


Welcome to ANDRAGOGY.net!

ANDRAGOGY.net is operated by Prof. Dr. Jost Reischmann, Chair of Andragogy, Bamberg University, Germany
(Homepage).

This page wants to serve the international colleagues working at universities and colleges in the subject of **adult and continuing education**.

=

On this page you find our understanding of Andragogy, and the first printing (1833) of this term.

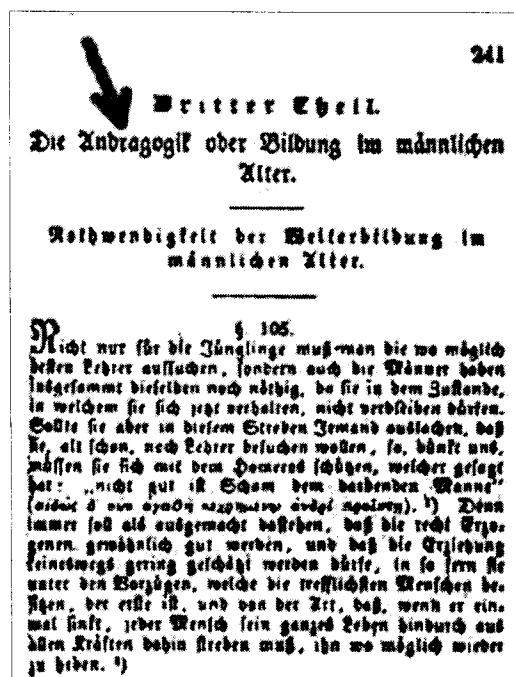
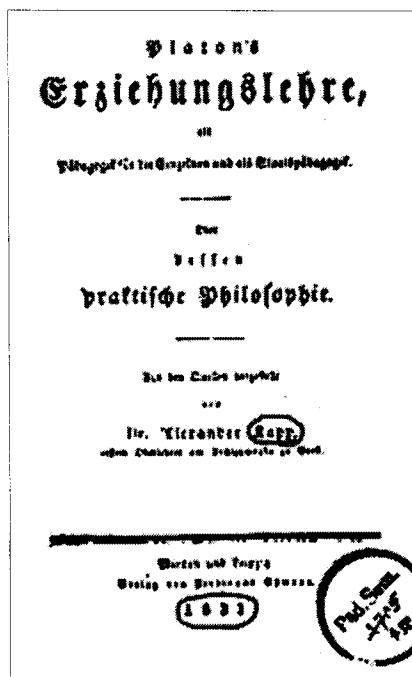
	for	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coming Adult Education Conferences • International Institutions of Adult Education • National Adult Education Instituts • Adult Education University Instituts: USA/Canada, Germany
---	-----	--

Visitors to ANDRAGOGY.net help visitors!

If you know **interesting links** that might be helpful for scholars in andragogy / adult education, share them with us! And have a look to the links other colleagues found helpful.



Why “Andragogy”?

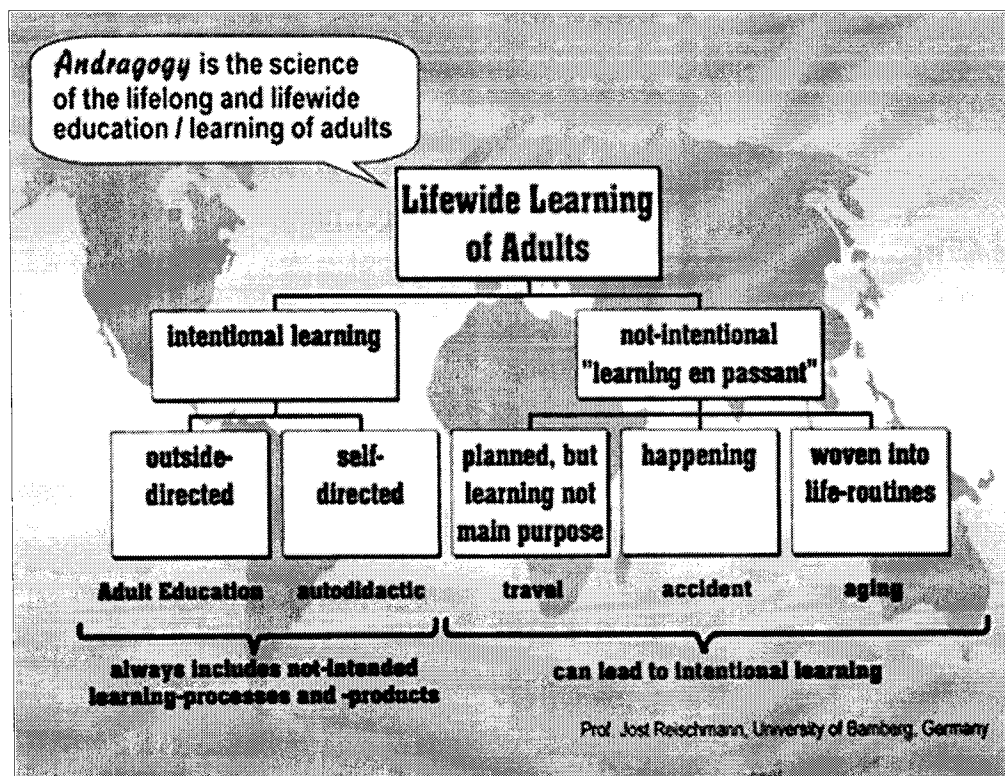


The first document using the term “Andragogik”: Kapp, Alexander (1833): Platon's

Erziehungslehre, als Pädagogik für die Einzelnen und als Staatspädagogik. Minden und Leipzig.

We changed the name of our chair in 1994 from "Adult Education" to "Andragogik", using a term that was coined in 1833 by the German educator Alexander Kapp. There were mainly two reasons to do this:

- We use the term "andragogy" to label the **academic discipline** that reflects and researches the education and learning of adults. By this we emphasize the differentiation between the field of practice ("adult education") and the scholarly approach ("andragogy").
- In our understanding "andragogy" **comprises the "lifewide learning" of adults**. This understanding includes not only institutionalized forms of learning, but also selfdirected and even partly-intentional or non-intentional forms of learning.



Structural scheme of adult education and adult learning

Autor: Reischmann, Jost (2000): Welcome to ANDRAGOGY.net. At: <http://www.andragogy.net>. Version Febr. 23, 2000.

New manuscript February 2004:

Autor: Reischmann, Jost (2004): Andragogy. History, Meaning, Context, Function. At: <http://www.andragogy.net>. Version Febr. 25, 2004.

Jost Reischmann:

Andragogy. History, Meaning, Context, Function

The term 'andragogy' has been used in different times and countries with various connotations. Nowadays there exists mainly three understandings:

- 1. In many countries there is a growing conception of 'andragogy' as the scholarly

approach to the learning of adults. In this connotation andragogy is the science of understanding and supporting lifelong and lifewide education of adults.

- 2. Especially in the USA, 'andragogy' in the tradition of Malcolm Knowles, labels a specific theoretical and practical approach, based on a humanistic conception of self-directed and autonomous learners and teachers as facilitators of learning.
- 3. Widely, an unclear use of andragogy can be found, with its meaning changing from 'adult education practice' or 'desirable values' or 'specific teaching methods,' to 'reflections' or 'academic discipline' and/or 'opposite to childish pedagogy'.

Terms make sense in relation to the object they name. Relating the development of the term to the historical context may explain the differences.

The history of 'andragogy'

The first use of the term 'andragogy' - as far as we know today - was found with the German high school teacher Alexander Kapp in 1833. In a book entitled 'Platon's Erziehungslehre' (Plato's Educational Ideas) he describes the lifelong necessity to learn. Starting with early childhood he comes to page 241 (of 450) to adulthood with the title 'Die Andragogik oder Bildung im maennlichen Alter' (Andragogy or Education in the man's Age - a replica can be found on www.andragogy.net). In 60 pages he argues that education, self-reflection, and educating the character is the first value in human life. He then refers to vocational education of the healing profession, soldier, educator, orator, ruler, and men as family father. In a common pedagogical pattern, he includes and combines the education of inner, subjective personality ('character') and outer, objective competencies; and learning happens not only through teachers, but also through self-reflection and life experience, and is more than 'teaching adults'.

Kapp does not explain the term Andragogik, and it is not clear, whether he invented it or whether he took it from somebody else. He does not develop a theory, but justifies 'andragogy' as the practical necessity of the education of adults.

This may be the reason why the term lay fallow: other terms and ideas were available. The idea of adult learning was not unusual in that early age around 1833, neither in Europe (enlightenment movement, reading-societies, workers education, educational work of churches), nor in America (Franklin Institute in Philadelphia, Lowell Institute in Boston, Lyceum movement, town libraries, museums, agricultural societies); all had important dates between 1820-40. The existing objects had their terminology, a new term was not needed.

The second and third invention

In the 1920's in Germany adult education became a field of theorizing. Especially a group of scholars from various subjects, the so-called 'Hohenrodter Bund', developed in theory and practice the 'Neue Richtung' (new direction) in adult education. Here some authors gave a second birth to the term 'Andragogik', now describing sets of explicit reflections related to the why, what for and how of teaching adults. It was a sophisticated, theory-oriented concept, being an antonym to 'demagogy' - too difficult to handle, not really shared. So again it was forgotten. But a new object was shining up: a scholarly, academic reflection level 'above' practical adult education. The scholars came from various disciplines, working in adult education as persons, not representing university institutes or disciplines. The idea of adult education as a discipline was not yet born.

It is not clear where the third wave of using andragogy originated. In the 1950's andragogy suddenly can be found in publications in Switzerland (Hanselmann), Yugoslavia (Ogrizovic), the Netherlands (ten Have), Germany (Poeggeler). Still the term was known only to insiders, and was sometimes more oriented to practice, sometimes more to theory. Perhaps this mirrors the reality of adult education of that time, without formal training for adult educators, some very limited theoretical knowledge, no institutionalized continuity of developing such a knowledge, and no academic course of study. 'Adult education' still was a unclear mixture of practice, commitment, ideologies, reflections, theories, mostly local institutions, and some academic involvement of individuals. As the reality was unclear, the term could not be any clearer. But the increasing use of the term signaled that a new differentiation between 'doing' and 'reflecting' was developing, perhaps needing an extra term.

Andragogy: A banner for identity

The great times of the term 'andragogy' for the English-speaking adult education world came with Malcolm Knowles. He describes:

'... in 1967 I had an experience that made it all come together. A Yugoslavian adult educator, Dusan Savicevic, participated in a summer session I was conducting at Boston University. At the end of it he came up to me with his eyes sparkling and said, 'Malcolm, you are preaching and practicing andragogy.' I replied, 'Whatagogy?' because I had never heard the term before. He explained that the term had been coined by a teacher in a German grammar school, Alexander Kapp, in 1833 ... The term lay fallow until it was once more introduced by a German social scientist, Eugen Rosenstock, in 1921, but it did not receive general recognition. Then in 1957 a German teacher, Franz Poggeler, published a book, *Introduction into Andragogy: Basic issues in Adult Education*, and this term was then picked up by adult educators in Germany, Austria, the Netherlands, and Yugoslavia ...' (Knowles 1989, p. 79).

Knowles published his first article (1968) about his understanding of andragogy with the provocative title 'Andragogy, Not Pedagogy.' In a short time the term andragogy, now labeling Knowles' concept, received general recognition throughout North America and other English speaking countries; 'within North America, no view of teaching adults is more widely known, or more enthusiastically embraced, than Knowles' description of andragogy' (Pratt, 1998, p. 13).

Knowles' concept of andragogy - 'the art and science of helping adults learn' - 'is built upon two central, defining attributes: First, a conception of learners as self-directed and autonomous; and second, a conception of the role of the teacher as facilitator of learning rather than presenter of content' (Pratt, 1998, p. 12), emphasizing learner choice more than expert control. Both attributes fit into the specific socio-historic thoughts in and after the 1970's, for example the deschooling theory (Illich, Reimer), Rogers person-centered approach, Freire's 'conscientizacao'. Perhaps a third attribute added to the attraction of Knowles concept: Constructing andragogy as opposing pedagogy (later reduced) provided opportunity to be on the 'good side,' not a 'pedagogue,' seen as 'a teacher, especially a pedantic one' (Webster's Dictionary, 1982). This flattered adult educators in a time, where most adult educators were andragogical amateurs, doing adult education based on their content expertise, experience, and a mission they felt, not based on trained or studied educational competence. To be offered understandable, humanistic values and beliefs, some specific methods and a good sounding label, strengthened a group that felt inferior to comparable professions. And this came

coincidentally along with a significant growth of the field of practice plus an increased scholarly approach, including the emerging possibility to study adult education at universities. All these elements document a new period ('art and science') in adult education; it made sense to combine them in a new term.

Providing a unifying idea and identity, connected with the term andragogy, to the amorphous group of adult educators, certainly was the main benefit Knowles awarded to the field of adult education at that time. Another was that he strengthened the already existing scholarly access to adult education by publishing, theorizing, doing research, by educating students that themselves through academic research became scholars, and by explicitly defining andragogy as science (Cooper & Henschke, 2003).

Nevertheless, over the years critique developed against Knowles' understanding of andragogy. A first critique argues, that Knowles claimed to offer a general concept of adult education, but like all educational theories in history it is but one concept, born into a specific historic context. For example, one of Knowles' basic assumptions is that becoming adult means becoming self-directed. But other genuine concepts of adult education do not accept this American type of self-directed lonesome fighter as the ultimate educational goal: in family, church, or civic education, where the 'we' is more important than the 'self.' The andragogy concept of Knowles is, as the Dutch scholar van Gent (1996) criticizes, not a general-descriptive, but a 'specific, prescriptive approach' (p. 116). Another critique is Knowles' conceiving of pedagogy as pedantic schoolmasters' practice, not as an academic discipline. This hostility toward pedagogy had two negative outcomes: On a strategic level, scholars of adult education could make no alliances with the colleagues from pedagogy; on a content level, knowledge developed in pedagogy through 400 years could not be made fruitful for andragogy (more critical remarks see Merriam/Caffarella, 1999, p. 273ff, Savicevic, 1999, p. 113ff). Thus, attaching 'andragogy' exclusively to Knowles' specific approach means that the term is lost for a general using.

The European development

In most countries of Europe the Knowles-discussion played at best a marginal role. The use and development of 'andragogy' in the different countries and languages was more hidden, disperse, and uncoordinated - but steady. Andragogy nowhere described one specific concept, but was from 1970 on, connected with the, in existence, coming academic and professional institutions, publications, programs, triggered by a similar growth of adult education in practice and theory as in the USA. 'Andragogy' functioned in Europe as a header for (places of) systematic reflections, parallel to other academic headers like 'biology', 'medicine', 'physics'. Examples of this use of andragogy are: The Yugoslavian (scholarly) journal for adult education, named 'Andragogija' in 1969; the 'Yugoslavian Society for Andragogy'; in 1993, Slovenia's 'Andragoski Center Republike Slovenije' was founded with the journal 'Andragoska Spoznanja'; Prague University (Czechia) has a 'Katedra Andragogiky'; in 1995, Bamberg University (Germany) named a 'Lehrstuhl Andragogik'; the Internet address of the Estonian adult education society is 'andra.ee'. On this formal level 'above practice' and specific approaches, the term andragogy could be used in communistic countries as well as in capitalistic, relating to all types of theories, for reflection, analysis, training, in person-oriented programs as well as human resource development.

A similar professional and academic expansion developed worldwide, sometimes using more or less demonstratively the term andragogy: Venezuela has the 'Instituto Internacional de Andragogia', since 1998 the Adult & Continuing Education Society of Korea publishes the

journal 'Andragogy today'. This documents a reality with new types of professional institutions, functions, roles, with fulltime employed and academically trained professionals. Some of the new professional institutions used the name andragogy - meaning the same as 'adult education', but sounding more demanding, science-based. But throughout Europe still 'adult education', 'further education' or 'adult pedagogy' is used more than 'andragogy'.

Andragogy: Academic discipline

An academic discipline with university programs, professors, students, focusing on the education of adults, exists today in many countries. But in the membership-list of the Commission of Professors of Adult Education of the USA (2003) not one university institute uses the name 'andragogy', in Germany one out of 35, in Eastern Europe six out of 26. Many actors in the field seem not to need a label 'andragogy'. However, other scholars, for example Dusan Savicevic, who provided Knowles with the term andragogy, explicitly claim 'andragogy as a discipline, the subject of which is the study of education and learning of adults in all its forms of expression' (Savicevic, 1999, p. 97, Henschke 2003, Reischmann 2003). This claim is not a mere definition, but includes the prospective function to influence the coming reality: to challenge 'outside' (demanding a respected discipline in the university context), to confront 'inside' (challenging the colleagues to clarify their understanding and consensus of their function and science), overall to stand to a self-confident academic identity.

The coming reality will show whether the ongoing differentiation in institutions, functions, and roles will need a term 'andragogy' for conceptual clarification.

References and further reading

Gent, B. van (1996): 'Andragogy'. In A. C. Tuijnman (ed.): *International Encyclopedia of Adult Education and Training*, (2nd edn, Oxford: Pergamon), p. 114-117.

Cooper, M. K. & Henschke, J. A. (2003): *An Update on Andragogy: The International Foundation for Its Research, Theory and Practice*, (Paper presented at the CPAE Conference, Detroit, Michigan).

Henschke, J. (2003). : Andragogy Website <http://www.umsl.edu/~henschke>

Knowles, M. S. (1989): *The Making of an Adult Educator*, (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass).

Merriam, S. H. and Caffarella, R. S. (1999): *Learning in Adulthood*, (2nd edn, San Francisco: Jossey-Bass).

Reischmann, J. (2003): *Why Andragogy?* Bamberg University, Germany
<http://www.andragogy.net>.

Savicevic, D. (1999): 'Understanding Andragogy in Europe and America: Comparing and Contrasting'. In J. Reischmann, M. Bron, Z. Jelenc (eds), *Comparative Adult Education 1998: the Contribution of ISCAE to an Emerging Field of Study*, (Ljubljana, Slovenia: Slovenian Institute for Adult Education) p. 97-119.

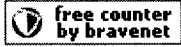
Autor: Reischmann, Jost (2004): Andragogy. History, Meaning, Context, Function. At: <http://www.andragogy.net>.
Version Febr. 25, 2004.

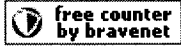
Jost Reischmann is Professor of Andragogy at Bamberg University in Germany. He is President of the International

Society for Comparative Adult Education (ISCAE) and member of the International Adult and Continuing Education Hall of Fame.

Back to incoming page		-Home-page	International Link-List	Andragogik Uni Bamberg	top of page 
---------------------------------------	---	----------------------------	---	--	---

018616



Since February 22, 2000, we counted  visitors to this page.
Clicking the counter gives you an idea where visitors came from.