THE MARGINALIZED ROLE OF NON-FORMAL EDUCATION IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF ADULT EDUCATION

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Abstract

In 1998, James Draper challenged adult educators in the introduction to his chronology to build on his chronology and to ask questions of history that might help us to understand the influence that "learning has had in directing and enriching the development of individual men and women." This paper attempts to respond to that challenge and provide an explication of the development of adult education in context: the context being the historical and social developments of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries with special attention and examination of the developments in and marginalization of non-formal adult education. The social, religious, philosophical and historical context of non-formal adult education demonstrates the contextual framework embedded in adult education and reveals a movement of voluntary organizations that have carried on massive non-formal educational endeavours.

Résumé

En 1998, dans l'introduction de sa chronologie, James Draper a mis au défi les formateurs d'adultes d'ajouter à sa chronologie et de poser des questions d'histoire susceptibles de nous aider à comprendre le rôle que « l'apprentissage a joué dans l'orientation et l'enrichissement du développement des individus, hommes ou femmes. » Cet article tente de relever ce défi et offre une explication du développement de la formation permanente dans un contexte particulier. L'examen de ce contexte, constitué par les développements historiques et sociaux du 19e siècle et du début du 20e siècle, porte une attention toute particulière aux développements et à la marginalisation de la formation permanente non-institutionnelle. Le contexte social, religieux, philosophique et historique de la formation permanente non-institutionnelle met en relief le cadre contextuel intégré à la formation permanente et fait apparaître un mouvement composé d'organismes bénévoles qui ont poursuivi une énorme entreprise d'éducation informelle.

The Canadian Journal for the Study of Adult Education/
La Revue canadienne pour l'étude de l'éducation des adultes
17, 1 May/mai 2003 19-45
ISSN 0835-4944 © Canadian Association for the Study of Adult Education/
L'Association canadienne pour l'étude de l'éducation des adultes

"One of the most serious barriers to the advancement of understanding in any field of study must be the existence of conceptual ambiguity and terminological confusion"[1] In an area fraught with diffusion, complicated by diversity, and unsettled by nature, adult education becomes such a field. Terms like adult learning, continuing education, lifelong learning, recurrent learning, adult education, community learning, non-formal education, informal education, add to the confusion of a field that is misunderstood and often undervalued by academics?

What then of the body of theory surrounding the field of adult education? Adult education is regarded as a field of study, not as an academic discipline. Many writers in the profession express concern over the lack of an explicit body of theory and the resulting dependency upon a technicist conception of adult education.[2] This dependency has resulted in the elevation of technical rationality "to a position of undisputed pre-eminence over forms of human thought and discourse."[3] Adult education has been pre-occupied with its attempts, as have other areas of endeavour, with the emphasis placed on science and technology. The field consists, to a large degree, of practitioners who acknowledge that there is no tacit body of knowledge which is adhered to, or expounded, and as such ignore in large part, the history of the development of the field.

Certain assumptions or unchallenged beliefs frame the discourse of adult educators and may be utilized to examine these tacit understandings. This paper will examine adult education as explication of the development of the field in context: the context being the historical and social developments of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. The social, religious, and philosophical changes and developments of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries will be examined to help us to understand the underpinnings of how the field has developed. The paper further aims to take up the challenge issued by James Draper, in his "Introduction to the

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[1]Stephen Brookfield, *Adult Learners, Adult Education and the Community* (Milton Keynes: Open University Press, 1983), p.22

[2]See Gordon Selman and Paul Dampier *The Foundations of Adult Education in Canada* (Toronto: Thompson Educational Publishing, Inc. 1991), p.iix; Michael Welton, "Dangerous Knowledge: Canadian Workers'Education in the Decades of Discord" in *Studies in the Education of Adults* (1) 1991, p.25-40; Michael Collins, *Adult Education as Vocation: A Critical Role for the Adult Educator* (London: Routledge, 1991); Stephen Brookfield, "The Epistemology of Adult Education in the United States and Great Britain: A Cross-Cultural Analysis" in B.Bright ed. *The Epistemological Imperative* (London: Croom-Helm, 1989),p. 160; Derek Briton *The Modern Practice of Adult Education: A Post Modern Critique* (State University of New York Press, 1996).

Canadian Chronology" to build on his work and to present further understanding of this field we call adult education.[4] It can be demonstrated, through the historical context, that adult education developed in specific directions because of the historical events of the last 200 years. Closer examination of the historical links will illuminate and provide an understanding of the development of the nature of the enterprise of adult education. The paper will focus specifically on non-formal education and will argue that it has been undervalued in historical recording.

In broad terms we can agree that adult education, in Great Britain, the United States, and Canada has developed along similar lines and can be seen to have originated in a common arena. Immigration to Canada and the U.S. in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries was, to a large degree, responsible for bringing many of the British traditions across the water, including many of its educational institutions. Some that spring to mind readily are the Mechanics Institutes, the YMCA, University Extension, the Workers' Educational Association, and the Open University.

Definition

Before we can discuss the development of adult education we must first decide what we mean when we use the term. The term adult education, as many would agree, evades explicit definition. There are several basic difficulties present which cloud the issue and make precision complicated. The first is the range of historical events which have been included in the formation of the enterprise. The second is the number of agencies, the diversity and multiplicity of their activities and the difficulty associated with identifying criteria that might be used. The third is the question of adulthood: who is, or is not, and adult? These questions are surrounded by basic philosophical questions which may be, and often are, in conflict.[5]

There have been several approaches to the definition of adult education. There are those who attempt definition on the *large scale* like The Recommendation on the Development of Adult Education by UNESCO which defined adult education as:

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[3]Collins, Adult Education as Vocation, p. 2-4

[4]James Draper, "Introduction to the Canadian Chronology" in *The Canadian Journal for the Study of Adult Education*, Vol.12, No.2, November 1998, pp. 33-44

[5]Coolie Verner, A Conceptual Scheme for the Identification and Classification of Processes; John Elias and Saharan Marum, Philosophical Foundations of Adult Education (Malabar: Krieger Publishing Company, 1980), p. 4

> ...the entire body of organized educational processes, whatever the content, level and method, whether formal or otherwise, whether they prolong or replace initial education in schools, colleges and universities as well as in apprenticeship, whereby persons regarded as adult by the society to which they belong develop their abilities, enrich their knowledge, improve their technical or professional qualifications or turn them in a new direction and bring about changes in their attitudes or behaviour in the twofold perspective of full personal development and participation in balanced and independent social, economic and cultural development....[6]

A definition of this scope offers no insight or accessibility to understanding at all. In fact, it merely covers all of the bases and points in the general direction of liberal education.

There are those who attempt to define adult education by *purpose*. The famous 1919 Report of The Adult Education Committee of The British Ministry of Reconstruction called adult education

> ...all the deliberate efforts by which men and women attempt to satisfy their thirst for knowledge, to equip themselves for their responsibilities as citizens and members of society or to find opportunities for self-expression.[7]

This reflects the philosophy of adult education in the context of the history of the time that it was written and portrays adult education from a social movement perspective emphasizing citizenship, solidarity, and shared ideals for a democratic society.

Cyril House in *The Design of Education* defined adult education as the *process* whereby men and women

> ...seek to improve themselves or their society by increasing their skill, knowledge or sensitivities; or it is any process by which individuals, groups or institutions try to help men and women improve in these ways.[8]

Coolie Verner also chose to concentrate on process but added the element of operational analysis when he defined adult education as

> ...the action of an external agent in purposefully ordering behaviour into planned systematic experiences that can result in learning for those whom such activity is supplemental to their primary role in

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[6]UNESCO, *Recommendation on the Development of Adult Education*, published in Canada (1976, reprinted Ottawa: Canadian Commission for UNESCO, 1980), p. 3

[7]The 1919 Report, A Design for Democracy (New York: Association Press), p. 56

[8]C.O. Houle, *The Design of Democracy* (San Francisco: Josses-Bass, 1972), p. 32

society, and which involves some continuity in an exchange relationship between the agent and the learner so that the educational process is under constant supervision and revision.[9]

Malcolm Kneels tells us that the term 'adult education' refers to at least three different *phenomena*:

1) a set of activities—the total programs and activities provided by an institution

2) an intellectual process—the means by which adults seek or participate in learning

3) a social system—made up of individuals and organizations centred around the concept of education for adults, sometimes called a movement.[10]

Others yet discuss the differences between the terms, "the education of adults" and "adult education." The confusion surrounding these two phrases has been responsible, in many instances, for creating a great deal of the bewilderment that surrounds the field of adult education. This results in some educators talking and theorizing about the education of adults while others are listening from within the framework of an institution named adult education.

What is the impact of this in relation to the question "what is adult education?" What we end up with is a discourse which originates, most frequently, in philosophical inclination. Each definition contains elements which, while emphasizing different aspects of the field, will ultimately relate directly to the philosophy of the individual educator and to what is viewed to be the role of adult education. For example, liberal educators will view a definition differently from progressive educators, and radical educators would view a definition lacking an element of consciousness raising to be inadequate. Perhaps there are two reactions to this predicament

1) maybe a definition is not necessary or

2) adult education is what the author says it is and definitions will be tied to personal educational philosophy

For the purpose of this paper I will attempt a working definition to clarify the direction of the paper. This definition borrows heavily from the work of Cyril Houle:

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[9]Coolie Verner (Chicago: Adult Education Education Association of the USA, 1962), p. 2-3

[10]M.S.Knowles, A History of the Adult Education Movement in the United States (New York: Krieger, 1977), p. viii

> Adult education is the process by which individuals, groups, institutions and associations gain the skills, knowledge or sensitivities, deemed necessary to satisfy and develop intellectual quests, manage their own affairs and contribute positively to the improvement of society.

This definition is a combination of purpose and process and is a definition that provides an easy framework for the purpose of this paper.

Organization of Adult Education

The organization of educational content or the manner in which we think about the educational relationship between the learner and the provider can be classified under the following headings: formal, informal, and non-formal. Formal education is that form of education gathered within the traditional institution, e.g., universities, community colleges, institutes of learning, either private or public. It usually involves a timed concept of learning, a curriculum, and a graduation system complete with appropriate accreditation.

Another approach is called informal education. This method of education is often unplanned, sometimes unintentional, and rarely organized in an institutional sense. It accounts for the sum total of educational experiences an individual encounters over a lifetime of learning, "the lifelong process by which every person acquires and accumulates knowledge, skills, attitudes and insights from daily experiences and exposure to the environment...,"[11] how to make toast, or clean the floor, or change a tire, or relate a folk tale, or raise children, and the list goes on.

The third type of organization, and the organization that is of most pertinence to this paper is called non-formal education. This is the education which is carried out in other instances of society. These occasions range from informal gatherings in churches and clubs to groups gathered in homes. Gordon Selman and Paul Dampier say that non-formal education is aimed at facilitating selected types of learning on behalf of particular interest or sub-groups of the population. The essential element, they maintain, is that the activity has been *planned* (author's emphasis) as an educational experience.[12] In the foreword to the report on the conference *Non-formal Education and the Rural Poor*, Cole S. Brembeck states that non-formal education has been termed frequently as the silent educational system: "It does not require elaborate campuses and buildings. Its 'curricular' will not often be found

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[11]P.H.Coombs, *The World Crisis in Education*, p.24, quoted in Selman and Dampier, p. 12

[12]Selman and Dampier, *The Foundations* , p. 12

spelled out in catalogues or brochures."[13] Often non-formal educational experiences may not be viewed as learning, and the participants may not view themselves as learners. Furthermore, those teaching may not view themselves as teachers. The experiences may include short courses to update workers, a one-day seminar, volunteer training, community programs in health, nutrition, family planning, a book club, professional development courses, a class in music appreciation or gardening, a publication aimed at informing, educating and updating membership on issues of importance to that membership. Non-formal education is flexible, adjustable, and adaptable. It is well-suited to many learning needs and situations, and to societies in various stages of historical, social, or national development.

Many writers, like RP Singh and Neerja Shikla, point out that while there are similarities, non-formal education is quite different from informal education which is gained most often within the culture of the family. They also hold that non-formal education is just as different from formal education. Non-formal education holds no promise for the future and does not result in the alienation from culture or background, so often the result of formal education, especially in developing countries.[14]

Non-formal adult education is most often associated, in the late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries with development in underdeveloped countries. This is because non-formal education is the most appropriate and effective method for teaching in poor and underdeveloped nations: it needs no elaborate buildings, no highly qualified teachers or administration and there are no credentials to be supervised. It can be provided under a tree, in a village meeting place, or in the fields. Many can be led to believe that this is non-formal education in its greatest manifestation. They may forget however, or in some cases be unaware of, the mass education of the nineteenth-century which was carried out in Mechanics' Institutes, literary associations, church groups, clubs, literary societies and study circles, and which educated thousands of adults into citizenship and practical politics. In summary, non-formal education is intended to provide learning opportunities in a variety of instances, in an unrestricted manner. Flexibility and accessibility coupled with learner interest are defining characteristics.

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[13]Cole S. Brembeck, Director of the Institute for International Studies in Education in Michigan State University, wrote this in the foreword of the "Report of the conference and workshop in Non-formal Education and the Rural Poor," held at the College of Education, Michigan State University, March 1977, p. vii

[14]R.P. Singh and Neerja Shikla, *Non-formal Education: An Alternate to Formal Systems* (Chandigarh: Bahri Publications Private Limited, 1979), p. 3

Historical Background

The concept of adult learning has not developed since the 1930s, nor is it a modern day phenomenon. Adult education did not begin with the Mechanics' Institutes, as many would have us believe. The origins of adult education, especially non-formal adult education, may be traced back to the ancient Greeks and thinkers like Plato, who believed that learning could not begin until adulthood was achieved, to the Chinese, the Hindus, and the Buddhist monks who would travel to neighbouring villages to teach their skills. It was evident in the Medieval Christian Church and in Thomas More's *Utopia*. CJ Titmus says that one of the earliest published books on education, Zenophon's *Cyropaedia* came out of what is modern day Iran. Mosques, universities, and Koranic schools organized education which started in Baghdad and Cairo, stretched from Persia to Spain and advanced southwards to South Africa.[15]

JFC Harrison says modern concepts of adult education can be seen to have a recognizable beginning in the 1790's and the new industrial society[16] Colin Griffin concurs, stating that adult education concepts can be seen to have their origins with the origins of industrial and urban society.[17] JW Hudson puts the date a little earlier reporting that it is certain that several adults entered the Welsh Circulating Schools as early as 1740 in order to learn to read the Bible. He goes further to say that between the years 1737 and 1760 as many as 150,212 persons had been taught to read by these Circulating Schools and that there is sufficient evidence to prove that adults formed two-thirds of that number. These dates place the beginnings of modern adult education a good fifty years before the Mechanics' Institutes. The first school organized in Great Britain exclusively for the formal education of adults however, was opened in Bala, Merionethshire, in the year 1811, by the Reverend T. Charles, B.A.[18] This was ten years after the organization of the first Mechanics' Institutes.

The history of adult education has exhibited different popular concepts and beliefs that have centred on religious growth, scientific discovery,

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[15]C.J.Titmus, "Introduction" in *Lifelong Education for Adults: An International Handbook* (Toronto: Pergamon Press, 1989), p. xxiv

[16]J.F.C.Harrison, Learning and Living 1790-1960: A Study in the History of the English Adult Education Movement (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1961), p. xii

[17]Colin Griffin, *Adult Education: As Social Policy* (London:Croom Helm, 1987), p. 141

[18]J.W. Hudson, *The History of Adult Education* (1851; reprint, London: The Woburn Press, 1969), p. 1

economic reconstruction, political distraction and social upheaval. The 1919 Report compiled by the British Ministry for Reconstruction, for example, drew its inspiration from the church, physical science, the development of cheap literature and the popular press, from Co-operation, Trade Unionism and the Chartist Movement.[19]

Social Change

At the beginning of the nineteenth-century England was evolving from an agrarian to an industrial society. Pre-industrial society was based on landed property, feudal conquest and military force, whereas post industrial society saw the rise of cities and towns and new urban professions. The opportunities afforded the ideal citizen in pre-industrialized society was restricted to only a few; whereas, in theory, the professional ideal of post-industrialization could be expanded to everyone. H. Perkin sees the rise of professional society as the culmination of the industrial revolution. At the material level he describes it as a rise in human productivity. This rise, says Perkin, was on *such a scale* that it boosted, as it were, the logarithmic index of society. Productivity increased, by a multiple rather than a fraction, both the number of human beings which a given area of land would support, and standards of living or consumption per head of goods and services.

Such a rise in scale required, involved and implied drastic changes in society itself: in size and distribution of the population, in its social structure and organization, and in the political and administrative superstructure which they demanded and supported. It was in brief a *social revolution:* a revolution in social organization, with social causes as well as social effects.[20]

Pole tells us that the population of England and Wales increased from five and a half million in 1700 to nearly nine million by 1801.[21] The pressures resulting from industrialization, the Napoleonic war, economic

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[19]Chartism was the working man's political reform movement in Great Britain, 1838-48. It derived its name fro the People's Charter, a document published in May 1838, that called for voting by ballot, universal male suffrage, annual Parliaments, equal electoral districts, no property qualifications for members of Parliament, and payment of members. The charter was drafted by the London Working Men's Association, an organization founded by William Lovett in 1834.

[20]H. Perkin, The Rise of Professional Society: England Since 1880 (London: Routledge, 1989), p. 18

[21]Coolie Verner's Pole's History of Adult Schools: A Facsimile of the 1816 Edition with an Introduction and Bibliographic Notes (Washington D.C.: Adult Education Association, 1967), p. 2

stress and population explosion produced a new working class that was poor. Urban slums developed as the population gravitated to the cities in search of work.

The industrial revolution had created a working class which created baffling dilemmas for the middle classes. From 1830 the Poor Laws engaged the attention of Parliament. These laws addressed issues involving conditions in the factories, Irish poverty, and national education. The social and moral state of the poor presented a scenario which could not be hidden or ignored. "The working classes, though they had not yet entered politics, had become a political issue."[22]

The existence of a working class who were illiterate constituted a barrier to the spread of middle-class ideology. The creation of a fully literate society was considered to be critical to the central philosophies of the day. Enlightenment, evangelicalism and utilitarianism put a premium on a minimum of literary facility.[23] The response to this predicament for many working class leaders was situated in non-formal education. Adult education in a non-formal fashion represented a means for social and political emancipation.

Religious Influence

Initially, the poverty and depravity involved with slum dwelling sparked a reform note, prevalent in the religious thought and practices of the day. Slums were an occasion of sin. Sin, therefore, resulted from illiteracy and the amelioration of sin was through moral instruction. Since the poor were sinful because they were illiterate, they must be taught to read the Bible in order to save themselves.[24] Some of the beginning steps in the development of modern adult education was spawned in the belief that the condition of sinners could be improved, and the souls of the depraved could be redeemed through learning to read the word of God.

Adult education was very much the product of the conceptual ideology and changing trends among nineteenth-century Protestant churches.[25] *During* the nineteenth-century Protestant churches went through major changes and fundamental transformations. Into a world previously dominated by Anglican, Methodist, Baptist, Congregational, Lutheran, and Presbyterian

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[22]Harrison, p. 5

[23]Ibid., p. 42

[24]Ibid., p. 4

[25]Christopher Headon, "Women and Organized Religion in Mid and Late Nineteenth Century Canada," in *JCCHS* (1978), p. 13

"goals of converting the individual and spurring the community along the path of spiritual and ethical growth" defined a revivalism which became one of the pre-eminent concerns of the nineteenth-century, English speaking world. Revivalism defined the very nature of religious expression. [26]

The theology of evangelicalism in the early nineteenth-century placed emphasis on Jesus, the man, who could provide the example of how to live a Christian life. Emphasis shifted from the concept of the Lamb of God, or redeemer, symbolized by Easter, to Jesus the man, and his birth at Christmas. Religion was to be a guide to living as well as providing a road to redemption. What distinguished evangelicals, says Boyd Hilton, was the fervour with which they practiced "vital religion". This religion "of the heart" stressed conversion and grace. The individual invited God's grace to enter the soul to become "born again". Everyone was in a state of moral depravity because of original sin. Life was a moral trial. The agents of redemption were personal conscience and good works; the means of redemption was through Christ's Atonement on the Cross, which purchased ransom for the sins of all mankind.[27] Faith in the Atonement, good works, sanctification, and holiness was integral to the process of securing Heaven.

By mid-century however, new and softer interpretations of the Atonement altered the face of evangelicalism. The focus began to shift from "that of a specific religious disposition centred in the Christian revelation to a more general (and ultimately more secular) moralism concerned with ethical conduct, with "culture."[28] Hilton argues that this softer, evangelicalism (social gospel) accounted for the growth of Christian social action, or moral reform, during the second half of the nineteenth-century. Ramsay Cook says that the social gospel in its most fully-developed version insisted that the only goal of Christianity was to reform society and build the kingdom of heaven on earth.[29]

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[26]Neil Semple "The Quest for the Kingdom: Aspects of Protestant Revivalism in Nineteenth-Century Ontario", in David Keane & Colin Read (eds.), *Old Ontario: Essays in Honour of J.M.S.Careless* (Toronto: Dundurn Press, 1990), p. 95-117

[27]Boyd Hilton, The Age of Atonement: The Influence of Evangelicalism on Social and Economic Thought, 1795-1865 (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1988)

[28]McKillop, Matters of the Mind, p.96, quoted in the introduction of Sharon Anne Cook, *Through Sunshine and Shadow: The Woman's Christian Temperance Union, Evangelicalism, and Reform in Ontario, 1874-1930* (Montreal & Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1995), p.8

[29]Ramsay Cook, The Regenerators: Social Criticism in Late Victorian English Canada (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1985), p.175

By far the most impressive and successful of the organized attempts at adult education before 1870 was the Mechanics Institutes. The history of the Mechanic's Institutes extends from 1799 to the mid fifties of the nineteenth-century when it became merged with the movement for technical instruction.[30] The mechanics in Great Britain, who were required to operate the new machines in the factories, became interested in how the machines that they were expected to use worked. This led to the formation of classes of non-formal instruction and libraries to help workmen to learn and to understand. More importantly these mechanics learned to read. The concept of the Mechanics' Institute spread quickly and expanded throughout Great Britain. In 1851, Hudson tells us, there were 610 institutes with 102,050 subscribing members, possessing 691,500 books in their libraries.[31]

By the mid nineteenth century non-formal adult education was well established and firmly anchored in the conceptual framework of social reform ideology. Adult education was stimulated by the need for the creation of a fully literate society. Evangelicalism and utilitarianism put a premium on a minimum of literary facility and non-formal adult education became a useful and effective vehicle. These social and religious underpinnings were integral.

Voluntary Organizations

While the Mechanic's Institutes were flourishing and the main stream of the adult education movement was developing along the lines of moral and social reform, another offshoot of adult education was emerging–the mutual improvement society, or voluntary association. From the 1850s onward Joyce Appleby, Lynn hunt and Margaret Jacob talk of the "spontaneous generation of thousands of voluntary associations."[32]

This voluntary movement, or club movement as it is sometimes called, consisted of small groups of people (members) who met together for the purpose of self improvement. Members met in one another's homes, in factories, in town halls, in churches. Voluntary association represented the approach of some groups to problems which they felt were important enough to seek a solution. The very spontaneity of such adult educational activities

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[30]The British Ministry of Reconstruction Report, "A Design for Democracy," commonly called "The 1919 Report" (1919, reprint New York Association Press), p. 168

[31]J.W. Hudson, *The History of Adult Education* (London: The Woburn Press, 1969), p. vi

[32]Joyce Appleby, Lynn Hunt and Margaret Jacobs, *Telling the Truth About History* (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 1994), p. 99

coupled with the popularity of the phenomenon is a guarantee of their relevance to felt needs. Harrison maintains that these voluntary associations were more relevant than formal, institutional adult classes. If one of the fundamental aims of adult education was to enable people to come to terms more effectively with the problems of living in an industrial community, and if such adult education was best pursued in a small voluntary group, then the mutual improvement societies must be regarded to be as successful as some of the longer-lived pretentious adult education institutions.[33]

There are several explanations for the popularity of voluntary associations. They provided a means of social mobility through the medium of non-formal education. There were two conditions by which the working classes could improve their station; one way was through middle-class intervention, the second was through self-help and voluntary association.[34] It is easy to see how the idea of a few friends getting together to solve a problem or to discuss issues that were relevant to the needs of the times, became a popular idea and, more importantly, it was an easy and uncomplicated method of achieving self improvement and of finding answers to problems.

Perkin has another theory as to the development of clubs and associations that is interesting, incisive, and well worth consideration. He maintains that the revolution in social organization was not only due to the increasing division of labour; it was the cause of a further division of labour as management became more complex and separated. There are two facets to this division of labour: specialization and integration. Perkin points out that specialization directed society to professionalism. The new specialists, according to Perkin, formed groups and associations, clubs or unions, to enhance their status, protect their skills from competition, and increase incomes. Although Perkin addresses only the world of men, it can be seen that the rise in specialization could account for, and be another impetus to the establishment and increase in women's voluntary organizations which became so popular and prolific at the latter end of the nineteenth century. Middle-class women, who had become specialized moral mothers, formed groups, associations, and clubs to enhance their public status and to carry on the labour of social reform that was required in the cities and towns.

Industrialization had created an enormous working class isolated in the smoke and dirt of the manufacturing towns and commercial cities, unhealthy,

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[33]Harrison, p. 50

[34]Diane Mirth, The International Council of Women: A Study in Non-formal Adult Education (PhD diss., University of Alberta, 1999)

badly fed, badly housed, ill educated, often [it was believed] drunken, hedonistic and feckless, whose teeming children were likely to grow up still weaker, sicklier and more ignorant than their parents. These conditions had produced 'a characteristic *physical* type of town dweller: stunted, narrow chested, easily wearied, yet voluble, excitable, with little ballast, stamina or endurance–seeking stimulus in drink, in betting, in any unaccustomed conflicts at home or abroad.'[35]

Christian moral mothers were shocked by urban poverty, industrialized unrest, social disease, prostitution and crime. They responded to the call of religious reform and formed organizations to improve society through non-formal education. Organizations were established to deal with all aspects of society. Interest ranged from reading groups to temperance. Some organizations attempted to take care of the innocent who drifted to the cities, were preyed upon and taken to dens of infamy; while others were established to attempt prostitute rescue. Judith Fingard notes that the coexistence of the two types of rescue underscores the concept of the dual nature of women as understood in the Victorian era: pure and polluted; angel and whore.[36] The rescue of fallen women from prostitution was a primary concern of moral mothers in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

In *The Rise of Respectable Society,* FML Thompson states that publicizing, recruiting, and organizing evangelical congregations or major charities were a male preserve. Men were the professionals, the clergy, and the ministers commanding the large armies of women in voluntary organizations. Although this may have been true at the beginning of the century it was certainly not the case as the century came to a close and organizations began to run their own laundries for wayward girls, homes and international organizations. By way of example, The Woman's Missionary Society of the Methodist Church of Canada was determined to keep budgetary control and accountability in their own hands.[37] This was viewed as essential to the freedom of their organization. However, Thompson's observation that "The replacement of gainful or productive employment by voluntary work may have been an exchange which did more for the status of

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[35]See C.F.G.Masterman, "The Heart of the Empire" (Fisher Unwin, 1901) and "The Condition of England" (Methuen, 1909) in *The Rise of Professional Society*, p.54

[36]Judith Fingard, *The Dark Side of Life in Victorian Halifax* (Porters Lake: Pottersfield Press, 1989), p.140. I am not entirely certain that this concept can be restricted to Victorian society as it continues to be a duality in modern society.

[37]Rosemary R.Gagan, A Sensitive Independence: Canadian Methodist Women Missionaries in Canada and the Orient, 1881-1925 (Montreal & Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1992)

the class that for the status of the women...[38] makes an incisive comment on conditions of the middle-class during this time and the direction of power over the long term.

Social and economic conditions had transformed the family from a productive to a consumption unit. White middle-class men left their homes to fill the new positions created by industrial society. This accentuated the separation of the world of white middle-class men and women. The notion of spheres became common in this world: women belonged in the private sphere of the home and men belonged in the public sphere.[39] Middle class women who remained in the home or private sphere, as a statement of male financial success, became increasingly isolated and increasingly leisured. Mass production and consumer items such as clothing, bread, canned goods, medicines, many of which had previously been made in the home by women, formed part of the new technology. This accessibility to ready-made goods contributed to the amount of leisure middle-class white women were experiencing for the first time. This "new freedom," in turn, created a change in the role of women in the family. "Woman's exclusive domain was thus a shrinking one."[40]

The introduction of the Public School Act in 1870 added to the isolation of these women as their children now left the home on a daily basis to attend public school. The image of woman as mother and moral protector of the restricted domain of the home became intensified. White middle-class women now had the time to become involved in voluntary organizations.

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[38]F.M.L.Thompson, The Rise of Respectable Society: A Social History of Victorian Britain, 1830-1900 (London: Fontana Press, 1988), p. 253

[39]The metaphor of the "sphere" was the figure of speech, used to describe women's part in culture. When exploring the traditions of historical discourse, historians found that notions of women's sphere saturated the language; they, in turn, used the same metaphor in their own descriptions. Thus the relationship between the name–sphere–and the perception of what it named was reciprocal; widespread usage in the nineteenth century directed the choices made by the twentieth century historians about what to study and how to tell the stories that they reconstructed. One of our culture's presuppositions has been that men and women live and work in separate spheres. Erik H. Erikson gave the trope of separate spheres a psychological foundation when he studied the play habits of male and female children in the early 1960s. The three historians that have substantially reinforced the centrality of the metaphor were three women, Barbara Welter, Aileen S. Kraditor and Gerda Learner. Linda K. Kerber "Separate Spheres, Female Worlds, Woman's Place: The Rhetoric of Women's History" in *the Journal of American History,* Vol.75, (June 1988), pp. 9-39

[40]Margaret Lamberts Bendroth, The Social Dimensions of 'Woman's Sphere:' The Rise of Women's Organizations in Late Nineteenth Century American Protestantism (PhD diss. Johns Hopkins University, 1984), p. 12

More importantly, membership in voluntary organizations was public proof of their middle-class: "...there, sustained by spiritual authority, they could regularly socialize in the performance of unimpeachable tasks...."[41]

While coloured women did not experience this separation of home and work, it is important, at this point, to note that membership in women's volunteer organizations for the purposes of non-formal education, was not the solitary domain of white middle-class women. As Karen J. Blair points out, membership in women's voluntary organizations expanded to every race and class.[42] Anne Firor Scott notes that, in the United States, before the Thirteenth Amendment, wherever northern occupation brought freedom, coloured women organized to deal with community problems. By 1910, she says "... in proportion to population, black women had developed at least as many, possibly more, voluntary associations than had their white counterparts." [43] By 1914, the National Association of Coloured Women's Clubs, founded in 1897, claimed fifty thousand members in twenty-eight federations and over a thousand clubs.[44] While this number is impressive, it can be suspected that there were other small clubs that were not affiliated with the National Association, hence the number could be higher.

As was the case with the white population, the church was initially the central organizing institution in the emerging coloured communities, but by the 1890s secular clubs began to be established for self-education.[45] Motivation for coloured women was, in many ways, very different from that of their white contemporaries. Limited on all sides by prejudice and poverty, their situation was challenged in fundamental ways. "Worthy" and "unworthy" was not part of their vocabulary. The fact that they shared with their poorer sisters all of the indignities of racial prejudice and the stigma attached to colour gave a different tone to their statements and to their work.[46] Mary Church Terrell, quoted in Scott's article,

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[41]Veronica Strong-Boag "Setting the Stage': National Organization and the women's Movement in the Late 19th Century," in Susan Mann Trofimenkoff and Alison Prentice, eds., *The Neglected Majority: Essays in Canadian Women's History* (Toronto, 1977), p. 89

[42]Karen J. Blair, *Clubwoman as Feminist: True Womanhood Redefined, 1868-1914* (New York: Holmes & Meier Publishers Inc., 1980)

[43]Anne Firor Scott, "Most Invisible of All: Black Women's Voluntary Associations," in *The Journal of Southern History,* Vol.LVI, No.1, February 1990, p. 5

[44]Ibid., p. 17

[45]Ibid., p. 9

[46]For more information of black women's voluntary organisations see, Scott, "On Seeing and Not Seeing: A Case of Historical Invisibility," *Journal of American History, LXXI* (June 1984), 7-21; Gerda Lerner, *Black Women in White America: A Documentary*

> We have our own lives to lead, she told us. We are daughters, sisters, mothers, and wives. We must care for ourselves and rear our families, like all women. But we have more to do than other women. Those of us fortunate enough to have education must share it with the less fortunate of our race. We must go into our communities and improve them; we must go out into the nation and change it. Above all, we must organize ourselves as Negro women and work together.[47]

The 1919 Report states that "adult non-vocational education has owed its main inspiration and the success it has attained to voluntary organizations of various kinds, and particularly those established for educational purposes....[48] It further states that the experience and success of voluntary bodies has shown the necessity for the recognition of the peculiar needs of adults and for methods of education, organization and administration appropriate to the satisfaction of those needs. The voluntary organizations, both white and coloured, engaged in non-formal educational work and attempted to provide an atmosphere in which social spirit, co-operation, and the search of truth could flourish.

By the end of the nineteenth-century, thousands of men and women were involved in voluntary associations. The development of these associations was not due to the method of conducting classes, it was attributable to the method of organization. It was the non-formal organization of adult education that attracted and appealed to so many groups of individuals who gathered in associations and clubs. At a time when there existed a great need for learning and knowledge, non-formal education counteracted the sterilized non-personal attempts of the existing formal institutions. It must be noted that these associations and clubs existed alongside the more traditional institutions and did not replace them. This voluntary tradition that engages in non-formal adult education has remained as a vital part of the enterprise and carries with it tacit understanding and theories.

History (New York: 1972); and "Community Work of Black Women" reprinted in *The Majority Finds Its Past: Placing Women in History* (New York: 1979); Susan Lynn Smith "The Black Woman's Club Movement: Self Improvement and Sisterhood (M.A. thesis, University of Wisconsin, 1986)

[47]Mamie Gavin Fields, *Lemon Swamp*, 189-91, quoted in Scott's "Most Invisible," p. 18

[48]The 1919 Report, p. 117

Adult Education and Democracy

The late 1860s saw a resurgence in socialism called Fabian socialism.[49] This introduced another element to the arena of non-formal education. Numerically these social activists were a small group, but their activities, and above all, their propaganda, set up a ferment of social ideas which captivated a whole generation and carried over into the first decade of the twentieth-century. Workers who had been saturated within Liberal complacency had, by the end of the century revived old unions, created new ones, established a new political Labour party in 1893 and assumed a more radical social aspect. "Such was the effect of the dynamic of socialism."[50]

Resulting from this renewed vigour and social dynamism there began a demand for education for social and industrial emancipation. Better working conditions, shorter hours, better pay were issues that needed to be addressed, and workers needed the skills to be able to represent themselves in union disputes. As the range and volume of working class activities grew, there developed a need for education of the activists. Hence, the idea of separate worker education, and the Worker's Educational Association (WEA) was formulated. The Labour pioneers probably did not regard themselves as conducting special education but, in every sense the activities of the eighties and nineties could be regarded as education, certainly as propagandist.[51]

The new socialism was non-formal education in both its method and in its broad effects. Socialist Sunday School, Adult Schools, and Labour Clubs were established and socialist lecturers preached whenever possible. In a broader context, the flood of Fabian pamphlets and journals released stimulated debate on the fundamentals of democracy and politics which lasted until the First World War. Democratic rights of the individual, including suffrage issues for women and citizenship education, became a dominant theme in the education of adults and has remained an important, integral part of the conceptual web of adult education from this time forward.

In this manner adult education entered the twentieth-century primarily identified as a social movement. Social movement theorist Sidney Tarrow says that social movements are created when political opportunities open up

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[49]The New Columbia Encyclopedia defines Fabians as being opposed to the revolutionary theory of Marxism, holding that social reforms and socialistic "permeation" of existing political institutions would bring about the natural development of socialism. Fabians helped create in 1900 the unified Labour Representative Committee, which evolved in the Labour Party.

[50]The 1919 Report, p. 250

[51]Harrison, p. 260

for social actors who usually lack them.[52] In this case it was adults seeking to become informed of their political and social rights. This aligns with the working definition on non-formal education developed for this paper and fits with the categories generally defined by theorist of social movement as leaders worked with a view to motivating adults to take action in order to improve their status or to remedy perceived ills and conditions of society. The appeal of education was increased as knowledge became more relevant to the everyday working class.

Adult education and worker education became intertwined with the concept of democracy, and as the concept of democracy had passed from a system of political machinery into a practical influence in the daily life of society, it awakened a consciousness of new powers and new responsibilities. Men and women who, a generation before, might have accepted without criticism the first opinion offered them, desired at this time to use their own minds and to form independent judgements. Adult education was increasing the level of individual human dignity.[53]

The WEA was influential in four ways: first, it provided non-formal education for the activist leaders who were involved with the workers and who represented workers in negotiation; second, it educated the worker-citizen in matters of democratic process; third, it provided general cultural education to the worker individual; and fourth, it facilitated special types of education suited to the worker—in particular the tutorial class with its emphasis on three years' duration discussion, and individual aid to students.[54]

The 1919 Report addressed adult education in relation to its democratic responsibilities

> ...the essence of democracy being not passive but active participation by all in citizenship, education in a democratic country must aim at fitting each individual progressively not only for his personal, domestic and vocational duties but, above all, for those duties of citizenship for which earlier stages are training grounds; that is, he must learn

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[52]Sidney Tarrow, *Power in Movement, Social Movements, Collective Action and Politics* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994). See also Herbert Blumer "Social Movements" in R. Serge Denisoff and Robert K.Merton eds. *The Sociology of Dissent* (New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, Inc. 1974), p. 6

[53]The 1919 Report, p. 70

[54]Harrison, p. 291

(A) what his nation is and what it stands for in its past history and literature, and what is its place among the other nations of the modern world
(B) what are his duties to it, from the elementary duties of sharing in its defence and submitting to its laws up to the duty of helping to maintain and even to elevate its standards and ideals
(C) the economic, political and international conditions on which his nation's efficiency and well being depend...for the furtherance of international co-operating in science, medicine, law, commerce, arts, and for the increasing establishment of world-peace[55]

This is an example of the expressions of the high optimism which were prevalent at the end of the First World War. The 1919 Report was famous and widely distributed. It offered an adult educational framework to fit a new age "made safe for democracy". It addressed issues not previously addressed, e.g., the formal education of women. At the end of the war there still existed a feeling, even among the leisured classes, that it was absurd and affected for a woman to desire knowledge for its own sake. However, the Committee who developed the Report saw that the events of the few preceding years had brought about a new situation and was convinced that women "should advance abreast with men along the educational highway."[56]

The idealism of the Report was centred on the word "Reconstruction". The First World War had brought the labour movement to unprecedented strength. It had an especially catalytic effect among teachers and students in colleges. Made aware by the crisis of war at home and revolution in Europe of the human problems of labour organization, adult educators began to reflect upon "industrial democracy" and upon the connection between education and democracy.[57]

To educators after the war the importance of education became paramount if participatory or deliberative democracy was to be successful. They realized that thinking people were much more able to play a part in the wider life of society. Democracies needed to encourage people who were not only able to think but who were conversant with issues surrounding areas of social and political life. It was reasoned that only by having a thinking and educated people that a democratic society could be accomplished, even if the

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[55]Quoted from the letter to the Rt. Hon. D. Lloyd George, MP, Prime Minister, from Arthur L. Smith, Chairman of the Adult Education Committee of the British Ministry of Reconstruction commonly called the 1919 Report, in an abridgment of the report, *A Design for Democracy* (New York: Association Press, 1956), p. 54

[56]Ibid, p. 18

ideal of democracy was only an ideal—it was a goal to endeavour to achieve.[58]

Progressive Education

Resultantly, with this new optimism after the war, there was a rapid growth in non-formal and formal adult education. This growth coincided with the educational philosophy of progressive education which was gaining in popularity and becoming a dominant influence. The dynamic, progressive movement was central to the establishment of theoretical positions in a society that was undergoing rapid urbanization, industrialization, economic and political stresses.

If we examine some of the major theorists of the field of adult education, namely Knowles, Rogers, House, Tyler, Lindeman, Bergevin, and Freire, it is possible to identify elements of progressive philosophy and ideals: adult vocational education, extension education, citizenship education, family and parent education, and education for social action. Many of the basic principles in adult education originated in progressive thought: needs and interests, the scientific method, problem solving, the centrality of experience, pragmatic and unitarian goals, and in the new ideas surrounding the notion of social responsibility.[59]

The theory of progressive education culminated in the ideal of education for democracy as defined by John Dewey. Although Dewey did not address the education of adults specifically, much of what he said has been adopted by theorists in the field of adult education and has become, for many adult educators, the basic philosophical framework for their thinking.

Dewey's *Democracy and Education* places education at the very heart of social reform. Dewey maintained that democracy was "a way of life" rather than a political system. Dewey's work provides and institutional framework which nourishes the individual to work towards the collective "wise rule" and provides an arena for discourse and participation. It is the belief that democracy as an ethical ideal calls upon men and women to communicate in order to build communities that provide the necessary opportunities and resources for every individual to realize fully his or her capacities and powers through active participation and discourse in political, social and

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[57]Kallen, p. 8

[58]Peter Jarvis, Adult and Continuing Education: Theory and Practice (London: Croom Helm, 1983), p. 9

[59]John L. Elias and Sharan Merrian, *Philosophical Foundations of Adult Education* (Malabar: Krieger Publishing Company, 1980), p. 45

cultural life. The ideal rests on a "faith in the capacity of human beings for intelligent judgement and action if proper conditions are furnished.[60]

> It is common place to say that education should not cease when one leaves school. The point of this common place is that the purpose of school organization is to insure the continuance of education by organizing the powers that ensure growth. The inclination to learn from life itself and to make the condition of life such that all will learn in the process of living is the finest product of schooling[61]

Dewey continues in the same passage to say that, "Hence education means the enterprise of supplying the conditions which ensure growth, or adequacy of life, irrespective of age."[62]

Education, as a result of Dewey, became practical, pragmatic and utilitarian. Education emphasized the centrality of experience—learners' experiences were viewed as valid learning. The individual was at the centre of the learning. Our present use of needs assessments are an offshoot of progressivism. Progressives approach method at both the theoretical and the practical level. There is inherent unity between method and subject matter. How we teach is related to why we teach and to what we teach. Problem solving, projects and activity are all methods associated with progressive education. Progressives oppose the concept of teacher as the only authority. Learning becomes an interactive process. Learning, according to Dewey, is something students do for themselves. The teacher stimulates and facilitates. Education fosters creativity and stability, as well as individuality and social consciousness.[63] The notes have a familiar ring for present day adult educators and show direct historical connection..

The relationship between education, social change and action was of specific interest to Eduard Lindeman, an educator influenced by Dewey. Stewart notes that one of Lindeman's basic beliefs was that adult education was the most reliable form of social activism. Only by educating the adherents of a movement could such persons, "utilize the compelling power

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[60]John Dewey, "Creative Democracy: The Task Before Us" in *Later Works* (1939), 14:227, quoted in Robert B. Westwood, *John Dewey and American Democracy* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1991), p. xv.

[61]_____ *Education and Democracy* (New York: MacMillan Publishing Co., 1938), p. 51

[62]Ibid.

[63]For a more in-depth discussion on Progressive Education see Elias and Merriam, pp. 45-70

of a group and still remain within the scope of democratic behaviour."[64] Lindeman, at this time, was talking about non-formal adult education.

Every social action group, Lindeman said, should at the same time be an adult education group. Conversely he went "even so far as to believe that all successful adult education groups sooner or later become social action groups." This progression was inescapable. Consequently, adult education would become "an agency of progress" if its short term goal of self improvement for the individual could be made compatible with "a long term, experimental but resolute policy of changing social order."[65]

Lindeman organized a group called *The Inquiry* which met in conference or workplace settings to discuss the issues and problems of the day. This group epitomized non-formal education in action. Projects were produced. Monographs and articles were written and published. There existed a state of mind receptive to and encouraging of experimentation which could lead toward social reform. In practice, the group took on just about any problem or issue that was meaningful for its members. Topics ranged from—community development, international relations, racial conflict, "business ideals," to class conflict. The group even talked about the process of dialogue and the place it had in the democratic process. Systematic and deliberate attention was given to the analysis of the verbal facets of democracy, such as discussion and conference methods.[66]

Many of the philosophical aspects of progressive education, and more specifically of Dewey's embodiment of educational thought, are easily traced in the work of the later day adult educational theorists. Progressive education was therefore, a powerful influence that helped direct the identity of adult education in general and non-formal adult education in particular.

Discussion

Adult Education proceeded into the twentieth-century bearing identifying marks of the historical events of the nineteenth century, social change, religious revival, the rise of voluntary associations, political change, and the move to Progressive Education. It was an enterprise that was characterized by moral and social reform coupled with a large element embodied in voluntary association. It was in these voluntary organizations that members gathered, affected society, and negotiated change. Through voluntary association members educated each other to have a direct impact on society.

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[64]Stewart, p. 51
[65]Ibid.
[66]Ibid., p.52

They built community institutions and spotted emerging social problems: they were prolific builders of vital community institutions, orphanages, laundries for unwed mothers, homes for the aged and widowed, kindergartens, libraries, health clinics, houses of refuge and playgrounds. Many of these voluntary organizations started programs that were later taken over by government. Hence, it is arguable that the welfare state emerged, in the early twentieth century, as a result of the programs that sprang up from voluntary associations and the programs of non-formal education afforded through them.

Voluntary organizations, or clubs, proved a valuable and important vehicle for the education of women. While some colleges and universities were beginning to admit women at the latter end of the nineteenth century, formal education for women was still a distant reality. It was the volunteer organization which afforded women, both coloured and white, access to non-formal education and a legitimate role in the social reform of society. "Club life succeeded at reaching and assisting a large body of American womanhood to grow, by altering their expectations [through non-formal education] of both their social functions and their ability to carry out change."[67] Voluntary association offered women an opportunity to grow in a manner not offered in any other place. The education that was sought by these women and delivered through the club had awakened women to their life potential and empowered them to improve their own lives and the lives and conditions of those less fortunate around them. Many of the members of these organizations moved from self education to community improvement and eventually to national political action. The role that the voluntary organization played in the education of women clearly illustrates the importance of the understated role of education as an institution which encompasses and nurtures both tradition and transition.[68] "It speaks to the sociology and anthropology of education as those disciplines ponder the relationships among class, gender and access or the effects of dominant groups on the educational aspirations of muted groups."[69]

The model of non-formal education set up by the voluntary organizations at the end of the nineteenth century, provided a powerful blueprint for those who wished to affect social change. Reformers in Canada, like the Rev.

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[67]Karen J. Blair, *The Clubwoman as Feminist: True Womanhood Redefined, 1868-1914* (New York: Holmes & Meier Publishers, Inc., 1980), p.71

[68]Theodora Penny Martin, *The Sound of Our Own Voices: Women's Study Clubs 1860-1910* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1987), p. 2

[69]Ibid.

Moses Coady, who set up study groups of fishermen in Nova Scotia, were engaging a model that had proved successful. The Antigonish Movement organized exploited fisherman and their families into co-operatives.[70] Coady used non-formal means, or study groups, patterned on the model already established by the Mechanic's Institutes and voluntary organizations to educate the fishermen into ways of improving their conditions, and the conditions of those around them. Farm Radio Forum and Citizen's Forum were further examples of non-formal methods of adult education designed specifically to improve the conditions of those who were interested and had need to be informed in matters of citizenship and democracy.

Adult education, at this time, was termed a social movement because it's main aim was to work towards educating for social reform, democracy and citizenship. Some may use the term "grass roots". The 1950s however, presented a demarcation for adult education. Selman calls these the "pivotal years". There occurred at this time a concern for the future of adult education and a pressing need to professionalize the field. Theorists began a debate, which still continues, to define and to discuss the concepts, theories and nature of what would be a new profession. Adult educators became concerned with methodology and the development of curriculum. The Progressive Education Association died in the 1950s. No contemporary educator would align themselves wholly with the philosophical stance. However, progressive theory surrounding student-centred learning, creative methods of teaching, the role of education in social change, the problem of situated curriculum, remain firmly embedded in the fabric of adult education as we begin the twenty first century.

The pressure to develop a body of theory surrounding adult education has, in many ways caused those involved to overlook and undervalue the immense efforts of the enterprise of non-formal adult education. Added to this is the consideration that some the largest efforts in adult education have been organized and delivered by volunteers, in many cases women's

[70]For more detailed information on the Antigonish Movement and Moses Coady see Anne McDonald Alexander's, *The Antigonish Movement: Moses Coady and Adult Education Today* (Toronto: Thompson Educational Publishing, 1997) and her *The Meaning of Liberation in Adult Education as Revealed by Moses Coady and the Antigonish Movement* (1985); Moses Coady's , *The Man from Margaree: Writings and Speeches of M.M.Coady: Educator, Reformer, Priest* (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1971). Moses Coady's, *Masters of Their Own Destiny: Th eStory of the Antigonish Movement of Adult Education Through Economic Cooperation* (New York: Harper, 1939); Ida Delaney's, *By Their Own Hands: A Fieldworker's Account of the Antigonish Movement* (Hantsport, N.S.: Lancelot Press, 1985)

organizations, by non-formal means. In the pressing need to develop a professional identity, by professional educators, these stalwart educational endeavours have been ignored, overlooked, undervalued, and marginalized by those who have sought to bring adult education into the main arena. Professional educators were not always at the helm of these non-formal educational programs, therefore, these efforts have been devalued in favour of those efforts that might add weight to the case for professionalism.

It is no wonder that there is a perception that there is no body of theory. It stands to reason that if the 1950s were, in economical and organizational terms, a "take off stage" in which the lines for development were organized, and the direction for the future of the professionalization of the field defined, there has been only forty years in which to attempt this.[71] Understandably, this is a small amount of time compared to the time that public schooling has had to develop theory. Griffin puts forth an incisive opinion. He maintains that one of the major reasons that adult education remains under theorized and, in some senses, underdeveloped as a profession, is the fact that there has been no public ideological debate as has occurred in the area of public schooling. The concepts and ideas of adult education have not been examined critically or hotly contested and have resultantly, been assimilated in a rather uncritical fashion. A crucial aspect of this, he points out is the issue of government funding. Historically large amounts of public money in the form of tax dollars have not been committed to adult education as they have been to public schooling. Therefore, adult education has not received the necessary analytical interest of educators, academics, or the public.[72]

As a result of this marginalization, non-formal adult education, some may argue, has grown like a weed, scattered and thriving where the soil conditions are right. Most of what has become the vast, and often confusingly divergent, conglomerate of adult education springs from historical concerns which adult education has attempted to answer. The nineteenth and twentieth centuries have experienced a continual widening of the areas of democratic participation, an unfolding of new opportunities—political, social and cultural—for an expanding number of people. Education has contributed largely to this and the adult education movement has been perpetually on the frontiers.

At the beginning England was a pre-industrial, aristocratic state; at the end, a nation striding forward in a new age of mass democracy. The

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[71]Selman, *Adult Education in Canada: Historical Essays* (Toronto: Thompson Educational Publishing Inc., 1995), p. 50

[72]Griffin, p. 158

traditions and context of a movement which has helped to bring about changes of this size are indisputably rich and divergent. Several historical aspects stand out from the rest and help us to understand the development of the entity we call adult education. First, adult learning has been the outcome of a movement, largely voluntary, not just a series of organizations. Second, it has been in the main regarded as a movement for freedom and liberation, both personal (in the sense of widening horizons) and social. Third, it has been an earnest, serious affair; there has been comparatively little of the 'learning for leisure' approach and a great deal of emphasis on striving and struggle by people who had very little leisure.[73] In this sense it is difficult to understand Harrison's position that adult education has been in several senses, an elitist movement. Further, it is unusual that an historian who has completed a history of the period 1790–1960 and examined the Mechanics' Institutes, the WEA, the voluntary movement, and education for democracy, could maintain that adult education was an elite movement. Rather, adult education, and especially non-formal adult education, to its detriment, has reached or overreached, and like the seed in the wind has settled wherever the historical conditions have created an environment that has been both necessary and conducive to learning.

In conclusion, in taking up the challenge issued by James Draper, this paper has asked new questions and uncovered some of the historical underpinnings of the current debates that surround our profession. The paper traces and outlines an impressive educational endeavour that will deepen the understanding of the contributions made through non-formal adult education in determining a field of study. It has looked at development in context: the context being the social and historical developments of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries and suggests that in fact, there are strong social, religious, historical and philosophical contextual frameworks embedded within adult education which should be examined and developed by those who would take James Draper's challenge and continue the crusade to contribute to the understanding of the field of adult education.

[73]Harrison, p. xiv