

Foundations of the Adult Education Field

[A PowerPoint presentation for an introductory lecture in a graduate
course in Adult Education]



So Why Me On This Topic?

- B.S. in Rural Soc., M.S. in Extension Education, & PhD in Adult Education
- Coop. Ext. Program Planner/Evaluator
- Worked in Adult Community Educ.
- Forty-five years teaching graduate courses in Adult Education
- Research/scholarship in Adult Educ. (see my resume: <http://roghiemstra.com/resume2016.pdf>)

What Can You Take Away From This PPT Presentation?

[See Part One in Merriam/Brockett (2007)]

- A better understanding of what is an adult (how do we define that term?)
- Knowledge about what is adult education
- More information on what and who are adult educators
- Preparation for the rest of the course

Various Ways of Looking at “Adult”

Chronological – Ages 16, 18, 21;
all markers or milestones in our
society

Psychological – Responsibility,
parenting, family support, jobs

Societal – Expectations, history,
parent’s footsteps, maturity

Some Milestones

Age 16: Driver's license (in some states), can drop out of school, other?

Age 18: Can vote, legal to drink (in some states), join the military, other?

Age 21: Legal ramifications

Other: Parenting at 14, dying in war at 17, etc.

(Write down other milestones that come to your mind?)

Defining Adult

Adult – The extent that an individual perceives herself or himself to be essentially responsible for her or his own life (Knowles, p. 5, M/B 2007) – treat people educationally as adults if their self-concepts are adult-like

Defining Adult (cont.)

Adult – Okay – what are your views? When did you become an adult? Did you act differently as an adult?

(Write down some answers to these questions as means for orienting your own understanding of what it means to be an adult.)

What is Adult Education?

Education – vs – Learning



Planned

Educational

Activities



Cognitive

Activities

or Exchanges

These two views exist among educators.
What do you think?

What is Adult Education?

I like Bryson's 1936 definition:

All activities with an educational purpose that are carried on by adults engaged in the ordinary business of life (p. 7, M/B 2007)

Can add functions like planning, administration, organizing, self-improvement activities, etc.

What is Adult Education?

Here is Merriam and Brockett's definition (p. 8):

Activities intentionally designed for the purpose of bringing about learning among those whose age, social roles, or self-perception define them as adults.

What is (cont.)?

Some miscellaneous points!

- See pp. 18-19 in your text and look at the goals/purposes as additional defining frameworks
- Other areas to consider are nurse education, training, etc.
- Your thoughts? Jot them down.

What or Who, Then, are Adult Educators?

**Here are some of the terms you
will find in the literature:**

- Facilitator**
- Teacher**
- Instructor**
- Guide**
- Encourager**
- Planner/organizer/implementor**

What or Who, Then, (cont.)?

One more concept to consider:

Professionals (trained, having certificates or degrees, experienced, etc.)

-VS-

“Those coming in through the back door,” volunteers, etc. – anyone working with adults

IT IS YOUR TURN!



Let's dialogue about your ideas regarding definitions of adult, adult education, and the adult educator in the 2nd discussion forum.

Reference: Merriam, S., & Brockett, R. (2007). *The profession and practice of adult education: An introduction to the field*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.