

## Chapter 16

# By Means of Critical Theory: Informed Emancipatory Education – An Essay on Realities and Possibilities

**Gabriele Strohschen**  
*DePaul University, USA*

### **ABSTRACT**

*So-termed non-traditional adult students have become a key target for marketing efforts in higher education, and non-conventional, accelerated paths to university-issued degrees are the lure du jour in the business of selling education programs. A key ethical challenge in our profession remains how we align the education of adults according to the higher education institutions' mission statements to the education adults seek and actually receive. This chapter calls for considering the realities and possibilities of socially responsible educating when institutions are accountable to myriad stakeholders to peer at this issue through the lens of emancipatory education informed by tenets of critical theory. The argument hopes to engage the readers in problem-posing so that cross-sector, collaboratively designed education options can be considered that are contextual rather than prescriptive in nature and which align to the indigenous needs of teachers, learners, institutions, and communities.*

DOI: 10.4018/978-1-7998-4141-8.ch016

## INTRODUCTION

*“We cannot solve our problems with the same level of thinking that created them”*

— *Albert Einstein*

### Toward Problem-Posing

What is the purpose of education for adults? This simple question elicits diverse answers. Consider for a moment the variety of underlying assumptions and the concomitant considerations that are at the root of pondering the question when we ask different stakeholders about the purpose of educating adults. Drilling deeper, we may further ask: Toward what end do adult educators facilitate learning? Who determines the kind of transformation education programs are to achieve for adult learners? Whose reality are we reproducing with adult education programs? Whose reality are we affecting and how? The issue at hand in our field is that the power over the *why, what, and the how* of teaching is unilaterally maintained by those institutions, who sell their education products; namely education programs for which they award a coupon that declares one an educated adult. How did we arrive at this?

## CRITICAL QUESTIONING OF ASSUMPTIONS AND CONVENTIONS: STARTING THE DISCOURSE

### Power and the Producers and Disseminators of Knowledge

Institutions of education have a long tradition of holding the mandate, and with that the power, to educate adults. According to Fischer, formalized schooling originated in 3600 BC “when writing systems were developed in ancient civilizations around the world” (2004, p. 36). The immediate forerunners of contemporary institutions of higher education in the USA date back to the 6<sup>th</sup> Century. Based on values of the Roman Catholic Church (Riché & Contreni, 1978), the influence of the scholastic movements of the church on academic structures was further influenced by monasticism. This broadened university structures in which art, music, sculpting, and architecture were taught (Begley & Koterski, 2005), in turn reaching a wider class of people now. Universities in North America’s colonial times were modeled after the structure of these cathedral schools of the Middle Ages.

In their designs and approaches, not much has changed about Universities’ since those days as the “rather insulated and isolated North American academicians have remained steeped in brick-and-mortar, we-build-it-they-come approaches” (Strohschen, 2015x, p. 81). As such, the business of educating adults generally is built upon two social constructs:

1. the institution’s vision, goals, and plans about designing, developing, and implementing education programs, or the *why, what, and how* of the curricula, and
2. the values of the sources that produce the knowledge for the content, design, and delivery of education programs.

Considerations for the design and delivery do not readily include visions, goals, plans, and values of stakeholders other than the providers of education programs, and seldom is there space for collecting data to assess and grasp the reality of current and potential participants in this education business; including a vast cross-section of ‘participants’ such as students, teachers, vendors, employers, funders, advocates, community leaders, and more. Simply put, the chorus of voices of the very participants in this education business is not included. Yet, to arrive at clarity of relevant and meaningful education programs, value clarifications (or the *why* we teach); the expressed needs of adult students, assessed pre-design of education programs (or the *what* of content we teach) and the preferred strategies, methods, and techniques of teaching ought to be ascertained from the adult learners and the ‘teachers’ and the institutions (or the *how* we teach, or for that matter, *who* teaches). Instead, stakeholders in the education game are left on the sidelines of a field, one that is actually populated with a broad diversity of potential players of cross-sector dimensions, all lined up on a wide spectrum of interconnected interests, needs, and resources, and most importantly, ready to play a win-win game.

Today, education programs continue to be designed, developed, and delivered within the aforementioned *institution-centric* approach that harks back to the origins of universities. Nowadays, few institutions offer non-traditional programs or alternative non-conventional delivery strategies and methods. Content to address relevant needs and strategies for appropriately delivering education programs for the adults are designed within the academy by academicians, with very few exceptions. Aside from engaging marketing strategies that speak to student-centered programs, the few that do, all too often do so merely based on varying interpretations of andragogy, often only loosely grounded in half-baked views of principles of self-directed learning. The intent is to attract adult students to these so-termed non-traditional programs. But basically, education programs remain designed by an institution’s cadre of academicians, constrained by personal values and assumption, university politics and strategic plans, and by accreditation requirements. Hence, institutions “color only slightly outside of those prescribed and approved lines of program design and delivery templates” (Strohschen, 2015x, p. 82) albeit, perhaps, with the best of intentions of fulfilling a mission of educating the hearts, hands, and minds of its ‘students.’

When we view the purpose, content, and format of programs aimed at educating adults through a lens of emancipatory education, which is informed by tenets of Critical Theory, would we open a discourse that is more inclusive of the voices of diverse stakeholders beyond those societally empowered to provide the educating? Could we shed paradigmatic assumptions (Brookfield, 1995) from which we answer the questions posed above to, at minimum, consider realities and possibilities of those “other” from us, the academicians, the educators? When we view the purpose, content, and format of programs aimed at educating adults through the lens of emancipatory education (Freire, 1970), what insights might we gain about the design and implementation of education programs? Could we pose questions aimed at considering mutually agreed upon possibilities in our pursuit to find contextual solutions to achieve transformation of self and society by means of adult education?

## **Deconstructing and Co-Constructing: Philosophical Underpinnings**

### **Critical Deconstructing**

A critical perspective posits that without inclusion of the voices of ‘students’ as much as those of other stakeholders in the education game, we cannot claim that we authentically address the needs of adult learners, of communities, and even of society at large. But we do. And this is where we might find the

## ***By Means of Critical Theory***

origins for appropriately posing the problems and examining the realities of the needs of individuals, institutions, and communities and examine the possibilities for a critical theory-informed emancipatory Adult Education. As a member of the 'Post-War' generational cohort (i.e., the ten-year post WWII period of my cohort is labeled such in Germany, and not 'Baby Boomers' as it is in the USA), the state of flux in everyday life created a reality for survivors of the war and their children of post-modern dimensions. One lived a moment, each moment, at a time, without possibility to tether experience to what had come before or might come next. CT, being born within such a context, therefore, has a very particular meaning to and in Europe, different from what it may have had for the importers of the CT concepts in the USA. I suggest, therefore, that CT is a tad problematic applied in the USA as a tool for analysis because it ought to be adapted to the cultural context of USA. However, it suffices for us to grasp the premise of CT born out of darkness and looking for enlightenment in a post-world war world given war-like social issues in USA's historically marginalized communities, CT, or at least some of its founding and instrumental participants of the Frankfurt School, sought to provide a theory for deconstructing the human experience from many angles with input from many experiencers, holding humanist tenets and liberation of individuals dear while denouncing ontological claims of individual experience and positivist analysis of society.

The thoughts of the Frankfurt School are highly influenced by the Judaic heritage, with its key themes. According to Tarr, its essence is stated in four major themes, "First, ethical monotheism, that is, the unconditional character of the ethical demand. [...] Second, an awareness of the historical mission, the consciousness of being the chosen people, that is messianism. Third, justice and goodness, expressed in the untranslatable term *zedakah*. Fourth, concern with social justice (2011, p. 182). The one fundamental, prevailing, and most crucial element of the Frankfurt School of thinking and acting that connects to the purpose of adult education within that Judaic thought tradition, is a "need for increased education to counteract authoritarian trends" (Bronner, 2011, p.5). If social justice is an underlying goal of CT, then it connects to the espoused, and largely not achieved, goal statements of adult education. And with that statement, we have identified an intersection of varying philosophies that underpin education, at least at their simplest common denominator: to liberate the human spirit and free the inherent capacities of any individual by means of education, i.e., building off and upon the experiences of many engaged in the field of adult education. Social justice in this premise can and ought to be constructed by "the people."

## **Assumptions**

Without grounding, knowledge, real life experience, and critical reflection, it is easy to fall prey to vendors' or self-declared and university-validated experts' *flavor du jour* solutions. Hawking the sale of research-based strategies, methods, and techniques, along with selling technology that is equated with "teaching", these are more often than not only superficial innovations that are based on 'cliff-noted' principles of classic adult education theories or research that omits crucially relevant insight from said stakeholders in this argument. At risk, therefore, is the lack of a deeper understanding of the origins, values, and purposes of Adult Education philosophies, theories, and methods. Even in spite of assuming good intentions, without fundamental knowledge and value clarification, educators and administrators may be at a loss on how to make suggested "innovations" work when they don't work as prescribed by the "seller." *Why* we educate, and *what*, and *how* we apply strategies, methods, and techniques ought to be crystal clear, and they most definitely include *posteriori* knowledge about designing and delivering education programs.

Essentially, I therefore posit fundamentals to form the premises for an argument of collaboratively designing, developing, and delivering education offerings to make them relevant and meaningful, practical and transformational for the very stakeholders they are to serve. These call for educators and administrators to be:

1. inclusive in identifying the knowledge, skills, and attitudes to be taught, authentically sharing power by collaborating with stakeholders in addition to academicians' expertise the (the *what*)
2. familiar with the varying philosophical underpinnings (the *why*) in order to be transparent about the purpose of particular programs
3. versed in classic and fundamental theories of adult education that address delivery strategies, methods, and approaches (the *how*)
4. able to adapt, or contemporize, the approach to the design and delivery of education programs by, with, and for stakeholders.

Given this collaborative approach and power sharing, design and delivery of education programs would be open for re-construction that addresses expressed needs and clarified values among stakeholders.

### Critical Reflecting With Stakeholders

In order to arrive at such reconstructing the social construct of education programs in its institutions, we could critically reflect on basic philosophical underpinnings about Adult Education (Horkheimer & Adorno, 1968; Tarr, 1977; Edgar & Sedgwick, 2002; Bonner, Koch, & Langmeyer, 2004; Brookfield, 2005), and within the value framework of emancipatory education (Freire, 1970). The interconnected notions of these theorists' principles might aid our analysis and subsequent understanding of why and how to engage in our craft of educating. Such analysis might also assist us in moving away from an *either-or* perspective on educating; meaning that we ought to question root assumptions of our institutions of education, because those essentially maintain that the power of knowledge production and dissemination is solely held within such institutions. And, in turn, critical reflection and analysis might open us to see the realities and possibilities of mutually beneficial and collaboratively arrived-at education offerings.

In an effort to deconstruct current paradigms of adult education design and delivery to ascertain relevance, or relevancies, to today's needs, interests, and goals of adult education for stakeholders, I merely turn to essentials of CT and emancipatory education. With an apologetic nod to thinkers from Adorno to Horkheimer to Habermas and to Brookfield, I offer but a key strand of richly debated and variously applied tenets of said theories. My take intends to provide a way for looking at more than only two sides of a coin, to nudge us away from an *either-or* mindset. "The penetration of critical social theory into education and more specifically into adult education has reactivated a debate about the relation of adult education to society [...]. After the decline of the counter-cultural movement of the 1960s and the institutionalization of lifelong or permanent education, debates about socio-political issues and goals of adult education diminished as well" (Finger, 1991). Critical Theory may serve as inspiration for perspective transformation or critical thinking if we consider all forms of human understanding as socially constructed in the course of the development of relations. My take intends to provide a way for looking at more than only two sides of a coin, to nudge us away from an *either-or* mindset.

In contemporary society, adult/higher education has many definitions, each of which grounded in a particular set of values. These values inform the *why, what, and how* of education programming. We

## ***By Means of Critical Theory***

construct our view on what adult education is and ought to be based on our values and paradigmatic assumptions. It therefore behooves us to uncover the roots of what we believe and value to analyze the alignments and discrepancy among perspectives and lived realities so that we can appropriately evaluate the veracity and appropriateness of our programs (Strohschen, 2016). And in order to step off our particular platform, we need to suspend our *either-or* attitude about what is true and valid in design and delivery of education programs so that we can access the diversity of vantage points of stakeholders, in addition to our own.

## **Emancipatory Education: Toward Reflecting**

Within our Adult Education practice, we have dedicated a smidgeon of our work to liberatory (Freire, 1970) or emancipatory (Fanon, 1963) education. If we agree that ~isms and ~phobias may dissipate by means of education (e.g., through liberating ourselves from paradigmatic assumptions which thrive within the void of reflection, in the lack of critical analysis, without cross-cultural experiences, and through homo-socio reproduction), then we could also agree to the oft proclaimed call to offer non-conventional design and delivery of programs.

Satre (1963) pinpointed the European continent's philosophy and science knowledge capital as the demise of any chance of holistic, non-classist, inter-cultural and emancipatory leadership through collaborative study for the betterment of all, "The European elite undertook to manufacture a native elite [...] they branded them, as with red-hot iron, with the principles of Western culture [...] (p. 7). Fanon (1963) addressed this "changing the shape of the world" in his *The Wretched of the Earth*; however, he limited this observation to the Black Revolution. Yet, within that era in history and the perspectives of leaders like Freire and Fanon, at the same time, we do find the seeds for valuing knowledge and participation in the political process and social movements (such as adult education, if you will) of those not at the decision-making table, i.e., beyond the powers-that-be (education institutions, if you will). "Participatory and critical pedagogy coupled with egalitarian policies in school and society can *holistically* address the education crisis" wrote Shor in the foreword to *Freire for the Classroom* in 1987 (p. 107). Participation by the beneficiaries of adult education programs clearly includes that the design and delivery processes of programs should be informed by many stakeholders to appropriately guide the impact of such programs on the stakeholders.

I amplify these voices on the fringe of our field's knowledge base, which are often quickly dismissed for being radical and running counter to prevailing interpretations of democracy by many good colleagues in the field, because this chapter seeks to speak to the realities and possibilities Adult Education can offer when content and process are co-designed *by, with, and for* a variety of stakeholders. With an emancipatory education premise at the heart of the argument, we are already traipsing about in the fringes of conventional education institutions, and we are trekking amidst the wretched of the earth (Fanon) or the disenfranchised (Freire) with our *educaré* mission, i.e., leading adults toward emancipation, transforming power structures, and ushering in social change. This trifecta of goals need not be shrouded in radical or revolutionary threads; emancipation, power, and change can take many forms for any given stakeholder; the issue is who gets to define the construct. This emancipation, sharing of power, and change cannot be accomplished only by defining 'education' within prevailing standards and norms of institutionalized Adult Education, nor be designed and delivered exclusively by traditional institutions, given current institutional constraints of unilaterality. In short, were we to look at Adult Education as the

multi-faceted phenomenon it is, provision of education offerings **should** begin with extending participation in assessing, designing, and delivering education programs to those the ‘education’ is to benefit.

In this argument, the beneficiaries include more than the students we have traditionally identified as marginalized ones, so emancipatory education’s values tell us. Beneficiaries include myriad stakeholders with a stake in the education game, yet, only **if** our agreement and root assumptions pivot on education being a means for emancipation, with its most common denominator being a liberation from dependency, and personal and community development being defined by the very individuals and communities. And then only **if** we are willing, capable, and able to value all voices to broaden the design and delivery possibilities of education programs.

## Educating Adults in Democratic Structures

We expend public and private grant monies, incur student loans, and expand the education industry with adding a service-learning component to our missions that claim to serve the ‘indigent.’ Bourdieu sees the role of education in society as the means to achieve social reproduction. Social inequality is reproduced in the educational system as the education system maintains dominance of the class, and with that, prevailing values, beliefs, and veracity of knowledge are passed on in our education programs (Bourdieu, p.83). Brookfield argues that a critical theory of adult teaching and learning ought to emphasize the teaching of how to challenge ideology, contest hegemony, unmask power, overcome alienation, learn liberation, reclaim reason, and practice democracy (2005).

Within our USAsian ideology of democracy, we run into a conceptual dilemma given its fundamental concept and principles. Although the concept of ‘rule by the people’ originated two and a half millennia ago in ancient Greece, its essential values are embedded in democratic structures throughout the continents. These are found in the belief that social and political systems ought to be established to protect people’s rights, interests, and welfare. And when defined, such principal aspects of a contemporary form of democracy are stated as:

- Democracy— Rule by the People through free and fair elections and other forms of participation
- Constitutionalism—The use of constitutions to limit government by law
- Liberalism—Freedom, equality, and dignity of the individual.

[http://www.civiced.org/pdfs/books/ElementsOfDemocracy/Elements\\_Subsection3.pdf](http://www.civiced.org/pdfs/books/ElementsOfDemocracy/Elements_Subsection3.pdf)

Taking this concept and its principles into the social realm of education, a key question arises: Who are “the people” that ought to govern the teaching and learning? If participation in making decisions about one’s rights, interests, and welfare is to be guaranteed the people; and if government is to be defined, held accountable, and limited; and if this is happening within an atmosphere of freedom, equality, and dignity of individuals, then how does the monopolistic structure of institutionalized power over educating adults fit?

In its, admittedly, simplest interpretation, the argument can be made that those ‘to be educated’ ought to have a say in the design and implementation of their education programs as well as in the content of education programs and type of ‘couponing’, all of which ought to be informed in collaboration with a variety of stakeholders. With that premise, we have arrived at questioning whose ideology ought to prevail and whose realities ought to be valued in designing and delivering our Adult Education offerings.

## Through the Looking Glass: Lenses of a Different Attitude

Circling back to the key issue, the assumptions upon which education offerings are currently based in our Adult Education realm. Basically, in the field of adult education, its definition of purpose was aligned with the immediate needs of adults for applying newly learned knowledge and skills to improve the quality of their lives. And so, we see the values and goals of education on the plaques in the halls and on the websites of academic institutions, commemorating missions. Aside from the traditional tripartite mission of colleges and universities, i.e., teaching, research, and service, these mission statements imply what role adult and higher education is to play in the lives of the learners. The common values, stated in many ways, are for education to develop individuals personally, socially, and also economically through the acquisition of knowledge and skills. In the USAAsian context, these mission statements often also address the social justice aspect, as such individual and social development is perceived as a means to create a more equitable and just society, aligned to the ideals of the US brand of democracy. To reiterate, these assumptions are:

1. The **institution's vision, goals, and plans** about designing, developing, and implementing education programs, or the *why, what, and how* of the curricula, and
2. The **values of the sources** that supply the knowledge for the content design and delivery of education programs.

To extend participation in shaping values, vision, goals, and plans to the suggested vast spectrum of stakeholders, the funders, the educators, and the administrators of education programs need to adapt lenses through which to view designing, implementing, and evaluating the success of education programs that are aligned to the expressed needs of such stakeholders. This means, first and foremost, not to subjugate the knowledge of those **not** imbued with the same knowledge as those with the power (i.e., the power bestowed by credentials and academic degrees given solely by education institutions as much as the power grabbed within political processes), who design and deliver programs, and to evaluate those, whose knowledge has been disqualified unless also bestowed by credentials and academic degrees validated and by education institutions.

An attitude of authentic collaboration might result in accepting collaboration with non-educators. Bruffee (1993) put it succinctly, "Collaborative learning makes the Kuhnian assumptions that knowledge is consensus: it is something people construct interdependently by talking together. Knowledge in that sense, according to Kuhn, is "intrinsically the common property of a group or else nothing at all" (p. 113).

## **CONCLUSION: CONSIDERATIONS TOWARD SOLUTIONS FOR RELEVANT AND APPROPRIATE APPROACHES TO EDUCATING ADULTS**

### **Collaboration, Interdependence, and the Value of Indigenous<sup>1</sup> Knowledge**

This attitude of authentic collaboration can sprout from an awareness of *both-and* stances instead of the culturally prevailing *either-or* ones which are culturally embedded in Western Civilization's institutions. In Adult Education, we get caught up in *either-or* perspectives when reflecting on realities of the many stakeholders in our playing field and on the possibilities of critical theory-informed emancipatory



education offerings. It is simply the mainstream cultural nature of a polarizing indoctrination of Judeo-Christian values.

A broader acceptance of a *both-and* stance has been somewhat strengthened more recently in our field through writings about Metagogy (Strohschen, 2009; 2016; 2019), albeit it by many monikers. The problems in the current state of Adult Education, which are tightly tethered to such prevailing paradigmatic assumptions and values of our so-termed Western Civilization, are not solved by jumping to solutions with the latest *flavor du jour* techniques hawked by vendors, selling the newest technology in the education industry. Problem-posing in the Adult Education community, critical theory's and emancipatory education values would suggest, needs to be grounded in clarity of its purpose and in a way to pose problems and solutions within a collaborative that will amplify the voices of diverse stakeholders, their values, their beliefs, and their needs. We already agree on the benevolent nature of educating adults, at least in those institutionalized mission statements, do we not?

We ought to examine underpinning philosophies and theories on education and consider how to apply these tenets within the discourse to inform the design and delivery of authentically relevant and appropriate approaches to educating adults within systems and structures that address the realities of stakeholders.

This chapter offered but a framework for analysis and some basic points and references for further exploration. The laid-out premises are intended to nudge us toward a discourse that considers the diverse and divergent realities of stakeholders. It opens our view to the possibilities for contextual education program design and delivery that values collaboration, interdependence, and indigenous knowledge (Strohschen, 2009). My intent with this chapter is to raise questions along with eyebrows, and to move us toward heightening our awareness of such realities and possibilities. Identifying and suspending our paradigmatic assumptions and considering diverse vantage points while engaging many stakeholders in the adult and higher education realm can lead to appropriate and contextual education solutions. Such solutions ought to provide equitable access to education, share the power and positionality of institutions of education, and strengthen the knowledge and skills of education professionals in order to serve the needs of students and the other stakeholders. Such solutions cannot be prescribed and sold in pickle jars to institutions of education. Such solutions must be co-constructed by and with the people they are to benefit. Are we, educationists ready for this advocacy challenge?

## REFERENCES

- Begley, R. B., & Koterski, S. (2005). *Medieval education*. New York, NY: Fordham University Press.
- Bourdieu, P. (2000). *Reproduction in education, society and culture* (2nd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.
- Bronner, S. E. (2017). *Critical theory: A very short introduction*. England, UK: Oxford University Press. doi:10.1093/actrade/9780190692674.001.0001
- Brookfield, S. D. (1988). Conceptual, methodological and practical ambiguities in self-directed learning. In H. B. Long (Ed.), *Self-directed learning: Application and theory* (pp. x-x). Athens, GA: University of Georgia Press.
- Brookfield, S. D. (1995). *Becoming a critically reflective teacher*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

### ***By Means of Critical Theory***

- Brookfield, S.D. (2005). *The power of critical theory: Liberating adult learning and teaching*. San Francisco, CA: John Wiley & Sons.
- Bruffee, J. (1999). *Collaborative learning: Higher education, interdependence, and the authority of knowledge*. Baltimore, MD: John Hopkins University Press.
- Bruner, J. S. (1966). *Toward a theory of instruction*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Edgar, A., & Sedgwick, P. (2002). *Cultural theory: The key thinkers* (1st ed.). London, UK: Routledge.
- Edgar, A., & Sedgwick, P. (2002). *Cultural theory: The key thinkers* (1st ed.). Routledge
- Fanon, F. (1961). *Les damnés de la terre*. Paris, France: François Maspero S.A.R.L.
- Fischer, S. R. (2004). *History of writing*. London, UK: Reaktion Books.
- Freire, P. (1993). *Pedagogy of the oppressed*. New York, NY: The Continuum. (Original work published 1970)
- Freire, P. (1995). *Pedagogy of hope. Reliving pedagogy of the oppressed*. New York, NY: Continuum.
- Fröbel, F. (1826). *Die Menschenerziehung*. Leipzig: Wienbrach Verlag.
- Horkheimer, M. (1992). *Traditionelle und kritische Theorie: Fünf Aufsätze*. Berlin, Germany: Fischer Verlag.
- Horkheimer, M., & Adorno, T.W. (1968). *Dialektik der Aufklärung: Philosophische Fragmente*. Amsterdam: De Munter Verlag.
- Putnam, R. D. (2000). *Bowling alone: The collapse and revival of American community*. New York, NY: Simon & Schuster.
- Riché, P., & Contreni, J. (1978). *Education and culture in the Barbarian West: From the sixth to the eight Century*. Columbia, SC: University of South Carolina Press.
- Satre, J. P. (1963). Preface. In F. Fanon (Ed.), *The wretched of the earth* (pp. 7–30). New York, NY: Grove Press.
- Shor, I. (1996). *When students have power: Negotiating authority in a critical pedagogy*. Chicago, IL: The University of Chicago Press.
- Strohschen, G. (2009). *The handbook of blended shore education: Adult program development and delivery*. New York, NY: Springer International. doi:10.1007/978-0-387-09443-4
- Strohschen, G., Begovich, M., Eiathakul, S., Heaven, V., Johnson, C., Prince, G. C., ... Williams, C. (2013). Beyond the classroom: Mentoring that builds relationships for civic engagement. In *Proceedings of 2013 Mentoring Conference of The Mentoring Institute*. Albuquerque, NM: University of New Mexico.
- Strohschen, G., & Heaney, T. (2000). This isn't Kansas anymore, Toto. In M. Eisen & E. J. Tisdell (Eds.), *New directions in adult and continuing education No. 87. Team-teaching and learning in adult education contexts* (pp. 31–41). San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

Strohschen, G., & Lewis, K. (Eds.). (2014). The community connexions project: A university's civic engagement approach to bridging racism and classism in urban Chicago by examining identity. In E. Tzadik, R. Vemuri, & R. Fisher (Eds.), *7th global conference on interculturalism, meaning and identity*. Prague, Czech Republic. Retrieved from <http://call-for-papers.sas.upenn.edu/cfp/2013/07/26/cfp-7th-global-conference-interculturalism-meaning-and-identity>

Strohschen, G., & Lewis, K. (Eds.). (2015x). Blended shore education: Civic engagement and competencies in 21st century doctoral education. In T. Heaney & D. Ramdehol (Eds.), *Reimagining doctoral education adult education* (pp. 81 – 92). San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

Strohschen, G., & Lewis, K. (Eds.). (2016). *The metagogy project: A theorem for a contemporary adult education praxis*. Atlanta, GA: American Scholars Press.

Strohschen, G., & Lewis, K. (Eds.). (2019). *Competency-based and social-situational approaches for facilitating learning in higher education*. Hershey, PA: IGI Global. doi:10.4018/978-1-5225-8488-9

Tarr, Z. (2011). *Theories of Max Horkheimer and Theodor W. Adorno* (1st ed.). New York, NY: Routledge.

## **ADDITIONAL READING**

Bell, D. (1987). *And we are not saved: The elusive quest for racial justice*. New York, NY: Basic Books.

Bonner, M., Koch, T., & Langmeyer, D. (2004). Organizational theory applied to school reform: A critical analysis. *School Psychology International*, 25(4), 455–471. doi:10.1177/01430343040408779

Dewey, J. (1938). *Experience and education*. New York, NY: Collier Books.

Glaser, B. G., & Strauss, A. L. (1967). *The discovery of grounded theory: Strategies for qualitative research*. Chicago, IL: Aldine Publishing Company.

Horton, M., & Freire, P. (1991). *We make the road by walking: Conversations on education and social change*. Philadelphia, PA: Temple University.

Kaufman, R., Guerra, I., & Platt, W. (2005). *Practical evaluation for educators: Finding what works and what doesn't*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press.

Kirkpatrick, W. A. (1950). Blueprint. *Occupations: The Vocational Guidance Journal*, 29, 210–212.

McKnight, J., & Block, P. (2010). *The abundant community: Awakening the power of families and neighborhoods* (1st ed.). San Francisco, CA: Berrett-Koehler.

McKnight, J., & Kretzmann, J. (1996). *Mapping community capacity* (Rev. ed.). Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Institute for Policy Research.

Mezirow, J., & ... (2000). *Learning as transformation: Critical perspectives on a theory in progress*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

Riel (2017). Understanding action research. Retrieved from <http://cadres.pepperdine.edu/ccar/define.html>

## ***By Means of Critical Theory***

Smith, M. K. (2000 – 2009). Social capital, the encyclopedia of informal education. Retrieved from <http://infed.org/mobi/social-capital>

Strohschen, G. (2007). Adult education praxis in Thailand: A tapestry of interdependence for lifelong learning. In K. King & C. X. Wang (Eds.), *Comparative adult education around the globe* (pp. 11–30). Zhejiang, China: Zhejiang University Press.

Vygotsky, L. S. (1978). *Mind in society - the development of higher psychological processes*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Wenger, E., McDermott, R., & Snyder, W. (2002). *Cultivating communities of practice: A guide to managing knowledge*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard Business School Press.

Witschel, G. (1973). *Die Erziehungslehre der Kritischen Theorie*. Bonn, Germany: Verlag.

Wood, A. (1985). Habermas' defense of rationalism. *New German Critique, NGC*, 35, 154–164.

## **KEY TERMS AND DEFINITIONS**

**Collaboration:** As considered here, cross-sector collaboration is loosely connected to key principles of grounded theory, promoting the kind of behavior of engaged stakeholders that clearly identifies contributions to a project by each partner and values task achievement over power or winning by any one partner only, thus building group cohesion to reach agreed upon goals.

**Critical Theory:** The broad framework for confronting social, historical, and ideological forces that reproduce 'status quo' of values, which maintains the power and positionality of stakeholders. Core principles of CT are extracted in this chapter to encourage critical reflection and analysis on expressed realities of stakeholders engaged in the education field. Its principles support how to challenge power structures to envision possibilities for novel education program design and delivery through cross-sector collaboration.

**Emancipatory Education:** Emancipatory education, credited to Paulo Freire, promotes the critical examination of positionality, values, and power of self and of groups with which one affiliates. It provides an approach to knowledge production and disseminations in education offerings that makes space for freeing one's self from doctrinaire legal, social, or political restrictions and mindsets.

**Interdependence:** Interdependence in this chapter is presented as a construct for describing human relations (i.e., equality between the individual and the collective and equity in values and contributions). It provides a platform for individuals to closely observe, identify, and analyze values and needs to understand contextual realities. Seeking to break patterns in thinking and behaviors, valuing interdependence can make us aware of possibilities for building win-win relationships in order to achieve innovations in mutually beneficial education programs.

**Metagogy:** Metagogy scaffolds our discourse about ideologies, values, and missions of Adult Education to arrive at meaningfully examined and contextually relevant education program design and delivery. The term was originally given by Strohschen and Elazier to describe an inclusive approach to instruction by, with, and for student and teacher that iteratively moves on a spectrum of dependent/more directive to interdependent/less directive instructional approaches and relationships. Metagogy concept originated in the early 2000's with several international action research projects that sought to identify process,

content, and criteria for blending principles of the ~gogies in Adult Education into a theorem to guide our praxis. The resultant Metagogy Theorem provides a framework for selecting contextually appropriate teaching practices. It offers up a *both-and* process for developing and implementing methods, strategies, and techniques for educating adults. It acknowledges contextuality and intersectionality of geopolitical, cultural, national, psychological, and other boundaries to reduce barriers to teaching and learning, created by our sparring ways about whose ideology ought to prevail in Adult Education. Sources: <https://www.igi-global.com/chapter/framing-philosophy-21st-century-global/46570> <https://www.igi-global.com/chapter/in-the-nexus/80314> <https://www.igi-global.com/chapter/back-to-the-future/227978>

**Paradigmatic Assumptions:** According to Brookfield, “Paradigmatic assumptions are the hardest of all assumptions to uncover. They are the structuring assumptions we use to order the world into fundamental categories. Usually we don’t even recognize them as assumptions, even after they’ve been pointed out to us. Instead we insist that they’re objectively valid renderings of reality, the facts as we know them to be true. Some paradigmatic assumptions I have held at different stages of my life as a teacher are that adults are self-directed learners, that critical thinking is an intellectual function characteristic of adult life, that good adult educational processes are inherently democratic, and that education always has a political dimension. Paradigmatic assumptions are examined critically only after a great deal of resistance to doing this, and it takes a considerable amount of contrary evidence and disconfirming experiences to change them. But when they are challenged and changed, the consequences for our lives are explosive.” *Source:* Open Educational Resources of UCD Teaching and Learning, University College Dublin [http://www.ucdoer.ie/index.php/How\\_to\\_be\\_Critical\\_when\\_Reflecting\\_on\\_Your\\_Teaching](http://www.ucdoer.ie/index.php/How_to_be_Critical_when_Reflecting_on_Your_Teaching)

**Problem-Posing:** A well-known term coined by Brazilian educator Paulo Freire. It describes a method of teaching that focuses on critical thinking. This method further emphasizes the thorough critical analysis of diverse vantage points of participants in education for the purpose of developing education programs that promote the liberation of individuals. Freire used the principles of problem-posing as an alternative to the ‘banking model’ of education. In this chapter, the concept is applied to identifying any need or issue within adult education program design and delivery to uncover the possibilities when a diversity of stakeholders collaboratively engages in clearly and openly posing their diverse views on needs or issues to examine disparate perspectives.