

Sharan B. Merriam, Rosemary S. Caffarella, and Lisa M. Baumgartner, *Learning in Adulthood: A Comprehensive Guide, 3rd ed.* (San Francisco, CA: John Wiley & Sons/Jossey-Bass, 2007), 533 pp.

During my Supervisory CPE training and while serving as a graduate teaching assistant, I gained valuable hands-on experience about how adults learn and how I could be a more effective educator. Yet I often felt I had shaky theoretical moorings for my pedagogical practice because I did not possess a good mental grasp of the breadth of educational theory. It is to remedy dilemmas like mine that Merriam and her colleagues have authored this text—it is thus a most welcome resource.

Learning in Adulthood is organized into four parts. The first section concentrates on contextual factors that influence North American adult education, such as demographics, globalization, and technology; formal, nonformal (i.e., local, community-based, and voluntarily organized), and informal (everyday, spontaneous, and self-directed) settings; and parsing the concept of participation in learning. These chapters set the table for part two, which focuses on adult learning paradigms, including Malcolm Knowles's classic andragogical model, self-directed models, transformational models (e.g., Mezirow and Freire), and experiential learning models (e.g., Dewey, Kolb, and Schön). In part three, the authors turn from a cognitive emphasis toward a more holistic perspective, which for them includes embodied, spiritual, and narrative learning modalities, as well as giving attention to non-Western lenses (Confucian, Hindu, Islamic, Maori, and African) and to power dynamics, post-modernism, and feminist theory. Following this cluster is part four, addressing developmental issues. Merriam et al present five traditional learning orientations (behaviorism, humanism, cognitivism, social cognitive learning, and constructivism); four angles on understanding adult human development (biological aging, psychological change, sociocultural dimensions, and integrative theories); a look at cognitive development (the realm of Piaget, Kohlberg, Perry, Kegan, and Belenky et al); an exploration of intelligence and the processes of aging; and a tour of the intersection of memory, thinking, and the brain. The final chapter, "Reflections on Learning in Adulthood," is the authors' effort to articulate their own conception of how a learner engages an educational process in a given context to achieve learning.

As this summary implies and the text's subtitle asserts, this book is ambitious in scope and, in many ways, the authors' discussions match their broad aspirations. A key strength of the text is the authors' critical analysis of the

theories they describe. They conscientiously critique each model they present, highlighting its strengths and advantages. In that same spirit, I venture to say that the very comprehensiveness of this volume occasionally leads to redundancy—such as explaining a theory several times at different points in the text. Further, the logic of placing the fourth part (and especially the chapter on traditional learning orientations) so late in the book was puzzling, as was the authors' seeming unawareness of Parker Palmer's work, given their emphasis on spirituality in education. Yet even with these flaws, Merriam and her collaborators have created a very useful tool for all of us who first hear a call toward spiritual caregiving and then find ourselves teaching, supervising, and offering formation to others seeking to learn this unique art.

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David O. Jenkins and P. Alice Rogers, eds., *Equipping the Saints: Best Practices in Contextual Theological Education* (Cleveland, OH: Pilgrim Press, 2010), 192 pp.

This collection of reflections had its genesis in a self-study of the contextual education program at Atlanta's Candler School of Theology, where David Jenkins and Alice Rogers were the program's co-directors. As part of their research, Jenkins and Rogers visited numerous other schools to observe practices of theological field education. They were intrigued by the variety of practices encountered in their visits—practices deeply shaped by a school's values, contexts, and relationships. Curious about this diversity and supported with a grant from the Lilly Endowment, in 2007 they invited representatives from thirteen seminaries to come together to share "best practices" in contextual education. *Equipping the Saints* grew out of these conversations.

The book is organized into two parts. Part One consists of seven chapters, each written by a different author, focusing on "Institutional Values that Shape Best Practices." In the opening chapter, entitled "The Evolution of Theological Field Education," Emily Click provides an invaluable review of changes that have taken place over time in theological field education. She then defines three basic models used in teaching ministerial reflec-