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AUTHOR Rosen, Sumner M.
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ABSTRACT

There is a difference between the past and the present needs of the immigrants to America's urban areas; therefore the provision of relevant programs is tied to the awareness of existing conditions. Industry has moved to the suburbs and there has been an increase in service-oriented occupations. To meet the challenge posed by the changes, we need to develop a strategy of looking at the service itself, at its functions, and asking how to design, create, and provide a more meaningful, humane system of education, health, and social services. The recall of retired teachers and other professionals is not the solution. The writer advocates integration so that at every level that a human being functions in a human service agency, his training or education enables him to function adequately and competently. With this in mind, nurses' aides who are given additional responsibility when the professional nurses are absent need more training. Furthermore, shortages can be met by recruitment of teachers' and nurses' aides from a vast reservoir of motivated, interested individuals in the city. (NL)

New Careers and Adult Education

Sumner M. Rosen
Director of Research
New Careers Development Center
New York University

I am going to try to describe some of the fundamental challenges and issues with which adult educators and the establishments they represent must come to grips in the years immediately ahead. I use that word establishment deliberately--partly for provocative purposes, partly because I think it is true that educators are, at least as seen from some perspectives, part of an established institution representing established values, priorities, and procedures. What I have to say concerns the changes that I think are required on your part and on the part of others whom you are in a position to influence.

I want to begin with the urban crisis, and to connect this crisis with the tradition of adult education, a tradition which I respect. That tradition was created during the great wave of immigration in this country in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Many of you, your ancestors, and certainly mine were the direct beneficiaries of the massive effort that was made to acculturate millions of immigrants to this country, to this society, to its system, and to its economy. This effort enabled them to live as Americans and to earn their livings in an increasingly urban society. In sheer quantitative terms, this was perhaps the greatest single success in the history of any adult education enterprise of any country.

However, our topic is not past triumphs but present challenges, not old but new immigrants--the 1,700,000 Negroes who migrated, mostly

from the South, to the cities of the North between 1950 and 1963. The census of 1960 (which missed entirely a substantial proportion of the young Negro males in the central cities) revealed that in the ten cities with the largest number of black Americans, 43 per cent of the Negro population, or 1,900,000 of 4,500,000 Negroes, were born in the South. They are immigrants in every sense of the word, transported at their own expense from one life and culture to another, plunked down in the central city possessing virtually none of the qualifications and none of the handles on which to hang any meaningful opportunity for themselves.

The situation which faces these new immigrants differs in very important respects from that which faced the immigrants of two or three generations ago. In those days it required only minimal intellectual or mental or physical equipment to enable an immigrant to connect with the economy in a way which would yield him some modicum of employment and opportunity. American industry was then urban-based in very large measure; the major cities were the centers of industrial employment and industrial activity. Those industries included among themselves very large unskilled and semi-skilled components. There was also a very high rate of growth in the economy then. For people who sought the self-employment route, the entry costs--social, psychological, and financial--for self-employment were relatively low, quite modest, as all the data we have seem to show. It was possible under those conditions for people with a relatively modest educational background and equipment--literacy, some acculturation, and a few simple rules of thumb--to become employed or self-employed, because of the nature

of the economy and its relationship to what was then the massive supply of labor represented by that immigrant generation.

In 1968, industry has largely deserted the central cities. Decentralization is real. Successive waves of investment have taken the major industrial activities of our country further and further from our central cities, further and further to the suburbs and into the rural areas, into the Southwest, the Mid-West--closer to raw materials and to new markets, further away from the traditional sources of labor supply. The move away from the cities has been a response to the growing diseconomies of functioning in the city itself--high land costs, crowding, high labor costs, high costs of energy, raw materials, transports, etc. For various positive reasons--cheaper transportation costs, shorter distances to new markets, a more plentiful labor supply--it has come to make more sense for corporate managers these days to design and build large-scale, modern, highly automated plants many miles from the nearest central city, linked by rail or highway to markets and to centers of raw materials.

Industry itself has become significantly less important in economic life. Its place has been taken up more and more by the service sector of the economy, by the non-manual area of work. Even within industry itself we have seen an increasing shift from the direct to the indirect worker; that is, to increasing numbers of people with an indirect relation to production--in quality control, sales, planning, engineering, etc. In some industries, such as chemicals and petroleum, the proportion of indirect workers, most of whom wear white collars and business suits, is as high as thirty or

forty per cent, as compared to ratios which were much lower a generation or two ago. The American economy is becoming increasingly a white collar economy, which means that the stress on employment qualifications tend to move more and more from informal skill possession to more formalized and credentialized qualifications for entering employment, or for career advancement. This credential notion is central to our discussion, and to the problem that you face.

We have had a similar or related development in terms of the acculturation of our new immigrant masses. There has been a serious failure of central city urban school system to provide a decent quality of literacy and education to most minority group children; and the data show, as I am sure you know, that there is very little distinction between the quality of education delivered to the children who are themselves first or second generation immigrants from the South, and that delivered to the children of native-born Negro New Yorkers or Chicagoans or Bostonians. The failure in terms of literacy, of mathematics, of basic tools has been massive. The schools are only the most prominent and dramatic example of the failure of urban institutions vis-a-vis this new immigrant population. Our systems of health, welfare, and justice are in equally bad shape.

As for self-employment, the traditional American route for those who want something different, this is no longer possible in production, or in retail sales, or in the "Mom-and-Pop" enterprises out of which so many modest but stable middle class situations have been built in the last two generations. The criteria for effective and successful self-employment rest now on a strong technical base with a lot of professional input. The new enterprises of today, such

as marketing, communications, and scientific consulting firms, are largely built and staffed by people with at least college degrees and very often advanced degrees in one or more technical area, or by people with a very special talent nurtured in middle class and upper class situations.

The result of these forces, the result of these two kinds of movements--one on the immigrant side and the other on the employment side, is a central city population which is now confined to the city for a variety of reasons, having less, I think, to do with bias and prejudice and discrimination than with the economic locks that keep people tied to the city. There may be a "conspiracy" to deny the new immigrants suburban housing or to discriminate against them in employment, but this is less serious than the economic locks. Were overt prejudice to vanish miraculously, the central city population with which we are concerned would continue to be very much as I have described it. People who are confined to the central city and to the worst sections of it, who are almost completely without equipment to face the employment challenge and to take advantage of any meaningful employment opportunity, face, in short, a comprehensive set of barriers which keep them where they are and continue to deepen the tensions and polarize the differences within our society.

It is out of this nexus that we have the cauldron of social tension and social pressure, the really serious dangers that confront us in urban America today. Though this is a bleak picture, it hardly exaggerates the situation. If anything, I've understated and omitted some of the factors that make the situation of the central

city populations even more hopeless and desperate than it appears to the casual reader of newspaper headlines.

I would like to turn from that description to try to deal with some elements of diagnosis, prognosis, and, hopefully, solution. I will focus later in this discussion on the critical role of education and particularly adult education. If we are looking for strategies for solving the employment opportunity-income dilemma and the blockages that I've described, we might begin by identifying where the major absorbers of labor are likely to be in our society in the decades ahead. What are the growth sectors? Clearly they are not in manufacturing, not in the traditional absorbers of unskilled and semi-skilled labor which for so long acted as blotters to soak up surplus labor. Very few sons of workers today become workers, as I am sure you are aware, except in those enclaves like the building trades where a whole series of institutional factors provide and maintain a cozy monopoly for the favored few at the expense of the many. But the sons of workers do not become workers either by their fathers' or by their own choice, just as the sons of farmers no longer become farmers--and for very good reasons.

The major absorbers in labor in our society in the future will be in the service sector, and not only in those private service sectors, such as banking, insurance, and so on. Much more dramatic and much more exciting in their possibilities are the areas of health, education, social services, crime prevention, narcotics prevention, and a whole range of publicly supported and publicly provided services. Many have predicted that education will become the second or third

largest industry in this country in ten or twenty years. Education and health together may end up employing twenty-five or thirty-five per cent of the entire labor force before another generation has passed.

When one looks at these sectors--health, education, welfare--one of the first things discussed in the literature is the shortage of professional personnel. The advent of Medicare and of Medicaid, for example, put an enormous squeeze on the existing supply, the existing facilities for health care, particularly for the aged, and private doctor services; doctor's fees began to escalate, and there have been some scandals and much discussion about that problem. There has been good deal of profit-making on the one hand, but there has also been political pressure to cut back the level of benefits. This has not yet happened with Medicare, but it has certainly happened with Medicaid, not only by act of Congress but in my own state; New York put through a $100,000,000 reduction in the level of Medicaid which has a direct impact on the health and, in fact, on the lives of many millions of poor people who qualified for Medicaid a year ago, and now find themselves cut off. Their "fault" was that they responded for the first time in their lives to the opportunity to have decent medical care, and as a result swamped the facilities and panicked the politicians, who then took it out not on the doctors, nor on the profiteers, but on the poor people themselves as the most helpless, the least able to defend themselves.

These personnel shortages are real--shortages of teachers, doctors, social workers. Every professional journal and every professional

meeting deals with it, and one hears one hundred and one strategies for dealing with the shortage problem. The mayor of New York issued an emergency call some months ago to all the retired nurses to come out of retirement and out of the home back into the hospital, because they were desperately needed. Teachers are similarly recruited by school boards who offer them split days or split sessions or split weeks or some other combination of benefits if they will only come in and man these desperately crowded and undermanned classrooms.

I would strongly suggest that this is the wrong way not only to fill but even to define the shortage. The shortage is not one of traditional professionals doing the traditional professional job, and the way to deal with the shortage is not to have crash programs to multiply the number of medical schools, teachers' colleges, and nursing schools in this country in order to somehow catch up with the need. The need will forever be ahead of any plausible scenario along these lines. We need new kinds of strategies for dealing with the shortage. To develop that strategy one has to look at the service itself, at its functions and ask the question, not how do we get more doctors, more nurses, more teachers, but how do we design, how do we create and provide a more meaningful, a more relevant, a more responsive, a more humane system of education, or health services, or social welfare services, or crime prevention, or delinquency prevention, or paroles, or corrections, or prisons.

When you make this kind of list, and then examine each of those institutions, they have in common two interesting factors: they are short of professionals, and they are derelict in their performance.

Health care in this country is a failure, not only for the poor but for the middle classes of this country. It is the most expensive system in the world and one of the less effective. If you look at mortality, morbidity, infant mortality rates, public health data for a dozen countries, some of them with per capita income one-tenth of ours, and compare them with the United States, you begin to see the dimensions of that problem.

The social welfare industry or establishment is in such bad trouble that even its practitioneers are hard put to come up with meaningful defenses of the traditional procedures of the social workers and the social welfare agencies in our society. They simply do not function.

The connection between these failures to function and the problem of manpower shortages is at the heart of what I will call the New Careers analysis of the employment problems in our society. If one want to deal meaningfully with the shortage question, one has to begin by dealing with the service question. The services must be reorganized. This reorganization has among its purposes the lowering of what a colleague has called the "center of gravity" for the delivery of services. We now know that in many of the tasks that are done, that are concerned with education, or health, whether it's prevention or treatment or diagnosis; or social welfare, whether it's casework or community relations; one can find many separable elements or components of the service, which can be provided by people without the full credential traditionally required of professional practitioners. It does not take a social worker with a master's degree, or a nurse

with a baccalaureate or a diploma in nursing, or a public health nurse or a school teacher with a baccalaureate degree and minimum number of courses in education and a certificate, to do meaningful work in the classroom or in the clinic or in the street or in the home or wherever people are who need these services.

The traditional format, by which people have pursued educational goals for the first twenty or twenty-five years of their lives, and then moved from education into a career line, is an inappropriate and inadequate model of staffing, training, and manning the human service agencies, which are going to be the major employers of our society in the next generation and two generations. We have to find ways to break up the two monolithic and mutually exclusive routines of education and careers, and interweave them in such a way that education and work and training are carried on together as part of one's life, until one reaches the limits of one's aspiration, one's potential, one's energy, and one's ability to contribute--if indeed there are such limits. Those limits will vary in ways we do not yet know among people whose potential we often assume to be limited and measureable. Most of us, the practising professionals, are the beneficiaries and the products of the traditional system of education followed by work. Today there are millions of people for whom that route, that pattern, no longer applies.

The integration which I am advocating requires that at every level at which a human being functions in a human service agency, his or her training and education should enable him to function at that level adequately and competently, with a real sense of status, dignity,

self-fulfillment, and contribution. In the hospitals in New York City, where we developed some programs a few years ago, we found that the 8,000 nurses aides who manned the New York City hospital system were required to replace hundreds and hundreds of missing nurses, who couldn't be found, couldn't be hired, and, when they were hired, couldn't be kept. And yet in the design of the training program in those hospitals, in their remuneration systems, in their status and hierarchical systems (and there is no more rigid system of status and hierarchy than a modern hospital, as anyone who has been a patient or a practitioner will know), the nurse's aides were considered less than fully human. They really had no formal role except the most routine, and they had no opportunity for training or upgrading. In many cases they saved patient's lives, but they could have saved more if they had known more. No one took the trouble to think that they might want to know more. Nurses often believe that information is for them and other professionals to know, to have and to understand, and that nonprofessionals don't need it, aren't entitled to it, wouldn't understand it. Nurses's aides in hospital nurseries often spend frustrating hours trying to figure out what is wrong with babies in order to know what to do. There may be no nurse to ask, because nurses work from 9 to 5, but babies get sick all around the clock. Nurse's aides need to be equipped to function in these roles, even if they remain nurse's aides, and they are not now so equipped. Similarly, case aides in welfare departments must be enabled to function as case aides, and so forth. But this is not the heart of the matter. The key question is opportunity. Aides must be enabled

to take the next step toward whatever is required to move up the career ladder and to open up the career options that are, in principle, available in our social service systems. As you know, these options are very rich for those who come into them with the meaningful credentials. People with master's degrees and Ph.D.'s can not only operate in, but often end up ruling, redesigning, and taking possessions of these systems; their credentials enable them to do that. The professional elite have been the beneficiaries of our traditional educational system. The argument that we make is an argument for opening up access to that system for people who come into it with nothing more than their bodies, their motivation, and their potentials. These potentials have to be understood and recognized.

When we proposed that it would make sense to fill the nursing shortage in New York City by training nurse's aides to become nurses, we were told by nursing administrators, "That's a very good idea in principle, but we've already tried that, and it doesn't work. Nurse's aides are not motivated. We know because we know nurse's aides very well; we've worked very closely with them for 20 or 25 years, and they just are not interested in nursing, nor are they able to become nurses." They are right, if you define nursing or other professional education in conventional terms, if you apply criteria for entry which automatically screen out people who don't resemble those already in the system, and if you require of recruits a performance which is based on the internalization and the acceptance of conventional middle class values of aspiration, ambition, achievement, education and so on. But if you separate the core of content from the

traditional technique of delivery of that content, and make the content susceptible to new and innovative ways of being taught, then magical things can happen. The nurse's aides, supposedly "not interested" and "not qualified" nonetheless responded in overwhelming numbers to the opportunity to participate in a training-upgrading program, even though it meant for them great personal sacrifices and considerable hardship for their families.

These women were largely Negroes in their 30's and 40's who had been out of school ten, fifteen, twenty years and who were being asked to go back into a school situation combined with work for fourteen months, with virtually no time off. At the end of that fourteen months, if they were successful, they would get a state license to be a practical nurse. They would then wear a white uniform and they would function as professionals rather than as hired hands at the bottom of the hierarchy. Of the 8,000 people who were asked whether they'd be interested, 3,000 said yes. When the applications went out we had 2,400 applications from which we were required to choose 450 people. That's the measure of the gap between the resources that were available and the innate motivation of the victims of that particular system.

If you did exactly the same thing in a public school system, if you asked people in the community, "Do you want to be teachers of your own children? Do you want to function in those schools not just as an angry or alienated parent, but as a teacher?"--the answer would be yes. An apprenticeship system leading from teacher aide to assistant

teacher to associate teacher and finally to classroom teacher, would do the job. The problem is to make that opportunity available.

Solving that problem requires that we challenge seriously many of the assumptions behind professionalism and professional practice in our society, including the processes of accreditation and licensing. Research is required to create the kind of rational job assignments, job work molecules, and work task groups which can be performed by people at various levels of training and education. There is no reason to rely on the existing hierarchical, often highly irrational assignment of tasks which monopolizes prestige and meaningful work for the professional and assigns to everybody else meaningless, dead-end make-work.

Adult educators may have a better insight into this problem, and be better equipped to deal with it, than do their colleagues in the main educational establishment, who do not often understand that adults not only can be but want to be educated and trained in meaningful ways--provided that there is payoff for this education and this training. And because education is a very status-conscious, very credential-conscious, very hierarchical system, even if they understand this fact, they may feel threatened by a "lowering of standards." It will take a lot of analysis, discussion, and pressure to persuade people who think they have everything to lose from change to understand that change is necessary. It will also take much applied research to devise innovative ways of providing necessary, partial, sequential accreditation and training for people who cannot leave their jobs and families to go into full-time education or even evening education.

Every one of us in our professional training received a good deal of in-service training as part of our educational assignment. Whether one went to a teacher's college or a nursing school or a medical school or a school of social work, training involved working with clients, working in real situations under supervision. This job-related training is an essential part of professional equipment and professional accreditation. One must deliver analogous work-centered training and education for people who do not have bachelor's or graduate degrees.

Let me illustrate a principle with an anecdote about cleaners in a hospital who were provided a forty hour in-service program to teach them new cleaning techniques, human relations, cleanliness in the hospital, and their role in patient care. The program was a great success, complete with diplomas and a graduation ceremony. This was the first time that these cleaners had ever had training during working hours. They had always seen nurses, doctors, and technicians receiving training, and they thought of the hospital as a two-class system. For them, the symbolic meaning of in-service training was the partial elimination of that stigma and a new identification with the service system of which they had been a part in name only.

Training, and recognition of training through reward, must become legitimate and necessary parts of the educational system. No longer are pilot or experimental projects sufficient. Institutionalized programs, with secure support, must be made as legitimate as any of the things that now happen on college campuses. These programs must insist that work and education are connected and cannot be separated in the lives of this generation of new immigrants. They must incorporate

new ways to provide credit for a worker's own work and life experience, and to foreshorten traditionally required training periods in order to equip people to function without requiring of them useless--in the literal sense--knowledge. The campus must come closer to, and perhaps into, the work-place, so that work and training can be integrated and can reinforce one another.

This is the job to be done if we are to have any valid role for what is called adult education in dealing with the central social dilemmas and issues of our time. The task requires fighting some serious political battles within one's own "establishment", where the bureau assignments are made, the promotions given, and the budget allocations decided. With that fight won, the larger fight is easier to stage and to win. I can assure you of one thing, on the basis of first-hand experience: If you make your fight and identify yourselves as agents for this kind of change in education, you will have the support of those forces in the ghetto who now look upon you, and upon all people who have made it, as the enemy. They will begin to see the connection between what you do and what they must do, and you will begin to become relevant again to the lives of the immigrants who once before and once again will make this nation or break it. I think it is a challenge that you can understand; I hope it is one that you can accept.