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ABSTRACT

The most fundamental ideas ingrained in U.S. culture are the notions of freedom and democracy. The United States Constitution guarantees certain inalienable rights and protections. However, a person only needs to read "The Chronicle of Higher Education" since the September 11, 2001 attacks on the World Trade Center (New York) and the Pentagon (Washington, D.C.), the subsequent passage of the USA Patriot Act, and the U.S. wars in Afghanistan and Iraq to realize that discussing the current U.S. wars in the classroom can be impact a professor's career. If the professor is untenured or not on tenure track, student evaluations can influence an instructor's reappointment. Yet, those who teach international relations/studies courses cannot shy away from discussing controversial current events that are part of the curriculum. This paper offers an approach that allows a professor to employ both pedagogical and andragogical techniques to ease the difficulties of discussing current U.S. wars in the classroom. It notes that the basic difference between pedagogy and andragogy is one of treating learners as passive and dependent individuals or as relatively autonomous and self-directed individuals. (Author/BT)

Discussing America's Wars in the Classroom: Pedagogical and Andragogical Approaches

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The most fundamental ideas ingrained in American culture are the notions of freedom and democracy. The Constitution of the United States of America guarantees certain inalienable rights and protections. However, one only needs to read *The Chronicle of Higher Education* since the terrorist attacks on the World Trade Center in New York and the Pentagon in Washington, DC on September 11, 2001 and the subsequent passage of the USA PATRIOT Act and the United States' wars in Afghanistan and Iraq to realize that discussing America's wars in the classroom can be hazardous to a professor's career. And if the professor is untenured or not on tenure track, s/he is in more trouble with students who must evaluate her/him to get reappointed. Yet, those who teach International Relations/Studies courses cannot shy away from discussing these wars, as they are part and parcel of the curriculum. What I offer in this essay is an approach that allows a professor to employ both pedagogical and andragogical techniques to maneuver the minefields of discussing America's wars in the classroom.

Keywords: war, pedagogy, andragogy

October 26, 2001, the day George W. Bush signed into law the USA PATRIOT Act, marks the most recent blow to civil liberties in the United States. While the intention of the legislation is to protect the citizens of the United States from terrorism, it raises very important questions concerning civil liberties. This new law has given federal and domestic law enforcement officers wide sweeping intelligence-gathering power that when coupled with the reduction in judicial supervision gives great cause for alarm. United States intelligence-gathering agencies have misused their authority in the past, giving rise to the creation of many of the checks and balances Americans have today on these various agencies. As the following small sample from the many cases throughout the country shows, since the passage of the Act and the subsequent American wars in Afghanistan and Iraq, some professors have seen an infringement upon their civil liberties and others have decided to be silent to avoid recrimination.

In December 2002, Saint Xavier University suspended Professor Peter N. Kirstein for expressing anti-war sentiments in response to an inflammatory E-mail sent to him by a student at the Air Force Academy. Xavier University administrators also announced that Kirstein will be up for periodic review of tenured faculty (*The Chronicle of Higher Education*, December 6, 2002:A14). During the same month, Professor M. J. Alhabeeb, an Iraqi-born American citizen, was questioned by University of Massachusetts campus police and Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) agents based on a tip that he held anti-American opinions. Also, Stanford Law School rescinded the title of

Mentor accorded to Lynne Stewart, a New York-based lawyer, because she had been on the legal defense team of Sheikh Omar Abdel Rahman, the Muslim cleric convicted of plotting the 1993 bombing of the World Trade Center (*The Chronicle of Higher Education*, December 13, 2002:A11). At the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, in January 2003, Alfred Kagan, a professor of library administration, was rebuked by students and labeled as "seditious" because he had sponsored an anti-war resolution at the university. In addition, Gene Burns, a professor of Education at the University of Montana, also endured plenty of ridicule and many nasty anonymous messages wishing him harm for sponsoring a similar resolution (*The Chronicle of Higher Education*, January 24, 2003:A8-9). In February 2003, Sami Al-Arian, a professor of computer engineering at the University of South Florida, was charged by federal law-enforcement authorities with raising money to support a terrorist organization. His woes began when he criticized American foreign policy toward the Middle East during a class lecture (*The Chronicle of Higher Education*, February 28, 2003:A12). In April 2003, Carlos Alzugaray Treto, a Cuban professor who is also a leading academic expert on American-Cuban relations and a popular guest lecturer at American universities, was shut out of the country by the United States government for being critical of American policy. Also, during the same month, professors at Irvine Valley College had to protest a memorandum from Vice President Dennis White that bars them from discussing American wars in the classroom. In addition, Nicholas De Geneva, an assistant professor of Anthropology and Latino Studies, had to endure the wrath of some colleagues and students for expressing his anti-war sentiments on America's war in Iraq (*The Chronicle of Higher Education*, April 11, 2003:A26). In addition, Judith Grant, a professor of Political Science at the University of Southern California who lectures on authoritarian and totalitarian governments, feels such a chill that she now pauses a moment before she writes almost anything. She even wonders about whether she should write to some of her former students who are now in Saudi Arabia and China (*The Chronicle of Higher Education*, April 11, 2003:B10).

Despite these political minefields, professors who teach International Relations/Studies cannot completely shy away from discussing America's wars in the classroom since they are part and parcel of the curriculum. Thus, the major question addressed in this essay is the following: How can professors discuss America's wars in the classroom and avoid the pitfalls of the law and potentially disgruntled students? What I offer here are pedagogical and andragogical techniques that may be useful. The observations I make are not directed at the discovery of any new method or pedagogical panacea. I present them in complete modesty in the belief that what matters most is not the method but the instructor. May my observations serve then, at best, as a starting point for that self-examination. Since teaching about International Relations/Studies phenomena is one to which many of us are deeply committed, I venture to address my colleagues in the profession with the hope that they will not only give serious consideration to my suggestions and perplexities, but that they would also strive to suggest better solutions than those I have here proposed.

The Pedagogy/Andragogy Distinction

Political scientists Danny Balfour and Frank Marini (1991:478-485) have done an excellent job in summarizing the fundamental distinction between pedagogy and andragogy. The discussion in this section draws from their analytical framework.

Over the last thirty years, some adult education specialists have adopted the term "andragogy"

for the philosophy, principles, and practices that they have found most useful in tackling the special learning needs and characteristics of adult learning. These specialists have made a distinction in the adult education literature between pedagogy (an approach to education allegedly based on assumptions of student-as-child) and andragogy (an approach to education based on assumptions of student-as-adult). Indeed, as education specialist Popie Marinou Mohring (1990) has pointed out, this distinction is problematic in the sense that the pejorative meaning ascribed to pedagogy undermines its older and well-established meaning which neither focuses exclusively on children nor emphasizes the characteristics ascribed to it in the andragogy literature.

Although problematic, the way the pedagogy concept has been treated in the adult education literature is not without justification. A great deal of evidence exists in American education at all levels to support the characterization. It is probably best to treat the terms pedagogy and andragogy as the adult education literature has used them like "pure types" or "ideal types" in the Weberian sense, or "models" as the concept is commonly employed in contemporary social science. This will allow one to view the two concepts as extreme positions on a continuum of approaches to teaching, where no one teacher's approach is likely to be an unadulterated or complete example of either of the concepts.

As shown in Table 1, the basic difference between pedagogy and andragogy is that between treating learners as passive and dependent individuals and treating them as relatively autonomous and self-directed individuals. Education specialist Malcolm Knowles (1984) has noted that much of what is commonly conceptualized as education and teaching is the outcome of attempts to transmit knowledge and culture to children under conditions of compulsory attendance. Knowles (1970, 1984) and other scholars in the adult education domain (Bright 1989, Brookfield 1986, and Ingalls 1973) saw pedagogy as a method which developed in such a context and to have inappropriately permeated all of education, including adult education. Pedagogy, then, is problematic for International Relations/Studies education not so much because its assumptions may be oriented towards the learning needs of children as because they are associated with specific educational objectives and settings. Consequently, pedagogy does not provide a comprehensive model for learning about America's wars either by children or adults. Specifically, pedagogy is aimed at transmitting knowledge to learners who are presumed not to have the means or ability to learn on their own. It is characterized by a relationship of dependency between teacher and learner, where the latter is mostly passive and is taught by, or learns from, the former. Pedagogy assumes that the learner lacks relevant knowledge and experience and generally is incapable of determining the learning or educational agenda. As such, the agenda is to be set by the teacher or educational institution. This educational agenda, according to Brookfield (1986), is based on subjects sequenced in terms of level of difficulty and the skill level of the learner.

Pedagogy is familiar to most of us from at least part of our early school days. It probably can be effective and appropriate, given certain educational goals, participants, settings, and subject matter. Also, it can be applied to both children and adults. However, it cannot address every individual's learning desires and needs. Most adults, and even some children, cannot only learn various subjects from their teachers but also can take an active role in identifying and effectively pursue their own learning agendas.

The basic assumption of andragogy is that adults have a preference for self-direction in learning. As a learner matures and develops an autonomous sense of self, s/he tends to shun dependency relationships. This andragogical model, as presented by Ingalls (1973), takes into consideration the autonomy of mature adults and their drive to continue the learning process. A corollary to this

assumption is that the accumulated experience of learners is a valuable learning resource that should be integrated into the educational process. The learning content of andragogy is determined by the learners in collaboration with their teacher or facilitator because of the autonomy, desire to learn, and experience of the former. This agenda calls for solving problems or pursuing interests in the learner's immediate environment.

Table 1: Basic Assumptions of Pedagogy and Andragogy

Pedagogy	Andragogy
Dependent learner	Autonomous learner
Learner lacks relevant experience	Learner's experience is a major learning resource
Teacher/Institution sets the agenda	Learner can identify his/her learning desires and needs
Prepare for the future	Solve today's problems

Several implications can be delineated because of the fundamental difference between pedagogy and andragogy. The first of these, following Ingalls (1973) and Knowles (1984), has to do with the power relation between teacher and learner. While andragogy makes less of a distinction between teacher and learner, pedagogy emphasizes a dominant teacher and a dependent and passive learner. The andragogy teacher acts like a facilitator or resource for the learner and also acts as an active learner in the process. In pedagogy, communication is one-way directional: from teacher to learner. Andragogy, on the other hand, encourages integrative learning.

The second implication is that in pedagogy, as Ingalls (1973) noted, the teacher unilaterally decides *what* is to be learned and *how* it is to be learned in the belief that the learners are incapable of identifying their learning needs. In andragogy, the learners themselves directly and significantly influence the curriculum based on their interests and needs. The role of the teacher in andragogy becomes that of a facilitator to help learners form interest groups and diagnose their learning needs. Andragogy allows learners to manage and direct this collaborative process.

Finally, as Knowles (1984), Ingalls (1973), and Brookfield (1986) maintained, pedagogy treats education more in terms of preparation for the future than as a matter of doing in the present. An implied distinction exists between the world of learning and that of doing. Andragogy assumes that learning is central to what it means to be human. Consequently, very little distinction is made between learning and doing, between education and everyday problem-solving. Andragogy calls for identifying and solving problems in the present. It looks at the present situation and attempts to define and pursue concrete goals.

In sum, the nature and outcome of an International Relations/Studies educational process will hinge upon the assumptions that educators hold about the abilities and needs of the learners.

Pedagogy can sensibly be employed if it is believed that International Relations/Studies students are dependent and passive and would not learn in the absence of steady direction from the teacher. On the other hand, andragogy can sensibly be used when educators believe that International Relations/Studies students are basically autonomous, self-directed, and motivated to learn.

As Knowles (1973) reminded us, the assumptions educators hold about learners can become self-fulfilling prophecies. Learners in an International Relations/Studies pedagogic setting can become passive in the classroom largely because that is how they have been socialized to behave. Adults can become ambivalent about becoming involved in the educational or training experience for fear that they will be treated as though they lack the maturity and experience to contribute to the learning process.

Suggestions for Discussing America's Wars in the Classroom

The Center for Research on Learning and Teaching at the University of Michigan has offered some useful guidelines to help faculty and graduate student instructors deal with discussions of wars in the classroom. The guidelines contain three sections: (1) issues to consider before discussing wars, (2) suggestions for classes in which the topic of wars comes up unexpectedly, and (3) sugegstions for instructors planning and leading discussions about wars (http://ctl.stanford.edu). These guidelines have been tailored here in terms of effective pedagogical and andragogical techniques to discuss America's wars in the classroom.

Issues to Consider before Discussing America's Wars

1. Students will have very different interpretations of America's wars, their causes and their potential outcomes. It is important to allow students to express these differences without fear of ridicule or attack, while also encouraging disagreement, which is a cornerstone of critical thinking and part of the long tradition of intellectual inquiry in International Relations/Studies.

2.Some students have special and complicated relationships to the wars. For example, discussions about the wars may be especially difficult for faculty and students from certain groups, including the following:

(a) those personally connected to the United States armed forces, including those in the campus ROTC programs and those with families and friends in the armed forces;

(b) those from Asia and the Middle East and those who have close connections to Asians and Middle Easterners;

(c) non-American born faculty and students, who may be viewed or treated differently during these crises; and

(d) members of groups that some are blaming for the crises.

For each of these groups, there is a potential for backlash during class discussions. It is important that students not be doubly hurt as a result of discussion--first by effects of the wars themselves, and second by misguided generalizations.

3. Comparisons of current world leaders and events with historical figures or events must be made carefully and with an awareness of the complexities of the various histories. Individual perspectives on these comparisons are shaped by differences in political points of view, personal histories or ages, past experiences of violence or tragedies, group memberships, or geographical or cultural origins or reference points. Expression of these differences can be a resource for enriching discussions.

4. Instructors should not feel compelled to lead a discussion, especially if their own emotions or reactions make them hesitant to do so, if they have strong views that would make it difficult to relate to all students, or if they do not consider these discussions an appropriate use of class time. They can make a simple statement to the class to this effect and then move on.

Suggestions for Classes in Which the Topic of America's Wars Comes Up Unexpectedly

1. Acknowledge the concern of students who raise the issues and also point out that all those in the classroom have their own individual responses and concerns.

2. Decide whether you are ready and willing to engage with the topic at that particular time.

3. Get a quick sense from the class if others would like to devote time to sharing views. If you do pursue a discussion, set a time frame and then look to the following strategies for suggestions about the format for the discussion.

4. If a discussion seems inappropriate, or other students resist having a discussion on the spot, point out the available fora on campus and encourage students to attend them, stay informed, and share their concerns. Alternatively, you could schedule a discussion for a later class and suggest ways that students could prepare for it.

Suggestions for Instructors Planning and Leading Discussions about America's Wars

1. Think about appropriate ways to introduce and close a session. For example, you might begin with the reasons you are having the discussion, acknowledging that there are widely divergent opinions and feelings about the wars. In closing a discussion, you might restate the fact that substantial differences of opinion remain, and you can encourage students to continue the dialogue and look for ways to take advantage of campus programs on this topic.

2. Ask students to establish ground rules for the discussions before they begin. For example, you might suggest that students:

(a) Commit to use the discussion as an opportunity to learn more about complex and difficult

issues, rather than re-enacting polarized debates.

(b) Respect each other's views and avoid inflammatory language.

(c) Allow expression of personal stories and feelings. Thus, be prepared for some students to be emotional about the topic.

(d) Allow students to express anger and frustration within limits. While it is important for students to express themselves, it is also vital to guide the class and maintain an environment that encourages responsible discourse.

(e) Limit the length of any one student's contributions to avoid "speeches," so that all students would have an opportunity to participate.

(f) Agree to discuss the topic in a way that does not shut out any members of the class.

3. Create a framework for the discussion. Where you can, explore links to the International Relations/Studies discipline, letting topics emerge from the specific content of your course. Discussion topics applicable to all students include the following:

(a) What questions and fears do you have about these wars?

(b) In what ways are you personally affected by these events?

(c) How might these events affect your/our future?

(d) How can you become better informed?

(e) What positive actions can individuals take in response to these wars (e.g., attend university events about the wars, support students who are far from home)?

4. Encourage participation, but do not force students to participate. This can be accomplished by doing the following:

(a) Use a "round" by giving each student a chance to speak without interruption or discussion in response to a guiding question and allowing students to pass if they desire. Following the round, open the discussion for general responses.

(b) Divide students into discussion partners or small groups of 3-5 students.

(c) Offer students a chance to write down and organize their thoughts before speaking.

5. Be prepared for the ways these discussions can go awry:

(a) Prepare questions that will help break down silence and hesitation about speaking. Some

examples include the following: What makes these wars hard to talk about? What is most confusing about these wars at this point?

(b) Balance the emotional and intellectual aspects of the discussions by helping students differentiate between these ways of responding. For example, acknowledge the emotion in responses and help students to identify important questions and issues embedded in these responses.

(c) Validate personal experiences while also helping students to identify inappropriate generalizations.

(d) Prepare brief in-class writing assignments that can be used to refocus discussions if you feel that you are losing control of the class or if the discussions are going in unproductive directions.

6. Exchange ideas and strategies with other instructors, including debriefing the class discussions.

Conclusion

Indeed, it is imperative and urgent for International Relations/Studies instructors to be concerned about broader education as well as training and to be concerned about approaches to learning and teaching which are compatible with and conducive to the kind of students needed today and in the future. Students are needed who

(a) can deal with linguistic and cultural changes, uncertainties, and ambiguities;

(b) are sensitive to and capable of working with diverse values;

(c) will continue learning and developing their international relations skills;

(d) can work with colleagues and facilitators in constructive and open ways while sustaining a strong sense of character, ethics, and professional commitment;

(e) are flexible, open minded, and capable of finding new information on their own, absorbing new information and insights, and correcting their paths when what they learn calls for that; and

(f) are largely self-directed, creative, and have a proper sense of autonomy as well as responsibility.

If the primary purpose of International Relations/Studies educational processes is to help students become such individuals, it is obvious that andragogical approaches must be built into the procedures for fulfilling our educational responsibilities. Instructors must be sensitive to the socialization effects and self-fulfilling nature of different educational assumptions, philosophies, principles, and practices. International Relations/Studies programs do not want to teach learners to act as mindless cogs in academic machinery of common characterization.

International Relations/Studies students cannot afford to function according to the behavioral and intellectual patterns of dependence and passivity that are encouraged and inculcated by pedagogic assumptions, principles, and practices. To the contrary, the autonomy, self-directedness, and creativity encouraged by the principles and practices of andragogy are the characteristics most needed in the next generation of students. When andragogy is considered along with the idea of the socialization effects of educational environments and the possibilities of a reinforcement of these notions and contexts, the implications for International Relations/Studies education appear vital.

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