

Personal Top 51 Works in American Adult Education

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Dedication:

This *Selection of Works* is dedicated to Larry Berlin who headed the graduate program in adult education at the University of Michigan in the late 1970s and early 1980s. Larry graciously agreed to lead an informal “book discussion” of works relevant to the field of adult education and twice each month a dozen or so graduate students joined Larry in his home to discuss the evening’s selection. At first, the selection of works tended to surprise me because often the phrase *adult education* was missing from the book’s title. Yet his selections did indeed address both the meaning and mission of adult education. Larry’s selections were thoughtful and inspiring. Some of the works included here were among Larry’s selections but others have been added over the years. Thank you Larry for helping me understand the breath of our professional literature.



Personal Top 51 Works in American Adult Education

Defining adult education

By *adult education*, I'm referring to the process by which adults continue to make sense of the times in which they live -- a commitment to remain open to novelty, to engage life actively (not passively) and a willingness to continue maturing throughout life.

Why choose these 51 works?

The 51 works included here were chosen with the following ten themes in mind: 1) That we are a young nation still struggling to apply in practice the democratic principles embodied in our *Declaration of Independence* and *Constitution*; 2) That democracy is messy and begins within our local communities; 3) That a key principle of democracy is equality of opportunity, not limited by age, gender, or skin color; 4) That we share the earth with a host of other living organisms; 5) That one key to enjoying life is maintaining youthful curiosity; 6) That intelligent decision making often requires us to think creatively and boldly; 7) That learning new things and taking advantage of new opportunities often requires risk and uncertainty; 8) That learning in adulthood can be nurtured by others; 9) That our understandings about helping adults learn continues to grow; and 10) That maturity is an achievement, not assigned by age but defined by our commitment to learn and to continue growing throughout life.

Why 51 works?

I've selected 51 works because "selecting 50" seemed a bit too neat and may be misleading. As individuals interested in adult education (our own as well as that of others), we have a rich legacy of activities/programs, writings, and thoughts to draw upon. This list is but a selection, there certainly are many others, though this is not a bad listing to begin with.

A little reminder by Robert Frost:

The following 1915 Robert Frost poem captures, for me anyway, the frequent opportunities we have to alter the direction of our life.

The Road Not Taken

Two roads diverged in a yellow wood,
And sorry I could not travel both
And be one traveler, long I stood
And looked down one as far as I could
To where it bent in the undergrowth;

Then took the other, as just as fair,
And having perhaps the better claim
Because it was grassy and wanted wear,
Though as for that the passing there
Had worn them really about the same,

And both that morning equally lay
In leaves no step had trodden black.
Oh, I marked the first for another day!
Yet knowing how way leads on to way
I doubted if I should ever come back.

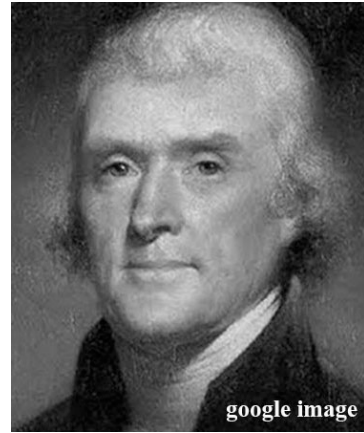
I shall be telling this with a sigh
Somewhere ages and ages hence:
Two roads diverged in a wood, and I,
I took the one less traveled by,
And that has made all the difference.

My Top 51 Works in American Adult Education

1770s-1800s

1. Jefferson, T. (1991). The declaration of independence. In D. Ravitch (Ed.), *The American reader: Words that moved a nation* (pp. 20-23). New York: Harper Perennial. (Original work adopted in Congress July 4, 1776)

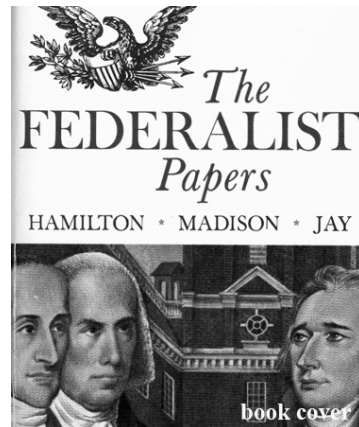
Purpose: Jefferson (though prime author of this document, was a member of a drafting committee that included John Adams and Benjamin Franklin) captures the sentiment of the Continental Congress in declaring the independence of their “united thirteen states” from King George III and England.



Excerpt: “We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain inalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness. -- That to secure these rights, Governments are instituted among Men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed, -- That whenever any Form of Government becomes destructive of these ends, it is the Right of the People to alter or abolish it, and to institute new Government, laying its foundation on such principles and organizing its powers in such form, as to them shall seem most likely to effect their Safety and Happiness.” (p. 21)

2. Hamilton, A., Madison, J., & Jay, J. (1961). *The federalist papers*. New York: New American Library. (Original work published as *The Federalist* 1788)

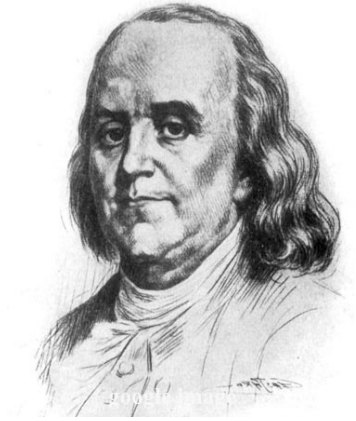
Purpose: These 85 letters to the public (beginning October 27, 1787 and ending late March, 1788) encourage the adoption of the new Constitution of the United States (approved September 17, 1787 and forwarded to state legislatures for ratification).



Excerpt: “After an unequivocal experience of the inefficacy of the subsisting federal government, you are called upon to deliberate on a new Constitution for the United States of America. The subject speaks its own importance; comprehending in its consequences nothing less than the existence of the UNION, the safety and welfare of the parts of which it is composed, the fate of an empire in many respects the most interesting in the world. It has been frequently remarked that it seems to have been reserved to the people of this country, by their conduct and example, to decide the important question, whether societies of men are really capable or not of establishing good government from reflection and choice, or whether they are forever destined to depend for their political constitutions on accident and force.” (p. 33)

3. Franklin, B. (1964). *The autobiography of Benjamin Franklin*; Edited by Laboree, L., et. al. New Haven: Yale University. (Original work published 1789)

Purpose: Franklin (often viewed as the patron saint of American adult education) reminisces about parts of his life, inspiring others to adopt some of his virtues, his tolerant and inquiring attitude, and his commitment to service.

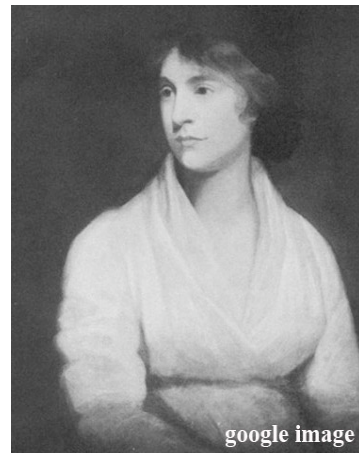


Excerpt: “I never was without some religious Principles; I never doubted, for instance, the Existence of the Deity, that he made the World, and govern’d it by his Providence; that the most acceptable Service of God was the doing Good to Man; that our Souls are immortal; and that all Crime will be punished and Virtue rewarded either here or hereafter; these I esteem’d the Essentials of every Religion, and being to be found in all the Religions we had in our Country I respected them all, tho’ with different degrees of Respect as I found them more or less mix’d with other Articles which without any Tendency to inspire, promote or confirm Morality, serv’d principally to divide us and make us unfriendly to one another. This Respect to all, with an Opinion that the worst had some good Effects, induc’d me to avoid all Discourse that might tend to lessen the good Opinion another might have of his own Religion.” (p. 146)

4. Wollstonecraft, M. (1989). *A vindication of the rights of women*. Buffalo, NY: Prometheus Books. (Original work published 1792)

Purpose: Wollstonecraft argues (pleads) for equal education opportunities for women.

Excerpt: “Contending for the rights of woman, my main argument is built on this simple principle, that if she be not prepared by education to become the companion of man, she will stop the progress of knowledge and virtue; for truth must be common to all, or it will be inefficacious with respect to its influence on general practice. And how can woman be expected to co-operate unless she knows why she ought to be virtuous? ... If children are to be educated to understand the true meaning of patriotism, their mother must be a patriot; and the love of mankind from which an orderly train of virtues spring, can only be produced by considering the moral and civil interests of mankind; but the education and situation of woman at present shuts her out from such investigations.” (p. 16)

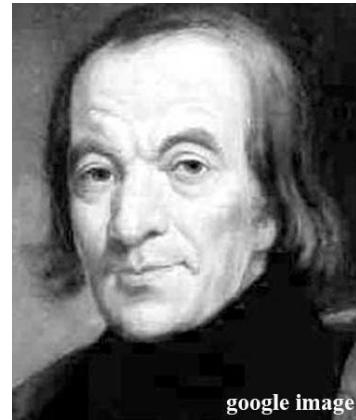


1810s-1830s

5. Owen, R. (1826). A declaration of mental independence. *New-Harmony Gazette*, 1(42), 1-3. (Address presented July 4, 1826)

Purpose: Owen draws attention to the *Declaration of Independence* document as being only an initial step toward achieving full independence; mental independence (individual mental maturity) was still a work in progress.

Excerpt: “My friends, it surely cannot be your wish, that any good and great cause should be effected only by halves, -- and more especially when that which remains to be done, is, beyond calculation, the most important? There is a noble object before us, to be won by some party or another in this or in some other country. It is no less than the destruction of the threefold causes which deprive man of mental liberty, which compel him to commit crimes, and to suffer all the miseries which crime can inflict (individual property, irrational systems of religion, and marriage founded upon both). Could we but gain this object – soon would rational intelligence, real virtue, and substantial happiness, be permanently established among men: Ignorance, poverty, dependence, and vice, would be forever banished from the earth.” (p. 2)



6. Tocqueville, A. (1981). *Democracy in America*. New York: Modern Library. (Original work published 1835)

Purpose: Tocqueville reflects upon American society's experiment in democracy – the good and the not-so-good (with a companion he visited the United States from May 9, 1831 to February 20th, 1832).

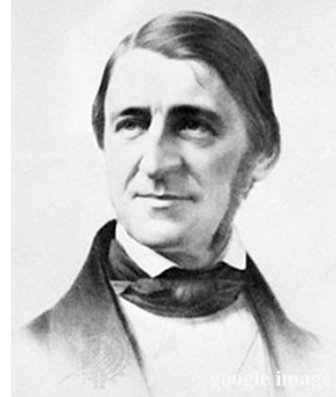
Excerpt: “It appears to me beyond a doubt that, sooner or later, we (France) shall arrive, like the Americans, at an almost complete equality of condition. But I do not conclude from this that we shall ever be necessarily led to draw the same political consequences which the Americans have derived from a similar social organization. I am far from supposing that they have chosen the only form of government which a democracy may adopt; but as the generating cause of laws and manners in the two countries is the same it is of immense interest for us to know what it has produced in each of them.... I confess that in America I saw more than America; I sought there the image of democracy itself, with its inclinations, its character, its prejudices, and its passions, in order to learn what we have to fear or to hope from progress.” (pp. 16-17)



7. Emerson, R. W. (1991). Nature. In *Nature and Walking* (pp. 1-67). Boston: Beacon Press. (Original work published 1836)

Purpose: Emerson encourages individuals to spend time alone in nature, allowing their senses to fully engage, and to truly experience living.

Excerpt: “In the woods, is perpetual youth. Within these plantations of God, a decorum and sanctity reign, a perennial festival is dressed, and the guest sees not how he should tire of them in a thousand years. In the woods, we return to reason and faith. There I feel that nothing can befall me in life, -- no disgrace, calamity, (leaving me my eyes,) which nature cannot repair. Standing on the bare ground, -- my head bathed by the blithe air, and uplifted into infinite space, -- all mean egotism vanishes. I become a transparent eye-ball; I am nothing; I see all; the currents of the Universal Being circulate through me; I am part or particle of God.” (p. 8)

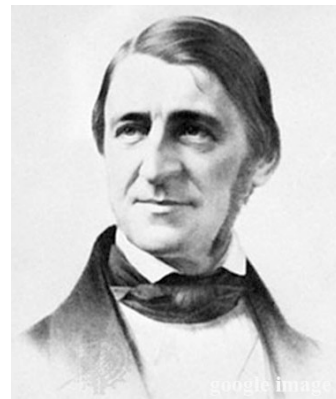


1840s-1860s

8. Emerson, R. W. (1982). Self-reliance. In L. Ziff (Ed.), *Ralph Waldo Emerson: Selected essays* (pp. 175-203). New York: Penguin. (Original work published 1841)

Purpose: Emerson encourages individuals to resist mindless conformity and to trust their own feelings and ideas.

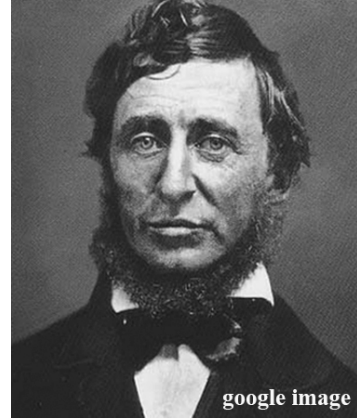
Excerpt: “Trust thyself: every heart vibrates to that iron string. Accept the place the divine providence has found for you, the society of your contemporaries, the connection of events. Great men have always done so, and confided themselves childlike to the genius of their age, betraying their perception that the absolutely trustworthy was seated at their heart, working through their hands, predominating in all their being. And we are now men, and must accept in the highest mind the same transcendent destiny; and not minors and invalids in a protected corner, not cowards fleeing before a revolution, but guides, redeemers and benefactors, obeying the Almighty effort and advancing on Chaos and the Dark.” (p. 177)



9. Thoreau, H. D. (1960). *Walden and civil disobedience*. New York: The New American Library. (*Walden* first published 1854)

Purpose: Thoreau shares observations from a journal kept while spending two years, two months, and two days in a self-built small cabin near Walden Pond.

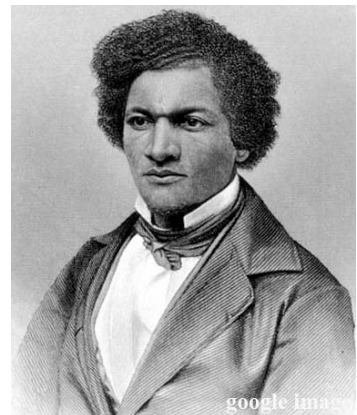
Excerpt: “I went to the woods because I wished to live deliberately, to front only the essential facts of life and see if I could learn what it had to teach, and not, when I came to die, discover that I had not lived. I did not wish to live what was not life, living is so dear; nor did I wish to practice resignation, unless it was quite necessary. I wanted to live deep and suck out all the marrow of life, to live so sturdily and Spartan-like as to put to rout all that was not life, to cut a broad swath and shave close, to drive life into a corner, and reduce it to its lowest terms, and, if it proved to be mean, why then to get the whole and genuine meanness of it, and publish its meanness to the world; or if it were sublime, to know it by experience, and be able to give a true account of it in my next excursion.” (pp. 90-91)



10. Douglass, F. (1991). Independence day speech at Rochester. In D. Ravitch (Ed.), *The American reader: Words that moved a nation* (pp. 114-118). New York: Harper Perennial. (Address presented July 4, 1852)

Purpose: Douglass reminds listeners of the nation's hypocrisy in celebrating a day that proclaims *equality of rights* when such sentiment cannot coexist with the institution of slavery.

Excerpt: “What, to the American slave, is your Fourth of July? I answer: a day that reveals to him, more than all other days in the year, the gross injustice and cruelty to which he is the constant victim. To him, your celebration is a sham; your boasted liberty, an unholy license; your national greatness, swelling vanity; your sounds of rejoicing are empty and heartless; your denunciation of tyrants, brass-fronted impudence; your shouts of liberty and equality, hollow mockery; your prayers and hymns, your sermons and thanksgivings, with all your religious parade and solemnity, are to Him, mere bombast, fraud, deception, impiety, and hypocrisy – a thin veil to cover up crimes which would disgrace a nation of savages.” (p. 118)



11. Seattle, Chief. (1991). Funeral/Treaty oration. In D. Ravitch (Ed.), *The American reader: Words that moved a nation* (pp. 92-94). New York: Harper Perennial. (Address presented December, 1854)

Purpose: Chief Seattle regrettably accepts the terms of a treaty with the federal government.

Excerpt: “A few more moons. A few more winters – and not one of the descendants of the mighty hosts that once moved over this broad land or lived in happy homes, protected by the Great Spirit, will remain to mourn over the graves of a people – once more powerful and hopeful than yours. But why should I mourn at the untimely fate of my people? Tribe follows tribe, and nation follows nation, like the waves of the sea. It is the order of nature, and regret is useless. Your time of decay may be distant, but it will surely come, for even the White Man whose God walked and talked with him as friend with friend, cannot be exempt from the common destiny. We may be brothers after all. We will see.” (p. 94)



12. Thoreau, H. D. (1991). Walking. In *Nature and Walking* (pp. 69-112). Boston: Beacon Press. (Original work published 1862)

Purpose: Thoreau stresses that we are not merely members of society, we are members of Nature, should spend time walking/sauntering in nature, and should embrace our untamed (natural) spirit.

Excerpt: “In Wildness is the preservation of the World. Every tree sends its fibres forth in search of the Wild. The cities import it at any price. Men plough and sail for it. From the forest and wilderness come the tonics and barks, which brace mankind. Our ancestors were savages. The story of Romulus and Remus being suckled by a wolf is not a meaningless fable. The founders of every state which has risen to eminence have drawn their nourishment and vigor from a similar wild source. It was because the children of the Empire were not suckled by the wolf that they were conquered and displaced by the children of the northern forests who were.” (p. 95)



1870s-1890s

13. Jackson, H. H. (1995). *A century of dishonor: A sketch of the United States government's dealing with some of the Indian tribes*. Norman, OK: University of Oklahoma Press. (Original work published 1885)

Purpose: Jackson draws attention to the *Indian Problem* in United States; that it was not due to the American Indian but to the government and people who treated them so inhumanely.

Excerpt: "It makes little difference, however, where one opens the record of the history of the Indians; every page and every year has its dark stain. The story of one tribe is the story of all, varied only by differences of time and place; but neither time nor place makes any difference in the main facts. Colorado is as greedy and unjust in 1880 as was Georgia in 1830, and Ohio in 1795; and the United States Government breaks promises now as deftly as then, and with an added ingenuity from long practice." (pp. 337-338)



14. Stanton, E. C. (1992). The solitude of self. In E. C. Dubois (Ed.), *The Elizabeth Cady Stanton – Susan B. Anthony reader* (pp. 246-254). Boston: Northeastern Press. (Address presented January 18, 1892)

Purpose: Stanton argues the necessity of equal rights and opportunities for women, primarily because the human condition requires personal strength and forbearance for both men and women.

Excerpt: "When all artificial trammels are removed, and women are recognized as individuals, responsible for their own environments, thoroughly educated for all positions in life they may be called to fill; with all the resources in themselves that liberal thought and broad culture can give; guided by their own conscience and judgment, trained to self-protection, by a healthy development of the muscular system, and skill in the use of weapons and defense; and stimulated to self-support by a knowledge of the business world and the pleasure that pecuniary independence must ever give; when women are trained in this way, they will in a measure be fitted for those hours of solitude that come alike to all, whether prepared or otherwise. As in our extremity we must depend on ourselves, the dictates of wisdom point to complete individual development." (p. 252)



1900s-1920s

15. DuBois, W. E. B. (1989). *The souls of black folk*. NY: Bantam Books. (Original work published 1903)

Purpose: DuBois addresses what it means to be black at the beginning of a new century and prophetically suggests the main problem of the Twentieth Century will revolve around race.

Excerpt: “The opposition to Negro education in the South was at first bitter, and showed itself in ashes, insult, and blood; for the South believed an educated Negro to be a dangerous Negro. And the South was not wholly wrong; education among all kinds of men has had, and always will have, an element of danger and revolution, of dissatisfaction and discontent. Nevertheless, men strive to know.” (p. 23) “The silently growing assumption of this age is that the probation of races is past, and that the backward races of to-day are of proven inefficiency and not worth the saving. Such an assumption is the arrogance of peoples irreverent toward time and ignorant of the deeds of men.” (p.186)



16. Addams, J. (1960). *Twenty years at Hull-House*. New York: New American Library. (Original work published 1910)

Purpose: Addams reminisces about her Settlement's first twenty years, why it was established, its early challenges and successes, its “stress and storm”.

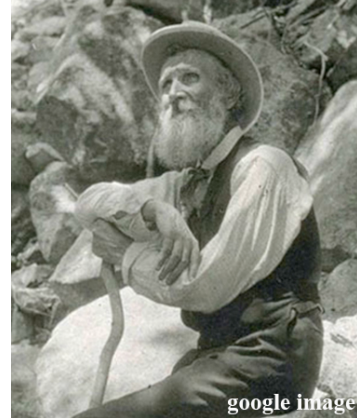
Excerpt: The Settlement, then, is an experimental effort to aid in the solution of the social and industrial problems which are engendered by the modern conditions of life in a great city. It insists that these problems are not confined to any one portion of a city. It is an attempt to relieve, at the same time, the overaccumulation at one end of society and the destitution at the other; but it assumes that this overaccumulation and destitution is most sorely felt in the things that pertain to social and educational privileges. From its very nature it can stand for no political or social propaganda. It must, in a sense, give the warm welcome of an inn to all such propaganda, if perchance one of them be found an angel. The one thing to be dreaded in the Settlement is that it lose its flexibility, its power of quick adaptation, its readiness to change its methods as its environment may demand.” (p. 98)



17. Muir, J. (1988). *The story of my boyhood and youth*. San Francisco: Sierra Club Books. (Original work published 1913)

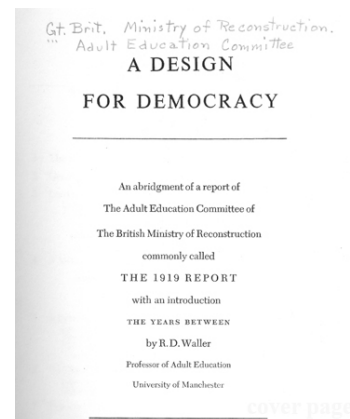
Purpose: Written the year before he died, Muir shares remembrances from his Scotland and Wisconsin years, lessons learned prior to experiencing the wilderness of California.

Excerpt: “Although I was four years at the University, I did not take the regular course of studies, but instead picked out what I thought would be most useful to me, particularly chemistry, which opened a new world, and mathematics and physics, a little Greek and Latin, botany and geology. I was far from satisfied with what I had learned, and should have stayed longer. Anyhow I wandered away on a glorious botanical and geological excursion, which has lasted nearly fifty years and is not yet completed, always happy and free, poor and rich, without thought of diploma or of making a name, urged on and on through endless, inspiring, Godful beauty.” (p. 159)



18. Waller, E. D. (1956). *A design for democracy: An abridgment of a report of The Adult Education Committee of The British Ministry of Reconstruction*. New York: Association Press. (Original work published as the 1919 Report)

Purpose: Waller reprints and discusses *The 1919 Report*, considered by the author to be “probably the most important single contribution ever made to the literature of adult education.”



Excerpt from the Report: “The Committee has based its conclusions upon the following propositions: 1. That the main purpose of education is to fit a man for life, and therefore in a civilized community to fit him for his place as a member for that community. 5. That the necessary conclusion is that adult education must not be regarded as a luxury for a few exceptional persons here and there, nor as a thing which concerns only a short span of early manhood, but that adult education is a permanent national necessity, an inseparable aspect of citizenship, and therefore should be both universal and lifelong. 6. That the opportunity for adult education should be spread uniformly and systematically over the whole community, as a primary obligation on that community in its own interest” (pp. 53-55)

19. Lindeman, E. (1961). *The meaning of adult education*. Oklahoma Research Center. (Original work published 1926)

Purpose: Lindeman challenges readers to wrestle with understandings they may have regarding adult education – its purpose and methods.

Excerpt: “Adult education presents a challenge to static concepts of intelligence, to the standardized limitations of conventional education and to the theory which restricts educational facilities to an intellectual class. ... We shall never know how many adults desire intelligence regarding themselves and the world in which they live until education once more escapes the patterns of conformity. Adult education is an attempt to discover a new method and create a new incentive for learning; its implications are qualitative, not quantitative. Adult learners are precisely those whose intellectual aspirations are least likely to be aroused by the rigid, uncompromising requirements of authoritative, conventionalized institutions of learning.” (pp. 18-19)



20. Martin, E. D. (1926). *The meaning of a liberal education*. Chicago: American Library Association.

Purpose: Martin examines the meaning of adult education. He addresses three rather broad questions: 1) What is an educated person like? 2) How do they differ from the uneducated? 3) Do they think differently and, if so, why?

Excerpt: “It is sought to make of adult education something which will broaden the interests and sympathies of people regardless of their daily occupations – or along with it – to lift men’s (and women’s) thought out of the monotony and drudgery which are the common lot, to free the mind from servitude and herd opinion, to train habits of judgment and or appreciation of value, to carry on the struggle for human excellence in our day and generation, to temper passion with wisdom, to dispel prejudice by better knowledge of self, to enlist all men, in the measure that they have capacity for it, in the achievement of civilization.” (p. 3)



21. Dewey, J. (1991). *The public and its problems*. Ohio University: Swallow Press. (Original work published 1927)

Purpose: Dewey acknowledges that the public has its share of problems -- he identifies some of them, the conditions that contributed to bringing them about, and what he believes should be done to address them.

Excerpt: "Thinking and beliefs should be experimental, not absolutistic, we have in mind a certain logic of method, not, primarily, the carrying on of experimentation like that of laboratories. Such a logic involves the following factors: First, that those concepts, general principles, theories and dialectical developments which are indispensable to any systematic knowledge be shaped and tested as tools of inquiry. Secondly, that policies and proposals for social action be treated as working hypotheses, not as programs to be rigidly adhered to and executed. They will be experimental in the sense that they will be entertained subject to constant and well-equipped observation of the consequences they entail when acted upon, and subject to ready and flexible revision in the light of observed consequences." (pp. 202-203)



22. Thorndike, E. L, Bregman, E. O., Tilton, J. W., & Woodyard, E. (1928). *Adult learning*. New York: The Macmillan Co.

Purpose: Thorndike et.al. provide scientific support to counter the assumption that only youth benefit from structured learning opportunities.

Excerpt: "In general, nobody under forty-five should restrain himself from trying to learn anything because of a belief or fear that he is too old to be able to learn. Nor should he use that fear as an excuse for not learning anything which he ought to learn. If he fails in learning it, inability due directly to age will very rarely, if ever, be the reason. The reason will commonly be one or more of these: He lacks and always has lacked the capacity to that particular thing. His desire to learn it is not strong enough to cause him to give proper attention to it. The ways and means which he adopts are inadequate, and would have been so at any age, to teach him that thing. He has habits or ideas or other tendencies which interfere with the new acquisition, and which he is unable or unwilling to alter." (p. 177)



1930s-1950s

23. Dewey, J. (1998). *How we think: A restatement of the relation of reflective thinking to the educative process*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin. (Original work published 1933)

Purpose: Dewey encourages teachers to reflect upon their classroom practice and adopt instructional strategies that foster reflective thinking.

Excerpt: “Our progress in genuine knowledge always consists in part in the discovery of something not understood in what had previously been taken for granted as plain, obvious, matter-of course, and in part in using meanings that are directly grasped as instruments for getting hold of obscure and doubtful meanings. No object is so familiar, so obvious, so commonplace that it may not unexpectedly present, in a novel situation, some problem, and thus arouse reflection in order to understand it.” (p. 140). “The mind is not a piece of blotting paper that absorbs and retains automatically. It is rather a living organism that has to search for its food, that selects and rejects according to its present conditions and needs, and that retains only what it digests and transmutes into part of the energy of its own being.” (pp. 261-262)



24. Dewey, J. (1991). *A common faith*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press. (Original work published 1934)

Purpose: Dewey encourages readers to wrestle with the meaning of “religious faith” and to examine religious aspects of everyday experience.

Excerpt: “We who now live are parts of a humanity that extends into the remote past, a humanity that has interacted with nature. The things in civilization we most prize are not of ourselves. They exist by grace of the doings and sufferings of the continuous human community in which we are a link. Ours is the responsibility of conserving, transmitting, rectifying and expanding the heritage of values we have received that those who come after us may receive it more solid and secure, more widely accessible and more generously shared than we have received it. Here are all the elements for a religious faith that shall not be confined to sect, class, or race. Such a faith has always been implicitly the common faith of mankind. It remains to make it explicit and militant.” (p. 87)



25. Bryson, L. (1936). *Adult education*. New York: American Book Co.

Purpose: Bryson introduces a new field of academic study; he provides the first adult education textbook.

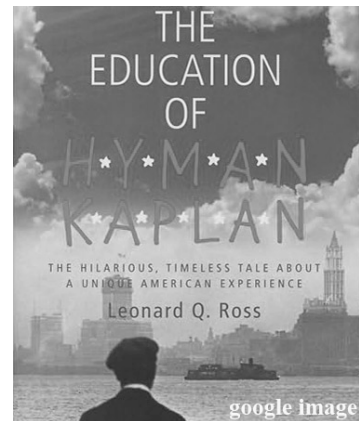
Excerpt: “The great importance of the movement at present is due to the increasing co-operation between public and volunteer agencies for the general betterment of the intellectual climate of the United States.... The words ‘adult education’, being fashionable, are now used to cover a multitude of activities. Many are commercial, as when advertising undertakes to ‘educate’ the people to buy some product of mass fabrication. Without drawing any invidious distinction, the term will be applied here only to activities that are not primarily for profit. We can define adult education as including all the activities with an educational purpose that are carried on by people engaged in the ordinary business of life. Age alone will not suffice to mark off the limits of its clientele.” (pp. 3-4)



26. Rosten, L. (1965). *The education of H*Y*M*A*N K*A*P*L*A*N*. New York: Harcourt Brace & Company. (Original work published 1937)

Purpose: In short stories first published in the *New Yorker*, Rosten, who once taught night school English classes to recent immigrants, creates memorable characters especially the ever hopeful and always entertaining Hyman Kaplan.

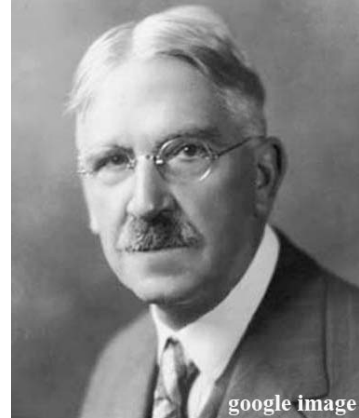
Excerpt (From *Mr. K*A*P*L*A*N's Hobo*): “Perhaps Mr. Parkhill should have known better. Perhaps he should have known Mr. Kaplan better. And yet, in Mr. Parkhill’s conscientious concern for *every* student in the beginners’ grade there could be no discrimination. Despite Mr. Kaplan’s distressing class record, despite his amazing renditions of the English language, Mr. Parkhill insisted on treating him as any other student. Just because Mr. Kaplan referred to rubber heels as ‘robber hills,’ or called a pencil-sharpener a ‘pantsil-chopner,’ was no reason he should not participate in the regular exercises of the class on an equal footing. (Mr. Parkhill had weakened a bit in this resolution when Mr. Kaplan had given the opposite of ‘new’ as ‘second hand.’)” (p. 19)



27. Dewey, J. (1963). *Experience and education*. New York: Macmillan. (Original work published 1938)

Purpose: Dewey draws attention to the “necessary relation between the processes of actual experience and education”.

Excerpt: “Unless a given experience leads out into a field previously unfamiliar no problems arise, while problems are the stimulus to thinking. That the conditions found in present experience should be used as sources of problems is a characteristic which differentiates education based upon experience from traditional education. For in the later, problems were set from outside. Nevertheless, growth depends upon the presence of difficulty to be overcome by the exercise of intelligence. Once more, it is part of the educator’s responsibility to see equally to two things: First, that the problem grows out of conditions of the experience being had in the present, and that it is within the range of the capacity of students; and, secondly, that it is such that it arouses in the learner an active quest for information and for production of new ideas.” (p. 79)



28. Skinner, B. F. (1976). *Walden Two*. New York: Macmillan. (Original work published 1948)

Purpose: Applying firm behavioral science principles, Skinner creates a fictional utopian community of around 1000 residents who seemingly experience full and meaningful lives without the numerous personal, social and environmental problems modern contemporary societies face.

Excerpt: “What we are trying to achieve through our cultural experiments in Walden Two is a way of life which will be satisfying without propaganda and for which, therefore, we won’t have to pay the price of personal stultification. Happiness is our first goal, but an alert and active drive toward the future is our second. We’ll settle for the degree of happiness which has been achieved in other communities or cultures, but we’ll be satisfied with nothing short of the most alert and active group-intelligence yet to appear on the face of the earth.” (p. 194)



29. Leopold, A. (1968). *Sand County almanac and sketches here and there*. Oxford: Oxford University Press. (A Sand County Almanac originally published 1949)

Purpose: Leopold addresses whether the embrace of ‘our modern standard of living’ is worth its cost in things natural, wild, and free.

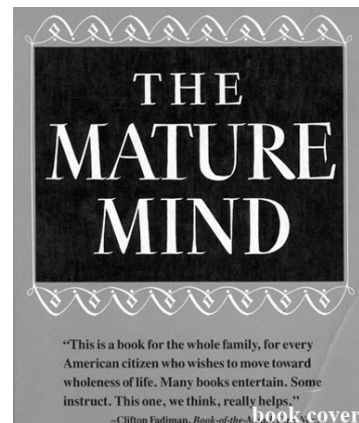
Excerpt: “Do we not already sing our love for and obligation to the land of the free and the home of the brave? Yes, but just what and whom do we love? Certainly not the soil, which we are sending helter-skelter downriver. Certainly not the waters, which we assume have no function except to turn turbines, float barges, and carry off sewage. Certainly not the plants, of which we exterminate whole communities without batting an eye. Certainly not the animals, of which we have already extirpated many of the largest and most beautiful species. A land ethic of course cannot prevent the alteration, management, and use of these ‘resources,’ but it does affirm their right to continued existence, and, at least in spots, their continued existence in a natural state.” (p. 204)



30. Overstreet, H. A. (1984). *The mature mind*. New York: W. W. Norton. (Original work published 1949)

Purpose: Overstreet’s 1950 *New York Times* Bestseller book defines the meaning of psychological maturity and encourages its adoption in the lives of all adults.

Excerpt: “The true way to think of adulthood is to think of it as a stage of life that has a significance no other stage can possess. Adulthood is the time for putting into effect a wisdom about life that childhood and youth are unable as yet even to possess. This is the dignity of the adult. This is his (her) dignity provided he (she) is a mature adult, not one who, arrested in his (her) development, is making time in a prolonged adolescence. What adulthood needs is not hobbies for immature grownups, but helps toward significant and happy maturing. Where there is no vision, we are told, the people perish. Where there is no maturity there is no vision. We now begin to know this. We realize that the evils of our life come not from deep evil within us but from ungrown-up responses to life. This is what our time requires of us. This is what may yet be the saving of us.” (pp. 291-292)



31. Carson, R. (1998). *The sense of wonder*. New York: Harper & Row. (Original work first published in July 1956 in *Woman's Home Companion*)

Purpose: Carson encourages parents to spend time with their children in nature – nurturing child-like curiosity in both parent and child.

Excerpt: “A child’s world is fresh and new and beautiful, full of wonder and excitement. It is our misfortune that for most of us that clear-eyed vision, that true instinct for what is beautiful and awe-inspiring, is dimmed and even lost before we reach adulthood. If I had influence with the good fairy who is supposed to preside over the christening of all children I should ask that her gift to each child in the world be a sense of wonder so indestructible that it would last throughout life, as an unfailing antidote against the boredom and disenchantments of later years, the sterile preoccupation with things that are artificial, the alienation from the sources of our strength.” (p. 54)



1960s-1980s

32. Houle, C. O. (1961). *The inquiring mind: A study of the adult who continues to learn*. Madison, WI: The University of Wisconsin Press.

Purpose: Houle examines the question “What kinds of men and women retain alert and inquiring minds throughout the years of their maturity?”

Excerpt: “As I pondered the cases, considering each one as a whole, it gradually became clear ... that within the group there were in essence three subgroups. The first, or, as they will be called, the *goal-oriented*, are those who use education as a means of accomplishing fairly clear-cut objectives. The second, the *activity-oriented*, are those who take part because they find in the circumstances of the learning a meaning which has no necessary connection, and often no connection at all, with the content of the announced purpose of the activity. The third, the *learning-oriented*, seek knowledge for its own sake. These are not pure types; the best way to represent them pictorially would be by three circles which overlap at their edges. But the central emphasis of each subgroup is clearly discernible.” (pp. 15-16)



33. Friedan, B. (1963). *The feminine mystique*. New York: Dell.

Purpose: Friedan addresses what her research (and own personal experience) suggests is a common dilemma faced by many American women: accept unquestioning the roles assigned to them by others or *choose* a different life, i.e., seek other meanings for their lives.

Excerpt: “The problem lay buried, unspoken, for many years in the minds of American women. It was a strange stirring, a sense of dissatisfaction, a yearning that women suffered in the middle of the twentieth century in the United States. Each suburban wife struggled with it alone. As she made the beds, shopped for groceries, matched slipcover material, ate peanut butter sandwiches with her children, chauffeured Cub Scouts and Brownies, lay beside her husband at night – she was afraid to ask even of herself the silent question – “Is this all?” (p. 11)



34. King, M. L. (1991). The march on Washington address. In D. Ravitch (Ed.), *The American reader: Words that moved a nation* (pp. 331-334). New York: Harper Perennial. (Address presented August 28, 1963)

Purpose: King reminds the nation that *civil rights for all*, as inscribed in the *Declaration of Independence* document, is still only a dream for many citizens.

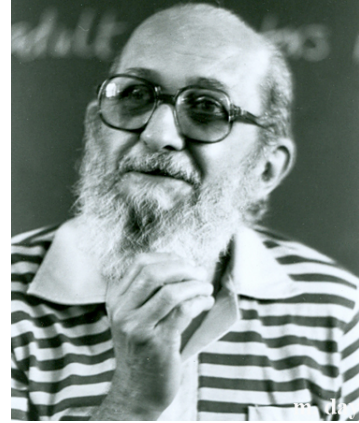
Excerpt: “I have a dream that one day this nation will rise up and live out the true meaning of its creed: ‘We hold these truths to be self-evident; that all men are created equal.’ I have a dream that one day on the red hills of Georgia the sons of former slaves and the sons of former slaveowners will be able to sit down together at the table of brotherhood I have a dream that my four little children will one day live in a nation where they will not be judged by the color of their skin but by the content of their character. I have a dream today.” (p. 333)



35. Freire, P. (1970). *Pedagogy of the oppressed*. New York: The Seabury Press.

Purpose: Freire shares his experience and thinking as an educator working with oppressed peoples using a dialogical and problem-posing form of education.

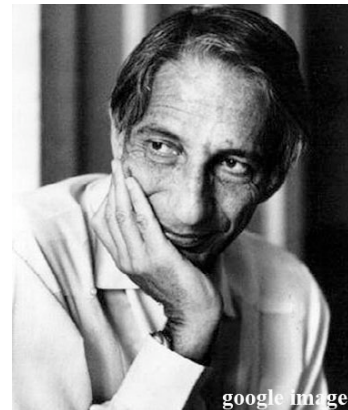
Excerpt: “True dialogue cannot exist unless the dialoguers engage in critical thinking – thinking which discerns an indivisible solidarity between the world and men and admits of no dichotomy between – thinking which perceives reality as process, as transformation, rather than as a static entity – thinking which does not separate itself from action, but constantly immerses itself in temporality without fear of the risks involved. Critical thinking contrasts with naïve thinking, which sees ‘historical time as a weight, a stratification of the acquisitions and experiences of the past’, from which the present should emerge normalized and ‘well-behaved’.” (pp. 80-81)



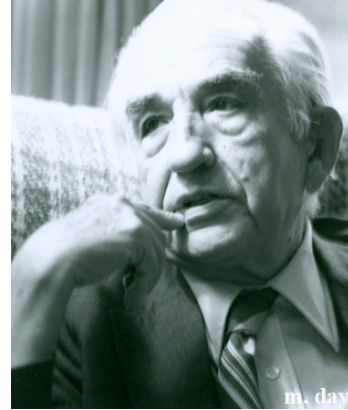
36. Illich, I. (1970). *Deschooling society*. New York: Perennial Library.

Purpose: Illich argues for the replacement of current “western” structures of obligatory schooling with *educational webs* so as to heighten *learning, sharing, and caring*.

Excerpt: “Schooling has become the world religion of a modernized proletariat, and makes futile promises of salvation to the poor of the technological age. The nation-state has adopted it, drafting all citizens into a graded curriculum leading to sequential diplomas not unlike the initiation rituals and hieratic promotions of former times. The modern state has assumed the duty of enforcing the judgment of its educators through well-meant truant officers and job requirements, much as did the Spanish kings who enforced the judgments of their theologians through the conquistadors and the Inquisition.” (p. 15)



37. McClusky, H. Y. (1990). A differential psychology of the adult potential. In M. Knowles, *The adult learner: A neglected species*, 4th Ed (pp. 146-162). Houston: Gulf Publishing. (Original work published in S. M. Grabowski, Ed. *Adult learning and instruction*, 1970, pp. 80-95)



Purpose: McClusky introduces a concept for understanding an adult's willingness to participate in new learning activities: MARGIN.

Excerpt: "Margin is a function of the relationship of Load to Power. In simplest terms Margin is surplus Power. It is Power available to a person over and beyond that required to handle his (her) Load. By Load we mean the demands made on a person by self and society. By Power we mean the resources, i.e. abilities, position, allies, etc. which a person can command in coping with Load. Margin may be increased by reducing Load or increasing Power, or it may be decreased by increasing Load and/or reducing Power.... If a person is able to lay hold of a reserve (Margin) of Power, he (she) is better equipped to meet unforeseen emergencies, is better positioned to take risks, can engage in exploratory, creative activities, is more likely to learn, etc., to do those things that enable him (her) to live above a plateau of mere self subsistence." (p. 149)

38. Adler, M., & Van Doren, C. (1972). *How to read a book*. New York: Simon & Schuster.



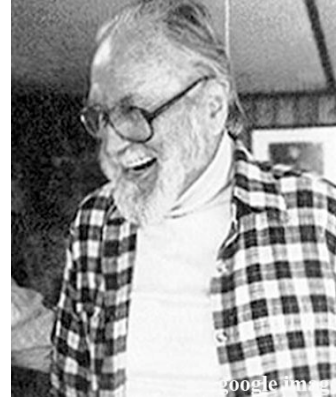
Purpose: Adler and Van Doren provide numerous helpful suggestions for helping adults read more actively, reflectively and critically.

Excerpt: "To pass from understanding less to understanding more by your own intellectual effort in reading is something like pulling yourself up by your bootstraps. It certainly feels that way. It is a major exertion. Obviously, it is a more active kind of reading than you have done before, entailing not only more varied activity but also much more skill in the performance of the various acts required. Obviously, too, the things that are usually regarded as more difficult to read, and hence as only for the better reader, are those that are more likely to deserve and demand this kind of reading." (p. 8)

39. Adams, F. (1975). *Unearthing seeds of fire: The idea of Highlander*. Winston-Salem, NC: John F. Blair.

Purpose: Adams shares the story of Highlander Folk School, begun in 1932, and the man who created it: Myles Horton.

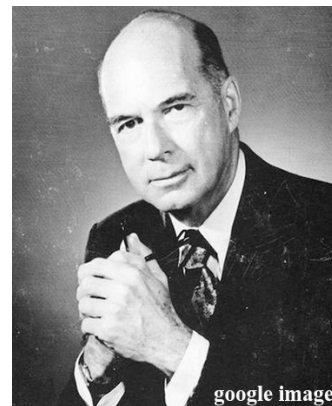
Excerpt: “Education at Highlander had to be problem-centered, and the problem had to be the people’s, not Highlander’s. ... Horton soon learned that poor people were usually quiet around strangers, or people they considered ‘well-spoken,’ meaning educated. When asked a question, some might take half an hour before answering. They’d be puzzling what the question meant, what words to use in reply, even why the other person had asked the question. Only as the staff came to understand the people and their ways of life, did they learn how to hear what the people wanted to learn or find within themselves enough security to move away from traditional academic methods. Once they stopped trying to teach in the way they had been taught, mutual learning could begin.” (p. 46)



40. McLeish, J. A. B. (1976). *The Ulyssean adult: Creativity in the middle and later years*. Toronto: McGraw-Hill Ryerson.

Purpose: McLeish focuses on creativity in the later years (from the mid-50s on), that life “can be lived actively and creatively, rather than reactively and listlessly.”

Excerpt: “Courage is the most striking quality evinced by Ulysses in his search for new experience. He is famous, it is true, for other characteristics – shrewdness and cunning, resourcefulness, loyalty to comrades, and an all-too-human capacity for cruel revenge upon those who have hurt him or his family or who endangered his honour. But his courage is so strong a feature of his nature that when it is combined with his unremitting sense of quest and his frequent loneliness and hardships, the result is a person not only heroic but movingly human – perhaps throughout history and legend the most human and heartwarming of all heroes.” (p. 13)



41. Knowles, M. (1970). *The modern practice of adult education: Andragogy versus pedagogy*. New York: Association Press.

Purpose: Knowles introduces a comprehensive theory intended to guide adult education practice.

Excerpt: “Adult-education theorists in both Europe (especially in Germany and Yugoslavia) and in North America are rapidly developing a distinctive theory of adult learning. And from this theory is evolving a new technology for the education of adults. To distinguish it from pedagogy (the art and science of teaching children), this new technology is being given a new name: ‘andragogy,’ which is based on the Greek word *aner* (with the stem *andr-*) meaning ‘man.’ Andragogy is, therefore, the art and science of helping adults learn. But I believe that andragogy means more than just helping adults learn; I believe it means helping human beings learn, and that it therefore has implications for the education of children and youth. For I believe that the process of maturing toward adulthood begins early in a child’s life and that as he (she) matures he (she) takes on more and more of the characteristics of the adult on which andragogy is based.” (pp. 38-39)



42. Russell, W. (1981). *Educating Rita*. London: Samuel French.

Purpose: Russell’s two-character play is about Frank, a middle age rather disillusioned British Open University teacher/tutor and his adult student Rita, a hairdresser. It was made into a popular movie in 1983 starring Julie Walters and Michael Caine.

Excerpt from the play:

Frank: Do you want to abandon the course?

Rita: No, No!

Frank: When art and literature begin to take the place of life itself, perhaps it’s time to ...

Rita: (emphatically) But it’s not takin’ the place of life, it’s providin’ me with life itself. He (Rita’s husband) wants to take life away from me; he wants me to stop rockin’ the coffin, that’s all. Comin’ here (to Frank’s university office), doin’ this (studying literature in an Open University course), it’s given me more life than I’ve had in years, an’ he should be able to see that. Well, if he doesn’t want me when I’m alive I’m certainly not just gonna lie down an’ die for him. I told him I’d only have a baby when I had choice. He thinks we’ve got choice because we can go into a pub that sells eight different kinds of lager. (p. 23)



43. Adler, M. (1984). *A vision of the future*. New York: Macmillan.

Purpose: Adler shares twelve ideas he believes can help make adult life fuller and more meaningful, both personally and socially; the discussion of *six parts of life* is especially stimulating.

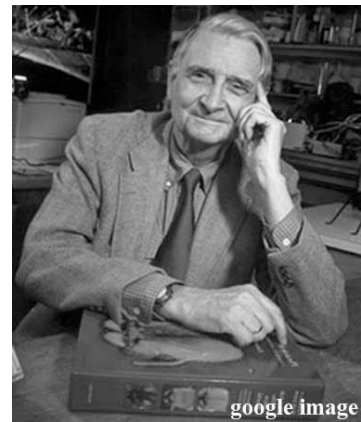
Excerpt: “In sharp contrast, the form of work that is pure leisuring does not aim at wealth, neither the necessities of a livelihood nor the amenities of a decent life, but aims rather at living well, a morally good human life. Leisuring is, therefore, morally obligatory, even though it is neither biologically nor economically necessary. The goods or values that leisuring aims at and achieves are goods that perfect the human person individually and also contribute to the welfare of the society in which the individual lives.” (p. 15)



44. Wilson, E. O. (1984). *Biophilia*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.

Purpose: Wilson argues the case for the innate existence of biophilia in all human organisms: “the innate tendency to focus on life and lifelike processes.”

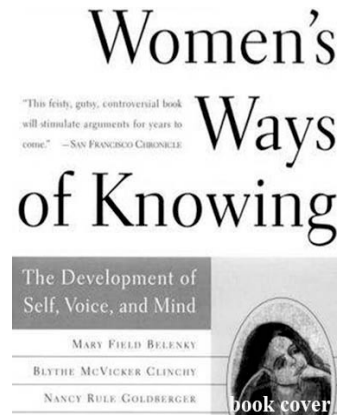
Excerpt: “I have argued in this book that we are human in good part because of the particular way we affiliate with other organisms. They are the matrix in which the human mind originated and is permanently rooted, and they offer the challenge and freedom innately sought. To the extent that each person can feel like a naturalist, the old excitement of the untrammelled world will be regained. I offer this as a formula of reenchantment to invigorate poetry and myth: mysterious and little known organisms live within walking distance of where you sit. Splendor awaits in minute proportions.” (p. 139)



45. Belenky, M. F., Clinchy, B. M., Goldberger, N. R., & Tarule, J. (1986). *Women's ways of knowing: The development of self, voice, and mind*. New York: Basic Books.

Purpose: Belenky et.al. share findings from interviews with 135 women (how they view the world in which they live, how they “draw conclusion about truth, knowledge, and authority”); five differing perspectives are described.

Excerpt: “We have argued in this book that educators can help women develop their own authentic voices if they emphasize connection over separation, understanding and acceptance over assessment, and collaboration over debate; if they accord respect to and allow time for the knowledge that emerges from firsthand experience; if instead of imposing their own expectations and arbitrary requirements, they encourage students to evolve their own patterns of work based on the problems they are pursuing. These are the lessons we have learned in listening to women’s voices.” (p. 229)



1990s-2100s

46. Takaki, R. (1993). *A different mirror: A history of multicultural America*. Boston: Back Bay Books.

Purpose: Takaki provides a view of America’s past from a comparative (multicultural) perspective, via the stories of the many diverse ethnic groups who shaped the country.

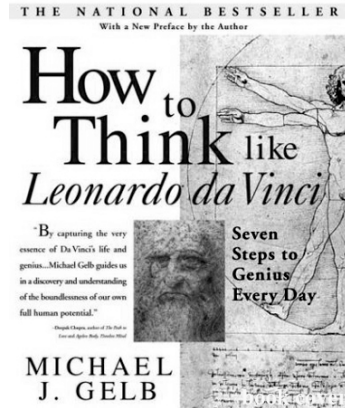
Excerpt: “As Americans, we originally came from many different shores, and our diversity has been at the center of the making of America. While our stories contain the memories of different communities, together they inscribe a larger narrative. Filled with what Walt Whitman celebrated as the ‘varied carols’ of America, our history generously gives all of us our ‘mystic chords of memory.’ Throughout our past of oppressions and struggles for equality, Americans of different races and ethnicities have been ‘singing with open mouths their strong melodious songs’ in the textile mills of Lowell, the cotton fields of Mississippi, on the Indian reservations of South Dakota, the railroad tracks high in the Sierras of California, in the garment factories of the Lower East Side, the canefields of Hawaii, and a thousand other places across the country.” (p. 428)



47. Gelb, M. J. (2004). *How to think like Leonardo da Vinci: Seven steps to genius everyday*. New York: Bantam Dell. (Original work published 1998)

Purpose: Gelb shares seven fundamentals of Leonardo da Vinci's approach to lifelong learning so as to assist readers experience their own surroundings more fully.

Excerpt: "The essence of Leonardo's legacy is the inspiration for wisdom and light to triumph over fear and darkness. In his never-ending quest for truth and beauty, art and science were married through the ministry of experience and perception. His unique synthesis of logic and imagination, of reason and romance, has challenged, inspired, and baffled scholars through the ages. History's greatest master of science and art has achieved the status of myth. In an age of specialization and fragmentation, Leonardo da Vinci shines forth as a beacon of wholeness, reminding us of what it can mean to be created in the image of our Creator." (p. 259)



48. Dawson, G., & Glaubman, R. (2000). *Life is so good: One man's extraordinary journey through the 20th century and how he learned to read at age 98*. New York: Random House.

Purpose: Dawson, with the assistance of author Richard Glaubman, shares a story of life, struggle and hope that spanned the 20th Century.

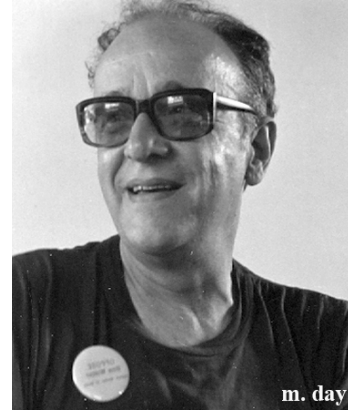
Excerpt: "I always had a dream that I would learn to read. It was my secret that I couldn't read. There was nothing I couldn't do and my mind was as good as anyone's. That's just how it was. All my life, I had been just too busy working to go to school. I kept it a secret that I couldn't read. My mind worked hard. When I traveled somewhere, I could never read a sign. I had to ask people things and had to remember. I could never let my mind forget anything, never let my mind take a vacation." (p. 224)



49. Ohliger, J. (2001). Does adult education exist? In M. Day (Ed.) *Proceedings from the Jackson Hole symposium on graduate study in adult education and instructional technology* (pp. 13-17). Laramie, WY: University of Wyoming.

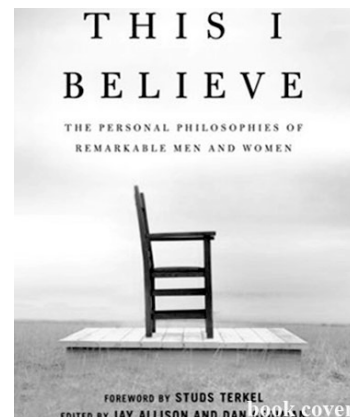
Purpose: Ohliger shares thoughts on a variety of themes related to graduate study in adult education.

Excerpt: “If Hope is White, What Color is Courage: These viewpoints may seem totally devoid of hope, and so they may be. But hope – actually expectation – has been for too long the packaged product adult educators – both entrepreneurial and radical – peddle. Perhaps instead we should offer courage. It can’t be sold, and we can’t claim to possess it ourselves. Courage is not foolhardy and finds healthy confirmation only in group action. So if we want to offer it we must join in the action. Let our fresh directions then come from: *Vows begin when hope dies* (Leonardo da Vinci) and *Courage lost, all is lost* (Goethe).” (p. 16)



50. Kamps, R. (2006) Living life with “grace and elegant treeness”. In J. Allison & D. Gediman (Eds.), *This I believe: The personal philosophies of remarkable men and women* (pp. 135-137). New York: Holt Paperbacks.

Purpose: Extending invitations to people “to write a few hundred words expressing the core principles that guide your life,” book editors provide a collection of these brief essays – one is by Ruth Kamps, a retired elementary schoolteacher in rural Wisconsin.



Excerpt from Ruth Kamps’s essay: “Sitting on our small deck, knitting and resting old legs, I am entertained by my spiritual sister, an equally old pine tree. She is very tall, probably forty feet or so, and is at least as old as I am. She leans a bit; so do I. In her care are many birds that I watch with pleasure. They love and fight and nest in the tree. ... There are those who want to give my life more importance than the tree, but I don’t believe them. They think there is a special place for me somewhere for eternity, but I don’t believe them. I believe my tree and all other living things believe and feel in their particular living ways. I want to work on being as good a human as I am able, just as my tree does her job with grace and elegant treeness.” (pp. 135-137)

51. Wlodkowski, R. J. (2008). *Enhancing adult motivation to learn: A comprehensive guide for teaching all adults*, 3rd Ed. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Purpose: Wlodkowski introduces a 4-part *Motivational Framework for Cultural Responsive Teaching*; he also discusses 60 motivation strategies instructors might consider applying when working with adult learners.

Excerpt: “Motivation planning works best when it is integrated throughout the entire lesson. All the examples of instructional design or planning are anchored in theories and strategies that support adult intrinsic motivation to learn. Planning carefully with adult motivation in mind not only helps us to be more effective instructors, it avoids a serious pitfall common to teaching: blaming learners for being unresponsive to instruction. When instructors design a lesson without the enhancement of learner motivation as a consideration threaded throughout its composition, they do not have a motivationally based plan to analyze for possible solutions to motivational difficulties that arise during instruction.” (p. 115)

