WHAT'S NEW IN THE HISTORY OF ADULT EDUCATION

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Jarvis, Peter, ed. *Twentieth Century Thinkers in Adult Education.* London: Croom Helm, 1987.

Stubblefield, Harold. *Towards a History of Adult Education in America: The Search for a Unifying Principle.* London: Croom Helm, 1988.

Stewart, David W. *Adult Learning in America: Eduard Lindeman and His Agenda for Lifelong Education.* Malabar, Florida: Robert E. Krieger Publishing Co., 1987.

Brookfield, Stephen, ed. *Learning Democracy: Eduard Lindeman on Adult Education and Social Change.* London: Croom Helm, 1987.

Historical studies in education in Canada, the United States, and abroad are flourishing. These studies, as might be expected, focus primarily on different dimensions of the formal education of children and adolescents. It is not unusual for historical studies of adult education to be marginalized within educational history in general. By that I simply mean that doing adult educational history is not deemed important. The late American education historian Lawrence Cremin is the exception to the rule: in his *magnum opus* trilogy of American educational history he sought to integrate the education of adults and children into a multiplex narrative sweeping through American time. It is, perhaps, not surprising that historical studies of schooling would prevail in the sub-field of educational history. Rigorously trained professional historians of education found employment in Faculties of Education catering to children and youth. To study adult education history made little sense, and was left to others, or the emergent (and desperately professionalizing) field of adult education. However, leaving Departments of Adult Education to pick up the slack or engage in historical studies did not help matters. During the heyday (in North America) of professionalization in adult education (from the early 1960s to the present), foundational studies, be they philosophy, sociology, or history, were hardly in vogue. At present in Canada there are only four or five graduate programmes that even include *one* course in the history of adult education, and none of these are considered to be compulsory or an integral part of the core programme.

But during the 1980s one notices—in Great Britain, the United States and Canada—an emerging interest in both historical studies and their role in the preparation of adult educators. Several events signal this interest in retrieving

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our adult education past. In the U.S. Sean Courtney created the Bulletin "Historical Foundations of Adult Education" in the mid-1980s and Michael Welton launched the CASAE History Bulletin in 1985. In 1986, the first international conference on adult education history was held at Oxford University. This latter conference brought together scholars from the United Kingdom, Europe, North America, the Middle East, and Japan. In 1989, Syracuse University's Kellogg-funded project gathered twenty scholars from Canada and the U.S. to analyse the history of the relationship between workers' and adult education (the proceedings have been published—*Breaking New Ground: The Development of Adult and Workers' Education in North America* [Syracuse University, 1990]). In March 1991, another group of North American scholars met to examine Syracuse's archival holdings (the central collection in the U.S.) and discuss class, gender, and ethnic dimensions of the construction of adult education histories. There may not be as many historians working in the adult education vineyards and their products may circulate primarily amongst the broad and diverse adult educational community. But the debates are intensifying and the quality of scholarship is becoming more sophisticated and in tune with contemporary historiographic developments. One also notices that adult educational historians are searching intensely for a usable history: retrieving a past that contests the professionalization of the field of study and practice and speaks to the current debates about how the study of adult education ought to be constructed. This lends a vitality to historical work reminiscent of the heady revisionist days of Michael Katz and his followers.

The works reviewed in this essay open a window on the central concerns of historians of adult education and illustrate some of the thematic issues present in the study of the history of adult education. The central concern of historians of adult education no longer plagues historians of schooling, namely, what is the *boundary* of adult educational history? The fundamental meta-historiographic problem for historians of adult education is what Czechoslovakian historian Ivan Savicky (1987) has called the "theorization of history." The classic synthetic works on the history of adult education (Kelly 1970; Knowles 1962; Grattan 1955) presented an "outline narrative" (Kelly's depiction). But these works neither defined precisely the *object* of historical analysis nor articulated the conceptual categories necessary to construct the relationships obtaining amongst the elements within the object's boundary. More recently, historians of adult education have offered several "solutions" to the problem of the object. European historians of adult education (Leon 1983; Terrot 1983) have focused on organized adult education in the modern French state. They argue that present-day developments have been determined by the state-entrepreneur-trades union triangle. But, Savicky asks, have they not merely derived the "most conspicuous line of changes in the relatively short period of time between 1870 and 1970" (1987, p. 21)? They cannot present any theoretical justification for their selection. Another approach which appears to hold out some promise is the focused approach—constructing adult education *as* workers' education. The

advantage of the focused approach is that history is theorized in a "firmly defined conceptual apparatus...[with] clearly stated goals of inquiry even in practical issues" (Savicky 1987, pp. 21-22). There is considerable sympathy for this standpoint amongst British adult education historians. The problem, however, is that this construction leaves out a large part of "empirically ascertainable" adult education. Welton's *Knowledge for the People* (1987) falls into yet another category: adult education history *as* the history of precedents. Here the focus is upon "progressive" forms of education—historical understanding consciously oriented to reclaiming liberatory moments from the past. But progressive elements, even critically interpreted, do not form any noticeable line of historical development. What one chooses is fully dependent on "changing contemporary frames of reference" (Savicky 1987, p. 22). Once again the sin of presentism has been committed. The meta-historiographic problem of the object has been dodged by Welton and others (Selman 1985; Law 1988; Rockhill 1985) who invent a master narrative for adult education: from social movement to professionalized practice. Other historians could just as easily offer an alternative master narrative for adult education history. And some post-modernist historians would eschew master narratives altogether. There is always more than one way of emplotting stories (White 1978). More seriously, the revisionists leave the theorization problem untouched. With this possible exception: linking adult education—its emancipatory interest—with social movements, past and present, requires a social theory of the nature of learning within these movements. And one cannot understand the historical emergence and functioning of social movements (as sites of emancipatory learning) without developing a theoretical framework specifying the function of adult learning and education in the reproduction and transformation of social systems. But no one has accomplished this latter daunting task.

Savicky claims that the "history of adult education has not yet found its theoretical plane which would help to reveal the tendencies of development of adult education in particular, in its specificity, and thus significantly contribute to understanding the present situation and prognosticating the future" (1987, p. 23). Unlike the history of schooling, adult education does not appear to have an "object...[that] is a comprehensive system, self-identical in the course of a long time" (*ibid.*). This fact is at the root of the persistent lack of clarity as to what should actually be included under adult education. Only liberal education? Vocational? Non-formal? Only institutional adult education? What about the spontaneous influence of the environment? Savicky's paradox confronts all adult education historians: where adult education forms a "real system, it starts closely approaching initial education. Where it preserves its specificity, especially its great innovative capacities, it stops being a real and observable system" (*ibid.*, p. 23). So far, then, we do not have an adequate theorization of the object of historical studies in adult education.

Two of the books (Jarvis 1987; Stubblefield 1988) reviewed in this essay contribute self-consciously to this debate. Do they push us beyond where we

have arrived? In *Towards a History of Adult Education in America* (1988) Stubblefield recognizes that in the U.S. prior to World War I adults learned through a variety of educational forms—chautauquas, lyceum lectures, correspondence schools, university extension, agricultural programmes, women's organizations, service clubs. After World War I, he observes, many persons and institutions "made adult education their business" (n.p.), and the term "adult education" covered a multitude of activities and social purposes. During the post-war period many thoughtful individuals began to think deeply and systematically about the "question of what kind of education adults needed" (n.p.). This questioning was precipitated by the perceived threat to the social order and in response to the new economic and social conditions of the progressive era. To bring some order into this chaos, Stubblefield constructs the object of adult education history *as* the intellectual history of selected "first generation theorists of adult education." Once he has delineated the object of adult education history (adult education history ought to focus on the ideas of formative thinkers), Stubblefield uses the concept of a "unifying principle" to organize his historical narrative. This concept has affinities with Kuhn's notion of a paradigm: Stubblefield believes that formative thinkers ("These theorists defined, for the first time, what adult education should be as a separate sphere of action in American society") shape their views on the nature of adult education, the social conditions calling for new forms of education, aims to be accomplished, appropriate methods, relation of adult education to society, and what the curriculum should be within an organizing paradigm or unifying principle. The ideas that a thinker holds, therefore, influence what knowledge becomes valued and the course of events within adult education history. He identifies three unifying principles present amongst the first generation theorists: (1) the diffusion of knowledge and culture (James Harvey Robinson and Lyman Bryson are exemplars); (2) liberal education (Everett Dean Martin, Robert Hutchins, Mortimer Adler exemplify this principle), and (3) social education (exemplified by Joseph Hart and Eduard Lindeman).

This is an elegant answer to the problem of the object. The buzzing facticity of adult learning is brought under control. One does not have to ponder through the night wondering how one is going to conceptualize adult education in the period before it came of age from the 1920s to the 1950s. But this severely elegant formulation creates some serious difficulties. For one thing, constructing adult education history as intellectual history obviously rules out understanding how adults organized their learning in historical times and places prior to the self-conscious emergence of "adult education." In a sense, Stubblefield traps himself in the twentieth century; and if he did write about, say, the colonial period, he might be inclined to search for the seeds of the present in the past. To write about other periods in American history, Stubblefield would have to find another unifying principle: one that would not be articulated at the ideational level. Second, even if we accept his guiding premise, we immediately face numerous problems. Why has he included *these* particular thinkers? What is the theoretical justification for

his selections? No women are included in his historical narrative. Why wouldn't Jane Addams, Ruth Kosinsky, or Hilda Worthington Smith be considered as formative thinkers? Black historians would shudder at the exclusion of their seminal educators from the list of formative thinkers. Stubblefield himself could be accused of participating in the creation of the myth of the American adult education "great tradition." By so doing, he opens the way for various deconstructive moves so familiar on today's stormy intellectual scene. One need only think of the thumping given to the classic liberal humanist course of studies in our great universities by various marginalized groups. Whose tradition did you say we are talking about? Adult education history, in Canada and the U.S., is still appallingly white, male, and middle-class. Stubblefield also has to confront the question of just how one situates ideas in historical context. When we extrapolate unifying principles from historical context, we are not able to see how particular discursive practices are intimately bound up with class, gender, and ethnic interest struggles. Stubblefield does not tell us much about the conflicting interplay amongst competing unifying principles in particular periods. In spite of these limitations, Arthur Wilson (1990) argues that Stubblefield's book contains hints of an "epistemological approach to an historical issue" (p. 6). *Towards a History* can be pressed in a Habermasian direction to reveal how "adult education knowledge has been constructed differentially at various times to serve changing interests" (Wilson 1990, p. 5). Jurgen Habermas argues that knowledge production is guided by three interests: the technical interest in control, the interpretive interest in understanding, and the emancipatory interest in freedom from domination. Wilson thinks that the epistemological debates in adult education history can benefit from an understanding of which interests were "historically evident" in the construction of adult education knowledge from the 1920s through to the present. This is an important insight. But this contributes to epistemological understanding of how narratives get constructed; it does not resolve the ontological (or meta-historiographic) problem of the object.

In *Twentieth Century Thinkers in Adult Education* (1987) Peter Jarvis, editor of this collection of essays, is not simply providing practitioners with a handy overview of some of the filed's key male thinkers (Mansbridge, Yeaxlee, Tawney, Thorndike, Dewey, Lindeman, Houle, Knowles, Kidd, Horton, Freire, Coady, Gelpi). Jarvis believes that by drawing upon the ideas of these formative thinkers we will come to a clearer understanding of adult education as a field of study. "Adult education," he says, "is a unique combination of elements of knowledge from the varying backgrounds and concerns of different thinkers, whose work has contributed to the body of knowledge, that may now be called adult education knowledge" (1987, p. 301). In itself, this is an interesting manoeuvre, one that historians of schooling would find surprising. Can Egerton Ryerson's ideas about schooling and children help educational historians construct their object of study? Historians of schooling would, I think, conceive of the thought and practice of particular actors as empirical data in need of inter-

pretation within an elaborated conceptual framework. For example, the now-tarnished "social control paradigm" was constructed in the 1970s to make sense of the thought and practice of educational actors; other interpretive models have been offered through the 1980s.

What Jarvis fails to differentiate adequately is theoretical knowledge oriented to delineating the boundaries of the field (or theoretical knowledge localized in a region within the field) and the various forms of knowledge developed by practitioners like Mansbridge, Freire, or Knowles. In my view, analysing the thought of formative thinkers cannot contribute to the resolution of the problem of the object. The intellectual history of the field can only be a sub-region within the delineated field of study. And once we have established this sub-region, the intellectual fun begins: how ought we to be doing intellectual history? Jarvis is fascinated with the way thinkers like Lindeman and Freire synthesize elements from many disciplines in order to construct their vision of the purpose of adult education and, within that vision (unifying principle?), their educational projects. From these thinkers, Jarvis extrapolates the principle that adult education, as a field of study, can never be a singular discipline. I believe that Jarvis is correct, perhaps for the wrong reasons, when he argues that the study of adult education cannot be a discipline. Thinkers like Lindeman or Freire may help us think about the constituent elements of the field of study and the social purpose of adult education. However, their own work requires interpretation within an elaborated conceptual framework.

The construction of the field of study is fundamentally a philosophical-anthropological task, requiring the disclosure of the basic learning processes of the human species. Habermas's theory of knowledge-constitutive interests can also be interpreted (besides throwing light on theoretical knowledge production) as specifying the "actual structures of a species that reproduces its life through learning processes of socially organized labour and processes of mutual understanding in interactions mediated in ordinary language: these basic conditions of life have an interest structure" (1971, p. 194). Until we are able to specify these anthropologically-grounded knowledge-constitutive interests and show what forms they take in history, we will not be able to resolve the problem of the object. We need to be able to understand particular educational forms as reflected moments of the normative deep-structural learning processes at play in specific social formations within particular eco-systems as they move through time. Our philosophically elaborated framework must enable us to write histories of adult learning and education within pre-industrial and industrial societies. How would we think of adult education within traditional North American Indian cultures? What about medieval France? Or New England in the early nineteenth century?

What kind of thinkers are assembled in *Twentieth Century Thinkers*? With the exception of John Dewey (who is included for his reflections on lifelong education), none of the thinkers have achieved "great" status in the sense of systematic, philosophically-rich, sophisticated thought about the human condition. Two early twentieth-century English thinkers —Mansbridge and Yeax-

lee—are really second-rate popularizers of other people's thought. Mansbridge's thought is sentimental and thin; his commitment to the "educational uplift" of the working-class male is passionate and rich, however. Yeaxlee's thought (he was an early advocate of lifelong learning) seems rather fatuous, nostalgically yearning for the lost world of spiritual values and the organic society. Yeaxlee is a kind of YMCA tractarian. Even Tawney, a more substantial intellectual than either Mansbridge or Yeaxlee, has not stood the test of time. Nothing much remains, contemporary social historians like J.H. Hexter tell us, of his work on seventeenth-century English history. To me Thorndike is a crude thinker who is comprehensible within the context of the "cult of efficiency" that overwhelmed American education thought and practice in the first few decades of the twentieth century. Modern thinkers like Houle, Knowles, and Kidd are essentially purveyors of practical insights into how adults ought to learn and how we should teach them. They are post-World War II public relations missionaries for the emergent professionalizing field. Their thought is philosophically skimpy and lacking in theoretical depth. This does not deny the deep-rooted humanism of a man like J. Roby Kidd, or his phenomenal inspirational impact on scores of adult educators.

Lindeman's importance to American and international adult education cannot be denied. He is a public intellectual, like Dewey, a breed of thinker now almost lost in our over-academicized world. His was not a systematic mind. But he shaped his discourse for a broad audience in response to the pressing issues of his day. He mediated other's thought to wide audiences. The meaning of adult education was only one, albeit very important, issue he addressed. The case of Miles Horton, the legendary American radical educator, is different again. He wrote very little throughout his brilliant life. One could say, in fact, that Horton's life was his text, and what a text it was! His legacy lies not in textbooks on shelves, but in empowered poor people in America's often desperate South. Coady's life parallels Horton's in many ways. His main text, *Masters of Their Own Destiny*, written in 1939, was first spoken orally at numerous town halls and community centres. One hears the echoes throughout. But his thought, either on education or theology, was by modern standards quite superficial. The Brazilian Freire has written the most philosophically-rich texts on adult education of all the thinkers assembled. But even here, one could argue that as wise as they are, they are essentially normative reflections on the moral and social purposes of adult education as well as on the need for a different method of teaching the oppressed. They are not theoretical studies of adult learning in socio-historical context.

What unifies these disparate thinkers? They are practical men of action. They, like the apostle Paul, are doers. They drift into their studies for reflection after they have fought the day's battles (admittedly, Dewey must have stayed quite a few days in his study). Despite differing views of the purpose of adult education, they are all passionate advocates on behalf of the neglected adult learner. Jarvis draws our attention to just how many of them had Christian

humanitarian origins. This fact in itself opens up interesting scholarly possibilities. Most were thinkers on the run who believed that life was best lived when people first served. If time was left over, then one could reflect. And these reflections stayed close to the practical ground, animated by the imperative of providing guides for beleaguered adult educators. The current rift between those of us who have been trained systematically in the universities and are more at home speaking on Habermas at conferences than organizing fishermen or miners, and men like Coady and Horton who spoke the language of the dispossessed and actually taught them, is very deep. These brief reflections signal the need for a framework for studying different types of thinkers. Some of these men were scholars, some were professional specialists, others popularizers and moral philosophers. A few combined divergent thinker modes. How do we understand the linkages between the thought of these men, their times, and the contending social interests at play in society?

David Stewart's *Adult Learning in America: Eduard Lindeman and His Agenda for Lifelong Education* (1987) is the first biographical study of Eduard Lindeman, whose thought is currently being resurrected and re-examined within American and international adult education circles. Jarvis and Stubblefield include essays on him in their respective works, and Stephen Brookfield has edited a collection of Lindeman's essays (1987). Stewart casts his book as an "effort to examine Eduard Lindeman's agenda for lifelong education in the context of his life" (p. xiv). If other discussions of Lindeman tend toward disincarnated history, Stewart wants to invert this tendency so that we can see the body and feel the life. And quite a body it is—Lindeman's early life is shrouded in mystery and shadowed by dark experiences, and this restless Bohemian spirit would scarcely be held up as a role model by middle Americans. But it is not so much the body that captivated David Stewart. It was a text, *The Meaning of Adult Education*, penned hastily in 1926, that is the springboard for his biography. Stewart read this first in graduate school and, like many others, was struck by its poetic power and awkward ambiguities. This axial event sparks his search for the source of its power and meaning for our time.

Adult Learning in America is essentially an extended and complex dialogue with, and exegesis of, *The Meaning*. Stewart constructs his story of Eduard Lindeman around this landmark text. Biographical details and portraits of his circle of intimates and associates are woven in and around an explication of Lindeman's vision of adult education. He does not present us with a tidy, chronologically ordered narrative. Rather, he organizes his study thematically and shapes his narrative for an audience of contemporary professional adult educators. Stewart believes that Lindeman's life holds "lessons that can enrich the lives of persons living today" (p. xiv). This tactic of narrative construction further exemplifies the commitment of contemporary adult education historians to discover a usable past. The resulting text, in my view, is like a staged conversation amongst the living and the dead, with Stewart and other contemporary voices joining in a dialogue with Lindeman about the meaning of adult

education. But this textual ordering—making sense of Lindeman for contemporary adult educators—is achieved at a price.

Stewart's work is carefully researched, lovingly crafted, and judiciously intoned. In fact, the author, like many biographers, identifies quite closely with Lindeman. At times authorial and subject voices seem to coincide, with Stewart moving inside Lindeman to address an American public which has yet to grasp the import of Lindeman's agenda for lifelong learning. The text divides roughly into three movements: in the opening chapters Stewart creates the backdrop for the appearance of *The Meaning*; in the middle section he probes its meaning in its time and ours; and in the final chapters he examines Lindeman's linking of adult education to democracy, national, and global crises. The final chapter, "Eduard Lindeman's Agenda for Lifelong Education in America," summarizes in codified form Lindeman's contribution to our thinking about the adult learner, curriculum, and other concerns. *The Meaning*, then, functions like a lodestar to Lindeman's life and work. Wherever we happen to be travelling in the narrative, Stewart will point us to the star in the heavens.

Through the course of *Adult Learning in America* we learn much about Eduard Lindeman's peripatetic life and restless striving for self-realization, his scrabble poor family origins, his work with voluntary associations, his linkage with *New Republic* intellectuals like Herbert Croly, his endless public lecturing, his career at the New School for Social Research where he taught a course on Adult Education for many years, his dozen books and hundreds of articles (most cast in popular style). Lindeman embodied C. Wright Mills' "sociological imagination." He helped Americans link their personal misfortunes to larger structural changes. He was an educator of the public. It adds up to a career worthy of narration. But Lindeman has not drawn the attention of American social or intellectual historians. Christopher Lasch does not mention him either in his early work, *The New Radicalism in America: 1889-1963* (1965) or his recently published *The True and Only Heaven* (1991). American intellectual life from the 1910s to the 1950s was host to numerous thinkers, like Herbert Croly, Randolph Bourne, Walter Lippmann, Lewis Mumford, John Dewey, and Reinhold Niebuhr, who probed American culture and politics more deeply than Lindeman. Many of the writings collected by Brookfield (1987) are tonally flat, politically naive, and analytically unsophisticated. What sense can we make of a statement such as "The only reliable instrument for establishing confidence among nations is adult education" (Brookfield 1987, p. 123)? But what marks out Lindeman for historical significance, Stewart argues, is his call for a "new kind of education" (p. 1) and his anticipation of ideas about adult learning that have since entered into the mainstream of American adult education thinking and practice.

When Lindeman wrote that "education is life" and insisted endlessly on the importance of education in social change and for citizenship, he was inhabiting a universe shared by Croly's *Progressive Democracy* (1914, Dewey's *Democracy and Education* (1916) and Lippmann's *A Preface to Politics* (1913).

Progressive thought laid great emphasis on "moral suasion" and "organized intelligence." At their best, progressives understood that political reform required moral reform. In Croly's words, "The ultimate value to civilization of any social project...depends less upon the desirability of the particular end which the project seeks to achieve than upon the quality of the individual men and women which participation in it tends to bring to the surface" (cited, Kloppenberg 1986, p. 416). Lindeman shared his friend Croly's emphasis on the educative dimension of political life. Over and over again Lindeman would argue that a democratic culture and society required a democratic process. Democratic goals could never justify non-democratic means.

Lindeman believed that education was life, that adult education revolved around non-vocational ideals, that the most powerful learning was grounded in life-situations and that the adult learner's experience was of highest value. These four basic assumptions, Stewart says, provided the "conceptual framework for Lindeman's philosophy" (p. 4). In one sense, Stewart's text is an extended commentary on how Lindeman elaborated upon, and applied, these axial assumptions in differing contexts. Stewart draws a line of continuity between Lindeman and contemporary American adult education practice, exemplified by Malcolm Knowles. But this interpretive move opens the author to the charge of presentism, of seeing Lindeman primarily as the *forerunner* of contemporary mainstream adult education thought. Other readings are possible. One might argue that Lindeman shifted the focus of analysis of learning away from the formal education site to the processes of the organization of our common life—interpersonal relations, family, work, culture, politics. Do the processes and forms (always changing) of our institutional life enable or disable human beings to develop their capacities and potential? Lindeman challenged us to scrutinize every structure, movement, and association in terms of their nurturing or blocking of human development, learner-centredness, and freedom. Along with Dewey, he advocated the creation of a developmental culture and politics. Lindeman believed that the organization of politics could be evaluated in terms of whether policymaking transactions enabled citizens to develop political knowledge, enhance political competence, and deepen their ability to act prudently. But this interpretive move, which suits my present interests, could also be accused of presentism. I am "reading" him as the *forerunner* of a post-liberal critique of advanced capitalism. Who's right? How many Lindemans are there? Presently Lindeman is claimed by the professionalized mainstream and radical social activists alike. Knowlesian specialists in the techniques of adult education as well as community-based educators working with the disempowered both lay claim to Eduard Lindeman.

Stewart's desire to understand Lindeman as a prescient thinker ("The Lindeman assumptions are manifest in the work of nearly every American adult educator." [p. 110]) forgets that one of the historian's tasks is to render the familiar unfamiliar. Where does Lindeman fit in American intellectual history of the first half of the twentieth century? If we think of Lindeman as a progressive

thinker, we would want to know to what extent his thought shared the assumptions of the progressivism of the 1900s and 1910s. Did he share the pre-World War I progressive's (like Jane Addams and the social gospeller Shailer Mathews) optimistic view of human nature and social evolution? In *The True and Only Heaven* Lasch distinguishes two fundamental types of progressives—those committed to a distributive view of democracy, and those committed to a participatory view. The participatory view, with its deep affinities with American populism, emphasized the renewal of personality through a revitalized democratic life. The distributive view, with its emphasis on the democratization of culture and not work, Lasch argues, contains the seeds of technocratic, anti-populist liberalism. Were these two conflicting conceptions of progressivism at play within Lindeman's view of the world? Does Lindeman's commitment to the non-vocational ideal of adult education suggest that he did not really believe very strongly in the workplace as a developmental learning site?

After the débâcle of World War I a formidable liberal thinker like Walter Lippmann believed that the idea of an educative democracy (the centrality of virtue to political life) lay in ruins. This old ideal was obsolete and any notion of an "omnicompetent citizen" was part of the lost world of the "self-contained community." A complex industrial society now required expert officials who would carry on with their own idea of the "common interest" increasingly shaped by public opinion. Lippmann, in a word, bid adieu to virtue (Lasch 1991, pp. 364-65). How did Lindeman relate himself to an increasingly pessimistic liberalism now attuned to human suffering and despairing of the very idea of enlightened masses? Did Lindeman share in the "tragic ethos of much intellectual life in the 1930s" (Fox 1990, p. 324)?

How would we situate him in the debates of the 1930s and 1940s that ripsawed through American life and letters? The old progressive ideal of human society as boundless arena for the realization of human potential had collapsed on the battlefields of Europe in World War I. Beginning in the 1920s, American letters rekindled its interest in the subject of tragedy. Radicals in the 1930s and 1940s became more attuned to the limits on human development. There were many contending "social philosophies" vying for hegemony during these decades: democratic socialists, communists, populists, managerial (or administrative) liberals, pragmatic realists. How did Lindeman shape his thinking about adult education for social change within this fermenting intellectual milieu? It is not that Stewart does not contribute hints of answers to these questions. He does. But he chose not to situate Lindeman's thought securely and deeply within American intellectual culture of these formative decades. The latter task is necessary, I believe, to understand fully Lindeman's usability for the present.

Since Lindeman's death in 1953, American liberalism has become brutally managerial, technocratic, and anti-populist. Can Lindeman provide us with the intellectual and spiritual resources to help us build a post-liberal society? Was Lindeman captive to the increasingly discredited ideology of progress? Does he help us to ask the right questions of our current situation? To answer these

queries, we need to know more about how Lindeman thought about the ends of democracy—the kind of social institutions and cultural foundation necessary to realize democratic values. Without understanding Lindeman's progressive-liberal views of the problems and promise of American life, contemporary adult education practitioners will appropriate Lindeman's insights into group dynamics and democratic pedagogical process without any deep reflection upon the structural and personal preconditions for a revitalized cultural and public life.

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ERRATUM

The author of the review of John N. Miner, *The Grammar Schools of Medieval England: A.F. Leach in Historiographical Perspective*, published in our last issue (Vol. 3, no. 1) was *Joan Simon*. We apologize for the error.