

"I AM NOT A PEACENIK" ADULT LEARNING OF DEVELOPMENT EDUCATION IN ENGLISH-SPEAKING CANADA

*Budd L. Hall**

The survival of the industrialized world is intricately tied to the economic well-being of the third world. The fact that so many of our problems are international in nature, scope and origin, calls for a development education which can support a new internationalism.

"The education question then came on for discussion . . . Citizen Marx said there was a peculiar difficulty connected with this question. On the one hand, a change of social circumstances was required to establish a proper system of education; on the other hand, a proper system of education was required to bring about a change of social circumstances; we must therefore commence where we were."

— from the Minutes of the General Council of the First International, August 10, 1869.

Development educators have been competing against vast amounts of information or misinformation that flows daily into our schools, radio programmes, television programmes with automatic support of tax systems or other commercial means. They compete with the interests of some of the most powerful institutions in our country and in the world. Development educators have had meagre financial support from governments, churches or other social organisations, and even these supporters have sometimes had ambiguous feelings about the kinds of messages which should go out or are needed. To make a career of saying things which many would really not like to hear requires courage, vision and ultimately faith in people. The development education community has most often responded to these challenges with imagination, creativity and commitment.

Indeed, there is much that formal education, adult education and other forms could learn from the development education community in terms of methods and approaches to learning. The dialogue amongst such educators has yet to begin in earnest.

The purpose of this paper is to outline some of the links between what we know about how adults learn, how and why they hold certain attitudes and not others and how they change their attitudes or, still more importantly, their behavior. When I was asked to work on this and started to think about the subject, I realized that it is a very complicated issue, which in some ways lies at the heart of all attempts or hopes for social reform or transformation. Such an answer seems unlikely, for as Jennifer Rogers, author of one of the more popular books on adult learning has noted, "Unfortunately there is hardly any subject among psychologists which arouses as much disagreement as the definition of learning" (Rogers, 1977: 54).

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The breadth and complexity of the issue of learning and behavior is further complicated by the multiple tasks which face development education. Development education as we know it in Canada serves a wide and at times opposing set of interests. The term refers most generally to education of both young people in schools and adults in a variety of formal and non-formal settings in matters of international development — most usually Canada's relations with developing or third world countries. As straight forward as this sounds, we know that development education in action takes on several quite distinct faces. There are at least four different elements present in most development education. Sometimes all elements are present in a broad campaign, sometimes the emphasis is on only one of the elements.

- **Consciousness Raising:** This goal, which focuses on creating a new awareness about individual, organisational or national actors in development has been enriched by experiences in the women's movement and the writings of Paulo Freire. It takes as its core the linkages of each of us to the larger development questions and focuses on creating an understanding of the "big picture" by beginning with each of us as individuals; from the known to the unknown. When it works well, a much clearer and critical perspective results. When it doesn't work well, and most of us have had some experiences of failure, it can immobilize people with the overwhelming tasks at hand. It assumes that we are most often struggling along to understand the economic and political structures together.
- **Empowerment:** Closely linked to consciousness raising, empowerment is the process whereby citizens, neighbors, trade union members or others move from consciousness to action; political or strategic action. It is the next step to being aware of the situation, doing something about it. It involves the further skills of trying to figure out what kinds of action will work, what kinds of time or other resources are available and what kinds of support from elsewhere are available. In many cases, we have found that in fact people are already quite conscious, but have not seen any useful ways of doing anything about it. This feeling of lack of influence, of disenfranchisement, of futility and helplessness in spite of knowledge is perhaps the most critical problem facing us.
- **Building Coalitions or Alliances:** Sometimes our work is geared specifically towards building the alliances and coalitions which we feel will have the most impact on a given situation. Our educational efforts are directed or focused on groups which we hope would be supportive, thereby building the strength of the issue. The People's Food Commission in recent years has been one such example which placed an emphasis on getting as many groups as possible involved, implying that much work had to be done explaining the issues of why a focus on food was even necessary before the general work of the commission could be carried out.
- **Influencing Policy:** The goal of much development education is in some way related to influencing policies: sometimes the policy of corporations or financial institutions vis a vis their lending policies in Southern Africa;

sometimes the political world such as Central America, we work, trade union

Some development education through External Affairs, the or bosses. This is a "bosses" approach and much else can follow in circumstances, research

Other policy-directed That is, it seeks to through mustering leaders to a given issue. for this approach, made for reasons compelling.

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sometimes the policies of the Federal government vis a vis a part of the world such as Central America; sometimes the organisations within which we work, trade unions, churches, educational institutions or businesses.

Some development education is directed straight to the policy makers, External Affairs, the corporate headquarters, to our Members of Parliament or bosses. This is an "education of the politicians" or "education of the bosses" approach which assumes that once the leadership is on our side much else can follow because of their positions of influence. Under these circumstances, research and high quality data are often key.

Other policy-directed development education is more politically organised. That is, it seeks to influence the political or economic decision makers through mustering large numbers of individual and organisational supporters to a given issue. While research and interpretation of data are important for this approach, it is generally assumed that decisions are not always made for reasons of logic, but that political reasons, i.e. votes, are more compelling.

The Unity-of-the-Thorny-Question

Whatever angle or aspect or even whatever ideological position held, at least one thing which most development educators share is the struggle around perpetual thorny questions which crop up time after time in all our organisations. The way these questions are phrased may differ, but the essence remains something like the following:

1. With whom do we work?
2. How do we reach beyond the already converted?
3. How do we reach those in power?
4. How do we strengthen our coalitions?
5. Who educates the educators?

These have been the subject of many years of work and will be the subject of many more. So we have a complex set of issues, a constituency which is small and uncertain that it wants to be a constituency, a financial base which is sometimes uncertain that it wants us to say what we say and yet we go on, and in some ways seem to be growing. Why? The answer is: the fundamental imbalance in our nation and in the world. If we stopped working today in one week's time others would come forward, not out of charity or altruism (although there is much of that in our movement) but because of the nature of the inequalities in the world. We, a nation which has so many from so many parts of the world, will be called upon - whether we are ready or not - by the people of the third world, and the oppressed and forgotten people of our own nation to address the issues.

As so many international commissions have pointed out, the survival of the industrialised world is intricately tied to the economic well-being of the third world. As the Brandt Commission, the Palme Commission and other global projects have pointed out, cooperation is not charity. Jobs in Canada depend

on jobs in other parts of the world. Peace in Canada depends on peace elsewhere.

Our interdependency is underlined as well by the fact that so many of our local problems are international in nature. As a result of major economic instruments — such as the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund, transnational corporations, internationally controlled trade agreements and pricing formulas — the quality of our lives is increasingly linked to decisions made farther and farther away. The fact that so many of our problems are international in nature, origin and scope calls for a development education which can support a *new internationalism*. Not a continuation of the unbalanced internationalism — an internationalism of the rich and the powerful — but a new internationalism of those whose voices are not heard; an internationalism of new literates, of small farmers, of small shopkeepers, of trade unionists, of co-operators and of development educators.

What has worked?

We have a formidable task at hand and it is entirely appropriate that we take a bit more detailed look at what we can learn about the relationship of education, learning and the changes in attitude and behavior we are involved in. I felt that the proper place to begin was with people who have been engaged in development education in one way or another for a long time. I asked a few of them to share some of their experiences they have had where people have actually changed their opinions from one thing to another, even their personal transformations. The responses were informative, because many of the people with whom I spoke could not think or did not know of any such occasion in spite of the fact that they had been working as long as 20 years in this field. This does not mean that change did not take place of course, merely that such changes are slow, often imperceptible at the time and express themselves in varied ways. But there were a number of friends who were able to identify such experiences and their stories are worth telling. (I have not used real names, except for Gatt-Fly.)

Yasir (Tanzania)

"In the situations which I have been in where people have agreed to do something different or have changed their minds it has been because the person talking with them has been able to establish a feeling of trust and confidence with the people. In many of the situations when we were trying to explain to people about Ujamaa and the Arusha Declaration, we were most effective when we used parables, stories about the village we were in and spoke in manners which showed our respect for their ideas. Nyerere was so effective because he was able to talk to people in very clear, direct and straight-forward language."

Bruce (Canada)

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unlikely place for the kind of experience you're talking about, but I found it an incredibly powerful experience for those involved. I can remember going to see the villages before the workshop with Musa Abdu, a Nigerian adult educator who had been trained by one of the well-known English adult educators. When I questioned him about production on the villages, he unequivocally said, "It's very low because the villagers are lazy." No talk about land ownership, marketing structures, "support" services from the bureaucracy, etc. Nevertheless, 6 days later he and other participants were walking into a bureaucrat's office and challenging all of the official's rationalisations and victim-blaming. What produced this shift in attitude? Simply working with ordinary villagers and beginning to understand the complexity of their situation and at the same time attempting to play the roles of peasants and understand their motivations in a drama situation. The learning situation forced them to work with people of a class they had little intellectual contact with before and to try to understand the major issues and social relationships of this class from an insider's point of view. It wasn't just an intellectual or theoretical exercise, but the dramatization process forced people to be very concrete.

A year later Musa writes to say that he is using his own petrol to do follow-up work with the villagers because the arts council funds have been cut."

Maria (Chile)

"When I first went to work in a village in an adult education programme I thought that the campesinos were ignoramus nobodies. They didn't exist as thinking people or even people who felt the same as I did. But we were working under the leadership of Paulo Freire whose method meant that we were supposed to have a "dialogue" with these campesinos . . . how to have a dialogue with such people? It did not take long, however, for me to find out that these people knew far more than I about living where they did, about relations to the "patron" and about what they could do and could not do. In the campo, it was I who was ignorant, naive and dim-witted — once that happened we began a real dialogue which still echoes in my mind."

Jill (Canada)

"I remember one film called *Killing Us Softly* which is very simple but almost always seems to have a powerful impact on the people who see it. It is the film of a lecture by an American talking about the violence done to women and men through advertising. The film is really only something taken during one of her illustrated lectures, but it really works. I guess it works because it is very well organized and gives people a lot of different entry points to the argument. If people don't connect with the destructive images of women, they may with the exploitation of children. Men who see the film notice the increasing exploitation of them as well in advertising."

Lionel (Canada)

"Personally my first and lasting shock came when I went to an African University for a summer. I met Nigerian professors whose ideas of History and

Anthropology were nearly exactly the opposite of what I had been taught. The fact that African scholars could so skillfully refute the Euro-centric view of the world and present one with Africans themselves in the centre caused me to question many other assumptions later on. It did not happen all of a sudden, but has grown all these years."

Gatt-Fly (Canada)

"Our shift (as an organization) from trying to influence the powerful to helping empower the powerless began in 1975 when we first started to develop the Ah-Ha seminars. In the course of conducting the early Ah-Ha seminars with farmers, fishermen and community groups we had our own eyes opened to the links between global and local issues. We realized that the real hope of change lay in the efforts and struggles of oppressed people at a local level, not in reforms of the international trade and monetary system. The enthusiastic response to the seminars from popular groups contrasted vividly with the frustrations and lack of results in our dealing with government which we were experiencing at the time."

Robert (Senior Educator, U.S.A.)

"I am not a peacenik. I made a commitment to working on issues of peace as a result of taking part in an international workshop on adult education and peace with about 25 other people from different parts of the world. As we sat around the table for several days, a Cuban, a Russian, a Finn, a Canadian, someone from Latin America, we gradually came to get to know each other. We listened to all the positions which people had put forward and then began to try and find some points of agreement for discussion. Little by little as the week went on, we began to make connections as human beings not as protagonists of a given government or position. At that moment, it felt like something was possible and that I could do something personally to contribute to the situation of peace. I am now organizing a joint US-Russia seminar on this subject."

Rajal (India)

"Recently I was asked by a group of six women whom I had not met, to work with them on a participatory research methodology about images of women. I was for the first time in a long time quite nervous about this. I, a single male, what would I talk about? We began talking and the only thing we could start from was our own experiences with relationships between women and men. The group of women were mixed, some poor, some middle class, some urban and some rural. I learned suddenly that women were able to relate to each other as women to some degree in spite of their class differences. They talked about the difficult jobs they have — keeping track of children, men, their jobs, cooking, etc. They could talk to each other because they started from sharing personal experiences. I learned too because I was unsure and therefore open to listen."

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Common Threads

Even from as small a group of experiences as these, we can see some observations and common threads, some points to be noted and compared with the ideas of those who write about learning. These are not in any particular order nor are they exhaustive.

1. The linkages between the personal experiences and the larger economic and political structures are important.
2. An environment of trust and genuine dialogue is present, either by design or by circumstance in these stories.
3. There is a sharing of direct experiences.
4. All people involved are both teachers and learners.
5. At some stage in one's personal life or working life we are more open to learning than at other times.
6. All people can and do learn; it is never too late.
7. When people want to learn, it is difficult to stop them.

What do others say?

Having started from a sample of our own experiences, it would be interesting to see what other writers on the subject of learning have said. As noted earlier, there is some debate about the phenomenon of learning itself. The Club of Rome's book, *No Limits to Learning* (Botkin, 1979) talks about societal learning and national learning, while others such as Thomas (1983), Brundage and MacKeracher (1980) argue vigorously that learning is only an individual act. As Thomas has put it, "Learning is an *individual activity*. Groups, organisations, corporations, collectivities of any kind do not learn" (Thomas, 1983: 6).

The definition used in the Brundage and MacKeracher study seems to reflect the most generally held positions in North America, "Adult learning refers both to the process which individuals go through as they attempt to change or enrich their knowledge, values, skills or strategies *and* to the resulting knowledge, values, skills, strategies and behaviors possessed by each individual (Brundage et al: 5).

Their list of background postulates about adult learning bear repeating.

1. Education is political.
2. All adults can and do learn.
3. Adults are not mature children; nor are children immature adults.
4. Learning is cyclical and continuous.
5. Learning takes place in a variety of settings.
6. The relationship between teaching and learning is not all that clear.

Political Aspects

More than other forms of education, development education has been aware of the differing political perspectives which influence education. Few would disagree with the observations of the authors of the Persepolis Declaration who said, "Adult education like education in general, is a political act. It is not

neutral, for the act of revealing social reality in order to transform it, or of concealing it in order to preserve it is political" (Persepolis: 1).

Gregory Baum, the distinguished Canadian theologian has carried the analysis further in noting that differing philosophical assumptions underlie the concepts of what or how people learn. He talks about liberal, conservative and socialistic philosophical assumptions which in turn create differing educational approaches.

The liberal approach with its emphasis on unique individual adaptation to the world calls for an educational approach which offers a diverse set of programmes to accommodate all individual needs with an emphasis on means and process rather more than on ends or goals.

The conservative educational strategy is to provide learning programmes to all members in society to learn the basic components of the approved model of reality. Its aim is a universal model of behavior as worked out by the structures of the society. Education will bring people to this common model.

The socialist philosophy underlies an education which strives to assist in the recovery of lost or repressed models, to raise consciousness leading to a re-structuring of society or a transformation of situations.

Naturally many development education programmes contain elements of all three philosophies, but the most successful examples we have noted earlier seemed to be quite clear in their approach or aim; by design or chance they were transformative. Most development education seems to have a transformative goal, but sometimes the methods or process are taken from a liberal or conservative epistemological base.

Marx, Tawney and Freire

Marxist interpretation of education is scattered as little direct reference was made by Marx to education as such. He was clear however on the primary factors influencing the creation of ideas. The fundamental act of human beings is the necessity of producing goods to meet basic needs. In order to produce things we have to also enter into social relations which in turn influence the way we think, in fact they set the very agenda for thought. As Marx put it, "It is not the consciousness of humanity that determines their being, but, on the contrary, their social being which determines their consciousness" (Marx 1961: 5).

R.H. Tawney, the key philosopher supporting the growth of the workers' education movement in England at the turn of the century elaborated on the educational implication for creating a more equal state and in doing so noted, "The purpose of an adult education worthy of its name is not merely to impart reliable information, important though that is. It is still more to foster the intellectual vitality to master and use it, so that knowledge becomes not a burden to be borne or a possession to be prized, but a stimulus to constructive thought and an inspiration to *action*" (Tawney, 1964: 88). He further noted that all serious educational movements in England have also been social movements.

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The most recent philosopher to speak on behalf of people's education has been Paulo Freire. With his unique mixture of Christian thought, humanistic psychological underpinnings and political economic understanding he has been arguably the single most influential educationist within the development education community. While the rush to label every programme in sight as "Freirean" has not always been useful, his ability to inspire middle-class people has been unmatched.

In re-reading *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* recently, I found that his form of expression is still eloquent and compelling even while the limits of his formulas have been seen. For example:

- "The oppressed must see examples of the vulnerability of the oppressor so that a contrary conviction can begin to grow within them."
- "Dialogue requires humility."
- "The goal is to fight alongside the people not to win them over."
- "The starting point for organizing the program content of educational or political action must be the present, existential and concrete reality" (Freire, 1973).

Finally in the search for ideas on how people learn, I turned back to the *Adult Education Handbook*, written in Tanzania in 1973 to support large-scale adult education programmes in that nation. The simple list of conditions under which people learn best still seem to fit in spite of the complexity and sophistication of our Canadian context.

- "Adults learn best when,
- a. they want to learn
 - b. information is presented in a logical order
 - c. they are treated as adults
 - d. they *do* something
 - e. they have a chance to practise
 - f. the information is useful to them in their daily lives
 - g. *their* experiences are used
 - h. there is a dialogue situation" (Institute of Adult Education, 1973: 123).

Going On

We have accomplished much in the short history of development education in this country. We are present at an exciting time for organizers of all kinds. The economic collapse so disturbing to us for our sisters and brothers in Africa, the violence being wrought against our friends in Central America serve to keep our own consciousness high. To these events far away, we can now add the transformative nature of the Peace movement, with its ability to link up people of many different ideological persuasions in a common concern with global survival. Our ranks may also be swelled by those working to tackle local and domestic economic problems, the Bishops, the churches in general, the trade unions urging a new social movement and networks of native peoples, human rights activists, women against exploitation by technology. The interna-

tional linkages are key to all our concerns and development educators are facing challenges and opportunities which have not existed before.

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Resumé

La survie du monde industrialisé est étroitement liée au bien-être économique du tiers monde. Le fait que tant de nos problèmes sont d'aspects, d'envergures et d'origines internationaux demande une éducation au développement qui peut soutenir un nouveau internationalisme.

EVALUATING THE IMPACT OF DEVELOPMENT EDUCATION

Charles Lusthaus, Gary A. Cecil, Welch, I.

Have development education programs in responding differently to the developing world? An understanding of the impact on the developing world? An understanding of the 'deved' community takes on the challenges that development programs can improve.

For the past decade interest in the field of evaluation has grown. One important part of evaluation is the impact of a program. Does an educational program make individuals, to an organization, to our country, to our society, to our world, to our planet, to our universe, to our galaxy, to our universe, to our planet, to our society, to our country, to our organization, to our individuals, to our program which was implemented? Do development education programs, physics programs, new management programs, have attempted to assess the impact of these evaluations have taken place in the development education system, a system which has had a concept of evaluation.

Today, however, education is not a system. New educational systems are being developed. The need of people to learn about our character, our development education. In general, development education activities associated with the developed world and the developing world. The development education system is under pressure to evaluate the development education community. Do development education programs made a difference to Canadian development education to the developing world? Are new development education programs made a difference to the developing world? Are development education programs made a difference to the developing world?

These are difficult questions to ask. Those who have been involved in evaluation of development education programs will be increasing pressure on them to respond to such questions. Similarly, the development education community will be increasing pressure on them to respond to such questions. Similarly, the development education community will be increasing pressure on them to respond to such questions. Similarly, the development education community will be increasing pressure on them to respond to such questions. Similarly, the development education community will be increasing pressure on them to respond to such questions.

What is an Impact Evaluation

The first step is to clarify the meaning of the term 'impact evaluation'.