



How part-time untrained teachers of adults learn to be effective teachers
by Suzanne Waring

A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Education
Montana State University
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Abstract:

In most communities adult education opportunities are available through local universities or colleges, community colleges, or public school adult education programs. In addition, business and industry, labor unions, government, park and recreation departments, museums, health care facilities, and libraries, to name a few, provide courses and training. Like no other time in history, adults are interested in lifelong learning and make use of these institutions and agencies for providing learning opportunities. As a result, many teachers of adults are needed.

Teachers of adults are knowledgeable in their subject field; therefore, that requirement has often been the sole criterion for an agency to hire a particular individual - often without a job interview. Furthermore, many individuals who teach for those agencies and institutions are untrained as teachers of adults. Nevertheless, many of them become effective teachers.

The purpose of this qualitative research, using the case study approach, was to discover how untrained, part-time teachers learn to become effective teachers. The data were gathered by surveying the supervisors and students of effective teachers and by surveying and interviewing the effective teachers themselves. First, it was determined that the characteristics and practices encouraged by the adult education field were the same as those stressed by not only the students of these effective teachers, but also the effective teachers themselves. Jointly, the teachers and students spoke of enthusiasm for teaching and for the subject, respect/concern for the students, and patience as outstanding teacher characteristics. The effective teachers displayed a self-assurance that provided a foundation for the outstanding characteristics and practices they utilized as they went about their teaching responsibilities. Effective teachers in this study often reflected on their teaching. They thought about their own effective teachers from high school and college and attempted to model after them. They reflected on their own experiences in the classroom to determine what techniques or procedures were or were not effective for providing adults with worthwhile learning experiences. This ability to reflect on their own experiences as students and to think and react to their own teaching may be a key to these teachers' effectiveness.

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of

Doctor of Education

MONTANA STATE UNIVERSITY--BOZEMAN
Bozeman, Montana

April 1996

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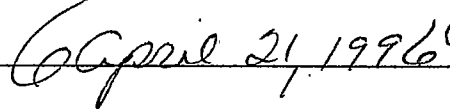
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ABSTRACT

In most communities adult education opportunities are available through local universities or colleges, community colleges, or public school adult education programs. In addition, business and industry, labor unions, government, park and recreation departments, museums, health care facilities, and libraries, to name a few, provide courses and training. Like no other time in history, adults are interested in lifelong learning and make use of these institutions and agencies for providing learning opportunities. As a result, many teachers of adults are needed.

Teachers of adults are knowledgeable in their subject field; therefore, that requirement has often been the sole criterion for an agency to hire a particular individual--often without a job interview. Furthermore, many individuals who teach for those agencies and institutions are untrained as teachers of adults. Nevertheless, many of them become effective teachers.

The purpose of this qualitative research, using the case study approach, was to discover how untrained, part-time teachers learn to become effective teachers. The data were gathered by surveying the supervisors and students of effective teachers and by surveying and interviewing the effective teachers themselves. First, it was determined that the characteristics and practices encouraged by the adult education field were the same as those stressed by not only the students of these effective teachers, but also the effective teachers themselves. Jointly, the teachers and students spoke of enthusiasm for teaching and for the subject, respect/concern for the students, and patience as outstanding teacher characteristics. The effective teachers displayed a self-assurance that provided a foundation for the outstanding characteristics and practices they utilized as they went about their teaching responsibilities.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Background of Problem

The 1990s may someday be labeled the beginning of the information explosion era. The speed of the accumulation of knowledge that has doubled every five years during the last decade will continue to escalate (Appleberry, 1994). A Massachusetts Institute of Technology study estimated that by the year 2002 information will double every 11 hours (Hornung, 1987). James B. Appleberry (1994), President of the American Association of State Colleges and Universities, wrote:

The discovery of new information gives individuals no choice if they want to keep up with their profession and at least be in a position to help control their own future. They will be required to commit themselves to a lifetime of study, learning and adaptation. (p. 2)

Furthermore, people are also living long healthy lives, offering expanded years to explore and learn new and varied ideas. Consequently, they seek out formal and informal learning opportunities from the time they leave secondary school to and throughout their retirement years. As a result, a demand exists for community institutions to offer learning opportunities in a wide range of topics--both practical and theoretical--with competent teachers guiding the learning experience.

As might be expected, universities and colleges, especially community colleges, are playing an integral role in providing individuals learning opportunities through adult, continuing education, and distance education programs, as well as through their standard offerings. At the same time, these institutions are also being affected by uncertain times with unstable fiscal resources, by a growth of new information to teach, and by ever-changing technology that also affects resources and knowledge. To allay these demands, colleges are hiring part-time faculty to complement their full-time tenured faculty to teach on campus, through distance-learning technology, and at distant sites.

Part-time faculty teach at lower wages and without benefits but, also, offer the adult students a broad range of engaging topics to explore and to integrate into their work and leisure lives. With special areas of expertise, part-time teachers

bring to the college a richness and diversity of experience that is usually not found in a full-time faculty. This is especially true in business and industry, where part-time faculty members can offer up-to-the-minute observations to students who will soon be competing for jobs in the marketplace. (Harris, 1980, p. 13)

As a benefit to the institution, "part-time faculty represent enrichment, diversity, scheduling flexibility, short-term contractual obligations, and a degree of economic savings" (Harris, 1980, p. 15). The percentage of all undergraduate instruction performed by part-time faculty and graduate assistants has risen from 30% to 40% from 1980 to 1990 (Harris, 1980; Nielsen & Polishook, 1990). Therefore, educational institutions, as well as students and teachers, have a strong interest in whether instruction taught by part-time teachers is beneficial (Sellen, 1980).

In addition to colleges, other institutions offer adult education and community education programs. Churches, hospitals, industry, business, and governmental agencies such as Extension Service, correctional institutions, libraries, union apprenticeship programs, and private technical and business schools cite education as an integral facet of their mission. They have recruited part-time and volunteer teachers for classes, seminars, and workshops for a number of years. However, with the growth of the adult population, information, and technology and with the emphasis on life-long learning, educational demands from the public are projected to increase the need for teachers of adults in the coming years.

It is a characteristic of the field that a very large percentage of the college and adult education part-time teachers have not received training through certified teacher preparation programs taught in colleges and universities. Untrained teachers enter the classroom with little or no assistance in classroom management, resource knowledge, human relations information, knowledge of the characteristics of the adult students, motivational techniques, or teaching methodologies. With content expertise in hand, untrained teachers attempt to plan a course, work with students, and evaluate their teaching experiences. In addition to the practical experience required of the adult educator, other enigmatic attributes such as "self-confidence, the desire to share his or her know-how, and the ability to relate easily to people" (Sellen, 1980, p. 26) are essential characteristics but may not be apparent to the individual who has not been educated to become a professional teacher.

How does the part-time, untrained teacher acquire the confidence and skills that lead to successful teaching? A November 26, 1993, *Great Falls Tribune* article tells of an award-winning, full-time teacher who attributed his teaching skills to those who worked with him. Curt Prchal said, "When I came here 10 years ago, I didn't know how to teach. . . . What I do know now is due to the faculty here" ("Honored Teacher Shares Accolades," 1993, p. 1B). A teacher who is working with others can learn from them (Brookfield, 1990). Whenever a problem arises, a full-time teacher can talk the situation over with a co-worker in the hall, over lunch, or in the shared office. However, part-time adult educators arrive at a designated place, teach the class, and leave with very little interaction between themselves and other teachers. Therefore, when an unsettling event or problem continues to be unresolved to the satisfaction of both the teacher and the students, part-time, untrained teachers will often have no one to ask for assistance. All too often, part-time teachers must rely upon themselves to resolve content, student, and organizational problems.

Adults enrolling in courses can be, and most likely are, highly diverse. They are at different stages of psychosocial and physical development, have varied ability to solve complex problem-solving strategies, and have had extremely different life experiences (Darkenwald & Merriam, 1982). Adults seek out learning opportunities for a wide range of reasons, frequently feel trepidation about the possibilities of their being able to learn something new, and have little awareness of how they learn best. Nevertheless, when adults seek out adult education opportunities, they are motivated to learn something specific. The successful adult education teacher can utilize this

motivation to meet those diverse students on their own levels by helping them feel successful and showing each of them how they can best learn the new skill or information. The demands on the untrained adult education teacher are significant, as significant as those for the trained secondary and primary teacher.

Statement of the Problem

Although many intricate and finite skills are essential for providing the successful learning experience, some untrained, part-time adult educators have become highly competent instructors. They receive high marks on student evaluations with students requesting them again as teachers. Yet very little information is available that explains how they have learned to develop effective teaching practices. Who are these teachers--how old are they and what is their gender? Why do they teach? What teaching characteristics do they bring to the classroom--those who seem to have learned to be excellent teachers on their own? Do they enter the classroom for the first time and have the skills to teach or do they learn by trial and error on their own? What is it that they do to organize and manage a classroom environment? How do they know what are the correct teacher behaviors for the adult classroom? Do they naturally like people? Do they like teaching and do they feel that they are good teachers? How do they view themselves as teachers and how do they view the student? Educational agencies, supervisors, and teachers themselves know little about how the untrained, part-time teacher of adults becomes effective.

Those selecting part-time staff use little scrutiny in determining who would be an effective adult educator. Because administrators know little about what criteria they want in their part-time teachers of adults, they simply do not interview, mentor, or provide professional development for their part-time teachers. "Across the nation schools are suffering from a lack of administrative expertise at the departmental and divisional level to attract, hire, and retain qualified part-time faculty members. Research must be carried out and dissemination models developed to assist colleges in making more rational efforts in this area" (Harris, 1980, p. 14). There is little doubt that schools and agencies, administrators, and teachers themselves would profit from knowing how untrained teachers learned on their own to provide an effective learning experience for the adult student.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to discover how a group of effective, untrained, part-time individuals became effective teachers. This information would be useful to those who want to teach adults or wish to improve their skills as teachers of adults, to those who hire teachers for adult education, and to those who provide professional development or mentor teachers of adults.

The major mission objective of most educational institutions is to provide the best educational experience possible for their student consumers. The core of that educational experience is the teacher's role assisting adults in their "lifelong process of continuing inquiry" (Knowles, 1980, p. 41). Because effective teachers are

enthusiastic, student oriented, knowledgeable of their subject area, creators of a positive learning environment, and have a clear, stimulating style in the classroom, they assist institutions in attaining their mission objectives.

Frequently expertise in the field is the sole criterion for selecting a teacher for adult education (Pratt, 1989, p. 78). As a result, students rarely complain that part-time, untrained teachers do not understand what they are teaching. Students do frequently complain, though, because of poor teaching skills. Instructional characteristics of teachers and the practices they utilize serve as the bread on which the content of the subject being taught is spread. Higher education institutions and adult education agencies need to have a knowledge base for understanding how part-time, untrained teachers of adults become effective on their own for hiring, mentoring, and professional development purposes.

Not only does the institution profit from knowing more about the characteristics and practices of effective part-time adult educators, but the untrained teacher also gains immeasurably. The untrained teacher needs the opportunity to reflect upon someone else's struggles, triumphs, and eventual satisfaction in facilitating adult learners. Knowing the results of this research can only further a person's mastery of teaching.

Research Questions

1. What did the demographics reveal about effective, untrained, part-time teachers of adults? Demographics included age, gender, type of agency the

teacher represented, teacher's educational background, number of months of teaching experience, and type of course taught by the teacher.

2. Did students identify the same characteristics of effective teachers as their untrained, part-time teachers of adults identify of themselves?
3. How did untrained, part-time teachers of adults learn to be effective? The *how* encompassed the events that taught a particular practice or characteristic, the persons who taught or modeled the characteristic or practice, and the particular skills or characteristics that were learned.

Significance of the Study

Colleges and universities report a large number of adult, non-traditional students who are enrolling in postsecondary education and are requesting that classes be offered at non-traditional times or in off-campus locations. Adults are also seeking out learning opportunities and training from many community organizations in addition to colleges and universities. Many such learning activities are planned and facilitated by a part-time adult educator who is often untrained in the craft of teaching.

Statistics emphasize the increasing importance of adult education to Americans. The National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) reported that 18,197,000 people or 11.8% of the population enrolled in at least one adult education course in 1978 (Darkenwald & Merriam, 1982, p. 119). In 1991, NCES (March 1992) verified that 57,391,000 or 32% of the population had taken part in

adult education. The number of people taking part in adult education increased by 20% in the years between 1978 and 1991. To look at it another way, if each additional educational activity averaged 20 people, almost 2,000,000 more adult education activities took place in 1991 than in 1978. Like no other time in history, there is a need for effective adult education teachers.

Adults have specific goals for enrolling in classes; consequently, they want and demand an effective learning experience. Apps (1981) wrote that returning students will not "put up with poor teaching" (p. 68).

If the instructor is not willing to change, they [returning students] will back up and they will do what they have to do and probably smile in the classroom--but eventually, if there are enough of them, they will start raising hell on campus. They won't go out trashing or anything like that. But they will go to the dean and the administrators and will insist that change be made. (p. 77)

However, when teachers organize materials and curriculum, plan carefully, and perceive the needs of the individual students because they are enthusiastic about teaching and their subject, the effect can be gratifying for the student, the teacher, and the institution.

The results of a study showing how untrained, part-time teachers of adults learned to be effective may be useful in the following ways:

1. To amplify the available body of literature addressing the essential characteristics and practices of the teacher of the adult learner.
2. To note characteristics of successful part-time teachers of adults.

3. To focus on how untrained, part-time adult educators became effective teachers (what they learned, how they learned it, when they learned it, and from whom they learned)-- an area with little research emphasis in the past.
4. To create a window on the learning activities going on outside the university or college. This is an area that has had limited exposure in research.

The results of this study could be useful to those who consider teaching as an opportunity to share their expertise with adult learners. The information will benefit those who are presently teaching adult education but are dissatisfied with their facilitating skills and are not certain how to redirect their efforts. For those who hire adult educators and supervise them, this information could be especially beneficial as criteria both for interviewing part-time, specialized teachers and for mentoring them toward greater success in the classroom either in professional development programs or on a one-on-one basis.

Definition of Terms

The following will serve as definitions of terms for this study:

Adult education is considered to be "a process whereby persons whose major social roles are characteristic of adult status undertake systematic and sustained learning activities for the purpose of bringing about changes in knowledge, attitudes, values, or skills" (Darkenwald & Merriam, 1982, p. 9).

Adult learner is a mature man or woman who takes responsibility for his or her own actions or decisions and has enrolled in a structured learning activity offered by higher education or community or nonschool education.

Classroom is "any organizational group learning situation, such as workshops, conferences, or training programs" (Darkenwald, 1989, p 67).

Effective teacher has the ability to critically reflect on and bring about the process and outcomes of facilitating learning that are worthwhile to learners.

Higher education is considered to be those institutions both public and private who engage in formal postsecondary education. Higher education offers both credit and non-credit workshops, seminars, and courses.

Part-time teachers are those teachers who are considered college adjunct or who teach in community or nonschool education without being employed as a teacher for more than ten hours a week.

Students are those who participate as learners in structured adult education workshops, seminars, and courses sponsored either by an entity of higher education or community or nonschool education.

Teachers are those instructors, mentors, facilitators, trainers, advisors, resource managers, or educators who help adults learn in a structured environment (Boshier, 1985; Galbraith, 1991a).

Assumptions

A study design was utilized to learn how untrained, part-time teachers of adults become effective. The following assumptions were made:

1. Some people may be "born teachers"; however, even they must train themselves to be effective teachers.
2. To train themselves, untrained, part-time teachers of adults are involved in a thought process determining how and what they teach.
3. Untrained, part-time teachers of adults contend with varying content topics, types and ages of students, teaching conditions, new information in their area of expertise, and varying methodologies. They can analyze how they learn to manage successfully those components of teaching.

Limitations

There were limitations to this study:

1. The usefulness of this type of study is dependent upon the proper selection of effective untrained, part-time teachers in adult education and their ability to analyze what makes them effective. As a result, findings and conclusions are of effective, untrained, part-time teachers of adults and will not be indicative of all teachers or of primary and secondary teachers or of trained teachers or of full-time teachers.

2. The study was dependent upon the skills of the researcher.

The validity and reliability of qualitative data depend to a great extent on the methodological skill, sensitivity, and integrity of the researcher. Systematic and rigorous observation involves far more than just being present and looking around. Skillful interviewing involves much more than just asking questions. (Patton, 1990, p. 11)

3. Because teachers are highly unique, effective characteristics or practices for one may not be beneficial to another. Furthermore, every group of adult students will bring together a unique classroom setting. With the learned information of this study, teachers may consider what elements can be utilized in their own teaching environment.

CHAPTER 2

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Agencies Involved in Adult Education

Adult education flourishes whether organized by the four-year college, the community college or at various community centers. Within college institutions, adult education courses are offered under the auspices of departments such as Extended Studies, Continuing Education, Distance Education, Outreach and the New College, which is the latest innovative idea of service to the nontraditional learner. Community colleges, in particular, have served as the major type of institution to offer non-credit courses. Community college offering of non-credit courses has increased from 2.6 million to 6.8 million in the last 20 years (Galbraith & Shedd, 1990, p. 6).

Faculty and staff of college and university systems have seen a dramatic increase in nontraditional students who are 25 years or older enroll in standard higher education programs. The number of nontraditional students has risen to 57% of all college students, and enrollments for this age group are projected to increase 16% (National Center for Educational Statistics, 1989-1990). These students have different needs from traditional students and are requesting a change in the college offering format, such as classes offered in the evenings, on the weekends, and at

off-campus locations (Apps, 1989). Colleges and universities may find resistance from the full-time faculty, who already have a full teaching load, to meet these particular needs of nontraditional students and, as a result, seek out part-time faculty to fulfill the new demands (Gappa & Leslie, 1993).

In some states, community colleges, technical institutes, and four-year colleges and universities are the primary deliverers of adult education while in other states public schools take that leadership role (Darkenwald & Merriam, 1982). In the adult education programs, sponsored by public school systems, part-time teachers share their knowledge with interested individuals in such topics as welding, small engine repair, wood carving, calligraphy, financial planning, and aerobics. Community education "identifies the communities' educational needs, assesses available community resources, and uses these resources to develop appropriate programs and activities to meet the identified needs" (Apps, 1989, p. 290).

In small, isolated communities, public school-based agencies often broker with distant colleges and universities to bring in college courses. For instance, in Lewistown, Montana, the community education supervisor brokers courses from six different colleges. Even though the course is credited through the distant college, it is frequently the responsibility of the community education supervisor to find qualified individuals who live in the community to teach the courses.

"In recent years, the line between educational institutions and other organizations has become increasingly blurred. Many different types of institutions now actively sponsor educational programs" (Calvert, 1985, p. 5). Quasi-educational

organizations have been dubbed by such names as "shadow education systems" or "nonschools" (Calvert, 1985, p. 1). These agencies can be divided into two areas: nonprofit, self-supporting agencies and those that are for profit. Nonprofit agencies include Cooperative Extension Service; religious institutions; health organizations; libraries and museums; community-based agencies, such as community park and recreation departments, Red Cross, and YWCA; voluntary organizations, such as League of Women Voters; professional organizations; worker education programs; and national adult education clearinghouses and conference providers. For-profit providers include correspondence schools; proprietary schools; private teachers and tutors; consultants and workshop providers, such as Career Track; business and industry-sponsored programs, such as Dale Carnegie; and conference centers (Apps, 1989).

In addition, business and industry have their own training organizations which have increased in the last 25 years. In 1994, the total training budget of organizations with 100 or more employees in the United States was at a \$50.6 billion all-time high. This had increased from \$40 billion in 1988 ("Training Budgets Edge Upward," 1994).

This growth has been so great that the business corporation has become one of the principal educative forces in contemporary society. This has occurred for a host of reasons, including rapid technical change, the increasing complexity of most jobs, a sharp increase in individual mobility both within and across occupational categories, the widespread recognition that "human resources" are a valuable asset that should be "developed" on a continuous basis and a plethora of governmental regulations that require corporations to provide training in a multitude of areas related to occupational safety, quality assurance, and compliance with various legislative mandates related to

environmental protection, consumer rights, affirmative action, and so on. (Darkenwald & Merriam, 1982, p. 170)

In a survey compiled by Wilson (June 1984) for The Learning Connection Network (LERN), an estimated 200,000 people were working as trainers in American industry. From 1988 to 1994 the total annual budget for trainer salaries in industries of 100 or more employees increased from \$27 billion to \$36 billion ("Training Budgets Edge Upward," 1994). "According to a recent survey conducted by the Bureau of Labor Statistics, 71% of all employers provided some kind of formal training to employees. The participation rate of large establishments was nearly 100% while 69% of smaller employers with less [sic] than 50 employees provided some formal training" (Knowledgework Solutions, 1995, p. 7).

The number and variety of quasi-educational organizations offering adult education is growing because people are seeking out learning opportunities. Many of the individuals who call themselves facilitators or trainers of these organizations are teachers of adults. Adult Education agencies are numerous and will continue to grow into the next century. The demand for effective programs and teachers can only increase.

The Adult Education Professional

Houle (1970) drew a pyramid as a graphic representation of adult educators. At the apex of the pyramid were the professional educators who focused on adult education. They worked in and directed adult education programs found throughout the country. These people commonly identified themselves with the agency for which

the adult education department was simply an appendage. They rarely thought of themselves as adult educators. They often moved into the directorship, developed adult education programs for a number of years, and then were promoted to another position within the parent agency. Except for the professional faculty of adult education in the education departments of graduate schools, this very important leadership aspect of Houle's adult education pyramid remained unstable (Houle, 1970).

Below the apex of the pyramid were the facilitators, trainers, and teachers who were face to face with the adult learner. They either taught in adult education full time or worked in the field part time as a way to supplement their income. Directors of adult education agencies were cognizant of individuals on campus or in the community with the special knowledge and expertise needed to teach courses, seminars, or workshops. Those fulfilling the responsibilities dictated by the mid-section of the pyramid were more likely to call themselves adult educators than those at the apex (Boshier, 1985).

At the bottom of the pyramid--in Houle's viewpoint, the largest section of adult educators--were the volunteers who spent hours working in the community in capacities such as those training Boy Scout leaders, preparing people to answer Crisis Hot Lines, or teaching individuals to be knowledgeable voters as representatives of the League of Women Voters (Houle, 1970).

For the purpose of this study, it was important to take a closer look at the middle section of Houle's pyramid which encompassed the large number of adult

education teachers who work part time. Many take on the extra work because they have young families and large mortgages or they may seek full-time employment and determine that part-time teaching at a college may provide the avenue leading to full-time employment (American Association for Adult and Continuing Education [AAACE], 1994; Boshier, 1985). They frequently hold other full-time positions but for several reasons--of which the joy of sharing their knowledge with others is predominant--they choose to extend the working day to facilitate an adult education learning activity. Those teaching adult education in public school programs are often K-12 teachers who are supplementing their income by moonlighting and have no training in methods of teaching adults (Grabowski, 1978). At the community college level, "part-time faculty" are of two groups. Some strive to become full-time faculty while others teach to enhance their full-time profession by becoming part-time members of academia (Hauff & Berdie, 1989).

Quanty (1976) drew a profile of the part-time teacher of Johnson County Community College from a survey that indicated that 56% were male and 97% were white with an average age of 33. Fifteen percent had advanced degrees while 54% held master's degrees. On the average they taught 1.5 classes per session while 60% taught only one class. Fifty-three percent had taught at the community college for fewer than two years, and 87% held outside jobs.

A survey done in Minnesota over ten years later indicated that females outnumbered males among part-time faculty members. The mean number of credits taught by an individual part-time faculty during a year was 22. Half of the part-time

faculty who responded to the survey worked only for the community college while one-fourth also taught elsewhere out of the community college system (Hauff & Berdie, 1989).

Colleges and universities reported 164% increase in part-time faculty between 1970 and 1988 while full-time faculty had increased 37% (Nielsen & Polishook, 1990). In 1987, 40% of all undergraduate classes were taught by part-time faculty (Nielsen & Polishook, 1990). The National Center for Educational Statistics reported that 47% of community colleges' faculty was part time (Ostertag, 1991). Yet eight years later, the American Association of Community Colleges (1995-1996) reported that 65% of the community college faculty was part time. In a study by Shedd and reported by Galbraith and Shedd (1990), over 53% of the part-time faculty had no training in adult education, 63% had no formal teacher training of any type, and 53% had less than five years teaching experience in higher education.

Because of the nature of adult education and the multitude of agencies who hire or seek volunteers for structured adult education learning activities, it is difficult to define the adult education teacher. A survey done by Hartman for the Learning Resources Network (LERN) described a typical adult educator as:

New to the position, has little or no course work in adult education, holds a degree in fields other than education, comes from the field outside of adult education, anticipates his/her next job to be outside adult education, is likely to leave it in five years, and works very hard. (Hartman, 1983-1984)

However, only 5% of the respondents were teachers while 50% were directors, presidents or deans of an adult education agency.

The variety of agencies offering adult education training and courses and the individuals with diverse backgrounds teaching adult education lead many individuals to identify with another profession other than adult education (Galbraith & Zelenak, 1989). They will identify with the entity for which they work such as the museum, extension service, or labor temple instead of calling themselves adult educators (Boshier, 1985, p. 7). As Boshier (1985) so vividly described, so many come "to adult education through the legendary back door [that] one wonders if there is a front entrance" (p. 5). As the result of a lack of a common identity, most teachers teaching adults do not strive to be trained in the methodologies of adult education (Merriam, 1988b, p. 32). Adult education associations often discover individuals performing similar jobs in different settings and unaware of being a part of a movement with its own theory and research literature (Boshier, 1985). Until these teachers begin to identify themselves as adult educators, the field of adult education will remain unstable (Brockett, 1991).

Across the broad spectrum of adult education are the individuals who volunteer their time to teach. These individuals have certain principles for sharing their time. The American Red Cross (1990) described volunteers as "individuals who reach out beyond the confines of their paid employment and of the normal responsibilities to contribute time and service to a not-for-profit cause in a belief that their activity is beneficial to others as well as satisfying to themselves" (p. 4). In a dissertation of a study of volunteers, Godbey (1958) summarized the volunteer:

He is better educated, he works as a professional or other vocation which in itself requires more education and probably provides better

income than the "average," and if he owns and occupies a home, it has more rooms than that of the "average" citizen. In age, however, he is about the same as other citizens, not being markedly older or younger These volunteers, it would seem, are persons with well-developed social consciences, and the training and means to do something about them. These volunteers have determined in large measure what is the desirable relation of themselves to the society of which they are part. This relationship includes service to others above and beyond minimum standards set by law and custom. (pp. 50-51, 61)

Houle's often-quoted pyramid has recently become distorted. Increasingly, women, who made up the majority in the legion of volunteers, are moving into the workforce leaving little time for filling the volunteer positions in the community. This one factor has decreased the size of the foundation of Houle's pyramid. . . . Furthermore, the escalation of the number of adult and continuing education courses offered as a result of interest in life-long learning activities has increased the number of individuals representing the mid-section of the pyramid and serving the adult learner directly, causing the center section of the pyramid to balloon outward. At the same time the number of professionals being trained, teaching in, and directing adult and continuing education programs has increased throughout the country (Boshier, 1985). Simply checking the classified ads in *The Chronicle for Higher Education* and one's local newspaper shows an increase in positions calling for adult education directors. Houle's pyramid now has the pumpkin-shaped appearance.

The Adult Education Teacher

Are good teachers born or made? Eble (1977) titled his book *The Craft of Teaching* because, "I was endorsing a belief that in anything we do well, we are both born and made. More made, generally, I think than we allow" (p. 5).

Other experts agree with Eble. Roueche and Baker (1986) studied the characteristics of good teachers and identified predominate attributes in *Profiling Excellence in America's Schools*. They asserted, "We contend that anyone with reasonable intelligence who wants to become a good or better teacher can cultivate the attributes that characterize the excellent teacher" (p. 133). After reviewing research on effects of teacher behavior on student achievement, Brophy and Good (1986), however, were not so quick to agree. They concluded that even though most adults could survive in the classroom, not all can be effective teachers.

Even trained and experienced teachers vary widely in how they organize the classroom and present instruction. Specifically, they differ in several respects: the expectations and achievement objectives they hold for themselves, their classes, and individual students, how they select and design academic tasks, and how actively they instruct and communicate with students about academic tasks. Those who do these things successfully produce significantly more achievement than those who do not, but doing them successfully demands a blend of knowledge, energy, motivation, and communication and decision-making skills that many teachers, let alone ordinary adults, do not possess. (Brophy & Good, 1986, p. 370)

Thomas and Ferguson (1987) concurred that by advantage of birth and childhood environment, some people seem to have natural qualities toward teaching; however, a person will not become an outstanding teacher inherently. Lowman (1984) wrote:

College teachers' effectiveness is . . . a function of both personal and environmental characteristics. Some are more naturally skilled than others, but conditions affect the way any instructor's skill is applied. The key issue is, of course, the *relative* contribution of the individual skill and institutional support to the quality of teaching (p. 211).

Thomas and Ferguson (1987) believed, "Excellent teachers have always worked systematically to acquire and perfect the skills that made them outstanding. Quality performance in any endeavor takes conscientious and persistent honing" (p. 185).

From this discussion the conclusion might be drawn that some teachers are naturally gifted in the classroom while there might be a few who would find teaching unnatural and unattractive. For most, however, teaching--in fact, effective teaching--can be attainable. Those who seek to teach must put forth energy, develop a sense of perception of what works well, and seek to learn even though perfection is never fully attained. To Barer-Stein (1994) the continual act of seeking to perfect teaching makes it a craft.

One aspect of honing those practices and characteristics might be for a person to analyze his or her philosophy for teaching. All teachers have a working philosophy that serves as a basis for how they function as teachers. Regardless of whether or not they have written down or thought through this philosophy, it governs their attitudes and behaviors as teachers (Apps, 1981). A teacher's philosophy directs his or her beliefs about the nature of the learner, the purpose of the curriculum, the role of the teacher, and the mission of education (Conti, 1990). In other words, it directs all of the practices of teachers, including those teachers who teach adults in various community-based agencies.

The natural qualities that teachers bring to the classroom, the willingness to put forth energy to improve their ability to teach, and the awareness of a philosophy that drives feelings about teaching and education bind together to make teachers what they are.

Characteristics and Practices of Effective Teachers

This review of literature revealed that experts have many different models charting teaching characteristics essential for an effective learning experience for students enrolled in postsecondary education, as well as community and nonschool education. Sherman, Armistead, Fowler, Berksdale, and Reif (1987) used the words "enthusiasm," "clarity," "stimulation," "love of knowledge," and "preparation/organization." Alciatore and Alciatore (1979) wrote of interest in students, good personality, interest in subject matter, ability to make the subject interesting, and objectivity in presenting subject matter and dealing with students. Feldman (1976) cited these characteristics: ability to stimulate interest in the topic, enthusiasm, knowledge of subject taught, and preparation for and organization of the subject matter. Hoffman (1963) listed teacher's attitude toward students; presentation skills; personal characteristics and general worthiness; knowledge of subject; stimulation of thought and interest; positive attitude toward the subject, tests, and grading; and creation of a positive classroom climate. It is very difficult to determine effectiveness because

what constitutes effective instruction (even if attention is restricted to achievement as the outcome of interest) varies with context. What

appears to be just the right amount of demandingness (or structuring of content, or praise, etc.) for one class might be too much for a second class but not enough for a third class. Even within the same class, what constitutes effective instruction will vary according to subject matter, group size, and the specific instruction objectives being pursued. (Brophy & Good, 1986, p. 370)

However, an attempt must be pursued to discover effective practices for adults in the classroom if the knowledge of effective practices utilized by the adult education teacher is to grow.

Whether teachers are born with the qualities to teach and/or learn those skills through a childhood environment or whether they strive for that result through class-by-class examination of what is effective and what is not, an examination of the literature reveals that the characteristics and practices of effective teachers characteristics can be grouped into the following six areas: (a) an enthusiasm about the subject and about teaching, (b) a capability to show concern for students as learners and respect them as adults, (c) the skill to create a positive learning environment, (d) an ownership of knowledge of the subject and methodologies for teaching that particular subject, (e) the incentive to arrive prepared and organized for teaching responsibilities, and (f) an ability to be clear and stimulating in their classroom style. These terms are mere guideposts to guide the individual teacher's reflection as every situation has different learners, unique context, and specific course content to be introduced.

Effective Teachers Are Enthusiastic
About the Subject and Teaching

Enthusiasm for the opportunity to teach, to work with students, and to facilitate learning on a particular subject is a vitally important characteristic of an effective teacher (Alciatoire & Alciatoire, 1979; Apps, 1981; Eble, 1977; Feldman, 1976; McKeachie, 1986; Sherman et al., 1987). A respondent to Thomas and Ferguson's study of effective teachers wrote of an English teacher:

Brother Gerard . . . had an effect on my life because of his love and enthusiasm for his subject matter and for being a teacher. I shall never forget the day he recited word for word the poem "Lady of the Lake." His enthusiasm made me enjoy literature and also encouraged me to become a teacher. (Thomas & Ferguson, 1986, p. 168)

When a teacher is enthusiastic, the students quickly detect that enthusiasm, and whether or not the student delves into the subject enough to want to follow in the teacher's footsteps, the teacher's enthusiasm makes the subject more palatable for courses that are required and more enjoyable for courses that have been taken by students wanting increased skills and knowledge.

Lowman (1984) pointed out that "the best way to keep students from being bored by a subject is to show them that you are not bored with it" (p. 74). Students used the words "dedication," "devotion," "enthusiasm," "fervor," and "love" to describe excellent teachers' attitude toward the subject and teaching in a study by Hoffman (1963). Responses to the survey relayed that teachers' enthusiasm for their subject often became infectious and "led to important changes in the student's life as a choice of major, a choice of vocation, a resolve to go on for graduate work, and a lasting intellectual concern with a particular field of knowledge" (Hoffman, 1963,

p. 23). Wlodkowski (1991) pointed out that teachers who "treat students with a normal positive expectation that they will learn" and who "make the learning worthy of adult learners' choice" (p.100) can motivate students to be also enthusiastic about the subject.

Literature has supported the view that enthusiasm can be detected by specific visually identified behaviors. Collins (1978) determined the following behaviors exude enthusiasm: rapid and excited vocal delivery, eye movement, gestures, movement, surprised facial expressions, word selection, acceptance of ideas and feelings, and explosive and exuberant energy level. Bettencourt, Gillett, Gall, and Hull (1983) utilized nearly the same terminology by determining that enthusiasm could be identified by dancing, wide open eyes; rapid, uplifting, varied vocal delivery; ready, animated acceptance of ideas and feelings; emotive facial expressions; selection of varied words; and exuberant overall energy level. Results of a study by Bettencourt et al. (1983) showed that training could increase teacher enthusiasm in the classroom and that elementary children were better at staying on task with a teacher who displayed enthusiastic behaviors (p. 437).

An outcome of a study of Native American learners' reflections on teacher actions revealed that the teacher's smile influenced learners (Conti & Fellenz, 1988):

Unlike smiles in the movie industry or the political arena, students know the true smile from a teacher cannot be fabricated. They recognize good teachers by "that smilish look on his face." They know that "good ones smile a lot" and that there is a lot of meaning and feeling in a smile. From these expressions they can sense that "she made me feel welcome. She [radiated] a genuine smile." (Conti & Fellenz, 1988, p. 2)

Enthusiastic teachers are motivated, and motivated teachers seem to have a "zest for life" (Conti & Fellenz, 1988, p. 2). They are role models to students by being goal oriented in their own lives with a commitment to their careers (Thomas & Ferguson, 1987) and willing to reveal a human side to adult students (Galbraith, 1991b). Enthusiastic teachers expect much from their students, are accessible outside the classroom, find satisfaction in their profession when they see their students learn, and, because of the time they spend on their profession, see beyond the units they teach to the "big picture." (Pratt, 1989 p. 80; Thomas & Ferguson, 1987, p. 162).

Effective Teachers Show Concern for
Students as Learners and Respect
Them as Adults

A review of literature revealed several components making up the teaching characteristic of being student-oriented. To adult students, teachers must be objective (Apps, 1981; Thomas & Ferguson, 1987) and reasonable (Eble, 1977): listen actively (Thomas & Ferguson, 1987); have good rapport with students (McKeachie, 1978; Thomas & Ferguson, 1987); show empathy (Hoffman, 1963; Thomas & Ferguson, 1987) and understanding (Draves, 1984); encourage mutual respect (Brookfield, 1986); treat students as individuals (Hoffman, 1963); show a willingness to be warm, loving, caring and flexible enough to accept others (Tough, 1979); and show respect for others' self-worth (Brookfield, 1986). In fact, concerned teachers pay close attention to increasing the adult student's self-worth (Brookfield, 1986).

From a practical point of view, suggested good teaching practices for relating to students are knowing students' names, keeping students informed of their progress,

helping students one on one, grading and returning papers promptly, and telling students when they have done well (McKeachie, 1986). Teachers should encourage students' questions and viewpoints, should be sensitive to how students feel about the material or its presentation, and should encourage students to be creative and independent in dealing with material (Lowman, 1984). Large classes and other variables can hinder the teachers' attempts in these basic components of respect for students; however, it is important for teachers to take advantage of every opportunity to show students that they care about them as people and as students (Findley, 1995).

An aspect of relating to students is to understand why adults engage in adult learning activities. Brookfield (1986) suggested "that adults learn throughout their developmental stages of adulthood in response to life crises, for the innate joy of learning, and for specific task purposes" (p. 7). They do not need to be convinced of the reality of lifelong learning. Often adults look to adult education for the following reasons: (a) when some significant problem has developed, such as a job change, retirement or loss; (b) when there is a need for a positive change agent such as following a marriage, divorce, or death of loved one; (c) when the individual strives toward some personal critical reflection to problems; and (d) because there is a social acceptableness for different ethnicities to take part in formal learning activities (Apps, 1981; Ewert, 1994). Houle (1961) submitted that adult learners become involved in continuing education for three reasons: (a) They seek to gather knowledge for a specific goal; (b) they pursue education for social reasons unrelated

to objectives of the learning activity; and (c) they strive to learn for the sake of learning regardless of whether it could be applied to immediate life activities.

Concerned teachers understand that adult learners often arrive at the learning site with trepidation. Daloz (1986) believed:

Teachers of adults do well to recognize the anxiety experienced by many beginning students. It is often masked as bravado or scorn, but underneath often lies a deep uncertainty--about the ability to succeed "late in life," about losing face before other students or teachers half their age, about working in sometimes starkly unfamiliar realms.
(p. 31)

Will they embarrass themselves, they wonder. Wlodkowski (1991) encouraged teachers to tell students that they can be successful learners. If students do not expect success or experience success, their motivation to learn will be highly affected.

Many adult students come to the learning experience with the I-want-to-learn-about-this-but-I-may-be-too-old-and-too-dumb anxious feeling. This attitude is more common than the exception.

They [students] speak about getting chills, about their hair standing up on the back of their necks, or about their pulse racing with excitement. They talk about feeling flushed with anger or hot with embarrassment, or they describe a painful knot of anxiety forming inside their stomachs as they see themselves falling short of self-imposed or teacher-prescribed standards. Learning is rarely experienced in an emotionally denuded, anodyne way. (Brookfield, 1990, p. 46)

Especially when adults are learning difficult knowledge and skills, they may feel a threat to their self-esteem, and some become angry and resentful (Brookfield, 1990). Most adults cover their fears well, but almost all of them have had some kind of "put down" as to their ability to learn, resulting in their hesitancy to step forward in a formal learning experience. Brookfield (1990) called this the Impostor Syndrome as

