

Chapter 3

Some Foundational Aspects of Andragogy's History

ABSTRACT

This chapter offers a vigorous clash for and against andragogy within this time frame but reaching back to ancient roots informing the development of andragogical ideas and connecting with the very beginning of the 21st century. Savicevic from Serbia provided a critical consideration of andragogical concepts in 10 European countries – five Western and five Eastern. Knowles clearly articulates in one place his six assumptions and eight process elements of andragogy. Poggeler from Germany listed 10 trends, which he hoped would be beneficial in future European and USA research. Welton launched a very vigorous accusation against Knowles and andragogy that declares their abandonment of adult education's vital role in fostering democratic action. Draper traced the metamorphosis of andragogy as humane treatment of adult learners. Savicevic's comprehensive andragogy book includes thirty of his works over 26 years and views andragogy as a fairly independent scientific discipline.

INTRODUCTION

This decade presents a clash of forces for and against Andragogy. Savicevic (1991) provided some foundations of andragogical concepts stemming from ten European countries. The comparison of these showed common roots in which he aligned himself with establishing the origin and development of andragogy as a discipline focused on adult learning and education in all its forms of expression. Pratt (1993) perceived andragogy as lacking what he seemed to view as fulfilling a promise of being a panacea for adult education. Knowles (1995) clearly articulates in one place his six assumptions and eight process elements of andragogy. Welton (1995) leveled a most vigorous accusation against Knowles and andragogy that declares their abandonment of adult education's once vital role in fostering democratic social action. However, Houle (1996) claimed that Knowles' andragogy remains the most learner-centered patterns of adult education programming. Billington (1998) found that presence of the andragogical process of SDL helped learners grow. Nonetheless, the absence of it, contributed to learners regressing. Draper (1998) researched the metamorphosis of andragogy as humane treatment of adult learners, Baden (1998)

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applied andragogy to successfully administer twenty-seven associations. Savicevic (1999b) speculated that Knowles made a number of mistakes on andragogy, so considered him inconsistent. Johnson (2000) asserted that andragogy could qualify as a theory or emergent theory of adult learning.

NARRATIVE

Era # 8: Scientific Foundation of Andragogy Being Established Amid Skepticism and Misunderstanding (1991-1995)

Savicevic (1991) provided a critical consideration of andragogical concepts in ten European Countries – five western (German, French, Dutch, British, Finnish), and five eastern (Soviet, Czech-Slovak, Polish, Hungarian, Yugoslav). This comparison showed common roots but results in five varying schools of thought: (a) Whether andragogy is parallel to or subsumed under pedagogy in the general science of education; (b) Whether agology (instead of andragogy) is understood as a sort of integrative science which not only studied the process of education and learning but also other forms of guidance and orientation; (c) whether andragogy prescribes how teachers and students should behave in educational and learning situations; (d) the possibility of founding andragogy as a science is refuted; and, (e) that endeavors have been made to found andragogy as a fairly independent scientific discipline. Moreover, he clearly aligned himself with the fifth school of thought in that the kind of research he was conducting aims toward establishing the origin and development of andragogy as a discipline, where the focus is the study of education and learning of adults in all its forms of expression.

Savicevic (1991) also suggested that Socrates, Plato, Aristotle, the Sophists, Ancient Rome, and the epochs of humanism and the renaissance, all reflect thoughts and views about the need of learning throughout life, about the particularities and manners of acquiring knowledge in different phases of life, and about the moral and aesthetic impact. He also credited J. A. Comenius in the seventeenth century with being regarded as the founder of andragogy with his primary wish to provide comprehensive education and learning for one and all to the full degree of humaneness, while urging the establishment of special institutions, forms, means, methods and teachers for work with adults. In addition, he theorized that the institutional basis for adult education actually formed in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries in Britain and other countries with the emergence of Mechanics' Institutes, workers' colleges & educational associations, university extensions, board schools for adult instruction, correspondence education, and people's universities.

At this time, there was again strong criticism of American andragogy, and that coming from Australia, primarily Candy (1991). At that time Knowles articulated andragogy, self-expression and personal development were in vogue. Thus, self-directed learning and andragogy was gaining some prominence in becoming known as autonomous learning.

In addition, a fourth Doctoral Dissertation focusing on Malcolm Knowles involvement in andragogy was completed. Muller (1992), misinterpreted Knowles in that she critiqued his andragogical ideas from the philosophical perspective of progressivism rather than understanding his concept of andragogy from his predominately humanistic philosophical perspective.

Houle (1992) emphasized the impact of Knowles on American andragogy, and how he worked this out in practice, especially in non-school settings and the workplace. He went on to indicate that scholars and theorists may find great value in Knowles' discussion of the development of learning theories in

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