

# ADULT DEVELOPMENTS

The Bulletin of the  
**SOCIETY FOR RESEARCH IN ADULT  
 DEVELOPMENT**

Spring 2000 (Vol. 9, No. 1)

## The Upcoming 15th Annual Adult Development Symposium

Theme: Adult Development and  
 Transformative, Humanistic  
 Education  
 for the Next Millennium

Presented by  
 The Society for Research in Adult  
 Development and  
 The Straus Thinking and Learning  
 Center  
 at Pace University

in collaboration with  
 Teachers College, Columbia University,  
 and the  
 Gallatin School of Individualized  
 Study at  
 New York University

Friday through Sunday, June 23-25,  
 2000  
 Pace Plaza Campus, New York City

The 15th annual Symposium of the Society for Research in Adult Development (SRAD) will be held Friday through Sunday, June 23 through 25, at the Pace Plaza Campus of Pace University in New York City. Each year, researchers, practitioners, and students of adult development meet at the SRAD symposium to explore various topics in the field of positive adult development from an interdisciplinary perspective.

Positive adult development refers to development starting in late adolescence and continuing throughout life. The focus is on the changes and expanded capabilities that improve the

quality of life of individuals as they adapt to the challenges of adulthood's ages and stages. This emphasis is in contrast to views and studies which emphasize decline, as studied in gerontology.

Typically at the symposium, investigators present data and theories—as well as applications—on a variety of topics

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## The Unfolding Self-Portrait: Adult Development through Autobiography

**By Irene E. Karpiak**

*Editor's note: Irene Karpiak, Ph.D., is Assistant Professor, Educational Leadership and Policy Studies, at the University of Oklahoma in Norman. This paper was presented at the 1999 SRAD Symposium.*

### Looking Back to Find the Pattern

Everyone has a story to tell. Each recounting of an episode in our life translates it into a story in which each and other play a part (Randall, 1995). An event on the way home from work is detailed; a betrayal of a friend is described. In our story, characters emerge as though on a stage, each carrying his or her own part, "She said 'no,' and then I left." But when we begin the task of transforming our life into text—of writing our story—we

move slightly out of the frame of a single scene and become a witness to the wider theater of our life. We begin to see these past scenes in a different light, as well as the pattern that connects them. We look back, and we look ahead, and in this sense, we become both actor and director to our part in the rest of our life.

Autobiography is a "self-portrait" (Howarth, 1980). And like the authors who in the course of writing reflect back over their

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### **Upcoming Symposium...**

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relating to positive adult development from many traditions and points-of-view, often from an interdisciplinary perspective. Among the subjects addressed by members and participants are life periods, seasons, stages, and levels; whole-life approaches; consciousness; clinical development; adult attachment; careers; and expertise, wisdom, and life span.

Additional topics concern social, moral, ethical, ego, artistic, institutional, organizational, political, and family issues as well as epistemology and mathematical-scientific development. The symposium includes presentations of papers selected for their diversity and applicability, poster sessions, work and discussion groups that apply research and theory to current problems, and plenary sessions. SRAD works hard to create opportunities for stimulating, friendly, and respectful conversations and interchanges on adult development.

### **The Keynote and Plenary Speakers**

This year's keynote speaker—on Friday at the Symposium's official start—will be Dr. John Broughton of Teachers College, Columbia University. His presentation is entitled, "Work and Violence in the Transition from Youth to Adulthood."

The plenary speaker on Saturday will be Dr. Rachel Lauer, director of the Straus Thinking and Learning Center at Pace University. Her topic is "New Ways To Organize Concepts and Teaching of Adult Development." Sunday's plenary speaker is Dr. Victoria Marsick of Teachers College, Columbia University. Her topic is "Facilitating Learning Organizations."

Traditionally, SRAD holds a number of all-day preconference workshops on Friday, before the official opening of the Symposium. This year there are five workshops.

Michael Commons will present a workshop on "Scoring and Understanding of Perspective-Taking Skills in a Variety of Relationships." Susanne Cook-Greuter will present one on "The Leadership Maturity Framework as a Basis for Change Work with Individuals and Teams." Carl Goldberg will conduct a workshop on "Learning Basic Emotional Communication," and Albert Erdynast will conduct one on

"Designing Moral and Ethical Development Problems and Analyzing Collected Data." Also, Otto Laske will have a workshop on "Using the Developmental Structure/Process Tool (DSPT)."

A detailed program of Symposium presentations and sessions will be available later in the spring. Please see the advance registration form at the end of this *Bulletin*.

Pace University's Plaza Campus is in lower Manhattan, not far from the World Trade Center. Hotels are nearby, and dorm space will be available.

### **The Unfolding Self-Portrait...**

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life, adults who undertake this task embark on a process of connecting events and finding their larger meaning. It is a process that opens the possibility of a fuller understanding of themselves and the world around them. In this paper I describe the work I have been doing with adults who have been "writing their life" in several courses on adult learning and development that I teach. I will outline the autobiographical method and explore the potential of autobiography as a method for promoting positive adult development.

### **Where Paths of Development, Learning, and Story Converge**

The following theoretical propositions concerning adult development and adult learning underlie my work of autobiography as an educational method:

- Adults have the capacity to continue to develop psychologically through the lifespan. The individual never *is* but is always *becoming* his or her self (Jung, 1954, 1966).
- Development is directed towards greater inclusiveness, complexity, and coherence of personality (Mezirow, 1991; Kegan, 1982). Jung (1954; 1966) described this process as "individuation"—becoming all that one is capable of becoming, and Erikson (1980) called it coming into "integrity"—coming to terms with our life.
- Adults (as well as many adolescents) have the capacity to undertake the sort of transformative learning that permits a more inclusive, differentiated, and integrated view of themselves and the world (Mezirow, 1991; Tennant & Pogson, 1995).
- Autobiography (self-life-writing) requires one to take a distance with regard to oneself, to draw the meaning from one's life (Gusdorf, 1980), to reconstruct the unity of a life across time (Gusdorf, 1980), and find the "larger story" that distinguishes one's life from that of another (Houston, 1987).
- Learning occurs through the act of finding the pattern or meaning in one's life. Having stepped back and observed, the individual knows something now that was not known before (Olney, 1980).

#### **An Accidental Tourist Touches upon a Minefield— And A Treasure Trove**

I had not envisioned the power of autobiography when I first began to incorporate it into my graduate class on adult learning and development. Students were provided with simple guidelines for writing their stories. I encouraged them to avoid organizing their work as a simple chronology of events, and rather, to pay attention to any metaphor or pattern that emerged as they wrote each successive chapter. The following are illustrations of the many titles around which the stories became organized:

- Decade by Decade: Learning To Be in Charge of My Own Plot
- Moments of Loss: A Lifetime of Change
- "Fitting in:" Becoming Who I Want to Be
- The Himalayas to Halifax...and Beyond
- Friends: The Thread of Life

In reading their stories I was struck by the power of their writing. I had not expected such an expressive and reflective effort, this disposition to invest themselves so deeply, or their willingness to reveal the personal and often painful details of their lives. Neither had I imagined that this group of outwardly stable professionals could have led such varied, turbulent, self-creative, and multifaceted lives. These students wrote with emotion, sensitivity, and humor. At times, I was moved to tears by the power and pain of their lives. I now

could appreciate Sissela Bok's (1984) comment that when an individual dies, a piece of a library burns down.

#### **Follow-up Research with Those Who Had Written**

Six months following the original autobiographical writing, I invited the students to resubmit their stories and to participate in the follow-up research. Fifteen students, along with their stories, became part of this study. Through taped interviews, I explored with them the process of writing and the effects of having written.

#### **"Closing the Loop; and Ready for the Next"**

Writers expressed in various and personal ways a sense of having to look back over their lives and come to a reckoning with their past. As one expressed it, "I needed to look at my life in order to move forward." Another described the writing as, "A process of unraveling, pulling [my life] in a bunch of pieces and then putting it back together." For several, writing offered the opportunity for closure of painful events, and of "reexperiencing the feeling of an earlier time." Several observed that they could now see the roles they had unwittingly played in their life events. One summed up, "It made me reflect on the things that I went through, the life experiences that I went through, over about a 35-year period of time, and how I have developed over that period."

#### **"I Went through This"**

Looking back over their lives permitted these writers to validate their lives and to honor what they had undergone, learned, and become. As one commented, "I learned about myself—that I have a very rich life, which I never ever realized." For some, reflecting on their accomplishments gave them the strength to continue and to feel more able to handle events and situations that arise. As one affirmed, "I think in a way you reflect on your accomplishments; and it gives you the courage to go on to more learning. I am going to get started on graduate work." And another summed up, "Where I have had the most difficult times is where I've grown."

#### **Seeing the Pattern and the Wider Frame**

"Only looking back is there a pattern" (Erdrich, 1988, p. 33). As writers wrote, patterns emerged through connections and were often expressed through metaphors—"the colors of my life" or "moving from puppet to dancer." Writers were able to see not only their lives within its wider frame, but also the wider societal frame reflected within their lives. For instance, several commented that they could see a pattern in their responses to events and that these had created problems. But they could also see that their lives were a part of what society goes through. As one commented, "Society is exactly the same—going through transition periods." Olney (1980) has emphasized that this pattern finding is what the writer supplies and through this process extends the knowledge that he or she had before "to include the new, connected item or experience and the relation between old and new" (p. 31). And finally, one woman described her perspective on life's continuing mystery: "I think [life] is almost a book without end, because it is constantly being written. When you turn the page, you don't know quite what's

going to happen. What is the next chapter heading? Where is the story going to go?"

### Discussion of the Themes

The students' life experiences, expressed in both their writing and in their subsequent interviews, support the notion of autobiography as a potentially powerful tool and opportunity for transformative learning and development. Many of the students demonstrated that in the course of writing, they momentarily stepped outside of their normal self, and from that vantage point had taken on the role of critic, reviewer, and thoughtful self. In the course of the interview, they described their own experiences of conscious self-reflection and even deep critical appraisal of themselves and their lives. They highlighted events that had shaped their lives, as well as their own deliberate decisions and unconscious motives that had affected the course of their lives. This is an essential feature of autobiography and of transformative learning, and it is consistent with Gusdorf's (1980) observation that "autobiography is a second reading of experience, and it is truer than the first because it adds to experience itself consciousness of it" (p. 38).

Consistent with adult development theory, most of the students showed increased self-knowledge, self-acceptance, and appreciation of their uniqueness of a life that was their *own*. Several showed some evidence of having progressed in their task of integrity (integration) as Erikson (1980) has defined it—the sense of coming to terms with some painful aspects of their lives. A number expressed greater appreciation of how those various episodes and events of their life fit together, permitting a greater sense of personal coherence and integration. In summary, these individuals demonstrated that through the course of writing their stories they had deepened and enlarged their view of themselves and the world around them.

Notwithstanding the above, I must acknowledge that throughout this paper I purposefully selected examples that would illustrate the possibilities of autobiography as a learning and teaching tool. I have touched less upon those instances where this assignment represented simply a writing exercise to fulfill the requirements of the course. In these situations (albeit there were few) much more of students' attention went into producing a paper that would, in the words of one, "make sense

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of the English language." Still, one might consider this element of choice for the writer to be a valued feature of the autobiographical tool.

### Other Avenues, Other Possible Paths

Earlier I observed that everyone has a story to tell. Some people do it naturally and easily. Sometimes autobiography is used for therapeutic purposes or to stimulate creative writing. However, adult educators have yet to incorporate autobiography as an established method for teaching or learning. Educators have not yet recognized the power of this tool for self-knowledge and self-development in adult learners. Nor have they appreciated its potential for enlarging

our understanding of adult learners and drawing out from them those experiences and valued qualities that can contribute so potently to the learning environment. These students' stories remind us that every learner is unique, the sum total of an incredible variety of events, and each has something to be shared with others.

Autobiography need not be limited to courses related to adult development. If it is true that "every theory is an autobiography," then an experience that encourages people to reflect upon and articulate their theories of life can surely constitute valued learning. I have since introduced autobiography as an option in another graduate course that explores the major orientations to adult and higher education. Students write five chapters of their lives "as learners." For many, writing about themselves in this way is their first opportunity to recollect and recount the signal events and turning points that led them to become graduate students. In this same fashion, courses related to leadership and administration, human services, even biology could help students uncover those signal events that shaped their vocational choices and scholarly perspectives.

### Guidelines for Introducing and Using Autobiography

The following are guidelines that may be useful to others who want to initiate autobiographical writing among their students. Students are generally asked to submit an outline of the chapters, for review, before proceeding.

- A publisher has given you the option of writing five chapters of your life story
- Prepare an outline that includes the chapter titles; Consider a title for your story
- Write two pages for each chapter
- Avoid a simple chronology of events
- Pay attention to any metaphor or a pattern that emerges from the events of your life, like "crossing over" or "Still Me" (as in Christopher Reeve's autobiography)

### Conclusion

Autobiographical writing offers adults the opportunity to transform the events of their lives into a story. In the course of writing, individuals look into themselves and their life events and experiences and gain a deeper understanding of the meaning of these experiences. They come to understand their own patterns of behavior, perhaps even of their personal theory of life. To be sure, individuals will vary in the extent and degree to which they invest themselves emotionally in this process and therefore the amount of learning and self-knowledge that is gained. But for still others who do invest themselves, the act of self-observation may precipitate efforts to bring about a change in their story as they attempt to "escape from older narratives to a new beginning" (Smith & Watson, 1996, p.16).

Autobiography may be viewed as an unfolding self-portrait, of which the author both writes and witnesses the process of his or her development over time. In this regard, it holds promise as an activity that can promote positive adult development. If development is viewed as a continuing process of deepening our

understanding of ourselves and others, of enlarging our perspective on others and the world, and then integrating these into a more coherent, integrated, and complex self, then autobiography has a part in bringing these processes to consciousness for the benefit of the author and for those others with whom the story is shared.

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## Message From The Executive Director

by Mel Miller

The 14th annual Adult Development Symposium was held last summer at Salem State College, Salem, Massachusetts. By all accounts, the June 18-20 meeting was a huge success. The symposium was well attended, and everyone seemed to be pleased with the variety of presentations and the ensuing dialogues.

Dr. Jack Demick from Suffolk University initiated the formal activities with a keynote address following a stimulating day

of preconference workshops. Dr. Demick's talk was entitled, "What Are the Roots That Clutch?: What Adoption and Foster Care Can Tell Us About Development." His talk addressed findings from extensive research on adoption and foster care he has conducted over the years.

The other invited address was made by Dr. Kurt W. Fischer from the Harvard University Graduate School of Education. Fischer's presentation, entitled "Dynamics of Adult Cognitive Emotional Development," included some provocative theoretical conceptualizations of adult development, which thoughtfully integrated the emotional and cognitive domains.

In addition to the invited speakers, a number of exciting poster and paper panels were conducted. Topics included were: learning and education, developmental theory, family and aging issues, professional issues, clinical developmental topics, and social, political, and cultural concerns. A thought-provoking panel on narrative and biographical approaches to adult development was also offered. All in all, the meetings and conversations were both stimulating and rewarding to presenters and attendees alike.

SRAD especially appreciates the hard work that members of the Local Arrangement Committee at Salem State put in as well as the cooperation of the people who supported them. Special thank-yous to Albert J. Hamilton, Academic Vice President, Salem State College, for agreeing to sponsor the symposium; Anita V. M. Shea, Dean of the School of Arts and Sciences, Salem State College, for her support of the symposium; Janet Stubbs, Chairperson, Department of Psychology, Salem State College, for her support of the symposium; Michael L. Commons, Lecturer and Research Associate, Program in Psychiatry and the Law, Harvard Medical School, for arranging the excellent plenary speakers and for general help and support of the efforts of the Local Arrangements Committee; Patrice M. Miller, Associate Professor, Department of Psychology, Salem State College, for chairing the Local Arrangements Committee; Joanna Gonsalves and Margaret Johnson, Adjunct Instructors, Department of Psychology, Salem State College, for invaluable help both before and during the symposium; Kim Serrechia, Salem State student, for much-appreciated help; and last but not least, heartfelt thanks to Helen Watson-Felt, Head of Special Events and Conferences, and all the staff of the Ellison Campus Center and the food services, who did a great job of setting up for the conference.

The SRAD business meetings held on Saturday and Sunday afternoon were well-attended and productive. The creation and implementation of SRAD bylaws was discussed. We are seeking volunteers to form a committee on this critical matter. Guidelines and procedures for reviewing paper and poster submissions were also addressed. We are recruiting volunteers to form a committee to address this concern as well. Please contact Sharon Dickinson at the SRAD office if you would like to volunteer for either of these committees.

Next year's meeting, the 15th Adult Development Symposium, will be held at Pace University's New York City campus. The

Straus Thinking and Learning Center at Pace University has graciously volunteered to host the meeting. Roben Torosyan, Assistant Director, and Dr. Rachel Lauer, Director of the Center will head the Local Arrangements Committee at Pace. In an effort to further expand the appeal of the meeting in the New York City area, Dr. Lauer and Roben Torosyan have encouraged academic leaders at Columbia University Teachers College and New York University's Gallatin School to collaborate with them on this project.

The theme of the meeting has been listed as "Adult Development and Transformative, Humanistic Education for the Next Millennium." In addition to the adult educational thrust of this meeting, papers, posters, and panels on all aspects of adult development are planned. Please encourage your friends and colleagues to attend. We want to make the year 2000 Adult Development Symposium the biggest and best ever.

A quick thank you from all of us at SRAD to Bernie Folta for the stellar and professional effort he has applied to the organization and editing and distribution of the SRAD Newsletter. We have received some wonderful compliments on the last newsletter. Bernie, you are doing a great job.

Finally, we have just learned that Sharon Dickinson, our longtime SRAD administrative assistant, will be leaving Norwich University. She decided to take an early retirement and move to North Carolina with her husband Ron.

Sharon will be missed by all. Her organizational skills and patience with SRAD process have made an invaluable contribution to the society over the past seven years. Sharon's eye for detail and administrative touch have made the annual meetings run smoothly—usually without a hitch. She has supported us all in her special way. Sharon, we will miss you. We all extend to you immense heartfelt appreciation and gratitude. Good luck with the next stage in your developmental journey.

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### **The SRAD Web Site**

The SRAD Web site is at [www.norwich.edu/srad](http://www.norwich.edu/srad)

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### **Development at Any Cost?: Questioning Assumptions about the Necessity of Developmental Goals in the Professional Development of Teachers**

**By Jennifer Garvey Berger  
and James K. Hammerman**

For SRAD's 1999 Adult Development Symposium, we had planned a workshop that centered on the question, "Should transformational kinds of development always be a goal of teacher professional development programs?" At our discussions at the Symposium it seemed that many people assumed that transformational kinds of development should be a goal for *all* teacher professional development programs. While we think that those who work to support teachers would be well-served by knowledge of adult developmental stages and processes, we question the assumption that all professional development experiences should attempt to be transformational.

To begin this discussion, we'd first like to highlight the distinction that Kegan (1994) makes between informational and transformational forms of learning. Informational learning incorporates new facts or ideas into ways of knowing that already exist. In contrast, transformational learning changes the very *form* of those ways of knowing—expanding them and making them more complex and in that way more able to deal with multiple demands and tolerate increased uncertainty. Therefore, professional development experiences which are transformational change the *way* teachers know things—their epistemologies—whereas professional development experiences which are informational increase their sum of knowledge. These two different ways of supporting people's learning are often confounded by those interested in the professional development of teachers.

Part of our work focuses on the developmental requirements of inservice professional development for currently practicing teachers. We have found that many of these programs, especially those which are reform-oriented, make implicit developmental demands on the teachers who participate in them (Berger, 1999; Hammerman, 1999; 2000). In fact, we've found that the curricula of these programs and reforms often aim for teachers who are already internally-driven and able to negotiate great complexity. This suggests, as we will discuss later, that the programs may not have greatest effectiveness for those teachers who are not at that higher adult developmental level.

Kegan (1982, 1994) has identified those with such internally-driven meaning-making systems as "self-authoring" and has shown that less than half of the adult population operates at this level of complexity. In his book, *In Over Our Heads*, Kegan (1994) reviews the "hidden curriculum of modern life," describing the mismatch between our expectations of adults and their current epistemological capacities. It is his hope that those in positions of authority over adults—in our case, principals, educational policy-makers, and staff developers—might consider the current developmentally-related capacities of participants in professional development programs as they work to support them through the difficult task of growing in capability to assimilate higher levels of complexity.

This brings us back to our original question. If it is true that these inservice professional development programs for teachers implicitly demand developmental capacities that many people don't yet have, shouldn't transformation *always* be a desirable goal for these programs so that participants can further develop in epistemological capability? Perhaps. We would like to argue, though, that while it is useful to think about ways of helping people develop to better meet the complex demands of modern life, it is also important to be clear about when those demands are *necessarily* developmental—that is, requiring transformational growth—and when they might just as well be served by changes in knowledge or practice that don't require developmental shifts. Two factors play a part in our thinking about this question. First, if participants pay high psychological costs for development, the decision to attempt developmental teaching is more weighty. Second, if the work of teaching doesn't require *all* teachers to be at this high level of development, then transformational professional development is not always necessary.

There are important psychological costs to participants when their meaning-making perspectives transform. Many theorists and much anecdotal evidence would say that these costs are typically a response to the discovery that earlier ways of making meaning aren't complex enough for the new kinds of problems being presented (Belenky, Clinchy, Goldberger, & Tarule, 1986; Kegan, 1994; Perry, 1970). Kegan describes this change as "leaving the family religion" (Kegan, 1994, p. 266), either literally or metaphorically. As the transformational process begins to take hold, people begin to experience themselves as different from before, and other people begin to experience them as different, too. Close relationships—with family members, colleagues, and others—can be put at risk. The loss of the self's earlier way of knowing can be a profoundly painful experience.

So, if there are potentially heavy costs to transformational development, it is even more important to look at the goals of teacher professional development to see if such costs are necessary. The professional development of teachers most often concerns itself with teachers changing their practice so that they might improve learning opportunities for more children in their classrooms. To accomplish this, the goals of many programs seem to require significant shifts in the complexity of teachers' thinking about issues of curriculum, students, and the role of the teacher.

However, it is also possible to support new teaching practices, though perhaps not the thinking behind them, in other ways. For example, new classroom practices can also be nurtured by an environment that provides strong models for new teaching methods. Curriculum materials, peer support groups, school culture, and other contextual factors can also support changes in practice even without the deeper changes in thinking which permit an understanding of underlying theory and rationale. Teachers who are not able to design their own new teaching practices from the general principles underlying reform visions may still be able to change their teaching based on

designs created by others. Ideally, though, at least some members of each school community would be self-authoring. Also, ideally there would be ongoing mechanisms for teachers at all developmental levels to come together to explore teaching issues and problems and together generate new educational practices.

Teacher educators should think carefully about their goals as they design teacher professional development programs. If the demands of the particular situation require teachers to have self-authoring ways of making meaning, then teacher educators will have to think carefully and creatively about how best to support teachers to develop the capacities to meet such demands. While adult development theory suggests the kinds of supports and challenges that might drive transformational growth, much design and empirical work must be done before we have any clear template to guide program development and curriculum writing when transformational requirements are present.

Given our uncertainties about how to facilitate developmental changes and given that development is a complex and time-extended process, we must also learn how to build better supports for teachers who have not yet developed their own self-authoring capacities. One way to accomplish this is through school-community supports that provide structures to do the work required by reforms. Reforms and teacher professional development programs that stress collaboration among teachers—through mentoring, team-teaching, and reflective peer support groups, for example—may provide these kinds of structures. Through external community support, such "scaffolds" can let teachers who lack specific internal capacities act *as if* they have them and may even help those teachers move toward developing the internal capacities themselves.

Our conclusion, then, is that while there are times when teacher professional development should try to be transformational, at other times reform visions for educational practice may sometimes be accomplished primarily through informational learning. Professional program developers can consciously and carefully consider the necessity and consequences of whether to hold informational goals or transformational ones. By doing so, they will know with more certainty when the potentially heavy costs of transformational development are necessary in order to support teachers to do their jobs with greater effectiveness and when informational approaches will be sufficient. This can't help but improve the impact of our work as teacher educators.

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## Papers and Handouts from the 1999 SRAD Symposium

*Editor's note: At the 1999 SRAD Symposium, I tried to get papers and handouts from as many of the sessions as possible. Here is a list of the ones I got. If you'd like a copy of any of these (except, until I get permission, the ones that are copyright), please let me know, and I'll be happy to send one off to you. How to contact me is given at the end of the "Editor's Notebook" column, later in this Bulletin.*

Developmental Stages and Transitions between Stages in Child and

Adult Narratives about Losses of Attachment Objects by Patrice M. Miller and Susanne T. Lee, Salem State College and the Program in Psychiatry and the Law at Massachusetts Mental Health Center

Primary, Concrete, Abstract, Formal, Systematic, and Metasystematic Balance Beam Problems (© 1978-1995) by Michael L. Commons, Eric Goodheart, and Francis A.

Richards

Trusting the Process: The Mentoring Relationship in Adult Learning (© 1999)

by Frank Bellizia and Kate Waitte

Explaining the Home Birth Advantage: The Likely Role of a Trusting Connection in an Adult Life Transition (abstract and references)

by Alice LoCicero, Suffolk University and Lesley College

The Consequences of Being a Caregiver of an Older Adult and the Mental Health Resources Available To Support the Development of the Caregiver

by Victoria A. Sardi, George Washington University

Developmental Demands of Hierarchical Organizations by Sharon Rogolsky, Center for Creative Leadership →

Cognitive Development and Empathy Level

by Chris Lovell, Old Dominion University

Relations between Age, Gender, Empathy, and Moral Orientation in Descriptions of Political Conflict

by Joanna Gonsalves, Salem State College, and Debra Harkins, Suffolk University

Whether People Match Orienteering Words to Definitions or to Map-Places Better

by Lucas A.H. Commons-Miller, Longfellow School

Liberating Workplace Learners (Focus Group Materials)

by Robert J. Leaver, Organizational Futures, Inc.

Narcissism in the Epistemological Pit: An Intersection of Structural Stage Transition, Life Phase Transition, and Object Relational Vulnerability

by Thomas Swan, Sienna College, and Suzie Benack, Union College

Evidence for the Uniqueness of Attachments to Different Types of Entities in Adults and Children

by Susanne T. Lee and Patrice M. Miller, Program in Psychiatry and the Law at Massachusetts Mental Health Center and Salem State College

An Eclectic Approach to Mental Health Treatment: The Clinico-Developmental Treatment of Prisoners with Mental Illness

by Joseph A. Rodriguez

Facilitating Effective Action and Higher Levels of Verbal Understanding through an Integration of Paul & Gail Dennison's "Brain Gym" and Jean Piaget's Conservation Ability

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Results of a Study of the Nature and Measurement of Postautonomous Ego Development (© 1999)

by Susanne R. Cook-Greuter

Applying Learning to Life: A Theoretical Framework in Context (© 1999)

by Roben Torosyan, Pace University

[from *ETC.*, 56(1):2-24 (Spring 1999)]

Three Dances with Gracie: Exploring the Role of Shared Interpretive Authority in Adult Education Research

by Erik Jacobson, Maricel Santos, and Mary Jane Schmitt,

Harvard School of Education

Types and Structures: Revisions of Kohlberg's Moral Development Theory, Research Methodology, and Scoring Manuals for Research

by Albert Erdynast, Antioch Southern California at Los Angeles

A Tale of Two Sisters

by Deirdre A. Kramer and Dara R. Bowling, Rutgers,

The

State University of New Jersey

Wisdom: A Culturally Inclusive Developmental Perspective

by Masami Takahashi and Willis F. Overton, Temple University

Big Thoughts and Small Children: Parenting and Transformation of Stage Performance

by Margaret S. Johnson and Patrice M. Miller, Salem

State

College

Use Your World for Self-Rehabilitation of Memory and Thought, or The Role of Enriched Environments in the Rehabilitation of the Brain

by Lynn L. Serper, Brain Enhancement Services, Inc.

Empathy in Female Victims of Verbal Versus Physical Partner Abuse

by Cheree Hough and Jack Demick, Suffolk University

Adult Conceptions of Psychosexual Fidelity and Infidelity

by Albert Erdynast, Antioch Southern California at Los Angeles

Moral and Ethical Development Research Scoring Manuals

by Albert Erdynast, Antioch Southern California at Los Angeles

Human Development and Social Problems

by Courtney Nelson, The Fielding Institute

Towards an Understanding of Development in Transformational Teacher Education

by James K. Hammerman, Harvard Graduate School of Education

## Postautonomous Ego Development: A Study Of Its Nature And Measurement



**By Susanne R. Cook-Greuter**

*Editor's note: At the 1999 SRAD Symposium, Susanne Cook-Greuter presented a poster session on her recently completed doctoral thesis at the Harvard Graduate School of Education.. Here is the abstract of her dissertation.*

This thesis investigates mature ego development in response to perceived high-end problems with Loevinger's *Ego Development Theory* (1976) and measuring instrument, *The Washington University Sentence Completion Test* (SCT) (1970; Hy & Loevinger, 1996). In addition to a continuing differentiation-integration at higher levels of hierarchical complexity, postconventional development is here conceived of as a conscious, stepwise deconstruction of the habits of mind, or an increasing awareness of the constructed nature of reality. Two new stages, a Construct-aware and a Unitive stage are described which replace Loevinger's Integrated stage. Nine unique, empirically derived characteristics for identifying these two postautonomous ego stages are also introduced.

First, I tested my reconceptualization of high-end theory by comparing it to other theories from both postconventional constructivist developmental and transpersonal psychology (Commons et al. 1984; Kegan 1982, 1994; Basseches, 1984; Torbert, 1987; Koplowitz, 1984; Alexander, 1990; Wilber, 1986, 1997). The content validity of the stage-wide categories was assessed by investigating (a) how these theorists parse and define postconventional development, and (b) how they characterize their most advanced stages of meaning making.

Second, I subjected 147 postconventional completions and 60 SCT protocols to a multiple analysis by others. The sample was drawn from 4400 SCTs scored over 17 years. Interrater agreement among three trained raters using the *Second Edition* (Hy & Loevinger, 1996) and my postautonomous scoring categories was high with Cronbach's  $\alpha = .95$  ( $p < .0001$ ) for TPR. A critique of the *Second Edition*, other types of analyses, and the results from recalibrating the cutoff numbers required for assigning high-end protocol scores are also reported.

This study makes both a theoretical and a practical contribution to positive adult psychology by mapping and clarifying mature, postautonomous personality development and by providing stage distinctions and thematic categories to assess it. Moreover, these criteria may be useful in evaluating reality perspectives of mature individuals in other discourse contexts and other cultures. Finally, this thesis begins to bridge Western conceptions of psychological growth as increasing individuation and self-integration with Eastern notions of the permanent self as a transitional phenomenon that may be recognized as a guiding fiction or illusion and transcended.

**Notes From The 1999 SRAD**

## **Business Meeting**

**By Patti Miller**

At the end of the day on Saturday, June 19, 1999, Mel Miller welcomed everybody and began the meeting. Attendees discussed the location of the next symposium. One person suggested that one of the centers at Pace University might be interested in sponsoring the Symposium next year. If that doesn't work out, the meeting will move back to Vermont for next year. Another person mentioned Santa Barbara in 2001 as a possibility.

The SRAD Web site was discussed. A suggestion was made that there be two parts on the SRAD Web site. One would be for public discussion, while the other would be more private, for discussing the business of the organization. It might, however, cost something to set that up, but the organization is running in the black. SRAD does have a listserv (operated by Michael Commons), which anyone can subscribe to. There was some discussion as to why the listserv could not serve a dual purpose, but that was never resolved.

The matter of bylaws was brought up, with a suggestion that the organization come up with a set of bylaws to help make decision-making easier. Mel said that maybe formal by-laws are not needed, but SRAD does, at least, seem to need more structure. Those present were reminded that SRAD is not yet an independent organization. It functions under the Dare Association and does not have its own board or nonprofit structure. A couple of sets of bylaws have been collected, but other bylaw copies might be needed for ideas or use as models. These can be posted on the private part of the web site (if that gets set up), and comments can be collected on-line. However, people would need to be informed that this was happening. A person suggested that what the organization needs first is a mission statement. Another person noted that most of what a mission statement would be made up of is probably contained in the most recent Call for Papers. Linda Morris and Tom Boydell were among the people who expressed interest in working on this. Only a vague timeline was discussed with the possibility that perhaps by next year's meeting there might be a draft set of bylaws for people to consider.

A participant suggested that the organization send out membership renewal notices to people who have attended the symposium in the past, but did not attend in a particular year. The organization could come up with a procedure similar to those of other organizations, which is to choose one time of the year as renewal time. Perhaps around the time of the yearly symposium is the easiest time to keep track of memberships. At that time, former members and former attendees could receive a membership mailing.

Cheryl Armon will be working on a set of guidelines for reviewing proposals. The next day, Sunday, at the Symposium wrap-up after lunch, there was brief additional discussion of a few SRAD matters.

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**Longtime SRAD Members' New  
Book  
Includes Contributions by  
Other SRAD Members**

November, 1999, saw the publication of the latest book by two longtime SRAD members, Melvin E. Miller and Susanne R. Cook-Greuter, co-editors. Entitled *Creativity, Spirituality, and Transcendence: Paths to Integrity and Wisdom in the Mature Self*, the volume, part of the *Publications in Creativity Research* series, includes chapters by other SRAD members. Here are the contents:

Introduction: Creativity in Adulthood: Personal Maturity and Openness to Extraordinary Sources of Inspiration  
by Susanne R. Cook-Greuter and Melvin E. Miller

Part I: Creative Process, Inspiration, and the Muse in  
Writing and Composition

Creative Writing as a Spiritual Practice: Two Paths  
by Christopher G. Edwards

The Dark Side of Creativity: The Function of Duende and God-Battler in the Writings of Garcia Lorca and Kazantzakis  
by Verbena Pastor

Limitations to Artistic Creativity: Joseph Conrad's The Secret Sharer  
by Carl Goldberg

Inspired Creativity  
by Joel Funk

Part II: Personal Transformation and Integrity

Ethical Self, Spiritual Self: Wisdom and Integrity in the Writings of Erik H. Erikson  
by Carol H. Hoare

Edith Kramer—Artist and Art Therapist: A Search for Integrity and Truth  
by Melvin E. Miller and Susanne R. Cook-Greuter

Healing Images: Art and Meditation in Recovery from Cancer  
by John J. McKenna

Part III: Theoretical Approaches and Reflections

Scientist and Artist within the Mature Self: The Integration of Two Worlds  
by Ernest Zebrowski, Jr.

Major Creative Innovators as Viewed Through the Lens of the General Model of Hierarchical Complexity and Evolution  
by Michael Lamport Commons and  
Linda Marie Bresette

Lifelong Learning and the Good Life: Reconciling

Adult Education for Development  
by Stephanie Glass-Solomon and Cheryl Armon  
The Transpersonal Orientation as a Framework for Understanding Adult Development and Creative Processes

by Marcie Boucouvalas

The publisher is Ablex Publishing Corp. with the hardcover edition having ISBN 1567504604 and the paperback edition having ISBN 1567504612.

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**Change Coming To The SRAD  
Listserv**

SRAD has had an adult development listserv (called "adultdev"), hosted by Michael Commons on the tiac.net Internet service provider (ISP). We have learned that that kind of service is being discontinued by the ISP. Does anyone know of another site that could host the SRAD "adultdev" listserv? If so, please contact Michael Commons at [commons@tiac.net](mailto:commons@tiac.net) or Mel Miller at [srad@norwich.edu](mailto:srad@norwich.edu).

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**Editor's Notebook  
by Bernie Folta**

The previous issue of *Adult Developments—The SRAD Bulletin* was in February 1999. I had plans to have this issue out this past November, but as you can see, that didn't happen. I apologize for this. In a nutshell, what happened was that last semester I took on too many teaching duties and became severely overloaded. But now, I'm catching up on the things that got delayed.

\* \* \*

The 1999 SRAD Symposium was my second one, and I enjoyed it every bit as much as my first one in 1998. Though attendance in '99 was a bit less than in '98, I felt that the atmosphere at Salem State was as stimulating, exciting, and cordial as the year before at Vermont College. Last year I attended Michael Commons's preconference workshop on hierarchical complexity (and its scoring), and this year I attended Carl Goldberg's on shame. Both were excellent. If your haven't attended SRAD preconference workshops before, I urge you to consider it. They offer an opportunity for a concentrated exploration, including discussion, of an adult development subdomain—a great way to get familiar with new territory. This year there are five workshops (listed on page 2 in column 1).

\* \* \*

At the end of last June's SRAD symposium—during the wrap-up on Sunday, I asked the people present to jot down how the SRAD Symposium they had just attended had affected them, personally and/or professionally. Here are nearly all the responses (the ones I could decipher).

- "Awareness of the range of work uncovering the issues affecting aging"
- "I was impressed at the way people listened to one another, engaged with their ideas, and then built upon them."
- "I enjoyed deep collegial discussion about important questions."
- "Strongly reinforced my belief, confidence and faith in the nature of development and my role in helping to liberate it in organizations."
- "Robert Leaver's reminder, 'Life is short, so slow down'."
- "The combination of Kurt Fischer's presentation and high-level discussion reengaged me in thinking about central developmental issues."
- "I was most engaged by the focus on learning and less by the overjargoned development stuff."
- "Discussion groups facilitated an integration of perspectives."
- "I connected with people who think about the same things I do."
- "As always, stimulating, 'challenging,' productive, and enjoyable."
- "Provided much to reflect on, personally and professionally."
- "A supportive environment to meet with colleagues around issues of development not often touched in other settings."
- "It helped me to see the degree of interest in some of the work we've been doing."
- "The SRAD [Symposium] helped me to further my research goals."

\* \* \*

Vermont College of Norwich University has provided significant administrative and financial support to SRAD, and for this, we express special thanks.

\* \* \*

We're planning the next issue of this *Bulletin* for next fall. Here's how to contact me for anything in connection with *Adult Developments—The SRAD Bulletin*.

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 P.O. Box 900                              Fax: (802) 223-4625  
 Montpelier, VT 05601                  E-mail: bernief@delphi.com

### SRAD Membership And Symposium Registration

The international membership of the Society for Research in Adult Development includes people from all disciplines who are interested in positive adult development. We extend an invitation to all those interested in this field to join us whether their context is adult development in the individual or whether it's development within the framework of families, work, school, or communities.

For practitioners, the Society offers an opportunity to discover the latest ideas in the field and to explore the application of those ideas to everyday problems and challenges. For academic researchers and theoreticians, the Society offers the opportunity to share ideas, often in a deeper way, with other researchers and theoreticians through discussion and the exchange of papers and to explore the application of their ideas to the problems and opportunities of daily life by working on them with practitioners from many fields.

The Society supports diversity within its membership. Such diversity includes differences in professional status, academic discipline, occupation, race, culture, gender, and sexual orientation. Applicants from Canada, other parts of North and South America, and other countries are most welcome.

Among the benefits of membership in SRAD are—

- you become part of a network of people interested in and working in the field of positive adult development.
- you receive a one-year subscription to the *Journal of Adult Development*.
- you receive the newsletter of the Society, *Adult Developments—The SRAD Bulletin*.
- you receive the Call for Papers for SRAD's annual symposia and other communiqués.

### Membership And Symposium Registration Form

SRAD's membership year is from the beginning of one annual symposium to the beginning of the one the following year. The symposium registration fee includes SRAD membership so that symposium attendees are automatically members for the year following the symposium they attend.

The combined form for both SRAD membership (only) and for symposium registration follows. Please return the form to Mel Miller, SRAD's executive director, whose address is at the bottom of the form.

If you prefer to sign up through e-mail, please provide the information requested on the form, and send to [hrad@norwich.edu](mailto:hrad@norwich.edu). Your separate check should be sent to Melvin Miller, whose mail address is at the bottom of the form.

Student scholarships covering the symposium registration fee are available. Please contact Mel Miller, the executive director, for more information at [hrad@norwich.edu](mailto:hrad@norwich.edu) by e-mail or (802) 485-2134 by phone.

*If you have suggestions for SRAD, or you wish to note ways you could become involved, please append a note. Thank you for joining the Society and for your continued membership.*

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### Combined Form For SRAD Membership And 2000 Symposium Registration (Use as appropriate)

Note: Membership is included in the symposium fee, so persons who attend the symposium are members for the ensuing year.

Category:

Membership for the remainder of the 1999-2000 year  
 Membership for 2000-2001 (without symposium registration)  
 Registration for the 2000 annual SRAD symposium to be held June 23-25, 2000, in New York City (Registration includes SRAD membership for 2000-2001.)

**Fees:**

Annual membership fee (without symposium registration)  
 Regular membership, \$45 (US)  
 Student membership, \$35 (US)  
 Symposium fee (includes SRAD membership for 2000-2001)  
 Regular fee, \$165 (US)  
 Student fee, \$50 (US)

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Affiliation \_\_\_\_\_

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Students: Degree expected, year, school  
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 c/o Melvin E. Miller, Ph.D.  
 Norwich University  
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 Northfield, VT 05663 U.S.A.

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SRAD Annual Symposium

Friday through Sunday,  
June 23-25, 2000,  
at Pace University Plaza Campus,  
New York, New York

*Additional information inside*