandera’s (1977) popular social learning theory illustrates the behaviorist response to understanding people learning from each other in social settings through observation: “Bandura’s theory has a particular relevance to adult learning in that it accounts for both the learner and the environment in which he or she operates. Behavior is a function of the interaction of the person with the environment” (Merriam & Caffarella, 1999, p. 260). While adult educational research grounded in this theoretical perspective purports to incorporate the “learner and environment” as a valuable contribution to theory and practice, it is the way in which the social context is defined as a “container-like” variable that is of concern in this discussion. This functionalist amalgamation of the individual and the social clearly suggests that such a “social” perspective of adult learning is nothing more than an “add-on” to existing cognitive and behaviorist frameworks. On the one hand, it might be argued that this strategy is taken-up by educators to better build conceptual linkages with historically neglected dimensions, such as social factors as “external learning
factors” (Lent & Brown, 1996, p. 312). On the other hand, however, as we have argued elsewhere (Niewolny & Wilson, 2006; in press; Wilson, 2005), this “add-on” approach is more accurately described as a misuse of “socialness” that discursively limits us from fully exploring how learning occurs as a socially dynamic and culturally mediated activity embedded in and constituted by relations of power. In this view, we located several other efforts that employ this “add-on” strategy, most particularly in the area of situated learning (e.g., Daley, 2002; King, 2003).

The second discursive position characterizes the way in which “socialness” is dis/articulated as a political construction of adult learning. Without a doubt, some adult educators have not only taken up social learning approaches but have attempted to theorize an array of social, cultural, and historical perspectives as critical perspectives of adult learning (e.g., Barton & Tusting, 2005; Brookfield, 2005; Finger & Asún, 2001; Foley, 1999; Hart, 1990; O’Sullivan, Morrell, & O’Connor, 2002; Sawchuk, 2003a; Sawchuk, Duarte, & Elhammoumi, 2006). Our reading of the literature suggests that politicized frameworks, such as emancipatory learning (Hart, 1990), have garnered much attention as viable social learning frameworks through references made to three themes: learning for social responsibility, learning for emancipation, and learning as ideological resistance. Focusing particularly on the way in which “social learning” is positioned as an ideological-discursive practice, we learned that several authors explicitly and implicitly draw upon “social learning” as an ideological-discursive strategy to challenge the role of expertism in technology and science as a leading development agenda (Falk, 2001; Leeuwis, & Pyburn, 2002; Wals, 2007). In this view, according to Wals (2007), social learning enables educators and community organizers to engage in the process of resisting and transforming hegemonic and oppositional ideologies and discourses, particularly as they relate to the struggle for sustainability.

While it is encouraging to discover that the role of power informs “social learning” discourse, we revealed that critically oriented frameworks overall are largely positioned at the periphery and therefore not visible as central ideas for understanding adult learning. Drawing upon Foley (1999), we argue that this inferior position makes it difficult for adult educators to recognize that leaning is much more than a “technical and value-neutral process” characterized by individualistic conceptions of adult education (p. 2). Usher, Byrant, and Johnston (1997) further argue that such positioning limits our capacity to understand the interrelated relationships among social practices, selves, and the contemporary sociocultural context, as a guiding adult learning principle. This failure to fully articulate “social learning” as a political discourse is most evident in the ways in which critical readings of situated cognition and cultural-historical activity theory have been consistently overlooked by adult educators, thus ignoring the role of social action and cultural reproduction as the theoretical basis for conceptualizing the explicitly politicized nature of people learning in and with context(s) (Niewolny & Wilson, 2006, in press; Wilson, 1993; 2005).

**Implications for Theory/Practice**

Our paper is an argument for viewing “social” learning not as a particular learning tradition but more like a discourse of learning that is framed by relations of power/knowledge in adult education literature that constitutes its formation. With this discursive lens firmly in place, we argue that while it is promising that adult educators are increasingly committed to the ongoing discussion of social theories of learning, albeit with different perspectives and purposes, the conceptual fuzziness that surrounds the discourse remains troubling if we are to more robustly understand how adults learn embedded in and distributed across socially and culturally structured relations of power (Niewolny & Wilson, in press). It is our hope that this paper contributes to the understanding of “social learning” and its significance for organizing and developing adult
education as an alternative to the prevailing discourse of individualism, as explained by behaviorist, cognitive, and constructivist psychology. This review of the literature, therefore, attempts to challenge the status quo while proposing new possibilities as we move toward theorizing the multifarious and political nature of “socialness” in the theory and practice of adult education.

References


Non-Visibility Within Adult Education: 
Reading What Lies Written and Breathing Beneath

Dr. Steven E. Noble
University of Ottawa

Abstract: This paper explores, briefly, the non-visible aspects of adult learners, notably multi- and bi-ethnic learners. The complexity and contradiction of ascribed (publicly read) and (internally embodied) felt ethnic identities comes under exploration.

Introduction

Much of adult education literature speaks of definite categories of learners: learners who bear markers of ethnicity, disability, sexuality, gender, poverty or any other source of difference. What becomes increasingly vital, because of kaleidoscopic transmutations of possibilities for a more nuanced identity, through accelerating migration, is the recognition that, with greater frequency, individuals do not belong to discrete categories. Many adult learners are read in one way, but identify in ways completely different from the apparent textuality of their bodies. How do and can adult educators accurately read identity subtexts of learners? Do teachers of adults have the tools and awareness to understand that a White woman can identify more as a Black woman or a Black man can identify more strongly as a White man. Blended families are creating less knowable pre-determined ethnic identities. This paper theorizes the role of liminal identity through understanding the complicated complexity for “non-visible” students attempting to negotiate their recognition and comprehension of self within adult education environments and relationships. The importance of this theorizing for adult education is to find entry points and avenues through non-visibility to read relationships between what is “obvious” about a learner and what adult educators have chosen not to see. What knowledge is lost and what assumptions are discovered as a result are critical to more fully understand the learners who have come to adult education within their wholeness.

Gaps Within the Liminality of Real and Imagined Identities

When engaging adult learners from a variety of backgrounds, instructors can rely upon “textuality of appearance” as shorthand for “reading” students. Within this world of swirling migrations of peoples and inter-marrying across cultures, the reality of blended families can often be subjected to “acts of erasure” or dismissal of a learner’s full identity. By this term, is meant the discounting or the ignoring of what identity appears less visible. Public readings and private understandings of bodies carry tensions for the person containing a sense of self that, in turn, is being misread. Further, the sources for these stresses come from a variety of contexts that create “non-visibility” and “visibility” for readers of embodiment. In addition to the blending of ethnicities or “race,” there are similar dynamics for people with identities borne from non-visible impairments (deafness, blindness or psychiatric disorders), class (presumption of middle classed as universal reading), regionality (readings of urban identity takes precedent over rural) and sexuality (heteronormative imperatives subsume possible readings of diverse sexual minorities). How can and do adult learners understand themselves within learning contexts in which they are being read inaccurately? This paper focuses upon the categories of “race.” However, “race” being a biological mythological term, the preferred concept, is ethnicity.
Underpinnings Supporting the Theorization

Experiences of misreading, or not reading at all, my body as more than surface features is a common occurrence within adult learning environments for many. There are adult educators who continue to give greater credence to apparent physical attributes, rather than aspects of identity, which lay inscribed, breathing and partially hidden within bodies of learners. A typical experience stems from a moment within my university teaching when we, as teacher and students, as is typically done in first classes, were introducing ourselves to one another. One question arose of “How do you identify your ethnicity?” My response was “I grew up, through my large Jamaican maternal family, as both Canadian and Jamaican. In some very strong ways, I identify through my Jamaican heritage.” Immediately, the reaction from the class was, “No way. How could I possibly take that on? You don’t even look Black. Do you have pictures of your family you could show us?” Immediately, a significant part of who I was had to be “proven” or risk being publicly wiped away from further revelation or knowing. There was a “passion for ignorance” (Britzman, 1998) that “race” can be imagined beyond “black and white.”

As an adult educator, the dynamic of erasing unconsidered, deeper senses of self in order to maintain the legibility of students’ identities “easier” for the adult educator/reader rather than taking the time and effort to understand what lies just beneath. The skin. That thin, yet translucent, barrier straining in silence to, both, keep in and let out senses of self that can be deeply troubling for bodies that decipher an apparent contradiction. This paper works to disturb and provoke the taken-for-granted practice among many adult educators of “what I see is what I read; nothing else matters – or is even considered possible.”

Embodied Textuality Elements in a Cohesive Relationships

With regard to “non-visibility,” the key term in this theorization, the concept is placed alongside notions of “visibility” and “invisibility.” Visibility relates to the dynamic of being able to physically see, comprehend and understand what can be experienced. Invisibility describes the dynamic of being physically unable to see, comprehend and understand what exists to be experienced. “Non-visibility” exposes the relationship between a person’s whole and present embodiment of self and another individual’s disregard or ignorance to read this complete presence. Further, replacing the misread meta/physical body is the reader’s interpreting and manufacturing of experienced features to “fit” the reader’s norms and expectations of meaning.

Several terms are evoked through this bordered living within multi- or bi-ethnicity. The first, from queer theory, is the notion of “closet,” which is a social interaction construction whereby people hide devalued senses of self in order to be read as fully legitimate. Connected to the closet is the requirement to “come out” in order to achieve the potential for being fully read. Simply speaking and making public one’s sense of non-visible identity is not enough to have one’s full sense of self instantly legitimated. The connected notions of “proof” and “degree” have to be proffered. Proof speaks to the “reader” being the arbiter of whether the non-visible senses of self will be considered credible or outright disbelieved. The degree of proof determines the level someone’s sense of self is legible (or in what contexts the person is read that way). Centrally, then, within this theory of adult educator/learner relationships the educator, already the one in power, is also the one who determines whether a student’s non-visible identity is read as real or unreal, rather than the person who lives with the sense of self. Other dimensions within this theory of perception of non-visibility connect to Freirian forms of dialogue and Britzman’s

Speaking to Existing Theory Through Non-Visibility

Non-visibility speaks to two adult learning theories. Gadamer’s (1989) notion of conversation and the process of knowledge being constructed between, or among, people fit well with how Freire (1986) shifts to the construct of dialogue. Continuing on, once the Habermasian (1984; 1987) overlay of distortion and power within conversations is integrated, then the introduction of non-visibility’s role within adult education becomes clearer.

The second adult education theory within which non-visibility can be incorporated is Mezirow’s (1981; 2003) perspective transformation. Non-visibility can be invoked to better understand the nuance of Mezirowan meaning schemas, or the taken-for-granted dynamics that are relied upon to govern social interactions. Certain norms of expectation are drawn upon to normalize how one individual wants to be engage – and read by another. In an effort to keep interactions within the realm of convention, often information that is not deemed “normal” is removed from the equation. During those moments of exclusion, typically the misreading or devaluation of “the other’s” identity occurs. The paper will explore other connections between adult education theories and the dynamic of non-visibility and ways erasures, intentional and unintentional, can be addressed within adult learning contexts.

Multi- and Bi-Ethnic Identity or Shades of Meaning

Presumptions that skin colour equate identity creates an either/or world that is simplistic and dangerous, particularly for those who inhabit that sense of self. That to appear “Black” or “Hispanic” or “Asian” automatically means that someone identifies “souly” that way. As the number of interracial marriages approaches 3 million within the United States and about 250,000 in Canada (Rockquemore & Brunsma, 2008), there is an increase in bi-ethnic (for the purposes of this paper meaning first generation children born of parents of two markedly different ethnicities) and multi-ethnic (second generation children born of parents representing three or more ethnicities) identifying children. Many have, now, matured into adults seeking adult learning opportunities. This paper consciously has avoided focusing on “race,” preferring the concept of ethnicity. Historically and traditionally, the concept of the “one-drop rule” has held sway over the construction of “race.” Customarily, being bi-ethnic was equated to being Black. Ethnicity allows the breaking away from this legacy, while creating a greater fluidity across categories.

Within Rockquemore and Brunsma’s (2008) and Wallace’s (2004) works, the depiction of bi-ethnic and multi-ethnic identities, there are complexities that highlight that mixed blood does not automatically translate to Black. In a minority of instances, 13%, skin colour attributed to “race” does translate to Black; however, there was also 3% who felt themselves exclusively White. That vast majority of mixed ethnically identifying people in these studies indicate that there is lack of fixity to either Blackness or Whiteness. Bi-ethnic and multi-ethnic adults have learned overwhelmingly that theirs is a bordered identity. Many individuals with mixed backgrounds experience an easier movement between or among ethnicities. Challenges arise when interactions with others suggest that being mixed ethnically should be relegated to one category, Black and these bi-ethnic and multi-ethnic are read in a fixed way, yet feel in an embodied way a liminal sense within their worlds.
There are struggles that are aligned with living between borders: challenges with one’s social and personal definition of self, justifying or “proving” one’s identity choice, situations where he or she is forced between categories, lack of bi-ethnic/multi-ethnic role models, the double rejection from both familial ethnicities and conflicting messages from family members and peers about identity choice. Much of these issues are interactional, socially constructing, reinforcing or negating an individual’s sense of self. Adult educators can align their beliefs with skin colour equalling identity, without fully exploring how a learner has developed his or her internal sense of self.

Without a sense of how to proceed with one’s adult life, there remains to some degree identity confusion because of the constant vague socialization from family and peer reference groups that impinge upon the multi-ethnic individual. Adult educators have to be aware that with learners increasingly coming from blended backgrounds, there will need to be heightened awareness that hidden beneath the skin colour may be a sense of self that is a mixture, beyond ethnicity or of one fixed ethnicity or another. Further, among mixed ethnicities there is a contextuality that further shapes the situatedness of identity. Through conversations and social interactions, processes of normalization arise to shape and challenge identities that don’t easily fit within a category. Increasingly mixed ethnicity shifts beyond fixed categories, striving to fit nowhere and everywhere at once: to identify as transcending beyond one or other ethnicity, preferring to only see themselves as human – beyond the reach of categories. Much of this remains non-visible, beyond the perception of many adult educators.

Summary: Beyond “Race”

Within adult education, there are increasingly adult learners who come from blended ethnic families that are not readily apparent. Rather than focus on categories of “race,” there needs to be greater attention to ethnicity and the existence of identities that are bordered between two or more. The complexity of bi-ethnicity and multi-ethnicity creates challenges for educators reliant on the colour of skin to determine the identity of learners. Some learners identify very strongly with an identity that does not coincide with appearances or a blending of ethnicity – or beyond categories of “race” or ethnicity to something approaching a more universalizing sense of human. Digging beneath the skin to better understand the legacy of embodied ethnic living is critical for adult educators to best align student interests with teaching efforts.

References


The Quest For Peace and Justice: Examining the Nexus between Peace Education and Adult Education

Hleziphi Naomie Nyanungo
Institute of Peace, Leadership and Governance, Africa University, Zimbabwe

Abstract: The author critically analyzes assumptions embedded in the two fields of practice: peace education and adult education for social change and social action. Preliminary findings from a review of literature from the two fields of practice are presented.

Background

The mission of Mobile Assistance Organization⁶ (MAO), a non-governmental organization in Zimbabwe, is to assist internally displaced and mobile vulnerable populations. The organization provides humanitarian assistance to individuals and families who are displaced from their homes due to events such as natural disasters and conflict situations. In the turbulent period immediately following Zimbabwe’s 2008 elections, MAO focused its efforts on assisting individuals and families who had been displaced as a consequence of post-election violence. They helped villagers who found themselves destitute after their houses were burnt down by neighbors who supported a different political party. MAO also provided shelter to individuals who fled their homes because of threats to their lives on the basis of their support for the “wrong” political party. To these individuals and families who suddenly found themselves without a home, MAO offered assistance in the form of temporary shelter, food, blankets and clothes. MAO also facilitated the process for individuals and families who were displaced to either return to their communities of origin, or helped them establish homes in new communities. In their efforts to reintegrate the displaced into their original communities, or integrate them into new communities, MAO had to contend with the challenge of conflict in communities. For individuals and families returning to their original communities, it meant confronting neighbors who may have been the perpetrators of violence. In the case of persons relocating to new (host) communities, there was conflict as new residents were viewed with suspicion and hostility given the political climate prevailing at the time. In particularly poor communities MAO found that other residents were hostile to the returning or new residents because of the support they were receiving from MAO. Ideally, MAO provides assistance until the point where the family has successfully resettled. The conflicts were therefore significantly hindering MAO’s operations. The organization positions itself as a non-partisan humanitarian agency that only provides material humanitarian assistance. However, the situation in Zimbabwe at that time made it difficult for MAO to avoid directly addressing conflict.

I was introduced to MAO at a time when the organization was formulating a strategy in response to the conflict. The strategy they chose was to conduct peace education workshops in the communities in which they worked. The goal of the workshops was to enhance the capacity of communities to manage and/or resolve conflict. In integrating peace education as a strategy in community practice, MAO was following a growing trend I have observed among community practitioners and educators in Zimbabwe and other countries in Africa. Peace education seems to have become the tool of choice for managing and/or resolving conflict. There is an assumption

⁶ A pseudonym has been used to protect the identity of the organization.
that people engage in conflict, particularly violent conflict, because they do not know how to be peaceful or at least how to resolve conflicts peacefully. I find this assumption rather unsettling because it does not seem to address the roots of the conflict. If anything, it suggests that the causes of the conflict are the actors involved. However, as an adult educator I find myself grappling with how my field of practice might help address this situation better. And here I find myself echoing questions asked by fellow adult educator Michael Newman (1994) when he writes, “where are the practical proposals for helping people learn how to curb real or potential violence, and resist unsolicited impositions on people’s space and freedom by others” (Newman, 1994, p. 7). These observations and questions generated my interest in exploring the assumptions about peace and conflict embedded in peace education and adult education for community change. Moreover, I was motivated to learn about how the goals and processes of peace education are similar and/or different from adult education for social action and social change in community settings? Guided by these questions, I conducted a critical review of literature from two fields of study and practice: peace education and adult education for social action and social change. The overarching purpose of the literature review was to identify assumptions about peace and conflict underlying theories and practice in adult education and peace education. I present preliminary findings of this literature review in this paper.

**Peace and Justice: The Aims of Peace Education and Adult Education**

Salomon (2004) describes the general aim of peace education as “changed attitudes, increased tolerance, reduced prejudices, weakened stereotypes, and changed conceptions of self and other” (p. 2). Peace educators teach their students about what is peace, how to achieve it and the challenges to its achievement (Harris, 2004). However, as is the case in adult education (Spencer, 1998), there are varying strands of peace education. At least four categories of peace education are identified: (1) peace education that focuses on changing the mindsets of individuals; (2) peace education geared at providing skills for resolving and managing conflict; (3) peace education that seeks to promote human rights; and (4) peace education that emphasizes increasing awareness on issues such as environmentalism, disarmament, and promoting a culture of peace (Danesh, 2006; Harris, 2004).

When the field of adult education is categorized by its different purposes and aims, social change and social action is identified as one of several categories (Newman, 1994; Spencer, 1998). Constructed as such, adult education is perceived as a tool that can be used by people, particularly those who are oppressed, to analyze, challenge and transform oppressive social structures and bring about social justice (Baptiste, 1999; Cunningham, 1996; Foley, 1999; Freire, 1974, 2000; Horton & Freire, 1990; Newman, 1994; Nyerere, 1978). A branch of peace education that is closely aligned to adult education for social change and social action is what Harris (2004) refers to as “development education” (Harris, 2004, p. 12). My discussion on peace education will therefore focus on this branch of peace education.

Development [peace] education seeks to address issues of structural violence. Johan Galtung is credited with starting this branch of peace education in the 1960s when he proposed that structural violence distinguished negative peace from positive peace (Harris, 2004). Negative peace refers to the absence of direct or overt violence while positive peace is the removal of structural violence beyond the absence of direct violence, i.e. “the presence of an identifiable actor who causes physical harm” (Jeong, 2000, p. 23). In this way, peace is defined as not merely the lack of overt, physical violence. Causes of structural violence include cultural violence, human rights violation, and imperialism (Galtung, 2002; Harris, 2004; Jeong, 2000).
would therefore appear that development [peace] education and adult education for social change have in common the concern with oppressive social structures.

From the foregoing, it is apparent that the structural violence which is referenced in peace education is synonymous to oppressive social structures. This is evident in the following excerpt from “Pedagogy of the Oppressed:”

Any situation in which “A” objectively exploits “B” or hinders his and her pursuit of self-affirmation as a responsible person is one of oppression. Such a situation in itself constitutes violence, even when sweetened by false generosity, because it interferes with the individual’s ontological and historical vocation to be more fully human. With the establishment of a relationship of oppression, violence has already [emphasis in original] begun. Never in history has violence been initiated by the oppressed... Violence is initiated by those who oppress, who exploit, who fail to recognize others as persons—not by those who are oppressed, exploited and unrecognized (Freire, 2000, p. 55).

Based on this, I surmise that the aims or goals of development [peace] education and adult education for social change are the same – to change social structures that oppress people, and to remove the causes of structural violence to any group of people.

An underlying assumption shared by the two fields is that structural violence and oppression are a result of unequal power and resource distribution. I tentatively conclude that adult education for social action and development education share the aim of ending structural violence. However, there appears to be a divergence in embedded assumptions related to what happens when these oppressive social structures that cause structural violence are transformed or removed. Adult education assumes that the result will be a more just and equal society, while peace education envisions a peaceful society. In defining positive peace as the absence of structural violence that causes conflict, peace education equates social justice to peace. In other words, social justice is peace. I find no evidence to suggest that adult education share this assumption. To the contrary, it appears that adult education assumes social justice is necessary for peace to prevail. Put differently, adult education assumes social justice leads to peace. Although subtle, this difference is significant and has far reaching implications. My preliminary analysis suggests that adult education and peace education share similar goals but different (albeit related) objectives.

Means and Ways

Let us now consider the assumptions embedded in strategies advocated by peace educators and adult educators for achieving the shared aforementioned goal of ending structural violence. A key principle of the adult education approach to social change and social action is that those that are oppressed should play a central role in ending their oppression. The role of adult education is therefore to help people participate as subjects in the struggle for their own liberation from oppression (Cunningham, 1996; Freire, 2000; Horton & Freire, 1990). Central to this approach is the concept of critical consciousness where “the oppressed unveil the world of oppression and through the praxis commit themselves to its transformation” (Freire, 2000, p. 54). A similar strategy is employed in development [peace] education as explained by Harris (2004) in the excerpt below:

Peace educators use development studies to provide their students with insights into the various aspects of structural violence, focusing on social institutions with their hierarchies and propensities for dominance and oppression. Students in peace education classes learn about the plight of the poor and construct developmental strategies to address problems of
structural violence…This form of peace education teaches peace building strategies that use non-violence to improve human communities (Harris, 2004, p. 10)

Peace educators emphasize non-violent strategies for bringing about change. It is, however, not clear whether “violence” as used in the context of advocated “non-violent strategies” refers to just direct and overt physical violence, or if it also includes structural violence. In the adult education discourse, the notions of non-violence and neutrality as strategies for bringing about change have been problematized (Baptiste 2000, 2001; Newman, 1994). These adult educators recognize that violence exists in different forms and levels beyond the physical and while they do not advocate for violence, they push for educators to consider strategies that are appropriate for specific situations. For example, Baptiste (2001) argues that there are instances where coercive strategies are necessary to transform oppressive structures. Newman writes:

To bring about social rather than individual change, it is crucial for disempowered groups to consider adopting proactive strategies: strategies that will impinge on their enemies as on themselves…Our learners may not use the strategy of open conflict but we must remember that their enemies may not be nice people. They may be duplicitous and violent and our learners are lost if we and they have not prepared for this…We and our learners must always keep in mind that it is the enemy [emphasis in original] – the polluters, the despoilers, the corrupt and the corruptors, the bigots and the racists – who should change (Newman, 1994, pp. 130 - 133)

Given the difference in objectives noted in the preceding section, it is not surprising that my research has not yielded peace scholars making similar statements about strategies for dismantling oppressive structures.

It is common place for peace education activities to bring together people from groups engaged in conflict, for example, Palestinians and Israelis (Salomon, 2004). The aim is to change perceptions, attitudes and feelings that will hopefully lead to different understanding and relating between groups of people. Salomon (2004) notes five challenges to peace education meeting this aim:

1) Collective narratives and historical memories of groups
2) Collectively held beliefs about “us” and “them”
3) Built-in inequalities that imply different groups pursue different, and often opposing agendas
4) Excessive emotionality such as anger, bereavement, fear and uncertainty
5) Context of animosity, fear and belligerence as peace education is often viewed as subversive activity

The literature in adult education gives minimal consideration to interactions where the distinction between “oppressor” and “oppressed” is not so clear cut, or where members of conflicting groups come together to examine their different realities in the same activity. Even where different groups come together, such as the situation of African-American and European-Americans coming together at Myles Horton’s Highlander Folk school, activities were conducted towards a common enemy – racial discrimination (Horton & Freire, 1990).

**Implications and Recommendations for Adult Education**

My review literature thus far has yielded subtle and yet significant differences in approaches to social change from the perspectives of adult education and peace education. Based on my preliminary analysis, I have concluded that development [peace] education and adult
education for social change and social action may be viewed as different approaches to attacking a common enemy: oppressive social structures that inflict structural violence on the oppressed. However, the two fields of practice differ in their reasons for attacking their common enemy. From the perspective of peace education, this enemy (oppressive social structures) is what stands in the way of positive peace. Thus the removal of this enemy is assumed to automatically result in a society characterized by positive peace. Adult education, on the other hand, views oppressive social structures as the hindrance to social justice and equality. However, adult education does not assume that the achievement of social justice and equality marks the attainment of peace. My preliminary findings on this topic suggest great potential for further research in this area. One potential area for future research is on the content or curriculum for peace education (particularly development education) and adult education for social change.

Let us return to the peace education workshops that were being organized by MAO to address conflict in community settings in my introduction to this paper. I conclude this paper by listing a few recommendations that I, as an adult educator, would make to MAO as the organization attempts to address conflicts in the communities in which they operate. In making these recommendations, I draw upon the strengths of both development [peace] education and adult education for social change identified in the paper.

1) Engage the residents of the community in examining issues facing their communities rather than provide instruction on conflict resolution. Conflict is usually a symptom of deeper, structural issues.
2) From examining the structural issues, assist residents in identifying and implementing possible solutions for identified issues. Conflict resolution workshops can be integrated as part of a broader capacity-building project to implement solutions.
3) Involve community residents, as well as those that are displaced, in making decisions about resettlements and providing support for the resettled.
4) Reconsider strategies that create conditions of inequality by privileging one group over another, e.g. if blankets are being distributed, they should be distributed to all who need blankets rather than just the resettled.
5) Be prepared to work with the communities for the long term on these issues and beyond the provision of humanitarian assistance. One strategy might be to develop collaborative relationships with other organizations working in those communities and to strengthen the capacity of local groups and associations.

The implementation of these recommendations would shift MAO’s operations from merely providing humanitarian assistance to playing a role in transforming oppressive social structures.

Works Cited


Alain Locke’s “Beloved Community:” The Notion of Community, African and African-American Visual Art, and Locke’s Political and Educational Thought

Ann Marie O’Brien
Northern Illinois University
DeKalb, IL USA

Abstract: This paper examines how the notion of community is embedded in Locke’s writing on visual art and is an important aspect of Locke’s political and educational thought in the context of his practice of adult and higher education.

Introduction to Alain Locke

In recent years there has been a growing body of research on Alain Locke. Writers have analyzed his views on adult education, on the education of African-Americans, and most importantly, his views on culture and cultural pluralism. Lost in the discussion, is that Locke’s views on culture and education are embedded with his broad conceptualization of aesthetics and art. Surprisingly, this facet of his work has received little attention. The purpose of this paper is to examine and place Locke’s aesthetic philosophy, through his writing and teaching on African American art and culture in American visual arts, in the context of his practice of adult and higher education, in order to begin a discussion of this aspect of Locke’s work, and the role that it plays in our current understanding of his views about adult education. This paper examines how the notion of community is embedded in Locke’s writing on visual art and is an important aspect of Locke’s political and educational thought.

Alain Leroy Locke was a Harvard graduate in 1907 where he studied with such luminaries as George H. Palmer and Josiah Royce. He was the first African-American Rhodes Scholar in 1907, studying at Oxford and the University of Berlin before returning to the United States. He received his doctorate in Philosophy from Harvard University in 1918. He was the founder and Chair of the Philosophy Department of Howard University where he taught for 40 years, introducing philosophy, aesthetics, and anthropology to the curriculum. He assisted in the development of the first college theater and art gallery at Howard University. He was the intellectual leader of the Harlem Renaissance, philosopher, social critic, literary critic, adult educator, and cultural pluralist. He was the president (1946-1947), and member of the American Association of Adult Educator’s executive board for over 15 years (Guy, 1993).

Alain Locke was a principal interpreter of the Harlem Renaissance by virtue of his 1925 anthology, The New Negro, his promotional activities, and his extensive writing on black music, art, and literature. As African American philosopher and cultural critic, and author of the path breaking studies Negro Art: Past and Present (1936) and The Negro in Art (1940) during the New Negro Movement and Harlem Renaissance, Locke presided over the flourishing of self-consciously racial art movement in America and has been widely credited with providing the philosophical basis for its emergence. As a cultural theorist, Locke figures most prominently in histories of Black literary modernism and the performing arts (Calo, 2007).

Locke’s contributions to the wider literature of art history are, however, far less known. His essays on the history and impact of visual culture from the African Diaspora are recognized today as among the first American publications in these respective subject areas, but the vast literature on modernist primitivism and colonialism rarely considers Locke’s work, even though he wrote about both throughout his career. Locke has received insufficient attention for his
unique insight into the broad forces that shaped American modernism and cultural nationalism in the visual arts (Calo, 2007).

**Alain Lock, New Negro Art, and the American Association of Adult Educators**

Locke attempted to anchor New Negro art in a coherent set of aesthetic ideals. But many of the early exhibition venues for African American visual art, the Harlem branches of the New York Public Library and the YWCA, the Harmon Foundation traveling shows sponsored frequently by Interracial Councils, and the Federal Art Project, had primarily social and educational agendas of which art was a small part (Calo, 2007). *Negro Art: Past and Present* was first and foremost an educational project that was created as part of the Bronze Booklets, published by the Associates in Negro Folk Education and funded by the Carnegie Corporation. The series grew out of the Experiment in Negro Adult Education, a project administered by the American Association of Adult Educators (AAAE), a Carnegie affiliate (Calo, 2007).

Locke was hired by the Carnegie Corporation in 1933 to monitor and assess the outcome of Negro adult educational programs being conducted by public libraries in Atlanta and Harlem. His preliminary reports to the Carnegie Corporation noted that the dearth of available materials on Negro history and culture made progress in this initiative difficult. He recommended that the AAAE underwrite publication of a set of syllabi or structured study aids to facilitate Negro adult education. As a result, AAAE agreed to support publication of a collection of texts on Negro achievement and contributions to various fields. Locke served as editor and authored texts on both art and music (Calo, 2007).

African American art was rarely seen in a professional art context, and only in the case of the Federal Art Project. It can be said that the social agenda was in effect an intrinsic art agenda. Notwithstanding Locke’s elegant discussions on the subject, for the most part African American visual art in the early twentieth century was inextricable from the doctrines of racial uplift, mass public education, and progressive social reform that motivated its supporters to seek an audience (Calo, 2007).

As a cultural theorist, Locke occupied himself with the construction of a viable collective identity for African Americans that embodied a critical understanding of the relationship between race, nation, and democracy in modern America. Hutchinson defines this project as fundamental to our understanding of the Harlem Renaissance itself and the creative work that emerged in its wake. New Negro artists, he claims, appealed to Americanism, and “need to reconceptualize the meaning of American national culture in a way that takes account of the significance of racism in American history and the African American creative response to their conditions in the New World” (Hutchinson as cited in Calo, 2007, p. 63).

**The Harlem Renaissance, The New Negro, and Beloved Community**

It is believed that there is no better introduction to the Harlem Renaissance than to read *The New Negro*. The anthology grew out of a special, March 1925 “Harlem number” of The Survey, a journal devoted to current social problems. Since the early 1920s, The Survey, had run a series of annual “racial numbers” which sought to “make articulate the aspirations and social statescraft of a people” (The Survey as cited by Spear in Locke, 1968, p. xiv). Issues on Ireland, Russia, and Mexico had already appeared when the magazine’s editor, Paul U. Kellogg, decided upon a special issue on Harlem. As his usual practice, Kellogg brought in an outside editor, choosing Alain Locke, professor of Philosophy at Howard University (Spear in Locke, 1968, p.xiv). Locke wrote towards the end of the first chapter that:
...for the present, more immediate hope rests in the revaluation by white and black alike of the Negro in terms of his artistic endowments and cultural contributions, past and prospective. It must be increasingly recognized that the Negro has already made very substantial contributions, not only in his folk-art, music especially, which has always found appreciation, but in the larger, though humbler and less acknowledged ways. For generations the Negro has been the peasant matrix of that section of America which has most undervalued him, and here he has contributed not only materially in labor and in social patience, but spiritually as well. The South has unconsciously absorbed the gift of his folk-temperament. In less than half a generation it will be easier to recognize this, but the fact remains that a leaven of humor, sentiment, imagination and tropic nonchalance has gone into the making of the South from a humble, unacknowledged source. A second crop of the Negro’s gifts promises still more largely. He now becomes a conscious contributor and lays aside the status of a beneficiary and ward for that of a collaborator and participant in American civilization. The great social gain in this is the releasing of our talented group from the arid fields of controversy and debate to the productive fields of creative expression. The especially cultural recognition they win should in turn prove the key to that revaluation of the Negro which must precede or accompany any considerable further betterment of race relationships. But whatever the general effect, the present generation will have added the motives of self-expression and spiritual development to the old and still unfinished task of making material headway and progress. No one who understandingly faces the situation with its substantial accomplishment or views the new scene with its still more abundant promise can be entirely without hope. And certainly, if in our lifetime the Negro should not be able to celebrate his full initiation into American democracy, he can at least, on the warrant of these things, celebrate the attainment of a significant and satisfying new phase of group development, and with it a spiritual Coming of Age (Locke, 1925, pp.15-16).

While Locke does not say “Beloved Community” in his essay, he described the ideals of it. Locke embraced the romantic idea that races are characterized by their spiritual and artistic gifts—an idea that remained central to Black cultural politics. Locke also embraced the historical concept of race, developing it in a more specifically political direction while retaining its connection to the idea of cultural creativity in the ideal of the Beloved Community. He had the vision of self-realization through participation in a democratic culture, a vision that inspired a range of progressive intellectuals, both Black and White, urban reformers, Young Americans, cultural pluralists, Black theorists and in later years, Martin Luther King Jr. and the civil rights movement (Smith, 2007).

The Concept of Beloved Community

It was Locke’s professor, Josiah Royce at Harvard, who was the first to use the term “Beloved Community.” Josiah Royce had a vision of the city as a social ideal, what he called in 1913 the “Beloved Community.” Following the Apostle Paul, Royce stressed that the “Beloved Community” had not yet appeared—it remained for “the faithful” to “create” it: “It has not been
my privilege to tell you where the true Church is today to be found. As a fact, I believe it still to be an invisible Church” (Royce as cited in Scruggs, 1993, p.226).

Around that key phrase developed an important school of American school of social thought, including in its first generation Van Wyck Brooks, Randolph Bourne, Lewis Mumford, Waldo Frank, Kenneth Burke, and other critics, poets, and novelists. Among those it influenced were Jean Toomer and Alain Locke in the 1920s, Richard Wright, in the 1930s and Martin Luther King, Jr. in the 1950s and 60s. King, referring to the goals of the new Southern Christian Leadership Conference, would write in 1957, that “the ultimate aim of SCLC is to foster and create the ‘Beloved Community’ in America” (King as cited in Scruggs, 1993, p.3).

What King came to see as a goal for human society in general had already been presented as a model in Alain Locke’s anthology, The New Negro in 1925. Locke compared two kinds of “bonds,” the bond between African Americans in the past, which Locke said had been created by the de jure and de facto condition of bondage, and those created by the new city of Harlem, which was “the laboratory of a great race welding” (Locke as cited in Scruggs, 1993, pp.3-4).

This new city within a city promised an authentic, spiritual bonding:

hitherto… the chief bond between them (Negroes) has been that of common condition rather than a common consciousness; a problem in common rather than a life in common. In Harlem, Negro life is seizing upon its first chances for group expression and self-determination. In Harlem, an invisible city (“a common consciousness… a life in common”) would replace a visible “condition (Locke as cited in Scruggs, 1993, pp.3-4).

Locke according to Scruggs (1993), found Randolph Bourne’s secularization of the Beloved Community more attractive than Royce’s Christian emphasis, because of Bourne’s sociological focus on the American city, immigrant urban culture and his view of the city as the new home of the Beloved Community. Bourne’s essay, “Trans-National America,” was first published in 1916 in the Atlantic Monthly, in which he proclaimed that “all our idealisms must be those of future social goals in which all can participate, the good life of personality lived in the environment of the Beloved Community” (Bourne as cited in Blake, 1990, p.124). Scruggs (1993), maintains that Locke borrowed freely from Bourne’s article. His borrowings ranged from specific phrases to the notion that the Beloved Community was a “higher ideal than the “melting pot.” (Locke as cited in Scruggs, 1993, p.226).

Smith (2007) calls it ironic that the idea of the Beloved Community stems in large part from the anti-urban discourse of the nineteenth century English social critics John Ruskin and William Morris. Ruskin and Morris helped to inspire the settlement movement. Ruskin and Morris saw the city less as the site of a reconstructed modern community than as a symptom of a civilization in crisis, they worried about the effect of industrialization and urbanization on humankind’s relationship to the natural world and on the means of maintaining vital communal life. They also thought art was central to their goal of vital, creative communities and were equally concerned with labor and how the organization of labor affects human aesthetic and spiritual relationships to nature. Ruskin and Morris responded to the rise of the industrial city by developing an ideal conception of community to be realized in a reformed version of English village life. Ruskin reasoned that England’s national character had been warped by the dominance of the profit motive in the economic and most other spheres of life, production of material goods should be guided by higher motives, by aesthetic and humane considerations.
Both Ruskin and Morris sought to reunite artistic and industrial production to revive the artistry involved in making ordinary objects in order to make manual labor more pleasurable and ennobling (Smith, 2007).

Ruskin and Morris had widespread influence in late nineteenth and early twentieth-century England and America. Many American social theorists saw in their ideas a blueprint for more humane and vital urban communities. American urban reformers however, according to Smith (2007), faced an additional challenge in the cultural diversity created by America’s history of slavery and immigration. Cultural pluralism was also integral to the idea of the Beloved Community. Josiah Royce, Locke’s teacher, envisioned national and international unity growing out of healthy, robust “provinces” defined as “…any one part of a national domain, which is, geographically and socially, sufficiently unified to have a true consciousness of its own unity; to feel a pride to its own ideals and customs; and to possess a sense of its own distinction from other parts of the country” (Royce as cited in Smith, 2007, p.175). Royce, according to Smith encouraged provincialism for its tendency to create cultural diversity, which supported individuality, and for its tendency to contribute to “‘well-knit (social) organization’. ‘National unity,’ he argued, must grow together with local ‘independence of spirit’” (p.175).

The Young Americans, Waldo Frank, Lewis Mumford, Randolph Bourne, and Van Wyck Brooks, applied this set of ideals specifically to the urban environment, which in their eyes represented the dominant trends shaping modern communities in general. The United States in the twentieth century, they believed would be an urban nation, so it is in the city that they hoped to find a viable model of community. Drawing on Ruskin’s critique of the industrial separation of art and labor, Royce’s cultural pluralism, and Dewey’s pragmatic liberalism, they imagined a reformed democratic culture that would provide a common life for its inhabitants, a nation of small, tight-knit communities, like urban neighborhoods, that would provide a strong sense of place and social support for the expression of individuality, particularly through art. Like Ruskin, the Young Americans put special emphasis on the role of art in community-making. A healthy public culture, they argued, has as its end the flourishing of human personality, which ultimately takes the form of artistic expression. Art according to the Young Americans not only expresses the individual’s unique perspective on the common life of the group, it also serves as a way for humans to establish a meaningful connection to the external environment (Smith, 2007).


Here in Harlem— Locke pointed out, was—the first concentration in history of so many diverse elements of Negro life… It has attracted the African, the West Indian, the Negro American; has brought together the Negro of the North and the Negro of the South; the man from the city and the man from the town and village; the peasant, the student, the business man, the professional man, artist, poet, musician, adventurer and worker, preacher and criminal, exploiter and social outcast…These diverse elements have been brought by proscription and prejudice into a common area of contact and interaction—the result, Lock believed—was a great race-welding…Heretofore, it must be admitted that American Negroes have been a race more in name than in fact… The chief bond between them has
been that of a common condition rather than a common consciousness, a problem in common rather than a life in common. In Harlem, Negro life is seizing upon its first chances for group expression and self-determination (Locke as cited in Smith, 2007, p.177).

This need to give meaning to the environment is precisely why Locke urged African American artists to draw on their collective memory, not to limit their themes but to begin the task of interpreting the African American experience, thus welding the African American crowd into a community. For if a community lacks the means of self-expression and the ability to preserve and pass down its cultural traditions, its members would not be able to make sense of their world. Under this view, African American art should arise out of, but also help to create racial consciousness. Locke hoped that art would produce among African Americans a “self-culture” which in turn would build community by orienting diverse individuals to a common life (Locke as cited in Smith, 2007, p.177). In theory, such expression would also create better mutual understanding between the races, leading to full participation by African Americans in American political and economic institutions.

For these reasons, because art and creativity are fundamental to the vision of Beloved Community, when we speak of Locke and all his efforts and accomplishments as the intellectual leader of the Harlem Renaissance, philosopher, social critic, literary critic, adult educator, and cultural pluralist, we cannot separate his political views from his writing on art. We study the history and philosophy of adult education to help understand practice. The question we need to ask ourselves now, is how do we bring the vision of the Beloved Community to our classrooms and our campuses?

References
Whole-Person Learning: Lessons from Integral Health-Care Practitioners and Their Implications for Adult Education

Gabrielle Pelicci, Ph.D.

Knowledge is not a matter for the head alone, but for the heart and spirit, the body and mind; an adventure for the whole of our human being.

The integration of all aspects of an individual prepares one for collective knowledge, a new knowledge…

Tarthang Tulku, 1987, pp. 80, 164

For over a decade, I’ve studied the humanities, education and Complementary and Alternative Medicine. It began as a personal interest and transformed into a professional one. As an undergraduate psychology student, I explored the mind and the various methods of psychotherapy. During graduate school, I became exposed to eastern philosophies and religions, and I began practicing meditation as a means to quiet the mind and bring my life into balance. As I followed this path, it led to several trainings in holistic studies including a massage therapy program, a yoga teacher training and a certification in Healing Touch, an energy-based approach to health and healing.

During my doctoral program at the California Institute of Integral Studies (CIIS), I compiled all the knowledge and experience I had accumulated into a dissertation. For my research study, I interviewed six women healers. The purpose of this study was to uncover the learning experiences of Integral Health-Care Practitioners in order to construct an education system based on integration, collaboration, and whole-person learning. After studying the text for several months, six themes were developed: Importance of a Support Network, Multiple Ways of Learning and Self-Transformation, Nature as a Teacher, Energy as a Teacher, Integral Approach, and Purpose Driven Life. Once the themes were identified, I proceeded to weave the analysis of the life stories with the current literature and create a cultural, historical and social context for the themes identified in the life stories. This process of working with each theme to create a clear and coherent presentation lasted about 18 months and went through several transformations as the data became more integrated into my thinking.

For the purpose of this paper, I want to explore the lessons learned from the participants and the implications for adult education. The first theme, Importance of a Support Network, teaches us that support networks provide companionship, resources, inspiration, guidance, connection and stability in times of hardship. The current research on healthcare reports that social relationships serve important social, psychological, and behavioral functions across the lifespan (Berkowitz, 2002; Ornish, 2006; Uchino, Cacioppo & Kiecolt-Glaser, 1996). Gathering with others also reduces the risk of disease, death, and physical impairments. Not having close friends or confidants is as detrimental to health as smoking or carrying extra weight (Berkowitz, 2002). In an educational setting, adult learners can increase their support network by participating in learning communities and mentorship programs during the course of their studies so that they have the necessary support for their growth and development. Learning communities have been shown to increase student retention, improve academic achievement, increase student
involvement and motivation, and enhance student development in a variety of educational settings. Mentorship programs in an educational setting have similar benefits to learning communities.

With regards to Multiple Ways of Learning and Self-Transformation, becoming an Integral Health-Care Practitioner requires mindful learning, informational learning and transformational learning. It requires the ability to grow beyond cultural conditioning and the conventional paradigm to embrace a holistic worldview. It requires continuous creation of new categories, openness to new information and an implicit awareness of more than one perspective. And it requires the ability to not only change what we know but how we know. In an educational setting, multiple kinds of learning including mindful learning, informational learning, and transformative learning, can be integrated into the adult education curriculum to arm the adult learner with knowledge that she can use for her own self-development. Tools for the reflection process including meditation, yoga, journaling and dialogue will foster self-awareness, mental clarity, and help the adult learner to express, organize and evaluate her thoughts. The process of learning can also be facilitated by engaging in intention-setting, goal-setting and learning to see obstacles as opportunities for growth. Addressing the personal process of transformation through learning and not just the content of the learning will serve to better prepare the adult learner for the transformative learning experience.

With regards to Nature as a Teacher, the women in the study had many extraordinary experiences and learned several significant lessons from nature. Several researchers from diverse backgrounds including science, anthropology, philosophy and metaphysics have written about the sacred and intelligent power of nature (Abram, 1996; Tompkins and Bird, 1989; Chopra, 1989; Goodenough, 1998; Roads, 1990; Sahtouris, 2000). The education of the adult learner should emphasize the connections between the adult learner, the body and nature to create a holistic and balanced educational experience. In order to foster a relationship with nature, the adult learner should be educated about the ecological nature-based worldview and participate in experiential nature-based exercises. There are several organizations including the Council of All Beings and the Sierra Club which help individuals to find meaning and transformative power in nature. Traveling to various places in nature such as mountains, ocean, and desert would greatly enhance the adult learner’s awareness of the ways in which diverse environments change our sensations, experiences and perceptions. Engaging in interactive exercises to practice letting go of the socially constructed, isolated self would also help the adult learner get in touch with her interexistence with all forms of life and understand the holistic worldview.

For the fourth theme, Energy as Teacher, energy is defined as the life-force that is part of everything that exists and sustains living beings (Brennan, 1987, 1993; Hover-Kramer, 2002; Joy, 1979). Concepts of energy can be found in many cultures including India (prana) and China (chi). The participants in this study describe energy as a force that is creative, moving, fluid, reproductive, generational and spiritual. They experience it as colors, tingling, vibration and connectedness. Directly connected with the life-force energy improves our health, brings forth inner creativity, and brings us great joy in being alive (Keeney, 1997). Contemplative practices are one way to get in touch with the life-force energy. Contemplative practices can be a gateway into the deeper dimensions of learning (Robinson, 2004) and can improve attention, concentration, academic achievement and reduce stress (Shapiro, Brown & Astin, 2009). Exploring contemplative practices gives adult learners the resources that they can use not only to connect with energy but also to become more engaged and less overwhelmed with their studies.
For the fifth theme, Integral Approach, we learn that an integral healer is someone who is transformed, deeply changed, healed and whole, expanded in consciousness, uses personal development and self-care and a holistic lens to view the world (Khanna, 2004; Wilber 2004). This philosophy could easily be adopted by an integral education program for adult learners and could be implemented through individual and group work. Todd Jennings (1997) highlighted the way that integral education "promotes learning and teaching in non-fragmented ways that embrace notions of holism, complexity and interconnection" (p.1). This approach educates adult learners for being flexible and adaptive in an unpredictable and changing world. It gives them a whole-person experience of learning that integrates all aspects of the human being – physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual – and prepares them for a new knowledge.

With regards to the last theme, a Purpose Driven Life, one of the most frequent failures in education is that students rarely say that they find studying to be intrinsically rewarding. This is a critical problem. One of the most straightforward conclusions of research from the past two decades is that extrinsic motivation alone is likely to have precisely the opposite impact that we want it to have on student achievement. Teaching adult learners how to make choices that fulfill their calling and assisting them in creating a life that is abundant with meaning and value should be the mission of adult education. If it is observed that a student does not have a passion for what they are learning, that student should be encouraged to explore other avenues that may lead to a more purposeful or fulfilling life. To increase motivation in an educational setting, adult learners could be given choices of courses, assignments, and projects during their study. They could be involved in the decision-making of what they learn and how they learn to increase their sense of control. Collaboration will manifest from their involvement in the learning communities and meaning will come from helping them to create goals that are relevant and significant to them. There are also great exercises that can be extracted from resources such as Adrienne’s (1999) book, Finding the Purpose of Your Life, to achieve this objective.

In conclusion, in order for us to be more successful as educators, we need to make education more rewarding and meaningful for adult learners. The lessons learned from Integral Health-Care practitioners can help us to create a whole-person education system that addresses the physical, mental, emotional and spiritual needs of adult learners, giving them the necessary support framework for their growth and development and allowing them to experience great joy and creativity while they are learning. In my own teaching at Sober College, UCLA and the California Institute of Integral Studies, I am guided by the themes in this study and I have seen great results. Not only have students increased their academic achievement, but they have changed their priorities, managed their time differently, reconnected with others and reported that the courses were life-changing. We have a great opportunity to learn from the lessons contained in the life stories of integral health-care practitioners and to share those lessons with adult learners so that we might create a better education system, a system based on integration, collaboration and whole-person learning.

References

The Life Story of President Barack Obama: Using Critical Race Theory to Analyze Life Experience

Elizabeth A. Peterson, Ed.D.
National-Louis University, Chicago, Illinois

Wendy B. Yanow, Ed.D.
National-Louis University, Chicago, Illinois

Abstract: Using Critical Race Theory (CRT) as a lens and interest convergence and color-blind ideology as foci to explore the life experience of President Barack Obama, this study provides a framework for using CRT as a lens for examining life experience.

Introduction

Where better to begin a journey of new learning than an examination of our life experience? Adult education often begins with an exploration of life experience. And personal narratives or autobiographies often serve as the foundation for that exploration and for the potential learning each may gain as a result. While simply recalling experience allows for some amount of learning, deep learning comes when experience is examined through a critical lens. Using Critical Race Theory (CRT) as a lens and interest convergence and color-blind ideology as foci to explore the life experience of President Barack Obama, this study provides a framework for using CRT as a lens for examining life experience.

In Dreams from Our Fathers (Obama, 2004) his personal narrative, Barack Obama examines how he made sense of his life experience as a biracial child growing up in the United States in the generation immediately following Civil Rights. Throughout the book he describes racialized experiences that served as transitional learning points. Obama’s personal narratives provide an opportunity to explore the specific impact of color-blind ideology and interest convergence on daily life experience. And because of his public prominence today and willingness to discuss race, Obama’s narrative, in combination with his current comments in the context of his inauguration as President of the United States, provides an opportunity to look at racialized experience in the aggregate.

Premises guiding our work:
1. We can use CRT to gain a deeper understanding of experience with race in the United States.
2. The possibility exists for interest convergence to serve a positive role in a society where racism is considered endemic.
3. We can reexamine color-blind ideology to explicate its role in a society where racism is considered endemic.

Critical Race Theory, Interest Convergence and Color-blind Ideology

Fundamental tenets of CRT begin with the notion that racism, rather than being a reflection of aberrant behavior, is actually a reflection of normal life in this country. We are being intentional about using Critical Race Theory as an analytical lens because we believe that race
had a significant impact on the shaping of Obama’s life and in bringing him to the position he now holds, President of the United States of America.

An outgrowth of both Critical Legal Studies of the 1960s and the limited progressivism resulting from the Civil Rights Movement, Critical Race Theory evolved as a separate legal study in which the law was held accountable for its complicity in upholding the root cause of discrimination and oppression, which was racism. Derrick Bell, one of the architects of CRT, developed the theory as a lens to look at legal policy and decisions. He and others unpacked decisions, such as Brown v. Board of Education so that their true nature, from a critical racialized perspective, was exposed. By exploring the ways in which both whites and blacks might benefit from Brown v. Board, Bell demonstrated that the implementation of the law meant that black students would remain at a disadvantage.

Interest convergence, another basic tenet of CRT suggests that whites, or members of the privileged group, will only support anti-racist movements when there is benefit to whites (Bell, 2005). Supreme Court cases such as Brown v. Board of Education “cannot be understood without some consideration of the…value to whites…the economic and political advances at home and abroad that would follow abandonment of segregation” (Bell, 1995, p. 22-23).

As an outgrowth of the Civil Rights Movement, the concept of color-blindness, the notion that in decision-making matters, color should not matter, also gained strength. Although it began and grew as a liberal or progressive concept, color-blindness, today, works in the opposite as a “dangerously conservative approach” (Yanow, 2007, p. 41). In addition to its wholesale lack of recognition of the historical impact of race on experience, “color-blindness…allows us to ignore the racial construction of Whiteness and reinforces its privilege and oppressive power” (Taylor, 1999, p. 184). As a result, color-blindness can serve as an example of interest convergence.

**Research Paradigm and Methodology; Analytical Lens and Instructional Strategy**

As a framework for educational equity, CRT is a research paradigm as well as a research methodology; it is an analytical lens and an instructional strategy. As a research paradigm, CRT allows for a view of experience through a racialized lens. Beginning with the recognition that bias exists, i.e. racism is a normal reflection of our society, opens the door for more complex analysis of seemingly neutral experiences. The methodology or narrative analysis is in the reading of personal narratives such as autobiographies or life histories. CRT becomes an analytical lens when it is used to identify and explicate racialized experiences and it is an instructional strategy when adult learners, for example, are invited to create, and critically reflect upon, the stories which make up their life experiences. Writing stories based upon life experience can be a powerful tool for drawing out racialized and other, oppressive, themes.

Personal narratives can be the basis of an empirical study because they are the “truth,” a representation of the teller’s life from his/her perspective. Whether or not our experiences could be contested is not really the point. We recount our lives through the telling of our story; we do not analyze the story. So our life stories are always retrospective, but it is the analysis of narrative that brings them into the present where we can learn from them.

**Four Scenarios from *Dreams from My Father***

#1) Wishing to complete the fieldwork for her graduate studies, Obama’s mother decides to move back to Indonesia, allowing him to stay in Hawaii with his grandparents.
More than that, I’d arrived at an unspoken pact with my grandparents: I could live with
them and they’d leave me alone so long as I kept my trouble out of sight. The
arrangement suited my purpose, a purpose that I could barely articulate to myself, much
less to them. Away from my mother, away from my grandparents, I was engaged in a
fitful interior struggle. I was trying to raise myself to be a black man in America, and
beyond the given of my appearance, no one around me seemed to know exactly what that
meant. (Obama, 2004 p. 75-76)

#2) Frank is a friend of Obama’s grandfather. He is an elderly, well educated, poet. He is
an African American man. The bar that Obama visits along with his grandfather is frequented,
primarily, by African American men.

I was intrigued by old Frank, with his books and whiskey breath and the hint of hard-
earned knowledge behind the hooded eyes. The visits to his house always left me feeling
vaguely uncomfortable, though as if I were witnessing some complicated transaction
between the two men, a transaction I couldn’t fully understand. The same thing I felt
whenever Gramps took me downtown to one of his bars, in Honolulu’s red-light
district...Don’t tell your grandmother, he would say with a wink, and we’d walk past
hard-faced, soft-bodied streetwalkers into a small, dark bar with a jukebox and a couple
of pool tables. Nobody seemed to mind that Gramps was the only white man in the place,
or that I was the only eleven or twelve year old...Yet even then, as young as I was, I had
already begun to sense that most of the people in the bar weren’t there out of choice, that
what my grandfather sought there was the company of people who could help him forget
his own troubles, people who he believed would not judge him...Our presence there felt
forced... (Obama, 2004, p.77-78)

#3) Ray is an African American friend from High School in Hawaii.

I had begun to see a new map of the world, one that was frightening in its simplicity,
suffocating in its implications. We were always playing on the white man’s court, Ray
had told me, by the white man’s rules. If the principal, or the coach, or a teacher, or
Kurt, wanted to spit in your face, he could, because he had power and you didn’t. If he
decided not to, if he treated you like a man or came to your defense, it was because he
knew that the words you spoke, the clothes you wore, the books you read, your ambitions
and desires, were already his. Whatever he decided to do, it was his decision to make, not
yours, and because of that fundamental power he held over you, because it preceded and
would outlast his individual motives and inclinations, any distinction between good and
bad whites held negligible meaning. (Obama, 2004, p.85)

#4) Frank is the elderly poet and friend of Obama’s grandfather, mentioned above.

What had Frank called college? An advanced degree in compromise. You’re just like the
rest of these young cats out here. All you know is that college is the next thing you’re
supposed to do...they’re just so happy to see you in there that they won’t tell you the truth.
The real price of admission...And what’s that? ...Understand something, boy. You’re not
going to college to get educated. You’re going there to get trained. They’ll train you to
want what you don’t need. They’ll train you to manipulate words so they don’t mean anything anymore. They’ll train you to forget what it is that you already know. They’ll train you so good, you’ll start believing what they tell you about equal opportunity and the American way and all that s—t. They’ll give you a corner office and invite you to fancy dinners, and tell you you’re a credit to your race. Until you want to actually start running things, and then they’ll yank on your chain and let you know that you may be a well-trained, well-paid nigger, but you’re a nigger just the same. (Obama, 2004, p. 97)

Findings

Each of these four scenarios is first and foremost an example of the ordinariness of racism as experienced, every day, by people of color. Added to that, each scenario is a demonstration of the power and incessancy of color-blind ideology as well as the often accompanying myth of equality as seen in examples of interest convergence. In the first scenario, and as a young man, Obama (1995) didn’t have the freedom to experience the color-blind society that his mother experienced and might have even believed existed for him. He never mentions her talking to him about growing up black and what that might mean to him; she appears to be raising him to be a “man.” And he doesn’t talk with her about growing up black either. How do you deal with color-blindness once you realize it isn’t real?

Scenario two is both an example of color-blindness and interest convergence. As a white man, Obama’s grandfather can pretend that color is of no consequence when he takes his grandson to the all-black bar. Having a black grandson allows him a more comfortable entrance to the bar and once inside he benefits from his perceived friendship with people he assumes will not judge him. Although a young Obama does seem to recognize that people may likely be judging them, suggesting that to his grandfather, would, among other things, make real the absence of color-blindness, inequality and racism suggested by that scenario.

Scenarios three and four reflect a growing understanding on Obama’s (1995) part about the incessant yet ordinariness of racism. Having grown up in an environment in which color-blindness was the explicit ideology and racism much more implicit, he is beginning to realize what it means not to be white. In scenario three, Obama seems to recognize that color-blindness is a privilege of being white. And Frank’s explanation of college education as an experience in compromise, in scenario four, is a clear example of interest convergence along with an expression of his own deep understanding of both the impossibility of color-blindness and the realities of racism. Frank recognizes that in order for any black to really take on an equal role would require a willingness on the part of whites to let go of some control. The impossibility of that happening suggests that blacks get ahead only as that movement benefits whites.

Critical Race Theory and Experiential Learning: a Model for Teaching and Learning

The process employed above, much like the one employed by Bell (1995) when he unpacked legal decisions such as Brown, is one of unpacking experience and filtering it through a CRT lens. The connection between legal decision making and life experience is one, we believe, of influence. People make decisions and people create policy and it is their life experience that informs both the decisions made and the policies created. By looking at each experience as a racialized experience, certain themes begin to emerge.

Racism is a regular and ordinary experience for people of color in this country. When Obama (1995) talks about recognizing the world in a both simplistic and frightening way, i.e.
whites hold all the power, he seems to be acknowledging something he hadn’t before been willing to recognize. And when he recalls Frank’s insights about going off to college, he seems to recognize, perhaps more clearly, that while he may be making decisions about his life, those decisions are made within a context – not of his making.

Color-blindness is a privilege of being white. When Obama (1995) talks about raising himself to be a black man in America, one wonders whether sufficient effort was made to find him black male role models to emulate. Perhaps his being black was not of much concern in a liberal white family post Civil Rights. And when Obama’s grandfather makes himself comfortable both in the home of his black friend, Frank and, similarly, in the all black bar, he seems to be the one benefitting from color-blindness. And as a white man with a black grandchild, he further benefits in feeling the freedom to go to these places.

Conclusion
This study, presented as a model for teaching and learning, offers the opportunity to learn more about the art of learning from experience. CRT was first introduced to adult education in 1999 with the suggestion that African American students needed a vehicle to speak from their own experiences (Peterson, 1999). With a focus on interest convergence and color-blind ideology for this study, CRT provides us that vehicle as well. In an effort to create a framework for critically analyzing life experience, we used Critical Race Theory as an analytical lens and interest convergence and color-blind ideology as foci to explore the life experience of President Barack Obama.

References
Online Learning Effectiveness and Instructor Resistance
In Adult Learner Centered Extension Programs

Ernie Post
The Pennsylvania State University

Key words: online learning, blended learning, instructor resistance to online learning

Abstract: This paper reports the preliminary results of an ongoing mixed methods study to determine if the integration of online learning modules can help entrepreneurs accomplish business planning and elicit business start-up behavior. Insight is shared about why some adult learners and instructors are reluctant to migrate to online learning.

Small business owners are increasingly turning to the Internet for their educational needs through online learning. However, little is known about the effectiveness of online learning with small business owners and the possible implications of such for program educators. Increasingly, programs that serve the educational needs of entrepreneurs are turning to online learning as a way of providing education and knowledge to aspiring entrepreneurs. Yet, there is ample documentation concerning the problems of attrition, persistence and low completion rates associated with online learners in traditional college settings (Martinez, 2003).

Literature Review Implications for Practice and Future Research
Previous research suggests that entrepreneurs may present special learning needs when compared to the general population. For example, Logan’s (2008) quantitative study found that 35% of U. S. entrepreneurs experience dyslexia, compared to only 1% of this incidence with U.S. corporate managers. These dyslexic entrepreneurs indicated that they were either good or excellent at visualization, oral communication, problem solving and delegation, while the non-dyslexic entrepreneurs rated themselves as average or good on these same learning dimensions. Cope and Watts, (2000) Cope (2003), Rae and Craswell (2000) Van den Broeck and Willem (2007) each discuss the important role that mentors play in helping entrepreneurs reflect on their past experience and critical incidents through a dialogic process that helps make tacit knowledge explicit. Smith's (2001) qualitative study investigated business success from the perspective of Black women entrepreneurs, who comprise one of the fastest growing segments of entrepreneurs. The study determined that the dominant learning strategies used by the participants included observation, listening, modeling, apprenticeship, collaborative learning, mentoring, and transfer of learning. Also, these strategies were used in both formal and informal learning settings, often simultaneously. The prior entrepreneurship learning research makes it imperative to question – what are the implications for program educators serving entrepreneurs? – as policy makers and funding agencies push to transition these nascent entrepreneurs to an online learning environment.

Parker (2003) confirmed that a learner's locus of control as measured by Rotter’s Locus of Control scale is a significant predictor of academic persistence. Fredericksen, Picket, Pelz, Swan, and Frederickson (2001) found that the transparent interface, frequent instructor interactions and dynamic discussions are the most significant factors of student success with online learning.
Reisetter, LaPointe and Korcuska (2007) found that the timing of teacher input was a critical pedagogical difference between face-to-face (FTF) and online learners. Benbunan-Fich and Hiltz (2003), Kuhl (2002) and Rovai (2003) each consider the importance of providing for student-to-student interactions when designing online courses. Ashill, Eom, and Wen (2006) hypothesized that course structure, self-motivation, learning styles, instructor knowledge and facilitation, and interaction and instructor feedback would affect perceived learning outcomes. Although each of these factors were significant when measuring student satisfaction for the online course, only the students learning style and instructor feedback were significant when measuring for student perceived learning instead of instructor assessment. Figure 1 depicts the eight mediators that impact online learning effectiveness that were discussed in the literature review.

Figure 1. Mediators impacting online learning effectiveness.

The qualitative aspect of this study clearly pointed to a level of effectiveness for online learning that is on par with FTF learning. The raises several interesting questions: Can we experimentally test for this effectiveness? Can we find out whether or not entrepreneurs exposed to online learning in a blended format with personal consulting support do better than entrepreneurs who obtain the same personal consulting support, but who choose not to register for online learning?

**Quantitative Methods**

There were two hypotheses for the quantitative study. In order to provide for a two-tailed test, the hypothesis is stated as a null hypothesis.

H₀: There will be no difference between the online training group and the no-online training group in completing a written business plan.

H₁: There will be no difference between the online training group and the no-online training group in the decision whether or not to open a business.

Data was obtained from the Pennsylvania Small Business Development Centers (PASBDCs) that included information about whether or not the clients registered for online training as well as identifying whether or not the client had achieved a certain number of milestones. It was decided
to limit the data to only one center’s clients because it was the only one which had a large enough population of clients who had registered for online training to provide enough samples to compare. Additionally, data collected was just for two years when online learning was available from January 2006 to August 2008. There were 2004 subjects who met the criteria. The subjects were separated into two groups: those who had registered for online learning, \( n = 310 \): those who had not registered for online learning \( n = 1694 \). Next, the milestones for each subject were codified. There were 32 different types of milestones, many of which had nothing to do with the topic of the study. Similar milestones such as "Completed a Business Plan" and "Completed a Marketing Plan" were grouped together for each hypothesis. Two binary variables were created from the groupings: Planning Completed, and Decision Made. Subjects were determined to have completed planning if they met any of the similar milestones for planning. Subjects were determined to have made the decision if they had a milestone for either "Started a business" or "Decided not to go into business." Due to the binary nominal nature of the data, a chi-square test (using SPSS 16 for Windows) was used to determine whether or not there was a significant difference in the achievement of milestones between the two groups.

**Quantitative Results**

Both hypotheses were rejected. There was a significant difference between the online training group and the group that did not do online training. The contingency table is shown in Table 1. The actual count of subjects was greater than the expected count for the group which registered for online learning for both Decision Made and for Planning Completed, with a much larger discrepancy for the Planning Completed variable.

The initial review included the descriptive statistics of the data. A little more than half of the subjects had not yet officially started their businesses (52.3%). Less than 4% were considered "homebased" businesses. Forty-seven percent of the businesses were owned by a male, thirty-two by female, and twenty-one percent by both male and female. A comparison of their ethnicity and gender did not differ significantly from the general population. Business size ranged from very small to large and followed a normal bell-shaped curve distribution. The Pearson Chi Square for significance resulted in a value of 21.268, which is significant \( p < .001 \). None of the cells had an expected count of less than 5, so it was not necessary to apply the Yates correction.

While the Chi Square test shows us the results are significant, it does not tell us the strength of the results. To analyze the strength of the nominal by nominal relationship, the Phi statistic (a correlation technique for dichotomous variables) was utilized. The value was .103, which indicates that though there was a significant difference, the relationship between the variables is not extremely or highly correlated. Cramer's V, another test of strength of relationship, showed the same thing.

**Limitations of Study**

There are several limitations which impact the generalizability of the findings. The data was from a single center only; an unknown geographically-based variable may have impacted the results. Additionally, the study did not differentiate by consultant; perhaps the difference was due to quality of consultant, or a tracking bias. Subjects registered for online learning may have been more closely watched for milestones than non-online learning subjects.
Furthermore, registration for online training was measured, not actual participation in online training. There was no way to tell if the clients actually followed through with the online training, or felt that the training was helpful to them. Subjects who were not registered for online learning may have taken part in online learning elsewhere. With the data collected it was impossible to measure how the subjects integrated the learning with their practice. The clients took a blended learning approach, utilizing both online learning and FTF interaction in order to get the help they needed in developing a business plan or making a decision as to whether or not they should start a business. There was no way to delineate the impact of the online learning from the consulting help in general. Additionally, the quality of the business plan was not evaluated. It may be that the group that did not do online training had superior plans to the online training group. Both the online and no online training groups had members who were just starting or who owned existing businesses. These results raised questions concerning why such a small percentage of SBDC clients actually availed themselves of the online learning. The next section provides some insight to this question.

**Qualitative Interviews**

This section discusses several themes developed from 10 interviews with PASBDC consultants who volunteered to participate in the interviews. Consultants employed at the various SBDCs provide FTF education and mentoring to help prepare entrepreneurs who come to the centers for business planning help. The interviews were conducted with consultants representing rural, urban, suburban areas in Pennsylvania and the consultants had each attended a professional development conference six months prior to the interviews to help prepare them to integrate the online tools for their learners. The interview questions focused on gaining an understanding why most of the consultants in the PASBDC program had not been more successful with integrating online learning with their FTF consulting. Two distinct themes emerged.

Consistent with the previous literature, the interviews reinforced the notion that entrepreneurs utilize online learning courses and online tools based on a number of needs, attributes and characteristics. For example, an adult learner’s time constraints, schedule flexibility and Internet access all affect their willingness to utilize online learning. Those learners who are under 45, who have more education, professional office work experience and experience with computers are more apt to adopt online learning. Moreover, students learning style, degree of self-directedness (motivation) and prior experience with online learning each affect their willingness to adopt online learning. The more comfortable the student and their consultant are with computer technology the more likely that online learning will be adopted in the mentoring engagement.
A center’s culture plays a role with how readily consultants embrace online learning. Those centers where innovation and change is embraced and valued are more apt to have consultants that adopt online learning. There was palpable resistance and fear among the PASBDC consultants who were familiar with the online learning resources. This fear could be interpreted as caused by a concern that the online learning would be used in place of FTF consulting or fear that they would be expected to become computer experts to help students navigate the various online resources. Several voiced a concern of not wanting to be put in a position of becoming a technology expert. Everyone voiced a desire for more release time to take the online modules in order to better understand what they are recommending to their entrepreneurs.

In addition, some interesting observations were made about the things that were not talked about during the interviews. For example, no one discussed online learning in terms of how it could enable their center to have a competitive advantage over other economic development agencies. A surprise was that no one talked about policy and procedure or center performance issues as being a major concern for adopting online learning. Everyone talked about how online learning fits their current student needs, but only one consultant talked about how online learning might open opportunities for new marginalized learners. This consultant discovered that offering blended learning educational programs increased participation by the physically challenged by over 200%.

**Discussion and Implications**

Despite the noted limitations, the findings of the quantitative aspect of this study clearly indicate that providing online learning opportunities has a positive impact on whether or not entrepreneurs complete their milestones on the way to starting and growing their businesses. Considering the cost and resource differential between providing FTF and online learning, this blended approach may serve entrepreneurs the best.

Entrepreneurs use more formalized learning networks, and their needs are very different from most people. Logan’s research about the high incidence of learning disabilities in the entrepreneurial learning community may help online course designers take additional steps to improve the interface to assist entrepreneurs with various cognitive learning issues. As new technology improves, and as knowledge about learners advances, researchers will need to consider new questions about the relationship between these exciting new developments. Especially considered in the light of the qualitative findings regarding the differences in the way that entrepreneur’s learn, the quantitative results indicate that it would be beneficial to support entrepreneurs learning through making more online training available. The two themes developed from the qualitative interviews support the need for additional training for the PASBDC program consultants. This training should help the consultants better understand how to use the online resources to make their mentoring role with their entrepreneurs more effective and enjoyable. Consultants need more time to experiment with the new online learning resources and they need reassured that their FTF role with their entrepreneurs is valued and they need to better understand how online learning can help expand opportunities for their marginalized learners.
References


Rovai, A. P. (2003), In search of higher persistence rates in distance education online programs. *The Internet and Higher Education, 6*(1), 1-16.


Learning to Unlearn: A Case Study of the Initial Rejection and Subsequent Acceptance of Homosexuality by Heterosexuals

Tamara Priestley
Teachers College, Columbia University

Abstract: This research sought to gain an understanding of the learning heterosexuals engage in while coming to acceptance of homosexuality and to examine their understandings of heterosexism, power and positionality that might be at the base of such learning. Transformative learning theory was used as a lens to understand the learning and its process.

Context and Background
Throughout the history of the United States the homosexual population has often been viewed with misunderstanding and contradictory messages. At times they have even been repressed through various legal edicts that have had significant negative impacts on their lives (Bowers v. Hardwick 1986, Dallas v. England 1993, Boy Scouts of America v. Dale 2000, Ward v. Ward 2002). This has often led homosexuals to live their lives “invisibly”, under the radar of mainstream political, social and cultural issues. Browning (1993, 1994, p. 18) stated that, “gay people are admitted only to the degree that they sequester their difference and conduct a sexless public life that offers no model, no quarter, no inspiration to others-child or adult-who would explore all that is queer about themselves.”

However, in current American society the gay and lesbian population has begun to move to the forefront of many mainstream agendas ranging from the political (Local Law Enforcement Hate Crimes Prevention Act [H.R. 1592], The Military Readiness Enhancement Act [H.R. 1246]), to the social (Uniting American Families Act [proposed Federal Bill], Domestic Partnership Benefits and Obligations Act [proposed Federal Bill]) and work environment (Employment Non-Discrimination Act [proposed Federal Bill]). Each of these issues deals with rights that the majority heterosexual community is currently entitled to; but, they are unavailable to those of a homosexual orientation.

The number of homosexuals potentially in line for such rights and privileges is a question with varied answers. According to the 2000 United States Census Bureau (www.census.gov retrieved on November 22, 2008), there are 105.5 million households in America and of those, 1.2 million gay people live with a same-sex partner. However, this may be an under representation of the homosexual community because it only includes homosexuals who live together, leaving out those who do not live together, those who are single, homosexual youth, elderly homosexuals who live with caregivers, homeless homosexual people, undocumented homosexual immigrants and those who are not willing to disclose their sexual orientation for various reasons including the stigmatization and continued prejudice and discrimination against them.

Though the visibility of homosexuals is increasing and many have found a semblance of acceptance in society, they continue to be a marginalized group existing in a society where heterosexuality is the accepted norm. Heterosexist privilege—the taken-for-granted ‘rights’ of heterosexuals—permeates society (Mass 1996) and it is based on a heterosexism worldview (McNaught 1993) that believes that heterosexuality is actually superior to homosexuality and
should be an enforceable social norm (Badgett, 1995). Heterosexism is described by Hill (1995) “as the repressive social system of obligatory heterosexuality.”

Vanessa Sheared and Peggy Sissel (2001, p. 327) have reported that factors including homophobia have created “caste-like situations whereby entire collective bodies become marginalized and isolated from those who maintain power and control. So, ultimately, rather than celebrating diversity and difference, humankind has participated in a zero-sum game of winners and losers which is premised by racist, sexist, classist and otherwise prejudicial rationales.”

In spite of this prevalence of heterosexual hegemony toward homosexuality, results such as those shown in the 2006 survey by Harris Interactive in conjunction with Witeck-Combs Communications Inc. and the report “‘Coming Out’ and Americans’ Attitudes on Gay Rights” (http://www.hrc.org/issues/workplace.asp retrieved on October 7, 2008) gives some credence to the notion that more heterosexuals are becoming accepting of homosexuality. This acceptance by heterosexuals may emanate from learning or perhaps more accurately from an unlearning of biases previously learned, lived and often acted upon. Brew (1996, p.88) describes a process she calls “unlearning through experience.” She believes that without, “unlearning, real knowledge does not develop and grow.”

As Grace (2001, p. 263) states in Making Space: Merging Theory and Practice in Adult Education, the acceptance of homosexuality also involves, “unlearning hegemonic knowledge that defines the acceptable and accepted in hetero-normative terms only. This unlearning in the name of inclusion is crucial to transform understandings of culture and citizenship in education and the broader culture.”

The biases explored in this research project were viewed from the perspective of the majority heterosexual population towards the minority homosexual population. Newman (1996, p. 137) reminds us “rather than study the oppression, we should study the oppressors, we should look at their values, their culture, their ideologies, their addictions, their motives and their delusions.” This study attempted to do just that.

**Research Purpose and Questions**

The purpose of this research was to explore and gain an in-depth understanding of the learning that leads to and impedes an adult heterosexual’s shift from rejection to acceptance of homosexuality. A secondary purpose was to examine the understandings individuals have of heterosexism and power and positionality that might be at the base of such “unlearning”. The researcher utilized transformational learning theory as a lens to gain an understanding of how individuals learned to become more accepting of homosexuality as well the power and positionality involved in the bias of non-acceptance of homosexuality.

The overarching focus of this study was on perspective transformations:

**How heterosexuals come to an understanding of their own awareness of heterosexism and an ‘unlearning’ of non-acceptance of homosexuality.**

The following questions guided the research:

1. How did the heterosexual come to such awareness and what were the facilitators and impediments on their journey to accepting homosexuality?
2. What role does an awareness of heterosexism play in one’s acceptance of homosexuality?
3. In what ways does transformative learning theory help to understand the learning and its process?
**Research Design and Framework**

Qualitative research methods were selected for this study because it was not known in advance what the experiences or “learning’s” of the subjects were. Thus, it was imperative to generate data that was of rich detail and adequately descriptive of the subjects experiences. Exploring the identified problem of this research was accomplished via thoughtfully constructed in-depth, semi-structured, open-ended interviews with an embedded critical incident.

The initial study sample participants were drawn from adult members of PFLAG (Parents and Friends of Lesbians and Gays). These respondents volunteered from PFLAG chapters located in New York City, New York and Fairfield and Danbury, Connecticut. The PFLAG organization was targeted as a pool for research respondents because it is primarily a heterosexual organization that has as one of its goals to “…celebrate diversity and envision a society that embraces everyone, including those of diverse sexual orientations” (http://community.pflag.org/Page.aspx?pid=191 retrieved October 22, 2008).

**Findings and Conclusions**

With regard to how one initially learns to have a non-acceptance of homosexuality, the findings led the researcher to conclude that the early learning experiences youngsters have in K-12 schools are exceptionally important. The majority of participants stated unequivocally that during their time in a K-12 school, they repeatedly heard words and slurs that were negative toward homosexuality and that those utterances had a profound impact on their not accepting homosexuals. In addition, they also spoke about the pressure they encountered in high school to conform to heterosexual roles and standards. Conforming to heterosexual roles is an extension of the heterosexism that was discussed earlier and is prevalent in American society.

From this information the researcher concluded that one’s early school experiences have a profound impact on one’s initial frames of reference. Although the examples provided in this study focused on harassment-primarily in the form of hate language, the researcher believes that because the K-12 years seem to foster such a great impact on initial frames of reference, it is imperative that school systems use this information when designing inclusive, tolerance related programs. This finding and conclusion relates to Cervero and Wilson’s (2006) second characteristic of power in that the school system holds the power but ultimately it will be up to the individual educational personnel to decide how that power will used.

All of the participants related that coming to know a homosexual on a personal basis was the most important factor in their coming to accept homosexuality. The majority of participants said that they first met and be-friended a homosexual in their place of employment. Ten mentioned that they also have a homosexual relative. Five said that a relative was their first experience of personally knowing a homosexual.

Based on these findings, the researcher concluded that interpersonal relationships are extremely important and in the case of this research, the catalyst for individuals when shifting from non-acceptance to acceptance. This finding and subsequent analysis is supported in the literature of transformative learning. Mezirow (2000) Taylor (2000) and Brookfield (2000) all mention the importance of relationships and critical reflection. The fact that ten of the fifteen respondents reported having a homosexual relative is a bit higher correlation than the general public according to census estimates. However, it does demonstrate that homosexuals and their relatives comprise a large portion of the population. This is significant in that it led the researcher to conclude that recognizing and providing safe, trusting environments in the workplace and within families for homosexuals to live their lives openly is crucial.
The findings and analysis in this research offered several insights into the facilitators and impediments of those who are on a journey to accepting homosexuality. More than half of the respondents mentioned that the media was helpful in their acceptance of homosexuality. The respondents mentioned a variety of media sources such as film, television, music and ‘out’ celebrities.

For example, a number of respondents mentioned the television show ‘Will and Grace’ and the gay character, Jack. They said that watching this character interact with a sense of humor among heterosexuals made them feel more comfortable about homosexuals. Most of the participants also expressed that the presence of ‘out’ homosexual celebrities such as Ellen DeGeneres and her presence on a daily talk show gave them the opportunity to see and hear a homosexual living as a homosexual not as a character portraying a homosexual. The findings in the area of media as a facilitator led the researcher to conclude that the portrayal and opportunity to see and hear homosexuals can be an important aspect of one’s journey to accepting homosexuality. Because of these findings within the context of different media, it will be important to examine more closely the positive attributes in the media that encourage acceptance and replicate those qualities for future media.

Another finding was the emphasis participants placed on one’s self-esteem. The participants unanimously agreed that a negative sense of self-esteem would hinder not only an acceptance of themselves, but of others as well, particularly those of a homosexual orientation. However, among the respondents, there was no common definition or example of what constituted positive or negative self-esteem. The literature in this area was also not explicit in its definitions or examples of what creates positive or negative self-esteem and how it is displayed or acted out. This led the researcher to conclude that self-esteem whether positive or negative is a factor in accepting homosexuality but that more research is needed in order to find ways to foster positive self-esteem in the K-12 school systems, families and in adult places of employment.

Religion was mentioned as a facilitator and impediment to one’s acceptance of homosexuality. Because of the complex nature and emotional overtones of religions and their histories as well as reasons provided in the literature and by interviewees, the researcher concluded that religion and it’s relationship to acceptance and non-acceptance of homosexuality needs to be explored further within and across religious beliefs. The current very public climate of religion and homosexuality is another area that would benefit from further exploration.

Discussion of religion in the interviews was fraught with passionate emotions both in favor of and against religion and it’s role as a facilitator or impediment in accepting homosexuality. This led the researcher to conclude that in the future, religion may play a more important role in either encouraging acceptance or non-acceptance of homosexuality. From the literature, regardless of the religion, if it has at it’s foundation a dogma that is ethnocentric, it will be slow in encouraging acceptance of homosexuality. The less fundamentalist in structure of the church, the greater chance one has to promote homosexual acceptance.

Even though a number of participants were able to express with dismay, examples such as unequal marriage rights, military policy, and workplace conditions that demonstrated the unequal status of homosexuals in America, none used the word ‘heterosexism’. With the exception of two, no one demonstrated an understanding that their heterosexual privilege contributed to the unequal status of homosexuals. Another finding was that all of the participants were in agreement that hierarchical societies have always existed in the past and will into the future. Perhaps because only two participants identified their possible role in heterosexism and none were able to
articulate it, is a demonstration of just how deeply ingrained heterosexism is in our society and consciousness.

Transformative learning theory was used to help in understanding the learning process respondents engaged in while shifting from non-acceptance to acceptance of homosexuality. All of the respondents reported experiencing either a singular or series of events that caused a change in their meaning perspective. Only two respondents described a singular epochal event and they each reported that the event was framed around intense emotionally moving feelings for the individual who was the center of their transformation. Thus, it can be concluded that in this research as in previous research on transformative learning, gradual, multiple experiences are the most common occurrence for a change in meaning perspective.

The respondents also described periods of self-examination when they assessed their assumptions and critically reflected. Each respondent reported having a memorable period of emotions while engaging in the process of reflection. Some told of emotionally breaking down at PFLAG meetings when they reflected while sharing their stories of non-acceptance and eventual acceptance. Three males spoke with tears in their eyes when they recalled the very personal experience of discovering someone whom they were close with was a homosexual. Other participants recanted their self-reflection as an extremely private, personal time while others told of reflecting outward with others whom they knew and trusted.

From heartfelt, emotion-laden experiences, the researcher concludes that emotions are a fundamental part of self-examination, assessing assumptions and critically reflecting. The researcher also concludes that the participants did not share a common technique or process for their reflecting, but rather described a wide range of reflection experiences. Since all of the participants described a sense of relief when they found others who could share their new viewpoint, journey, emotions and perspective, the researcher concluded that critical reflection is an arduous experience emotionally and perhaps even physically.

The majority of respondents engaged in some form of action that required the use of their new perspective on homosexuality. Some found solace in sharing with co-workers and relatives while others became leaders in groups that promote acceptance of homosexuality. For all of these respondents, they expressed that whatever action they took, it was freeing for them, allowing them to explore new social situations, locales and workplace rules that in the past they had dismissed. Based on these reported experiences, the researcher concluded that dialogue around issues of homosexuality is necessary and should be encouraged, especially in the workplace.

Finally, the ability to reintegrate a new perspective into one’s daily life is an important characteristic of transformative learning. The respondents spoke of how their lives had been changed forever because of their new perspective. Respondents gave examples that primarily focused on the gaining of new friends and freedom from the prejudices that previously restricted their lives. The conclusion the researcher drew from this, was that once a person truly changes perspective, they have little choice but to live within that perspective. Thus, their daily routines, roles and activities become synonymous with their perspective. As one respondent said, “It’s like being on a battlefield, there is no going back”.

References


Is there a Technology Bias against Adult Learners?

Adnan Qayyum
Concordia University, Montreal, Canada

Abstract: Students’ communication and study habits outside of class were analyzed using grounded theory. Results indicate that factors other than age informed students’ communication patterns, including their use of ICTs. The research calls into question assumptions that adult learners are less inclined and able to use ICTs for education.

Background

There is commonly held belief that adults are more likely behind the technological times than youth or even children. Several writers have imported this general belief to education. They claim younger learners are more adept and interested in using information and communication technologies (ICTs) for education. Prensky’s binary of “digital natives” and “digital immigrants” is probably the common most expression of this argument. Adult learners are the immigrants in this metaphor, as they did not grow up in a land of digital technologies since birth. The subtext of the digital natives metaphor is that adult learners are less able and interested in ICTs in education. Intentionally or not, the metaphor has an anti-immigrant (read anti adult learner) bias. This bias is a recent incarnation of an assertion adult educators face repeatedly: you can’t teach an old learner new tricks. That is to say, you can’t teach an adult learner new tech. Yet what evidence exists to support the claim that adults are less interested and able to use ICTs for education? Certainly, claims by Prensky and others (Oblinger, 2003; Tapscott 1998) are based on highly questionable research at best, and at worst speculation dressed as facts.

Many studies have been done about how adult learners use ICTs in classrooms and course management systems such as Moodle, Blackboard, Elluminate Live, etc. However, a more accurate indicator of adult learners’ communication and ICT preferences is manifest in learner-generated, self-directed interaction not by instructor-required interaction. It is by examining learner-generated interaction that one can more accurately assess if and why adult learners are more or less likely to use ICTs for their learning. Thus this study focused on what students did outside the classroom, in the hallways, cafeterias, social spaces and other interstitial spaces.

Purpose of study

This study was not initiated to investigate if adult learners are less likely to use ICTs than younger students. That focus emerged later. The study initially served two purposes. Staff at the British Columbia Institute of Technology (BCIT), the research site, were interested in evaluating and examining how their educational technology initiative had diffused across campus and how technologies were being localized in unexpected ways. I was interested in describing how learners communicate outside of class for course purposes, and the role of ICTs in doing so. So, at the outset, the research was framed more generally as a study of student communication patterns and study habits outside of class. The goal was to learn about how students interacted but not to bias the study towards responses about ICTs. Given this, the general research questions were:

- how do learners communicate with peers outside of class time?
- how do learners use ICTs in these spaces to help their learning?
what factors influence learner interaction decisions?

This paper presents the results of the study about students communicating with peers and instructors outside of class for course purposes. (For the BCIT study with the same dataset, see Bullen et al 2008).

Research design

This study was designed with the goal of addressing the general research questions by describing students’ behaviour patterns and identifying themes within these patterns. The larger research goal was to use the themes from this qualitative study to create substantive hypotheses. These hypotheses are now being tested in a follow-up quantitative study that involved creating and administering a survey to a larger sample of students (N=442). Data has been collected and is currently being analyzed for the second part of the study.

The qualitative study was conducted at BCIT, a post-secondary polytechnic that offers diploma and degree programs in trades, applied sciences and business. Data was collected via several techniques including student group and individual interviews, instructor interviews, reviewing institutional documents, and reading students blogs. The study relied most heavily on the semi-structured student interviews, where students described their behaviour in their own words.

Students were asked the following questions in interviews:

- Through what channels do you communicate with peers?
- Name four topics you communicate about?
- Where are you when you communicate with peers?
- Describe what channels you use to communicate with your instructor.
- Does the instructor require or encourage you to communicate with peers?
- When you have a problem or issue in your courses, what do you do?
- What communication options would help you learn in your courses?

In total, 69 students were interviewed in 29 student interview sessions. Most students did not show up to pre-arranged focus groups. Fortunately, ethics approval allowed for approaching and interviewing students in spaces throughout campus to conduct on-the-spot interviews. Of the 29 student interview sessions, 11 were pre-arranged while 18 were on-the-spot. Nine of the sessions were with individual students while another 20 were with students in a group of two or more. Interviews averaged 15 minutes in length.

Of the 69 students interviewed, 63 stated their age, with 37.5% of students being over 25. The other 62.5% were 25 or under. The average age of adult learners was 30.3 years while the average age of youth learners was 20.6 years.

Emerging design grounded theory, advocated by Glaser (1992), was used to analyze the data. This approach to grounded theory is useful for creating substantive middle-range process theories (Merriam, 2002) without having to use a predetermined framework for analyzing data. In the first step of data coding, verbatim notes were made of student responses during the interviews. Extra field and open coding notes were then made about interesting comments students said. In the second step, notes were made in the margin of interview documents and memos were written to distill the key points from each interview. The key points from all interviews were aggregated into one document. Next, major themes from the data were listed. Creating themes involved grouping similar responses and choosing a keyword or phrase that
captured similarity among responses. Finally, themes were constantly compared with each other and all data. Themes were listed, reviewed, edited, removed and added until I felt the themes saturated the data. As I went back and forth comparing themes and data I regularly asked core grounded theory questions: how are the themes connected?; what is the data a study of?; what is happening here?

To validate the research, and make sure I was not finding just what I wanted to find, a copy of the analysis and emerging findings was sent to staff members at BCIT who were familiar with the data. Their perusal of and feedback on my research served as a peer review regarding the congruency of emerging findings with the raw data. The emerging findings were also presented at BCIT’s Professional Development Day. Attendees at the presentation included instructors who were interviewed for the study. Their feedback provided a mild member check.

**Findings**

Outside of class, students turned to peers and instructors for course purposes by talking in person and via cellphones, and by writing to each other via chat programs (e.g. MSN and Yahoo chat), email, Facebook, MySpace, WebCT and cellphone text messages. The most common method, by far, was for students to talk in person with peers and instructors. They would discuss assignments, seek and share information about administrative issues, organize work together, commiserate about their workloads, all interspersed with socializing. One Computer Science student depicted this dynamic well. “Often we discuss assignments we’re working on or assignments we’re doing. General conversation I guess. Yeah, there’s a lot of talk about our school and labs and the hockey game”.

From grounded theory analysis key themes emerged about which factors affected students’ interaction decisions. These themes included: the importance of program design, trust of peers, students’ relationship with instructors, the knowledge domain of a subject, and course design. These themes did not differ for adult learners compared to younger learners.

Two dimensions of program design were important, the cohort model and program schedule. Most BCIT courses are based on the cohort model, with a group of students often completing an entire program together. Students would turn to peers outside of class because, over time, they developed relationships as they had common experiences, struggles and goals. The program schedule affected time management. For many BCIT programs, students had to be on campus 30 hours a week or more. Students would often talk with peers in person, rather than using ICTs, because they were on campus together so much. For many, it made sense to use the time in between classes to study together, seek help about administrative issues from peers, etc. The cohort model and program schedule provided regular access to peers and a basis for trusting relationships.

Access to and familiarity with peers were necessary but not sufficient reasons for interaction with peers outside of class. This depended on whether students trusted their peers. Trust had three dimensions: affective, perceived utility, and reliability. If students trusted a peer affectively, they felt less risk approaching them about a course-related issue. But at times this was not enough. Some also would communicate with peers if they were confident that it was useful, such as improving the quality of their work or increasing their motivation. Finally, some students turned to peers because they received help from them quickly, when they needed it. Here ICTs could be helpful. One engineering student said, “if anything is due or any important thing, like whatever, you go and ask [on the Facebook discussion board]. Someone will reply”.  

305
Students relationship with instructors affected if and how they communicated outside of class for course purposes. Approaching instructors instead of peers for course-related issues often made sense if students found instructors physically accessible and emotionally safe. For those who did feel a threat, for example, it was useful to communicate with instructors via ICTs. One geology student said “I email instructors all the time cause I don’t like to talk about it [coursework] face-to-face cause they can catch me on all this stuff I don’t do”.

The knowledge domain of a subject related to issues of relevance and efficiency. For some Trades students, for example, it was just not an appropriate option to communicate via ICTs about subject matter that was mainly psychomotor. For most students, ICT options were for textual or audio communication. For some of these students, ICT options would require too much time and would perhaps be less effective for, say, discussing a graphic. One X-ray Technician student summarized this efficiency point by saying, it is “easier to ask in person, or show the [annotated] diagram of what I don’t understand”.

Course design related to issues of power and efficiency. Students certainly interacted with peers outside of class for course purposes if institutional powers required they do so for course assessment. “We use [the WebCT chat] because our teacher wants to monitor our progress, how we work with case studies” said a Health Sciences student. Course design also related to work efficiency. Some students communicated with peers because sharing a large workload saved time while effectively meeting course requirements.

This study found that outside of class all students, regardless of age, communicated with peers and instructors because of a mix of structural and personal factors. Structural factors were beyond the control of students. These included how the program was designed, how specific courses were designed and the knowledge domain of a subject area. Personal factors included whether a student trusted peers, her opinions about how useful and reliable peers were, and her perception about how available, safe and knowledgeable instructors were. Age was not a factor shaping if students communicated in person or via specific ICTs. Their motivation to use particular communication modes was based on issues of access, time management, safety, accurate knowledge, quick communication, relevance, and efficiency. Sometimes using ICTs were the most practical solution. Much of the time they were not. There was not evidence to indicate that students did or did not use ICTs just because they were putative digital natives or digital immigrants.

**Conclusion**

Adults have often been seen as laggards when it comes to using ICTs. It is unclear if this is in fact the case. But is it appropriate to extend what maybe a larger social phenomenon into the arena of education? Education, by definition, is a social relationship with particular structural and interpersonal dynamics. In this study, structural and personal factors were far more important in shaping students’ communication habits than a biographical factor such as age. Whether learners chose to use ICTs depended on a host of variables specific to the learning context.

**Implications for adult education theory and practice**

This research indicated that the general negative attitude about adults using ICTs for learning maybe an unfounded bias. It also suggests program planning and learner dynamics are important variables for adult learning, more so than learners' preferences for ICTs.
Adult educators should not accept uncritically the common belief that adult learners are less adept or inclined to using ICTs for learning. Even if adult learners may not use specific ICTs, it does not mean they cannot or will not use them for specific learning purposes. For the adult educators, there are a lot of other struggles to fight without regressing to old biases about what adult learners can and cannot do.

References
Oral Histories to Support Growing Democracy: Stories from the NYC Adult Literacy Community

Dianne Ramdeholl
National Louis University, Chicago

Keywords: adult literacy, oral history, critical pedagogy, popular education

Abstract: This oral history project chronicled narratives from the NYC adult literacy community in an attempt to preserve the field’s public collective historical memory. These narratives, countering dominant ideologies, explicitly connect adult literacy to human rights struggles, can support the field in a larger collective conversation rooted in sustainable democratic practices.

Introduction

Freire (1970) says society cannot integrate people into the current structures of oppression but instead transform those structures in order to change the world. In NYC, and throughout the United States, adult literacy has been redefined minus any connections to human rights or social justice education; instead it is colonized solely as a tool for workforce development agendas (Macedo, 1994). This fight against the direction of the field is not only to preserve students’ rights but aimed at transforming the structures of society in equitable ways. (Shor, 1987). Memories of adult literacy’s history involving struggles for basic human rights and equity are receding at lightning speed. This study chronicled narratives from the NYC adult literacy community that explicitly connect literacy to social change and democracy, in an effort to preserve the field’s collective historical memory. These stories, rooted in educational practices of Myles Horton, Paulo Freire, and other grassroots political educators, honor people being able to read both words and worlds, and support classrooms in becoming potential sites of transformation. This study can contribute to a larger collective conversation aimed at sustainable democratic practice, by addressing larger socio-political inequities that continue to be perpetuated by the dominant culture. These counter-narratives, grounded in participatory ideologies, don’t seek to integrate people into current structures of domination but instead strive to subvert and transform landscapes of power into liberatory sites filled with hope and possibility (Auerbach, 1991; Freire, 1970). Through engaging in pedagogies of resistance, we can reclaim adult literacy’s roots and become sustainable spaces driven by social justice interests (Macedo, 1994). The primary questions guiding this study were:

- What narratives can be elicited, from the NYC adult literacy community that explicitly situate practice within a struggle for human rights and social justice?
- What role can these narratives play in preserving the field’s historical memory of adult literacy being connected to social justice education?

Theoretical Framework

The counter-narratives from this study represent, at their core, critiques of dominant ideologies. Unpacking power inequities speak explicitly to critical theory, which highlights the ways in which capitalism pushes people into playing dehumanizing roles, which limits their abilities to become actors and authors in their own histories. This dynamic perpetuates legacies of economic/racial/gender oppressions (Brookfield, 2005). Freire (1970) called for people to
interrupt dominant scripts and rewrite roadmaps of power. Phyllis Cunningham (2005) says, if as a society we’re to hold any hope of a democratic, more equitable future we must be able to facilitate the right of those voices and perspectives that have been marginalized or ignored to gain meaningful access at the decision-making table. Shor (1987) states that currently, a human underclass is being perpetuated with no space to honor organic intellectuals. Boggs (1998) adds, as members of a transformed society, we need to leap to a new stage of being a more human human being. Recognizing the damage that a highly developed capitalist system has done to the humanity of its members, there must be a responsibility to create strategies to transform ourselves into human beings….a struggle not only against the external enemy but also the enemy within (pg. 151-152).

Research Design

Oral histories offer people opportunities to become actors in a historical script which they themselves author. Locally constructed knowledge, which honors shifting realities regarding notions of truth, was clearly the most appropriate research methodology to chronicle these counter-stories. Thompson (2000) points out that when community knowledge is honored, opportunities open up to recover experiences of the silenced and offer new ways of understanding histories of marginalized groups. This can access powerful spaces of inquiry and possibility. The cooperative nature of documenting oral histories can lead to radical questioning of knowledge production in our society. Whose voices ultimately prevail? Blaise (1993) suggests that people’s stories make us into world travelers. We learn (if only sometimes temporarily) to live in each other’s countries, speak each other’s language, negotiate each other’s streets, and turn our keys in each other’s locks. Coles (1989) reminds us that stories are all we carry with us in our journeys, and we owe it to each other to honor and learn from them.

Despite the democratic intentions of oral history methodology and its efforts to honor people’s pluralistic realities, their processes, lives and input; as a researcher, I am deeply aware of issues of power and fluidity in the construction and compilation of texts. How and where are we as researchers situated in the personal narratives we collect and analyze? In transcriptions, when we determine and insert punctuation, in what ways are we altering meanings? To what extent does our presence alter what people say and how they say it? Like Gluck (1991), I was cognizant that this historical document was shaped by my intervention and lens, in all of its limitations and shortcomings. In addition to interviews, other sources of data included observations, artifacts, field notes, and document reviews.

The following section excerpts, in a partial way that can’t nearly do justice to the complexity of Calvin’s narrative, an example of one of the counter-narratives from this study. It explores Calvin Miles’ trajectory and education. Calvin was a powerful student leader in New York City, the board president of VALUE ((Voices for Adult Literacy United to Educate - the only national adult learner organization in the United States), one of the first adult learners to be on staff at a literacy organization in NYC, and a member of many advisory boards in adult literacy. He was also working with on leadership development with students at The Open Book, a Freirian inspired former adult literacy program in NYC. My dissertation chronicled the history of this program, partly through participants’ voices. Tragically, Calvin died on January 22, 2009. His contribution to the adult literacy field was extraordinary. He was undoubtedly in it for the long haul.
Findings

We May be Off the Farm but we Still are Farmers (Calvin’s Early Life)

I grew up in a small town in rural North Carolina. My family has always been farmers, that’s all they knew. We may be off the farm but we still are farmers. We was planting things, growing vegetables, and fishing. That’s what helped them to survive because my great grandmother came off the reservation in the thirties when they was moving Native Americans off the land and taking them out to live in the desert. Part of my family is not just black, part of my family is Native American too. We been here a long time, before even the whites came. There was 12 of us and the whole family worked on a farm. On the farm when you sharecrop, you would supply the labor and the whites supplied the land. But the man kept the books. He not going to tell you where he put all his books. He tell you, ‘well, you didn’t make no money this year,’ and you don’t get nothing. There was a lot of that going on. I mean they really robbed a lot of black peoples out of their money. Sharecropping, a friend of mine told me, was one step up from being a slave, because you worked for nothing, the kids didn’t get educated, you know, you are never respected as a real, productive businessman. My father never got the respect he deserved for being a farmer. My father was a big farmer. He did great things for this country but that kinds of things don’t get into the paper; they don’t get into the news, in the books…

You Didn’t Have no Rights! (Race and Education)

We had to walk to school. The white kids rode the bus. Roundtrip it had to be about five miles everyday and sometimes it be cold; we sat there half a day before it warm up. One teacher had three classes. The teacher couldn’t get to everybody, it was impossible. People fell through the crack big time. Some people learned, but it was very hard. And then some people had to leave school to be on the farm. When you went back, it was hard to focus. They taught you Dick and Jane and you know you ain’t never gonna have a picket fence, or a white powder dog... It was scary growing up in that time. Certain places you couldn’t go. Your mother and father would tell you, you can’t go there because you know white people don’t want you there. And what made it so bad, you start accepting it, because your mother and father taught you to accept it. They needed for you not to get into trouble because if you get into trouble they may get threwed off the land and you don’t have no place to live. You didn’t see yourself as a human being, you saw yourself as somebody who creates some problems, you was a problem. I’m not saying people wasn’t complaining and doing things, but it was just the norm. That’s how bad it was, you just accepted it. School was important but it was more important to work on the farm. The farm was the livelihood of the family. The whites closed the school because they didn’t want black kids to go to school with white kids. Black kids had to go to the farm because the farm was important to the economy. In the sixties when big businesses came and brought all these big machines, it pushed a lot of people off the farm… So a person like myself, there was no work for me. People my age came to NY, to live, to find jobs, to work. We came with a lot of working skills, but we didn’t come with good reading or writing skills, because the school system was not that great. Coming to a literacy program, all I needed was somebody to teach me to read. I didn’t come asking the teacher, ‘What am I gonna read about?’ When he asked me what I want to learn, I laid it on the table because I had learned so much without even knowing how to read.
We Need an Adult Literacy Movement (Organizing and Student Leadership)

I was involved in Ocean Hill-Brownsville, a school up in East New York where in the sixties we was trying to get parents and some teachers to be in charge of the school. To take responsibility to make the school a community based program. That was the beginning of helping parents to be more involved in the schools and they did. That was in the early seventies when people was really involved in the schools on all kinds of levels. Some was involved in trying to get hired black principals and get more black teachers in the schools because black people wasn’t involved in the school system as much. Eventually we realized you should get somebody who really understand the community…

I remember in the eighties we were at a conference up in Lehman College and students was all in a big room talking. One thing that caught my interest was when Basemah (one of the students from The Open Book) said to the group, ‘you know we interview our teachers.’ I said to myself, this is cool. We started meeting at The Open Book because I think it was more free and Basemah had access. Students would feel comfortable. We had some pretty good meetings up there. We were trying to get students to be more involved in their programs, to talk about some of the stuff we could do together. Even though the Open Book was honest and open for people to be able to talk, students still hesitated sometimes because ain’t no-one ever asked peoples to voice their opinion before like Open Book. But the teachers knew certain things they could do to get students involved. Teachers got people to do newsletters and go out to the community, interviewing folks. Later on at the literacy program I worked, we started interviewing teachers. We got a group of students who wanted to do it and they came up with questions what they wanted to ask their teacher. We got that from the Open Book. Then I started doing workshops on reading with children. I had been in district 13 trying to get mothers and fathers to be involved in the school system before I learned to read. So I had some experience working with groups of parents and also working with groups of peoples on committees. I was interested because I was thinking about my own history of not being able to read and write. I always said if my father, even though he might not have been a good reader, but if he sat down with me and just held the book, I probably would have learned to read. Then I would know how valuable it was to read. I knew a lot of folks come to programs don’t know how to read but they can tell stories from pictures. So we decided to get some children books and get a group of people and just talk about the pictures in the book. And when they go home, just practice, just tell the story from the picture, don’t worry about the words. Now, my basic role is how to get students to see they can organize themselves so they can have more of a voice about what is happening in the literacy community. Students can communicate with students much better than teachers, they see things differently. I think if the Open Book had been open today, you would have had one of the strongest groups coming out of that school. I thought they was on the right track of developing strong student leadership. It just felt good when you went to the program, I felt like I could do anything I wanted to do there. One thing we have not done is help students to organize students. We have to be able to let students figure this stuff out for themselves. We did it on a small scale. I know programs don’t have a lot of resources but this is what we should be fighting for. More money to develop students to be all that they want to be. The civil rights movement didn’t start with everybody involved. It started on a small scale and worked its way to everybody. We need an adult literacy movement across the country. We need to say that we are not going to accept you giving little dabs of
money. You need to give us money before we can be able to do the things we doing. Right now we’re not seen as valuable. We’re seen as failures. That’s got to change. More students need to be leaders, and they need to tell their stories. Programs have to trust students. They should not think they are trying to destroy the program. One of the worst things in the field now is that students are not talking to each other. The literacy community need to get together and work better together. We need to stop undermining each other and start putting folks in that’s really doing it from the heart. In the South they wanted to keep people separate. And they did a good job. Now, it’s embedded in people’s minds. We are still separated. We need to understand each other and to find out we have the same thing in common. We know adult education is being mistreated by the country. When I first got involved in literacy, I felt good because I thought I was doing something good for the benefit of mankind. But now I see it as people telling us what to do in this field. We’re not working the system, the system is working us. We got folks that don’t know nothing about the field telling us what we should be doing and it’s not fair. We should take the field back. As long as I’m living, I will be fighting for this cause.

Discussion/Implications

Adult literacy largely represents a quest for basic human rights and agency with groups. Calvin says that the field must work in solidarity, engaged in a collective struggle towards a more democratic society. Calvin frames the conversation in ways that bring larger institutionalized inequities to the fore. He speaks of the almost impossible odds of succeeding in school in the South. Why replicate principles of a K-12 system, based on the industrialized factory model when adult literacy offers powerful testimonials it doesn’t work for entire communities? Heaney (2007) says, we’ve reduced adult literacy to a technical problem in need of a technical solution (by experts). By operationalizing literacy, there is no space for community empowerment models that can foster sustainable change and redistribution of power in equitable ways. This landscape divorces the field from its historical roots. History has repeatedly demonstrated that the only possibility for poor people to effect change is in large numbers, through social movements (Heaney, 2007). Calvin also points out the danger of students not talking with each other. This prevents people working together in solidarity and ensures status quo. In the current reductionistic climate of adult literacy that privileges dehumanizing and revisionist versions of history, there is an urgent need for counter-narratives that are grounded in different sets of realities and possibilities. Today the public historical memory of adult literacy is being re-written minus any connections to a democratic, just world. Oral histories can offer students space to re-write dominant scripts and tell their complex, fluid lived realities on their own terms. At its core, student leadership is a quest for equity and shared governance. This struggle cannot be prostituted, colonized, or domesticated. It cannot be rooted in dominant, paternalistic, and charitable ideologies. Like democratic practice, student leadership, involves being able to re-imagine and move beyond fixed definitions or frameworks to re-negotiate and re-envision new alternatives. This quest to transform society can only be rooted in solidarity. Calvin rightly points out that currently as a field, we’re not seen as valuable. We must, as a society, overcome our cultural aversion towards entire groups of people and challenge notions of imperialism and privilege in our struggle towards justice for everyone. Calvin talks about the need for an adult literacy movement in this country. This explicitly situates adult literacy in the midst of social movements. As adult literacy workers, we must make space for fragile democratic experiments which can foster human agency. How can we collectively disentangle and disengage our current
ways of being and living in the world, and open windows in our psyches that honor collective responsibility and humane, democratic possibilities? Horton (1991) states, the answers can only come from the people. We must listen to what students have to say and find ways in programs to reflect and build on those words, dreams, hopes, and desires. Maxine Greene (2003) adds that we need to learn to live and labor in the spaces and possibilities between freedom and imagination – to make present what is absent, to summon up a condition that is not yet.

References
Cunningham, P. (personal communication, February 10, 2005)
Greene, M. (personal communication, December 8, 2003)
Heaney, T. (personal communication, February 11, 2007)
Personal Transformations: Changes in Self & Literacy Engagement through Even Start Family Literacy Program Participation

Petra A. Robinson, Texas A&M University

Introduction and Background

Illiteracy is a major social dilemma facing countries in the developed and underdeveloped world. The problem has far-reaching implications as it threatens the economic and social vitality of a country. Within this globalized world, a country’s competitiveness depends on the resources within that country and, in particular on its social and human capital. Indeed, the human capital indicators of a country, particularly, those based on literacy rates affect the country’s labor productivity and (GDP) Gross Domestic Product (Coulombe, Tremblay & Marchland, 2004). Elish-Piper (2007) draws attention to the increasing expectations for adult literacy in the United States over the last century, particularly as it relates to one’s status, employment and ultimate productivity.

In an effort to address these challenges, the United States primarily through the Department of Education, administers various programs related to for combating societal problems such as illiteracy. One such publicly funded program is the Even Start Family Literacy Program. Administered by the Office of Elementary and Secondary Education, the Even Start Program, according to The Department of Education (2007), “offers grants to support local family literacy projects that integrate early childhood education, adult literacy, parenting education, and interactive parent and child activities for low income families” (¶ 2). The Department of Education offers considerable funding and supports the program’s aims of improving parents’ literacy/basic education while helping them engage fully in educating their children towards helping them attain their full potential as learners.

Intended for a disadvantaged population, Even Start focuses on four key components: (a) early childhood education, (b) parenting education, (c) adult education, and (d) parent-child joint literacy activities, known as Parent and Child Together Time (PACT). McKee and Rhett (1995) indicate that “Even Start programs offer at-risk children and their families a chance to ‘start even’ with other families” (pp.155-156). They further catalog objectives of the Even Start Program as “three interrelated goals: (1) to help parents become full partners in the education of their children; (2) to assist children in reaching their full potential as learners; and (3) to provide literacy training for their parents” (McKee & Rhett, 1995, pp. 157-158).

Purpose & Significance of Study

The purpose of this study was to examine how family participation in Even Start programs contributes to family literacy engagement and individual self-development. It sought to understand how parental participation in the program influences their reading behaviors and other literacy practices, as well as highlight observed changes and transformations in their personal development and in their parenting practices. This study specifically sought to answer the primary research question, “How does participation in the Even Start Family Literacy program contribute to individual transformation and family engagement in literacy practices?”

This study is significant with implications to theory, practice and policy specific to family literacy. The first item of significance relates to the development of family engagement and literacy practices on the part of parents who participate in the Even Start Program and the second relates to the observed or notable changes in their personal development and parental practices.
Participation in Even Start programs involves planned activities and efforts that one expects to influence family literacy practices positively. On the other hand, an exploration on the influence of participation in an Even Start program on a parent’s self-concept and self-efficacy is crucial as it ultimately affects the entire family unit. This study provides us with an opportunity to do what King and Wright (2003) see as enabling “our field to benefit from careful examination of the changes learners experience and value” (p. 231).

On a theoretical and yet practical note, the study is significant as it examines how family participation in Even Start contributes to changes in self and family engagement in literacy practices and development. This is important as it may provide an inside look on this process of development and, therefore, provides clues for practitioners and researchers in the field, contributing to existing literature available on the issue. It is also significant as the results of the study make possible suggestions for further research. The study highlights implications related to program planning and facilitation and instructional strategies.

It also underscores implications related to program assessment as it accentuates outcomes that may or may not be explicit to the program’s intended goals. On a policy level, the study is significant as it may contribute to a deeper understanding and appreciation for the way in which parents experience the program based on current regulations and structures. This can have implications for policy at the program, district, and national/government level.

**Methodology**

Using a qualitative research design, this study sought to identify, document, and examine the influence of the Even Start program in personal transformations and changes in literacy and family engagement on the participation of parents in an Even Start program.

The sample was selected primarily based on two criteria: English Language proficiency and length of enrollment and participation in the Even Start program. Each participant was enrolled for no less than 6 months and the adult instructor assisted in selection; based on my inability to speak Spanish, she sought to select students who possessed a fair command of the English Language in order to accommodate reasonable communication between the participants and myself as the researcher. Since the purpose of the study was to explore the transformations resulting from participation in the Even Start Program, a reasonable participation time was not only prudent but also necessary. The selected sample for this pilot study consisted of two instructors: one for the adult education program and the other, an early childhood education instructor and eight enrolled parents. All participants were females from Mexico who all self-identified as Hispanic.

The center was selected as it hosted the Even Start program (comprehensive, due to Parent and Child Together Time [PACT] component) from which I wanted to select participants to interview.

**Data Collection and Analysis**

Data for this qualitative study were collected through in-depth semi-structured interviews. Questions were open-ended and participants were allowed to express themselves on other matters related to the questions/subject as they saw fit. The parents’ questions focused on their educational background as well as on areas related to self-transformation, while the instructors’ questions focused on demographic data, their educational backgrounds, as well as their
perceptions related to the parents’ transformations. For this study, the teacher for the adult component and the teacher for the child component were interviewed to gain insight into their perceptions about the program and the transformations and personal development experienced by the parents.

In terms of analysis of the data, the thematic analysis approach was useful as it assisted in identifying recurring themes throughout the data. Using this analytic approach, the process resulted in the identification of several overarching themes. It enabled me to maintain focus on the content of the narratives presented by the participants and each narrative was thematically analyzed and presented under major themes, as they were found recurring in the transcripts.

Findings

Reflecting on the research question that asks how family participation in Even Start programs contributes to family literacy engagement and individual self-development, the findings are classified according to personal transformations occurring within several themes. These themes include parenting skills development, critical thinking skills, literacy practices, English communication skills and self-esteem/confidence/self-efficacy, and critical thinking skills. Supplementary changes and findings of importance and interest relate primarily to the supportive environment and are classified under the theme environmental support for learning.

Discussion and Implications

Realizing the tremendous worth of the Even Start program relating to these self-changes identified in this preliminary study, there are significant implications for practitioners in the field of Adult Basic Education, Family Literacy and Early Childhood Education. Their role is significant because of the influence they have on the participants. The findings of the study suggest that the teachers become role models for the parents and are a key source of support for them. Practitioners should also recognize the value of their work on the participants in terms of their personal and professional development. As instructors, there is an inherent authoritative and expert power over their students, thus highlighting the magnitude of their span of influence. This is especially important for the impact on the family unit as well as the community in general. One notable element of the program is the PACT component, and practitioners can effectively use the period effectively to deliver important messages to the participants as it relates to family engagement, literacy practices, and even social responsibility. Practitioners are influential and can assist these marginalized women to negotiate their lives within power structures in their environments. They can also help these families become more critically aware of the social contexts that characterize their lives.

The findings also suggest that since the program positively influences this segment of the population, it is useful for policy makers to see the value of the program and continue to provide support its sustenance, further growth and development. This would greatly affect the community and lead to an overall improvement in the standard of living for that often-disadvantaged group. Focusing attention on this program, reducing obstacles to participation by increasing accessibility could improve, for example, the educational level of attainment, graduation rates, and employability resulting in citizens that are more productive.

Researchers too, recognizing the great value of the program, could focus further research on examining (in detail) the barriers to participation and especially as experienced by fathers. The majority of Even Start programs are utilized by women. It is also important to recognize that the influence of the program on the community and families could be far reaching if more fathers
were participating in the program. The context within which these families live and operate is challenging and complex, therefore research is fundamental in unveiling hegemonic structures that affect this population, and encouraging inclusivity.

In summary, the findings of this study indicate the need for high quality, interactive services for meeting the objectives of the Even Start Family Literacy Program from which parents and children benefit as well as the community as a whole.

References


The Career Paths of African Americans in the Corporate and Political Arenas

Dionne Rosser-Mims
Assistant Professor, Troy University

Glenn A. Palmer
Associate Professor, DeVry University

Keywords: Career Development, African American, Politics, Human Resources, Leadership Development

Abstract: This paper compares the career development experiences of African Americans in the areas of politics and corporate America. The authors aim to identify congruencies in the career development experiences of African Americans in both fields.

Introduction

This paper compares the findings of two separate empirical qualitative studies that explored the career development of African Americans in Corporate America and in politics. Both qualitative studies were conducted at the University of Georgia. Palmer’s (2001) study explored factors that inhibit and facilitate the career development of African Americans in the field of training and organizational development. In his qualitative study of ten African Americans, six women and four men were interviewed. Their corporate positions ranged from first line managers to human resource directors, with their educational levels ranging from undergraduate to terminal degrees. The participants were employed by Fortune 500 and Fortune 1000 companies located in the Southeastern United States. The research focused primarily on structural, attitudinal, and personal factors that affect career development.

In the second study, Rosser-Mims (2005) explored African American women’s leadership and career development experiences as they pursued a career in elective office in Georgia. A purposive sampling technique was employed to select nine African American female elected officials. These women, who ranged in age from 50 to 80, currently serve or have served in elective office at the local, state, and federal levels. The objective of this study was to uncover the underlying reasons why African American women do not pursue a career in politics. In merging these studies, Palmer (2001) and Rosser-Mims uncovered congruencies in the career development of African Americans in both contexts. To gain an understanding of the career development experiences of African Americans, and to determine why their career development has been understudied, a review of the historical development of the career development field is warranted.

History of Career Development

Herr (2001) observed that current usage of the term career development is inherently informed by the blending of two conceptual frameworks, “one that explains the development of career behavior across the life span and the other that describes how career behavior is changed by particular interventions” (p. 196). From a historical context, the pairing of these two terms occurred as recently as the late 1960s. Prior to this, the terms career and development were associated with vocational development/psychology, in other words, with individual abilities,
needs, and interests. Career development theory and research have only recently begun to focus on how contextual factors such as history, culture, socioeconomic status, ethnicity, and gender influence the decisions individuals make toward their professional future (Hartung, 2002).

Several theories of career development and career choices exist (Brown & Brooks, 1996; Holland 1985; Super, 1957). However, many of these theories lack relevance to the career development and aspirations of racial and ethnic minorities (Stitt-Gohdes, 1997). Because career development research has primarily focused on white males, career development experts now question the applicability of such research to the career aspirations of African Americans. Traditional models of career development do not take into account the complexities confronting African Americans’ career development (Fitzgerald, Fassinger, & Betz, 1995). Only recently have researchers begun to examine the nature and scope of the career development experiences and choices of this group (Palmer & Johnson-Bailey, 2005, 2008).

African Americans’ Career Development: Issues and Barriers
Palmer’s (2001) and Rosser-Mims’ (2005) individual research studies identified several articles on career development, and both researchers concluded that few of these articles focus on the career development of African Americans. This confirms that there is a dearth of empirical research to identify and understand the factors that impact the career aspirations of African Americans in both political and corporate contexts (Bell & Nkomo, 2001; Farmer & Associates, 1997; Hackett & Byars, 1996). Furthermore, Parham and McDavis (1987) and Sue and Sue (1990) acknowledged that the educational and career development of African Americans have been affected by poverty, racism, juvenile delinquency, and a high percentage of single-parent families. Smith (1983) contended that despite the odds, African Americans have made considerable gains in education and the workplace since the 1960s. However, several experts and scholars believe that various barriers (discrimination, prejudice, structural variables, lack of skills, etc.) have prevented African Americans from achieving their full potential in the workplace (Carnevale & Stone 1995; Cox, 1993; Glass Ceiling Commission, 1995).

African American women are more disadvantaged than African American men in the career development process (Hackett & Byars, 1996). According to Hackett and Byars, while both are confronted with racism, African American women must deal with the added layer of sexism. Despite this, research shows that African American females tend to have higher educational achievements and thus greater occupational attainments and aspirations than African American males. African American women are also more likely to be employed in professional positions than African American men (Catalyst, 1993; Schreiber, Price, & Morrison, 1993). However, the progress of African American women in the educational and occupational arenas does not translate into greater occupational status with better incomes. African American women continue to earn less than their male counterparts, and the situation is worse when compared to White men (Carnevale & Stone, 1995; Cox, 1993).

A summary of the literature on career choices and development of African Americans in the political and corporate arenas reveal several issues and barriers (Palmer, 2001; Rosser-Mims, 2005):

- **Lack of a culturally relevant career development model**—Career choices and aspirations of African Americans are different due in part to certain cultural determinants.

- **Expectations and Aspirations**—Differences in expectations and career aspirations impact career outcomes.

319
• Discrimination and Prejudice—African Americans are denied certain opportunities due to racial, ethnic, and cultural factors.
• Gender Differences—Women tend to experience greater occupational barriers than men.
• Career paths—The career trajectory of African Americans is not linear but marked by various interruptions.

Corporate America and Politics as Career Options

Current trends indicate that by the year 2050, Asian Americans, Hispanic Americans, African-Americans, and non-Caucasian groups will represent 47 percent of the total American population (Bremner & Weber, 1992; Farrell, 1993). Consequently, almost half the workforce is projected to be made up of minority employees. Given the projected demographic changes, the management, organizational development, and human resource literature have stressed the need for organizations to value diversity through continuous career development in order to maximize organizational effectiveness. Experts in training and organizational development have urged organizations to learn about cultural differences and not surrender to ethnocentrism (Cox & Blake, 1991; Cox, 1993) and to provide meaningful intervention and opportunities for minorities to continually develop their careers (Arbona & Novy, 1991; Evans & Herr, 1994). The challenge for these organizations is to create effective strategies and programs that will change internal structures, systems, and cultures to make them receptive to a culturally diverse workforce. Despite the overwhelming evidence of the workforce becoming increasingly multicultural, and the resulting increase in productivity and efficiency, relatively few organizations are taking the necessary steps to develop and nurture the careers of African Americans (Arbona, 1990; Leong, 1995).

Corporate America

Minorities are greatly and adversely affected by poor and inappropriate career planning. Morrison (1992), acknowledged that if minorities are not well guided in the early stages of their careers, the residual effect is that of “losing development opportunities over time [which] keeps them from qualifying for high-level positions” (p. 2). Morrison argued that minorities are given less challenging assignments, usually in non-revenue generating functional areas. This results in minorities not being given opportunities to effectively demonstrate their capabilities and potential to function in high profile areas of the organization. According to the Glass Ceiling Commission report (1995), the critical career path for senior management positions requires taking on responsibilities most directly related to the corporate bottom line. However, the few minorities found at the highest levels tend to be in staff positions, such as human resources, or research, or administration, rather than in line positions, such as marketing, or sales, or production. At the same time, most companies require broad and varied experience in the core areas of the business to advance professionally, experience that, even now, too few women or minority men are in a position to develop.

Studies reveal that the career track of minorities does not lead to upper management and executive level positions (Morrison, 1992; Van Velsor & Hughes, 1990). Morrison acknowledged that minorities are usually assigned jobs with low visibility and less challenging than those assigned to white males. Catalyst (1993) also argued that career-enhancing assignments are usually not given to minorities. Frustrated with the lack of career planning and
advancement in organizations, many minorities either move to other middle management positions or exit the organization.

Minorities complain that lack of access to and understanding of the informal culture and network of the organization are additional barriers to career advancement. A study by Wentling (1992) of thirty women in middle management positions revealed many had difficulties conforming to corporate norms and values, embracing the corporate culture, and reaching out and finding support. Wentling also found the women had little understanding of the informal political structure because of lack of access to critical information. A thorough understanding and access to information about the informal organizational culture, history, and politics, are necessary to negotiate the corporate hierarchy (Morrison, 1992; Schreiber, et al., 1993). Morrison confirmed that the lack of political savvy about the organization is a hindrance to career advancement, and this lack of savvy is manifested in two ways. First, minorities lack information and understanding of how the informal network operates, and how to avail themselves of the opportunities and advantages. Second, they experience difficulties in seeking to be accepted in the informal culture. The in-group/out-group phenomenon, and the values, norms, and beliefs espoused by the in-group or dominant culture significantly impact this relationship (Carnevale & Stone 1995; Cox, 1993). Lack of access to the informal culture, lack of political savvy, and lack of access to vital information, are barriers thwarting the career advancement of minorities in organizations (Glass Ceiling Commission, 1995; Wentling 1992).

Politics

The question that undergirds this section is: why don’t more women, particularly African American women, consider politics as a career option? Rosser-Mims (2005) suggested that one explanation is that history reveals that men tend to approach politics as a career because their political ambition is cultivated at an early age. Moreover, men are encouraged at an early age to get involved in politics and to pursue it and thus have planned for it. Women do not receive this same support. Therefore, this is an example of how gender bias can affect women’s access to certain careers and arguably to political leadership roles (Carroll, 1993; Thomas & Wilcox, 1998). While women are left with the responsibility of determining how to manage multiple social roles: wife, mother, employee, community/civic leader, this often delay their entrance into politics (Carroll, 1983, 1984).

For an African American woman the roles are greater. Not only does she have to manage all roles enumerated above, she has the added burden of coping with the complex issue of conflicting identity issues that surface in her professional and personal life. According to Farmer and Associates (1997), socialization affects the various career choices we make. Indeed, more women are entering traditionally male dominated professions deemed “credible” for political leadership roles (i.e., lawyers, doctors, business owners, the wealthy, etc.) in respectable numbers (McGlen & O’Connor, 1998). However, they are still socialized in helping fields such as education and nursing, for example. These fields are not as highly esteemed in the political arena as are the traditionally male dominated professions—though this trend seems to be slowly changing (Carroll, 1983, 2003; Clark, 1991). Despite the changing focus, women are still not oriented towards politics, which can be regarded as a helping field, because of the power that politicians can possibly possess and wield.

Baraka-Love’s 1986 research study indicates that no clear model of a successful career pattern in public service exists for African American women. Moreover, the current career development literature fails to examine the career development experiences of African Americans
women who choose professions in public service, namely political leadership positions. However, what has been learned about women’s career development in general is that the career decisions that women and men face are significantly different which is relevant to this study. In addition, differences in career development also exist between women of color and White women (McCollum, 1998, Sokoloff, 1992). For example, Barrett, Cervero, and Johnson-Bailey (2003) assert that African Americans women encounter subtle and deliberate barriers in their career development. Such barriers stem from personal and institutional challenges, in so far as:

Institutional challenges are structural and environmental barriers, such as limited access to vocational guidance and assessment, tracking into ‘appropriate’ jobs and discrimination in hiring, promotions, and transfers. Personal challenges would encompass specific problems or issues related to the individual. Examples are lack of self confidence, less career exploration and more career indecision, and the inability or unwillingness to play the political ‘game’. (p. 2)

In addition to these challenges, the literature shows the decisions that women of color face in general tend to be more complicated as a result of the double jeopardy of race and sex discrimination (Bell & Nkomo, 2001; Leong, 1995; Farmer & Associates, 1997; Fitzgerald et al., 1995; Sokoloff, 1992). For example, African American women are faced with the phenomenon of ‘biculturality’ (Bell & Nkomo, 2001) existing between White and African American worlds. Accordingly, Barrett et al. (2003) posited that biculturalism is the notion that “depicts how African Americans interact with White society…the ability to function in two socio-cultural environments and to negotiate between them” (p. 111). Historically, African American women living within the dominant White culture have been forced to either assimilate or find ways to maintain their identity. Another major issue for African American women in the workplace is balancing their “personal, professional, and communal lives” (King & Ferguson, 2001, p. 125). Negotiating among these life forces requires an exorbitant amount of physical and emotional energy, which has severe consequences for African American women’s health and well-being (King & Ferguson, 2001). This circumstance is exacerbated by the “strong African American female” image which is characterized as

The strong [B]lack woman is a motivated, hardworking breadwinner. She is always prepared “to do what needs to be done” for her family and her people. She is sacrificial and smart. She suppresses her own emotional needs while anticipating those of others. She has a seemingly irrepressible spirit unbroken by a legacy of oppression, poverty, and rejection (Harris-Lacewell, 2001, p. 3)

As evidenced, several studies have identified and documented the limitations of employing classical career development theories to the experiences of African Americans, particularly, the impact that both social context and positionality have on their experiences (Bell & Nkomo, 2001; King & Ferguson, 2001; Schreiber et al., 1993; Sokoloff, 1992). Potentially more useful and relevant to understanding the career development of African Americans and other marginalized groups, whose career development experiences do not fit into existing frameworks, has been the application of social learning theories (King & Ferguson, 2001). Farmer & Associates (1997) concurred, “Promise for a more comprehensive theory, relevant for the diversity of the U. S. population today in terms of ethnicity, gender and sexual orientation, will likely come from emerging theories based on social learning theory….” (p. 3).
Findings and Conclusions

Palmer’s (2001) and Rosser-Mims’ (2005) studies have reinforced the finding that African Americans are often not allowed to optimize their career and leadership potential due to various obstacles. These obstacles are classified as (1) structural barriers (i.e., organizational policies, programs, rules, procedures, and practices), (2) attitudinal barriers (i.e., feelings, perceptions, and stereotypes held by certain members of the organization), and (3) race and gender barriers. In both studies, these barriers were identified as thwarting the participants’ opportunities to achieve optimum career success, despite being qualified experientially and educationally.

In conclusion, this paper serves to inform those involved in the development of career and leadership development programs of the need to cultural variables in career development training models. As more African Americans aspire to positions in the corporate and political arenas with expectations of building careers in these fields, it is important for educators, career development trainers, and human resource managers to attend to the development needs of this group. We also need to understand the ways in which the intersections of race, gender and other differences impact learning along one’s career development path. By comparing the findings of Palmer’s (2001) and Rosser-Mims’ (2005) studies, the authors reiterate that barriers persist and that these barriers thwart efforts of African Americans to realize their career potential in corporate and political spheres.

*References will be provided during presentation*
Unethical Behavior, Academic Misconduct, & Incivility: Does it occur in Adult Education Classrooms?

Michael L. Rowland
The Ohio State University

Abstract: The purpose of this research was to survey members of the CPAE listserv regarding personal experiences with ethical issues and dilemmas in the adult education classroom and to also obtain their perceptions of the most critical ethical issues adult educators encounter in the classroom.

Incidents of cheating, corruption, dishonesty, fraud, and ethical violations both in the workplace and in higher and professional education are pervasive and being increasingly reported in the mainstream media and via the internet. To some people, it may seem like everyone is cheating to get ahead in today’s world. Callahan (2004, p.9) states, “Although it is well known that academic cheating by students has reached an all-time high, it’s also true that parents and tutors and other adults are increasingly helping students do whatever it takes to get an edge in their high-stakes education careers.” If adults are helping their children or other students to cheat, what does that say about the behavior of adults who enroll in our educational courses? Adult education much like higher and professional education would therefore seem to have its share of students and faculty who may be prone to dishonesty and commit acts of unethical behavior, academic misconduct or promote a climate of incivility. Callahan (2004) asserts that much of the cheating increase in America is related to issues of anxiety and insecurity in America. He declared that American values have changed since the 1970’s; noting that we have become more selfish, more focused on money and being cutthroat. Callahan suggests colleges and universities should establish stronger honor codes with faculty making a commitment to teaching integrity.

Informally, many colleagues in the field of adult education discuss the problems of a market-driven, consumerist approach to adult education, and problems with issues of academic integrity and classroom behavior and expectations of students. Yet, there have been few empirical studies in adult education that have focused on how these important issues impact adult educators and the teaching and learning environment. As Brockett & Hiemstra (2004, p.4) assert “it is important to put ethical issues in adult education on the ‘front burner’ of discussions related to professional development for educators of adults.” As adult educators we often must wrestle with ethical dilemmas and perhaps wonder if we are taking the most ethical or the easiest approach. How do we as adult educators maintain the highest ethical standards in and out of the classroom?

Theoretical Framework and Review of Relevant Literature

The theoretical framework for this study is rooted in the literature of ethics and education with a specific focus on the role of ethics as related to adult education. A review of the literature reveals that discussions of ethics in adult education have largely focused on two primary areas of concern: (1) establishment of a code of ethics for the profession (Gordon & Sork 2001; Hatcher & Storberg-Walker 2004; Sork & Welock 1992; Cunningham 1992; Connelly & Light 1991; Griffith 1991; Lawler 1996) and (2) the ethics of teaching and practice Caffarella 1988; Price 1997; Cervero & Wilson 1994; Wilson & Cervero 1996; Rose 1996; Sork 1988; Pratt 1998).

In order to truly understand the complexities of ethics and ethical dilemmas in adult education, a definition of ethics is warranted. Singarella & Sork (1983, p. 244.) noted, “ethics is the branch of philosophy which investigates that which is good, bad, right, wrong, morally
approved or disapproved within groups or cultures.” Similarly, Brockett (1988, p.2) defines ethics as “a branch of philosophical inquiry that focuses upon moral questions...ethics refers to a set of beliefs that serve as guides to action.” Many individuals rely on their personal sense of morals to guide their actions, while others may rely on their religious beliefs or professional experiences in their approach to ethical dilemmas and making ethical decisions (Rowland, 2008). Other professional groups such as health professions, business schools, and elementary and secondary education schools have codes of ethics that are designed to insure appropriate behavior and boundaries as a professional, yet what are the ethical tenants of adult education? Although the field of adult education may not have a professional code of ethics, we must also be mindful of the rules of the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 (FERPA).

Ethics and ethical dilemmas has been the subject of two studies in adult education that helped inform the current study on ethical dilemmas. McDonald and Wood (1993) surveyed 3 different groups of adult education practitioners in Indiana about ethical dilemmas they encountered in the classroom and perceptions and need for a codes of ethics for the field. McDonald and Wood found issues regarding confidentiality, specifically discussing student information with colleagues, other students and outside agencies was the most cited ethical dilemma facing the 3 groups. Following confidentiality the most cited ethical dilemmas were (in decreasing order of importance): 2) ownership of instructional materials, 3) employment practices, 4) conflicts of interests, 5) financial issues, 6) evaluating student performance, 7) enrollment and attendance issues, 8) professionalism and competence issues and 9) unsound program design.

Another important study related to ethical dilemmas in adult education was partially based on the McDonald and Wood (1993) study and was conducted by Gordon & Sork (2001) in British Columbia who also examined the need for a code of ethics but also the ethical issues and dilemmas adult educators experienced in their practice. Gordon & Sork found that the most cited ethical issue was also confidentiality and problems of giving out student information to others. The other most cited ethical dilemmas were (in decreasing order of importance): 2) student-faculty relationships, 3) financial issues, 4) professionalism issues, 5) conflicts of interests, 6) evaluating student performance, 7) ownership of instructional materials, 8) inter-organizational concerns, 9) credentials and 10) unsound training designs.

Academic Misconduct

An additional classroom issue that often creates ethical dilemmas for educators involves concerns related to academic integrity of students and faculty colleagues. Academic integrity and misconduct are widely discussed in the literature of higher education yet, it is almost non-existent in the adult education literature. It would appear this is not an issue of concern in adult education classrooms. It is understandable that there may be some reluctance to discuss these types of issues for fear of being perceived as weak or unable to manage these important issues. This reluctance could explain the paucity of literature on the subject in adult education.

Jocoy and DiBase (2006) investigated the prevalence of plagiarism, its detection and remediation among adult learners in an online certificate program in geographic information systems. Specifically, they looked for acts of copy & paste plagiarism, using detection devices as Turnitin.com and EVE (Essay Verification Engine). By using Turnitin.com, it was revealed 13 percent plagiarism while manually checking citations caught only 3 percent. They note instructors must be alert and check for plagiarism even among adult students. Another study examining concerns of academic integrity is by Gambescia (2007) who explored best practices in the handling of academic dishonesty issues with adult students. His study focused primarily on adult
students enrolled in continuing professional education. Gambescia found that there were significant gaps in students’ knowledge, attitudes and experiences with issues of academic honesty. He contends that dealing with issues of academic honesty, is not about making more rules, but finding ways to “best articulate, educate and implement the spirit, and meaning of these policies to adult student groups” (p.54).

Incivility

Another area that raises ethical concerns involves issues working with difficult students and colleagues. The term “incivility or uncivil behavior has been defined by Feldman (2001, p.137) as “any action that interferes with a harmonious and cooperative learning atmosphere in the classroom.” For example, making loud, sarcastic remarks, having emotional outbursts, or answering cell phones while in class may be indicative of uncivil behavior by students; yet, fast-paced instruction, indifferent remarks, and surprise tests are actions by instructors that students consider uncivil. Galbraith (2008) suggests three important ways for adult educators to respond to acts of incivility in the classroom. He suggest educators should, (1) stay calm, (2) do not sink to the level of the person who committed the uncivil act, and (3) respond immediately to the problem.

Research Design

The purpose of this study was to assess adult educator’s personal experiences and concerns regarding ethical dilemmas encountered in the adult education classroom. The primary method of data collection was through a web-based survey to obtain information and perceptions from members of the Adult Education CPA-E listserv regarding ethical dilemmas facing today’s adult educators in the classroom. A corresponding link to the survey web site was sent via email to the CPA-E listserv. Participants were asked to share one or two examples of ethical dilemmas they encountered. The types of issues and frequency of the issues are provided in the results section.

Findings and Discussion

A total of seventy-two adult educators responded to the online web survey. The participants included 44 females (62 percent) and 27 (38 percent) male participants. The majority of the participants (61 percent) had sixteen plus years of experience, while only (8 percent) had five years or less of experience. Of the total number of respondents, 28 percent had taken a formal ethics course as part of their adult education program.

A sample of respondent’s comments to open-ended questions is presented below and where necessary were edited to protect confidentiality. Respondents were asked about important current ethical dilemmas graduate students and professors of adult education encounter. The most frequently cited ethical issue of importance among forty percent of respondents related to plagiarism and cheating issues of primarily students but also of faculty.

Most Important Ethical Issue

Respond # Comments:
2 Plagiarism among students and faculty and stealing ideas and research from each other in the field is rampant
12 Candidacy exams at the doctoral level seems to growing sites of plagiarism
13 My biggest concern is Plagiarism
19 Most students have NO CLUE as to the fact that their cheating behavior warrants expulsion or course failure
26 Academic misconduct by students – plagiarism and equity in terms of admissions
standards and support
27 I feel that students do not have the time to do a good job and so they are looking for shortcuts… such as quoting someone and then not attributing that to a source
34 Cheating with technology is a problem. There is so much out there it is impossible to gage the work at times to determine if it is the student’s original work or not
44 Plagiarism is a problem. Students are under a lot of pressure to fulfill roles of full time workers, head of household and student. Our electronic age makes it easy to borrow without recognition
56 There are problems with the ethics and honesty in research among faculty
66 I believe a student had someone else write most of her dissertation because the writing style was so uncharacteristic of her. How do I prove that?

However, one respondent did not view plagiarism or cheating as a significant problem and noted, “Cheating is the least of my concerns, although it does happen. To me, the most important problem is student confidentiality. It is so easy to talk with my colleagues and forget to delete [student’s] names.” Another respondent asked, “How do I discern unethical behavior and what are reasonable variations in ethical standards.” Yet, one participant stated, “I’m not sure we spend time on ethics and codes of conduct—we assume students at the graduate level are aware of appropriate behavior.” Other important ethical concerns of respondents included, 1) offering programs and courses for which the job market is uncertain, 2) influencing students to take courses they do not need, 3) the market-mentality of students and university administrators, 4) power relationships among students and faculty, 5) lack of commitment by adult educators to redress social injustices, 6) inappropriate classroom conduct and classroom management issues and 7) fair evaluation of students.

In addition, respondents were asked to share one or two examples of situations they have encountered in the past 12 months that created an ethical dilemma for them as an adult educator. One respondent noted, “I [a junior faculty member] was involved in a dispute among two senior colleagues over a power struggle. I did not handle it well.”

**Ethical Dilemmas**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Respond #</th>
<th>Comments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Students abuse deadline dates for assignment completion, in order to work the system</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Handling student requests for letters of recommendation when you have doubts about their ability or suitability of the student for the program or position they are seeking</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>Students compare teaching skills of new and more seasoned faculty. Students show little tolerance for new faculty and want to remove new faculty from teaching. Should I support the new faculty or do I as the students’ request, and report the faculty to upper administration?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>32</td>
<td>Giving a student a grade he/she didn’t deserve. Rampant grade inflation in dept</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>38</td>
<td>Pressured by a committee to pass a very deficient dissertation defense</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>47</td>
<td>Faculty starting a research project without completing an IRB. There are no rules on how to address this with faculty-only of a student</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>48</td>
<td>Knowing that a colleague did not follow university guidelines for doctoral exams</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>51</td>
<td>Supporting a faculty member for tenure who was not qualified</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Administrators overstepping their authority and avoiding due academic process
Constantly dealing with a faculty member who will do anything to get whatever
he/she wants
Witnessing unprofessional treatment of students by professors

There were a number of comments from respondents related to issues of race and gender. For example, there was talk of excluding one group from participation in discussions (a form of reverse discrimination); still others noted special challenges and concerns in working with students and faculty of diverse backgrounds. One respondent shared, “how do I talk about race and social justice issues in the classroom?” Another respondent shared a similar concern, “I think discussion of all social justice issues can lead to an ethical dilemma. Should I share my views on such issues as poverty, racism, power imbalances, or the war in Iraq?” Still, others expressed concerns regarding gender bias, power imbalances and issues of sexual harassment of students in adult education.

Incivility
Finally, participants were asked to discuss any other concerns of ethical dilemmas in adult education. Several comments were related to inappropriate classroom behavior. For example, one respondent noted, “I have had more than one example of students treating me with disrespect in the classroom; seems minor but pointing fingers, giving me dirty looks, speaking rudely.” Another respondent shared a similar concern, “I have experienced non verbal hostile behavior by students, text messaging in class, rude commentary, and lack of response to questions asked in class.”

**Respond # Comments:**

2 Students will tell you, instructor ‘A’ told us this or that, not what you are telling us now. The instructor has no idea whether the student has misunderstood the previous instructor or whether this is an attempt by students to sow the "Seeds of Discontent" among Instructors.

5 Students asking questions in an angry tone in class

8 Chairs of committees who bully their grad students into a certain research direction, or other dissertation-related decisions. A my way, you don’t graduate mentality

12 Students are lacking qualities such as integrity, respect and trust

15 I think there is often a lack of civility and/or tolerance displayed between students, also breaking confidentiality information on other faculty members

22 There is a considerable amount of power plays by faculty members in my department. I’m afraid to stand up to senior faculty members who have power over tenure. This makes it difficult to stand up to them about their inequitable practices

27 The way some colleagues communicate with students. It doesn’t reflect our commitments as adult educators

30 Students who demand compensation because of receiving low grades

33 There have been several cases where I have felt students were basically trying to buy a degree. The work they produced was mediocre, just enough to get by. There was no personal commitment to excellence or to the field.

37 Lack of professional behavior and interpersonal respect among my colleagues

38 Faculty dating their students

49 Students who demand an incomplete in a course where there are no grounds for an incomplete in the course
Student commenting on the back of an Exam Paper about an essay question, stating “This is the stupidest question I have ever heard of”

Implications for Adult Education

The issues presented here demonstrate only a portion of the ethical issues of concern to adult educators. Many times an ethical dilemma may escalate into a legal issue. We are obligated to be professional at all times, especially in our communication with students and colleagues. In order to better understand how to manage and handle these issues, there must be an ongoing dialogue among faculty, administrators and graduate students interested in pursuing a career in academia, taking place regularly on what the important ethical issues. As revealed in this study, there is a need to educate and encourage junior and/or novice faculty as colleagues. Adult educators may want to consider holding an ethics summit or ethics pre-conference to better understand and manage the ongoing ethical issues in order to maintain the highest ethical standards.

References

A complete reference list may be obtained by email to: Rowland.3@osu.edu

Feldman, L.J. (2001). Classroom civility is another one of our instructor responsibilities. College Teaching, 49(4), 137-140.
Griffith, W. S. (1991) Do adult educators need a code of ethics? Adult Learning, 2(8), 1, 4.
Older Baby Boomers Seeking Collegiate Degrees: 
Developmental Influences on Educational and Vocational Aspirations

Jane L. Schaefer
Columbus State Community College, U.S.A.

Abstract: This paper summarizes findings from a phenomenological study designed to explore the experiences of degree-seeking, adult learners—specifically, Older Baby Boomers (OBB) born between 1946 and 1958. Findings seek to understand how adult development—psychosocial, cognitive, and spiritual dimensions—influences older adult students’ future aspirations, both career and retirement, and their transformational learning experiences within the context of higher education.

Several national trends are converging that greatly impact adult education today. First, the increasing presence of adults in higher education is accentuated by the expansive Baby Boom generation. Older Baby Boomers, the leading edge of this large cohort, are not only nearing retirement, but are returning to higher education in record numbers (Creighton & Hudson, 2002). Second, the demographic phenomenon of increasing adult learners impacts workforce and economic development in the 21st century. Between 2000 and 2015 the highest growth rate in the U.S. workforce will be among workers aged 55 to 64 (Montenegro, Fisher, & Remez, 2002, p. 5). Even though four out of five Baby Boomers desire to continue working beyond typical retirement age, many will require upgraded skills and credentials (Freedman, 2005). A third significant trend impacting adult education is longer life expectancy—age 77 today compared to age 47 in 1900 (Zeiss, 2006). Longer life expectancy and longer life after retirement have encouraged older adults to participate in various new learning and work experiences.

Study Purpose and Contribution
To meet the demands created by these trends, we need a deeper understanding of how adult learners—particularly those who are at or near traditional retirement age—access institutions of higher education, experience successful learning in their higher education endeavors, and plan to utilize their college education in their remaining work-lives. This phenomenological study examines the experiences of degree-seeking OBB between the ages of 50 and 62. Specifically, this study explores: (a) who contemporary, degree-seeking OBB students are and how they describe their support needs as they transition back into college; (b) the learning experiences and expectations of OBB students as they move through college and how those impact their cognitive development and adult transformative learning experiences; and (c) the influence of spirituality as OBB students move out from their educational experience toward vocational aspirations.

This study addresses qualitative research gaps in the higher education literature pertaining to the learning and development of older adult degree-seeking students. The majority of studies concerning older adult learners have focused on those seeking non-credit and informal education. Furthermore, the recent surge of studies regarding spiritual development in college has been quantitative in nature and largely focused on traditional-aged students. This study provides a deeper understanding of how those learners who are at or near traditional retirement age move into institutions of higher education, move through their college learning experience, and plan to move out of higher education toward their future vocational aspirations.
Theoretical Framework

Characteristics of adult learners are illuminated through multiple constructs of adult development, including cognitive, psychosocial, and spiritual dimensions. Although numerous theories informed the design of this study, the data were analyzed using Nancy Schlossberg’s transition model (psychosocial development), the construct of spiritual quest construct (spiritual development), and Jack Mezirow’s transformational learning theory (cognitive development).

Prior studies of adult psychosocial development indicate that older adults often transition from concern about competency and personal welfare to concern about others and what is meaningful as they age (Bridges, 1980). Schlossberg’s transition model identifies factors that influence a person’s ability to cope with a particular transition such as going to college (Schlossberg, Waters, & Goodman, 2006). Those grappling with life transitions may also be questioning the meaning and relevance of their remaining life’s work and their individual purpose. This form of existential engagement represents the spiritual dimension of adult development which can be understood as one’s spiritual quest (Lindholm, Goldberg, & Calderone, 2006).

As human beings adult students have a felt need to understand and make sense of their experience—cognitively, psychosocially, and spiritually. To create higher learning environments most conducive to adults’ success, adult educators and program administrators need to become astute as to how the various dimensions of adult development influence student learning. Adult educators must strive to increase the capacity of students to become critically aware of their own cognitions and to assess their relevance for learning, a task which is central to adult transformative learning (Mezirow, 2000)

Research Design

A study which explores the intersection of older adult students’ development and adult learning lends itself to qualitative research methodology. This phenomenological study explored the experiences of older adults returning to college and was framed within the epistemology of constructivism, using an interpretive theoretical perspective. A purposeful sampling strategy was used to select nine students enrolled in a bachelor’s degree completion program at a Midwest university. Volunteer participants, between the ages of 50 and 62, were seeking undergraduate degrees, as opposed to those engaged in life-long learning for the purposes of personal enrichment or corporate training. Using a modification of Siedman’s three interview approach (1998), primary data collection methods consisted of: (a) two 90-minute semi-structured individual interviews; (b) one 30-minute phone contact (which served as a third interview); and (c) one reflection questionnaire adapted from Nino’s Spiritual Quest Assessment (1997) which provided insight into individuals’ ideas about spirituality. Secondary data collection consisted of an archival data review of the degree requirements of the program in which students were enrolled. Research questions guiding this study were:

1. What is the experience of OBB pursuing higher education degrees? What past experiences and future aspirations bring them to higher education? Why are they seeking higher education degrees?

2. How do the multi-dimensions of adult development—cognitive, psychosocial, and spiritual—influence older adult students’ transformative learning and meaning-making experiences in
higher education? Conversely, how does their college experience influence their personal growth and development?

3. How do OBB view and describe the role of higher education in supporting their continued development and future vocational aspirations?

Data were systematically analyzed by first listening to each interview and reading all transcripts to get a general sense of the data. This holistic review of data was followed by a more focused, three step examination process. First, the data were dissected into the smallest units of meaning to discover any significant statements of reality from the participants’ perspectives. Then, data were pieced back together inductively in new ways to produce meaningful interpretations of participant statements. Finally, themes of meanings emerged from the data analyses and an exhaustive description of the phenomenon was created. Multiple strategies were utilized to verify conclusions including triangulation of data, presenting negative or discrepant information, retaining access to participants for continued member-checking, and utilizing both a peer reviewer and an external auditor to develop intersubjective consensus.

Findings and Conclusions

Persistent patterns of findings emerged from the data, including, but not limited to, the following: older adult learner characteristics and reasons for enrollment; higher education support needs; adult transformative learning; self-identified cognitive, psychosocial, and spiritual development; vocational concerns of meaning, purpose, and service; and spiritual influences on future aspirations. These findings reveal the essence of the phenomenon of older adults pursuing higher education degrees, as perceived by participants to be a self-identified transformative process resulting in improved learner self-efficacy, and acquired within a supportive, adult-friendly higher education environment which enabled students to successfully transition not only toward degree completion and ensuing career enhancements, but toward meaningful vocational aspirations grounded in personal spiritual beliefs. Findings were inducted from the data regarding OBB students’ experience of the higher education process, as summarized in Table 1.

Moving In: Higher Education Support Needs of Older Baby Boomers

Who are contemporary OBB students and what support needs do they have when moving in to college as older adults? Most OBB college students are first generational college students and experience an information deficit about higher education processes. Degree-seeking older adult students are primarily motivated by career aspirations, not personal enrichment. Many are returning to college due to job loss, need of enhanced credentials for promotion, or to train for a new career altogether. OBB students experience complex support needs while transitioning back into their college endeavors, particularly since many have had experiences of academic failure as traditional aged college students. OBB students sought support through expressions of admiration (affect), agreement or acknowledgement from others or even oneself (affirmation), and assistance in such things as money, time, and entitlements (aid). Advisors, faculty, and family members played important support roles for OBB learners.

Moving Through: Older Baby Boomers’ Transformative Learning in College

How does one describe OBB as learners? Findings reveal important characteristics of persons who will be entering adult programs in the next decade. OBB students are serious learners, and most have worked to overcome learning doubts, fears, and past regrets. They are dedicated to
Table 1

Transition of Older Baby Boomer College Students

Findings Summary Map

“MOVING IN” Support & Situation

VOICES OF OBB STUDENTS
Who are contemporary, degree-seeking OBB students and how do they describe their support needs as they transition back into college?

Who are they?
1st Generation College Students

Why do they seek degrees?
Primarily career-related aspirations
- Career advancement
- Preparation for new careers

What support do they receive and need?
- Affect – from family, spouse, & traditional age students
- Affirmation – from faculty
- Aid – advisors offer key support

“MOVING THROUGH” Strategies

OBB AS LEARNERS
What are the learning experiences and expectations of OBB students and how does going to college impact their cognitive development and adult transformative learning experiences?

How do they approach college learning?
OBB students are serious, focused, and dedicated students with high learning expectations. They use positive coping strategies – reframing, attitudes of hope, and spirituality.

What cognitive changes result from their college-going experience?
College brings increased:
- Critical thinking ability
- Capacity for ambiguity and complexity
- Tolerance for others

Do they experience college as a transformative learning process?
Evidence indicates YES.
- Critical reflection on assumptions
- New meaning perspectives
- New actions and attitudes

“MOVING OUT” Self

OBB FUTURE ASPIRATIONS
How do OBB students understand spirituality and does spirituality influence their educational and vocational aspirations?

How do OBB define and understand spirituality?
Spirituality > religion
Spirituality is meaning-making through spiritual quest activities:
- Inwardness (self discernment)
- Relatedness with others (both Higher Power and humanity)
- Generativity for meaning and purpose

What is the relationship between their spirituality and educational aspirations?
Spirituality is not a consideration for enrollment, but the higher education journey impacts spirituality through changed perceptions of self.

What are OBB’s vocational aspirations and are they influenced by spirituality?
- Work beyond retirement
- Spirituality impacts future vocational choices or ethical choices of how one does his or her job
- Encore service careers is a common spiritual quest
academic success and practice self-regulation to achieve goals and increase their self-efficacy. OBB students have high learning expectations of both themselves and their instructors. Learning, for example, must be applied, and a social interaction is preferred. Most use positive coping strategies to approach learning, including reframing problematic situations, maintaining an attitude of hope, and using spirituality to transition through stressful situations. How does college learning impact older adults’ cognitive development, and does it result in personal transformation? The college learning experience of study participants resulted in increased cognitive capacities which precipitated experiencing college itself as a transformative learning process. OBB students attained an increased ability for critical reflection and discourse, a capacity for ambiguity and complexity, and a tolerance of others. These cognitive changes resulted in varying degrees of transformative learning. Engaging in the transformative learning process enabled students to experience changed meaning perspectives and resulted in greater freedom to act on their own purposes, values, and meanings, rather than relying on those assimilated blindly from others. Such vital developmental changes in adults cannot be ignored.

**Moving Out: Future Aspirations and Spiritual Quests of Older Baby Boomers**

“Researchers have only just begun to investigate the connections between adult learning, spirituality and transformative learning within the higher education setting” (Groen & Jacob, 2006, p. 76). Many adult educators believe that the spiritual dimension of education is important to meaning-making in adult learning. But, how do OBB students define and understand spirituality? Does spirituality influence the educational and vocational aspirations of OBB students? Typical of the Baby Boom generation, OBB students define spirituality as different from religion and tend to place greater value on spirituality than religious practices. Unlike traditional aged students, OBB do not look for higher education to play a role in their spiritual development, but they do acknowledge the importance of spirituality in their own daily living. They also acknowledge a spiritual influence in their vocational aspirations, either on the type of work they choose to pursue or, at the very least, on the way they go about conducting themselves at work. Furthermore, those seeking to delay retirement to serve others through encore careers seem especially cognizant of spiritual influences in their quest for meaning and purpose.

**Implications for Adult Education Theory and Practice**

This study has important implications for student affairs personnel. Meeting the needs of older adult learners includes strategies, such as: (a) addressing issues of equitable and streamlined access for part-time students; (b) removing financial aid barriers for those who work full-time yet have limited disposable income to spend on educational pursuits; (c) providing increased flexible course scheduling and expanded on-line course availability; (d) standardizing assessments of prior learning and articulation processes to efficiently allow for work experience credits; and (e) providing student services for adult-specific support needs. In particular, higher education must respond to adult learners’ tendencies toward service-related careers. Half of Americans age 50 to 70 want jobs that contribute to the greater good (Freedman, 2005). By helping older adult students prepare for such careers, colleges will capture a new population of students to serve, and will help millions of people find greater significance and purpose in life” (Zeiss, 2006, p. 40).

This study also has valuable pedagogical implications to consider. Faculty professional development opportunities are imperative to enable faculty members to know how to employ more transformative learning and teaching strategies, to become comfortable in acknowledging the spiritual dimension of adult learning, and to become adept at revising curriculum...
requirements to account for adult learners’ workplace experiences. To remain relevant and effective with adult learners, college faculty and staff must learn to habitually acknowledge and integrate the importance of all learning, including that beyond formal higher education such as life experiences, continuing professional education, and job experiences. The supportive higher education of the future environment entails honoring alternative modes of student meaning-making aside from cognitive, rational approaches, such as the affect expressed in spirituality.

This study provides employers with possible directions for policy changes necessary to accommodate the vocational aspirations of those who are redefining the course of retirement. Since OBB desire to do work that is intellectually stimulating, employers must be proactive in providing innovative opportunities for continued and meaningful employment, such as part-time, flexible schedules and tuition reimbursement for those who wish to complete bachelor degrees or seek advanced degrees. Just as academic programs serving career-minded OBB students must go beyond the confines of typical senior programs (designed primarily for enrichment), employers must provide talent management and retirement planning that encompasses more than mere financial planning. Life planning is key to retaining the knowledge capital so prevalent in OBBs.

References


Adult Education & Participant Empowerment for Organizational Transformation: a Learning Organization Case Study Introducing an Integration Model & a Strategic Empowerment Tool

Soni Simpson, DePaul University, USA
Elizabeth Londo, Director of Organizational Development, Edlong Corporation, USA

Abstract: Aligned organizations of empowered, diverse learners are positioned to achieve shared objectives while responding to marketplace changes. Two models, the Integration Model & Annual Strategic Empowerment Tool, encourage systemic transformations. Using these models, engaged employees co-create and achieve strategic objectives through full integration with the annual performance management system.

New Models Fill a Practical Void

Effective management education creates empowerment and improves the organization’s capacity for aligned strategic action. In today’s society, organizations are faced with

- the unique issue of employing a highly diverse workforce including racial and gender differences as well as four generations in the workplace,
- significant transfer-of-training issues to ensure retention of learning and application of training,
- the challenge of becoming true learning organizations in order to compete effectively while providing employee voice and empowerment.

Although there are models that deal with adult learning in the education fields and models that deal with individual aspects of effectiveness within organizational behavior literature, there are no models that integrate the true principles of adult education to provide employee empowerment and voice to systemic organizational transformation. These new models can enhance learning in all organizations.

Case in Progress

This learning program was initiated with a family-owned business-to-business company that had some confusion about how they went to market. They had sold a particular type of product for more than 40 years and identified themselves as a specialty manufacturer. However, their customers knew them by the level of service they provided, including their responsiveness to unique requests, their lack of minimum orders, and their personal touch. The company’s employees displayed wide diversity in race, gender, and age, and recent hires worked side-by-side with employees that had been there for decades. Some of the company’s scientists were driven by data and scientific principles, while others considered themselves food artists. The company’s marketing and sales force focused efforts on meeting the evolving needs of a wide variety of types of customers at different phases of their own product life cycles.

These philosophical differences were compounded by a diverse leadership group grappling with a newly evolving power structure influenced by the recent death of the founder,
new outside hires in management and leadership positions, and major life-issues several key family members and the trainer faced including a move, grief, illness, pregnancy, and a divorce. Of course, in a family business, the founder’s family issues are reflected in the company’s culture and impact all employees at some level. The challenge the training program was designed to address was to articulate the philosophical differences among management, and then co-create a shared brand philosophy and go-to-market strategy that drew upon the strengths of this diversity.

**Bases for Model Development**

The Integration Model & the Annual Strategic Empowerment Tool were both developed for a corporate-wide strategic brand integration course. There were no learning models available that effectively promoted organizational change with collaborative participant empowerment. The specific challenge in this case study was developing an organization-wide culture shift through 1) a learning program with reinforced transfer-of-training and 2) a program for providing voice and relevance to each employee regardless of level, type of learner, type of worker, or individual differences. All employee/participants were seen as valuable in the transformation process. In order for the company’s culture to transform it was imperative that learning transfer into hands-on relevant action. Specifically, this unique learning program successfully tied employee training and empowerment to organizational goals and individual performance management to better ensure employee voice and democratic transformation. The following highlights the program design, briefly describes the program’s link to adult learning theories, and provides a brief introduction to the models. See Exhibits 1 and 2.

**Organizational Learning Program Design for Transformation & Model Elements**

With the understanding that organizational transformation is symbiotic with individual transformation and empowerment, we initiated a learning program that engaged employee expert knowledge from all organizational levels, all four generational age groups, and addressing several learning styles, using the following interactive methods:

**Phase I: Democratic Learning from the Ground Up.** Four one-day learning sessions with a multi-level planning team introduced democratic principles, addressed multiple learning styles, and examined customer-focused brand management theory, including case study, critical reflection of business issues, and brainstorming.

**Phase II Employee Empowerment Linked to Goal Setting.** All group learning was incorporated into the development of a corporate strategic plan using democratic principles of employee empowerment. Learning & input sessions were held for the entire corporation.

**Phase III Performance Management Linked to Strategic Plan Empowerment.** The existing performance management system was incorporated into the 2008 strategic plan. Each strategy, tactic, and objective was assessed for measurability and assigned to all employees as part of their 2008 performance objectives. Additionally, each employee ensured their performance objectives were directly aligned to the plan.
Two Model tools developed and utilized. Two practical training tools were developed in the process. Visual graphics of each model as well as proven practical application of these models and their elements will be provided in detail in presentation.

The Integration Model developed ties organization values to a triangular relationship between employees/members, customer relationships, and organization systems. This relationship sits on a background of organization culture that is influenced by leadership. Each element of the model was developed in collaboration as a basis for member voice and empowerment in the organization’s transformation. The Integration Model created provided a platform for dialogue between these diverse groups on how to best transform the organization to comply with the standards of the industry while continually evolving to meet customers’ changing needs. See Exhibit 1.

The Annual Strategic Empowerment Tool links the democratically created strategic plan to individual member development. This tool is an arrow moving the organization forward. It ensures the transfer-of-training by specifically tying each organizational goal to each member’s role in organization transformation. These goals and roles are created in collaboration, increasing ownership, buy-in and effectiveness. The Annual Strategic Planning Tool was developed to capture the dialogue in a way that could be operationalized by the organization in the coming year. It included the hypothesis that these changes would improve organizational results. See Exhibit 2.

Adult Education & Organizational Behavior Theory
Informed Learning Program & Models
In addition to using our combined 40 years of experience in the fields of organizational development, adult education, and training, we reviewed significant bodies of literature and evaluated several schools of thought as we developed and applied these new models. A brief summary of important sources follows:

- **Stephen Brookfield and Stephen Preskill’s Discussion & Democratic Classroom Theories** recognizes the importance of learner voice and effective discussion as a learning method.
- **Malcom Knowles’ Androgogy Adult Learning** offers a learner-centered/directed model of instruction with learner viewed as a mutual partner to designing learning activities.
- **Howard Gardner’s multiple intelligences** champions practical or real-world intelligences;
- **Peter Senge’s and Watkins & Marsick’s Learning Organization** defines a learning organization as one that learns continuously and transforms itself in response to the external environment within which it thrives. According to these principles, learning takes place in individuals, teams, in the organization and even in the communities with which the organization interacts.
- **On-The-Job Social Learning** takes into account the importance of the person, understanding that people learn and develop thought patterns through observation of others in a social environment. Three key components are vicarious learning, self-control, self-efficacy.
- **Social Theory**, the program focuses on attention (model stimuli and trainee characteristics), retention (coding, organization and rehearsal), motor reproduction
(capability, accuracy, feedback), and motivational processes (reinforcement). Models were used pervasively as stimuli, trainee characteristics were taken into account, and rehearsal and reproduction were used to increase retention, accuracy of learning and feedback. Additionally, reinforcement through linkage to the performance management system was incorporated into the final transfer of training.

- **Motivational Goal Setting** assumes a person’s behavior results from conscious goals and intentions. Thus, using group democratic decision-making methods to develop achievable goals is imperative for empowerment.
- **Critical Reflective Thinking** is built upon critically examining assumptions and beliefs from which an individual or an organization’s behavior is based. Participants are encouraged subtly and sometimes explicitly to question how they view their industry, customer and corporate identity.

**Case-in-Progress Lessons Learned, Results-To-Date, and Implications Going Forward**

The learning program that was developed launched 2008 as a year when dialogue and learning were already a part of the culture. Several new ad hoc groups were initiated to benchmark and manage key metrics for the organization and to continue to deepen cross-functional relationships with the intention of increasing efficiencies and improving customized service levels simultaneously. As a result, reliable key metrics have been established and organizational results have continued to improve throughout the year. The crux of this change occurred through the simple medium of strategic conversations designed to further the achievement of a shared objective.

This approach has become systemic; it is now being used to address obstacles to achieving shared goals and to continually refine methods for working towards achieving the strategic plan. In 2008, the company fell short of its goals—but it did grow, at a time when the industry was experiencing significant setbacks. Most other companies reported lowered revenues from the prior year. In 2009, they continue to build on the results of the last year and, if they continue on the current trajectory, will be even more successful in achieving shared objectives.

The integration model illustrates that an organization has essentially three main levers with which to strategically respond to the marketplace. Strategic initiatives will impact either customers, employees, or the systems and processes in place. If you approach strategic planning with this simple approach significant improvements in operational efficiencies and improved organizational results can be achieved. In a sense, this is the rudder the Titanic needed.

A diverse company facing a multitude of challenges is fraught with variables that may affect the outcome in invisible ways. It would be interesting to try these two models with start-up companies with a few employees. The models can provide the framework for conversations about systems and processes, desired employees and key customers and the Annual Strategic Empowerment Tool can be used to capture the conversations as objectives for the coming year. A Strategic Plan is a vision of a desired future and the particular strategies hypothesize about the best route to that desired outcome. Linking the tactics to the employees through performance management can create in smaller companies a laser-focused common intention to work together to remove obstacles and thus achieve a shared dream. The marketplace is undergoing an unprecedented transformation, and these two models may help to create a more level playing field for organizations at differing levels of complexity.
Implication for Adult Education in Organizational Settings and Relevance for Adult Learners

Organizations are legal entities comprised of a number of individual learners of all types and levels. We hypothesize that organizations with a wide learning program and co-created transfer-of-training mechanism built from shared understanding and empowered with tools to assess their situation will be more effective and will experience improved results. The following models created aid in setting strategic priorities. They also visually link the relationships that are fundamental to success. We also believe that facilitating understanding of how to use these models through organization-wide large and small group guided learning sessions is an important component in taking learning to practical, relevant action.

In conclusion, this learning program utilizing two new models was truly a marriage between practical experience, conceptual academic material and immediate organizational challenges. These models have proven versatile and have application across a broad range of organizations seeking participant voice and ownership in healthy change. Additionally, this case study of a diverse, urban manufacturing company addresses challenges and opportunities for the education of adults in an organizational setting with a highly diverse membership. In short, this program met the challenge of utilizing a learning program to facilitate individual and organizational transformation.

EXHIBIT 1: Integration Model

Financial Result Will Determine the Size of the Circle

EXHIBIT 1: Integration Model
Exhibit 2: The Annual Strategic Empowerment Tool

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>2009 Strategies</th>
<th>Strategic Leader Clear the path to achieve the goal and consolidate efforts</th>
<th>Annual Strategic Objectives</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Strategy 1:</td>
<td>Project Leadership:</td>
<td>Maximize the contributions of the employees</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strategy 2:</td>
<td>Proactive Business Maintenance Program:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strategy 3:</td>
<td>Customer-Community Collaboration Program:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strategy 1:</td>
<td>Integration Impact:</td>
<td>Implement Systems</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strategy 2:</td>
<td>Accounting System:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strategy 3:</td>
<td>Value-Driven:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strategy 1:</td>
<td>Customer-Brand Relationship:</td>
<td>Customer Relationships</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strategy 2:</td>
<td>Brand Awareness:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strategy 3:</td>
<td>Brand Philosophy Implementation:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zero Strategies</td>
<td>Strategic Leader Clear the path to achieve the goal and consolidate efforts</td>
<td>Annual Financial Objectives</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strategy 1:</td>
<td>Pricing Management:</td>
<td>Sales revenue growth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strategy 2:</td>
<td>Sales Leadership:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strategy 3:</td>
<td>Resource Management:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strategy 4:</td>
<td>Asset Management:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strategy 5:</td>
<td>ROI Management:</td>
<td>Earnings objective</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strategy 1:</td>
<td>Debt-to-Equity ratio:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strategy 2:</td>
<td>Real-estate management:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strategy 3:</td>
<td>Financing management:</td>
<td>Mean return objective</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

References


Abstract: This thesis addresses the labour market integration of new immigrant professionals to Ontario, and critically examines the role that formal education plays in this process. Employing Smith’s (2006) institutional ethnography, I examine the social organization of adult co-op programs offered by Ontario District School Boards.

How does is happen that in the quest for “Canadian work experience” a woman with a master’s degree, years of international work experience, and an extremely high proficiency in English, ends up in a Canadian co-op high school program working for 11 weeks in a major bank as a teller for no pay? Each year more than 6,000 immigrant professionals in Ontario go through high school co-op programs in the hopes that the work placement will provide an opportunity for them to re-enter their professions. The courses offer Canadian work experience—which immigrants are told by employers they need—and grant high school credits, which are of little value to immigrant professionals who often have graduate degrees from abroad. While the work placements that immigrants make may be useful in getting jobs or making connections, the argument of this paper is that because the programs are guided by the mandate and policies of the Ministry of Education, they fundamentally cannot meet the needs of immigrant professionals.

Drawing on the methodological and ontological orientations of institutional ethnography (Smith, 2006), I investigate how the social organization of Canadian work experience, enacted through the actions of numerous people in different locations, produces the inclusion of highly skilled immigrants in particular labour market positions, specifically, as unpaid volunteer workers. I argue that as an ideological construction, Canadian work experience functions both to regulate immigrant professionals’ access to the labour market and produce immigrants as workers deficient in the necessary skills for the Canadian labour market. Canadian work experience acts as a marker of difference in a system of classification whereby immigrants, because of their (obvious) lack of Canadian work experience are deemed inferior to other workers. The result of this classification is the growing racialization of the labour market with immigrants, and especially immigrants of colour, over represented in low skilled, low paid jobs despite their educational credentials and international work experience. In the case of the co-op programs, racialized immigrants are transformed into high school students working without pay.

Recent immigrants, in particular, face greater economic hardship than their Canadian-born counterparts in the past (Reitz, 2005) and “Canadian work experience” requirements have been described by many as the most difficult barrier to employment for newcomers (Schellenberg & Maheux, 2007). In the immigration selection criteria, work experience accounts for 21 per cent of the total, however, this work experience is generally not from Canada. By classifying immigrants as “lacking in Canadian work experience” immediately upon their arrival, immigrants are reclassified from “highly skilled” migrants to deficient jobseekers. Research has shown that although new immigrants have higher levels of education than their Canadian-born cohorts, they are more likely to work in low-status, low paying jobs (Galabuzi, 2006; Jackson, 2002; Li, 2001;
Ornstein, 2000). Volunteering for Canadian work experience is widely considered to be a necessary part of the migration and settlement process for immigrants (Slade, Luo & Schugurensky, 2005). Data from the National Survey of Volunteering and Giving (Statistics Canada, 2001) reveals that 30 per cent of newer immigrants indicated that their motivation for volunteering was to improve their job opportunities. A range of employment-based programs designed with a volunteer work placement have been developed to address the problem of “lack of Canadian work experience”, including Ontario school boards co-op programs.

This qualitative research study is composed of two components. First, between February 2006 and May 2007, I conducted 14 open-ended interviews with two groups of participants: six “highly skilled” immigrants who volunteered for “Canadian work experience” and eight workers from not-for-profit organizations and school boards who have experience at various levels of administration in programs for immigrants containing a volunteer work placement. The purpose of the interviews with administrators was to gather information beyond the experiences of the immigrants to discover how “Canadian work experience” is organized. The second method of data was a textual analysis of secondary data collection from publicly accessible material, including articles from academic journals, community-based reports, policy documents from school boards and various levels of government.

The Social Organization of School Board Co-op Programs

School boards in Ontario have been offering co-op programs to adolescents for decades. Their goal is to provide young students an opportunity to learn about work first-hand, spending time in an actual workplace while earning credits towards their high school diploma. In the late 1990s, school boards, particularly those in the Greater Toronto area, started extending these high school co-op programs to new immigrants to gain Canadian work experience. “Want to continue the career you had in your home country? Canadian Experience for the career you want. Be true to yourself. Follow your dream!” While the Toronto District School Board’s CanEX (Abbreviation for Canadian Experience) Co-op program encourages potential students to “live their dreams”, the Foreign Trained Professional Co-op of the Dufferin-Peel Catholic School Board asserts that “in the recent school year, 70% of our students found paid jobs after they completed the program”. These programs are popular with immigrants who learn early in their settlement process that they are lacking Canadian work experience.

There are currently at least five school boards offering different versions of co-op programs to immigrants to get Canadian work experience. The Co-op programs, both within and between school boards, have different in-class to work placement ratios. Some programs are structured so that the first three weeks are all in-class instruction followed by a mix of placement and classroom hours; other programs have eight weeks of in-class instruction followed by 11 weeks of full time (40 hours per week) placement. Student selection criteria varies slightly among programs; in general, to qualify a person must be an immigrant, over 21 years of age, able to attend on a full time basis, have a certain level of proficiency in English, a work permit, a health card, a completed resume and enough money to cover the fees and living expenses for the duration of the course. The enrolment of the programs also varies widely; the Toronto District School Board through its five co-op programs enrolls approximately 2,400 students per year while the Dufferin-Peel Catholic District School Board enrolls over 3,000 students (Smits, 2007). The students pay assessment, student activity and materials fees for the courses that total, on average, $110.
All of the participants in my study indicated that the curriculum of the Co-op program did not meet their needs. Golnaz, for example, had previously taken a Job Search Workshop in which she spent three days with an employment counsellor revising her resume and cover letter. When she was not exempted from this two week section of the Co-op curriculum, she felt her time was wasted:

And at the beginning they start again repeating how you have to organise your resume. I had just done that in another course. They didn’t have anything for me to do. They only changed the format because everything was set up there, so if I for example wrote the title on the right side they shifted it to the left side. Nothing was new there. But they had to go through those processes. (emphasis added).

This comment, “they had to go through those processes” is a perfect point to begin tracing the social organization of the program. What processes is she referring to? Why did the teachers have to go through unnecessary course content? Golnaz’s observation points to a rigidity in the Co-op curriculum and an inability of the teachers to adapt the curriculum to the actual needs of the group. During my interviews with the Co-op teachers, I asked them about how they determined the curriculum for the Co-op program and they pointed me to an Ontario Ministry of Education document, “Cooperative Education and Other Forms of Experiential Learning: Policies and Procedures for Ontario Secondary Schools” (2000). This document outlines the principles, guidelines, criteria, and administrative responsibilities for cooperative education courses. Upon close examination of the policy, I realized that this policy document applies to all co-op programs, both for adolescent high school students and adults in the for-credit day programs. Despite the fact that the high school program has been extended to serve a very different client group, immigrant professionals, no modifications to curriculum, policies or procedures have been made by the school boards. With respect to the curriculum, one Co-op teacher reported:

In the Co-op program, the students [immigrant professionals] get four high school credits. They are identical to the credits that the kids get so sometimes I have a parent who is in my class, and he’s got a 17-year-old kid in the regular system and they’re both taking the [grade 11] Designing Your Future credit (emphasis added).

For immigrants with university degrees and professional experience, two problems arise out of the curriculum requirements: (1) the content of the academic courses is not relevant; and (2) the length of the program is too long. First, the academic portion of the program is not relevant to immigrant job-seekers. This is not to say that learning about the Canadian parliamentary system or Canadian poetry is not important (for new immigrants as well as Canadian born and educated people), however, in the context of the programs promising to help immigrants get re-established in their professions, these courses are not a valuable use of time. Because of the program design, immigrants have no choice but to sit through these courses to have the opportunity of doing the work placement; according to one participant, “it is the price of admission”. There is an internal logic to the co-op program when applied to a grade 11 student, but this logic falls apart when dealing with “students” who are adults with years of schooling and work experience. The high school credits are not meaningful to people with one or more university degrees and the positioning of these programs within the high school curriculum necessarily renders highly skilled immigrants into entry level, inexperienced students.

Secondly, while it is obvious to the students that in order to go on a placement they need to go through specific curriculum, it is not obvious to them that the Ministry of Education policy also determines the length of the course. The co-op guidelines state that the work placements have to be accompanied by related academic courses so in order for a school to offer a four credit
co-op placement, the program has to include two different in-school courses. The hours of the program have to include time for pre-placement, integration and placement. According to the policy, “a course based on two related full-credit courses may be scheduled for no less than 110 hours and no more than approximately 440 hours” (p. 29). Longer programs are deemed desirable for students as “they afford the additional learning time at the placement that is often necessary to enable students to gain the practical experience and the practice they need to fully achieve course expectations” (p. 29). While this structure makes sense for youth who take the co-op program as part of their high school schedule, for immigrants trying to get into the labour market, the courses are too long; immigrants are forced to live off of their savings during the 18 to 20 weeks of the co-op program.

The high school programs are organized under a set of institutional practices geared toward the education of youth, and they do not meet the needs of adult immigrant “students”/jobseekers. The adolescents use the co-op programs to learn about the workplace, to explore a potential career and to get some experience in the workplace. For immigrant professionals, they need an efficient way to learn about local customs in their profession; they already know about the world of work.

**Same Program, Different Work Organization**

There is one critical difference, however, between the co-op programs for adolescents and adult immigrants; the adolescent program is part of the regular school stream and the other is part of the Continuing Education stream. The funding and working conditions for the teachers are very different in Continuing Education, despite the fact that they have to deliver the same program. With the introduction of Bill 160 in 1999, adult education in Ontario was entirely reconfigured. All adult education programs including Adult day school for credit courses such as co-op, were re-organized under the Continuing Education framework with a different set of administrative processes from the regular high school stream. Previous to this policy change, adult day students in credit programs were funded at the same rate as adolescent high school students; Bill 160 dramatically cut the funding for adult students to approximately one-third of its former value.

The working conditions for the teachers in the Adult day schools were also radically altered. Under the Continuing Education stream, the teachers have vastly different working conditions from teachers who are in the regular high school stream. They work on nine week contracts, are paid hourly for classroom time only, receive a lower hourly wage and have larger class sizes than teachers in the regular system. According to one Continuing Education teacher:

> In the con-ed stream, we are not part of the regular high school system. We have a different pay scale - we get paid only for the hours we put in. There are some benefits, but they’re not exactly identical to the benefits that the regular teachers get. For example, the teachers would be paid sort of on a pro-rated basis for 12 months. We’re paid only for the months that we work. So if we don’t work in the summer, we’re not paid. It makes it a little tight.

For teachers in the regular stream, the co-op class sizes are set between 22 and 26 students, they have unassigned time for preparation and marking as well as a set maximum number of periods for student mentoring. The Continuing Education teachers have no paid preparation time and there are no negotiated limits on class size. Because the funding of the Continuing Education Adult Day Schools (a set amount per hour per student) is entirely different from the funding of the regular school (a set amount for a full time student), this drives different
enrolment and working conditions for the teachers and as a result the class size for co-op is often double or triple that in the regular classes. The teachers are obliged to find and closely monitor placements for the co-op students, yet because adult education is devalued and underfunded, the ability of the teachers to deliver the programs to function as laid out in policy is compromised. It might be possible for a teacher in the regular stream to manage each student’s co-op placement in their classes that have a maximum of 26 students but it is difficult to manage for the co-op teachers in the Adult day schools who often have 80 to 100 students in their classes. The responsibility to find placements, then, is downloaded onto the student. Because the co-op programs are 18 weeks long and the teachers’ contracts are only nine weeks, there is constant stress on the teacher about the number of students in the program; if the numbers fall below a certain threshold (set by administration), then the course can be cancelled at the nine week point. In the report, “Ontario Learns: Strengthening Our Adult Education System”, by the Ministry of Education (2005), it is noted that the precarious working conditions for the teachers of the Continuing Education have impacted the program delivery: “The low pay and the uncertain employment future mean that educators leave, and administrators find it hard to recruit new educators to what is viewed as a “second-class” teaching environment” (p. 33).

In addition to the curriculum and funding issues, the mandate of the Ministry of Education creates another set of institutional work practices that work against the interests of immigrant professionals. Because the co-op programs are structured within the Ministry of Education and fall within the education framework, they fundamentally cannot meet the needs of immigrant professionals. The co-op programs are governed by a set of institutional guidelines and practices that are geared toward the education of children and youth. All Ministry of Education programs are framed around education as an outcome, not employment; schools need to report on the number of credits granted and the number of pupil hours, not the number of people employed through their programs.

**Concluding Comments**

The economic impact of the program is substantial, yet because it is subsumed under the educational mandate, it is invisible. In terms of labour value, assuming that the school boards across the province have 6,000 students completing the Co-op program each year completing an average of 32 hours of volunteer work for 10 weeks on placement, this would total 1,920,000 hours of volunteer work, or the equivalent of 923 full time jobs. At minimum wage ($8.75), the value of this labour is $16,800,000 in unpaid wages.

None of the participants I interviewed were able to re-establish their professional practices by enrolling in the co-op program. In my interviews with teachers, however, I heard stories of adult educators going well beyond the call of duty to help an immigrant professional get a footing in the labour market. I do not mean to negate these success stories or to critique the hard work of the co-op teachers, but to highlight the intrinsic conflict between the intentions of the teachers and the required institutional practices of the school board. Since funding requirements determine work practices (Ng, 1996), the teacher’s time and energy is focused on administering a learning experience with high school credits as the outcome, not on securing meaningful employment for the immigrants. Regardless of the intention and efforts of the teachers, by going through the curriculum of the program, they “activate the texts [policy, curriculum] in the service of the organization” (Campbell and Gregor, 2002, p. 34). Examining how the mandate, crystallized in policy, limits the effectiveness of the co-op program is important because it shows how immigrant professionals are actively classified as high school students, positioned for entry-level
precarious employment, and as a result experience downward class mobility and de-professionalization.

References
Adult Learning Communities: Does Self-Efficacy Pre-Determine Participation?

Dr. Jennifer Smolka, Dr. Stacey Johnson, Thomas A. Glover & Heather Dodds
Western Governors University

Abstract: In a voluntary online community structure, Western Governors University seeks to find correlations between adult learners’ self-efficacy, community participation and academic success. Based on surveys of 164 new Education students, self-efficacy was not correlated with either participation measures of interaction or academic measures of success.

Introduction

Western Governors University (WGU) is a competency based online university. In WGU’s self-directed learning model, adult learners are responsible for their own academic success. WGU provides no structured courses through traditional instruction. Rather, learners engage in various types of resources in order to gain the knowledge needed to be competent in the content domains for their degree program. Adult learners must demonstrate competency by rigorous assessments for each learning domain. If learners are already competent, then they are able to accelerate by demonstrating competency without engaging in any learning resources.

Since the WGU model focuses on online self-directed learning, a key support component of this model includes a vibrant community. Communities must address adult learner’s need to feel connected with other students and the University. When learners matriculate on the first of any month, they immediately have two communities: “Education without Boundaries” (EWB) community and their program community. EWB helps introduce new learners to the WGU model and online learning. Program communities for each degree provide a virtual space to connect with other learners through topics of professional development, enrichment and support. After beginning coursework, they are enrolled in learning communities related to the first term course work. WGU provides the structure and platform for these communities that are consistent with the model of supporting independent learners who are not required to participate in the community activities. The lack of required participation means that community building is more informal and voluntary on the part of adult learners.

Purpose and Problem Statement

The purpose of this pilot study was to determine effects of technology self-efficacy on participation in communities. This study is important to the university as we continue to explore new ways to encourage participation in the communities since current data show that only a third of learners voluntarily participate. If self-efficacy has an effect on participation, then WGU needs to provide more sources of self-efficacy influence for adult learners.

Literature Review

“Perceived self-efficacy is defined as people’s beliefs about their capabilities to produce designated levels of performance that exercise influence over events that affect their lives” (Bandura, 1994, ¶1). The concept of self-efficacy is grounded in the larger framework of social cognitive theory. Self-efficacy has the potential to influence academic motivation, learning and achievement. “Self-efficacy is not a measure of skill; rather, it reflects what individuals believe
they can do with the skills they possess” (Eastin & LaRose, 2000, Introduction, ¶3). Self-efficacy is developed through four sources of influence: mastery experiences, vicarious learning social persuasion, and inferences from somatic and emotional states (Bandura, 1994).

**Predictor of Accomplishment**

“Self-efficacy beliefs are strong determinants and predictors of the level of accomplishment that individuals attain” (Pajares, 1996, ¶ 5). Adults with high self efficacy look at tasks as challenges to be mastered. Their commitment and motivation is high. “Those who feel efficacious for learning or performing a task participate more readily, work harder, persist longer when they encounter difficulties, and achieve at a higher level” (Schunk & Pajares, 2002, p.2). Individuals with a low sense of self-efficacy will shy away and perceive new tasks as a threat and their commitment and motivation is low. If you expect less of yourself, you expend less effort. “Individuals with a weak sense of self-efficacy will be frustrated more easily by obstacles to their performance and will respond by lowering their perceptions of their capabilities” (Compeau & Higgins, 1995, p. 192). Since self-efficacy is a self-referent judgment concerning future functioning, it is an excellent predictor of behavior. “People engage in tasks in which they feel competent and confident and avoid those in which they do not” (Pajares, 1996, ¶ 5).

**Technology & Self-efficacy**

In computer usage, self-efficacy is the key for novices to tackle their difficulties and fears. Once an individual achieves a positive self-efficacy with computer skills, they need to build the efficacy in relation to the Internet. “The Internet requires development of a further set of skills that, to the novice user, at least, may be daunting” (Eastin & LaRose, 2000. Introduction, ¶ 4). Studies show Internet use, experience and outcome expectancies are positively correlated with Internet self-efficacy. Of the three, the strongest predictor is mastery experience. In an investigation of self-efficacy and performance in distance learning, it has also been determined that one of the key components of success in computer based learning and distance learning is basic computer self-efficacy. In using the Internet for learning, Nahl found “that those who have a less positive initial self-efficacy perception can be overwhelmed and end up dropping out … while those who have a more positive initial self-efficacy perception maintain this perception throughout the program, all the way to success” (1996, ¶ 10). Those that achieve success maintain positive self-efficacy during the times of highest difficulty and uncertainty.

**Research questions**

Based on previous research in self-efficacy and adult learning, we anticipated that adult learners who scored high on technology self-efficacy would quickly engage in WGU communities. Through communities and higher perceived values of tools, learners would have greater academic success in the first eight weeks and then in first six-month term. Adult learners with low self-efficacy would be slow to make progress with assessments and would not engage fully in the learning communities and resources. The guiding research questions are: (a) Does technology self-efficacy and perceptions about learning tools affect voluntary participation in learning communities? (b) Does technology self-efficacy and perceptions about learning tools affect academic success during the first weeks in the program and at the end of the term?
Methodology

This pilot study was designed to give community leaders a snapshot to determine if a full study should be warranted. Teachers College students were given a survey before starting the Education Without Boundaries (EWB) introductory course. After two months, assessment progress and community participation quantitative data was collected and correlated with the survey results. At the end of the pilot study, a final survey will be distributed. Community and assessment data will be collected again to provide for a final evaluation of the pilot study.

Participants

The typical WGU Teachers College student is 35 years old. Self-reported demographic data indicates that the WGU Teachers College student body is 68% White, 7% African-American, 4% Hispanic, 1% American Indian or Native Alaskan and 1% Asian or Pacific Islander, 2% Other with 17% declining to answer ethnicity. The female/male ratio is approximately 80/20. Geography demographics include 40% rural, 45% suburban and 15% are urban. WGU students tend to have some prior college experience; however, 40% are first generation college students in their families. Students must have some basic technology skills in order to find and apply to our online university. General motivations to join the Teachers College include a pursuit of licensure, family support of a lifelong dream, and a desire to “give back” to the education system through a career change.

All new Teachers College students (n=298) were invited to participate. With a 62.8% completion rate, 184 chose to complete the survey. This sample group closely matched the ethnicity, female/male ratio, geography demographics and first generation college student percentages of the full Teachers College in the same month. Therefore, the students invited to participate were an accurate reflection of the full college. For the mid-study survey, only respondents to the first survey were invited to participate. Forty-four percent of the first survey group participated in the second survey (n=80).

Data Collection and Means of Analysis

Quantitative data was collected through Likert scale surveys, community participation counts and assessment progress. Technology self-efficacy was measured through the Stages of Adoption (Christensen and Knezek, 1999). A tool perception survey (Smolka, 2002) was used to measure perceptions of learning tools. Learner’s progress was tracked by completed assessments. Community participation was measured through discussion threads read and messages posted. Pearson r was calculated between each data point for triangulation of data: self-efficacy score, assessment progress and community participation. A t-test for paired samples was used to measure changes between the different surveys.

Analysis of Results for the Pre & Mid Survey Data

Stages of Adoption Summary Analysis

The Stages of Adoption (Christensen and Knezek, 1999) identifies six stages of self-reported efficacy about technology skills: Stage 1: Awareness; Stage 2: Learning the process; Stage 3: Understanding and application of the process; Stage 4: Familiarity and confidence; Stage 5: Adaptation to other contexts; and Stage 6: Creative application to new contexts. Learners initially stated that they were either Stage 5 or Stage 6 at a rate of 78.8%. This is not surprising since they have decided to engage in a completely online technology-based educational program. Administrators should be aware of possible ways to support the 21.2% who aren’t as confident in
technology. Over the initial eight weeks in the program, students self-efficacy for technology did not change significantly (+.03).

Summary of Tool Perceptions

Learners were given nine tools that are integrated into the curriculum at WGU and asked to evaluate their perception of value to their learning on a scale of 1 (low) to 5 (high): Textbooks (A), Multimedia (B), One-to-One Synchronous Instruction (C), Course of Study (D), Online Discussion Boards (E), Small Group Collaboration (F), Performance Tasks (G), Assessment Rubrics (H), and Exams (I). Overall, learners valued Small Group Collaboration and Online Discussion Boards the least and Courses of Study, Performance Tasks and Assessment Rubrics the most. Table 1 includes the mode and percentages of high value for each tool.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>A</th>
<th>B</th>
<th>C</th>
<th>D</th>
<th>E</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>G</th>
<th>H</th>
<th>I</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pre</td>
<td>Mode</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>% at 4+</td>
<td>90.9%</td>
<td>85.5%</td>
<td>82.4%</td>
<td>94%</td>
<td>60%</td>
<td>57%</td>
<td>94.5%</td>
<td>88.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mid</td>
<td>Mode</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>% at 4+</td>
<td>93.5%</td>
<td>80.5%</td>
<td>79.3%</td>
<td>93.4%</td>
<td>51%</td>
<td>31.2%</td>
<td>96.1%</td>
<td>96.1%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Analysis of Means for Pre and Mid Values of Learning

In a t-test of means, two tools had a statistically significant difference between the first survey and the second survey. After eight weeks at WGU, students’ value of Small Groups (p<.01) and One-to-One Learning (p<.05) decreased significantly. Facilitators of communities have been investigating how to effectively integrate small group and one-on-one learning into the curriculum. Therefore it is not surprising that after engaging in a self-directed learning model students found less of a value when they were given few opportunities to collaborate with other students or with individual instructors.

While not statistically significant results, there are trends that need to be considered. Only two of the tools had any increase to the value after eight weeks: Courses of Study and Assessment Rubrics. Based on educational experience and ongoing focus groups, we believe that adult learners do not appreciate the benefits of actively utilizing the WGU Courses of Study. Further, many students have never used a rubric as an evaluation tool before coming to WGU. On the summary survey in July, it will be interesting to see if these positive trends continue to improve the perception of value to an individual’s learning at a statistically significant level.

One negative difference that should be examined during the final analysis is the decreasing trend for Online Discussion Boards. These WGU results were similar to Smolka’s finding in the Technology Applications Certification Program (2002). TACP respondents anticipated a value to learning of the discussion boards. However after participation in the boards they did not place as high of a value. After 16 weeks, the TACP difference was statistically significant (p=.001). An explanation given for the drop in the TACP program was that the “facilitation and design of the asynchronous communication activities were not designed to properly impact the learning and those facilitating the discussions were not properly trained in the use of the tool” (Smolka, 2002, p. 44). During final analysis, it will need to be confirmed if there was a downward trend in perceptions of value for discussion boards to determine if there is a need to evaluate the design of the platform and the need for more training of facilitators.
Analysis of the Self-Efficacy Correlations

In order to calculate a total amount of community interaction, the count of posts and reads were summed. For a total perceived value of all learning tools, a mean was calculated. The initial values of self-efficacy as measured by the Stages of Adoption and a mean Tool Perception showed no correlation to either the total interaction or to any of the subsets of community counts. One tool, Discussion Boards, did have statistically significant mid-survey value correlation (p<.05) with the overall interaction total (r=-.237). The existence of this correlation is not surprising. What is interesting about this correlation is that the pre-value of Online Discussion Boards did not correlate with Interaction (r=.023). Instead of a predictor of use, the correlation existed after use. Those who had used it more valued it more.

WGU measures academic success by Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) which is the percent of assessments passed each term against the total assessments enrolled in the term. Each term students complete proctored objective assessments and performance assessments. Each performance assessment contains several smaller tasks and by collecting tasks, WGU can measure progress towards completion. To measure SAP for the pilot study, assessments passed and tasks submitted were collected. The self-efficacy measure of Stages of Adoption did not correlate with any of the academic success indicators. Of the Tool Perception pre-values, there were no significant correlations. Similar to the use of the community correlating with the value after the fact, the assessment indicator of passing assessments statistically significantly (p<.05) correlated with the value placed on Exams at the mid-point survey (r=.251).

While the analysis did not provide the anticipated results, there were some unintended findings which support WGU’s community efforts for academic success. When total community interaction was correlated with academic success, several statistically significant correlations were found. Learners’ total interaction had a medium correlation (r=.348; p=.000) with the quantity of tasks submitted as a part of performance assessments. Furthermore, the total interaction correlated to Term SAP rate (r=.254; p<.01) and to Assessments Passed (r=.194; p<.05). WGU adult learners who interact more in the communities tend to submit more tasks and therefore increase their term SAP percentage.

Implications for Adult Education Theory and Practice at WGU

WGU’s approach to education tends to favor those students that excel intrapersonally utilizing independent learning resources. WGU’s adult learners are less likely than their traditional-college-age counterparts to be highly literate in the different types of technology used in our model. Therefore, we must determine the best way to bridge the gap between the technologies delivering education and the predictors of success of our student body. This pilot study’s initial findings provide insight as administration focuses on a significant strategic initiative of web-enabling the Courses of Study. Currently, Courses of Study are PDF documents that are a study guide to pace students’ studies and engage them with a variety of learning resources, including online communities. The web-enabled Course of Study will integrate the use of (a) learning resources including textbooks, (b) performance assignments that link to rubrics for feedback, (c) asynchronous methods of support including fully-searchable FAQs and (d) the ability to contact the mentor by email or phone. These design decisions parallel the findings of this study based on the tools with the highest perceived value.

Administration at WGU has been exploring the appropriate level of integration for message boards, synchronous chat, and collaborative tasks. The current plan is to mock up several versions of a web-enabled Course of Study and then gain input from learners through
additional focus groups. Although the initial findings indicate a devaluation of the discussion boards, those who are using them place a higher value on them. Therefore, the strategic placement of discussion boards in the Course of Study and the training of facilitators to pull students into the boards could demonstrate an increase in the value through an increase in use. Community administrators must review the design of the message boards and train our facilitators on techniques to engage students.

This study is important as we determine predictors of success within this unique learning environment that are specific to adult learners and the struggles that they face. The university can be better prepared to develop methods of positive self-efficacy influence through mastery experiences, vicarious learning, social persuasion and somatic and emotional support.

**Areas for Future Research**

Our original hypothesis that students who have high technology based self-efficacy would quickly engage in our online learning communities did not prove to be so which has led us to consider other possible indicators of community participation. Two possible indicators include the ease of use of the platform and the quality of the community facilitation.

For any level of self-efficacy, a community platform that is not intuitive to use will be devalued by students. Feedback from student focus groups not included in this study has indicated that some students dislike the current community platform. The program community leaders are currently investigating the use of different tool sets and platforms to spec out a new format for communities and one area of future research would be to determine how the intuitiveness and design of the platform determines participation.

Additionally, if there is limited activity evident in the community, there will be no hook for new participants or draw to return. It is incumbent upon the facilitators in each voluntary community to create a space that is safe and inviting to students. If quality of the facilitation is unacceptable, community activity will languish and participation will drop. A second area for potential future research would be to determine the areas needed for ongoing facilitator training.

**References**


Autonomy And Autogenesis: Practitioner Research And The Self-Made Literacy Tutor

Ralf St.Clair and Kathy Maclachlan
University of Glasgow, UK

Abstract: Examines the conduct of a practitioner-led action research program in Scottish literacy, and challenges the extent to which PLAR can be adopted as a professional development strategy. Expresses caution about the potential for PLAR to reinforce individualized and managerial approaches to the field as promoted by new public management.

Practitioner-led research holds fascinating possibilities for adult literacy education as well as for education more generally. It promises a way to generate local knowledge on the pressing issues of practice, with insights tailored to the interests of those working most directly in teaching. More than this, it seems to offer an opportunity for professional development where the control lies in the hands of practitioners. In this discussion we highlight the benefits of practitioner-led action research (PLAR) and challenge the broader significance of those benefits. We wish to suggest that the apparent “win-win” outcome of PLAR is grounded in a certain set of assumptions about the desirable professional identity of literacies practitioners. This discussion is informed by a critique of the ideas of New Public Management currently holding sway in education.

Background To The PLAR Project

This paper examines a practitioner research project in Scotland funded by Learning Connections, the branch of the Scottish Government concerned with adult literacies and numeracies. The project set out to achieve two aims. First was supporting practitioners in conducting a research project around the individual learning planning (ILP) process. ILPs are central to the literacies field in Scotland, used for defining objectives, planning instruction, and assessing learners’ achievements. Second was to record the process of practitioner research systematically and refine a model that would be viable in the Scottish context. It was hoped that lessons could be learned from the project about ways to improve practice and encourage practitioners to continue research beyond the project’s limited timeframe, hopefully increasing research capacity in the Scottish literacies community.

The essence of practitioner research is a structured, systematic enquiry enabling those engaged in the work to identify, analyse and understand real practical problems in their immediate environment and work towards solving them. PLAR projects in adult literacies work have been conducted in several countries around the world in recent years. Perhaps the highest profile project is the five-year long “Practitioner Research and Development Network” developed by the National Center for the Study of Adult Learning and Literacy (NCSALL) (Smith, Bingman & Beall, 2006). The factors that NCSALL identified as supporting practitioner research were activities such as study circles that involved practitioners examining their own and other researchers’ work, combined with paid staff release time and sustained opportunities to engage in these activities; a practitioner in the role of ‘leader’ to help them connect with research and researchers; and state support, including funding and a designated staff person (Smith et al., 2002, iii). One interesting offshoot of the NCSALL work was an initiative to promote practitioner research as staff development, and a systematic curriculum to support such projects was
developed (Virginia Adult Learning Resource Center, 2003). Though this guide is both clear and useful, it says little about the context or supports necessary to make PLAR sustainable in practice. In Canada, a significant report on practitioner research was published about seven years ago (Quigley & Norton, 2002). Much Canadian literature supports the integrated approach put forward by NCSALL, but emphasises the needs of practitioners more clearly. A framework written for the National Literacy Secretariat points out the importance of:

Working conditions that encourage practitioners to engage in reflection and research include such aspects as long-term adequate funding, fulltime jobs, adequately staffed programs, long-term and permanent contracts . . . (Horsman & Norton, 1999, pp. 4-5)

Overall, the extensive and relatively well-funded North American experience strongly suggests that infrastructure is important for the success of practitioner research. An extension of this argument is that isolated and occasional efforts to establish PLAR within a practitioner community are unlikely to be successful. For PLAR to be an effective strategy, it seems that practitioners have to be engaged over a substantial time within a framework that creates real opportunity for them to participate and to make a difference to the field.

In the UK, practitioner research appears to have been slower to take off. Nonetheless, the National Research and Development Centre in England completed a substantial project lasting three years. The Practitioner-Led Research Initiative funded 17 projects each lasting nine months and each involving from three to six people with £10,000 allocated per project (NRDC, 2008). Hamilton (2006) made the following observation:

First, we must spread the word about the difference a relatively small amount of research funding can make to individual practitioners and their organisations, as a spark to further work . . . Participants have told us that practitioner research offers validation of their status and knowledgebase, visibility, levers for funding locally, and ideas to feed into training and management (p. 16).

In Scotland, two important precursors to the current research were the 2003 pilot project, “New Practice, Good Practice: the role of reflection in adult literacies tutor training” and the more substantial PLAR project from 2006 “New Ways to Engage New Learners.” The latter project produced valuable insights into the process of conducting practitioner research, and the development of the current project was strongly influenced by its recommendations. The authors suggested that consideration should be given to alternative models of supporting practitioner research, and that mechanisms should be clearly established for securing research time in work for all participating practitioners (Maclachlan et al. 2006). Once again the importance of structural considerations in the promotion of practitioner research is emphasised.

The overall message of the literature appears to be that practitioner research should be approached with caution. Doing it well requires paying attention to a number of difficult structural issues, not least employment conditions. While experience elsewhere provides key principles for developing PLAR, it is clear that the context matters a great deal. It was with these cautions in mind that we developed plans for the PLAR projects on Individual Learning Plans.

**Methodology For The Participatory Research Project**

The methodology chosen for the most recent Scottish PLAR initiative resembled professional development activities more than traditional research in a number of ways. It was a very tightly scheduled process explicitly located within organisations rather than working with individual participants. Instead of asking busy practitioners to learn and adopt traditional research approaches, we specifically designed the process to fit the context and priorities of participants. The team’s approach was to demystify the research process for participants, making it into a tool...
for future professional and pedagogical development. Participants were expected to commit to attend one half day workshop per week for ten weeks, plus spend limited time in preparation and writing. This relatively intense schedule was intended to address the issues regarding time commitment and perseverance by moving the project work out of practitioners’ daily working lives into a “protected zone” of workshops.

**What Did We Learn About Practitioner Research?**

The practitioners were all employed within literacies education, though their roles varied from part-time tutors with a portfolio of employment to those in managerial positions. The majority were local authority employees, though three worked for voluntary organisations. The majority described themselves as having no research experience at all. Some had written a dissertation during an undergraduate degree, but generally they were new to formalised research. Participants’ reasons for joining the project were quite consistent. They were both interested in and enjoyed research itself, but were also attracted by the possibility of improving practice around ILPs within their organisation. One participant, interestingly, said that being involved might help to strengthen the relationship between a participating voluntary organisation and local authority community education. These answers suggest that participants entered the project with a positive orientation to research and the contributions it can make to practice.

There was considerable variety in the outcomes participants hoped for. They ranged from personal curiosity to a wider ranging hope for “new ideas for learning plans that will be embraced by learners and tutors.” If there was a common thread, it was the emphasis on practical outcomes. A second survey and interview, both conducted on completion of the research, provided an opportunity for the practitioners to reflect upon their experiences and contrast them with their initial expectations. Most participants felt that they got out of the project what they expected:

> I think the project went well. We encountered problems along the way, and it was always going to be difficult to give it the time we wanted to, but I think we have come through it having developed and piloted something that will benefit learners and the service they receive. This was what we wanted from the project, and so that’s good!

The connections and opportunities for reflection with colleagues were mentioned widely:

> It was a very positive experience because it improved the service we offered, gave an opportunity to work closely with a colleague, and to make connections with other people and the university.

Several were very positive about the potential of PLAR in professional development:

> It does contribute to professional development because the whole process of going through the different stages of research helps you to take a step back and look for evidence on which to base changes. It is a good learning experience.

Overall, these responses suggest there is reason for cautious optimism about the potential of PLAR, if designed correctly, to contribute to staff development.

External issues also affected participants’ experiences of conducting the research. The most common was time, both in sheer amounts and availability. Almost everybody put in more time than they were allocated from their work, and some did the entire project in their own time. There were a number of issues that affected specific groups, such as working with a trusted colleague or being inspired by other research. There was some disagreement about an ideal timeframe. Some felt that ten weeks was too short, while others appreciated its intensity, and yet others suggested shorter and even more intense would be better.
Reflecting on the Project

There appears to be growing practitioner support for PLAR as a method of professional development within the adult literacies community in Scotland, but this is not unconditional. The practitioners identified a number of key factors that need to be addressed for PLAR to be viable. The first is time, which has to be protected from the demands of everyday work, be flexible, and able to be allocated by the cluster members because the same set period every week was not practicable for many of them. With other demands in the practitioners’ lives changing constantly, it was important that PLAR could fit into the natural rhythms of the work without too much disruption. The second area is funds, for travel, materials and to “buy out” research time. Thirdly, support is crucial, and this takes several forms. Support from line managers is essential, and this has to go beyond “turning a blind eye” to the research activity. It matters that line managers positively support the projects, showing interest in them and a willingness to act on the findings.

New Public Management and PLAR

Here, we wish to step back a little from the study in Scotland, and consider the issue of PLAR as a strategy for staff development. As we worked our way through the project we started to become increasingly aware that PLAR is more than just an alternative to conventional means of professional development—the implementation of PLAR profoundly changes the structure of staff education. For example, if the majority of staff development time were to be dedicated to PLAR, it would reduce the consistency of training and preparation across the ALN workforce. It would also reduce the requirement on literacy partnerships to provide and pay for training. PLAR could be rolled out with the implicit message that professional development was now to be a self-administered process. Literacy instructors would have the responsibility to create their own professional identity, and build the knowledge necessary to that identity on an individual level. PLAR can be more than a way to deepen the research capacity of the ALN field and start to build a corpus of well-educated workers. It can also be a way to individualise responsibility for that knowledge generation. The reduced need for partnership-wide training and the ability of partnerships to limit their commitment to the training function is consistent with recent developments throughout the public sector, and to understand why they are acceptable and what they mean, it is useful to review the nature of public sector management in Scotland.

Since the early 1990s, there has been a change in the philosophy of public management in many countries and in many sectors within those countries. The post-World War 2 consensus regarding the desirability of a strong and protective welfare state ended thirty years ago, and since then there has been a degree of thrashing around in the search for an approach to public management that could secure the pragmatic provision necessary for advanced economies without leading to spiralling costs and de-incentivisation of the workforce. By the late 1980s the idea of applying private sector management tools to public sector enterprises was taking shape, and by the early 1990s “New Public Management” (NPM) had emerged (Horton 2006). The changes to management in the public sector have been profound, affecting culture as well as the procedures. There was a move away from rule-bound hierarchies and towards networks and partnerships of smaller, self-managing units, often situated within the private and voluntary sectors as well as the public sector (Horton 2006). So while traditional public sector bureaucracies have been interested in standardisation and equality of response in the form of services, NPM pushes state agencies towards an entrepreneurial, individualised approach. The change to New Public Management has been somewhat piecemeal due to institutional and wider contextual factors, but in the last ten years has affected education quite markedly. Sachs
(2001) analyses the debate in terms of two competing identities: democratic and managerial professionalism. Democratic professionalism is described as seeking “to demystify professional work and build alliances between teachers and excluded constituencies of students, parts and members of the community on whose behalf decisions have traditionally been made either by professions or by the state” (p.152). Readers with an adult education background may find this description familiar. Managerial professionalism is far more consistent with NPM approaches. It is based on the notions that all institutions can benefit from adopting the concerns with efficiency found in the private sector, and that services can be managed to maximise this. Particular moments in education have the potential to collapse into either managerial professionalism or democratic professionalism. Sachs (2001) uses the example of teacher research as one such moment that she sees as falling more into democratic professionalism, breaking down the isolation of educators and building their knowledge. We would suggest, however, that the identity of teacher researcher, whether in a school or other educational setting, has an equal potential to fall under the notion of managerial professional.

The conditions of NPM push towards a particular managerial notion of professionalism referred to as the entrepreneurial professional (Menter et al. 1997). A key influence here is captured in the notion of performativity, requiring practitioners to “set aside personal beliefs and commitments and live an existence of calculation” (Ball, 2003, p.215). Being good at what you do as an educator is no longer enough; you must be able to demonstrate that you are good.

### The Autogenesis Of The Literacy Educator

It is not our intention to deny or minimise the potential benefits of PLAR as a knowledge generation strategy. It offers many benefits such as responsiveness to local conditions and a degree of immediacy. It challenges and disrupts universalising discourses in adult education—whatever they may be—and we see this as a good thing. However, in the light of the NPM and the spread of managerial professionalism, we suggest there is another, somewhat less positive, perspective that has to be recognized when considering PLAR as professional development.

This perspective begins from the realisation that PLAR, in placing the emphasis for research development and process in a new location, not only gives practitioners more control but also changes the nature of professional development in fundamental ways. This is evident when PLAR as professional development is compared to systematic and consistent provision of opportunities and workshops. PLAR is highly individualized and potentially quite eclectic, as would be expected from its local focus. Related to this, however, PLAR is also relatively untransferrable. It leads to no credentials and can often involve work that is directly related to specific pragmatic—and programmatic—outcomes. There is a danger that PLAR can become procedural and technicist if it not managed appropriately. It is easy to imagine scenarios where PLAR processes could contribute to the aims of the wider organization even where educators expressed some caution about the desirability of those aims—and in fact this was very nearly the case in one of the Scottish projects.

There is also the very salient issue of resources for the conduct of research. This issue arises again and again in the literature, and did once more in the Scottish projects. Even with a written commitment from line managers to make time and space available for the PLAR work, no responsibilities were actually removed from participants, and it generally ended up being an extra burden. The notion of standardizing PLAR in practice rewards the energetic and those with fewer demands outside their working life—a scenario which has already persisted too long in much of the education field.
Seen from this angle, PLAR is strikingly consistent with the NPM agenda. It individualizes, and can reward espoused effort rather than enacted skill. It doubles in on itself, tending to favour the ends of organizations rather than the strengthening of practitioners. It places a requirement on educators to create their own practices, pulling themselves up by the bootstraps to form an individuated identity of narrowly defined competence. It can be far from clear to what extent practitioners are being empowered and to what extent they are being abandoned.

**Be Careful What You Wish For**

Finally, our argument is about the use and application of PLAR, and the need to make a careful distinction between professional development and knowledge generation. The current tendency to assume that PLAR can serve both ends needs to be considered deeply. It may well be that the ends are incompatible, and that it serves educators and learners badly to assume that they can both be achieved by any one strategy.

**References**


The “Many Faces” and Complexities of Continuing Education units within today’s Higher Education Organizations: An Empirical Study

Sandria Stephenson

Abstract: A qualitative methodology was used to identify higher education leaders’ understanding of continuing education units’ organization and program development. Using various metaphors, the study reveals that the way administrators conceptualize their units symbolically often determine their administrative strategies relative to organizational development and program planning issues within their parent organization.

Background and Purpose of the Study

Regardless of the growing responsibilities for continuing education units, they are still often regarded as “simply marketing” arenas for higher education institutions (Bok, 2003; Breneman, 2005). Yet continuing education is constantly in an organizational architecture mode where the structures, systems, and resources are being translated into strategies, programs, activities, tasks, and ultimately into people’s competencies, capabilities, and attitudes. Serving as corroborator and catalyst, linking needs to stakeholders and programs, yet doing so within their traditional setting, is the crucial “story” of continuing higher education. Hence, inquiries related to the reevaluation of the historical mission and value of continuing higher education, in the changing political-economic climate of higher education, are necessary. This study examined how university administrators conceptualize their continuing education units’ organizational dynamics, and model elements in such unconventional settings. Specifically, what are the various metaphoric models of continuing education that administrators construe as key organizational approaches to program planning and development? The questions guiding the study were:

1. How do university administrators identify their role, responsibilities, and connections to continuing education?
2. How do these administrators metaphorically categorize the organizational structure of the continuing education units within these universities?
3. How do these metaphorical frameworks relate to program planning and development?

Theoretical Framework

Higher education history shows that universities play a very important role in the education and development of human beings, both socially and economically and also that the history of continuing education is inexorably linked to the history of higher education (Gessner, 1987). However, while it is also a concern that universities are [might be] losing their historic mission (Bok, 2003; Shapiro, 2005), continuing educators proffer that higher education leverage continuing education when offering higher education benefits to the society at large (Breneman, 2005; Edelson, 2006; Offerman, 2002). Continuing higher education, once considered on the periphery of higher education’s academic activities, is becoming main-stream, an important component of the main academic activities within many high caliber universities (Donaldson, 1991; Gessner, 1987; UCEA, 2006a). However, there is not one defined template of organizational structure that defines continuing education in general.

Drawing on social and cultural anthropology, Bolman and Deal (2003) espoused a four-frame model to “make sense of organizations” (p. 12). One part of the four-frame model is the
symbolic frame. The symbolic frame tends to abandon rationality and views organizations as cultures, stories, and myths. Hence, the way in which administrators conceptualize and express assumptions about their units’ organizational structure in the higher educational realm is symbolic of various model prototypes that, reasonably, can be configured as having a humanistic, mechanistic (bureaucratic), or procedural design (Hodge, Anthony, & Gales, 1996). These frameworks will offer a postmodern, symbolic interpretive ontology in its approach to program planning (Hatch & Cunliffe, 2006). While the goals of continuing education program planning are diverse, the primary goal is to promote the mission of its parent university. Program planning and development is the single most important decision making process in which continuing educators engage on a daily basis (Cervero & Wilson, 1994; Dickeson, 1999; Edelson, 2006) and involves important issues such as themes and objectives, program format, budgeting, faculty, and fit of the program within the larger university’s mission (Cafferella, 2002; Cervero & Wilson, 1994, 2006; Edelson, 2006).

Research Design

The study used a qualitative methodology to examine respondents’ experiences and perceptions of continuing education within eight major traditional universities, four private and four public. Qualitative research is the concept that seeks to interpret peoples’ construction of reality and to identify patterns in their perspectives. The rational for choosing this methodology was the need to evoke meaning from these administrators who served as the units’ informants (Merriam & Simpson, 2000; Patton, 2002). These respondents were higher education administrators with titles such as (Vice Provosts, Provosts, Vice Chancellors, and Deans) who had direct responsibilities for or connections to continuing education. They were selected based on various criteria including their titles, knowledge about, and responsibility or connection to the continuing education units, and the length of time in the role. In addition, criteria for the units were that they represent a key division within a major university and must offer credit and noncredit programs for nontraditional learners. The units were selected based on geographical locations, representing four of the six geographical categorizations as outlined by the University Continuing Education Association (UCEA, 2006b). These geographical locations are Mid-Atlantic, South, Great Plains, and Mid-America.

Seventeen semi-structured interviews, that were tape recorded and later transcribed, along with institutional documents provided by the informants served as the data. The data were analyzed using an overarching constant comparative analysis; the interviews were analyzed inductively, while the documents were analyzed using qualitative document analysis. This open coding process was use to identify the concepts and to develop the patterns and themes. According to Strauss and Corbin (1998), open coding is “the analytical process through which concepts are identified and their properties and dimensions are discovered in data” (p. 101). Subsequent to the open coding process, an axial coding process was used for creating the summaries, major categories and, subcategories.

Findings

For purposes of research anonymity these eight universities’ names have been replaced with pseudonyms portraying the region and the institutions typology, whether public or private. The pseudonyms are as follows: Mid-Atlantic Public, South Public, Great Plains Public, Mid-America Public, Mid-Atlantic Private, South Private, Great Plains Private, and Mid-America
Private. The study reveals that continuing education is a ubiquitous feature in every sphere of post-secondary education, yet various kinds of organizational configurations prevail. Nevertheless, its organizational dynamics can be construed metaphorically (Edelson, 2006) or symbolically (Bolman & Deal, 1994, 2003). The way in which administrators conceptualize and express assumptions about their units’ organizational structure in the higher educational realm is symbolic of various model prototypes that, reasonably, can be configured as having a humanistic, mechanistic (bureaucratic), or procedural design (Hodge, Anthony, & Gales, 1996). The following paragraphs summarize the institutions, and symbolic models and frames and where appropriate, informants’ quotes are included for emphasis or further explanation.

**Overview of Institutions Symbolic Frames**

*The humanistic constructs.* This construct sees continuing education as mediating or facilitating, where it places continuing education at the interface of the larger, external community; providing efficient and effective services to students who use continuing education as a means of access to the university. Two institutions, it seems, fit this construct they are Mid-Atlantic Public and Mid-Atlantic Private. However, the specific models were mediator and facilitator respectively. The informants at Mid-Atlantic Public admitted that structurally, continuing education is *non-authoritative* with regards to academic program offerings, but is administratively. With respect to the organizational structure, the Associate Vice President for Outreach stated, “Ok, so organizationally, I guess I would say we are a centralized organization and all those units report up to me and I report up to the Vice President for Outreach.” The Associate Director for Continuing education alleged, “Continuing education is set up as a centralized administrative function; we work with all the academic units to extend their programs off campus so we are a centralized administrative unit.” Degree programs are “offered” through the various academic departments, schools, and colleges; the academic units offering the programs have full academic authority, hence the continuing education unit’s *mediator* role. For Mid-Atlantic Private University, the School of Continuing Education is technically one central ‘freestanding’ unit, and is expected to be entirely self-supporting. In responding to the question regarding the structure and organization of the continuing education unit, the Dean responded as follows, “Essentially I am an academic dean of a free-standing school we have our own faculty part-time, and our own curriculum…” “I not sure what terms you want me to use, but ‘free standing’ is the way we would describe it.” This school of continuing studies is in a *facilitator role* in that it supports the university summer program, in addition to being a self-supporting, centralized unit with its own programs and faculty. However, it can also be surmised that it is trying to secure political and economic autonomy so that it can chart its own destiny, hoping to achieve true independence and equality. Not quite [the] overarching *humanistic frame*.

*The procedural constructs.* This construct shows continuing education as having a hybrid or educational-laboratory model, it allows for new program concept development which is subsequently supplemented by an academic department; it often plays a greater role in administration of parent academic programs. Three institutions fit this construct; they are Great-Plains Public, Mid-America Public, and South Private. From this Great Plains Public university example, it can be deduced that continuing education resembles other administrative units that *interplay with the academic subsystems*, notably colleges and schools within the university system. However, there is an important difference, and that is, continuing education plays a greater role in developing, administering, and evaluating a variety of academic credit and noncredit programs even to the point of administering the entire summer semester for the parent
university. Hence, it is neither “centralized nor decentralized.” This “hybrid” model as, described and noted by the Provost is situated within a procedural framework. The Vice Provost for Mid America stated that, “CE is, one of the, well, is the fastest growing part of the whole extension function in the state...we reach over 160K individuals each year through CE. So in that respect, it’s making a great contribution to the educational mission of the university to serve people beyond the campus.” As an organization CE is academically decentralized within the schools and colleges; as each offers a different level of participation in such programs; however, there is a central office which is administratively responsible for all continuing education activities on the campus. Hence, continuing education at this university is viewed somewhat similar to an educational laboratory model with a procedural framework. It is a place where new programs and innovations are launched and through which university resources extend beyond boundaries of the state. For South Private University continuing education also resembles an educational laboratory with a procedural framework. In responding to the question regarding this organization of continuing education, the Provost describes continuing education as follows, “We have multiple sites of CE throughout [this state]. Some other schools do, but not to the extent of CE.” Within the school of continuing education, there are many opportunities to engage in new and innovative strategies and, because of its diversity, and multiplicity, continuing education within this institution is also seen as a unit engaged in opportunities for research and development within the lifelong learning arena.

The mechanistic construct. This construct views continuing education as somewhat laminated or egalitarian by definition, radical in its imagery. It is about advocating for the adult learner as a utopian mission to the recasting of society and its basic ideologies. In the colonial sense, the unit is seeking to achieve some integration and acceptance within an affluent cultural setting. Three institutions were construed has symbolically displaying the mechanistic frame. At South Public University the lines of demarcations between credit and noncredit programs are prevalent and obvious within this setting. When asked about the structure of the unit the Associate Vice Chancellor replied passionately, “Credit programs, summer programs, and lifelong education [are] now centralized, after July 1st, (2007) we will be moving to decentralized. These programs (the credit and summer) will be run by the individual colleges....hopefully it will work...not sure if this is good, bad, or right or wrong only time will tell.” The perceived lack of control and disorganization creates a symbolic mélange that warrants improvising so that efficient and effective service can be provided to students who use continuing education as a means of access to this university. The School of Professional Studies is one of three major academic units of the Great Plains Private University. The Associate Dean in responding to her connections and responsibilities to continuing education said, “The whole function of distance education is academic and that’s pretty important even though people think it’s an add-on, it’s not an add-on, it’s an integral part of what we all do.” It offers graduate and undergraduate degrees, certificates, as well as professional, and other noncredit programs via three academic units. What is important to note about continuing education at this school, is its historical development from an auxiliary-service-oriented unit to one that is currently academic and highly regarded. This school is organized as a unit with its own faculty and academic policy, procedures, and structure. In responding to the question about structure the Vice President for Professional Studies described the unit in this manner, “It’s a relatively autonomous administrative and academic unit of the university which is somewhat unique among not-for-profit universities. He asserts, “We are not like most continuing education programs, most of our programs are for credit and for degrees or certificates... for younger adults and older adults.” Thus
continuing education at this institution is somewhat *radical* or *egalitarian* by definition or in its imagery. The Associate Provost at Mid-America Private notes that “continuing education at this university is demarcated in two different structures and programs: there is an evening program that is entirely noncredit, it is dynamic and expansive. Then there is a credit segment that offers bachelors’ degrees to adults.” “Organizationally, the unit is under the Dean of the School of Education and Professional Studies. It is autonomous in its operational activities, a relatively small operation yet very complex in its organizational structure,” he continued:

I would say it is, boy, that’s a great question, it is amorphous. The university as a whole is centralized and although….the Director can do “some” programmatic and entrepreneurial things, she is limited by what the university can give her before she does that. And there is probably more subtle oversight than intentional oversight. And so that kind of a cachet oversight doesn’t give you a lot of direction, it really is kind of a cloud.

From the above quotes, it seems that continuing education is in a *colonial* setting within this university and the frame is very *mechanistic*.

**Conclusions and Implications**

Six models of continuing education within three structural frameworks are presented as the findings reveal an allegorical picture of these different models of continuing education organizations within eight universities and throughout four representative regions of the United States. These models and respective frameworks can be categorized under the umbrellas of the three designs, alluded to as: [humanistic] mediator and facilitator; [procedural] hybrid and educational-laboratory; [mechanistic] radical and colonial. Consequently, the study concludes that the participating continuing education units highlighted are not representative of all the units’ metaphorical or symbolic models that could possibly exist, whether structurally, academically, or otherwise. Implicitly for continuing education practice it is obvious from this study that there is no one “model type” of continuing education structure that *fits* a standard continuing education unit or one typology that is known to be normative or transferable to any other setting. For this reason, any benchmarking of organizational structures cannot be decisive and should only be used for comparative assessments. From a theoretical perspective, the study disagrees with some of the literature in higher education and concludes that not all continuing education units are “simply marketing” arenas for higher education institutions as often portrayed in the literature (Bok, 2003; Breneman, 2005). They are; however, key elements in alternative organizational approaches and in strategic planning when thinking about program development and implementation for nontraditional or adult learners. Hence, the modes by which administrators symbolically conceptualize their units often determine their administrative strategies relative to program planning, and development, as well as relational issues within their parent organization.

As an implication for higher education, the study affirms that continuing education organizations serve as alternative means of access to higher education for adult and other nontraditional learners. However, continuing education can be relegated as an “organization within an organization,” where power, politics, policy, and cultural constructs affect its organizational structure and program planning and where traditional higher educational constructs and culture in-turn determine its structure, programs, and strategies. Hence, it is imperative to keep these various, symbolic organizational models in mind as a prelude to understanding how university administrators conceptualize the socio-political and socio-
economic dynamics of their continuing education units within the context of a larger university setting.

References


The Sacred Cow: Understanding the Role of Culture in the Health-Related Behaviors of Older Asian Indian Immigrants

Swathi Nath Thaker

Introduction

In today’s society, life expectancy continues to increase as advances in technology continue to encourage the development and implementation of new medical treatments and solutions. For example, within the United States, persons over age 65 currently represent approximately 13% of the population (Bee, 2000). As the baby boomer generation enters retirement, this number will continue to increase. In addition to this growth, the rise in immigration continues to change the demographics within the United States, thus impacting the composition of the elderly population. As individuals within these minority populations age, their use of health services will continue to increase. Although there has been a wide array of research concerning minorities and healthcare, knowledge on the Asian Indian community is limited, even though this is one of the fastest growing elderly groups in the United States (Doorenbos, 2003). These immigrants value family and maintaining relationships and much of their learning takes place within and among the community in an informal setting. Furthermore, these distinctions become increasingly evident when exploring traditional Asian Indian health practices, such as Ayurvedic medicine, which focuses on treating the mind, body, and spirit. Understanding these nuances is critical to serving the needs of this growing population. However, very little research explores how these cultural values impact the way in which these immigrants learn about health in the United States. For this reason, it is imperative to have a better understanding of how cultural values shape Asian Indians’ behaviors and approaches to health.

With this in mind, the purpose of this study was to understand how cultural values influence health-related behaviors among older Asian Indian immigrants in the United States. The following 3 questions were explored: (1) How do older Asian Indian immigrants learn about health-related issues? (2) In what ways do culture and heritage affect older Asian Indian immigrants’ health behaviors? and (3) How do older Asian Indian immigrants mediate between Western and Eastern healthcare approaches?

Literature Review

Culture and learning are interwoven and inseparable (McLoughlin, 1999). In the field of adult education, the awareness of cultural issues manifested itself in critiques of traditional learning theories, such as andragogy and self-directed learning. Merriam and Caffarella (1999) criticized these theories as neglecting the context of learning and the background of learners. Amstutz (1999) and Lee (2003) highlighted that these theories are based on the mainstream culture of the Western, White, and male populations. Culture can be defined as the learned and shared knowledge, belief, values and habits (Krochber & Kluckhonn, 1952) which distinguish one group of people from another (Hofstede, 1980). Values represent the core of a cultural system and serve as a standard for people to make judgments in their lives. Studies indicate that Asian Indians value collectivism, hierarchy, family, and community (Merriam & Mohamad, 2000; Pai & Adler, 2001; Roland, 1988). These beliefs shape these individuals’ learning process.

Informal learning takes place outside of formal institutions and can occur in many contexts, such as on the job, within family relationships, or in leisure pursuits. Although this form of learning is often considered residual, researchers still argue that much of adults’ learning
takes place in this manner (Cairns, 2000) and happens continuously (English, 2000). Networking is a type of informal learning which is readily evident in the Asian Indian community. By consulting one another, informal learning allows for not only individual growth, but also community growth, a key value among Asian Indians.

Just as cultural values shape the learning process, such beliefs also play a role in healthcare. Asian Pacific Islander Americans (APIAs) represent the fastest growing ethnic group in the United States, and Asian Indians rank third among this extremely diverse minority population. Studies show that there is still a strong belief in traditional medicine such as Ayurveda among Asian Indians (Channa, 2004). Additionally, the teachings of Hinduism play a role in the way these individuals view sickness and well-being (Panganamala & Plummer, 1998). Similarly, these beliefs also impact one’s perception of death and end-of-life care (Doorenbos, 2003).

Methodology

A qualitative research design was used and in-depth interviews, lasting between one to two hours, were the primary method of data collection. Eleven Asian Indian immigrants who are 60 years of age or older and are not affiliated with a health profession, were purposefully sampled as research participants. The constant comparative method was used to analyze the data in order to determine common categories, themes, and patterns across the research sample. In order to enhance reliability and validity, member checks, peer review, and an audit trail was used in order to increase the trustworthiness of this study.

Findings

Findings are presented based on each of the three research questions guiding this study. When considering how older Asian Indian immigrants in the United States learn about health issues, the participants mentioned their healthcare professional, immediate family, the media, Internet, and the Indian community.

Healthcare Professional/Immediate Family

All of the participants mentioned that they rely on their healthcare professional for accurate and pertinent health information, whether it is for a referral or knowledge about a treatment option that they are proposing. For example, when asked about how he checks and maintains his diabetes, Suresh shared, “The doctor gave me a little gadget which, you know, prick yourself and then read and give you all those things. In fact he pushed me into that habit.” This trust in authority is one of the reasons that the healthcare professional is a main source of information for Asian Indians. These individuals believe that their doctor has their best interest in mind, which is echoed by Hanuman, “So if the doctor suggests something, I just follow him because he is my doctor and he is going to take care of me.”

All the participants also relied their physician’s knowledge during the decision making process. For example, Anita recalled how she changed her exercise habits after a consultation with her physician: “But, and I think this uh exercises in the weight bearing exercises in the gym is better because my doctor you know OBGYN had suggested that you know I start doing weight bearing exercises to improve the bone density and all that.” This reliance on the healthcare professional was even more evident in those individuals who were faced with a serious illness. For instance, when Raj was diagnosed with cancer, his doctor was his primary source of information, especially regarding his options: “Once it [the test] came positive then he gave me a book to read with all the options. And I talked to my doctor basically that’s what you need.”

The immediate family, which included spouses, children, and siblings, was also utilized for health information. First and foremost, these individuals depend on their family when seeking
physician referrals. Suresh shared a story of a time when he was not receiving proper treatment and his daughter stepped in: “After that, I think couple of days later I was not feeling better, I was not getting the right treatment so then my daughter suggested this other doctor that was in uh the Alcoa area.” Participants also revealed that spouses were not only a source of information, but also provided encouragement to practice good health habits. This was especially true for the women in this study. For example, Leela notes, “My husband pushes me to it…he says I’ll go walking with you, he’s an exercise fanatic he does not even miss a day of exercise.” In contrast, the male participants depended increasingly on their children and/or siblings when confronted with a health issue. For instance, Deepak notes that after experiencing heart problems, his daughter taught him to be more careful about the food he ate: “I never knew those labels, you know, Avani [his daughter] told me you have to see saturated fat, this and that. And now I’m always reading labels.”

**Media/Internet**

The media, such as television, radio, and popular magazines, was also used by these individuals to learn about varying health topics. Balram shared this story to illustrate why he began yearly exams:

But after I saw this one [a magazine article] I said boy, then reading lot of articles it says after certain years of age you should be going for this one regularly, after this age you should be doing this one and it was common knowledge after 50 years you should be more uh paying attention to what you do, your exercising, your uh health. Magazine and other reading material were a particularly important resource for the women in this study. For example, when asked how she learns about health topics Anita shared, “I uh I read these uh you know health magazines you know every month they send some articles about health.” When Leela was diagnosed with a problem, she went to the library and “read everything I could find in books and magazines” to better comprehend her condition, its symptoms, as well as available treatments. In a similar fashion, Nirali noted “I’m interested to, even when my daughters uh get some problem also, I used to read [about] those things.”

In addition to media, all of the men in this study also used the Internet in some way to learn about varying health issues. Jai made use of the World Wide Web to learn more about a recommended physician when he was in need of surgery. He notes, “When we found out this guy’s name, and we went to the internet and found out his qualifications and what in all on him.” Suresh shared that he uses the Internet to help him learn how to maintain his diabetes. He notes, “There is so many medical websites that talks about uh diabetic foundations, there are so many websites I don’t remember specific particular name.” Overall, the Internet serves as a major learning tool for these immigrants.

The women in this study were less likely to utilize the Internet as a source of information. And even when they did use this technology, it was with someone else, generally their spouse. For instance, Anita shared “We [my husband and I] look up on the Internet um just you know stay up to date on the issues of older people.” Likewise, Leela expressed that she and her husband used the Internet to find out about physicians specializing in her illness: “Uh we were looking on the Internet to find information and then her name came up as the, you know, she’s really the pioneer in the research.” For both of these women, using the Internet was a joint activity, once again emphasizing the support that their spouse provides.
Indian Community

The Indian community is another key source of information for these individuals. While this can include the immediate family, it is much broader and often includes a large circle of friends who serve as a family away from home. A number of participants mentioned that they discuss health issues with their circle of friends. For instance, Anita shares, “we will be talking you know people our age will be talking about health matters and then we learn little bit from them also at parties or functions or when we visit friends and all that.” Through these types of discussions, these individuals not only learn about specific topics, but they also encourage one another to practice good health habits. The participants’ network of friends is an integral source of knowledge, providing these individuals with valuable insight on various health issues.

The second set of findings relate to the cultural values that shape these immigrants health-related behaviors and include: forming a personal relationship with their healthcare professional, including family in decision making, and valuing alternative medicine.

Personal Relationship with Healthcare Professional/High Level of Family Involvement

These participants revealed that they desired a personal connection with their healthcare professional. This longing for a personal connection is a driving factor when these individuals are selecting a physician. Some feel that an Indian doctor is key to obtaining the desired treatment. Jai notes, “I found an Indian origin doctor, and I said, “I will go to that guy. And he was an extremely nice guy, and he was now his intellectual level as well as on a social.”

In addition to favoring Asian Indian doctors, still others are willing to make sacrifices in order to find a personal connection with their healthcare professional. For instance, Suresh noted that he drives over a 100 miles to see his physician. When asked why he chooses this commute, he shared the following: “See him, I can talk to him a little closer and you know personal I can call anytime and he can call me. That way a little closer than some outside doctors I guess.” By building a personal relationship, these immigrants felt greater rapport with their healthcare professional and thus had increased confidence in the treatment process.

In addition to cultivating a relationship with their doctor, these individuals also include their family in their medical decisions and treatment. A number of these participants take a family member with them whenever they visit their doctor. For example, both Suresh and Hanuman note, “Basically my wife was with me going to the doctor’s office” and “Or sometimes my wife comes… but mostly we go together.” This is another illustration of how these immigrants not only look to their family, but often rely on these individuals to make critical decisions.

Valuing Alternative Medicine

When considering medical treatment, whether on their own or with their family, all of these participants mentioned that they have contemplated the use of alternative medicine at one time or another. Family plays an integral role in this belief. For example, when questioned about his interest in alternative medicines Deepak stated, “Yeah, they believe, and now I believe too,” noting that his family’s confidence in this form of treatment influenced his decision to try this type of medication. Others utilize their own understanding of the system as reason enough to try alternative medical treatments. “Ayurvedic is plant based and natural and they have been dispensing these ayurvedic medicines for, in their families, for so many generations, so the knowledge base is there,” described Jai, explaining why he believed this medical system has value.

The last set of findings explores how these participants mediate between Western and Eastern treatments of medicine. Not only do these immigrants consider alternative medicine, but
each of these participants had also used this form of treatment at one time or another. When discussing their decision making process during treatment it was clear that these individuals experimented with both systems, resulting in varying patterns of use between Western and Eastern medicine. Suresh began with alternative treatment when he was first diagnosed with diabetes. “But my friends they used to um say some of the Indian herbs and some of the seeds uh [in] vegetables would help to minimize diabetic effect. I used to eat that,” he commented, noting that he preferred to try this natural remedy rather than take medication.

In contrast, others described situations where they started with Western treatment and moved to alternative medicine in the hope of better results. Leela has been struggling with an illness for several years and after becoming discouraged with Western treatments, as well as the physicians, she turned to alternative medicine. She even went to India to visit with a doctor specializing in alternative remedies and is planning to return for follow-up: “I’m going to India again in May so I’ll go back to him [homeopathy doctor] and see what he thinks of it.”

Still others noted that they utilize both Western and Eastern treatments simultaneously, believing that the two forms of medicine complement each other. “So I do that one whenever there is a need, use of lemon, ginger, things like that” shared Balram. But when asked if he starts with these natural remedies he stated, “No, no, no, it’s not that I will try that first and then go to something. I will try that one along with other over the counter [medicines] what has worked for me.” Listening to these stories it became evident that with these participants there was no clearly defined pattern of mediation between Western and Eastern medicine. Instead, the decision was based on each individual’s experience, knowledge, and belief in each form of treatment.

**Discussions and Conclusions**

Findings from this study resulted in two main conclusions. The first conclusion of this study is that Indian culture and heritage shape healthcare behaviors of older Asian Indian immigrants. Asian Indians are a collective community, valuing relationships with others over individual gain. This desire to emphasize the community over the individual also encourages these individuals to seek out help from family, friends, and other community members. When examining which family members are included, it was evident that the women relied on their spouse, while the men often looked to their adult children and/or siblings. Although research indicates these immigrants often turn to the male elders in the family (Ma, 1999; Pai & Adler, 2001; Roland, 1988), this was not the case for these participants. This could be due to a variety of reasons. For some of these participants, their siblings still live in India and so they turn to other family that are in closer proximity and more readily accessible. Other individuals mentioned that they contemplate other factors, such as education and connections, when considering who to ask for help. This illustrates the complexity of family dynamics and underscores the importance of the extended family unit.

Choudhry (1998) argues that often Asian Indians believe that it is the physician’s responsibility to monitor and guide their health behaviors. Hanuman, Suresh, Bansi, and Nirali all relied primarily on their physician to help them stay healthy. Each of these individuals trusts the judgment of their doctor and believes that he or she will provide them with necessary information regarding their health. However, this did not overshadow their desire to connect with their healthcare professional. Although the literature on Asian Indians indicates that a respect for hierarchical structure may prevent these immigrants from asking questions and sharing their opinions (Pai & Adler, 2001; Roland, 1988), findings from this study challenge this premise. Rather than being timid and docile, these participants worked to cultivate a personal relationship with their doctor so that it would be possible to have an open dialogue. Once again this is in
contrast to the hierarchical nature of the Asian Indian culture (Roland, 1988). Although there is a respect for authority and the physician’s expertise, this does not always lead to compliance. Instead, these immigrants prefer to have a relationship where communication flows not only from the doctor to the patient, but vice versa as well.

The second conclusion drawn from this study is that these participants utilize different forms of informal learning when seeking information about health matters and/or concerns. Cairns (2000) suggests that what is learned through this method may be the most significant learning that an individual acquires, and this is especially relevant when considering health knowledge. A number of participants shared how a news program, a magazine article, or even a conversation with a friend, altered their health habits.

Since individuals are not directly seeking information, English (1999) argues that for learning to occur, “there has to be some element of reflection on action” (p. 391). This form of reflection was evident in the decision making process of these participants when they were faced with an illness. The experimental attitude that these immigrants adopted was in itself an informal learning process. They started with one treatment, reflected on the outcome, and then decided whether or not they should take a different course of action.

These conclusions highlight several implications for practice. First, the desire to maintain relationships with other members of the Indian community is an integral component to reaching this audience. These individuals look to their network of friends and family first for information, guidance, and support and through these interactions, there is a form of knowledge sharing that continues to develop the members of its community. For this reason, organizations within the Indian community, such as a local temple, are excellent initial entry points to reach this population. Second, it is evident that cultural values shape these individual’s health behaviors, even those who have been living in the United States for an extended period of time. Traditional systems of medicine, such as Ayurveda or homeopathy, are considered as treatment options by these immigrants when they are ill. This information is vital when offering medical treatment and for this reason, healthcare workers need to not only understand the value that these immigrants place on traditional medicine, but also establish a clinical atmosphere that will allow this information to be shared. And finally, when working with these immigrants, it is important to remember that the entire family is involved in decision making. Data from this study reveals that participants were often accompanied by other members of their family when seeking medical attention, even if the visit was a regular check up. Physicians should attempt to include the patient’s family during the visit, sharing information with all those involved. Similarly, when developing educational interventions, programs targeting the entire family will be increasingly successful, as they will allow individuals to work together towards a common goal.

References
Critical Public Pedagogy and Michael Moore’s Film Sicko: Creating a National Dialogue for Changing Health Care

Elizabeth J. Tisdell & Karin Sprow, Penn State University-Harrisburg, USA

Abstract: This paper discusses a qualitative study exploring how health care workers view Michael Moore’s film Sicko and its role in national discussions of health care.

Love him or hate him, there is no question that filmmaker Michael Moore is a provocateur who knows how to get discussion going. Perhaps this is no where more obvious than in the national discussion he has caused about health care with the release of the film Sicko in 2007 a year and a half before a presidential election. Politicians from both the left and the right invoked his name in the time leading up to the recent presidential election. Senator Joe Lieberman referred to him by name in his speech at the Republican National Convention (RNC), while the democrats hosted an optional viewing of Sicko at the DNC. But the dialogue about the issue of health care and the blessings or evils of Michael Moore and his tactics didn’t stop with the election. In the very recent flap (March 2009) about whether or not Rush Limbaugh was at all representative of the republican party, and the question put out in the press about whether Rush was the republicans’ Michael Moore, Moore (2009) himself came out strongly indicating why there was no comparison between the republicans’ feelings about Rush with the democrats feeling about him; the democrats embrace Moore, while the republicans want to distance themselves from Limbaugh. On one level this is beside the point here, as the purpose of this paper is to discuss results of a qualitative study where the purpose was to examine health care professionals’ views of the film Sicko as a tool of adult education (or mis-education, depending on their perspective) and the extent to which they believe the movie affects the national consciousness and discussion of how to reform the health care system. On the other hand, this recent discussion in the national news about democrats and republicans and Rush Limbaugh and Michael Moore as we write this paper is precisely the point, particularly for us in adult education. Michael Moore, makes use of the tactics of what Sandlin (2007, following Giroux) refers to as critical public pedagogy; in the film Sicko, he did so about the critical issue of health care. Whether his films are education or mis-education or some of both may be a matter of some debate, which speaks to the need for examining forms of media as adult education, as well as the need for critical media literacy. In what follows we provide a little backdrop on critical media literacy, Michael Moore, and the film itself to set the context of the study.

Related Literature and Theoretical Framework

It is clear that media and popular culture have an enormous influence on all of us. This has prompted a few adult educators in recent years to discuss the importance of studying critical media literacy (CML) and popular culture in adult education at conferences (Armstrong, 2005; Tisdell, Guy, Sandlin, Wright, & Thompson, 2008) and in publications (Guy, 2007; Tisdell & Thompson, 2007; Wright & Sandlin, 2009). Most CML discussions in the field have focused on fictional entertainment media, there has also been a strand focused on analysis of resistant forms of media intended to turn it on its head as culture jamming (Warner, 2007). Sandlin (2007) provides examples of culture jamming in her analysis of Adbusters, and Rev. Billy and his “Church of Stop-Shopping” as anti-consumption education. What has been missing from the
discussions of media in adult education is consideration of the new genre of documentary films called critical documentary: those documentaries that make it to the box office and make use of comedy, drama, and fact to deal with a particular issue. Michael Moore’s films are of this genre, with Sicko being his most recent effort.

Michael Moore is a master of using multiple film tactics based on some fact, mixed with comedy and bias, to take on an issue and to portray a particular message. As film theorist, Ernest Callenbach (2007/2008), in his discussion of how Moore has changed the box office documentary film industry notes, “his films are dramas, not lectures—though they contain mini lecture in the margin or the voice over” (p. 18). In traditional documentary, the narrator is often invisible. In Moore’s films, the narrator is not only visible, he himself, is visible as the narrator. As Callenbach quips, Moore as narrator is “Amurrican-style overweight, resolutely unchic, and mouthy—absolutely abjuring the policy-wonk stance!” (p. 18). In Sicko, Moore took on the health care industry, clearly to create a point as the presidential election season drew closer. As provocateur, and a critical public pedagogue of sorts, Moore was trying to stir adults to action on behalf of themselves and others, in a country where more than 40 million people do not have health insurance, and as the film documents millions more are underinsured. In that sense, Moore was acting as an emancipatory adult educator in that he was asking people to learn something and to take action for broad scale social change. As media scholars (Buckingham, 2006; Giroux, 2004) note, movies, television, and other forms of popular culture act as a form of public pedagogy, often through a hidden curriculum. Much of Michael Moore’s “curriculum” is overt: he is very obviously trying to make an overt political statement in his films; Sicko is no exception, and as many have noted, Moore is clearly trying to get discussion going on the topic of health care reform (Singer, 2008; Tanner, 2007).

**Moore’s Apparent Influence on National Dialogue**

In the early months of the release of Sicko, the Kaiser Family Foundation (2007) did some tracking on its reach and effects in getting the discussion going. They found that of those that had seen it, the response was more positive (48%) than negative (33%); further, 45% had a conversation about the health care system as a result of seeing it, and 43% indicating that they are more likely to think that health care reform is needed because of watching the movie. Holtz (2007) believes that this poll demonstrates that “now there is evidence that Sicko did indeed get people thinking and talking” (p. 28). Information from the poll indicates that, at the time the questions were asked, only 4% of respondents had seen the film, but that “many of the people who didn’t actually see it still said the movie affected their opinions about the health care system...Moore certainly achieved his goals of making media waves” (p. 29). A following poll on campaign issues in 2008 states that 54% of people wanted to hear the candidates talk about healthcare and health insurance affordability, and 62% optimistically think healthcare costs can be improved by president and Congress.

In the months following the release of Sicko in June of 2007, the California Nurses Association launched a national campaign encouraging nurses and citizens across the country to see Sicko and support a single-payer system of healthcare in the US, alternately known as universal healthcare or Medicare for All. Following the release of Sicko, CNN physician, Sanjay Gupta, criticized the film on air for its “facts.” In a much publicized point-by-point clarification by Moore on his website, the doctor stated that the facts were correct, given the information Moore used. The kind of media coverage healthcare issues have received since then was commented on by Moore, ”I think it's helped a lot of journalists realize there's a whole other side to this story—the non-corporate side, the side of nurses, the side of working people, the side of
people who have no insurance… Every week I get somebody sending me a video or a story from their local newspaper or TV news station where the local reporter has gone out and talked to the [local] person who has gone through the very same things these Sicko participants have gone through” (Waldman, 2008, p. 39).

Of the many inaugural balls that took place on January 20, 2009 for President Obama, at the Smithsonian Institution Natural History Museum, containing the famous Hope Diamond, inaugural attendees enjoyed speeches by prominent global healthcare advocates, joined together to express their support for health as a human right. The name of the ball was “Health for All Blue Diamond Inaugural Ball.” Joining the advocates onstage was Sicko patient and spokesperson for the California Nurses Association, Donna Smith, which indicates the movie’s effect on the national dialogue.

Supporters of HR 676, the bill before the House of Representatives, which asks Congress to change policy to reflect healthcare as a human right and establish a single-payer healthcare system in the US, have created the Healthcare Not Warfare” movement, designed to promote the bill and its tenets. Michael Moore supports HR 676, known as the US National Health Insurance Act, had only 23 Congressional supporters when it was first introduced on January 24, 2007, but 90 supporters by the summer of 2008. Surprisingly, that number dropped to 62 co-sponsors when it was reintroduced into the House on January 24, 2009. It remains in committee. Very recently, on March 5, 2009, the new president, in the midst of a serious economic crisis, hosted a healthcare summit at the White House, including voices from all sides of the healthcare debate. While President Obama does indeed support health care reform, White House Press Secretary, Robert Gibbs, earlier stated that the President did not believe the best way to lower costs for consumers at the present time included a single-payer system. Thus, exactly how the health care system will change remains to be seen.

**Study Purpose and Theoretical Framework**

All of this indicates that Sicko has clearly generated discussion. While this is interesting, there is little data based information about how health care professionals respond to Sicko, and how they think it affects the public discourse on health care. Hence, our purpose was to examine how health care professionals view and discuss the film both in their verbal and written commentary.

This study is grounded largely in both a critical media literacy framework and the work of scholars (Buckingham, 2003; Giroux, 2002; hooks, 1994; McLaren, 1995; Yosso, 2002) who note the tendency of the media to both reproduce and resist structural power relations based on race, gender, class, and sexual orientation in their portrayals of characters; it’s also grounded in the work of asthose who argue that the media can act as a form of public pedagogy, and that it’s important to combine consumption of media with a critical public pedagogy (Giroux, 2002; Sandlin, 2007). It is our belief that Michael Moore on the one hand acts out a form of critical public pedagogy in the creation of his films that clearly have a political agenda. On the other hand, it is up to adult educators (broadly defined) and learners to continue to prod and critique the messages portrayed to further the inter/national discussion on issues raised through his films, in this case, the issue of health care. In this way, they can be developing critical media literacy, as well as engaging in an ongoing critical public pedagogy. To some extent, the study is also grounded in some of the literature out of media studies that deals with the issue of what is called “priming”. The theory of priming originates in cognitive psychology, as many communication theories do. According to the definition cited in Holbert, Pillion, et al. (2003), priming research in mass communication studies “the effects of the content of the media on people’s later behavior or
judgments related to that content” (p. 428). Within the area of political communication, specifically, (and one could argue that many of Moore’s tactics in Sicko were a form of political communication), priming explores how public policy issues raised prominently in the media influence judgments toward politicians as well as political issues.

**Methodology**

This was a qualitative study of educators and health care professionals’ perspectives of Michael Moore’s film Sicko, gleaned from two different but related data sources: (1) through focus group interviews that were transcribed with 22 health care professionals, who work in the health care industry, and/or were also seeking further degrees related to health care, or were faculty members in higher education settings; (2) textual analyses of 14 reviews of Sicko that appeared in medical or nursing journals by health care professionals. Of those participating in the focus group discussions, all had seen the movie either on their own or as part of a class. Several were practicing RNs in an RN to BSN program; four were professors in the health care field; the rest were health administrators or mental health professionals. Focus group participants first saw the film on their own; before discussing the film in the focus group they were asked to fill out a brief open ended question form asking them what they thought of the film, and what scenes stood out, and the extent to which they had discussed the film with others. Afterwards, they wrote about what stood out to them from the discussion. This was partly to examine how discussion enhances their analysis of the film as well as to examine how they construct knowledge as a result of social interaction. These data from interviews and these generated documents are being analyzed according to the constant comparative method (Merriam, 1998).

To begin the textual analysis portion of the study, the ProQuest multiple databases were searched using the terms, Michael Moore and Sicko in combination. 538 documents of all types were located. Six of the documents were from scholarly journals, 23 were from magazines, 321 were from newspapers, and 61 were from trade magazines for the film and television world. Interestingly, the newspaper entries included announcements from all across the country about group showings at churches, colleges, and even house parties, in which attendees would see the Sicko then discuss its implications. In addition, there were many letters to the editor and pieces in sections called “Forum” or “Readers Respond.” These results from the general database search indicate that there is a high level of interest in the topic as well as many people joining in what appears to be a grassroots kind of movement to expose as many people as possible to the information in the film.

Following up on this initial search, two additional searches were made using the same search terms, but this time in the medical database, PubMed, and the nursing database, Cumulative Index for Nursing and Allied Health (CINAHL). The searches netted 14 scholarly journal reviews and/or conceptual discussions of Michael Moore’s Sicko as it relates to the topic of healthcare. Four of the articles are from outside of the US (Haas, 2007; McLellan, 2007; Newbold, 2007; Reinhardt, 2007), but still considered as part of the study for their valuable insight into the US healthcare crisis. Textual analyses were conducted on these articles.

**Findings and Discussion**

Space limitations allow only for summaries of the findings. In general, the findings were similar across both sets of data: both the authors of articles and the interviewee participants saw Michael Moore as having a biased agenda, but one that certainly got the discussion of health care going; some were very critical of his tactics, but virtually all agreed that he was a provocateur. How this
played out across the two groups of data are provided here separately, with the textual analysis provided first, and then the summaries of the interviews.

Textual Analysis: Critical of Bias But Agree with Larger Purpose

The fourteen articles that appeared in health journal all had the same four sections: (a) a brief explanation of the topic of Sicko, and often included a synopsis of the most horrifying stories from the film (the man who had to choose which finger to reattach and the woman whose daughter died on the way to a second hospital after her insurance refused to pay at the first, were the most popular); (b) a critique of the content of the film or of the filmmaker; (c) an explanation of existing problems in the US healthcare system; leading up to (d) why the film is important to the healthcare crisis. For purposes of this textual analysis, the summaries of Sicko were largely ignored. While certainly important to the articles and their purposes, for this study, the focus was on the critiques and how, despite the serious critiques of the movie, the medical professionals still believe that the film was not only relevant to the healthcare in the US, but could play the role as educator for its audiences, or at the very least, act as a catalyst to restart or reenergize the healthcare debate in the US.

The critiques of the film and the filmmaker by the medical professionals all largely have the same two themes: (a) there is a lack of full information; and (b) Moore’s style of presentation could be conceived of as detrimental to effectively communicating his message from an unbiased perspective. Regarding the first theme of a lack of full information, or a lack of the full story, Hacker (2007) wishes there had been a clear indication of the pros and cons of the current insurance system. Holtz (2007a) laments the missing “whole story” (p. 46), while MacLellan (2007) from her perspective in the UK, addresses the presentation of the French and British systems as “unassailable,” while the “reality is a bit messier than depicted” (p. 2152). When addressing the second theme of Moore’s presentation style, the authors discuss the polarizing effect of the filmmaker. Dossey (2007) posits that Moore can make his audiences dismiss his message entirely in the face of his “rough-and-ready, confrontational style” (p. 547), and Giles (2007) finds him “divisive” (p. 49). McLellan (2007) tires of Moore’s “faux naivete” and finds him “manipulative” (p. 2152), as does Beller (2007), and Curran (2007, p. 253) finds the movie “emotional, simplified, discouraging and draining.”

After spending time critiquing Sicko and Michael Moore, each of the authors then spends a large amount of time critiquing the system in which they work. This is the strongest portion of most of the articles, as the authors feel free to agree with the overall premise of the film—that the current system is clearly flawed and requires rehabilitation. Dossey (2007) takes the opportunity of the film review to discuss at length the ethical dilemma facing physicians as they deal with the money-driven insurance companies. Dossey (2007) and Weissmann (2008) point out the life expectancy and infant mortality rate discrepancies between the US and other countries as embarrassing. Hacker (2007) notes the film offers no “answer” but calls the healthcare crisis’ “basic truth undeniable” (p. 733).

Finally, after confirming that Moore’s basic assertion is true, the authors become hopeful that the film will have a positive effect on the current situation by making people think about the issues surrounding healthcare. Weissmann (2008) believes that Sicko has “made the country realize” that the right to healthcare “should be part of our ordinary existence” (p. 671). Holtz (2007a, b) is hopeful for a realization that care and responsibility will come back into the conception of healthcare in this country. Beller (2007) finds Moore’s contribution “immense” and sees it as a “catalyst” for change (p. 630). Giles (2007) shares the previous views when he admits
to the film’s “powerful call for change” (p. 49). McLellan (2007) while quite critical of Moore, ends by saying “my country… could do with a few more irritants just like him” (p. 2152).

Focus Groups: Discussing Bias and Issue Leads to Further Understanding

Findings related to the focus group data indicate that virtually all recognized that Moore had a “biased perspective” and that he was trying to create a point. Those with less formal education in the study, particularly the four younger RN’s who were returning to school to complete a Bachelor’s degree tended to be more negative about the film in their initial reactions and mistrust that there was value to the film because they knew Moore had an agenda. For example, one 22-year old RN wrote, “Is this for real? I know Michael Moore is out there, but I really hope people don’t believe this 100%.” Like the results found by Holbert and Hansen (2006) and Holbert, et al. (2007) in their considerations of priming, prior knowledge of Michael Moore as someone with a political agenda appeared to have an effect on the views of these younger participants and their interpretation of the messages as presented by the filmmaker. Those older nurse participants as well as all the other health care workers had a more nuanced view of the film: they recognized bias, but saw him as more like the provocateur that he is, though many were somewhat critical of Moore and his tactics. Those participants with more education and more experience working in the health care system discussed both the politics of the health care system, and seemed less concerned that Moore had an agenda, and analyzed the film with more nuance. For example, one of the professors in the study noted, “It did provide insight into the reality of the health care crisis in the United States; but ...I thought it also had just as many political overtones as health care issues that were presented. I was a little uncomfortable with the all-or-nothing approach. The U.S. is all bad; other countries that were looked at – England, Cuba, Canada, France – all good. So I thought it depicted the problem, but really did not represent a lot of the complexities of the issue and a lot of the realities of the issue.” All virtually agreed that he got the discussion going, and their post focus group thoughts about the issue, and Michael Moore indicated that they thought more about the complexity of the issue. Many indicated that they were going to find out more of the facts that Moore discussed in the film particularly in regards to health care in other countries.

Conclusion

In spite of the recognition of the bias in Moore’s films, many of these more seasoned health care professionals welcomed Moore’s agenda; however, they still believed that people need to discuss and critique the film, and saw value in its getting discussion going of a broken system. These results support the 2003 study by Holbert, Pillion, et al., which indicated that increased amounts of political communication as part of the entertainment media could be an effective way to alter opinions of viewers. Sicko definitely falls into the category of entertainment media and appears to be both thought and discussion provoking, even among this population of health educators who already know much of the information contained in the film and agree that the system is “broken.” The extent to which people talk and critique the film and think about the health care system and work to change indicates that it has indeed been a form of critical public pedagogy. In conclusion, while the analysis of data continues, so does discussion of Sicko and of health care reform in these new days of the Obama administration. Moore, and his public pedagogy on health care have indeed helped stir up adults’ consciousness in his own version of emancipatory education. While some of the giants of the field, such as Paulo Freire and Myles Horton (1991) may offer critique, I think they might say Moore was making a way not just by walking; that he was making a way by filming and creating a new public pedagogy. His presence and his pedagogy has people talking. Indeed, that’s just the point! 

377
Are Transformation and Power Shifts All or Nothing Events?

Jacqlyn S. Triscari
Penn State University--Harrisburg Campus

Key Words: power, organizational transformation, change

Abstract: This paper represents a qualitative case study conducted in one organization. It examines the role of power and shifts of power in an organization during an organizational transformation, a very specific form of change in which the center core or the worldview of the organization is altered.

Purpose of the Study

Theoretical Framework

Research Design

I chose a qualitative case study as my research design since the case study methodology can incorporate a variety of evidence—documents, interviews, focus groups, and so on (Patton & Applebaum, 2003; Yin, 1994). The end result was a family of answers versus a single view of a complex reality (Schnelker, 2005; Sobh & Perry, 2005). Case studies also tend to focus on the answers to “how” and “why” questions, facilitate understanding of complex phenomena, pursue in-depth analysis of multiple patterns, seek to investigate a phenomenon in its context, and use an inductive approach to arrive at meaning (Cepeda & Martin, 2005; Llewellyn, 2007; Patton & Applebaum, 2003; Rowley, 2004). Both critical reflection and deconstruction during the analysis are reinforced. In addition, the postmodern view of temporary, fluid and context dependant outcomes is integral to the analysis process. Thus, it is a misconception to expect that the total view is the sum of the individual parts (Gummesson, 1991).

My research questions were:

How is the transformation process intertwined with shifts in power?
   a. What does this look like?
   b. How is power used to meet organizational and personal goals?

When an organizational transformation is occurring, what happens with regards to power?
   a. What is the role of formal power and structures?
   b. How do less formal sources of power or agency impact the organization?

Periodically, throughout the research process, I reviewed artifacts, documents and records for any signal or evidence of power shifts resulting from the implementation of policies and procedures by the senior management group during the transformation. I initially used organizational documents to set the stage and understand the history of the company. This was then followed by a series of individual interviews with the senior management group and the founder of the organization. Based on my initial understanding from the documents and interviews I formed questions for the subsequent data collection phase. I held a focus group interview comprised of workers, looking for confirming or disconfirming evidence of the findings from the interviews of senior management and the initial content analysis. Finally, I conducted individual interviews with participants from the focus group looking for further understanding and examples of the power shift process, strategies, outcomes, etc.
The data analysis was built upon a model created by Cepeda and Martin, 2005 and involved spirals of analysis illustrated below.

Each spiral started with a plan and had a section which dealt with data collection and analysis. What differentiates this model from others is what occurs in the circle once these steps have been accomplished. The model encourages the researcher to look beyond the obvious assumptions and question the possible multiple meanings from the data. In implementing this model into my research, I essentially combined the data collection and analysis phases. I believe this was a way to “live” the framework of the study—critical organization theory with a postmodern lens.

Dividing the study and analysis into spirals of analysis accomplished two things: 1) it preserved the chronological perspective that I had as the study unfolded and 2) it also allowed for emerging viewpoints or temporary conclusions to be identified and yet left the study open-ended through the series of questions that are still unanswered at the end of each spiral. Each spiral not only included my initial reactions about the topics and findings emerging from the study thus far, but also developed a series of questions still remaining or being revealed as a result of this spiral’s examination.

The focus of my research was a qualitative study which sought to understand the role of power, and shifts in power that occur during an organizational transformation from the perspective of both the senior management and the worker staff. It sought to find evidence of, and understand the notion of power re-distribution as it is transferred from the senior levels of management to the staff or workers during an organizational transformation, a very specific form of organizational change (Argyris & Schon, 1978; Levy, 1986). The findings in part substantiate the literature as well as offer something new for consideration.

The theoretical framework of this study is critical organization theory using a postmodern lens. The combination of critical organizational theory (Carr, 2005; Ogbor, 2001; Grimes, 1992; Grubs, 2000; Sementelli, 2005; Wheatley, 1992) and postmodern organizational theory (Abel, 2005; Casey, 2000; Feldman, 1997; Fleetwood, 2005; Goodall, 1993; Hatch, 1997; Kauffman, 2000) creates a theory which shares an interest in power and at the same time replaces rational reason and a singular understanding with multiple truths. Since the context of this study is within an organization experiencing transformation, a theoretical framework which incorporates change of the center core and worldview is necessary especially when it comes to values, beliefs, and attitudes (Argyris & Schon, 1978; Chapman, 2002; Fletcher, 1990; Levy, 1986; Marshak, 1990; Mink, 1992; Newhouse & Chapman, 1996). Adding critical and postmodern organizational theory to this framework achieves this goal.

For the most part the both of these theoretical derivatives echo the adult education literature and definitions. Most notable, however, is the difference that regardless of the
variations to the theory, the interpretation in the business or management literature rest *inside* of an organization as opposed to the general population (Alvesson & Wilmott, 1992). Also, because the theory is applied to organizations that operate in a capitalistic environment, all references to criticism of capitalism are omitted from this theory. Similarly, a phrase coined by Alvesson and Wilmott (1992) micro-emancipation may exist in organizations where the goal is to spread decision making power to more staff members within the company, but the goal of emancipation falls short of social reform.

This critical form of organizational theory includes the process of critical reflection, questioning hegemony, democracy of power, organizational change as opposed to status quo, and inclusion in decision making in the organization. The postmodern lens adds multiple views, perspectives, fragmentation, non-rational and tentative understanding of a problem to the theoretical framework. It also introduces deconstruction as a process to examine concepts and company policies (Goodall, 1992). This combined theory allows for exploration of power shifting during organizational transformation in two important ways. First, multiple perspectives can be explored since consensus of view or understanding is *not* a goal, many different interpretations simultaneously are encouraged. Second, these interpretations are based on context and are thus tentative and fluid. In this way, power can be viewed coming from multiple sources at the same time and provisional based on context.

It was the use of this reflection and constantly challenging my own understanding that I believe led to a greater understanding of the complexity of this study. This process fits with the theoretical framework of the study: constant questions and deconstruction of concepts such as “What does decision making look like in this organization?” “Who is making what types of decisions?” and “What is power and how is it intertwined in the transformation process?” The model encourages changes in perception as each spiral of analysis is completed; does not seek consensus, calls for critical reflection, and incorporates deconstruction of concepts. It also pushes the researcher to find multiple ways of looking at the data and search for multiple understandings of it. In some cases, using this process caused me to confirm my initial analysis and in other cases it caused me to change my mind or at least pursue contradictory evidence. In this way, a “spiral towards understanding is never complete” (Cepeda & Martin, 2005, p. 861), each cycle of analysis may result in a richer and deeper understanding allowing for further insights. However, it is likely that the cross-case analysis coupled with time allowed for reflection has yielded unique views and understanding of the data. This process is also responsible in part for the difficulty experienced in finding an appropriate stopping place in this research study. As the saying goes in the production of other types of projects—a production is never done, it is abandoned. I admit having this reaction to this study.

In my study, the only group which showed evidence of total transformation was the worker staff. There was a change in their core beliefs, values, and assumptions created by the freedom to critically reflect upon their prior experiences and the encouragement to deconstruct the job responsibilities of their positions. Throughout the process of transformation, they were able to increase their decision making ability—in a way that far surpassed the concept of traditional empowerment or agency of workers. They also bonded with the CEO/Executive Director in a way that was not discussed in the literature. The workers shared founding principles of the organization as well as other espoused cultural aspects of the organization’s operation. While there existed a separation in the roles and duties of the management staff and the workers there also was a relationship that existed between them. This interrelationship was dynamic and ebbed and flowed as the power was shifted between and among these groups.
According to Foucault (1990), power from a postmodern perspective is not neutral and does not come from a single source; instead it is all around us. It can be good, bad, or neither, but undeniably an entity of the transformation. Surprisingly, in this study while the workers bonded to the CEO/Executive Director in terms of beliefs, values, and assumptions and even at times made decisions which were in conflict with their immediate supervisors, the result was not one of win and loss. The hierarchy and the power distribution remained in place. So, in many ways the management exercised ‘power’ over the workers. However, the workers also exercised their own form of power in expertise and information when it came to their jobs. This issue could have led to power struggles and given birth to negative working relationships. Instead, the result was that in this organization both hierarchal power and legitimate power coexisted with the power or agency of the workers.

My findings shed some light on the illusive nature of organizational power during a transformation. Some key assumptions about organizational power are raised for discussion. Maybe power does not follow organizational lines. Power distribution might look different depending on whom or at what level the transformation is introduced. As Foucault (1990) and others have discussed in the literature (Casey, 2000; Goodall, 1992; Hatch, 1997; Kauffman, 2000; Kilgore, 2001) power shifting does not have to be about one side loosing to the other side can win. Power can come in all shapes and from many sources simultaneously (Erchul, Raven & Wilson, 2004; French & Bell, 1973; Fiol, O’Connor & Aquinis, 2001).

In the literature, transformation, like change is often referred to as an event or occurrence. Perhaps, transformation is not an all or nothing event. Considering the job assignments of different positions might be a way to consider and gauge transformation instead of treating organizational transformation as an all or nothing event. Perhaps it can occur in part—or at least in a portion of the organization. Perhaps it is a process. Furthermore, perhaps this process is ongoing.

Findings and Conclusions

At the end of this study it was evident that parts of the organization had experienced transformation and other parts had not. In addition, the management staff relied on the hierarchy as their major source of power. They remained focused on operational duties or transactional tasks to make the organization run smoother. This focus on operational activities had the impact on the workers of added control and increased traditional forms of power use—power coming from organizational structure; reward, coercive, position and legitimate power sources (Erchul, Raven & Wilson, 2004; French & Bell, 1973; French & Raven, 1959). Though the management staff did not see a transformation in their values, assumptions and beliefs in the same way that the worker staff did, they nonetheless supported the transformation process through their attention to transactional activities. Some of these actions were changes in policy, procedure, mission statement, etc. These actions are important because the completion of these activities often allowed for transformation to occur in other parts of the organization.

Implications for Practice

Much has been learned about both the nature of transformation and the shifts of power required within this transformation process of this particular organization. One natural question that arises for practice is “Does the notion hold true that some aspects of control and power continue to exist in similar form both post and pre the organizational transformation such as operational control?” Perhaps transformation and power shifting are processes that occur
incrementally and perhaps they are not all or nothing events but instead dependant on many complex factors. Using a critical organization theory with a postmodern lens, assists the researcher in opening their own eyes to the potential of finding power located in many places within the organization. It also assists the researcher in finding freedom to question their own understanding of what they are seeing, hearing and concluding as they witness change. It encourages the researcher to be comfortable with tentative, fluid solutions. By better understanding the transformation process, leaders can better guide its direction—even if temporarily.

References

382


The Supreme Court Follows, It Does Not Lead:
Adult Education and American Popular Constitutionalism

By Wayland Walker, University of Georgia

Abstract: The theory of Popular Constitutionalism posits that American social change precedes legal change. Utilizing data from the fight for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgendered and Queer (“LGBTQ”) social and legal rights, this paper explores evidence supporting the theory of Popular Constitutionalism and its implications for adult education research.

Purpose of the Study
The political right in the United States has excoriated the so-called “activist” judiciary and created and supported a stream of discourse which posits that judges are counter-majoritarian in their decisions. For example, hard-line conservative speakers would have Americans believe that, when in 2003 the United States Supreme Court overturned all of the nation's few remaining sodomy laws in Lawrence v. Texas, those Justices were acting against the will of the people, who remain firmly opposed to the so-called “homosexual agenda” and deeply prejudiced against Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgendered and Queer (“LGBTQ”) Americans. This is, quite simply, not true. By the time the U.S. Supreme Court issued its Lawrence opinion, there were only thirteen states which still had sodomy laws, and those were seldom enforced against consenting adults in the privacy of their own homes. Arguably, by the time the opinion issued, most Americans, while perhaps not ready to openly affirm their LGBTQ brothers, sisters, daughters, and sons, were at least opposed to discrimination against us. The Supreme Court lagged behind social change when it obliterated the last sodomy laws, which, though seldom enforced, were used to discriminate against LGBTQ people by making us presumptive criminals.

The purpose of this study is to demonstrate why the notion of the counter-majoritarian, activist judiciary is a lie told by oppressors who are trying to make America into the nation they wish it would remain, not the more tolerant nation it has become. LGBTQ advocates (myself included) and their allies have engaged in decades of educational work which has resulted in a more widespread social tolerance of difference than many of us ever dared hope possible. This study will review some of those educational efforts and campaigns and demonstrate that the ultimate legal changes were the result of cultural change created by those adult education programs. Social change preceded, and was not preceded by, court decisions extending some portion of the basic rights enjoyed by heterosexual Americans to LGBTQ citizens. The relationship between social transformation and legal change is, however, dynamic; while social change arguably precedes and facilitates legal change, existing laws create a “channeling effect” on identity-based social movements (Eskridge, 2001-2002).

Theoretical Framework and Research Design
This study deploys three theoretical frameworks. The first, borrowed from legal discourse, is the notion of popular constitutionalism, a relatively new idea within the legal academy which “explains that the core premise of much legal scholarship— that judicial review is countermajoritarian— may well be wrong” (Friedman, 2002-2003, p. 2599). Popular constitutionalism posits that “our nation's constitutional culture exists not only outside and often prior to Supreme Court opinions, but also outside and often prior to other organs of federal and
state governance” (Eskridge, 2008, p. 369). Under this theory, over time American judicial
decisions can be expected to mirror the will of the American people. Further, there is a direct
connection between popular constitutionalism and education for social justice: “Social
movements rise when many persons simultaneously accept a norm, organize subcultural mores
and institutions around that norm, and finally engage in political activism to entrench that norm in
our constitutional culture” (Friedman, 2008, p. 369).

The second theoretical framework, poststructuralism (Kang, 2007), provides the
intellectual scaffolding for the study itself, which is a rhizomanalysis. Rhizoanalysis is a loosely
bounded discursive analysis of texts and social phenomena, focusing upon function rather than
any supposed inherent meaning or essence (Alvermann, 2000). Rhizoanalysis, like many forms
of qualitative inquiry labeled postmodern or poststructuralist, seeks, with St. Pierre (1997), to use
new and different forms of data and analysis and to escape the heavy modernist binaries that
circumscribe much of Western discourse. By replacing the metaphor of the tree with that of the
interconnected rhizome, where meaning is found diffusely and at all points rather than discretely
and through roots, trunks and branches, a poststructuralist scholar deploying rhizoanalysis makes
possible new understandings outside of existing hierarchies and systems of binaries. “Thus
opens a rhizomatic realm of possibility effecting the potentialization of the possible, as opposed
to arborescent possibility, which marks a closure, an impotence” (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987/2005).

Focusing primarily upon legal texts and historical and theoretical documents, this
rhizoanalysis looks at one battle for social change, the fight for LGBTQ rights from the 1980s
through the present, to understand how educational interventions create social and legal change.
Through the multiple lenses of its author's own history and positionalities--as an LGBTQ activist,
a practicing lawyer, and a professional adult educator--this study explores the complex
interactions between education for social justice and legal decisions. In this analysis, I deploy
the third theoretical framework, a Foucauldian analysis of power and how it functions within
discourse.

Foucault (1990/1976) broke with Marxist and other critical thinkers in positing that power
is not something repressive and oppressive, but rather something that is immanent and
productive. One does not have power, one exercises power. “Power is not something that is
acquired, seized or shared, something that one holds on to or allows to slip away; power is
exercised from innumerable points, in the interplay of nonegalitarian and mobile power relations”
(Foucault, 1990/1976, p. 94). Social power, including the power that maintains hegemony and
oppressive and discriminatory practices, is deployed within regimes of truth and dominant
discourses (Brookfield, 2005). This power can be interrogated where and as it is deployed. For
example, antigay discourse, in the form of current arguments that the courts should not “promote
homosexuality,” can be said to sediment themselves in legal opinions, pleadings, and antigay
populist literature (Eskridge, 2002). Analysis of discursive strategies can reveal the fault lines of
power and provide methods of attacks for educators seeking to challenge oppression. Such an
analysis might reveal, for example, that the most obvious of the antigay arguments are not
plausible, and that the most plausible of the antigay arguments are not Constitutional (Eskridge,
2002).

Findings
This study provides empirical support for the notion that the U.S. Federal and various state
Constitutions are living documents which reflect the will of the people, and to the notion that
education for social change is more important than legal advocacy. Courts serve to slow, and not

385
to facilitate, social change. By the time Federal or state high courts speak, they are more likely to be bringing the slow-adopting, more prejudiced members of society in line with the whole nation rather than to be forcing social change on the majority. The landmark civil rights decisions are victories for the American people, not for a handful of judges. Those victories are the result of adult education campaigns for social justice, not just the work of clever lawyers. Because power is diffuse and rhizomatic and found in its application, the manner in which it functions can be found in virtually all such critical decisions. For this short paper, I will utilize three such decisions—Loving v. Virginia (1967), Bowers v. Hardwick (1987), and Lawrence v. Texas (2003)—to demonstrate the operation of power and the importance of activist adult education (Hill, 2004) to the transformation of American society.

Loving v. Virginia

Loving v. Virginia (1967) is a very interesting case, given the current battle over marriage equality for LGBTQ Americans, since it represents the last gasp of the antimescegenation laws, that is, the laws designed to prevent people of different races from marrying. While it does not involve LGBTQ marriage rights, it does involve what the Supreme Court then called the “fundamental right” to marry. In that case, two residents of Virginia, an African-American woman and a white man, were married in the District of Columbia, which had no laws against such marriages, but lived in Virginia. They were tried and convicted in Virginia of violating the state's law against interracial marriages, including marriages in other jurisdictions, and sentenced to a year in jail. Their conviction was upheld throughout the state judicial system. In reviewing their conviction, the U.S. Supreme Court noted the justification used by the state trial court: “Almighty God created the races white, black, yellow, malay and red, and he placed them on separate continents…The fact that he separated the races shows that he did not intend for the races to mix.” Loving v. Virginia, 388 U.S., p. 3.

By the time the Court reviewed the actions by the Virginia trial court, the U.S. Civil Rights Movement, including its brilliant legal campaign championed by the NAACP, was in full swing. Educators and activists had been combatting racial prejudice and racism for years, and this sort of religious prejudice must, at that time, have seemed absurd to the many or most of Americans who did not believe that racial categories, and, with them, the justification for racism, were fixed and immutable. Indeed, before overturning the Virginia law and the conviction of a couple who, in the eyes of history, are entirely innocent of any wrongdoing, the Supreme Court noted that “Virginia is now one of 16 States which prohibit and punish marriages on the basis of racial classifications” (Loving v. Virginia, 388 U.S., p. 6). In overturning all such remaining laws in the country, the Supreme Court opined that such law represented impermissible attempts to maintain White Supremacy, and further held that “Marriage is one of the basic civil rights of man fundamental to our very existence and survival. To deny this fundamental freedom … is surely to deprive all the State's citizens of liberty without due process of law.” Loving v. Virginia, 388 U.S., p. 12 (citations omitted).

Legal decisions do change the social landscape, but a decision such as Loving v. Virginia can be understood as the result of social change and the educational efforts of the Civil Rights Movement. By the time of the decision, the remaining sixteen states with such racist laws were stubborn and obstinate outliers, late adopters of the more tolerant values that most Americans were adopting. In sweeping aside all remaining such prejudiced laws, the Supreme Court was performing a sort of mopping-up effort after the heavy work and sacrifice by so many legions of Civil Rights activists and martyrs. In voiding marriage laws based upon racial and religious intolerance, the U.S. Supreme Court was inscribing into law something that We the People had
already said throughout that tumultuous decade: while it may take years yet to eliminate the traces of racism, official and state sanctioned racism is unacceptable.

**Bowers v. Hardwick**

Under the theory of Popular Constitutionalism, a defeat on a Civil Rights issue, however disheartening, is not the end of the story. It can be, rather, a catalyst for further educational efforts and further social change. *Bowers v. Hardwick* (1986), the U.S. Supreme Court decision which upheld all of the remaining sodomy laws in the United States, is one such decision. In *Bowers*, two adult gay men (referred to only as “homosexuals” in the decision) were charged for the crime of having consensual sexual intercourse in the privacy of their own home, under a Georgia law that provided for up to twenty years imprisonment for such an offense. In upholding the Georgia law from federal Constitutional review, the U.S. Supreme Court ruled that its authority was limited and that there was no fundamental constitutional right which justified overturning the presumed judgment of the majority of Georgia citizens “that homosexual sodomy is immoral and unacceptable” (*Bowers v. Hardwick*, 478 U.S., p. 196). In making this decision, the U.S. Supreme Court noted that twenty-five (or half) of the Republic’s states still had sodomy laws on their books.

If the U.S. Supreme Court Justices are scribes of the living text that is our Constitution, then, in the process of writing down what they posit that We the People are, they exercise power. That power immediately begets resistance, and such resistance can transform American society. Since the Georgia law was not limited to homosexual sodomy, the *Bowers* Court had upheld the criminalization of behaviors, including oral sex, in which the majority of Americans engaged, creating an understandable push-back against such judicial and legislative hypocrisy. Even more importantly, after *Bowers*, the LGBTQ movement was reenergized. The AIDS Coalition to Unleash Power (“ACT-UP”) and other street activist movements including Queer Nation and the Lesbian Avengers appeared on the American scene, pushing for an inclusive agenda that included full citizenship for LGBTQ people in such matters as benefits, employment discrimination, and the right to serve openly in the military. LGBTQ people flocked to the law schools as the legal scholarly press roundly excoriated what was seen as a regressive, backwards, and prejudiced decision (Eskridge, 2008). So, under the theory of Popular Constitutionalism, even though the *Bowers* decision was arguably correct when made—many or most of the We the People, perhaps laboring under the assumption that they knew no LGBTQ people, remained deeply prejudiced against “homosexuals”--the decision itself transformed American society, by creating social contexts where education for social change was widespread. The decision had a channeling effect, and, while the Federal Courts remained bound by Bowers, one by one the state sodomy laws began to fall under individual state constitutions, as concerted legal and educational campaigns by such actors as the Lambda Legal Defense and Education Fund and the American Civil Liberties Union swept the nation.

**Lawrence v. Texas**

In the years after *Bowers*, fewer states retained their sodomy laws, and fewer still enforced them, but the laws remained important lynchpins in attempts to deny LGBTQ people full civil rights. As long as sodomy was against the law, a state could deny domestic partner benefits on the grounds that a partnership to do an illegal thing--in this case, to engage in homosexual sodomy--was void. In *Lawrence v. Texas* (2003), the U.S. Supreme Court, after noting that only 13 states still retained sodomy laws on their books and that few still enforced them, overturned all the remaining sodomy laws in the United States. In its decision, the U.S. Supreme Court took the almost unprecedented step of declaring that its decision in *Bowers* wasn't
just wrong now, it was wrong when decided: “Bowers was not correct when it was decided, and it is not correct today. It ought not to remain binding precedent. Bowers v. Hardwick should be and now is overruled” (Lawrence v. Texas, 539 U.S., p. 578). In re-writing the Constitutional text of our nation to include its LGBTQ citizens, the Court waxed eloquent: “As the Constitution endures, persons in every generation can invoke its principles in their own search for greater freedom” (Lawrence v. Texas, 539 U.S., p. 579).

Just as in Loving, the Court in Lawrence engaged in a sort of mopping-up action, pulling the recalcitrant and more prejudiced jurisdictions into line with the more progressive majority. While prejudice against LGBTQ people, including legalized discrimination, persists, LGBTQ people can no longer be criminalized simply because our relationships include same-gender sexual behavior. America has gone from being a nation in which some states legally repress homosexual behavior to being a nation in which is more tolerant (Eskridge, 2008).

Conclusions: Combatting the Big Lie of Judicial Activism

As a litigator, I have had occasion to oppose litigants who practice what lawyers call the Big Lie. Such litigants take a partial truth or assertion, then attempt to reiterate it until it gains the force of truth. Truth is in the repetition. Countering such litigation is an expensive exercise in patience; each time the Big Lie is asserted, it must be countered with specific truths. Otherwise, the propounders of the Big Lie will point to that one point in the trial transcript where the Big Lie was not rebutted, and will claim that there is merit in their assertion on the basis of that failure to rebut. Proponents of the Big Lie win their cases when the judge is inattentive and when their opponents do not constantly reiterate the specific facts which counter the Big Lie.

The chief Big Lie of the far right, that the Federal Judiciary is some sort of liberal junta determined to undermine American values, has a spokesman on the U.S. Supreme Court, Justice Anton Scalia, who in his Lawrence dissent argued that the Supreme Court acted as a “governing caste” and repudiated the will of the People (Lawrence v. Texas, 539 U.S., p. 604). A simple and cursory rhizoanalysis of the Court's decision proves otherwise. We the People are more open to LGBTQ rights than the speakers of oppression and hate would have the Court believe. The price of freedom is vigilance. We must refute the notion of this activist judiciary each and every time it is spoken by right-wing populists and propounders of hatred against LGBTQ people and other oppressed groups.

Implications for Adult Education Theory and Practice

The implications of this study for adult education theory and practice are profound, because it suggests that adult education for social change is more important that legal advocacy in the fight for civil rights for oppressed minorities. “In a democracy, We the People are ultimately responsible for value choices, and the primary audience for Gay is Good claims ought to be our neighbors and our legislators, not (just) our judges” (Eskridge, 2008, p. 378). The work of elite civil rights lawyers is important, but it is secondary to the sustained educational campaigns that make legal victories possible. In the many fights for social justice that remain, legal advocacy should always be informed and directed by the educational strategies.

Importantly, adult education researchers, as consummate borrowers from other academic and theoretical traditions, should pick up the discourse on Popular Constitutionalism and provide the sort of qualitative empirical analysis that will facilitate future research and future social change. There is a dynamism within the theory that has yet to be unpacked and explored empirically, and which begs for the sorts of critical analysis that adult education as a discipline
embodies. Popular Constitutionalism is mediated by existing laws and social structures, and there is a feedback loop inherent in judicial decision, as social movements themselves are sculpted by the laws they challenge (Eskridge, 2002, 2001-2002; Siegel, 2006). Further research is needed to explore how power functions at the intersection of activist and social movements and the legal and social cultures which they seek to transform. The simple truth of Popular Constitutionalism is demonstrable from a review of legal documents: how adult education in social movement facilitates legal change remains to be more fully explored.

References
Adult Learning in Ecotourism: The Current State of Research

Pierre Walter
University of British Columbia, Canada

Abstract: This paper reviews research on adult learning in nature, adventure and community-based ecotourism. Aims, learning activities, outcomes and philosophical orientation of each type of ecotourism are analyzed, and areas in need of further research identified.

Introduction

Although there is a rich body of educational practice in environmental education for adults, environmental adult education is largely under-researched and under-theorized. The exception to this rule is the vibrant tradition of “Environmental Adult Education” – concerned with adult learning in the environmental movement, global environmental justice, transformative learning and popular education (Hill and Clover, 2003). However, other traditions of practice in environmental education for adults are largely absent in the wider field of Adult Education. At the same time, since the 1970s, the discipline of Environmental Education has produced a wealth of scholarship on environmental learning and education; however, this is mostly in relation to formal schooling for children and higher education. When adults do appear, their experience is often analyzed in terms of relationships to children; for example, in scholarship on intergenerational learning, or in university-based ecology or environmental education programs.

In Environmental Education, nonformal and informal environmental education for adults and children alike is also under-researched and under-theorized (Dillon, 2003), although “free-choice learning” in informal settings is currently a growing area of research in the field (Zeppel, 2008). As Environmental Education researcher Falk (2005, p. 2) concedes, “worldwide, most learning, and in particular most environmental learning, is acquired outside of school.” Such non-school settings include museums, science centers, botanical gardens, zoos, visitor centers and guided recreational and nature activities. In Adult Education, a limited amount of research has been conducted on nonformal environmental education (Taylor and Caldarelli, 2004; Feinstein, 2004), but none to date on adult learning in ecotourism.

The purpose of this paper is to develop a typology of the varieties of adult learning which occur in different forms of ecotourism and to identify areas of needed research. A comprehensive review of research literature in the fields of Ecotourism, Environmental Education, and Adult Education is used to identify: (a) aims, (b) learning activities and (c) outcomes of adult learning for each of three types of ecotourism. These are nature, adventure and community-based ecotourism, respectively (Honey and Stewart, 2002). The environmental learning which occurs in each type of ecotourism is then characterized according to five philosophical traditions of adult environmental education (Walter, forthcoming), following Elias and Merriam (1995).

The paper contributes to better understanding of the nature and importance of adult learning in ecotourism. Such new knowledge helps to identify areas of future research and may help to change the design of Ecotourism programs to be more cognizant of and focused on adult education. In theoretical terms, the paper extends the reach of Adult Education into two new areas of scholarship; namely, the fields of Ecotourism and Environmental Education; and by the same token, brings aspects of these fields into Adult Education, hopefully enriching all three.
Ecotourism and Visitor Learning

The meaning of ecotourism continues to be debated, but almost all definitions now include some aspect of environmental education as their aim (Weaver and Lawton, 2007; Honey, 2008). In a recent comprehensive review of ecotourism research, Weaver and Lawton (2007) argue that even while diverse definitions of ecotourism abound, they share three core criteria (p. 1170): “(1) attractions should be predominantly nature-based; (2) visitor interactions with those attractions should be focused on learning or education, and (3) experience and product management should follow principles and practices associated with ecological, socio-cultural and economic sustainability.”

In an attempt to define standards of practice in ecotourism certification, Honey and Stewart (2002, pp. 1-2) argue for a similar operational definition of ecotourism, once again with education as a key component:

…ecotourism is a multifaceted concept that involves travel to fragile, pristine, and usually protected areas. It strives to be low impact and (usually) small scale; helps educate the traveler; provides funds for conservation; directly benefits the economic development and political empowerment of local communities; and fosters respect for different cultures and human rights.

Honey and Stewart (2002, p. 1) further distinguish ecotourism from nature tourism (“travel to unspoiled places to experience and enjoy nature”) and adventure tourism (“nature tourism with a kick – with a degree of risk taking and physical endurance”). However, while this is a useful distinction to make in setting standards of what they term “authentic” ecotourism practice (p. 7), most other authors cast a wider net over the field, allowing nature and adventure tourism to fall under the umbrella rubric of “ecotourism” as well. For the purposes of this paper, this more inclusive meaning of ecotourism will be adopted, and the terms “nature” ecotourism and “adventure” ecotourism will be used to distinguish among types of ecotourism rather than to exclude them from the concept. The third type of ecotourism – corresponding to Honey and Steward’s (2002) definition above – will be called “community-based” ecotourism, following common usage in the field (Weaver and Lawton, 2007, p. 1173-74).

Methodology

The review of literature for the study runs from the late 1980s, when the term “ecotourism” first began to regularly appear in the academic literature, to the present. Journals in the field of (a) Ecotourism were identified in reference to Weaver and Lawton’s (2007) state of the Ecotourism field review; those in (b) Environmental Education by an extensive search of academic databases for “ecotourism and environmental education” and “ecotourism and learning,” and in (c) in Adult Education by a review of leading journals. Ecotourism journals included: Journal of Ecotourism; Tourism in Marine Environments; Environment, Development and Sustainability; Ocean & Coastal Management; Progress in Tourism and Hospitality Research. Edited collections of research on ecotourism and key sub-topics were also reviewed. Journals in Environmental Education included: Journal of Environmental Education, Environmental Education Research, Australian Journal of Environmental Education, and Canadian Journal of Environmental Education. Finally, Adult Education journals included Adult Education Quarterly, International Journal of Lifelong Education, Studies in the Education of Adults and Convergence.
Findings

In findings for the study, a spectrum of philosophical orientations to adult education was identified, ranging from Liberal and Behaviorist (nature ecotourism), through Progressive and Humanist (adventure ecotourism) to Radical (community-based ecotourism). Findings are summarized in the chart below and then elaborated for each type of ecotourism in turn.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TYPE OF ECOTOURISM</th>
<th>AIMS</th>
<th>LEARNING ACTIVITIES</th>
<th>OUTCOMES</th>
<th>PHILOSOPHY</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>nature</td>
<td>-behavioral change: promote nature and wildlife conservation</td>
<td>- guided walks - nature centers - wildlife watching - interpretive programs</td>
<td>- increased knowledge - aesthetic appreciation - environmental awareness - action for conservation</td>
<td>Liberal Behaviorist</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>adventure</td>
<td>- psychological change: self-confidence self-fulfillment - environmental knowledge - outdoor survival skills</td>
<td>- guided camping, hiking, rafting, canoeing, kayaking, mountaineering</td>
<td>- new skills &amp;knowledge - psychological change - environmental action</td>
<td>Progressive Humanist</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>community-based</td>
<td>- community development - environmental conservation - cultural preservation - increased commitment to and action for social change</td>
<td>- participation in local livelihood and conservation activities - guided tours - indigenous experts - homestays</td>
<td>- economic development - cross-cultural exchange - revival of traditional knowledge - environmental conservation &amp;activism</td>
<td>Humanist Radical</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Nature Tourism ("travel to unspoiled places to experience and enjoy nature")

Nature tourism can be broadly divided into land-based and ocean-based ecotourism. Land-based nature tourism includes activities such as hiking, bird-watching, nature walks, "swamp tromps," "slough slogs," canoe trips, visits to nature centers, wildlife viewing, interpretive programs and conservation activities (e.g. culling invasive species, docent volunteering). Land-based nature ecotourism is found in virtually all large National and State/Provincial Parks, as well as in urban nature centers and community centers, and through numerous naturalist organizations. Marine-based nature tourism (or "marine wildlife ecotourism") includes both commercially-based and non-profit ecotourism ventures. For reasons of space, only research on adult learning in marine-based ecotourism will be summarized here.

Extant research on visitor learning in marine wildlife ecotourism includes whale-watching (Andersen & Miller, 2006; Forestell, 1993), dolphin-watching (Lück, 2003; Orams, 1997), turtle-watching (Tisdell and Wilson, 2005) and scuba diving (Townsend, 2003). This body of research covers but a small sample of marine wildlife ecotourism, which also includes viewing of animals such as porpoises, dugongs, manatees, seals, sea lions, sharks, rays, penguins, albatross, cuttlefish and a vast number of tropical reef fish and plants.
Several educational models of strategies by which affective and behavioral changes can be effected in marine wildlife viewing have been developed by researchers in the field. Early on, Forstell (1993) posited a three-phase model for environmental education in marine eco-tourism based on his long engagement with whale-watching in Hawai‘i. During the first Pre-contact Phase (on the boat, before sighting the whales) apprehension and excitement among visitors is high, and this naturally leads to visitors asking questions about how to sight whales, their behavior, biology, habitat; about safety; and about oceanography, natural history, and geography. Guides give out relevant information in “short doses” and speak also about whale conservation and the need for environmentally sensitive visitor behaviors. During the second, dramatic Contact Phase, with breaching whales in front of them, visitor questions focus on what is being seen: whale species, sex, body features, behaviors and safety. Forstell sees this phase as full of “teachable moments” since visitors are experiencing “dynamic (cognitive) disequilibrium” in response to an emotional personal encounter with whales. Visitors are now open to more in-depth learning on the behavioral dynamics of whales, relationships between animals, how environment shapes behavior, etc.. This learning then helps them regain “cognitive balance.” Finally, in the Post-Contact Phase, visitors tend both to compare what they have learned on the trip with their previous knowledge of whales, and to incorporate the whale-watching experience into a wider understanding of environmental issues, mainly related to potential harm and threats to whales (e.g. oil spills, hunting, food supply). At this point, interpreters will talk about connections between visitor behaviors and whale and marine life conservation, and introduce a wide range of conservation actions they might take (sign a petition, contribute to an environmental group, lobby government, volunteer for conservation activities, etc.).

Building on Forstell’s model, Orams (1997) proposed and tested a five-part model for the development of education programs to “increase visitor enjoyment and understanding and prompt more environmentally responsible behaviour” (p. 296). Orams’ model begins with the twin areas of Curiosity (“creating questions in people’s minds”) and The Affective Domain (“using techniques and stories to involve participants’ emotions”), moves into creating Motivation to Act (outlining environmental problems plus solutions), then into giving Opportunities to Act (on the spot petitions, applications to join environmental organizations, purchase of environmentally friendly products), and finally, Evaluation and feedback into program planning (pp. 297-98). In testing his model with experimental (n =317) and control groups (n = 308) of dolphin-watchers, he found strong indications of desired behavioral change toward environmental responsibility on the part of tourists in the experimental group (i.e. Those following his five-part model), but not in the control group.

For the most part, other research on marine-based ecotourism has likewise found desired education and conservation outcomes. Zeppel (2008, p. 13), in a meta-analysis of research on interpretive programs in 18 marine wildlife tours, summarizes their educational effects: “Providing wildlife experiences that elicit from visitors a combination of affective and cognitive responses to marine wildlife increases environmental awareness, modifies intentions to act pro-environmentally, and fosters conservation appreciation and actions by visitors.”

Adventure Tourism (“nature tourism with a kick”)

Adventure tourism is a form of ecotourism encompassing numerous experiential education and outdoor education programs. These programs of backpacking, skiing, ice climbing, rafting, horse-back riding, white water kayaking and rock climbing usually take place in wilderness settings and have “an element of adventure or challenge used as a method to educate through direct experience” (Warren, 2005, p. 89). Outdoor adventure programs include

393
therapeutic, leadership development and environmental studies organized by schools and universities as well as commercial ecotourism and non-profit adventure tourism programs for adults. Educational aims include personal growth, the learning of technical survival skills (travel and camping) and environmental, geographical and historical knowledge (Potter and Henderson, 2004). Outward Bound Wilderness is perhaps the most famous of these initiatives, but community and commercial programs, including those sponsored by indigenous peoples, wilderness adventure groups, adventure travel agencies and local ecotourism operators are increasingly common.

The Outward Bound program has been the subject of voluminous educational research, but less research has conducted on adult learning in other forms of adventure tourism; in particular, on local and commercial adventure ecotourism ventures. In Adult Education, one relatively well-documented outdoor experiential learning program is the Audubon Expedition Institute (AEI), which has strong parallels to adventure ecotourism. The program is “based on the assumption that the best way to truly learn about the environment is to experience it directly,” with its goal “to create experiential learning communities that inspire informed and compassionate ecological leadership” (AEI 2009). Like social justice streams of Outward Bound (Warren 2005), AEI not only encompasses time “spent in the backcountry,” but also firsthand experience of environmental impacts on these areas (AEI 2009). In this model of experiential education, students move through a modified version of David Kolb’s four experiential learning stages (Wittmer and Johnson, 2000). These include: Preparation (observation and reflection), Experience (concrete experience), Personal and Collective Reflections and Transformation (abstraction) and Application (experimentation). Much like visitors in Forestell’s (1993) Post-Contact Phase of nature ecotourism, in AEI’s final Application stage, students might write advocacy letters to a local newspaper, volunteer with service and environmental agencies, or pursue careers as environmental advocates (Wittmer and Johnson, 2000).

Community-based Ecotourism (community development and environmental conservation)

Adult learning in community-based ecotourism (CBE) is probably the least researched among the three forms of ecotourism, although CBE is also one of the richest sites of learning. The summary presented here will be necessarily brief, and draws mainly on the author’s recent study of adult learning in a community-based ecotourism project in southern Thailand (Walter, in press). CBE is widely associated with sustainable development, and takes form in community ecotourism development projects in the global South as well as indigenous communities in the North. As noted in the quote in the second section of this paper, CBE, like nature and adventure tourism, aims not only to educate the traveler and support environmental conservation, but also to bring direct economic, social, political and cultural benefits to local communities. CBE initiatives are as varied as the communities and natural environments in which they are found, ranging from the Galapagos Islands, to Costa Rican rainforests, and the wildlife of Southern Africa to the lands and waters of the indigenous communities of Canada, the U.S. and Hawai’i (Honey, 2008; Nepal, 2004).

Environmental learning and education in CBE takes place in the intense, and relatively prolonged personal encounter between visitors and local people who are at once hosts, indigenous environmental and cultural experts, organizers of tourism activities, and guides to experiencing and understanding the natural environment and livelihood activities (Walter, in press). Visitors may learn not only of indigenous species of fish, birds, animals, trees, plants and other life, but also of the cultural understandings and livelihood activities of the sea, forest and land. They may learn, for example, to appreciate the beauty and biodiversity of tropical rainforests and reefs, and
to catch fish, navigate local waters, build traps, dig for shellfish, cook local food, tap rubber, plant rice seedlings, speak the local language, and learn about culturally appropriate behavior, local belief systems, politics and problems. They may also participate in local environmental conservation or community development efforts and, like whale-watchers and adventure ecotourists, engage in wider environmental activism as a result of this learning.

**Conclusion**

Of the three types of ecotourism, research on adult learning and environmental education in nature tourism appears to be the most extensive, mostly in the behaviorist tradition. Research on adventure tourism as a commercial venture outside of educational institutions is scarce, although experiential education models provide a promising point of departure for studying less structured forms of ecotourism learning. Finally, research on adult learning in CBE is still in its infancy, although this form of ecotourism appears to be a rich site of adult learning.

**References**


Creating Learning: A Critical Program Planning Praxis  
For Collaborative Knowledge Construction and Social Change

Colleen Aalsburg Wiessner  
North Carolina State University, USA

Abstract: Positing an alternate program planning perspective, this paper explores the possibility of viewing planning as a critical praxis. It blends theory and practice in development, content, and research approach; explores meanings and functions of praxis as a rationale for this perspective; and outlines purposes, principles and practices of the approach.

Introduction

In the last decade a new generation of scholars moved into faculty positions in adult education departments. For many of them, the road to academe wove through diverse and compelling community and organizational contexts related to their practice and to their research. They engaged with stakeholders, constructed knowledge collaboratively and acted to create social change through their program planning efforts. Their voices are beginning to be heard (for example: Bowles, 2007; Bracken, 2008; Grenier, et al., 2008; Mosley, 2005; Wiessner, 2006).

As adult educators we bring the best of our theoretical training, pedagogical/andragogical practices, and teaching and learning skills to our planning efforts. However, adult learners in academic and community contexts have often not integrated theories and practices of adult education and program planning as they engage in experiential and other types of learning. While they often operate out of their tacit pedagogical practice knowledge, making their philosophy, processes, and perspectives explicit aids in fostering effective planning approaches.

This praxis responds to Freire’s (1973) directive not to use his work without adaptation and contextualization to the needs of learners involved in a learning project. It is an approach to program planning based in critical and feminist pedagogies, rather than a fixed model of program planning. After several years of working with what I referred to as a model, I realized this work represents a different approach to program planning; a praxis for program planning.

Several years ago I boldly added “Wiessner” to a list of models from which students could choose for a presentation in a program planning course. I did not quite know what that model was, but I knew I had one operating tacitly and viewed this opportunity as a way to finally make it explicit – if someone chose it. A curious student did! Since that time, I have worked to refine my work as a model and have presented it each semester to inspire innovation and freedom of thought as my students create and analyze their own models related to challenges and opportunities in their work contexts.

Each time I thought about or presented my “model” I would reflect, individually and with students, as to whether it was in fact a model. I did not think it was, technically, but I was not sure how to categorize it otherwise. Eventually, I began to think of it as a pedagogy, which led to my current exploration of it as a critical planning praxis.

Grounding in theory and practice

Rather than suggesting a new model for program planning, this paper posits a praxis that can be employed in critical program planning efforts. It is grounded in the literature of program planning and of critical and feminist pedagogies. In their work Cervero and Wilson (2006) use...
the image of the planning table, referring to their work as a theory for practice. While affirming
the value of planning models, they also recognize that structured models “offer limited guidance
in the real places where real people struggle to plan real programs” (p. 2). They also address the
theory-practice divide, clarifying its scientific and technical-rationale epistemology and
advocating for a different approach. “Actionable theory has to be (1) plausible – that is, able to
account for actual practice; (2) politically strategic – that is, able to analyze and act within and
upon power relationships; and (3) ethically illuminating – that is, able to reveal and sustain
ethical standards for judging practice” (p. 260). Planning must attend to power and responsibility
and can be characterized as the practice of possibility (Wilson & Cervero, 2001).

Planning models can be viewed in three broad categories: classical, naturalistic, and
critical (Cervero & Wilson, 1994). Relevant to this proposed praxis, the critical perspective
focuses on best judgments in practice, education as political, social inequities, relationships of
power, and the ethical and political nature of planning. “Practice is inextricably connected to
institutional contexts that have a history, are composed of interpersonal and organizational
relationships of power, and are marked by conflicting wants and interests” (p. 25).

Critical pedagogy is a way adult educators seek to create change and foster social justice.
This pedagogy is central to program planning efforts, yet it is often assumed rather than
described. I have identified principles and practices that characterize critical pedagogy and that
are important to this suggested praxis (Wiessner, 2005). They include: conscientization, critical
reflection, co-creation of knowledge, problem-posing, reciprocal roles of teacher-learners and
learner-teachers, centrality of participants’ experiences, engaging in dialogue, valuing
participants’ voices, using cooperative teams and collaborative learning methods, praxis, and
empowerment for action. It is empowering to have experience and voice affirmed. Working
together collaboratively also contributes to empowerment. Action critically reflected upon –
praxis – is an essential component of critical pedagogy and a way that learning is evidenced.

Tisdell (2000) identifies five themes prevalent in feminist pedagogy: how knowledge is
constructed, voice, authority, identity as shifting, and positionality. She also presents feminist
teaching goals. Feminist pedagogy seeks to expand consciousness, capacity for voice, and self-
estee. Learners are engaged to construct and express new knowledge and become more fully
authors of their own lives and actors in the world. Leaders facilitate learning activities that
encourage connection and relationship, use affective as well as rational and cognitive modes of
learning, challenge unequal power relationships and work for social change, and seek out and
validate contributions of those who have been marginalized by systems of oppression. With their
students, they study authors and course content about women to increase women’s status and
opportunity in society, discuss limitations of their own capacity to facilitate social action or
emancipatory activities, and problematize personal or institutional constraints (Tisdell, 2000).

Critical and feminist pedagogies clarify the intentions and actions that support and drive
this critical program planning praxis.

Praxis in adult education: Foundation for program planning praxis

I present dimensions of this critical program planning praxis below. It was my original
intention to focus on that aspect in writing this paper. During its development, however, I realized
the importance of featuring the rationale for this praxis and the methodology in this first
treatment; clarifying and questioning the appropriateness or value of this approach.

Freire defines praxis as “reflection and action upon the world in order to transform it”
(1972, p. 28). The relationship between theory and practice is often cited in the literature. “In
more scholarly terms praxis is defined as the necessary conjoining of theory and practice, so that
type is seen as both arising within practice while simultaneously informing practice”
just completed so that relevant theory can be applied. The cycle of praxis is (1) do; (2) look at
what you did; (3) reflect using theory; (4) change; (5) do, and so on. Praxis is not practice, which
could be a repetition of a given approach without the reflective analysis and new dimensions”
(pp. 180-181). She refers to the process of praxis.

Both Freire (Elias, 1994) and Greene (1988) refer to praxis as a way of knowing. hooks
emphasizes active engagement, wholeness – union of body, mind and spirit – and mutuality. West
(1999) links praxis to prophetic pragmatism. Organic intellectuals, like West, help people
challenge hegemony, based on their “empathetic identification” with what it is to be oppressed”
(Brookfield, 2005, p. 506). Bellah, et al. (1996) temper this perspective a bit, suggesting that
practices of commitment are akin to praxis. These “shared activities…are not undertaken as
means to an end but are ethically good in themselves” (p. 335).

in relationship to conscientization. hooks’ perspective on praxis centers on conscientization as
well, referring to critical awareness and engagement as consciousness joined by meaningful
praxis. She emphasizes the importance of creating a participatory space with learners for
“verifying in praxis what we know in consciousness” (hooks, 1994, p. 47). Greene cites the
importance of imagination; in cycles of action and reflection new futures become clear.

In addition to its nature, the literature discusses the processes of praxis. Brookfield refers
to it as the “heart of facilitation” (1986, p. 10) and emphasizes the importance of collaborative
analysis of activity. “Central to this process is a continual scrutiny by all involved of the
conditions that have shaped their private and public worlds, combined with a continuing attempt
to reconstruct those worlds. This praxis of continual reflection and action might be accurately
viewed as the process of lifelong learning” (Brookfield, 1984, p. 294). Context is critical to
praxis (Brookfield, 1984; Vella, 2008) and praxis can lead to transforming contexts.

The concept of praxis has sometimes been coopted and used to refer merely to an
integration of reflection and action without attention to its “dialectical unity of thought and action
rather than a sequence” (Brookfield, 2005, p. 505) and without critically challenging dominant
ideologies. Additionally, its connections to its Marxist origins are often lost.

This proposed praxis joins cycles of action and reflection, challenges hegemonic forces
and institutions, creates spaces for imagination, and engages participants toward social change.

Methodology

This pedagogy for program planning emerges from five sources of knowledge
construction: 1) thirty years of professional practice in collaborative program planning, 2) ten
years of empirical research on program planning for conferences and other adult learning events,
3) analysis of written resources created both in practice and from research, 4) feedback from
selected collaborators in the program planning activities, and 5) critical reflection with students
and colleagues as part of a program planning course in the context of an adult education program.
It is grounded in adult education theory and program planning literature.

Brookfield (1992) posits three types of criteria for theory building in adult education that I
applied to developing and analyzing this approach to program planning: 1) epistemological, 2)
communicative and 3) critically analytic. Jarvis’ (1999) theory/practice work was also formative.
Von Krogh, Ichijo, and Nonaka (2000) identify five steps for new knowledge creation: sharing tacit knowledge, creating concepts, justifying concepts, building a prototype, and cross-leveling knowledge. Each of those steps has been taken in this process of creating new knowledge related to a critical perspective on program planning. A central activity is making tacit knowing explicit (Polanyi, 1973); clarifying and naming the planners’ activities and experiences. The process used in developing this praxis parallels the praxis itself, as used in program planning contexts.

The first step to clarifying this approach to planning took place at Teachers College during my doctoral studies. A group of colleagues and I developed Women as Change Agents: A Values-Driven Model for Program Development. One step of that project was to identify best practices that we had each employed in planning efforts. It was the first time I put into words what I had been enacting in practice. It also clarified the centricity of values in my planning.

Initiating the model development process in the class I teach at NCSU, the student researcher conducted document analysis and coded resources I had written about programs I had designed and the planning work involved. By email we collected ten descriptors from eight collaborators who participated in programs we jointly developed using this approach. In person, I collected ten descriptors from six additional collaborators. Their involvement took place over a period of twenty years. Next, we individually analyzed the codes that emerged from the articles and the descriptive words we collected. Comparing our analyses, we developed themes and arrived at what we then called a model.

Confirmability of this approach has been assessed informally. Before I present this approach in class – usually toward the middle of the semester – I ask students to write five descriptors each, related to what they think the model will include based on their experiences in class. In groups they combine their ideas and form categories. I involve everyone in presenting Creating Learning. As the presentation progresses, groups speak up when their purposes, principles or practices are mentioned. We reflect on the planning approach as part of the class.

**Program planning praxis**

In this section I present the critical program planning praxis in four sections: epistemology, purposes, elements, and practices.

**Epistemology**

This pedagogy grew out of planning in non-profit contexts with the goal of social change and educational innovation. It is grounded in critical and feminist pedagogies. Infused with a love of the arts and a belief in the power of creativity, it evidences commitment to multi-level, multi-dimensional inclusion and the value of every voice and its potential to make a difference.

**Purposes**

Purpose forms the first focus of this approach. Adult educators who created and engaged in this praxis were involved in program planning in contexts where the purposes included transformation, collaboration, inclusion and valuing of a range of voices and perspectives, developmental leadership, knowledge creation, innovation, and embodying spirituality.

**Principles**

Principles clarify activities central for program planners in meeting those goals. They include: focus on purpose; study, respond to and connect to context; involve all stakeholders;
embody vision and values; pursue multiple purposes and symbolic goals (organizational); create connections (individual); plan for continuous learning; build or create the infrastructure for both the team and the organization; and use transformative and developmental vehicles. Team members are asked to establish their own developmental goals and are also asked, “What else can we accomplish while we work on this project? Developing leaders is one example.

Practices

Vehicles facilitate the enactment of this approach in planning and implementing actual programs. These include fostering involvement of all voices; engaging in dialogue; modeling; involving the whole person personally and experientially; collaborating and participating in large and small groups; thinking critically; planning for multi-intelligences, multi-sensory, multi-modal, multi-faceted learning activities; integrating the arts; storytelling; stimulating expanded and creative thinking; organizing by purpose at every level; attending to detail; and flexing, adapting or improving as needed. Program planner skills and dispositions undergird these activities and processes. Evaluation takes place at multiple levels – team, organizational, stakeholders, and participants – with different types of evaluation for different audiences.

While responses from collaborators divided into these practices, the language used to describe them was also interesting. Most of the following words or phrases surfaced repeatedly: inclusive, communication, engaging, do what you teach, interactive, tingle and texture, colorful, dramatic, out of the box, theme, intentional, prepared, spontaneous and surprising.

Each aspect is grounded in adult education research and practice. All need further description. However, with limited space, I didn’t feel the praxis would make sense without the foundation provided by the reframing rationale and the knowledge construction process. This critical praxis constitutes a way of seeing and being, of acting and thinking. It embodies theory and action, and action and reflection, in continuous cycles designed to foster knowledge construction and social change as outcomes to the planning activities.

Discussion

I view the concept of a program planning praxis as a work-in-progress, a scholarly reflection on ways to conceptualize researching, teaching, and participating in practice-based planning efforts. I look forward to reflecting on it with others. It emerged out of decades of collaborative program planning. Numerous questions beg consideration:

- Does it focus on and capture the planning processes, or is it more descriptive of the form that the programs take, or a program best practices perspective?
- What is its relationship to planning models? Does it supplement various models or would it be substituted for a model?
- Could it be adopted and adapted by others, or is it primarily the reflection of one person’s practices?

Critiques abound and I present a few. This approach is clearly complicated and many layered. How would it be implemented? It may be best used by one style of leader at an advanced level of experience, limiting its applicability. This praxis often requires co-leadership to maintain a marriage of vision and detail. It enacts high mega, high macro, high micro, and high quasi level foci simultaneously. As with any enterprise, who can really say what someone else needs? The danger of patriarchy exists. I have wondered how one would equip a learner to use this praxis. The answer: through engaging participants in the praxis and by shaping it through their critical action and reflection, just as it was originally developed and enacted.
Conclusion

So, is a critical program planning praxis an approach that merits consideration? If so, is this work-in-progress a legitimate praxis with potential to add to the planning literature? Am I just giving new language to something that already exists? As planners we need to engage in the cycles of praxis discussed in the paper. Our praxis as adult educators – action and reflection – represents a means for building and rebuilding theory, not just illuminating practice. This presentation as part of AERC creates another level of reflection on this proposed critical praxis.

References

Mosley, L.J. (2005). Negotiation of sociopolitical issues within medical education when planning programs to address racial and ethnic disparities in health care. 2005 AERC.
You are What You Eat!? Television Cooking Shows, Consumption, and Lifestyle Practices as Adult Learning

Robin Redmon Wright, University of Texas at San Antonio
Jennifer A. Sandlin, Arizona State University

Abstract: A discussion of the public pedagogy of “celebrity chef” cooking shows, their promotion of consumer life-styles, and alternative cooking shows as sites of resistance to those lifestyles.

Purpose of the Study

Noam Chomsky (2003) has led an ongoing discussion about how a few multinational corporations have “manufactured the consent” of the American public for undemocratic public policies, environmentally damaging lifestyles, and oppressive cultural norms—despite the fact that such ideologically-laden actions are in sharp conflict with the interests of the majority of the population, the health of the culture, and the sustainability of the planet. In this research, we posit that one arena through which this hegemony is played out is televised cooking shows. We view these cooking shows as cultural products encoded with meanings that help shape audiences’ identities, lifestyles, and relationships to consumer culture. Our research is thus grounded in two emerging areas of study within adult education. One explores consumption as a site where adults engage in learning. Sassatelli (2007) explains that to live in a consumer society means satisfying one’s daily needs through capitalistic modes of production and consumption. That is, individuals do not produce their own goods for their own use and satisfaction of their daily needs; instead, they buy and use commodities that are mass produced, exchanged, and made available for purchase. Consumption is a complex set of social, economic, and cultural practices that are “interconnected with . . . the spread of the market economy, a developing globalization, the creation and recreation of national traditions, [and] a succession of technological and media innovations, etc.” (Sassatelli, 2007, pp. 5-6). Sassatelli argues that consumption holds strong social, political, and cultural implications. Adult education researchers focused on consumption believe that everyday moments of consumption constitute a powerful form of “public pedagogy” where adults learn what it means to be “consumers” and “citizens” (Jubas, 2008; Usher, 2008). The small but growing interest among adult educators in exploring issues of consumption (Jarvis, 2008; Jubas, 2008; Usher, 2008; Usher, Bryant, & Johnston 1997), has produced work that is beginning to help us understand how learning and education are related to the practices of consumption. Usher, Bryant, and Johnston (1997) posit that we cannot understand adult learning without understanding the role played by consumption in the lives of adults.

A large body of work within cultural studies has focused on cultural consumption, or how “cultural texts or artifacts are used in everyday life” (Mackay, 1997, p. 3). Cultural texts and artifacts include popular media commodities such as television, movies, and magazines. The second, closely related, area of study within adult education into which we place our work, then, is the production and consumption of mass media and popular culture as forms of “public pedagogy” that educate adult learners and help shape both their understandings of society and their own identities (Wright & Sandlin, in press). Television viewing, in particular, is an increasingly ubiquitous space of cultural consumption, as television audiences consume, decode, and make meaning of the cultural texts presented through this medium. As Storey (1996, p. 9) argues, television is “without doubt the world’s most popular leisure activity.” In this study we
examine how popular television cooking shows produce, package, commodify, and market food-related “lifestyles” for their audiences. The purpose of this study is to consider the hegemonic forces behind the growing phenomenon of television cooking-show programming which reinforce the agendas of huge multinational corporations while simultaneously undermining the health and self-image of a large percentage of the American viewing public. We also examine “alternative” cooking shows as potential sites of resistance. As Foucault (1987) insists, there can be no power structures without the possibilities for resistance.

Theoretical Framework

We draw from Du Gay, Hall, Janes, Mackay, and Negus’s (1997) notion of the “circuit of culture,” as well as from a Gramscian approach to cultural studies of consumption. The “circuit of culture” model points to five different yet inter-related universal cultural processes: representation, identity, production, consumption, and regulation. The circuit of culture model reminds us that to fully understand a cultural product, we must understand how it is represented, “what social identities are associated with it, how it is produced and consumed, and what mechanisms regulate its distribution and use” (Du Gay et al., 1997, p. 3). A Gramscian approach views consumption as a space of contestation where hegemony is played out; in this view “consumption is akin to communication, and goods are better than, for instance, prayers or stories in making visible the categories of culture . . . Routine and ritualised consumption practices train participants in the relevance and cultural content of social categories, inequalities and diversities associated with gender, race, class, and age” (Martens, 2005, p. 346).

We also draw from Usher, Bryant, and Johnston’s (1997) and Usher’s (2008) critical postmodern approach to learning through consumption. This work focuses on consumption as a “sign economy” where lifestyles and the symbolic and aesthetic meanings of groups of objects—and their impact on identity development—have become more important than any particular commodity’s use-value. Lifestyle practices involve expressive modes of learning, the creation and re-creation of identity, and the “self-referential concern with style and image” (Usher, Bryant & Johnston, 1997, p. 18). Usher, Bryant, and Johnston (1997, p. 18) explain that this ongoing re-creation of identity, with its concern with aestheticisation, creates the need for “a learning stance towards life as a means of self-expression and autonomy.” As the focus of modern life has become crafting meaningful lifestyles (through consumption), Usher (2008) posits that the desire to create these lifestyles motivates individuals to learn in multiple and varied ways. Given the emphasis within lifestyle practices on “novelty, fashion, taste, and style,” lifestyle practices “are practices of consumption and moreover of a consumption which is potentially unending, since as desire can never be satisfied, there is always the need for new experiences and new learning” (Usher, Bryant, and Johnston, 1997, p. 18). Much of this learning takes place outside formal institutions of education. Learning and knowledge themselves also become commodities, as individuals purchase and consume them for their own symbolic value.

Methodology

The concept of “bricolage” (Kincheloe, 2001) aptly describes methodology in cultural studies. That is, scholars using the framework of cultural studies to examine popular culture must be “pragmatic and strategic in choosing and applying different methods and practices” (Alasuutari, 1995, p. 2). Johnson et al. (2004) argue that while there are a variety of specific methods used in cultural studies, in general there are two broad approaches to methodology: what they call readings, which focus on understanding culture through textual means, and meetings, which focus on direct encounters with other humans, via ethnographic methods. We were concerned with reading, via critical textual analysis, the meanings of cooking shows. Connecting
with the cultural circuit mentioned above, we were concerned with all nodes of the circuit, but
paid particular attention to how these shows are produced, the kinds of lifestyle representations
that are encoded in the shows, and how these representations connect with particular identities.
We conducted a textual analysis of two of the most-watched mainstream cooking shows: Emeril
Live and Rachael Ray’s 30 Minute Meals, and two “alternative” cooking shows: the Post Punk
Kitchen and Sam the Cooking Guy. We viewed each show as a “case study” (Yin, 1994) but also
sought to understand how these shows related to each other (intertextuality) and to explore the
genre of these cooking shows generally. Data included episodes of the shows, websites sponsored
by the shows, and analyses of the “product universe” surrounding the shows (cookbooks,
cookware, restaurants, etc.). Analysis included qualitative ethnographic media analysis, critical
media analysis, and constant comparative analysis.

Findings

Our analysis of the “celebrity chef” cooking shows is reflected in three over-arching
themes. First, these shows present hosts that intentionally create a persona of the “every-
person,” the common cook. Bam! Emeril is a good-ol-boy who’ll show regular folk how to “kick
it up a notch.” And Rachael Ray is the girl-next-door who’ll show working-class wives how to
regularly create gourmet feasts in 30 minutes for pennies a day, right? Wrong. With his doctorate
from the Johnson and Wales University culinary program and commanding more than $25,000
per episode (for each of his various shows), Emeril Lagasse pretends a “crass working-class
credentialism” (Miller, 2007, p. 132) for profit. And Rachael Ray, whose television persona is the
“girl-next-door” who can relate to busy working women, grew up in a wealthy family of
restaurateurs. Second, the shows are actually multi-million dollar enterprises that
blur the lines between advertising and content. The Food Network is owned by Scripps Network Interactive
(70%) and the Tribune Company (30%) whose joint holdings cover a myriad of commercial
products and services promoted on the shows. While 7 to 8 minutes of each 30 minute program is
comprised of an average of 15 commercials, product placement within the 22 minutes or so of
“content” make the educative aspect suspect. In fact, according to Ketchum (2005), the shows are
simply infomercials for the hosts’ product lines and the sponsors. Emeril and Rachael each have
almost incomprehensibly diverse and lucrative business interests including restaurants,
magazines, food, cookware, and cookbooks, to name a few. Finally, the products they sell are
fully integrated into lifestyles of consumption and consumerism. Even with these two hosts, the
range of culinary tastes is designed to appeal to all lifestyle preferences. Emeril’s machismo and
Rachel’s coy femininity are magnified or subdued based on the intended audience for their
different shows. Equally diverse are the settings, each kitchen tastefully and expensively
furnished with all the latest gadgets (available on their websites). Rachael also hosts a travel/food
show highlighting fine restaurants in the cities she visits. The goal is to create lifestyle shows that
will appeal to the broadest possible audience base. Moreover, the shows purport to “teach”
audience members to be “better” and to cultivate “more refined” tastes than they currently have.
They offer the identity of “connoisseur,” as they promote the appreciation of gourmet ingredients,
fresh organic foods, and specialty items. The implication for viewers is that they are somehow
neglecting family and friends if they cannot provide the tasteful (and superior) sensations of food
and home represented on the shows. They market luxury items as basic needs for their viewers’
lifestyles. Ketchum (2005, p. 217) argues that cooking shows “carefully construct a consumer
fantasy world for its viewers . . . [with] explicit advice in both advertising and programming,
about how the viewer can realize the commodity fantasies.” She further argues that the Food
Network (which hosts both celebrity chefs among 45 others) “encourages people to conceptualize
their desires in terms of commodities and to see social connections as bonds that are formed through the acquisition and display of goods” (p. 218). *Emeril Live, Emeril Green, The Essence of Emeril* and *Emeril Live: Fine Living* air daily. Rachael Ray’s *30 Minute Meals, Rachael Ray’s Tasty Travels, Inside Dish,* and *$40 a Day* on the *Food Network* now compete with her hour long celebrity talk show on ABC, *The Rachael Ray Show,* winner of the 2008 Daytime Emmy for Outstanding Talk Show. Cooking, of course, features prominently, along with guests ranging from former President Bill Clinton to comedian Jeff Foxworthy. This hour-long, 5-days-a-week promotional program is filled with product placements, as well as over 15 minutes of overt advertising.

**A Taste of Something Different?** In addition to the celebrity chef shows, we also examined two “alternative” cooking shows. Both Sam Zien of *Sam the Cooking Guy* and Isa Chandra Moskowitz of the *Post Punk Kitchen* position themselves as “different” from the celebrity chefs on mainstream cooking shows. *Sam the Cooking Guy* features Sam Zien who claims that his inspiration came from watching TV chefs who made very complicated food that most viewers would never make at home. His show airs on the Discovery Health Channel as well as on local channels throughout the Southwest. Like the celebrity chefs, Sam positions himself as an “everyday guy,” stressing that not only is he not a *chef,* he has no formal culinary experience, having worked in the biotech industry before starting his cooking show in 2005. He wants to make cooking “casually understandable,” hence differentiating himself from the celebrity chefs. He states, “With no fancy equipment and by speaking English instead of ‘chef-speak,’ I’m sort of the everyman of television cooking.” He explains, “My goal is not to get people to go to a restaurant, my goal is for people to say ‘Hey, I can make that.’” The show is filmed in his own house, and viewers see him bumbling around his kitchen, using ingredients in his cupboard and interacting with his kids, dogs, and neighbors, “just like we all do.” He uses ingredients viewers can buy at regular grocery stores, including pre-cooked and pre-assembled ingredients. He states, “there’s no foie gras. . . no white truffle oil, no ‘Peruvian mountain-raised squab in sesame-lime-soy marinade stuffed with braised forest turnips and wild inoki mushrooms in a hand pressed plum and raspberry glaze.’ I’m just a regular guy, using regular words showing how to cook easy, great food. . . . This is a cooking show ‘for the rest of us,’ I like to say.” While Sam seems to eschew much of the focus on “connoisseurship” and lifestyle promotion featured in the celebrity chef shows, he recently began selling a cookbook, cooking appliances, knives, dinnerware, and t-shirts through his website, thecookingguy.com. This site offers prominent advertising space to Rachael Ray and also sells her cookware along with Sam’s. These goods are marketed as “Sam’s Favorites” and include items he uses on his show and his own product line. While the range and scope of items sold is smaller than those of the celebrity chefs for now, and while his “outsider” and “everyman” persona seems more genuine than the celebrity chefs, we posit that Sam’s “alternative” status is gradually being incorporated into another commodified lifestyle choice.

The *Post Punk Kitchen* is a public access television cooking show airing in New York City (and now available on the Internet) and featuring Isa Chandra Moskowitz. Isa grew up in Brooklyn, New York. As a teenager, she became involved in the anarchist movement in New York, helping to turn abandoned buildings into homes, to create community gardens, and to create news, music, and entertainment, including ‘zines (do-it-yourself magazines). Also during this time, Isa was introduced to vegetarianism, became involved with social justice groups such as *Food Not Bombs,* and began connecting food to politics and health. In 2003 she became disillusioned with the cooking shows on TV, because they lacked any connection to the politics of food, and decided to create a vegan cooking show. The *Post Punk Kitchen* embraces the punk
idea of “Do It Yourself,” or DIY, wherein “the unpolished, improvised nature of DIY projects results in something much more interesting than most overtly commercial efforts” (Moskowitz, 2005, p. xiii). Within this punk rock ethic, Isa explains, “we can create our own forms of entertainment. We don’t have to sit back idly and wait for something to happen—we can make it happen” (p. 3). The DIY ethic is also decidedly anti-corporation, as Isa explains: “The Post Punk Kitchen is a ‘Bam!’-free space for vegetarians and food-lovers everywhere that came into being in 2003, born out of frustration over the garbage that the Food Network was trying to feed the masses (no pun intended). We believe that the airwaves and the risotto are for the people, not for corporations trying to peddle their processed-cheese wares. And we just really, really, really could not take another second of Rachael Ray saying ‘EVOO’” (p. 174). Isa’s show is filmed in her apartment, with the help of friends and neighbors.

The Post Punk Kitchen explicitly rejects prepackaged food products. Isa stresses that reliance on prepackaged foods is “culinarily incorrect”—that is, she argues “great cooks depend on fresh ingredients” (p. 1). This stance is not simply about cultivating a disposition for “fine, gourmet foods.” In her cookbook Vegan with a Vengeance, Isa urges readers to avoid convenience foods, because relying on such foods “makes us vegans dependent on huge corporations with shady policies. It’s nicer to spend our money on locally grown vegetables and small independent businesses wherever possible” (p. 1). Avoiding such foods “will help wean you from the corporate teat while at the same time saving you money and encouraging you to support local growers” (p. xiii). Above all, Isa holds to the principle that food and politics are inextricably linked. She states, “Eating is a moral act or a political statement, depending on whom you ask. When you choose to stop eating animal products and supporting big business, you prove both statements to be correct” (p. xiv). Isa’s website, http://www.theppk.com offers only recipes, a forum, and advice. We posit that the Post Punk Kitchen’s focus on the politics and health of food, and its DIY production and distribution on public access television, constitute a resistant stance that positions this show in opposition to the celebrity chef shows and their corporate backers discussed above.

Discussion and Implications for Adult Education

Disguised as educational cooking lessons, the “celebrity chef” cooking shows promote an upper-middle-class lifestyle enhanced by the appropriation of goods and commodities. All the while, real issues surrounding the life-sustaining reality of food are ignored. These shows never mention global hunger, genetically altered food, or the recent increase in food-born disease. Thirty years ago, instances of food-born illness were rare in the U.S., but today, “infected food makes seventy-six million people ill each year. Five thousand die, and 325,000 are hospitalized, at a public health cost of U.S. $10 billion” (Miller, 2007, p. 119). Moreover, between 1980 and 2000, adult obesity grew by 80%. While there are clear correlations between obesity and the prices of fresh fruit and vegetables, the “the high moralism so prevalent in the U.S. media has led to a doctrine of personal responsibility, militating against both collective identification and action” (Miller, 2007, p. 120). Meanwhile, the media offer cooking shows selling a lifestyle of “unattainable and unrealistic images of consumer bliss” (Ketchum, 2005, p. 220) while multinationals are promoting cheaper genetically-modified (GM) crops in the U.S. (crops banned in most first world countries). Monsanto produces over 90% of GM crops worldwide and Bayer Cropscience, Du Pont, Dow and Syngenta produce the rest. With no public education on the risks and potential environmental problems associated with GM foods, these “multinationals will soon run global food production, pressuring states to buy from them and excluding other forms of farming from the market” (Miller, 2007, p. 138). Celebrity chefs also fail to mention how the
U.S. is “feeding off of others in the world” (Meister, 2001, p. 165) by failing to address pressing issues in global food production such as cheap labor, human exploitation and environmental damage.

Usher (2008) raises questions about what it means for adult educators to operate within a hyperconsumer world where individuals are often engaged in expressive, aesthetic, and identity-based learning as they enact lifestyle practices. For a way out, Usher looks to the “rhizomatic” learning occurring in the new social movements that are emerging in resistance to consumerism and its myriad negative social, economic, and environmental consequences. We posit that the Post Punk Kitchen plays this kind of resistant role. And we argue that critical adult educators should address issues of public pedagogy surrounding literal consumption in the life-world—food and its use by multinationals to create all-pervasive consumer lifestyles.

References
Who Volunteers to Provide Reading Instruction for Adults and What Do They Know?

Mary Ziegler, R. Steve McCallum, Sherry Mee Bell
The University of Tennessee, U.S.A.

Abstract: Volunteer instructors make a substantial contribution to adult literacy, yet little research has been conducted to better understand not only who the volunteers are but what they know about reading instruction. This study describes a national sample of 124 volunteer instructors and their knowledge of providing reading instruction for adults.

In the adult education field, volunteers have played a major role in providing reading instruction. Volunteers contribute in a wide variety of adult literacy settings for example, community-based organizations, libraries, correctional facilities, and federally funded adult literacy programs.

In general, about 60% of adult literacy instructors are volunteers (Ziegler, Bell, & McCallum, 2007). Although volunteers make a substantial contribution, very little research has been conducted that focuses exclusively on them and their role in instruction. Of the research that has been conducted, most explores volunteers’ motivation for working with adults who want to improve their reading ability (Sandlin & St. Clair, 2004). While volunteers’ motivation is an important aspect of their role, it does not address their knowledge about providing reading instruction. Only a few studies have directly explored instructional practices or professional development specifically related to reading (Belzer 2006a; Belzer, 2006b; Ceprano, 1995). Most of these studies used qualitative data from small groups of participants or programs so that the little knowledge we have about volunteers as instructors is very narrow in scope. We do not know, for example, what volunteers’ educational backgrounds are, their experience in teaching adults, how they view their preparation for teaching, or the general level of knowledge about providing instruction to adult learners. The purpose of this study was to address the gap in the literature by describing a national sample of volunteer instructors and their knowledge of providing reading instruction.

Literature Review

Adult literacy in the United States consists of diverse programs that have different funding sources, occur in different settings, and have no agreed-upon standards for instructional quality. For example, 40% of the personnel reported by state-administered adult education programs in program year 2000 were volunteers. In many community-based adult literacy programs, including those offered in local libraries, all of the instructors might be volunteers. Although programs are possibly affiliates of a national organization, they are autonomous in the way they address the needs of the local community (Evans & Hugo, 2000). Correctional facilities provide adult literacy education for up to 25% of adults who are incarcerated and who have not graduated from high school (Harlow, 2003). This broad spectrum of program types challenges researchers because data from programs are difficult to collect and impossible to aggregate.

Adding to the challenge of multiple program types and settings is the preparation of volunteers to provide adult literacy instruction. Most volunteers in adult literacy provide one-on-one instruction, and in some cases small group instruction, rather than classroom-based
The types of instructional materials and methods vary widely across programs; the selection of curricula, for example, is generally up to the local program staff. Most adult literacy programs require some type of training before volunteers begin providing instruction to adult learners. Training varies from program to program depending on many different factors such as the size of the program, resources, the range of instructional philosophies, and assumptions about literacy and adult learning. Most volunteers receive from 2 to 20 hours of training prior to beginning instruction (Belzer, 2007).

Most of the current research focuses on why individuals are motivated to become volunteer literacy instructors (Sandlin & St. Clair, 2004. Only a few studies conducted in the last 15 years examined the quality of instruction provided by volunteers; these focused primarily on small samples of programs or individuals (Belzer, 2006a, 2006b; Ceprano, 1995). Belzer (2006a), for example, studied three tutor/student pairs randomly selected from different programs. Pairs worked together for at least three months prior to the beginning of the study. Findings suggested that the adult learners and volunteer instructors reported that they had achieved success.

Volunteers did face some challenges. For example, they had difficulty selecting texts that were both of interest to students and appropriate to their reading level. Selecting appropriate materials is among many challenges that volunteer instructors face. Because volunteers offer approximately 60% of adult literacy instruction and because little is known about this population, the purpose of this study is to provide information to the field about the characteristics of volunteer instructors including their knowledge of teaching reading.

**Theoretical Framework and Perspective**

This study is based on a framework of research-based reading instructional strategies for adults that was developed through a federal grant from the National Institute for Literacy (Kruidenier, 2002). The framework was developed by the Adult Literacy Research Working Group (ALRWG) convened by the National Institute for Literacy (NIFL) and the National Center for the Study of Adult Learning and Literacy (NCSALL). Members of ALRWG evaluated research focusing on reading conducted primarily with adult learners. Their work, reported in *Research-Based Principles for Adult Basic Education Reading Instruction (RBP)* (Kruidenier, 2002), identified principles, trends, and ideas for providing reading instruction to adults. The framework consists of four key aspects of reading: alphabetics, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension and ways to assess them. Even though the body of research on adult reading instruction is relatively small, it describes instructional strategies that have received at least some level of scientific support. These aspects of reading are separated for research purposes but overlap in actual instructional settings (Snow & Strucker, 1999). While the use of this framework narrowed our understanding of reading, it facilitated our ability to gather relevant data from participants.

**Research Design**

Data for this study was drawn from the standardization data from a larger study to assess the knowledge that practitioners have for providing reading instruction to adults. We chose a quantitative design because of the size of our sample and its suitability for our research questions. Research questions included the following: What do volunteer instructors know about teaching reading to adults? Is there a difference based on highest level of education? Is there a relationship between volunteer instructors’ knowledge and their years of experience teaching adults? Is there a difference based on teacher certification? Is there a relationship between knowledge and hours of
training? And finally, is there a difference between volunteer instructors and paid instructors? Volunteers were limited to those who provide instruction.

Participants. Our sample included responses from 124 individuals who described themselves as volunteer instructors or tutors. Most were female with a mean age of 53. With regard to their educational level, 32% had less than a bachelor’s degree, 28% had a bachelor’s degree; 29% had a master’s degree, and 5% had an education specialist or doctoral degree. Volunteers worked in a variety of settings including community colleges, community-based organizations, family literacy programs, local school systems, libraries, and correctional facilities. Finally, participants rated their preparation for providing instruction as follows: 23% very well, 31% well, 30% moderately, and 16% minimally prepared. Participants were from four regions of the United States; 57 from the Northeast, 13 from the Southeast, 12 from the Midwest, and 42 from the West. Because responses from each area were not uniform, the participants are not necessarily representative of volunteer instructors as a whole.

Instrument. The Assessment of Reading Instruction Knowledge – Adults (ARIK-A) was designed as a professional development and research tool. The ARIK-A assesses teachers’ and volunteer instructors’ knowledge of providing reading instruction to adults. Items for the assessment were drawn from primarily from the framework developed by Kruidenier (2002). In the development and standardization of the ARIK-A, we worked with an expert panel recruited from the field of adult literacy and followed established procedures for creating a standardized assessment instrument. The ARIK-A consists of two main parts; the first requested information from participants and the second directly assessed their knowledge of providing reading instruction to adults. The instrument had 60 items that assessed the four aspects of reading and assessment. Approximately one third of the items assess factual knowledge and two thirds assess ability to apply knowledge. The objective portion of ARIK-A provides an individual score for each scale and a composite score for the combined scales.

Procedure. We received help in recruiting volunteers from state offices of adult education and professional development staff. For standardization purposes, we identified the number of full-time and part-time instructors and volunteer instructors in four regions of the country: Region 1: Northeast; 2: Southeast; 3: Midwest; and 4: West. We mailed 994 assessment packets, 511 were returned, and 468 were usable for standardization. In total, 124 individuals who identified themselves as volunteer instructors completed and returned the assessment packet; 57 were received from Region 1, 12 from Region 2, 13 from Region 3, and 42 from Region 4. Although we have representation from all four regions of the U.S., the participants are not necessarily representative of volunteer instructors as a whole. Complete description of the assessment and the standardization process can be found in the ARIK-A Manual (Ziegler, Bell, & McCallum, in press).

Results

Descriptive statistics, correlational analyses, and mean comparisons (t tests and one way analyses of variance) were conducted to provide information about volunteer instructors’ knowledge of teaching reading to adults as determined by performance on the ARIK-A. These data address the first research question: What do volunteer instructors know about teaching reading to adults? Volunteers’ mean scores on each of the five ARIK-A scales (Alphabolics,
Fluency, Vocabulary, Comprehension, and Assessment) were similar, ranging from about 8 to 9 raw score points. Each scale has 14 items; on the average volunteers demonstrated a little over 60% mastery on each scale. A repeated measures analysis of variance (ANOVA) indicated no significant difference \( F(1, 124) = .9, \ p = .33 \) among the scale scores. Consequently, subsequent analyses were conducted using only the ARIK-A total score.

To determine if level of knowledge differed based on level of education, a one way ANOVA was conducted, comparing total mean scores on the ARIK-A for volunteers with less than a bachelors’ degree, a bachelor’s degree, and those with a master’s degree or higher. The ANOVA indicated significant differences in knowledge based on level of education \( F(2, 114) = 7.99, \ p = .001 \). Post hoc comparisons (Tukey a) indicated that those with a bachelor’s degree or less earned significantly lower scores than those with both bachelor’s \( (p = .003) \) and master’s degree or higher \( (p = .002) \). However, there was no difference in knowledge for those with bachelor’s as compared to those with master’s or higher \( (p > .05) \).

The third research question focuses on the relationship between knowledge and years of experience teaching adults, adolescents, and children and was addressed via correlational analyses. Significant positive correlations were found between years of experience teaching adolescents \( r_s = .20, \ p = .027 \) and for years of experience teaching adults \( r_s = .33, \ p < .001 \) but not for years of experience teaching children \( (p > .05) \). In general, as years of experience teaching adolescents or adults increased, volunteers’ ARIK-A score tended to increase.

An independent samples \( t \)-test was conducted to determine if there was a difference in reading instructional knowledge based on teacher certification. Volunteers who were certified earned significantly higher scores \( (M = 39.38) \) on the ARIK-A than those who were not certified \( (M = 34.12; \ t = 2.45 (111), \ p < .016) \).

Correlational analyses were conducted to examine relationships between knowledge and training, the focus of the fifth research question. Specifically, correlations were conducted to determine if hours spent in training during the past four years (in conferences, workshops, college courses, and independent study) were significantly related to knowledge of teaching reading as determined by the total ARIK-A score. No differences were found; Spearman’s \( r_s \) correlation coefficients ranged from -.09 to .12, all with \( p > .05 \).

A sixth question addressed the relationship between volunteers’ self-rating of their preparedness to teach reading and their knowledge as demonstrated by scores on the ARIK-A. The relationship between the volunteers’ self-rating and their ARIK-A scores was nonsignificant \( (r_s = .04, \ p = .66) \).

The final research question focused on differences in volunteers’ adult reading instruction knowledge as compared to full-time and part-time paid instructors. ARIK-A means and standard deviations for instructors by employment status are presented in Table 5. An ANOVA was conducted to determine if level of reading instructional knowledge differed based on employment status (full-time paid, part-time paid, or volunteer). No significant differences were found \( F(2, 457) = .137, \ p = .87 \).

**Discussion and Implications for Practice**

According to our results, volunteer instructors vary widely in their educational backgrounds, areas of expertise, prior preparation, and teaching experiences. Importantly, according to our results it is not reasonable to assume that volunteers know less than paid instructors do. Overall, volunteer instructors and paid instructors mastered about the same percent of content on the ARIK-A about 60%). This is consistent with Snow and Strucker’s (1999)
recommendation for strengthened professional development for adult educators (regardless of whether they are paid or volunteer) who may have had very little direct instruction in the mechanics of reading.

Although conventional wisdom assumes that professional development for adult literacy instructors is critical for acquiring knowledge about effective practice, that relationship did not hold for these volunteers. In fact, there were no differences in the level of knowledge among the volunteers based on the types of professional development they received, the number of hours they participated, or their perceived level of preparation. Nonetheless, other studies have reported a positive relationship between training and instructional knowledge (Bell, Ziegler, McCallum, 2004; Smith & Gillespie, 2007). The contradiction in results may stem from the type of professional development offered for volunteer instructors. Belzer (2007) suggests that effective professional development must address the knowledge that volunteer instructors need to face the instructional challenges of working with a particular adult who has encountered problems with reading. The relationship between professional development and instructors’ knowledge will continue to be the focus of research, but in the meantime, administrators of adult literacy programs are faced with the challenge of providing professional development for individuals who work on a voluntary basis. One of the challenges posed by the results of our study is how to create professional development for such a diverse group, particularly when programs have limited resources for ongoing education and training. Since volunteers are already contributing their time for instruction, program administrators may hesitate to request the contribution of more hours for ongoing professional development.

Adding to the challenges of providing professional development is the fact that volunteer instructors themselves begin their voluntary service with different levels of knowledge depending on their educational and professional backgrounds. The diversity among the volunteers suggests that there should be a diversity of resources and opportunities for professional development. A one-size-fits-all training is not likely to be effective for a group of instructors who have widely divergent backgrounds and experience. Notably, volunteers spent the highest number of hours of professional development in independent study. Hours of self-study are rarely accounted for in determining the level of an instructor’s professional development; however, being a self-directed learner is a natural part of adult life (Merriam, Caffarella, & Baumgartner, 2007).

Voluntary literacy programs can make use of the free resources available electronically for literacy practitioners who are interested in increasing their level of knowledge about reading instruction. In addition, resources are available from the NIFL through ALWRG, in a free electronic format, which focuses on describing instructional strategies that are supported by at least some research (McShane, 2005). Although the study is informative, the sample may not be representative of the group of volunteers as a whole. Results should be generalized with caution. Even so, we believe the sample reflects the diversity of the volunteer instructors and the relationship between certain volunteer characteristics and their level of knowledge about providing reading instruction.

References


Alternate Degree Program Delivery Formats for Adult Students: What is Lost and What is Gained?

Carrie J. Boden, University of Arkansas at Little Rock, USA
W. Franklin Spikes, Kansas State University, USA

Abstract: A growing number of adult learners are turning to accelerated degree programs to complete an initial or more advanced college degree. While various aspects of these types of degree programs have been discussed in the literature, relatively little is known about how the epistemological beliefs as well as the self-directed learning readiness of adults who are enrolled in accelerated degree programs change over time. A discussion of the findings of recent research about the relationship and the development of these phenomena by adult learners along with implications for improved adult education form the basis for this research roundtable.

More and more of the nation’s over 3,300 institutions of higher education are turning to alternative models to develop and deliver degree-related learning experiences for adults. Accelerated degree programs, cohort-based learning experiences, online courses, and weekend degree sequences have become an increasingly important element of adult higher education today. An examination of the related literature including the works of Imel (2002); Kasworm (2001); Walvoord (2003); and Wlodkowski (2003) among others reveals that a certain amount of information exists about many aspects of these. Despite this, and while the growth of accelerated degree programs has certainly provided adults with a never before seen level of access a college education, many questions still remain unanswered about the nature of the learning outcomes that result from an adult student’s participation in these types of learning experiences. In an attempt to achieve a greater sense of understanding about the nature of alternative degree-related program delivery formats for adult learners, recent research has produced an interesting set of conflicting findings (Boden, 2005). These include information about the programs’ overall success, the type and character of the learning outcomes that were achieved by students, and the cognitive development and epistemological beliefs of students who were enrolled in these programs. Accordingly, to begin the discussion, the conveners of this roundtable will share data from their research concerning the epistemological development levels of cohort and non-cohort based adult students. In one instance, adult learners in the cohort-based programs that were examined in this research were found to be more likely than were their non-cohort program counterparts to possess the self-directed traits of creativity and the ability to use basic problem solving skills. At the same time, they were also found to be less likely to have a positive self-concept as an effective, independent learner, and they possessed less sophistication in their cognitive development than did their non-cohort counterparts. They were also more likely to hold naive epistemological beliefs such as learning does not require effort and intelligence is static. Seemingly then, it may be possible to conclude from these somewhat counterintuitive findings that cohort groups may simultaneously both impede and enhance an adult learner’s cognitive development.

Subsequent to discussing and examining the meaning of these and other data from the conveners’ research, participants at this roundtable will also have an opportunity to reflect upon the many philosophical, ethical, and academic issues that this information presents to educators of adults who are planning and implementing accelerated and cohort-based degree programs. To do
so, the remainder of this roundtable conversation will be organized around the following broadly based questions: 1) To what extent should alternative degree programs seek to foster the cognitive development of adult learners verses providing content based learning experiences of an expedient and convenient nature? Is it possible to simultaneously meet both outcomes? And if it is, what best practices exist to do so?; 2) Who wins and who loses as more and more degree granting programs are being moved to alternative, accelerated and cohort-based delivery formats? Whose needs are really being met? Can a balance between such institutionally driven agendas as maintaining financial viability and achieving enrollment stability and meeting the individual developmental needs of adult learners be equally well achieved? If so, how? and 3) What additional knowledge is needed to assist educators of adults to make better decisions about how to develop accelerated degree programs which will meet both the institutional and individual student’s needs? What contributions can research in the field of adult education make in answering this question and improving practice? How so?

References
Overcoming Barriers to Persistence for First-Generation Adult Community College Students

Jennifer A. Boulanger
Teachers College, Columbia University, United States

Introduction

The study sought to understand first-generation adult community college students’ persistence strategies, their origins and development. The main research question, “What strategies do first-generation adult community college students employ to enable them to stay in college?” is addressed by exploring participant responses related to four sub-questions: (1) How are the strategies employed by first-generation adult community college students shaped? (2) What individual strategies do first-generation adult community college students employ to enable them to stay in college? (3) How do institutional characteristics interact with individual characteristics to influence persistence? (4) To what extent do practitioners’ perspectives corroborate student reports of effective strategies? A qualitative design that incorporated a self-nominating survey, critical incident, interview, and engagement with a focus group provided a wealth of data that was coded and analyzed.

Findings

Data analysis revealed that strategies were shaped through interactions and experiences within the lifeworld (Habermas, 1987) and through experiences that fostered self-efficacy. Data analysis further revealed that students developed social-environmental and independent strategies, as well as institution-based strategies which included interactions with instructors and mentors, use of institution-provided academic supplements, and engagement with communities of practice.

Lifeworld Factors

Students reported that early educational experiences helped them to pattern current study strategies on those that worked during early learning. Family dynamics and interactions, as well as work and economic factors provided strategy-shaping models for persistence. Ascribed characteristics, such as first language, gender and adulthood itself influenced development of persistence strategies. Dropping out of college in the past affected some students’ ability to turn past barriers into persistence strategies. Crises stimulated a reordering of priorities that reinvigorated the desire to make their lives better through education and fostered resilience.

Self-Efficacy

The “conviction that one can successfully execute the behavior to produce the outcomes desired” (Bandura, 1977, p. 79) and the belief that academic achievement is possible was a common theme for subjects. Participant comments indicated that students shaped persistence strategies based upon what led to mastery in the past, verbal reinforcement of learning behaviors, witnessing other successfully completing learning tasks, or positive feelings after successfully implementing strategies.

Social & Environmental Strategies

These strategies were developed as responses to others or to the immediate environment and included intentional postponement of college study, retreating from unsupportive family members, distancing from unsupportive friends, turning to prayer for support, and receiving tuition assistance and other work benefits, such as a cohort-based, company-sponsored program.
Independent Study Strategies

These strategies are the participants’ reported methods of studying autonomously and were shaped by an awareness of their own styles and preferences. Independent study strategies included intentional choice of a college major, time management, and use of tried and true study methods, such as practice exercises and self-tests, notetaking, highlighting, outlining, SQ3R, and flash cards. Participants also stressed the importance of repetition as a persistence strategy.

Interactions with Instructors and Mentors

Participants sought caring instructors and mentors as a persistence strategy and characterized caring individuals as those willing to give up extra time, those who were approachable and responsive, and those who inspired passion for the subject and for learning. Participants also sought those whom they described as effective teachers because they communicated clearly and intuitively sensed students’ needs. Students also persisted by avoiding those teachers and mentors who did not display these characteristics.

Intra-Institutional Factors

Three participants found use of the branch campus a persistence strategy. Students also used the library as a convenient place to study and used the learning center, seeking tutors for courses they found challenging, particularly mathematics.

Engagement with Communities of Practice

Communities of practice are organically-formed groups of individuals who join together for a common purpose (Wenger, 1998) — in this case, to seek knowledge and meaning in the context of the learning environment. Students in the study formed such groups and reported that the groups provided a feeling of belonging, as well as allowing them to test or affirm new knowledge, to fill in gaps in understanding, or to reveal insights that may have resided just beneath the surface of conscious comprehension.

References

Intersecting Cultural Connections for Doctoral Persistence

Ruby Cain, Ed.D., Ball State University, U.S.A.
Marjorie Treff, Ed.D., Indiana University, U.S.A.

Abstract: This Roundtable Discussion addresses the barrier of informal peer support system (where its absence is one of the cited barriers to doctoral persistence) via the theoretical framework of shared case stories. These case stories explore the experiences of two women who entered a doctoral program as returning adults, and the ways in which their separate stories intersected and became interdependent, supporting their persistence towards degree. The presenters will provide a theater style format to share their stories in four scenes.

From 1970-71 to 2003-04, the number of doctor’s degrees conferred by degree granting institutions rose 51% from 32,107 to 48,378 (Snyder, Tan, & Hoffman, 2006). For the same period, the number of doctor’s degrees in education rose 17% to 7,088. A cursory review of the statistical data suggests a success story: more individuals are pursuing and achieving the dream of advanced degree attainment. But closer inspection reveals a startling reality: doctoral programs result in a 50% attrition rate nationwide, with what may be even higher rates for underrepresented groups (Lovitts, 2001). A business process resulting in 50% scrap would be critically scrutinized, and redesigned to reduce waste, or eliminated. An employee with only a 50% productivity level would be retrained or released.

Scene #1: Entering the doctoral program. Two individuals unknown to one another made the decision to enter the doctoral degree program at a Midwestern university. Their life experiences, motivation for education/doctoral program selection, and perceptions and expectations of the program, including a game plan for completion, were as different as day and night.

Ruby, the consummate planner, knew from an early age what she wanted to do, and how to achieve her goals. She “planned the work, and worked the plan,” and when life events changed her plans, from math teacher to information technology project manager and curriculum planner on the side. Before graduate school, Marje seldom planned anything. Instead, she reacted to whatever came along. During her master’s work, Marje developed an appreciation for planning, because it supported her need for some control. So, when a professor put Ruby and Marje in contact with each other, suggesting they carpool from Fort Wayne to Muncie, Ruby was excited. Then she thought: “Marje….sounds like a White person’s name. I wonder what she will do when she finds out I am Black? Will she try to get out of carpooling?” Marje recalled telling her husband that she “wondered if Ruby Cain was African-American.” When Marje went to Muncie for the graduate student orientation, she “saw two women close to my age. One was black, one was white. Ruby had the most beautiful smile!” Ruby described Marje as having “a magnetic personality. In an instant, I felt at ease and comfortable with her.”

Scene #2: Transitioning cultural difference to shared cultural bonds. Although stark contrasts could readily be identified in their stories, there were many cultural similarities, including age, gender, marital/familial status, and an insatiable thirst for learning.

Marje exhibited a more traditional style in her entre to the academic discourse. Her interactions with professors and students, although at times personal, primarily centered on academic topics. She made the effort to learn the infrastructure, to follow the rules, to “color
within the lines.” Even so, she was not above challenging those academic mores that did not seem fair or did not make sense.

Ruby’s style was more of a practitioner, and informal. Her interactions with professors and students, although at times academic, were more about personal, community, or professional topics. As a consultant and trainer for many years, she had the practical application that was addressed in the theoretical body of knowledge in the program. The direction taken in the journey was not as important as the destination. She started with where she wanted to go and the method to obtain it may or may not have been the traditional route. This did not mean blatantly ignoring the rules, but rather not being confined to them.

Marje was used to being in control, making the plans, directing the activities, often flying solo. Her request to car pool to one event elicited a response from Ruby of willingness to car pool for every class they shared throughout their program. Marje was not ready for that level of commitment. She wanted to take it slow. Ruby expressed flexibility and willingness to accommodate Marje’s schedule and preferences. Despite their different approaches, they negotiated their terms and carpooled through their entire program.

Scene #3: Creating Support Systems across and within culture. Transcending differences via a transformative breakthrough created a bond so strong they morphed into twins whose connection could not be broken by setbacks common in many doctoral program journeys. They supported, uplifted, and encouraged one another, and together met every challenge, overcame every barrier, and remained steadfast in their progress towards doctoral persistence.

Ruby and Marje see themselves as continuous, lifelong learners who thrive on engaging with new people, new experiences, and new growth. Both of them entered the doctoral program aware that they were pursuing a dream constructed many years before. In all of their shared courses, Ruby partnered with other students for group projects, leaving Marje to work with someone other than Ruby. Although Marje was disappointed at first, Ruby understood how important it was to “stretch and move outside of a comfort zone.” It got to be a source of amusement, and became very productive. It enriched both women’s learning experiences.

Scene #4: Graduation – where do we go from here? Marje is teaching part-time for two universities, developing her dissertation research more thoroughly, and learning with her undergraduate students. Intense job searches have been unproductive; with the contraction of the economy, and because of other personal circumstances and possibilities, she has decided to remain in Fort Wayne. She wants to stay close “to the people and programs that have become such a vital part of my experience and my life. I want to develop opportunities with Ruby to do consulting work. We make such a great team!”

Ruby plans to continue with her organizational consulting business, and possibly work as faculty for 9 – 10 months per year. She intends to transition to a part administrative (working with disenfranchised populations) and part faculty position. Her experience with the doctoral program “has afforded me the opportunity to inform my professional practice, to research and analyze community and social issues. I would like to do joint consulting projects with Marje. I think pairing up as co-facilitators would provide a powerful duo ready to take on the world. I know no matter where the future takes me Marje will always be a part of my life. We will stay connected in person or via technology.”

References
“Wow, it’s nothing like I thought!”: The importance of experience in the early stages of the dissertation process

Dana Dudzinska-Przesmitzki and Sandy Bell
University of Connecticut, USA

Keywords: Dissertation preparation, experience

Abstract: The use of deliberate practice, communities of practice, and concept mapping can enable doctoral students to make informed decisions in the early stages of the dissertation process. These strategies are particularly effective for students who have limited experience in the research domain of interest.

Background
In today’s information-rich academic environment doctoral students in Adult Education (AE) have a broad array of literature available to help them through the dissertation phase of their program. Resources abound, for example, on how to construct a solid literature review, how to choose the best methods for data collection, and even how to survive the whole dissertation process. Yet, for all the advice available to students, few resources emphasize the role of experience in preparing students to make decisions in the initial stages of the dissertation process. Early decisions students make regarding the focus or central phenomenon of study impact subsequent decisions. A considerable number of students, however, leap into constructing the proposal or reviewing the literature before assessing the extent to which they know all they need to about their phenomenon to advance to these next stages.

Part of the reason the emphasis on experience may be missing from dissertation resources is that many AE students begin their doctoral studies after gaining work experience in educational or related fields. These students enter their programs possessing a good deal of explicit and tacit knowledge generated from their work-related experience. This knowledge can guide their selection of the phenomenon on which they will focus their dissertation. However, some doctoral students in AE enter their programs lacking experience that can give them a “leg-up” in the early stages of the process. Reasons for this are many. For example, students may enter their doctoral program directly after completing undergraduate studies. Or, during their program they may develop new interests or adopt a major advisor’s interests in domains in which they have no prior experience.

Our concern for these experience-deficient students surrounds the impact their lack of “real-life” experience may have on making informed decisions early in the dissertation process when honing in on a central phenomenon of study. Relevant prior experience and making meaning of that experience can influence students’ success during subsequent stages of the process, as well. Specifically, experience may help students identify, in a more expedient and enlightened manner, a specific problem of study. Experience can provide additional lens students can utilize when evaluating and synthesizing literature. Experience may also lead to topical insights that better inform selection of research sites and participants, development of interview questions and format, and awareness of environmental cues that may impact interpretation of data. Lastly, relevant prior experience may facilitate students’ increased appreciation for the cultural and political nuisances of the studied domain.
**Conceptual Framework**

The ways and extent to which experience relates to learning have been the topic of much research and debate. Most scholars agree, though, that not all experience results in meaningful learning. In this roundtable we will share three empirically-based strategies doctoral students and their advisors can use to design and make meaning from “real life” experiences that will benefit students in the early stages of the dissertation process: deliberate practice (Ericsson, Krampe & Tesch-Romer, 1993), communities of practice (Wenger, McDermott, & Snyder, 2002), and concept mapping (Novak & Canãs, 2006).

Deliberate practice is an effortful activity aimed at improving performance through repeated experiences and feedback (Ericsson et al., 1993). The goal of deliberate practice is not simple repetition, but rather engagement in authentic, structured, and novel activities of increasing complexity to improve learning and performance. For students in the early dissertation stages, engaging in a structured or otherwise directed internship in the domain of interest may provide deliberate practice experiences that inform decisions regarding the research phenomenon. Opportunities for deliberate practice can be also gained through observation or service in settings where genuine problems of practice in that domain are apparent.

Members of a community of practice (CoP) possess a common concern for something that they do, and learn how to improve what they do as they work together over time (Wenger et al., 2002). By participating in a CoP related to a research domain of interest, students can gain insights into such factors as norms, values, and historic events that need to be considered in defining a problem or conducting the study. With careful planning, students could reap the benefits of insights generated from participation in such communities. However, if students are to benefit from experiences generated by deliberate practice and participation in CoPs, they need engage in activities that help them make meaning from their experiences. A variety of activities are available to students to make meaning of their experiences, and we believe that concept mapping is particularly useful.

Concept mapping is a method of eliciting individuals’ mental models to reveal the concepts, propositions, and relationships they attribute to a particular topic (Novak & Canãs, 2006). Concept mapping a dissertation idea, for example, can help students recognize gaps or inaccuracies in their understanding of a potential research domain. To address the gaps, students and advisors can design specific and genuine activities that afford “real life” insights into the domain. Maps can be constructed over time to reveal developing knowledge and ways in which the student can apply that knowledge to making informed decisions through the early dissertation stages.

**Outcomes**

This roundtable will provide an ideal forum for students early in the dissertation process, as well as advisors, to collectively discuss the challenges students face in this phase. We will generate specific examples to illustrate the utility of three strategies students can use to gain experience and insight that will contribute to their dissertation success.

**References**


The Examined Side: The Role of Congregations in Clergy Transitions

C. Franklin Granger, M. Div., University of Georgia
Lorilee R. Sandmann, Ph. D., University of Georgia

Abstract: The transition from theory to practice in the move from seminary to congregational ministry remains a risky leap for clergy despite curricular reforms and addition of context-based learning during professional education. Congregations that serve as teaching environments provide valuable practical ministry training for early-career clergy.

Background

For over 200 years, seminaries have existed for the professional training of clergy in North America. Dissatisfaction has continued for nearly half of that time regarding graduates’ readiness for ministry. Nearly a century ago, Matthews (1912) addressed tensions facing theological schools. He advocated practical experience as an integral part of the training and education so students might “lead a church in a changing social order” (Matthews, p. 168). Thirty years later in appreciation of Matthews’ work, McGiffert (1942) wrote that the questions raised “helped seminaries to sharpen their focus” as they went about the work of supplying “churches with ministers and teachers adequate to the opportunities before the Christian churches” (p. 398) of that day. However, it was not until 1962 that the Association of Theological Schools approved a new set of accreditation standards that required educational field experience (Eagan, 1987). Called by various names, such as field education, supervised ministry, or contextual education, these programs are designed to bridge the gap between seminary and places of clergy practice, the gap between academic and ministerial perspectives (Foster, Dahill, Golemon, & Tolentino, 2006; Beisswenger, 1996). The interest in having well-prepared professionals ready to serve the practical and ministry demands of congregational ministry sparked curricular reforms, new developments in field education, and additional out-of-classroom learning opportunities to integrate learning and preparation of students (Dreibelbis, & Gortner, 2005; Foster et al., 2006, 2005; Peluso-Verdend & Seymour, 2005). However, dissatisfaction with readiness for ministry remains, not only among students and faculty, but among congregations and contexts that receive these new leaders (Hess, 2008).

Congregations as Teaching Environments

The Transition into Ministry (TiM) initiative, funded by the Lilly Endowment, Inc. set out to counter the two-centuries-long approach of viewing pastoral preparation as “something that is largely completed upon graduating seminary” (Wind & Wood, 2008, p. 5). TiM offered a bold premise, “the actual performance of ministry in local congregations is how and where pastors finally become pastors” (Wood, 2006, p. 9). The core of this initiative was reshaping the preparation of Protestant clergy by supplementing conventional seminary training with “a focused apprenticeship in a ‘community of practice’” (Wind & Wood, p. 5). The programs in this initiative place “the congregation at the center of the learning experience and return practicing clergy to a central teaching role, while making reflective practice rather than academic study the pivotal way of learning pastoral ministry” (Wind & Wood, 2008, p. 16). Congregations are a formative power in the professional development of beginning clergy entering full-time congregational ministry (Wind & Wood, 2008). Interestingly, these teaching congregations
involved in this inductive phase of clergy education are discovering that clergy are not the only ones learning. This process involves reflection upon all aspects of the congregation’s life and practice. The beginning clergy, staff and congregation members come to understand “their work and life as one of continuous teaching and learning. In essence, as the congregations work with their new pastors, a new, local ecclesial imagination develops about what the church is and what ministry can be” (Wind & Wood, 2008, p. 36).

**Planned Research of Teaching Congregations**

A study is planned to identify how teaching congregations are transformed in the process of facilitating the training and development of beginning clergy in this inductive phase. Questions to be asked in the research include: What changes in structure, roles, and organization, if any, occur? What factors facilitate or impede the transformation of the congregation? What learning does the congregation do in the process? How does the congregation learn? Research results are intended to expand the application and use of organizational learning with congregations and to increase the use of this theory with nonprofit organizations. Congregations can gain in understanding of their organizational system through the application of this theoretical framework. The study will provide insight into and understanding of the teaching relationship for congregations engaged in this process and offer incentives and guidance for those interested in becoming teaching congregations. Findings will aid church and denominational leaders who seek to recruit new congregations to engage in this process of clergy education.

**References**


The Multiple Generations in Adult and Higher Education Classrooms:
What We Assume, What We Know, What We Can Learn,
and What May Be Missing

Catherine Hansman   Kathryn McAtee
Cleveland State University     Cuyahoga Community College

The purpose of this paper is to gain greater understandings of the “generation”
literature as it relates to adult learners in higher and adult education contexts. We
also analyze the literature from a critical perspective, considering how the
literature attends to issues of gender, race, ethnicity, class, and sexual identity.

Malcolm Knowles (1980) provides descriptors of adult learners as self-directed; however,
his notions paint a generic picture of adult learners that may not address other aspects of learners,
such as their generational cohort. In recent years, researchers (i.e. Elam, Stratton, & Gibson,
2007) have introduced the idea of differences in various generations and how they play out in
adult or higher education classrooms. Elam, Stratton, and Gibson (2007) define generations as “a
specific time period and shared experiences” (pg. 21) that, along with common influences, such
as people, places or events, may shape generational cultural values and behaviors. Understanding
research and literature concerning the different generations may help inform adult educators to
better understand, educate, and address the needs of the adult learners who populate our
educational institutions and contexts. The purpose of this roundtable paper is to gain a greater
understanding of the literature concerning various generations as it relates to adult learners in
higher and adult education, exploring its relationship to adult learning in various contexts. Our
secondary purpose, however, is to analyze the literature from a critical perspective, considering
how the literature attends to issues of gender, race, ethnicity, class, and sexual identity.

Synopsis of the Literature: In today’s adult education classrooms three generational cohorts
may be participating in the same educational experiences. Typical depictions of these generations
are the Baby-boomers, the Generation Xers, and the Millennials. The Baby-boomers’ birth years
span from 1946 to 1964 and are defined by the space race, civil rights movement, Vietnam, and
Watergate. The Generation Xer’s, who were born in the mid 1960’s to the early1980’s,
experienced the fall of the Berlin Wall, the emergence of AIDS, and the Internet (Oblinger,
2003). The most recent generational cohort, the “Millennial” or “Nintendo” generation (Stanford &
Reeves, 2007) were born after 1982. The Millennials are more biracial or multiracial than are
previous generations, with 20% of them having at least one parent who is an immigrant (Broido,
2004). Part of the problem with understanding these groups is the discrepancies in titles that
various authors use to describe the generations. Lowery (2004) uses the title “Thirteenth
Generation” for “Generation X,” and “Baby-boomers” may also now be referred to as
“Helicopter Parents”.

Generational learning preferences: In their research Cambiano, De Vore, and Harvey
(2001) discovered differences of preferred teaching techniques/pedagogies for the three
generations. The Baby-boomers expressed a need for hands-on learning activities using three-
dimensional and manipulative materials. Generation Xer’s need carefully laid out plans of what
is expected of them in the learning situation, including knowing future assignments the
parameters of each lesson, and the sequential steps involved in all assignments, with the
instructor leaving nothing to interpretation. Millennials prefer teamwork, experiential activities,
structure, and the use of technology. Their strengths include multitasking, goal orientation, positive attitudes and collaborative style (Oblinger, 2003). Stanford and Reeves (2007) address the issue of incorporating technology in the adult classroom, encouraging educators to develop technology skills and learn how to teach using technology that is appropriate for the content of the course and the generations in the classroom.

Concerns with generational research: In addition to confusing and conflicting titles for generations, some of the literature we examined seems to not be empirical research but opinion-based writing, which nevertheless seems to become part of the “data” concerning generations and influence much of what we assume about the differences and similarities between the generations who populate our classrooms. In addition, much of the writing concerning the different generations seems to assume that all individual members of each cohort have equal levels of financial, personal, and social support. Race, class, gender, sexuality, and ability all affect how individuals have access to educational opportunities.

Unanswered Questions: Much of the literature concerning different generations is undeveloped and requires further empirical research. Future generational research could focus on some of the following questions: What does the literature tell us about the various generations, and what are the similarities and differences among the generations? What can adult educators do to meet the learning needs of the multi-generational and diverse mix of students in higher and adult education settings? How does the generational literature represent gender, race, ethnic, class and sexual identity issues? How do adult learning theories, such as transformational learning, fit into what the literature tells us about the different generations and their learning preferences? Through asking these questions, we hope to promote discussions that will further our knowledge of meeting the needs of different generations of adult learners. Understanding the different generations present in adult learning contexts may help us move beyond the generic portraits of adult learners to considerations of the mosaic of generations that are present today in educational institutions so we may better provide the educational environments and learning experiences they require to be successful.

References
Who Were the Women?
An In-Depth Analysis of Some Early Women Adult Educators

Susan Imel
Ohio State University

Gretchen T. Bersch
Professor Emerita, University of Alaska

This analysis of early women adult educators focuses on four women—Lucy Wilcox Adams, Jesse Charters, Mary L. Ely, and Dorothy Canfield Fisher—who contributed to the early development of the field.

In the early years of the field of adult education in the United States, women were prominent contributors to the growth of the field, particularly to the literature base. Previous publications provide some explanation for why women moved from the center to the margins as contributors to the field’s literature base after the early period, but no extended analysis of the early women contributors has been conducted. This research project is designed to address that gap. The initial phase of the project (Imel & Bersch, 2008) examined the roles of women in developing the literature base from 1926-1941, the types of literature produced, and the connections or networks that may have fostered their efforts. The second phase of the study focuses on a more in-depth analysis of four of the women: Lucy Wilcox Adams, Jesse Allen Charters, Mary L. Ely, and Dorothy Canfield Fisher.

Lucy Wilcox Adams
Lucy Wilcox Adams was active in the California Association for Adult Education (CAAE) between 1929 and 1935. In 1929, at the time California received Carnegie Foundation funds to organize CAAE, Lucy was hired to work with the director, Lyman Bryson, to serve as organizer and secretary. Within the association, she was active in developing discussion groups, frequently in conjunction with her spouse William Forbes Adams, a professor of history at UCLA. In 1933, Carnegie funding for CAAE ended and Bryson left California to become director of the Des Moines adult education Forums programs, and Lucy became CAAE’s director. Due to the untimely death of her spouse, she was forced to seek other employment in 1935 (Personal Communication with E. Adams, 2008). During her six years in adult education she was a major contributor to the American Association for Adult Education’s (AAAE) Journal of Adult Education, authoring five articles plus at least one piece for the section, “Why Stop Learning,” that was reprinted in Adult Education in Action (Ely, 1936) in the section on Public Forums. Even after Lucy left the organized field of adult education, her work with many federal agencies involved adult education activities. Forced to retire from government service at the age of 65, she taught at University of California-Berkeley until the age of 70, when again mandatory retirement caught up with her. (For more details on the life of this fascinating woman, see her obituary: http://www.obitcentral.com/obitsearch/obits/misc/anthro8.htm).

Jessie Allen Charters
At the age of 48, Jesse Allen Charters came to Ohio State University (OSU) and launched what was to become the graduate program in adult education. In 1928, when her spouse W. W.
Charters, was hired to be the director of the OSU Bureau of Educational Research, she came with him to undertake an experiment in parent education for the Ohio Department of Education and OSU. Two years later, the Department of Adult Education was established with Jessie Charters as chair, making her the first woman professor in adult education in the United States. The Charters chose to come to OSU because of W.W.’s personal objective of giving “Mrs. Charters an opportunity to return to her career.” Unfortunately, Jesse’s career in adult education was cut short due to the depression when lack of funds forced the university to cut her salary in 1931 and again in 1933 (The Ohio State University Archives, W. W. Charters [RG: 40/p/117]). She resigned on June 30, 1933 (OSU Payroll records). During Jesse’s time in Ohio, she developed programs in alumni education, wrote articles for national publications, and was active in establishing Ohio’s adult education association, the Ohio Conference on Adult Education.

**Dorothy Canfield Fisher**

Dorothy Canfield Fisher was perfectly situated to be an early player in the field of adult education. Dorothy’s father had been librarian at Columbia and Dorothy had earned her Ph.D. from Columbia in 1904. She was acquainted with Frederick Keppel and others. In 1907, she married John Fisher, also a Columbia graduate. Dorothy was already a well-established author when Keppel asked her to write an early book about the field, Why Stop Learning? (1926). According to Morse Cartwright the book “received a wide distribution and gave the whole field its first general treatment in highly readable form . . . . The reaction of both the educational leaders and the more thoughtful portion of the public was immediate and gratifying” (Cartwright, 1935, p. 15). Dorothy served as AAAE president for two one-year terms: 1932/33 and 1933/34. In 1935, she wrote the introduction for Cartwright’s book, Ten Years of Adult Education, and she also wrote six articles for Journal of Adult Education, two of which appeared in Adult Education in Action (Ely, 1936). The key role she played on the selection committee for the Book-of-the-Month Club from 1926-1951 created an opportunity for millions of adults to access good literature (Yates, 1958; Washington, 1982).

**Mary L. Ely**

Dorothy Canfield Fisher was the famous and visible woman, but, within AAAE, Mary Lillian Ely was the worker bee. In the preface to Women in Two Worlds (1938), Mary reports she drew upon her experience as former Education Director of the National League of Girls Clubs but no doubt her college work in Latin and Greek and her work in the 1920s as a writer/advertiser and educational secretary came in handy in her adult education writing and editing work. Mary was at the heart of the adult education action for just over two decades from the time she began to work for AAAE, under Morse Cartwright and became, first the co-editor, then editor, of the Journal of Adult Education. Mary and Cartwright wrote Adult Education in the United States of America (1929), and she edited the summary of the proceedings of AAAE’s Tenth Anniversary Celebration included in the Journal [Vol 8(3)] and Adult Education in Action (1936). To gather information for her book, Why Forums (1937), she traveled from one end of the country to the other. She collaborated with Eve Chappell, a former newspaper reporter, to co-author Women in Two Worlds (1938). Both books were part of the AAAE Studies in the Social Significance of Adult Education in the U.S. In the 1940s she worked as a freelance writer. In 1948, she edited the Handbook of Adult Education in the U.S.

References available upon request.
How to Stay A.L.I.V.E. in a World of Ever-Changing Technology: Keeping Up with Adult Learning in a Virtual Environment

Donna Mancuso, Dominique Chlup, Rochell McWhorter
Texas A&M University, USA

Keywords: Virtual environments, technology, adult learning

Abstract: The purpose of this paper is to discuss the benefits and barriers for adult learning within virtual environments.

Introduction

In the past decade, technology has had an enormous impact on adult educators and learners. Technology for learning and collaboration include asynchronous email, weblogs, bulletin boards, distance learning platforms, and more robust synchronous environments of virtual chat, virtual classrooms, and virtual worlds. Knowles, Holton, and Swanson (2005) suggested that bold new opportunities are presented to adult learners through technology and that technology provides a “rich learning experience in the andragogical” tradition (p. 237). Ardichvili (2008) remarked that virtual communities of practice are “important vehicles for collective learning” (p. 541). Furthermore, these virtual environments provide opportunities for the elimination of some of the barriers of interaction and learning in real-time (Bierema & Hill, 2005). These virtual environments can also enable lifelong learning by providing flexibility in the pace of learning for the learner’s own competence and circumstances (Macpherson, Elliot, Harris, & Homan, 2004).

Method and Data Sources

Over the past year, we conducted a focused inquiry in a virtual world by observing and interacting with other adults in open forums, training sessions, university spaces, and by forming several virtual learning communities. The social constructivist mode of inquiry, one designed to seek new insights and a deeper understanding of a phenomenon (Lincoln & Guba, 1985), was selected for this inquiry.

Data in this study was gathered from three primary sources and two secondary sources. The primary sources were open-ended questionnaires (Patton, 2002), semi-structured interviews (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005; Erlandson, Harris, Skipper, & Allen, 1993; Lincoln & Guba, 1985) as well as participant observational data (Spradley, 1980). All primary data was gathered in the online virtual world of Second Life (SL). Forty-five participants were recruited for the study through purposive sampling (Lincoln & Guba, 1985) using advertisements in educational settings, invitations to participants observed in public and educational settings, and postings to an educational e-mail discussion list. Secondary sources consisted of a review of extant literature and examination of supplementary data from numerous blogs, websites, and an educational e-mail discussion list.

All data gathered in this inquiry were systematically analyzed using the constant comparative method (Glaser & Strauss, 1967; Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Merriam, 2005; Ruona, 2005). Accordingly, data gathered from each primary and secondary data source was unitized, transferred to data cards, then systematically sorted into categories, coded and finally clustered into major themes. Trustworthiness and confirmability of the thematic findings were enhanced
through the triangulation of various data sources (Denzin, 1992), the use of member checking with participants (Lincoln & Guba, 1985), memoing (Ruona, 2005), and use of multiple investigators (Morse, 1994).

Findings & Discussion

In a review of the available literature on the role of technology in adult education, little research has centered on the impact new technologies have on adult learners. Johnson and Levine (2008) note that “the core element in any virtual world is the ability for the visitor to interact with the environment—people, objects, and places—and to influence the course of events” (p. 162). In today’s virtual learning environments learners can interact in the same space at the same time; thereby, allowing for the emergence of virtual learning communities (communities of practice). Our findings reveal that there are benefits, as well as barriers, to the utilization of virtual environments in adult education for adult learners. The results of this study found themes in learning and in additional themes that have implications for adult education/learning. In our study, we found formal instances of learning, communities of practice, and self-directed learning. Furthermore, we found instances of educators utilizing Second Life for developing their learning environments and in curriculum/content design. In this study, many virtual communities of practice were aesthetically informed. Our findings also included benefits of using Second Life: (1) Variety of Educational Topics Available; (2) Provides Opportunities for Multi-Disciplinary Collaboration; (3) SL Facilitates Collaboration across geographical boundaries; (4) Emergent/Immersive Environment and Presence replaces old technologies; (5) Stimulates Life-long learning; (6) Health/Emotional Benefits reported by participants; and (7) Cost savings (eliminating travel expenses/phone calls, etc.). The barriers to utilizing Second Life included: (1) Glitches in Technology reduce effectiveness; (2) Addictiveness of SL; (3) Newbie/Learning Curve; (4) Funding Issues; and (5) Requires Self-Directedness.

Implications for Practice

The intent of the research is to contribute to the scholarship of adults’ perceptions of learning in a virtual environment. It is hoped that the research will provide individuals with new tools for using virtual learning environments in their own practice and develop ways of appreciating its potential impact on adult education.

References


The Transformational Impact of Learning to Teach Online

Carol A. McQuiggan, D.Ed. candidate
The Pennsylvania State University – Harrisburg

Abstract: An action research study is being proposed in which professional development for faculty to prepare to teach online will be intentionally designed to promote transformational learning and inform classroom teaching practices by critically reflecting on and discussing their assumptions and beliefs about teaching.

There are a number of driving forces and demands of the 21st century that are putting pressure on institutions of higher education to make changes in their traditional ways of teaching and even changing the entire environment of higher education (Langley, O’Connor, & Welkener, 2004). Perhaps the largest driving force for change is the rapid growth of the Internet enabling distance education and changing the way we gather and share information, gain knowledge, collaborate, design and deliver instruction, and changing the speed at which we can accomplish these tasks (Diamond, 2005; Jones, Mally, Blevins, & Munroe, 2003; Lezburg, 2003; Sorcinelli, Austin, Eddy, & Beach, 2006). It has spurred creative uses of new technologies, changed classrooms, and placed new and different demands on faculty (Lawler & King, 2000; Sorcinelli et al.).

As of fall 2006, almost 3.5 million students were enrolled in at least one online course in an institution of higher education in the United States. This is over double the number of student enrollees of over 1.6 million in fall 2002. Additionally, 11% of all United States higher education students took at least one online course in fall 2002, and this number increased to almost 20% by fall 2006. Much of this explosive growth was due to new institutions offering online education. Approximately one-third of higher education institutions account for three-fourths of all online enrollments, so there is still much room for continued growth (Allen & Seaman, 2003, 2007).

Some faculty have embraced online education (Allen & Seaman, 2003), but many faculty are only beginning to integrate technology into their teaching. Most have no experience with online teaching, having spent the majority of their years as a learner in a traditional face-to-face classroom (Brookfield, 2006). Their initial teaching model is typically born from that of their own teachers, and they teach as they were taught (Layne, Froyd, Simpson, Caso, & Merton, 2004). In this way, the teaching and learning environment has not changed much over the years (Conrad, 2004).

With few faculty having any online experience, it is not surprising that numerous changes have been noted in the faculty experience when teaching online. Several studies have found that when moving to the online environment, faculty note that which is unfamiliar, different, or absent and roles seem to change (Conrad, 2004; Morris, Xu, & Finnegan, 2005).

Learning to teach online may be a catalyst for faculty to reflect on and evaluate their current teaching practices. It is a potential opportunity to develop new ideas about teaching and learning (Tallent-Runnels et al., 2006), and to restructure traditional classroom roles and relationships (Jaffee, 2003). What worked for them in the past in their traditional classroom may no longer be helpful or reliable in their online classroom.

An action research study is being proposed in which professional development for faculty to prepare to teach online will be intentionally designed to promote transformational learning and inform classroom teaching practices by critically reflecting on and discussing their assumptions.
and beliefs about teaching. Additionally, the importance of relationships between the facilitator, faculty, and students in the transformation process will be explored.

During the roundtable discussion, those who design and deliver faculty professional development for online teaching, and faculty who are preparing to teach online or who have taught online, will discuss their experiences with online teaching and the implications of the proposed study. What changes in previously held assumptions and beliefs about teaching do faculty experience as they prepare to teach online?

References


A Comparative Case Study of GED programs at Four Illinois Community Colleges: Perceptions of Effective Instruction

Raiana Mearns
Doctoral Candidate, Columbia University Teachers College

Abstract: In this study, the researcher wanted to understand the dynamics of a GED classroom as it related to effective instructional practice. Teachers, students and administrators were asked what they considered to be effective strategies and how those perceptions were shared across groups to build a shared instructional vision.

In Illinois GED programs, less than 50% of GED students enrolled in classes pass the GED examination on average. Less than 30% of those who pass continue their education at the 48 Illinois community colleges (Knell and Scogins, 2004). With a state and federal emphasis on transitioning GED students to postsecondary or career training programs, adult educators need to know why students do not pass the exam. Barriers to persistence are often blamed for the low number of successful testers. GED programs have little influence over personal barriers in the students’ lives; however, adult education programs can ensure that students receive instruction that is considered effective.

The researcher collected data from GED teachers, students and administrators perceptions of what constitutes effective instruction through individual interviews. Teachers and administrators also completed demographic inventories. Students and teachers were asked to describe a critical incident when they successfully learned or taught a difficult concept. Documents from each college were used to determine how tacit messages were conveyed in recruitment materials or observation and evaluation forms.

Although students are often asked to complete classroom evaluations, they are rarely asked about the teaching strategies that work for them. Students articulated five strategies that were the most helpful. In addition students described the elements that create a GED classroom environment that is conducive to learning.

Teachers identified seven strategies that they found most effective. They were consistent with many of the evidence based strategies in the literature (Cromley, 2000, Taylor, 2006, Wlodkowski, 2008). Unfortunately teachers have few opportunities to share the methods that work with colleagues. Although all four GED programs had teacher observation or evaluation forms, they were not consistently used and teachers rarely received feedback about their instructional practices.

Administrators revealed that they are not comfortable telling teachers how to teach. Many of the administrators in this study judged the teachers’ performance based on their rapport with students. Three out of five administrators did not have an academic background in education. Administrators supported their teachers by sending them to attend professional development activities. They met regularly for in-service sessions that addressed policies, procedures and paperwork. Administrators were pleased with teachers if students were able to demonstrate level gains on standardized tests.

The researcher found the three groups agreed that a good learning environment needs to be present before learning occurs. Understanding what is meant by a good learning environment has created new questions. Students consider a good learning environment one where a student can feel comfortable that they will not be punished for poor attendance. Teachers describe a good
learning environment as one where teachers support and encourage students with patience and kindness. Administrators thought the GED class had a good learning environment when teachers and students had built friendly relationships and students persisted.

This researcher analyzed the data using adult developmental theory, adult learning theory, program planning theory, and organizational theory. Conclusions were based on the research findings as well as the existing literature, and recommendations were made for the field of adult basic education, GED teachers, students and administrators and for additional research that would further this area of study.

References
Displaced Mexican American Workers in Retraining Programs

Diana P. Mena and Mary V. Alfred
Texas A&M University

Abstract: One Stop Job Centers assist trade affected displaced workers in skills development and occupational retraining with the goal of re-incorporating them into the workforce. In this study, we explored the job loss and transitional experiences of two groups of low-literate, primarily Spanish speaking males. Findings included coping mechanisms and identification of barriers that included a failed method of instruction.

Merriam and Caffarella (1999) note that many displaced workers do not have transferable skills and are limited in employable skills. This is congruent with Daniels, Gobeli and Findley, (2000) and Carrol, Blatner, Alt, Schuster and Findley, (2000) studies of log and mill workers who lost their jobs due to NAFTA. Those studies indicated few people were retrained and few had transferable skills. The purpose of this study was to understand the transitional experiences of displaced Mexican Americans with low-English literacy to adult literacy and/or job training programs in preparation for reentry into the workforce. The research questions that guided this study were: a) How do Mexican American displaced workers describe their transitional experiences from worker to learner? b) What facilitated their learning and transition c) What factors hinder learning and transition among displaced Mexican American workers?

Literature Review

Displaced Worker is “person 20 years and over who lost or left jobs because their plant or company closed or moved, there was insufficient work for them to do, or their position or shift was abolished” (USBLS, 2008). Daniels, et al, (2000) and Carrol et al (2000) studies of log and mill workers who lost their jobs due to NAFTA found that few men retrained; and few had transferable skills. McAtte and Benshoff (2006) and Daniels et al (2000) found that the level of support the displaced worker had from family and friends was a predictor of whether a person participated in a retraining program or not and their subsequent success in completing the program. If the displaced worker has enough support from family and friends to cope with job dislocation and life transitions, he or she is more likely to participate in a retraining program.

Methodology

This was a qualitative study involving two groups: City A was group of recently displaced workers who were participating or have completed a retraining program sponsored by the Texas Workforce Commission. City B participants had already completed the training. Twelve participants were included in the study plus two instructors. Interviews lasting from 60-90 minutes and was the primary means of data collection. Creswell’s (2003) data analysis framework was used to analyze the data.

Findings

The participants’ self-perception as displaced workers, barriers, and coping mechanisms are congruent with previous literature studies. Their self-identity was tied to their job. Their coping mechanisms consisted on utilizing social networks as a support system. City A participants had a small social network and support system in comparison to City B participants.
whose support system and network was larger. Perceived Barriers - City A and B participants encountered the same perceived barriers to be the lack of English language proficiency, low educational attainment, age, financial constraints, and uncertain future. Both Cities A and B felt high self expectations about completing the program, but at the same time they felt the expectations imposed on them by the agency were too high, due to the limited amount of time available to complete the training program. However, City B participants expected and demanded the agency to be more responsive to their needs. “How do they want us to learn in 6 months, where we already lost 4 months just in getting started,” “It’s very hard to be in a classroom after working all your life….. trying to learn algebra and things I had not seen in more than 30 years…..” (Adan, City A). “The teachers only had us writing sentences and telling us to use our dictionary and to speak English….. but how? They never taught us to pronounce words; we never practiced in class how to speak English” (Carlos, City B). City B participants also stated more time was important. They expressed a need for qualified instructors and an instructional method that can teach them to speak English. They all expressed that they would like to have more time in which to finish the program and to be taught with an adequate learning method. On the other hand, the teacher from City A stated: To better understand these workers, “more cultural awareness is needed.”

Discussion

Claypool (2005) points out grief and anger are emotions a displaced worker must resolve before he or she can go on. “Men’s identities are attached to their jobs… (Claypool, 2005, p.30). These workers experienced a multitude of emotions due to financial hardship, limited literacy and limited English proficiency. Depression, stress, frustration are some emotions they experienced. All twelve participants expressed a need for a different teaching method that can better assist their learning needs, in addition, to needing more time to accomplish their educational goals.

References

Developing Anti-Racist Scholars: The Role of Adult Education Graduate Programs

Barbara A. Metelsky and Thomas R. Easley
North Carolina State University, USA

Abstract: The purpose of this paper and this roundtable is to explore the role of adult education graduate programs in preparing anti-racist scholars. In dialogue with others, we seek to understand the broad roles that programs have and the specific responsibilities that adult education graduate students, faculty members, and program administrators may undertake toward this end.

Introduction

A search of the Adult Education Research Conference (AERC) Proceedings from 1993-2008 revealed that the issue of racism was addressed at every conference held during this period of time. However, none of the papers, symposiums, or roundtables focused on the role of adult education graduate programs in preparing anti-racist scholars.

As developing scholars undertaking doctoral studies in adult education, we are on personal journeys to explore our respective positionalities as a White female and Black male and the impact that our positionalities have on our research. As we individually and jointly strive to understand: what constitutes anti-racist scholarship, what it means to be an anti-racist researcher, and how one becomes an anti-racist scholar, we recognize the importance of learning from and with others. We see a role for adult education graduate programs in fostering and supporting such learning. Therefore, the purpose of this paper and this roundtable is to begin a dialogue with other adult education graduate students, faculty members, administrators, and practitioners on the role of adult education graduate programs in developing anti-racist scholars.

Anti-Racist Research

Anti-racist research assumes that there is institutional racism in mainstream social science research. This is evident in the topics of study; the concepts and methodologies that are privileged; who is allowed, legitimated, and validated to research what and how; and how existing power structures allow for the production and dissemination of certain knowledges (Dei, 2005; Deschler, & Grudens-Schuck, 2000).

The purpose of anti-racist research is to further the understanding of how social oppression both constructs and constrains racial identity. Anti-racist research, therefore, must place “the minoritized at the center of analysis by focusing on their lived experience” (Dei, 2005, p. 2). It is not about the researcher becoming situated in another person’s lived experience; rather, it is about the researcher critically engaging her or his own lived experience in the pursuit of new knowledge. It is also about questioning the social structures that oppress people of various races and ethnicities and using the knowledge gained to break down these structures; i.e. to affect social change (Dei, 2005).

Preparing Anti-Racist Scholars

Racism is difficult to discuss. Issues of power, oppression, and privilege are challenging to explore. “Because ethnicity and especially race are emotion-laden issues; these are difficult matters for scholars to confront honestly, because scholarly reflection cannot force most
Americans and other Westerners to engage willingly in introspection about these topics” (Stansfield II, 1993, p. 6). Yet, to become an anti-racist scholar one must engage in introspection on these thorny and complicated issues.

Given that adult education graduate programs are the primary vehicle through which the next generation of adult education researchers is trained, it would seem self-evident that these programs should play a key role in fostering the development of anti-racist scholars. However, some have criticized that as the disciplinary field of adult education has professionalized, it has lost its historical social change focus (Cunningham, 1996). While today’s adult education graduate programs have a clear focus on the preparation of technically competent scholars, do these programs also have an intentional and explicit focus on preparing scholars who are critically competent; i.e. to conduct research from a critical perspective?

Our overarching question is “What is the role of adult education programs in preparing anti-racist scholars?” This question raises a broad range of related questions that include: (a) “What responsibilities do programs have in developing anti-racist scholars?”; (b) “What are the potential roles of adult education administrators, faculty members, and students in this regard?”; (c) “What efforts are programs currently undertaking toward this end?”; and (d) “How can efforts to develop anti-racist scholars be tied to broader issues related to research and Other marginalized people?”

**Desired Outcomes**

Given the broad scope of this topic, the complex issues involved, the page limit for this paper, and the short amount of time for the roundtable dialogue, our desired outcomes are modest. We will feel successful if we have brought attention to this important issue and have created an environment where people of diverse positionalities, with various roles in adult education graduate programs, and who have different opinions on this topic are made to feel welcomed and to have their voices heard.

Additional outcomes sought include the identification of: (a) others that are engaged in preparing anti-racists scholars or are interested in this issue, (b) literature that would inform this topic, (c) evidence-based or promising practices designed to prepare anti-racist scholars, and (d) broad research areas and specific research questions related to this issue.

**References**


Global Corporate Executives’ SOCIAL CAPITAL Formation Experiences

Yoshie Tomozumi Nakamura
Teachers College, Columbia University, USA

Abstract: There is growing interest in examining social capital and how it influences communities, organizations, and individuals. This research seeks to determine how social capital is developed among senior executives in a global organization.

This study explores to what extent and in what ways perceptions of business executives’ social networks are reportedly impacted as a result of participating in in-person seminars arranged by their organization. More specifically, this study seeks to understand the effect of a seminar that acts as a social intervention and impacts the participants’ perceptions of: social networks and their benefits, barriers, facilitating elements, and institutional support factors.

In today’s global business environment, organizations must respond quickly to ever-changing business conditions (Cohen & Prusak, 2001). Business leaders increasingly are responding to these challenges with proactive efforts to build institutional social capital. Social capital can be defined as the actual and potential resources of an individual or social unit embedded in and derived from network relationships (Nahapiet & Ghoshal, 1998). Social networks can be defined as social structures made of nodes (individuals, groups, or organizations) that are joined by various interactions such as business and personal relationships (Tichy, Tushman & Fombrum, 1979). Through social networks, which include business and personal relationships intersecting with adult learning practices, executives can support one another through the exchange of useful informational resources. These in turn become valuable assets known as social capital.

As companies recognize the importance of networking opportunities among their executives, they often create circumstances and settings whereby their employees can meet with each other and exchange useful informational resources. Social capital-building interventions include workshops, seminars, receptions, and the like. A significant concern that research can inform is that global executives need a better understanding of how valuable social networks are formed and maintained through such resource-heavy social interventions. Executives can benefit by utilizing social networks from past meetings as resources. By carefully examining aspects of social capital formation, they may be able to use findings to positively impact future interventions for improved organizational performance. However, little research exists that examines the ways that global executives’ social networks are impacted through such social interventions.

The purpose of this study is to understand how senior executives’ perceptions of their work-related social networks are reportedly impacted by attending an annual leadership development seminar sponsored by their employing global organization. I identify key components that are required for networking activities mainly from the social capital literatures. My queries include key components including trust, norms, obligations, expectations, and identity as reflected in survey scales in the quantitative design. I plan to investigate possible facilitating factors for and barriers to networking in the survey instruments as well. In this way, I will be able to obtain information on key networking indicators, perhaps extending findings to larger populations. Selective research subject interviews will hopefully generate related episodes surrounding social capital as well.
In view of the organizational leaders supporting my research, I anticipate that the findings from this study will help senior human resource professionals and senior managers interested in social networks improve event design for greater impact. Early indications suggest benefits from fostering productive networking in the for-profit sector. I am encouraged that the findings from this research will contribute to providing a base-line approach for adult educators interested in facilitating productive social networks in the workplace. Adult learning theories focusing on collective reflection with dialogue or critical discourse (Cressey, 2006) are implicit in the research design and questions of this study. Critical reflective practice theory helps explain learning processes as executives interact with others and effectively share ideas and opinions, as well as when they are discussing valuable solutions.

This study incorporates interview data, online surveys, archival research, and onsite observation. The first phase is individual (telephone) interviews. Concurrently, based on the themes, the second phase is a modified and further developed instrument to survey the executives about their social networks. Onsite observation occurs between and among the three surveys’ administrations. The study completion is anticipated for the fall of 2009. Data collection and analysis are on-going during the Adult Education Research Conference.

The AERC round table presents an opportunity to discuss topics surrounding social capital within the critical community. Questions that may stimulate interactive discussion can vary by audience. How important is social capital to modern organizational leaders? Does global distribution make social capital more or less important? What do scholars believe might be institutional motivating or supporting factors for, or barriers to, collaborative networking practices? How can adult learning theory better inform our understanding of social capital construction and maintenance?

Clearly, social capital can be a great asset among business executives, and one that effectively helps them better respond to competitive conditions. Literatures and empirical research show us that social capital theory definitions, concepts, and models frame networking phenomena among executives in organizational environments. This allows us to examine how social networks support community, organization, and individual development. I feel that discussions of my research at the conference will be generative for my work and hopefully additive for others.

References
What I Do Matters, Too: Transformation and Success of First-Generation Adult Women in Undergraduate Education

Sally J. Neal, PhD Candidate
University of Connecticut, USA

Alexandra A. Bell, PhD
University of Connecticut, USA

Abstract: Researchers qualitatively examined the experiences of first-generation adult women in a 4-year university, and found that participants (a) experienced enhanced academic self-efficacy through positive instructor feedback, (b) resolved the “dilemma of choice” regarding role expectations, and (c) developed a sense of responsibility for the academic status of the next generation.

Background
In 2005, 14.9 million students were enrolled in postsecondary education, and 31% were adult learners (NCES, 2007-182). The U.S Census Bureau (2005) reported that in 2003, 63% of all college students aged 35 and older were female. The NCES (2005) also found that while 68% of continuing generation students will complete a 4-year degree, only 28% of first-generation students will be successful. Adult, female, first-generation students run an especially high risk of attrition due to less participation (Donaldson & Graham, 1999), conflict with cultural peers (Luttrell, 1989, p. 39), or feelings of guilt about neglecting her family (Terrell, 1990). Although researchers have studied first-generation or female adult learners in vocational or community college settings, little is known about how this population succeeds at 4-year research universities.

Theoretical Framework
To guide this study on successful, female, first-generation adult learners in an 4-year university, the researchers utilized a conceptual framework synthesized from Tinto’s (1975) theory of undergraduate student dropout behavior and Gilligan’s (1982) model of women’s moral development. While Tinto theorized that college students must disassociate from prior communities to successfully integrate into an academic institution, Gilligan proposed that women grow developmentally by maintaining connection with others. Therefore, the need exists to determine how female, first-generation adult women succeed in an academic environment.

Methodology
Participants were eight first-generation adult women (ages 26-50) who had been successful in their undergraduate studies at a large, public research university. The authors used a basic (generic) qualitative methodology (Merriam, 1998) to identify themes. The sample was purposefully selected from female volunteers who had at least a Junior standing, were over the age of 25, and were first-generation students. Data was collected via semi-structured interviews, a brief demographic questionnaire, and participant reflective writings. Data was analyzed using open and axial coding, and constant comparative methods.
Results

Three themes were found in the data regarding the experiences of first-generation adult women who were successful undergraduates at a 4-year institution: 1) They retain pre-college relationships. Having experienced and overcome personal hardships as children or young adults, the first-generation women in this study developed a profound sense of responsibility for the next generation. Each spoke directly about their desire to become a role model for academic persistence and personal success. 2) A shift in perceived academic self-efficacy (from low to high) was a direct outcome of positive feedback from instructors. Receiving high grades contributed to the women’s rise in academic self-efficacy, and subsequent academic persistence. 3) Participants in this study moved through a developmental process that resolved Gilligan’s “dilemma of choice.” Rather than perceiving time to one’s self as “selfish and wrong,” time spent on education was perceived as “selfish and right,” and then, simply as “right.”

Discussion

The findings of this study are only generalizable to the sample and setting in which the research occurred. The sample is not representative of the entire population of female, first-generation, adult learners at the university where data was collected, or in any other university. None the less, further research is needed to determine how engagement in higher education alters first-generation adult women’s perspectives. In this study, the women experienced change in how they view their world; specifically, their place in it, and their responsibility to it. Enhanced self-efficacy also seemed to enhance confidence, self-esteem, and self-respect. As more and more adult learners seek out a 4-year degree, it is critical that professionals in higher education (both academic affairs and student services) continue to develop research agendas that inform the educational practice and policy of four-year undergraduate institutions.

References


“What do future educational leaders know about gender?”: A feminist content analysis

Debora Nelli, Portland State University

The educational access, opportunity and experience of students and educators in U.S. educational institutions is influenced and often limited by their gender. Gender discrimination impacts the academic, emotional, vocational and economic lives of both students and educators.

The Glass Ceiling Commission sponsored by the U.S. Department of Labor determined key factors in the amelioration of institutional gender discrimination were the beliefs, values and commitments of the institution’s leaders (U.S. Dept of Labor, 1995). The pivotal role educational leaders play in either reproducing or disrupting institutional gender inequity makes it essential to examine cultural artifacts for insights into the expressed and implied values, beliefs and commitments of future educational leaders regarding gender issues.

Purpose statement

Feminists have used content analysis to examine cultural artifacts such as texts, products, images and multimedia to expose and challenge dominant narratives and stereotypical representations (Leavy, 2007). Examining the textual cultural artifacts of academic socialization is also a uniquely appropriate project for feminist content analysis. There is often a tension between doctoral socialization’s primary purpose of imparting academic traditions and feminist ideals of questioning, revealing and resisting traditions that reproduce inequalities.

The initial socialization of educational leaders to the cultural norms of the discipline occurs during graduate study (Weidman, Twale & Stein, 2001). Additionally, doctoral dissertations represent “the intellectual culmination of the graduate school experience” (Boyer, 1990, p.74). This gives dissertations a unique descriptive value as an academic socialization artifact of future educational leaders.

Understanding the beliefs, values and commitments of future educational leaders in regards to gender issues provides a crucial first step in creating graduate programs and professional socialization experiences that can prepare educational leaders to meet the needs of all students and educators in a diverse contemporary society.

This study uses feminist content analysis as a lens to examine the gender consciousness, cultural beliefs and gender conceptualization of future educational leaders as represented by a key textual academic socialization artifact, the Educational Doctorate (Ed.D.) dissertation.

Research Questions

This study examines gender focused Ed.D. dissertation scholarship from U.S. public doctoral granting institutions in the last decade as indicated by the dissertation title. This inquiry into the consciousness and cultural gender beliefs of future educational leaders will focus on two questions, 1.) How prevalent is gender focused inquiry in recent Ed.D. dissertation scholarship? 2.) What are the cultural gender beliefs and gender conceptualizations represented in Ed.D. dissertation scholarship from leaders graduating in the last decade, 1998-2007?

Research Design

The study uses a mixed method approach to feminist content analysis with an initial quantitative stage to answer the 1st research question: How prevalent is gender focused inquiry in the last decade of dissertation scholarship?
Stage 1-Quantitative Sampling and Analysis

The sample for the quantitative stage will be the entire census of Ed.D. dissertations completed at public doctoral granting institutions during 1998-2007. Ed.D. dissertation titles will be collected using Proquest’s Dissertations and Thesis Database for all public doctoral granting institutions identified by their Carnegie’s institutional classification. Trained coders will examine, select and count dissertations titles with a gender focus. Multiple coders will be utilized and tested throughout Stage 1 data collection to ensure intercoder reliability.

Stage 2-Qualitative Sampling and Analysis

The sampling for the qualitative stage of the study will select a smaller purposeful sample of dissertations to undergo more in-depth analysis to answer the 2nd research question: What are the cultural gender beliefs and gender conceptualizations represented in Ed.D. dissertation scholarship from leaders graduating in the last decade, 1998-2007?

Textual representation from these selected dissertations will be examined to assess the presence of gender cultural beliefs, or stereotypes. Additionally, Tetreault’s (1985) Feminist Phase Theory will be used as a theoretical model to assess gender conceptualization in the qualitative stage of this study. Tetreault’s (1985) Feminist Phase Theory offers an evaluation model that has been successfully used to evaluate gender representation in textbooks, curricula, faculty professional faculty development and scholarly publications.

Contemporary feminist researchers also suggest that using gender as a category of analysis is complicated further by additional intersectionalities of advantage and disadvantage such as race, ethnicity, religion, age, class, and sexual orientation (Collins, 2000). Tetreault’s (1985) model offers a lens to assess gender focused studies for a more inclusive gender conceptualization.

In addition to Tetreault’s (1985) Feminist Phase Theory model, Altheide’s (1987) ethnographic content analysis will be also be used as an additional analytical tool to allow the additional flexibility for additional themes to emerge that may not be captured solely by Tetreault’s (1985) Phase Theory Model.

Implications for Adult Education

Unofficial educational policy is represented by dominant patterns of practice and cultural norms (Fowler, 2004). This study examines the current disciplinary cultural norms regarding gender as represented by educational leaders. If the cultural norms and unofficial policy of future educational leaders is to ignore, exclude or trivialize gender issues in education scholarship, gender discrimination in the access, opportunities and experiences of students and educators will remain uninterrupted by policies and practices in educational institutions.

A feminist content analysis of recent Ed.D. dissertation scholarship can offer valuable insights about the gender consciousness, cultural gender beliefs and gender conceptualization of future educational leaders. Insights gleaned from this key academic socialization artifact can inform program planning for the professional development of educational leaders.

References

The Higher Education Opportunity Act of 2008:
What Does it Mean to Learners of Nontraditional Age Who Experience
Intellectual Disability?

Kara Thrasher-Livingston
University of Alaska, Anchorage United States

Abstract: Analysis of discourse between the Higher Education Opportunity Act of
2008 and related public commentary reveals assumptions about learners who
experience intellectual disability who potentially engage with postsecondary
education. What does it mean for the nontraditional age adult learner?

The Higher Education Opportunity Act (HEOA) has been celebrated as a breakthrough for
people with intellectual disability to access postsecondary education. This inquiry is a critical
interpretive discourse analysis of sections 766 and 767 of the HEOA and related commentary in
public regional hearings, internet postings, stakeholder websites, and news blogs. How does this
discourse create, and/or contribute to assumptions about this learner, and the educational
environment itself?

Educational policy creates access to education for marginalized learners, with the theoretical
goal of inclusion, especially its social aspects (Popkewitz & Lindblad, 2000). The HEOA can be
seen as an expression of the society which created it, making inquiry a work in progress due to
changing definitions of adult learners, social perceptions (Jarvis, 2000), and adult education.

Definitions of disability have changed over time, and have never been standardized (Linton,
2006). Disability is viewed as a social construct, as it is usually thought of as a physical or mental
impairment resulting in perceived inability to perform in the social world as defined by the non-
disabled (Peters, 1993).

Words embody power in the lives of people, as who speaks or writes them permits or denies
access to education, supports, and society itself (Foucault, 1975; Freire, 1970). Discourse analysis
involving educational policy can reveal the foundational impact public policy has upon everyday
lives (Ball, 2006), especially from the standpoint of intellectual disability. Receiving a diagnosis,
experiencing evolving and eventually derogatory labels, meeting eligibility for education and life-
long support services involving telling one’s personal story over and over again are some ways in
which policy reaches into individual life experience (Nash & Thrasher-Livingston, 2008).

The HEOA endorses the creation of model programs emphasizing transition “to adulthood” for
eligible students, young adults age 16-25. Its overt aim is inclusion. The program is an
ambassador, identifying the student as outside the educational environment, as it “provides
individual supports and services for the academic and social inclusion of students with
intellectual disabilities in academic courses, extracurricular activities, and other aspects of the
institution of higher education’s regular postsecondary program” (HEOA, 2008). The targeted
student is one who can meet markers of perceived success, as defined by those who do not
experience disability. This denies access and creates the assumption of non-success for those who
do not fit historical, conceptual and actual “eligibility” (Merriam, Caffarella and Baumgartner,
2007).

Preference is given for programs offering graduation with a “meaningful” certificate or
credential. Many adults who experience intellectual disability and are of nontraditional age
haven’t experienced formal special education, due to the historic lack of educational options
Learners seeking personal enrichment rather than employment may find a special program with a required credential irrelevant. The banking concept of learning is reinforced by defining eligible learners and requiring completion of a specialized program with a resulting credential. Here the learner is assumed to retain all deposited knowledge, and learning is finished at completion (Freire, 1970/2006). What does this mean for life-long learners who experience intellectual disability, and for the educational environment wishing to engage with the HEOA?

Public discourse reveals paradoxical assumptions. Newly available financial aid for this learner invites both approval and questions about why this student would deserve it. Existing model programs and successful students are presented, celebrating their positive experiences (US Department of Education, 2008), and promoting the assumption that postsecondary education is appropriate only for people who need minimal supports, in specially created programs at formal institutions. The feeling that education “for all” has finally arrived is voiced, as well as concerns about participants’ ability to contribute to society as a result of their education (The Chronicle of Higher Education, 2008).

Education for all means all, yet the HEOA is targeted at “some”. It offers a diagnostic response to a framed and defined problem, potentially relieving the social and educational context from responsibility towards making a deeper commitment to full authentic inclusion and life-long learning.

References


Building Success in Online Educational Programs for Adult Learners

Matthew A. Eichler (chair), Tani K. Bialek, Cynthia L. Digby, and Cathy Twohig, University of Minnesota
Rod P. Githens, University of Louisville, Lynn A. Trinko, The Ohio State University

Abstract: The purpose of this symposium is to explore multiple perspectives on building and maintaining high quality online educational programs in university settings for adult learners.

As a course designer, course instructor, and former graduate student, I (M. Eichler) have had the opportunity to experience an array of online courses designed for adult learners. There seems to be a wide variety of approaches to online courses roughly matching the educational values of instructors and designers, from those who design courses much like independent study correspondence education with little interaction besides assignments to those who use who levels of administrative control through course tools and being highly involved in directive classroom conversation. As a profession, we have seen the rise of online, Internet-based courses through the rise of entire online degree programs both at traditional and online-only universities. Some have had high rates of success, while others have folded. Institutions have followed different paths in establishing, continuing, promoting, and utilizing online educational programs whether they are at the course level, the program level, or the university level.

This symposium will review several perspectives in building success in online educational programs adult learners. Some of the perspectives propose building success through course level interventions, including building effective discussions, utilizing audio tools in interaction, building social presence, or building a teaching presence, while others relate to programmatic issues, such as dealing with programs in transition or building successful student affairs programs for online learners. These perspectives come from experienced online educators in adult education programs.

Focusing on Discussion – Matthew A. Eichler

As one of the main forms for interaction between students and one another and student and instructor, discussion forums in online classes deserve high levels of attention in online teaching. In constructivist-styled online classes, course discussion, whether synchronous (chat) or asynchronous (discussion forum), serves as primary site for relating learning material to previous knowledge, for gaining understanding and building bridges between personal understanding and that of others, namely learning peers and the instructor, and for exploring inferential relationships. Providing elements of structure, such as grading rubrics, descriptive discussion protocols, and active student facilitation promotion provide for more meaningful and effective discussion forums (Gilbert & Dabbagh, 2005).

There are several noted benefits of online discussion forums compared to in-class face-to-face discussions, including the increased reflection time available for students, the ability to edit and formulate posts extensively, as well as the ability to read and post on the students’ own time, especially useful for students who are more fluent in written language than spoken language. Having the ability to follow a line of discussion through a thread is beneficial to both instructors and students (Tiene, 2000). Brookfield and Preskill explain that while online courses can be
isolating, learners have the golden opportunity to experience “genuinely individualistic critical thinking” (2005, p. 232) because the power of groupthink is reduced in the online environment.

Students in online courses express concern over repetition and an urge to write about something unique. This can be mitigated by providing several options for discussion prompts, which is something I present in my own online classes. For those students who find the discussion prompts provided to limiting, there is also an opportunity to write their own prompts and respond to them. In my own experience, I have found that students need to be taught how to respond to one another, so that discussion responses go beyond simple expressions of agreement or disagreement. A number of technical tips, plus careful questioning that encourages students to foster connections between the theoretical aspects presented in a class and the areas in which they can practice these aspects provide for optimal discussion. One aspect the instructor can foster in online courses is that of respect (Brookfield & Preskill, 2005). The instructor shows respect for learners in recognizing his or her own limitations in knowledge and acknowledging students’ contributions to the truth-seeking nature of an online discussion. Further, the instructor is the chief role model in online discussions, demonstrating ways of appraising others’ work and developing sound relationship through online discussion.

**Computer-mediated Communication (CMC) Voice Discussion Tools – Tani K. Bialek**

Computer-mediated communication (CMC) is an electronic exchange of information using computers and includes many forms of communication such as electronic mail (e-mail), bulletin boards and computer conferencing (Paulsen, 1995). CMC technology used as a teaching tool and has been widely studied for its pedagogical implications and research illustrates that CMC-enabled discussion threads reveal a deeper thought process by removing time constraints (Davie & Wells, 1992); provide more opportunities for self-reflection (Everett & Ahren, 1994; Aiken, 1993); facilitate collaborative learning (Bonk & King, 1998; Schrum & Lamb, 1996) and promote a learning community (Burge, 1994). Wimba Voice Board software is an Internet-based CMC tool that provides asynchronous verbal interaction resembling conventional text-based online discussion. Despite efforts to incorporate voice discussion boards, such as Wimba, research shows that most students prefer to make text rather than voice postings. Some headway has been made in the area of communication competency when using voice discussions where McIntosh, Braul, and Chao (2003) reported that 41 per cent of the students agreed or strongly agreed that Wimba discussion boards were effective in facilitating debates and discussions. Within the remainder of this section research results from an online course and ways to increase student adoption of voice discussion tools are reported.

The purpose of this research study was to examine Wimba voice discussion usage and preferences within a graduate-level online training and development course at a large Midwestern U.S. university. The course consisted of required discussion participation per module where students had the choice of using either voice, text, or a combination of voice and text discussion posting formats. The course also included an optional opportunity to participate in a training delivery practice session using the voice discussion tool. During the final week of the course students were surveyed electronically regarding their voice discussion usage and preferences. The survey contained both 7-point Likert-scale questions in addition to open-ended questions. Data showed that when given an option students preferred making text-based discussion postings. Within the five course modules containing require discussion participation, all twenty students chose to make text-only discussion postings and five students participated in the optional training
delivery practice. While students generally agreed that both voice and text discussions facilitated collaborative learning they still preferred making text discussion postings.

**TABLE 1: Survey Results**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Survey Question</th>
<th>Mean</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Online voice discussion technology is effective in facilitating discussions.</td>
<td>4.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The incorporation of voice discussion technology enhanced my overall online learning experience in this course.</td>
<td>4.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Online voice discussion facilitates collaborative learning.</td>
<td>5.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I prefer making voice discussion postings.</td>
<td>3.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Online text discussion technology is effective in facilitating discussions.</td>
<td>5.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The incorporation of text discussion technology enhanced my overall online learning experience in this course.</td>
<td>5.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Online text discussion facilitates collaborative learning.</td>
<td>5.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I prefer making text discussion postings.</td>
<td>5.2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In order to better understand students’ online discussion usage and preferences open-ended questions were included in the survey to uncover students’ likes and dislikes of the voice discussion tool and why they chose to, or did not choose to, participate in voice discussions.

**TABLE 2: Student Remarks Regarding Usage of Voice Discussion Technology**

**Pros**

I liked hearing other student's voices. I felt more "connected" with them.  
I liked that it made me realize how difficult it would be to actually synthesize the information in my training program and facilitator guide. It was great practice and helped me see the quality of my training program.

**Cons**

Sometimes the background noise made it hard to hear. There was a little static here and there, but it could have been where the person was recording.  
I did not use it because I was afraid of the technology. I am extremely busy, and taking the time to learn it when there was another viable method of classroom participation did not seem like an important way to spend my time.  
It was easier to write the text responses in the Discussion portion of the course. I also did the majority of my Discussion postings from work where a voice discussion wasn't very easy to disguise!

Through the survey it was revealed that none of the students had previously taken an online course incorporating voice discussion technology. When asked to describe their views regarding the use of voice discussion tools in an online learning environment students were open to using voice technology yet they were still hesitant due to ease of use issues.
TABLE 3: Student Views of Using Voice Discussion Technology in an Online Course

After using the voice discussion tools for this final bonus point opportunity, I would consider using it again. I was surprised by how easy and painless it was. I think that online voice discussion should be more of a requirement, especially with the course content of training and development.

I think that it is a great option for students to have. I think that a combination of text and voice discussion postings would be ideal. It also fosters new ways of learning and applying your knowledge to the class. I would be in favor of having voice discussions available for students more often.

Now that I have used it once, I would definitely utilize this tool if offered in a future course. I did have to respond neutrally to the majority of the questions because I was the first to post so I did not have the opportunity to listen to other people's postings and respond. I would like to see if it heightens the level of interaction and engagement in online discussions.

If it is optional, I think participants will always choose the easier discussion tool. In this case, the text postings were easier for me. As an online course, I do think that voice discussions can be a good way to learn and discuss with classmates, but an online course also doesn't quite have the same accountability that an actual classroom session has in terms of fostering discussion.

I think it is a great option for those who prefer to talk rather than type. It is also nice to "connect" with other learners in an online environment. It causes me to realize how my tone and word use effects people's impression of me. It takes more work than a normal post though, so I would probably stick with text.

The results of this survey pose several challenges for adult educators, students, and voice discussion board software manufacturers. Results of this research point toward ease of use as a key obstacle to increasing voice discussion usage. As educators we may have limited influence over the development of voice technology itself, however, there are ways we can increase adoption of voice discussion tools within our online courses. Three suggested practices are (1) promoting the educational benefits of voice discussion technology, (2) incorporating voice-based activities in addition to text-based, and (3) providing students with voice discussion training and support. In summary, the use of voice discussion board technology, such as Wimba, within online educational settings provides students with additional communication channels and has great potential to make a broader impact on self-reflection and collaborative learning in an online environment.

Creating Community Through Social Presence – Rod P. Githens

Online learning is unique from other types of distance education because of the communication tools that allow for high levels of interpersonal interaction between students. These media create spaces for participants to experience social presence, which allows for "project[ing] themselves socially and emotionally, as ‘real’ people” (Garrison, Anderson, & Archer, 1999, p. 94). Social presence facilitates learners’ safe engagement in meaningful dialogue and discourse. With more widespread availability of online synchronous communication technologies, instructors have even more opportunities to facilitate dialogue. Ultimately, dialogue, collaboration, and social presence can lead to the building of online learning communities. The benefits of community building have been demonstrated repeatedly in the research literature (e.g., Githens, 2007; Haythornthwaite, Kazmer, Robins, & Shoemaker,
In many academic fields, online learning communities have the possibility of generating the knowledge and perspectives that lead to meaningful learning.

Online learning communities can be fostered at the institutional level by providing synchronous communications tools like Wimba or Elluminate to programs throughout the institution. These synchronous tools greatly accelerate community building in individual courses (Aragon, 2003). At the program level, cohort models and orientation programs help to facilitate early community building through intense and consistent interaction (Haythornthwaite, Kazmer, Robins, & Shoemaker, 2000). Early foundational courses can be strategically designed to require team assignments that allow for maximum interaction between participants. At the course level, instructors can provide heavily interactive courses, require assignments that call for genuine interaction, and model casual conversations through their communications. For example, when using conferencing tools, instructors can engage in informal conversations before class. These conversations can foster a comfort level that helps a learning community to emerge.

There is also a need for caution in fostering online learning communities. Although dialogue and interaction can lead to meaningful learning experiences, research is mixed on whether positive academic outcomes are linked to individuals’ active participation (e.g., Picciano, 2002). Some individuals do not desire to participate in the learning communities that adult educators strive to foster (Githens, 2007). Additionally, the emphasis on community has lead to requirements or expectations of sharing photos and other personal information. This trend toward less anonymity could lead to marginalization that reflects the marginalization in larger society (e.g., based on race, gender, sexual orientation, socioeconomic status). In past years, online education was thought to minimize some inequities due to the relative anonymity associated with it.

An additional concern deals with the heavy reliance on text-based communication in online learning. Text-based media can provide safe places for learners to express controversial ideas (Conceição, 2002). However, Bregman and Haythornthwaite (2003) found that intellectual and technical anxiety contributed to some online students not only being reluctant to participate, but also taking long amounts of time to perfect their text-based postings. That concern is partially alleviated with the rise in audio-based synchronous tools.

**Building Success Through Teaching Presence - Lynn A. Trinko**

Teaching and learning in 21st century higher education no longer lies in the hands of the educator, but also with the learner. Understanding this is crucial to design and implementation of best practices in the online classroom. Utilizing the Community of Inquiry (COI) model (Garrison, Anderson, and Archer 2000) in online course design is just one way to accomplish the goals of the learners. According to the COI model (2000), teaching presence is but one of three presence types in the classroom, also including social and cognitive presence. Teaching presence involves course design, discourse facilitation, and direct instruction in text-based computer conferencing environments. Teaching presence commences with the onset of the course, with the course design and curriculum preparation, and it continues throughout the course, as the instructor facilitates the discourse and provides direct instruction as needed. The teaching presence continues as students within the course also help guide and facilitate conversations and discussions within the course to enhance the course.

Regardless of the formal role of the teacher, online learning provides an opportunity for flexibility and revision of content in situ that is not provided by older forms of mediated teaching and learning (Anderson, 2008, p. 346) Imagine students are struggling with a particular concept,
in a static online course there is no room for adjustments, whereas a course that used the COI model would be able to change the content for success of the learners. It could be a matter of re-design of content wording, adding additional resources, or adding a teacher interaction. All of these items increase teacher presence in the online environment.

Discourse facilitation, a necessary component in an online environment, is not just the act of agreeing and disagreeing, but the act of keeping learners engaged in the content. Facilitating the class for a teacher has the similar components as the face-to-face environment: attendance, keeping students on task, communicating expectations, and keeping the discussions flowing. Discourse is disciplined inquiry that requires a knowledgeable teacher with the expectation that discourse progresses in a collaborative constructive (Garrison, 2007). Discourse has two indicators that assist teachers in identifying it is occurring: Act of agreeing and disagreeing and the ability to reach consensus and understanding. These activities can easily be facilitated in an online environment through threaded discussion, chats and group reflection papers.

The teacher supports and encourages participation by modeling, commenting on and encouraging student responses, drawing in the less active participants, and curtailing the effusive comments of those who tend to dominate the virtual space (Anderson, Rourke, Garrison & Archer, 2001). All of these teaching strategies allow discourse to occur and to promote learning within the environment.

Direct instruction allows for providing intellectually and scholarly leadership in an online classroom. The provision of teaching presence is challenged to shape cognitive and metacognitive processes and learning. Student awareness of this process is crucial to complete the inquiry cycle (Garrison & Vaughan, 2008). Direct instruction also takes the form of statements that confirm understanding through assessment and explanatory feedback. (Anderson, Rourke, Garrison, Archer, 2001) The teacher’s role in the direct instruction process is a critical determinant of overall effectiveness.

**Managing Expectation in Programs in Transition - Cynthia L. Digby**

The Work and Human Resource Education program at the University of Minnesota has had several faculty members who were early technology adopters who used their technology interests to adapt courses blending technology and face-to-face options. There was some interest in possibly moving one program into a blended or fully online format but many questions and concerns needed to be addressed first. Since adult education, instructional technology, curriculum and instruction and human resource development literature indicate that blended learning may require a new learning paradigm, those of us involved in the process of moving courses to blended and online formats were encouraged to seek out best practices. As department teaching assistants, Anne Conroy and I sought research funding* to try and capture some of the history and best practices at the University of Minnesota when moving programs into blended formats. There are many ways to study blended learning environments and we chose to focus on the blending of learning environments at the program level (Bonk & Graham, 2006).

Two programs in the health sciences that underwent major programmatic transitions when they moved from mostly face-to-face to mostly online classroom formats were selected. The reasons these health programs needed to move to blended formats align with several of Garrison and Vaughan’s (2008) comments regarding scenarios facing typical nursing programs, and other professional programs. Data were collected by interviews (n=14) with administrators, faculty, technology support (university and program), and program support staff to ascertain their
perceptions and experiences regarding what is good about blending learning environments. One program’s move was bottom-up led and gradual (more than a decade and still occurring), and the other program’s move was top-down and required most faculty to move their face-to-face courses into online formats in under two years. Quality was a word mentioned by most of the participants and was both a direction and source of frustration. While it was clear that expectations of all involved with this project were high, hopeful, and there were some clear goals for both programs, there were issues that should be illuminated since these can impact program efforts in adult teaching and learning.

*This blended learning research project was generously supported by the University of Minnesota’s Vice-Provost for Academic and Distributed Education.*

**Student Affairs in Online Education – Cathy Twohig**

Student affairs encompasses many university service areas including admissions, registration, financial aid, career development/advising, legal services, disability services, and recreation services. The list of services may vary depending on individual institutions but is extensive in the array of opportunities for participation available to students.

The question of the role for student affairs in distance education is one that continues to evolve just as the overall field of distance education evolves. The Distance Learning Task Force report (2000) submitted to the NASPA (Student Affairs Administrators in Higher Education) board of directors warned of the danger of not designing and providing support services for students in distance education programs. The report went on to say that student services in an online environment may look different than those found in on-campus settings. “It may be that the distance learning student population needs different support services provided in imaginative ways, but they may need more support because the lack of structures and patterns of on campus education” (p. 2).

Kretovics (2003) discusses the importance for student affairs to offer opportunities for distance education students to connect to the institution. Student affairs programs offer students a way to be part of a community, whether that is an advising situation, a student union gathering, or other types of services provided in a community setting. The NAPSA (2000) report spoke of student affairs administrators needing to understand the importance of virtual communities and opportunities for students to connect in these communities. While student affairs has done a good job of integrating technology into the services they provide (Hirt, Cain, Bryant, & Williams, 2003), the creation of communities go beyond this integration of technology to create interaction among students.

The need to create opportunities for differing student’s needs is just as important in a virtual setting as in an in-person setting. Hirt, et al. (2003) found that the level and degree to what online students want through student affairs varies throughout the online community. The need for continued research in this area continues to grow as the distance education field expands around us.

Kretovics (2003) described the importance of connecting to distance students and creating a sense of community through student affairs. It would seem that the opportunities for student affairs to enhance the distance education experience are abundant at this time.

**Reflections**

Perhaps one of the strongest methods of improving online education programs is through improving and increasing interaction, whether that interaction is between students, between
student and instructor, or between student and learning material. Improving the quality of online course offerings and maintaining their quality will continue to require a reflective faculty and staff, who are ready to engage with new technologies and issues as they arrive. Critical to this improvement will be instructional faculty willing to be present in online courses, as a co-discussant, a moderator, a guide, and a mentor. The perspectives provided by Cathy Twohig and Cynthia Digby remind us of the behind-the-scenes work involved in continuing programmatic improvement, the evolution of course design and the ability to provision student affairs and student services for online students, which remains a challenge.

Online education will not eliminate the need for instructors and faculty members. In fact, there continues to be a need for faculty skilled in design and delivery of online education. It turns out that human interaction is still needed in high-quality educational experiences, whether provided in a small classroom, the workplace, or across the globe.

References
Davie, L., & Wells, R. (1992). Empowering the learner through computer-mediated communication. In Moore, M (ed.) *Distance Education for Corporate and Military Training. Readings in Distance Education, 3*, 104–112.
Distance Learning Task Force (2000). *Distance learning and student affairs: Defining the issues*. Submitted to the NASPA Board of Directors.


Beyond Andragogy: New Directions in Adult Learning Theory

Sharan B. Merriam, Chairperson
The University of Georgia

Abstract: While andragogy is here to stay, we have moved beyond centering it at the heart of adult learning theory. Five other ways to understand adult learning will be presented in this symposium: transformative learning, spirituality and adult learning, embodied knowing, the neuroscience of adult learning and narrative learning.

Adult learning is at the heart of all adult education practice. From literacy to continuing professional education, from the workplace to an art museum, from a college course to a yoga class, enabling the learning of adults is what holds an otherwise very diverse field together. For decades, Malcolm Knowles’s andragogy was how our field differentiated itself from childhood education and indeed, for many practitioners was the “window” into understanding adults as learners. Andragogy became a template for designing instruction for adult learners. It is still many newcomers first introduction to our field. While andragogy is here to stay, the purpose of this symposium is to present what is really new thinking in adult learning. We have moved beyond centering andragogy at the heart of our adult learning theory. Expanding our understanding of adult learning offers the potential for engaging more adults in learning, the common denominator across the many dimensions of adult education practice.

Five perspectives on adult learning will be presented in this symposium. First is a glimpse into some of the new thinking around transformational learning. While not a new topic, emerging are a number of alternative conceptions of transformative learning beyond Mezirow and Freire’s seminal work such as neurobiological, cultural-spiritual, race-centric and planetary views. The second presentation will be on spirituality and adult learning. The popular press has brought spirituality forward especially as it manifests in the workplace and higher education. How spirituality is being conceptualized as a component of adult learning will be explored in this second presentation. Because of the West’s focus on cognitive processing, the body as a site of learning and knowing has until recently been ignored. The growing research base on embodied or somatic knowing is the topic of the third presentation. Embodied learning is an alternate way of knowing that reconnects the mind and body. This connection between the mind and body is actually being reinforced by the latest developments in the neuroscience of learning. The fourth presenter will explain how learning, embodied experience, and reflection interact in making meaningful connections in the brain; in fact, imaging techniques have revealed how learning changes the brain itself. The fifth topic is on narrative learning. Human beings have always told stories to make sense of the world and to convey “truths” of the culture. What is new, is understanding how stories are a form of meaning-making. We learn through stories and creating a narrative to make sense of our experience is itself learning.
The New Andragogy: Transformative Learning Theory
Edward W. Taylor
Penn State University-Harrisburg

Three decades have passed since transformative learning’s (TL) humble beginnings in Mezirow’s (1978, 2000)* study about women’s experiences of returning to college. As a theory that sees learning as a process of construing new or revised interpretations of experience through reflection, it has accomplished what the study of andragogy had hoped to and much more. For example, andragogy is more a framework for teaching adults than a lens for explaining learning. Also, its related research is encumbered with host of challenges (e.g., noncomparability of studies, the wide variation in definition and implementation, learner control and voluntarism) (Rachal, 2002). TL on the other hand, although sharing some similar challenges, has persisted due to significant substantive research and theoretical critique offering a framework for both understanding learning and guiding the teaching adults (Taylor, 1998, 2007). As a result it has overshadowed andragogy, moving from the margins to the center of the study of adult learning both in adult education and variety of other disciplines (e.g., medical education, distance education). Furthermore, it is also no longer represented by several theoretical lenses but instead by eight, by some accounts.

One way to appreciate the range of alternative conceptions is to break them down into two groups based on their unit of analysis. The first group uses the individual primarily as the unit of analysis in transformative learning, which includes the following conceptions: psycho-critical (Mezirow); psycho-analytic (Boyd & Meyers, 1988; Cranton, 2006; Dirkx, 2000); psycho-developmental (Kegan, 2000; Daloz, 1986) and neurobiological (Janik, 2005). The former emphasizes personal transformation over context and social change, reflecting a more universal view of learning. The second group includes four additional conceptions: social-emancipatory (Freire, 1984); cultural-spiritual (Tisdell, 2003; Brooks, 2000); race-centric (Williams, 2003; Johnson-Bailey & Alfred, 2006; Sheared, 1994); and planetary (O’Sullivan, 1999). TL in this group sees social and individual change as one in the same with an appreciation for difference, placing a greater emphasis on positionality and its relationship to both the process and practice of transformative learning.

Despite all the interest in transformative learning in the field of adult education classroom, like andragogy, there is still much not known about the practice of transformative learning in the classroom. One area in particular is the lack of understanding about the impact of fostering transformative learning on learner outcomes (grades, test scores). Definitive support is needed if educators are going to recognize transformative learning as a worthwhile teaching approach with adult learners. Other areas of research include understanding the student’s responsibilities in relationship to the transformative educator when fostering transformative learning? Second, there is a need to understand the peripheral consequences of fostering transformative learning in the classroom. For example, how does a student’s transformation affect peers in the classroom, the teacher, the educational institution, and other individuals who play a significant role in the life of the student? Finally, the growing body of research and alternative perspectives should remind educators that fostering transformative learning is much more than implementing a series of instructional strategies with adult learners. It is first and foremost about educating from a particular educational philosophy, with its own assumptions about the purpose of education, role of the educator, and nature of knowledge.
While the assumptions underlying andragogy are firmly based in the potential of adults to learn, grow and develop, nowhere is the spiritual dimension of the human being directly addressed. It wasn’t until the 1990s that spirituality and its relationship to adult learning began to appear in our literature in direct discussion, though as English (2006) observes, it was an underlying influence for many in the field who have been advocates for social justice, such as Horton and Freire (1990).

There is often much confusion about what the term “spirituality” means and how it is distinguished from religion. In general in contemporary literature, spirituality is seen as being about an individual’s personal experience with the sacred, which can be experienced anywhere—in a secular setting, in a religious context, or in the natural world. Religion, on the other hand, is about an organized community of faith, with an official creed, and codes of regulatory behavior. When defined as an individual’s personal experience with the sacred, spirituality can indeed be experienced anywhere including the classroom. Recent writers have discussed the influence of spirituality and soul in how it affects learning on an individual and a cultural level and what it suggests for educating adults more generally (Dirkx, 1997; English, Fenwick, & Parsons, 2003), or as culturally responsive education in classroom settings (Tisdell, 2003; Tolliver & Tisdell, 2006); or in the arena of workplace learning or in community work for the common good (Daloz, Keen, Keen, & Parks, 1995; Fenwick & Lange, 1998). The strong influence of spirituality is also still present in those educating for social justice in myriad adult education settings.

Adults often report learning important life lessons through significant spiritual experience. There are many types of spiritual experiences. Those commonly reported in research studies happen in the context of births, deaths, and close brushes with death; through dreams and synchronicities; experiences in meditation, and nature; and through bursts of unanticipated creative expression (Tisdell, 2003; Wuthnow, 2001) that may relate to the integration of some aspect of one’s identity, around culture, gender, sexuality or life role status. Often these types of spiritual experiences happen through unconscious and symbolic knowledge construction processes (Fowler, 1982): people tap into some earlier event or meaning stream through images, symbols, music, stories, or ritual from one’s earlier life, and as a result of the experience reintegrate it in some new way. It often results in a reordering of chaos, and an embrace of paradox. People construct knowledge in powerful ways through spiritual experiences, or those that tap into the symbolic and imaginal realm. The ability to create, imagine, and come to further insight through symbol, metaphor, and art is part of the experience of being human that is so often ignored in education; yet it sometimes gets to the heart of spirit. Thus, attending to spirituality in adult learning involves making space for its expression, attending to paradox, sacredness, and the graced moments in teaching and learning that lead to unexpected insights.

As we enter this world from our mothers’ wombs, our infant bodies are bombarded by all sorts of sensory stimuli from our environment at birth. Experiences of infancy remind us about
the significance of our bodies as catalysts for new learning in this world, particularly in regards to sensory processes and reflexive responses to the environment. Furthermore, as we leave this world, for most individuals, developmental age-related, illness-related, and injury-related losses bring sharp attention back to the experiences of the body. We are generally engaged in and through our bodies on a daily basis. Being in our bodies is not a new experience. So why is learning through our bodies a new direction in adult learning theory? It is a matter of attention, growing insight, and approach toward learning through the body as a source of knowledge that points to this new direction.

While many of us have a sense of physicality in our bodies, it can be rather detached from knowing. Somewhere from womb to tomb, the continuity of learning through the body can be blurred and disconnected. Western thought has traditionally been rooted in a mind/body dichotomy, privileging the mind in knowledge construction and obscuring the body. We are accustomed to learning through a separatist view of body and mind, and we have been situated in chairs row after row in institutional learning spaces with little or no room for attention to the body. Furthermore, how to bring attention to the body in learning spaces can be steeped in challenges, risks, and complexities given that the body is a highly personal entity for most individuals.

However, the construction of knowledge really extends beyond the mind and its rational processes to other ways of knowing where we come to know the physical, socio-emotional, and spiritual world. Holistic learning opportunities in adult and higher education are beginning to draw attention to engaging and reconnecting the body and mind, the whole person, in learning experiences that guide best practice and inform adult learning theory. Embodiment, embodied learning and somatic learning are being discussed in terms of an awareness of bodily experiences as valued sources of knowledge construction through objective and subjective realms (Brockman, 2001; Clark, 2001; Crowdes, 2000; Freiler, 2007; Yorks & Kasl, 2002).

Furthermore, approaches to learning through the body are emerging in broad, innovative, integrated ways of knowing in resonance with andragogy as follows; they are participative rather than passive; they provide adult learners with alternate opportunities for knowing that are situated not just in their own comfort zones but also in gentle risks and challenges that facilitate new knowledge from previous knowledge: and they account for life experiences of adult learners (Merriam, Caffarella, & Baumgartner, 2007; Yang, 2003). Opportunities to directly or subtly incorporate attention to the body in learning offer great potential for creating significant experiences by embracing the spirit of human experiences and development, which are whole and integrated and not separatist. Learning through the body is most certainly worth navigating as a pioneering direction in adult learning.

**Learning with the Brain in Mind**

Kathleen Taylor and Annalee Lamoreaux
Saint Mary’s College of California

Until recently, most knowledge about brain function was derived from studies (often post-mortem) of brains that had been injured or diseased. In the last ten years, however, innovations in imaging technology have made it possible to look into the normally functioning brains of living persons. These new tools enable neuroscientists and educators to seek correspondence between theories of learning and how the brain actually works, thus going beyond andragogy to understanding the learning process more concretely. As adult educators, we have followed this
emerging literature for several years. Though still in its infancy, we find the neuroscience of adult learning offers largely untapped resources for educators who would foster and enhance adults’ capacities for lifelong learning.

As one example, adult educators have long known, anecdotally, that learning is enhanced through practice and application. Now, however, it is possible not only to identify the parts of the brain but also the kinds of learning activities more likely to create enduring synaptic connections. From the brain’s perspective, learning begins with sensory signals from the outside world that take the form of electrochemical activity traveling along neurons (brain cells) and across synapses (the spaces between), creating patterns of connection. When these connections are restimulated, the pattern becomes stronger: neurons that “fire together, wire together,” which is why repetition is often essential to learning. But new experiences need not always lead to new and different pathways. The brain first seeks to make sense of sensory input by comparing it to what it already “knows.” As a result, existing patterns of connection change, expand, and “reroute,” leading to denser, more complex, neural networks: “this represents learning as we understand it today” (Goldberg, 2001).

The role of memory in learning is somewhat paradoxical. Rather than being something stored in a particular place in the brain, memory is a process. “Memories are constructions assembled [from various places in the brain] at the time of retrieval, and the information stored during the initial experience is only one of the items used in the construction; other contributions include information already stored in the brain, as well as things the person hears or sees and then stores after the experience” (LeDoux, 2002, p. 203, italics added).

There is no one right way to teach adults; nevertheless, we may enhance learning when we align practice with this understanding of brain function. When adults are confronted with ideas for which their brains can find no related prior experience, and therefore no meaningful links to existing patterns, it may be difficult to create the necessary associations. While memory aids may be useful in establishing patterns for information-based learning and behaviors, they are less effective for learning that focuses on meta-objectives of higher education, such as openness to new ideas and multiple perspectives, the capacity for accurate self-reflection, and greater cognitive complexity. Such learning outcomes may require changes in the brain more readily accomplished by working intentionally with the brain’s process of making meaning, as this leads to the creation of more complex, more interconnected neural networks. This presentation will therefore focus on “best practices” based on current understandings of how the brain actually learns.

Narrative Learning
M. Carolyn Clark Texas A&M University
Marsha Rossiter University of Wisconsin Oshkosh

Learning in adulthood is integrally related to lived experience. The main assumption of andragogy is that adults bring a store of life experience to the learning encounter and that experience can serve as a resource for learning, but what is not considered are the differing ways in which experience and learners are understood to be connected. Constructivist learning theory locates learning in the reflection on experience, while situated learning theories see learning as happening in the interaction between learners and their contexts. Narrative learning theory posits
an even closer connection between learners and experience. The nature of experience is always prelinguistic; it is “langaged” after the fact, and the process of narrating it is how learners give meaning to that experience.

Narrative is a uniquely human way of meaning-making. Everyday we make sense of our life experiences by storying them, by constructing narratives that make things cohere. Coherence creates sense out of chaos by establishing connections between and among these experiences. Sometimes it’s a matter of locating experiences within a particular cultural narrative; at other times it’s a matter of constructing a narrative for ourselves that enables us to deal with an experience. Narrative is also how we craft our sense of self, our identity, and how group identities are formed. In all modes it’s important to understand narrative as a highly social process.

We believe narrative learning is a twofold concept—fostering learning through stories, and conceptualizing the learning process itself. When used as a pedagogical strategy, stories are powerful precisely because they engage learners at a deeply human level. Students learn through stories in three ways. First, learners hear stories; this implies reception. Stories are powerful because they engage learners at a deeply human level, appealing to our emotions and imaginations that take us far beyond the cognitive level. Second, learners tell stories; in this mode the learner is the actor rather than the receiver. In the telling of stories learners link their cognitive understanding of something to their own experience. And third, learners recognize stories, by which we mean that they come to understand that they themselves are constituted and positioned narratively, and this understanding creates the possibility for critique and its emancipatory possibilities. Narrative also offers a way to conceptualize the learning process itself. When we are learning something we are trying to make sense of it, discern its internal logic, and see how it’s related to what we already know. Learning something means working to create a coherent narrative of new ideas and concepts—we story our understanding. It’s an ongoing and complex process in which we identify and wrestle with the pieces that don’t yet fit together (what we don’t yet understand), and we recognize the gaps (what we still do not know). The process of constructing that narrative, that story, is how we can see our understanding of something come together and make sense. Narrative learning, then, is both an effective pedagogical approach and a useful way of conceptualizing the learning process.

**Adult Learning Theory for the Twenty-First Century**  
Sharan B. Merriam  
University of Georgia

Adult learning is a complex phenomenon that can never be reduced to a single, simple explanation. Rather, I think what we have is an ever-changing mosaic where old pieces are rearranged and new pieces are added. So, what we might conclude about adult learning today will most likely to out-of-date by the time we convene next year at AERC!

In the early decades of the 20\textsuperscript{th} century, adult learning theory in North America focused on the individual learner, how that learner processes information and how learning enables the individual to become more empowered and independent. Andragogy and self-directed learning are about the individual adult learner as has been much of Mezirow’s conceptualization of transformational learning. However, based on recent work in adult learning theory I think some observations can be advanced about what is characterizing adult learning theory at the moment.
Two such observations are that (1) there is increased attention to the various contexts where learning takes place, and 2) learning is a multi-dimensional phenomenon, not just a cognitive activity.

Today the historical, sociocultural context of adult learning is recognized as a key component in understanding the nature of adult learning. For example, in Tisdell’s presentation on spirituality and learning, she notes that spiritual development often involves “reclaiming” one’s cultural heritage. Taylor reviewed several formulations of transformative learning that are more context-sensitive than Mezirow’s theory, including Freire’s social-emancipatory view, a cultural-spiritual view and a planetary orientation. Recent research on the brain, narrative learning, and embodied learning also recognize that such learning is firmly embedded in the lived experiences of learners in the world. This shift to understanding the learner in context broadly conceived of where the learner is situated concretely (like the workplace), or socioculturally makes for a richer, more holistic understanding of learning in adulthood.

A second observation is the recognition that learning is a holistic phenomenon involving the body, emotions, the spirit as well as the mind. As was pointed out, for the brain to make meaningful connections, learning needs to be tied to physical, embodied experience. The brain is afterall, a part of one’s body. And clearly the body has become more visible as a source of knowledge and site for learning. What the body feels, the affective dimension of learning combines with the intellect in significant learning. Spirituality and its relationship to adult learning and adult education can be found in the practice of social justice educators, in the workplace, and in the experiences of individual learners. So too, narrative learning uses the natural “storying” of our lives as another pathway to meaning-making.

When adult learning is construed as meaning-making or knowledge construction as all the presenters maintain, then we can draw several implications for practice. First, encouraging reflection and dialogue, whether with the self, another, or a group enables learning to take place. Second, recent research in several areas has confirmed the importance of processing new information or experience with prior experiences. Finally, in addition to connecting with the learner’s life experiences and promoting reflection and dialogue, we can expand our repertoire of instruction to include creative and artistic modes of inquiry. Non-Western and indigenous knowledge systems have always turned to stories, folklore, myths, symbols, music, dance and even dreams as sources of knowledge. With the growing understanding that adult learning is a multi-dimensional and holistic phenomenon, we are beginning to recognize the value of incorporating more creative modes of inquiry into our practice.
