

Moni lisa smile andralogical model

Profession, Teacher



Movie " Moni Lisa Smiles" Related to Andragogical Style of Teaching The movie begins with Katherine Watson (Julia Roberts), in 1953, accepting an art history teaching position at the prestigious New England school for women. She is a liberal and a feminist who was inspired to come to Wellesley to " make a difference". After a semester of teaching a progressive, less traditional teaching style, she is given conditions by the alumni that, if she is to stay at Wellesley, she will teach the outlined syllabus and submit her lessons plans for prior approval.

This demonstrated the hard core traditional style view that governed Wellesley's educators. The students were expected to memorize the textbook. The administrator made the statement, " You didn't come to Wellesley to help people find their way; you came to help people find your way. " To compare the behavior of the students in the film, I'll start on the first day of class; the students embarrass Ms. Watson, the teacher, in front of the class evaluator by knowing everything she had prepared. The character, or teacher, seemed to demonstrate two different educational or behavioral positions.

At the end of the movie, you find numerous assumptions of the andragogical model. Ms. Watson appeared as a feminist who refused to fall under the traditional educational objectives or educational theories. Therefore, she changes her educational model or theory to the andragogical style of teaching. This was a change from the beginning of the movie when she first entered the classroom with the traditional power point. Thus according to Knowles (2011), she originally followed the pedagogical model. This model is

clearly defined in *The Adult Learner* written by Knowles, Holton, and Swanson, 2011.

It explains the pedagogical model assigns the teacher full responsibility for making all decisions about what will be learned, how it will be learned, when it will be learned, and if it has to be learned (2011, p. 60). This is the style of teaching the administrative staff at Wellesley believed to be the best. Historically this model has been found to be less effective than the andragogical style for adult learners who have specific educational needs.

The assumption that the andragogical model is based on includes: (Knowles, 2011 p. 63-67) *Principals of teaching* : (Knowles, 2011 p. 63-67) . The learner's need to know. -The first task of Watson was to help the students become aware of the need to know by making or demonstrating an intellectual case for the value of learning by giving them the potential tools, thus improving the quality of their lives. As an educator her goal was to help them discover the gaps between where they were and where they wanted to be. She demonstrated that there is much more to art than memorizing a textbook. This was demonstrated best in the movie when she talked to Joan about pursuing law school and seeking a career.

The learner's self-concept. Educator Watson was fully aware the girls had arrived at the self-concept that they were more than capable of reading the book and memorizing the information as they had been previously taught in the past. Educator Watson was approached with resentment and resistance by the girls demonstrating they had previously read the text. The attitude was, " We know this so just let us go out in smoke and socialize. " Watson was on top of the situation by coming to the second class introducing new

thought stimulating ideas; she utilized a power point presentation that included a picture of Soutine's "Carcass". She presented several other power points of art not found in the text and challenged the students to transition from being dependent learners, to think outside the box, transitioning and becoming self-directing learners. She also challenged them to become more than the traditional art students. Katherine tries to get the students to explore ideas by a metaphorical demonstration in the paint-by-numbers of the Van Gogh painting 'Sunflowers', in which the whole class in this scene paints their own painting individually.

The role of the learner's experiences. Educator Watson took teaching to another level by utilizing different learning strategies. She loved group discussions, problem solving and simulation exercises. She taught the importance of art related to individual expression and the students demonstrated their knowledge of this by each painting their own sunflower portrait. This was a demonstration of the role of the learner's experience. With this example, she opened their minds to new approaches, encouraged expression of values, sensitivity training, and mediation through self-expression of art.

She took them to her place where she had a collection of various artists that included modern to historical portraits. 4. The readiness to learn. -Ms. Watson's new andragogical approach and thought provoking ideas stimulated a readiness to learn that changed from the original attitude in the first class. The girls with high expectations and obvious intellectual history became excited and ready to learn. The new approaches used by Watson changed the attitude toward the non-ivy league teacher. She encouraged

them to use their experiences and valued their ideas and accepted them as people. .

The orientation to learning. -Watson's education style included real-life situations, and she taught them how art could help them to deal with problems. She used her personal history and collection to explain the importance of expression. She challenged their minds to analyze paintings and to paint for pleasure and therapeutic and social interactions. Watson wins them over when she introduces paintings not in the text, encouraging thought provoking ideas that really stimulated the minds of these students. .

The motivation to learn. -Watson was an excellent motivator in the film. She never let the girls think for once that just memorization of a book was acceptable. She encouraged learning to go above the ideas of tradition. (Again; with the example of Soutine's "Carcass" and more...) She motivated them to keep learning and encouraged them to be career oriented. Several times she told the students that they could be the housewife of their dreams, but to look at further education to fulfill their career dreams.

When you look at the movie and the leading students, you realize at first they refuse to go along with the free thinking ideas and they think the textbook contains everything they need to know. Katherine is appalled at the fact that they actually think of their education as a way to pass their time until they are married. The behavior of three main students include: Giselle Levy (Maggie Gyllenhaal), the student that in the beginning of the movie abruptly spoke out and said, "We're a far cry from Oakland," in a snotty tone. She appeared to represent the class attitude.

She appears to also be the most self-destructive of the students and does not seem to confront Watson's ideas like the other two. She displayed a characteristic most would look at as being promiscuous; the film displayed her behavior as being the most feminist and she was exhibited as a student who liked to control men with her body, leading you to believe she traded sex for favors and sometimes just plain fun. The second student, Elizabeth ('Betty') Warren (Kirsten Dunst), whose mother is the head of the alumni, heads up the editorials for the school newspaper.

Her viscous description of Ms. Watson's roommate gets her fired. She is a malicious gossip that utilized her editorials like a knife to publicly downgrade others and doesn't agree with Watson's feminist ideas. This conflict of ideas is presented during the movie; they had many heated discussions. Betty strongly believed in the popular cultural idea that the woman's place was in the home. Wellesley College, a prestigious New England women's school, expected you to memorize course contents much like the pedagogical model or theory of adult model of learning.

The women of that day attended prestigious schools expecting to prepare to become superb mothers, with the ultimate goal to take care of their husbands, only the elite males, and be home to care for the children. The third actor is Joan Brandwyn (Julia Stiles), who appears to be very open to the suggestion of Watson to pursue her dreams of attending law school. She struggles with the societal expectations of a woman in the 1950's, to marry and have children, which were glorified as the ultimate prestigious goal.

She is actually given a C on an assignment and goes to visit Ms. Watson when she is asked, "What is your plan after graduating?" "Just for fun,"

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questioned Watson, " if you could go to any law school in the country, which school would it be? " Joan told her Yale and explained Yale leaves five slots open for women and one of those five slots is for a Wellesley girl. Watson gets her an application, which she submits, and to her amazement she is accepted. She makes the decision in the movie to get married, and Ms.

Watson continues to educate her that she can do both and ultimately gives her a plan on how she can be married and go to school. Watson pushes her students not to settle for the lifestyle of a housewife, but have career oriented goals. To analyze the role of the teacher promoting the conditions of learning, according to Knowles, is to look at the learning environment, not only the physical environment, but the mutual trust, respect, helpfulness, including freedom of expression and the acceptance of differences (2011, p. 92-93).

The students must perceive the goals of the learning experience as their own goals. Educator Watson developed mutual trust and respect with the students. She demonstrated this in the movie when they decided they wanted her to be included in a social event. At the girls' social, she was encouraged to drink alcoholic beverages and answer personal questions about her private affairs with men. She was open, honest and interacted with them, building a trust and demonstrating and expressing her commitment to teaching " to make a difference".

She again encouraged education to be a career building tool and iterated the goals of learning needed to be their career goals. She encouraged planning and commitment toward these goals in the movie, especially in one example where she actually got an application for Betty to Yale law school. According <https://assignbuster.com/moni-lisa-smile-andralogical-model/>

to our text, in review of the theories applied, Malcolm Knowles first introduced the andragogy concept or theory as an honest attempt to focus on the learner (2011 p. 2).

The strength of andragogy is the fact that its six core adult learning principles can apply to all learning situations (2011 p.). It is a transactional model that enables those designing and conducting learning to build more effective learning processes (Knowles, 2011 p. 2). Knowles iterates the andragogy concept, when applied properly, will do everything possible to ensure the learner takes part in their learning process. This theory is best for the adult learner as their needs and capacity to learn are fully developed. We can utilize our experience and the fact that we have become responsible workers and learners.

The pedagogical model assigns to the teacher the full responsibility for making all decision about what will be learned, how, and when it will be learned (Knowles 2011 p. 60). This model leaves to the learner the submissive role of following instructions and memorization. The characteristics of the prestigious Wellesley College for woman in 1953 included a satirical review of stuffy attitudes of the alumni and administration. They had rigid rules and goals for the students. At the top of the list was getting married and college was just a place to go until that happened.

Furthermore, Katherine Watson, a feminist teacher from California, whose unconventional adult teaching style was acquired from Berkeley, was shocked to learn that students viewed their education as a prerequisite for getting married. The progressive thinking taught in California was not

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accepted well by the staff at Wellesley. The new teachers' class is hit and the students' enrollment in her class increased, but the strict rules and guidelines put in place by Wellesley were not easy to swallow by Katherine who came to "make a difference." It was obvious the institution and the educator were in conflict.

At the close of the movie, Katherine decides to leave and go to Europe. Betty dedicates an editorial to her teacher claiming that Katherine is "an extraordinary woman who lived by example and compelled us all to see the world through new eyes." As the movie ends, the students follow the taxi Katherine is in on their bicycles. Betty seems to be struggling and peddling the hardest as if to thank her for changing her life. If I was in the educational environment in the movie, I would promote learning by utilizing the framework of the six principals displayed by Knowles.

The first step in acceptance of administration is to make them an active part of decision making when her new syllabus was created. As the teacher, I would empower administration with Knowles ideas and let them see my new ideas through his ideas and history. They certainly seem to feel that they must have the upper hand and make decisions and this would give the control feature they appear to need. Historically Knowles has proven himself. In the 1950's he was the Executive Director of the Adult Education Association of the United States of America (Smith, 2002 p. 1-13).

He had already published his first textbook that was a guide for educators and this textbook was followed by many more. If administration wanted to stay the prestigious college of the nation, they would realize it was time for change. According to the article by Smith, Knowles was responsible for a <https://assignbuster.com/moni-lisa-smile-andralogical-model/>

number of important 'firsts'; he was the first to chart the rise of the adult education movement in the United States, the first to develop a statement of informal adult education practice, the first to develop a statement of informal adult education practice, and the first to attempt a comprehensive theory of adult education via the notion of andragogy) (Jarvis, 1987 p. 185).

I firmly believe the administrative staff may need some education and redirection. After all, they are one of the most prestigious schools in the nation. I cannot see administration accepting to follow a less than the best for their girls, wives and future mothers. I am sure it would take patience and persistence. But if you look at the principles listed above and included the administration and persistently made them aware of the need to change to keep up with the 'educational political hierarchy' you would slowly 'make a difference'.

Empowerment often promotes change and Knowles was the leader in adult education of the 1950's. When you review this film and similar films, it helps you comprehend the contemporary and historic constraints imposed on teachers and the contexts of dealing with alumni and administration. I had never really thought about the politics and social involvement of schools and teachers in the past and I can see what a dilemma it could create. I loved the movie and watched it more than once. I plan to purchase it to use for future educational reference.

I can see that schools are sites of politics and culture, but as educators we must provoke the expression of students' future identities and possibilities.

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