

## ANDRAGOGY

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THIS WORD, common enough now in France, will perhaps serve as a title for an attempt to identify a body of knowledge relevant to the training of those concerned with the LEA sector of non-vocational adult education—something comparable with the material studied in teaching training establishments by intending school-teachers. The very comparison raises the question whether there is anything so significantly different about the learning situations and processes of adults that they call for more than a few minor extensions of pedagogical principles and practice. Certainly some school teachers practising part-time in adult education would give a negative answer. It may however be doubted whether the adult educator will readily find much that is helpful in the standard works and text-books in use in teacher-training. If they contain material from which inferences valuable for adult teaching may be drawn, these inferences have seldom been indicated. Some of the main strands in teacher training may be roughly classified as follows: 1 Principles of education—the philosophical basis of education in the nature of man and society—in personal and social needs and goals; 2 The study of children—the physiology and psychology of their development in relation to their social environment; 3 Educational psychology—the processes of perception and learning; 4 Methodology—related to the school situation and treated in considerable measure through practical experience. Almost all of this material is overwhelmingly concerned with 'the child' and with situations in which the educand is *in statu pupilaris*.

What can we find elsewhere, under similar headings, for the qualified mechanic or linguist or milliner who essays to teach adults? Far less than one might reasonably have expected from the size of Dr Kelly's recent bibliography, which lists comprehensively what has been produced by Departments of Adult Education, Councils for Further Education, the WEA, ECA, other voluntary bodies and by individual writers. Among all the products there is a vast preponderance of works on the history and philosophy of adult education. The remainder is, in very large measure, expressly related to the kind of adult education provided by the Responsible Bodies in academic subjects studied by the classical methods of reading, writing, lecture and tutorial discussion. This does not mean that it is necessarily inapplicable to a class in Italian or

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cookery, but the writers have seldom been concerned with such applicability as there may be. Of the perception and learning processes of adults, of the physical and psychological stages of adult development, of social environment expressly related to adult education, and, especially, of method, there is distressingly little to which those concerned with the growing volume of short training courses for evening institute staff may turn. It appears that there is a gap to be filled. This article is written, not to attempt to fill it, but to call attention to it and plead for contributions from people who are qualified to make them. Much material known to professional adult educators may be ready to hand, and it will serve a useful purpose if an average well-informed non-professional indicates the limits of his knowledge under the headings listed above.

### PRINCIPLES OF ADULT EDUCATION

The rationale of the LEA sector of adult education has been much less clearly and weightily formulated than that which underpins the work of Responsible Bodies. Collated from its various sources, it would run approximately on the following lines. This kind of adult education answers a number of personal and social needs: 1 the need for personal competence and creativity; 2 the need for general education of the kind implied in the phrase 'an educated person'; 3 the power to discriminate and judge, approached not through academic subjects but through a deepening of day-to-day interests; 4 the need to respond effectively to certain affiliative and associative impulses through participation in a task-related group. Such a drastic précis does less than justice to these principles. One might discuss, lengthily and heatedly no doubt, how far they may be integrated into an overall philosophy of adult education and, if so, whether the LEA field is complementary or subliminal to the Responsible Body field. The answers, if there are any, will not be of much immediate value to training. As Dr Johnson put it, a man might as well stand disputing which leg to put first into his breeches. 'Meanwhile, sir, his breech is bare'.

If one scans the more obvious works on adult education for ways of grounding this rationale, as in the case of school education, in general truths about man and society, one encounters little which seems to correspond with what we can observe of the million and more students who frequent evening institutes. Usually one finds the tacit assumption that liberal education of the kind to be had in universities is an unquestionable good and a necessary stage on the road to personal excellence; also, insistence on the need for availability of this kind of education for all adults in the

interest of social justice and healthy democratic development. There are, of course, some more comprehensive approaches, and a fairly typical example is given in the proem to *A Study Leader's Manual* published by the American Foundation for Continuing Education. Here, primary, secondary and adult education are all seen as stages towards 'knowing the goods in their order', the sense of values being the specifically human characteristic and the ultimate motive force in human life. The educative process involves some change in the educand's value-system. The adult stage is reached when the disciplines necessary for career have been mastered, and freedom to contemplate and take stock is restored. Not subject knowledge, but personal progress towards human excellence is the criterion of adult education. Even in this type of philosophy, however, there is an emphasis on consciously intellectual processes. Nowhere is much cognisance taken of the liberating and educative contribution that is made by construction and crafts—making things, and making things work; of the extent to which these things inexorably induce attitudes of humble respect for truth in the concrete, for the logic of structure and mechanism; of the way in which work with leather and wood and metal and cloth can convey an intuitive sense of going with, not against, the grain of life, and provide an inner touchstone by which to assay the quality of all experience. Nor, again, is there much recognition of the need for mastery of many of the techniques of living which can scarcely be called vocational—the ability to make a dress, speak Italian, catch a trout.

#### THE STUDY OF ADULTS

Concerning adult physiology and psychology so far as they relate to adult education, we appear to have little, and most of it is open to the criticism that it differentiates insufficiently, if at all, between various stages of adult development and between various temperaments and various levels of ability. Too often what is asserted is based upon experience with students in adult education, or is drawn from gerontological studies that refer only to the very old. The plain fact is that the block term 'adult' is no more serviceable for educational planning than 'the child' would be for the period five to fifteen. Recent research has tended to confirm that significant changes of personality take place throughout adult life, as we had always assumed. More surprising is the conclusion that as age increases, the differences between the sexes are accentuated. Quite apart from individual variations, there is strong evidence for the existence of distinct adult stages and categories, although the

business of charting and defining them from the point of view of adult education has scarcely begun. One might start, as a tentative basis for investigation, with some such scheme as the following, which applies, of course, only to voluntary, part-time adult students in non-vocational classes.

#### A Younger adults

- (a) Those seeking knowledge and skill related to advancement, e.g. languages, subjects that equip for professional opportunities or active political competence or late entrance to universities or colleges.
- (b) Those seeking skills of personal development or recreation, e.g. good-grooming, dinghy sailing.
- (c) Those with creative or associative motives.

#### B Middle age-range

- (a) Those whose motives for study lie in the wish to participate in high culture or stem from politico-social conscience.
- (b) Those seeking skills relevant to personal life with the emphasis on home-making, social status and leisure pursuits.
- (c) Those with creative and associative motives.

#### C Later life

- (a) Those seeking to come to terms with life in an integrative way, refining their own experience through the study of appropriate branches of knowledge.
- (b) Those seeking to come to terms with later life through occupation with certain skills and activities.
- (c) Those with creative and associative motives.

Clearly, this particular classification is ludicrously crude and inadequate, and much better-informed and thoughtful attempts would still be unable to take account of infinite human variability. They would, however, as they improved, have an increasing actuarial validity that would be of great use to adult education. They would have the merit of recognising the existence of broad human types. Without returning to Kretschmer we can distinguish, for example, between older people who are impelled by the desire for integrative understanding and those who are completely untroubled by this need and who seek only diverting activities. Similarly, such a classification would cohere with generally recognised distinctions between young adulthood, the prime, middle-age, senescence and so on. True, from the medical point of view there is considerable uncertainty about the timing of such stages. (For example, the

onset of a male climacteric comparable with the menopause is placed by Havelock Ellis at thirty-eight, by Kenneth Walker at fifty-five and by Norwood East and others at forty-five.) But these stages are not matters of chronology but of social and subjective recognition. Some work on this general theme appears to have been done in the medical or education departments of one or two American universities\* and it tends to establish the existence of a progressive feature of human life after fifty which is described as 'disengagement'. It involves a change from active to passive mastery as a chief source of satisfaction, and leads to a movement of interest away from the outer to the inner world of memory, comparison and synthesis. There is decreasing interaction between the aging person and the social group to which he belongs, a lessened desire for approval, and increased independence of choice of satisfactions, among which long-term interests tend to decline.

But perhaps, after all, the broad differences of student motive are more significant than age groups. In their turn they derive a good deal from differences of type and temperament and ability, as well as from those of previous educational experience. They can all be seen to some extent governing the division between studentship in the Responsible Body and LEA sectors of adult education. In the former lie, predominantly, motives arising from the wish for personal development according to ideals of scholarship and high culture, and the wish to gain command of life through understanding. In the latter, motives are concerned more with the wish for personal development through the acquisition of knowledge and skills that give command of immediate personal situation, a knowledge of the 'how' rather than the 'why' of things. Creative and associative motives also play a large part here.

Examination of student characteristics has been all too rare but it is growing. As well as the widely known surveys of Trenaman, Ruddock and Wilson, Zweig and Groombridge, some additional material is available.† So far as motivation is concerned the evidence is still slight but it suggests that the following categories cover most cases:

\*Studies at the universities of Kansas and Chicago referred to in *Psychological Backgrounds of Adult Education*, edited by Raymond G. Kuhlen (Center for the Study of Liberal Education for Adults, USA, No. 40).

†Dr Lowe of the Extra-Mural Department of the University of Liverpool recently undertook a comprehensive survey and the draft conclusions have been made available. They refer to work in both sectors.

1. Affiliative—answering the need to be approved and to join in approved activity.
2. Associative.
3. The desire for a sense of achievement.
4. The desire for satisfaction in performance.
5. Cultural motives—arising from the belief in the intrinsic value of certain subjects.
6. The desire for personal and social competence and ability to acquire the symbols thereof.
7. Integrative motives—the search for understanding and values.
8. Citizen responsibility motives.

It would also appear that students in LEA classes are more likely to be motivated by 2, 3, 4 and 6 above.

#### EDUCATIONAL PSYCHOLOGY

The learning process among adults has received some attention but there is little about the learning of manipulative skills and one has to turn to experience drawn from industrial retraining or similar situations.\* Some published papers, including eminently those of J. McLeish,† have shown that adults are not less capable of learning than the young, although there is some slowing-up of psychomotor reaction to a succession of varied stimuli.

Even so, it is not possible to say whether this is a normal senescent decline or a feature of diseases affecting nervous or arterial systems. Uncomplicated senescence appears to be confined to a minority. The important point is that learning performance among people over twenty is much more closely correlated with IQ and previous education than with advance in years.

As the middle-aged student is found to react best to stimuli when he has been warned that they are coming, it would seem to follow that he needs to be put much more fully in the picture of the strategy of a course than is the case with children. He tends to be impatient and bewildered by the artificial breakdown of material into graduated stages of the kind familiar in the early sections of, say, a school French primer, or with preliminary exercises abstracted from the job he wants to master. He is always prone to detect underchallenge. He is not helped by the contrived breaks and variations (play-time or learning-game or film) which alleviate the work of children. In fact he enjoys settling into a sustained session.

\*'Retraining for Industry' by E. Belbin, *New Society*, 19 March 1964.

†'Adult Learning' by J. McLeish, *International Journal of Adult Education*, Vol. XIV, No. 1 (1962).

He is often alienated by a devious, winsomely graduated, quasi-heuristic approach, and, unlike the young, shows a marked tolerance for being plunged in *medias res* by clear, authoritative instructions at the outset. However, once he has got under way, the adult tends to progress best at an individual tempo along his own lines, rather than by detailed group-instruction.

On the negative side there is strong evidence for an increasing dependence, with age, upon visual stimuli, although powers of vision tend to decline. Moreover, the adult learner forgets more quickly than the young, and much more revision is needed. This has to be put in an apparently progressive setting, as routine revision is less tolerable with increasing years. Adults are said to have more difficulty in discerning and admitting their own errors than the young, and to be more insistent upon immediate demonstration of their error, of a kind which, in some cases, the feedback machine can give. Generally speaking, however, the adult student is very susceptible to the influence of learning techniques which he has used successfully in the past. Confirmation of their validity is highly reassuring to him, and it would seem that, on the whole, adult education is not the place for experimental teaching and learning methods.

As they are self-selected, adult students contain a big proportion of people with high-achievement and fear-of-failure drives, and the sort of classroom competition which stimulates children may well prove inhibiting. Performance is best stimulated by competition with the individual's own previous performance.

#### METHODOLOGY

What we are in search of are generalised andragogical methods which are equally applicable in a language or a craft class, not merely to the teaching techniques specific to a particular subject. So far as the LEA class is concerned there is undoubtedly in existence a considerable volume of material on which to draw, but most of it is unpublished and to be found in lecture notes from short courses, and in neostyled notes for teachers handed out by Authorities, principals or inspectors. There is a small number of pamphlets on part-time teaching and one or two books such as *Educating Older People* by M. F. Cleugh. Some of the not very copious material relating to methods in Responsible Body work has a bearing on teacher-student and group relationships. There is great need for studies which examine and evaluate all this material and collate it, in assimilable form, with reference to the principles, psychology, motivation and environment of adult education in the

LEA sector. Such studies would greatly facilitate the work of those concerned with training. As some indication of the work to be done, the following is a brief summary of a small selection of the imperatives for evening institute teachers contained or implicit in some of the material mentioned above:

Teachers should, in their classwork, be aware of an educational responsibility that goes beyond the satisfaction of the conscious wishes of individual students. They should have their own detailed and progressive schemes of work separate from the syllabus possessed by the students. The latter should outline the nature and scope of the course and list the materials and books to be used. The teaching should aim at technical self-reliance on the part of the students; at higher standards and better ability to judge, discriminate and design; at mastery of a skill or craft, not the production of commodities. Records of individual student-progress in the skill should be kept, so that students are always engaged on challenging work. Where possible students should be grouped according to proficiency into parallel classes, or into groups within a class; or they should be recommended to seek a class of more suitable standard elsewhere. Teachers should be aware of what is available in their subject in the area. There should be liaison with public libraries and subject lists of relevant books to be found there. Individual note-making should become a routine part of the students' work. The teacher should know the relevant films, filmstrips, charts, specimens and other visual material and their main sources of supply. Lessons should normally involve demonstration or exposition, discussion, reference to books and note-making as well as individual work by the students. Care should be taken to see that there is not too much individual tuition, or that individual students are not neglected. Teachers should be vigilant for signs of bewilderment or hold-up in individual work. In exposition and discussion the teacher should encourage the exploration of all the educative relevances of the subject, — social (e.g. the economic or social-class implications of fashion), historical, scientific, aesthetic, and so on. The specific possibilities of a skill should not be neglected — the famous achievements in pottery, woodwork or the Italian language. Teachers should use the situation brought about by the class to facilitate the development of a face-to-face, task-related group. The room should be redispensed after its day use more suitably for an adult group. Teachers should know the name and something of the background of each student and show personal interest in them and in promoting their relationship with other students. Teachers should learn and use simple techniques

for initiating and sustaining discussion.

This breath-taking list of 'suggestions' is the result of crude compression, and like all such catalogues it has the repellent side-effect of implying the existence somewhere of a flawless teacher, earning golden odium from everyone.

It seems important to repeat that this article is intended as a call for aid from those who, unlike the writer, are engaged full-time in adult education.

## GROUP DYNAMICS THEORIES II

*Some implications of group dynamics research*

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I HAVE SUGGESTED that the findings of group dynamics research could well inform adult education practice. It ought to be borne in mind that the field of group dynamics, though by no means newly opened up, has had to wait until recently to be experimentally explored. Cartwright and Zander (6, x) in 1960 found it safe to say that 'more empirical studies have been carried out since 1953 than in all the preceding years'. It is therefore too soon for it to have a unified theory. In fact, it still lacks an agreed outline; but it has illuminated several aspects of group life that were even more inadequately understood before. In being explicit, I shall indicate the research findings that are relevant to the forces which determine the nature of leadership in groups, since it is the kind of leadership which the tutor practises himself and encourages and allows his students to practise that assists or hampers the success of educational activities.

### LEADERSHIP

The forces that determine the nature of leadership are threefold:

- (a) *the pressures of the organisation* (i.e. what the requirements of the educational institution permit the tutor and the class to do);
- (b) *the pressures of the group* (i.e. what the class members would like the tutor and other class-members to do);
- (c) *the pressures of the tutor's role concept* (i.e. what the tutor himself thinks and feels he ought to do).

An examination of these factors in the context of Responsible Body adult education will indicate the directions in which change could well be promoted.

### THE ADULT TUTOR AND THE ORGANISATION'S DEMANDS

The first part of this paper indicated that the ethos of Responsible Body adult education might encourage the leader to dominate the class. I find it nowhere insisted that he is required to act in this fashion (though obviously some of the characteristics of the University Extension Lecture movement inhibit group participation, and the requirements in some areas for the early preparation of syllabuses, and their publication prior to the first class meeting, will restrict areas of student involvement, by denying them a share in the planning of a syllabus). Indeed, one of the consequences of teacher isolation that characterises adult education and every other stage of the educational process, is that the administrator and his colleagues are unlikely to be aware of the tutor's teaching style and the conduct of his class, and would probably consider it undesirable to have such information. Prohibitions and requirements for methods of teaching are, therefore, unlikely to be made by the organisation, and if they were, would prove difficult to enforce. I suspect that the tutor as an alibi may often attribute to the organisation's demands many features of his performance that he requires of himself.

### THE ADULT TUTOR AND HIS STUDENTS' DEMANDS

It will be helpful if, before considering the effect which his perception of his students' demands has on the tutor, two qualifications were made:

- (a) people join groups because they feel they can gain satisfactions which they cannot obtain outside them; they remain in groups because they obtain greater satisfaction than dissatisfaction from doing so, but the satisfactions which they receive, and which incline them to continue their membership of the group may be other than those which prompted them to join it in the first place. So that, to take an extreme example, though students may initially desire no more than to sit at a tutor's feet, there is no reason to believe that their involvement in more co-operative educational ventures will of itself so disappoint their expectations that they will withdraw from membership of the group.
- (b) though the attractiveness of a group for an individual can reside in a number of factors—liking the people in the group, liking