BOOK REVIEWS

Dame, F.W. (1997). *Jean-Jacques Rousseau on adult education and revolution: Paradigma of radical, pedagogical thoughts.* Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang Publishers, 236 pp., (Softcover).

As an adult educator, my curiosity was piqued when I was presented with the title *Jean Jacques Rousseau on Adult Education and Revolution.* However after having read the text, the subtitle reflects a more accurate description of the book's contents. While those who might be looking for a readable overview of the works of Jean Jacques Rousseau, his pedagogical perspective on education, and his political leanings will be satisfied; those who have more than a passing interest in adult education (andragogy) will be disappointed.

Much of the book (virtually three quarters) is devoted to summarizing Rousseau's formative works and addressing concepts and terminology in extensive detail. I was halfway into the book before I got to the crux of adult education and even then Dame only refers to two adult educators: Paulo Freire and Ivan Illich. While there is solid ground for linking Rousseau and Freire, Illich has generally not been part of the adult education tradition. Nor does Dame address any of the literature on adult education other than *Pedagogy of the Oppressed.*

While the influence of Rousseau on the field of education cannot be denied, to consider him a forefather of adult education is a bit of an exaggeration. Unfortunately, Dame's selection of the similarities between Rousseau's philosophy and adult education do not compensate for the differences. Most blatant of all is that from the book's inception, the author attempts to rationalize Rousseau's belief in the inferiority of women by stating that if he lived in this century, he would surely think differently. That's a bit of an assumption. Even the 18th century had its share of progressive thinkers; Rousseau did not have to choose a stereotypic stance. In light of this reviewer's gender, the request to engage in the "willing suspension of disbelief" is a leap of faith. After all, one of the primary tenets of adult education is equality.

Other differences revolve around man's original state which, for Rousseau, is in nature. Adult education does not have these romantic leanings. While it is surely about finding oneself, it is not necessarily in nature, and while there is definitely a reflective component to adult education (that perhaps the isolation of nature can provide), it is not Walden. Adult education encourages interrelationships not isolation. Rousseau's individualistic position is not compatible with seeing man as a social being. While individual freedom is to be desired, it is not at the expense of social interraction.

Rousseau approaches adult education from a deficit perspective – what is called "negative education." The Rousseauian adult must "unlearn many prejudices, biases, and habits taught him by the social order" (p. 123). While much of adult learning may involve unfreezing certain learned behaviors and attitudes, it is not necessarily the norm. Not everyone engages in lifelong learning from a deficit perspective, nor are they necessarily made so by the state as Rousseau would suggest. People have a desire for fulfillment, for growth, and for development; they are not inherently corrupt, deficient, or repressed.

To do him justice, Dame makes some astute linkages. Rousseau's education is one that raises political awareness. For him education is a process of revolution and revolution is seen as education. This is true to the roots of adult education which lie in its mission for social change. Adult education is about challenging the status quo, not maintaining it. Power structures tend to be oppressive versus liberating and civil disobedience is to be encouraged. Dame very appropriately chastises 20th century practice that has seen the dissolution of our collective social conscience.

Similarly, there can be no arguing about the Rousseauian sense of the egalitarian nature of the student-teacher relationship in adult education. As an aside, however, Dame's use of the term "educatee" as opposed to "learner" still has overtones of pedagogy. Other commonalities include the fact that adult education is voluntary, is life and role related, must have relevance to the adult's world, and must be useful.

Current thought would also tend to share Rousseau's sentiment that "the State is charged with the responsibility of guaranteeing an

education for the attainment of these goals to all of its citizens" (p. 138). The goals are the pursuit of truth and knowledge. In other words, State involvement should not simply stop at training aimed at the acquisition of job skills, but rather the State must advocate for lifelong education as a right in that it improves collective life. The implied caveat, however, is that there needs to be a balancing of both individual and state interests.

Overall, Dame attempts to demonstrate that Rousseau's ideas are not outdated and that he not be excluded from the field of adult education. While we can always do with additional insights into the philosophy of adult education, and while Rousseau has leanings in the right direction, so do many others. It is difficult, however, to see him as a forefather of the movement.

Dame's central thesis is that Rousseau's "educational philosophy will enable us to receive worthwhile insights in educating adults to become contributing members of society and to change society for the better" (p. 27). In reality, this is likely the goal of all education adult or otherwise. If one asks does the book contribute to the literature on adult education, the answer would have to be "not particularly." If, however, one is looking for a primer on the educational and political philosophies of Jean Jacques Rousseau with some allusion to revolution, the reading time will have not been misspent.

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Jipson, J. & Paley, N. (Eds.). (1997). *Daredevil research: Recreating analytic practice*. New York: Peter Lang Publishing, Inc., 232 pp. (Softcover).

If one is to be titillated by provocative titles, Jipson and Paley's book certainly fulfills its goal. Daredevil research suggests to the reader some notion of risk and even, perchance, something new! Suffice to say "you can't tell a book by it's title!" What falls between the covers is another matter. This recent publication from the Peter Lang