

A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF PARTICIPANTS IN LECTURE  
CLASSES AND PARTICIPANTS IN STUDY  
DISCUSSION GROUPS

by

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## ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study is to analyze two distinct methods of adult education to determine if there are any significant differences between them with respect to certain selected socio-economic characteristics of the participants. The hypothesis assumes that there are no significant differences at the .01 level of confidence between adults enrolled in lecture classes and those enrolled in study-discussion groups.

In the study design an effort was made to reduce the dependent variables in so far as possible so that the primary variable would be the method employed in the adult education programs. Certain programs conducted by the Extension Department of the University of British Columbia during the fall of 1961 were used in the study. These included Living Room Learning groups which used the discussion group method and certain Evening Classes which represented the class method.

Three research groups were constructed consisting of those participants in evening classes, those in discussion groups, and a control group. Data was collected from participants by a questionnaire. This was analyzed and tested by the Chi Square test for statistically significant differences.

The results indicate that there are statistically significant differences in certain specific characteristics of people served by different adult education methods. Differences were found in age, educational background, marital status, occupation, and previous

experience in adult education programs. No significant differences were found with respect to sex, social status, social participation score, memberships in community organizations, and length of residence. In addition this study revealed that participants in university adult education are above average in socio-economic status, are actively involved in community organizations, and have lived for a relatively long period in their present community.

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## TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAPTER	PAGE
I. INTRODUCTION . . . . .	1
The Setting of the Study . . . . .	1
Statement of the Problem . . . . .	4
The Hypothesis . . . . .	5
Definition of Terms . . . . .	5
II. REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE . . . . .	7
Literature on Characteristics in Adult Education . . .	7
Comparative Studies of Lecture and Discussion . . . .	11
Literature on Variable Characteristics . . . . .	12
Relation to the Present Study . . . . .	14
III. PLAN OF THE STUDY . . . . .	16
Population Studied . . . . .	16
Characteristics Studied . . . . .	18
Procedure . . . . .	22
IV. CHARACTERISTICS OF PARTICIPANTS . . . . .	25
Lecture and Discussion Participants Compared . . . . .	25
Significance of Comparative Characteristics . . . . .	35
Similarities in Characteristics . . . . .	35
Differences in Characteristics . . . . .	40
Characteristics in "Ways of Mankind" Control Group . .	43

CHAPTER	PAGE
V. SUMMARY AND COMPARISONS . . . . .	48
Summary . . . . .	48
Comparison with Other Studies . . . . .	52
VI. CONCLUSIONS . . . . .	65
BIBLIOGRAPHY . . . . .	73
APPENDIX A. Questionnaire Used . . . . .	76
APPENDIX B. Table of Characteristics Studied . . . . .	80

## LIST OF TABLES

TABLE	PAGE
I. Age of Participants in Lecture and Discussion Groups . .	27
II. Educational Background of Participants in Lecture and Discussion Groups . . . . .	27
III. Occupational Grouping of Participants in Lecture and Discussion Groups . . . . .	30
IV. Social Participation Score for Participants in Lecture and Discussion Groups . . . . .	33
V. Number of Memberships in Community Organizations Reported by Participants in Lecture and Discussion Groups . . . . .	33
VI. Length of Residence of Participants in Lecture and Discussion Groups . . . . .	36
VII. Participation in Other Educational Courses by Participants in Lecture and Discussion Groups . . . .	36
VIII. Previous Participation in Lectures by Lecture and Discussion Participants . . . . .	37
IX. Previous Participation in Discussion by Lecture and Discussion Participants . . . . .	37
X. Comparison of Social Participation Scores . . . . .	46
XI. Chi Square Test for Significant Differences Between Characteristics of Participants in Lecture Classes and in Study-Discussion Groups . . . . .	47
XII. Influence of Sex on Social Status in Lecture Classes . .	52
XIII. Comparison of Age of Population in Vancouver Commencing at Twenty Years with Age of Participants in Lecture and Discussion Groups . . . .	54
XIV. Comparison of Marital Status of Population in Vancouver with Marital Status of Participants in Lecture and Discussion Groups . . . . .	54

TABLE	PAGE
XV. Comparison of Age of Adult Participants in University Sponsored Part-Time Courses in British Columbia with Age of Participants in Lecture and Discussion Groups . . . . .	57
XVI. Comparison of Marital Status of Adult Participants in University Sponsored Part-Time Courses in British Columbia with Marital Status of Participants in Lecture and Discussion Groups . . . . .	57
XVII. Comparison of Educational Background of Adult Participants in University Sponsored Part-Time Courses in British Columbia with Educational Background of participants in Lecture and Discussion Groups . . . . .	58
XVIII. Comparison of Educational Background of Participants in Los Angeles Program with Educational Background of Participants in Vancouver Program . . . . .	58
XIX. Comparison of Number of Organizational Memberships Held by Participants in Los Angeles Program with Those Held by Participants in Vancouver Program . . . .	60
XX. Comparison of Marital Status of Participants in Los Angeles Program with Marital Status of Participants in Vancouver Program . . . . .	60
XXI. Years of Schooling of Evening Class Participants in Fall of 1961 Compared to Evening Class Participants in Spring of 1962 . . . . .	63
XXII. Marital Status of Evening Class Participants in Fall of 1961 Compared to Evening Class Participants in Spring of 1962 . . . . .	63
XXIII. Occupation of Labor Force (Male and Female) in Evening Classes in Fall of 1961 Compared to Those in Evening Classes in Spring of 1962 . . . . .	64



## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

Within the past decade an increasing number of institutions of higher learning in Canada and in the United States have been adding study-discussion to their repertoire of methods in adult education. While a number of published studies have reported on the relative effectiveness of discussion in achieving certain educational goals, particularly in comparison with the more traditional technique of lecturing, no one appears to have attempted to analyze the participants to determine if there are any differences in the kinds of people served by different kinds of educational methods.

#### I. THE SETTING OF THE STUDY

The Significance of Study-Discussion. One of the most dramatic developments in adult education has been the phenomenal growth of liberal adult education through the use of the method which has become known as "study-discussion". Implicit in this success is the acceptance of this method both by the participants and by the sponsoring institutions, however, a large share of the credit must go to three organizations--The Great Books Foundation, The American Foundation for Political (now "Continuing") Education, and The Fund for Adult Education. The support of these three foundations has affected the direction which study-discussion has taken.

The Great Books Foundation, established in 1947, reports that in 1957-58 approximately 35,000 persons in more than 1,100 communities in the United States participated in Great Books discussion groups.<sup>1</sup> In addition, a number of Great Books groups flourish in Canada and abroad.

The American Foundation for Continuing Education was founded in 1947. It has reported that in 1957-58 there were almost 10,000 participants in 400 communities taking part in discussion programs sponsored by this foundation.<sup>2</sup> During the same period programs developed by The Fund for Adult Education involved another 10,000 adults.<sup>3</sup> The Fund also reports that during the period 1951 to 1958, it spent over two million dollars on its Experimental Discussion Project.<sup>4</sup>

In Canada the development of study-discussion has been slower but the last few years have witnessed an impressive spurt of activity. In 1960 the Canadian Association for Adult Education set up a national distribution agency under the name of "Living Library" for the express purpose of promoting the use of packaged discussion programs. Living Library reports that during its first nine months of operation, it

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<sup>1</sup>The Future of Study-Discussion Programs, A Joint Statement by: The Great Books Foundation, The American Foundation for Political Education, The Fund for Adult Education [White Plains, N.Y.: The Fund for Adult Education, ca. 1959], p. 7.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 8.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., p. 10.

<sup>4</sup>Glen Burch, Accent on Learning (White Plains, N.Y.: The Fund for Adult Education, 1960), p. xiv.

distributed material to ninety-seven study-discussion groups across Canada.<sup>5</sup>

The University of British Columbia. Within the framework of non-credit adult education programs at the University of British Columbia two principal educational methods are used. On the one hand, the older, traditional Evening Class non-credit program accounts for an increasing number of participants in lecture classes on liberal arts topics, while on the other hand, the Study-Discussion Program in the Liberal Arts, first organized in 1957, has been growing and accounts for a sizable share of the total enrollment in all Extension programs.

The Extension Department of the University of British Columbia conducted study-discussion groups in forty-two communities throughout the Province and involved almost 2,500 adults in the three year period, 1957-1960.<sup>6</sup> This compared with 25,600 adults enrolled in non-credit Evening Classes during the same period.

Some Concerns of Adult Educators. A frequently expressed goal of adult education is to broaden the base of participation. Institutions tend to attract particular clientele that are different in terms of such characteristics as education, occupation, and socio-

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<sup>5</sup> Peter Martin, secretary of Living Library, in a personal letter dated May 8, 1961.

<sup>6</sup> Study-Discussion--the First Three Years 1957-1960, a printed report, (Vancouver: Department of University Extension, The University of British Columbia, 1960).

economic status, but increasing concern is being shown for "under-privileged" groups--those who are poorly educated and of low status. Adult educators are also giving increased attention to programing for specific groups with special interests or needs, such as university alumni, women, public leaders, or trade union members, to name but a few. If adult education is to be more than "hit and miss", its organization and methodology must be based on careful and continuing studies of the populations served.

While adult educators have already noted trends towards the segregation of certain adults into the various agencies of formal adult education, little attention has been given to the selection by certain adults of various programs offered within the same institution. An understanding of the role that method plays in attracting adults would provide the adult educator with another instrument to use in designing programs to reach particular segments of the population.

There is a need for knowledge about whether different methods employed in adult education appeal to or attract different kinds of people and this provides the focus for this study.

## II. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

It is the purpose of this study to analyze certain selected characteristics of participants in liberal education programs for adults offered by The University of British Columbia. These programs represent two distinct methods of adult education so that it will be

possible to determine if there are any significant differences between participants in terms of the method.

### III. THE HYPOTHESIS

This study is based on the hypothesis that there are no significant differences at the .01 level between adults enrolled in lecture classes and those enrolled in study-discussion groups with respect to certain selected socio-economic characteristics; specifically;

1. There is no significant difference in age.
2. There is no significant difference in length of residence in the community.
3. There is no significant difference in socio-economic status.
4. There is no significant difference in social participation scores.
5. There is no significant difference in previous experience with either lecture classes or study-discussion groups.

### IV. DEFINITION OF TERMS

Evening Classes. The class method as utilized by the University Extension Department consists of a program of evening lectures conducted on the campus of the University of British Columbia located in the City of Vancouver. The majority of the topics fall under the category of "the liberal arts". Almost all lectures are

conducted by university faculty members. Most of the courses range in length from eight to twelve weeks, meeting in the evenings for  $1\frac{1}{2}$  to 2 hours. The typical format for an evening lecture class includes a one-hour presentation by the instructor which is followed by a question period. Discussion by and among the participants is seldom utilized or encouraged.

Study-Discussion Groups. The study-discussion method as utilized by the University Extension Department involves several principal characteristics: the discussion is guided by trained leaders who are not necessarily experts in the subject matter under discussion; the program involves a series of regularly scheduled meetings at which participants analyze and evaluate reading materials which have been assigned for home study; and the group meetings are designed to stimulate individual achievement and growth rather than reaching any consensus or group conclusions.

Living Room Learning. In British Columbia the study-discussion method is conducted by the University Extension Department under the popular title of Living Room Learning. A typical Living Room Learning group consists of 15 participants who meet one evening a week for a ten or twelve week period. As the title suggests these groups meet in private homes two hours at a time under the guidance of a volunteer leader who has been trained in discussion techniques by the University Extension Department. The topics are in "the liberal arts" and range from painting, poetry, drama, or the humanities, to economic and world affairs; from anthropology and religion, to philosophy and world politics.

## CHAPTER II

### REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

In reviewing the studies that have been made of the participants in adult education programs, it is noted that they include a wide selection of institutions and a variety of methods and techniques. Very few of these studies concern themselves exclusively with programs in the liberal arts and consequently they have little validity for direct comparison with the present study as it cannot be assumed that participants in vocational or credit programs will be the same as those in non-credit liberal education programs since the motivation to participate is different.

Although a few studies of liberal arts programs deal exclusively with the class method, studies on the use of the study-discussion method are sparse, and comparative studies concerned with characteristics of participants in classes and study-discussion are rare.

#### I. LITERATURE ON CHARACTERISTICS IN ADULT EDUCATION

A review of studies reporting the characteristics of participants in adult education reveals two significant factors. Firstly, programs using different methods tend to attract different kinds of adults. Secondly, studies of similar types of programs using the same methods produce fairly consistent profiles of the adult participants.

Brunner points out that "an examination of the results of the many surveys of participation suggests that however inclusive its goals, each organization enlists those individuals who are attracted by its program, and its clientele".<sup>1</sup> Brunner contrasts public school adult education which attracts a larger proportion of young adults and those with less than a high school education, with the Federal Extension Service which reaches adults under thirty least effectively but reaches more people with high school and some college education. He cites "descriptive studies of library users, enrollees in correspondence study and viewers of telecast courses sponsored by university extension divisions" as reinforcing the impression that there is considerable diversity among the participants in adult education.<sup>2</sup>

A report by Knox<sup>3</sup> on liberal adult education also notes the differences in characteristics among participants enrolled in several different programs, although there are also some consistencies noted which might be attributed to the nature of the subject matter and of the sponsoring institutions. Knox's comparative summary of student characteristics<sup>4</sup> revealed some differences in age, education, and occupation between discussion groups, lecture courses, and seminars.

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<sup>1</sup>Edmund deS. Brunner, et al., An Overview of Adult Education Research (Chicago: Adult Education Association of the U.S.A., 1959), p. 92.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 95.

<sup>3</sup>Alan B. Knox, The Audience of Liberal Adult Education (Chicago: Center for the Study of Liberal Education for Adults, 1962).

<sup>4</sup>Ibid., p. 24.



There is, however, a consistency similar to that reported by Verner and Newberry<sup>5</sup> who noted that participants in university extension are, on the average, better educated and with a higher socio-economic status.

By contrast, the study by Allison and Kempfer<sup>6</sup> of private home study schools revealed that a different kind of adult enrolled in correspondence courses. He tended to be male, married, and young. The median age was 26.5 years and only one-half of the students were high school graduates. Home study education makes its greatest impact on the skilled, technical, and professional occupational groups.

There are further differences among those who enrol in study-discussion groups. Kaplan<sup>7</sup>, Davis<sup>8</sup>, Burch<sup>9</sup>, and Hill<sup>10</sup>, all produce a consistent profile of the study-discussion participant.<sup>11</sup> This

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<sup>5</sup>Coolie Verner and John Newberry, "The Nature of Adult Participation", Adult Education, vol. VIII, no. 4 (Summer 1958), pp. 208-222.

<sup>6</sup>Helen Allison and Homer Kempfer, Private Home Study in the United States, A Statistical Study (Washington, D.C.: National Home Study Council, 1956).

<sup>7</sup>Abbott Kaplan, Study-Discussion in the Liberal Arts (White Plains, N.Y.: The Fund for Adult Education, 1960).

<sup>8</sup>James A. Davis, et al., A Study of Participants in the Great Books Program (White Plains, N.Y.: The Fund for Adult Education, 1960).

<sup>9</sup>Burch, op. cit.

<sup>10</sup>Richard J. Hill, A Comparative Study of Lecture and Discussion Methods (White Plains, N.Y.: The Fund for Adult Education, 1960).

<sup>11</sup>A detailed comparison of these findings as they relate to this study is presented in Chapt. V.

participant tends to be female, married, and a college graduate; professional or managerial in occupation, and falling into the age group between 35 and 45 years. As Fletcher<sup>12</sup> points out in the preface to each of these studies, "The studies themselves make it clear that the reading-discussion method attracts a particular kind of audience, and that the larger population from which it is drawn has many other tastes and proclivities".

Similar conclusions were reached by Brunner when commenting on the discussion program of the Great Books Foundation and on the Los Angeles metropolitan area discussion program in the liberal arts. He concluded that, "they are most selective with respect to education, economic status, and occupation... Both of these programs draw heavily from the better-educated segment of the population with above average incomes".<sup>13</sup>

A report on the non-credit evening classes<sup>14</sup> conducted by the University of British Columbia suggests that "socio-economic factors play a considerable part in the composition of adult evening classes".

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<sup>12</sup>C. Scott Fletcher was President of the Fund for Adult Education, publishers of these four research studies.

<sup>13</sup>Brunner et al., op. cit., p. 94.

<sup>14</sup>The University of British Columbia, Department of University Extension, "A Report of the Geographic Variation in Greater Vancouver of Registration in Non-credit Evening Courses on Campus in the Fall of 1958", (December, 1958, mimeographed). Vide Alice Lindenberg and Coolie Verner, "A Technique for Analyzing Extension Course Participants", Adult Education, vol. XI, no. 1 (Autumn, 1960).

Even when distance of place of residence from the campus was taken into account, a higher proportion of the participants came from sections having a higher percentage of professional and business people and higher income groups. Counselling experience revealed "that adults whose formal education did not go beyond elementary school or a few years of high school, frequently feel that courses offered by a university are not within their scope".

Similar characteristics were revealed by Jones<sup>15</sup> in his study of university non-credit evening class participants. He found over sixty per cent of his sample had some school attendance beyond high school graduation and over one-half reported proprietary, managerial, or professional occupations.

## II. COMPARATIVE STUDIES OF LECTURE AND DISCUSSION

In a search for literature comparing adult participants in lecture classes with those in discussion groups only one major study in the area of liberal education was found. This study at the University of California at Los Angeles was reported by Hill.<sup>16</sup> Since Hill was concerned primarily with the effects of the two methods upon participants, lesser attention was paid to the possibility of similarities or

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<sup>15</sup>H. Gordon Jones, "A Test of Validity of Place of Residence as an Indicator of Socio-Economic Characteristics of Participants in University Non-credit Evening Classes" (unpublished Master's thesis, The University of British Columbia, 1962).

<sup>16</sup>Hill, op. cit.

differences in the characteristics of participants in the two programs. Hill concluded that "in general, the same kind of people were attracted by both methods".<sup>17</sup>

An investigation by Ashmus and Haigh<sup>18</sup> revealed that there is a significant difference in student preferences for the teacher-centered approach if they have no previous experience with group-centered methods. Students having past experience with both methods show no significant difference in preference for either.

Kaplan's study<sup>19</sup> also revealed differences between those who participated in study-discussion groups and those in the regular extension courses. He reported that study-discussion attracted more women, older and better educated adults, and that they were mainly in professional occupations. He also concluded that participants in the discussion program were not typical or representative of the general adult population.

### III. LITERATURE ON VARIABLE CHARACTERISTICS

Social participation is defined by Brunner as "inter-action with others in a socially defined relationship wherein the roles of those

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<sup>18</sup>Mable Ashmus and Gerard Haigh, "Some Factors Which May Be Associated With Student Choice Between Directive and Non-Directive Classes, "American Psychologist, vol. VII (1952), p. 247, cited by Richard J. Hill, Ibid., p. 105.

<sup>19</sup>Kaplan, op. cit.

participating are more or less structured and mutually understood".<sup>20</sup>

Since this definition fits organized adult education, research in the area of social participation offers further clues about and attests to the differences in the characteristics of adults who participate at different rates and in different kinds of adult education activities. Brunner's review of social participation indicates such differences.<sup>21</sup>

In urban communities occupation is significantly related to formal participation. Brunner reports that the highest rate of participation is evidenced by "professional-technical" and managerial personnel. Service and unskilled workers are least active. Further testimony is provided by Verner and Newberry who point out that different organizations draw their memberships from different occupational groups.<sup>22</sup>

Brunner also suggests that it is probable that those with more education are more highly motivated to participate, and further, that the social standing of an individual in the community "profoundly affects his participation, no matter how his social position is measured".<sup>23</sup> Verner and Newberry's review corroborated the fact that participation is greater for those of higher status.

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<sup>20</sup>Brunner, et al., op. cit., p. 99

<sup>21</sup>Ibid., chapt. VI.

<sup>22</sup>Verner and Newberry, op. cit.

<sup>23</sup>Brunner, et al., op. cit., p. 105

Age was reported by Brunner to be associated with differences in rates and patterns of social participation. Youth and young adults participate little with the peak of participation falling within the age group thirty-five to fifty, after which there is a decline in participation among the older groups in the population. As Verner and Newberry noted, the younger and the older adults are generally the least active participants.

Finally, participation patterns differ between men and women. Brunner points out that "men usually participate more heavily than women in non-church formal associations";<sup>24</sup> however, Verner and Newberry report that urban, middle class women attend more meetings more regularly, although men in similar situations belong to more organizations.

#### IV. RELATION TO THE PRESENT STUDY

Although the participants in adult education are not representative of the general adult population, the studies cited give support to the contention that even among these participants there is considerable diversity. While certain different programs or methods evidence some consistency in some of the characteristics of the adults enrolled, other characteristics show great differences.

The studies which dealt with lectures alone or with discussion

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<sup>24</sup>Ibid., p. 106

alone, must be approached with caution in terms of their comparative value in this present study. The variable of subject matter must be considered. For this reason the studies of programs in the liberal arts<sup>25</sup> have greater significance for this study and will receive comparative treatment in Chapter V.

Further caution is needed. Unless participants are given an obvious opportunity to make a choice between the two methods then the resultant findings about their characteristics will not necessarily reveal differences between participants in the two types of programs. It seems highly probable that a different set of values and expectations come into play if the decision is between enrolling or not enrolling in one particular adult program, than if the decision revolves around choosing between two alternative methods.

The only comparative study cited was that reported by Hill and he concluded, "In general, the same kinds of people were attracted by both methods".<sup>26</sup> This conclusion is being retested by the present study in terms of adults in British Columbia.

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<sup>25</sup>Kaplan, Davis, Burch, and Jones.

<sup>26</sup>Hill, op. cit., p. 84.

## CHAPTER III

### PLAN OF THE STUDY

In order to examine the problem selected for this study it was necessary to collect data about certain selected socio-economic characteristics of participants in two distinct methods of adult education. The program conducted by the Extension Department of the University of British Columbia provided the variety of methods and the participants that would meet the requirements of the study.

#### I. POPULATION STUDIED

In designing this study an effort was made to reduce the dependent variables in so far as possible so that the primary variable would be the method employed in the adult education program. By studying selected groups from the Extension Department activities it was possible to control such factors as subject matter, fee structure, starting time, duration of program, and geographic accessibility. In this way the variable of method could be isolated and its influence analyzed.

During the fall of 1961 the Extension Department program included a variety of different adult education activities readily available to any interested adult. For purposes of this study, certain programs were selected. These included specific activities from the Living Room Learning series which employed the discussion group method and certain Evening Extension Classes which represented the class method. These two types of programs offered choices of liberal arts topics, at the same fee,



commencing in late September and continuing for one evening a week for an eight to twelve week period. Both types of programs were readily accessible to residents of the area. With such similarities, the participants would be self selecting and any difference among characteristics of participants could be attributed or related to the difference in method.

Three research groups were constructed consisting of those participating in evening classes, those in discussion groups, and a control group.

Lectures. Almost all Extension Department non-credit Evening Classes are held on the campus of the University of British Columbia, situated in the City of Vancouver. Out of the total Evening Class program in the Fall of 1961, seven classes<sup>1</sup> enrolling 272 adults were selected for study as being most comparable to Living Room Learning in terms of subject matter.

Discussion. All Living Room Learning study-discussion groups functioning in Vancouver during the Fall of 1961 were included in this study. Some 173 adults were enrolled in thirteen discussion groups in topics<sup>2</sup> similar to those in the lecture classes.

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<sup>1</sup>Lecture topics included (with enrollment shown in brackets): World's Great Religions (128), Introduction to Philosophy (20), Pre-history of British Columbia (19), The Indomitable Romans (46), Introduction to the Appreciation of Literature (27), Faith in Times of Disintegration (13), and The Ways of Mankind (19).

<sup>2</sup>Discussion topics included: Great Religions of the World, Philosophy in the Mass Age, World Politics, Shakespeare and His Theatre, An Introduction to the Humanities, and The Ways of Mankind.

Control Groups. Although care was taken to choose test groups with similar subject matter content, a further control was utilized by selecting groups in which the topic was not only similar but also identical. "The Ways of Mankind" was the topic chosen for the control groups because it was readily adaptable to both lecture and study-discussion and because its previous popularity would suggest that groups could once again be successfully started. Advertising for both Evening Classes and Living Room Learning specifically pointed out the choice available between lecture and study-discussion for this particular topic. One lecture class among the seven studied was devoted to The Ways of Mankind, while this same topic attracted three study-discussion groups out of a total of thirteen groups.

## II. CHARACTERISTICS STUDIED

Certain socio-economic characteristics of participants were isolated for study. These tend to be the items most apt to indicate differences among participants in the two methods if such should be found to exist. Furthermore, these characteristics are commonly employed in social-scientific research in analyzing groups. The following characteristics were selected for study.

Age. Age has been used fairly consistently as a measure of participation in adult education programs. As Brunner points out, "participation in adult education decreases with age".<sup>3</sup> Verner and Newberry

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<sup>3</sup>Brunner, et al., op. cit., p. 96

report that "young adults of both sexes are generally poor participants", and further "age, per se, however, is not a serious barrier to participation. Kind rather than the amount of participation may be a factor".<sup>4</sup>

Length of Residence. One of the sub-hypotheses in this study concerns length of residence, which, according to Brunner, has been found to influence formal participation in all communities.<sup>5</sup> However, according to Verner and Newberry, "migrants to a community are less active participants than residents..."<sup>6</sup>

Socio-Economic Status. To determine social status an index developed by McGuire and White<sup>7</sup> was chosen because of its simplicity. The McGuire and White index (short form) utilized the three characteristics of occupation, source of income, and education. These were rated on a scale from 1 to 7 and weighted. The scale for occupational ratings developed by McGuire and White was replaced by a seven scale table of occupations developed by Blishen.<sup>8</sup> By using Blishen's scale based on the 1951 Canada Census it was intended to ensure identification of occupational ratings in terms appropriate to Canadian society. In determining

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<sup>4</sup>Verner and Newberry, op. cit., pp. 210-211.

<sup>5</sup>Brunner, et al., op. cit., p. 107

<sup>6</sup>Verner and Newberry, op. cit., pp. 210-211.

<sup>7</sup>Carson McGuire and George D. White, The Measurement of Social Status. Research Paper in Human Development No. 3 (revised), (Department of Educational Psychology, The University of Texas, March 1955)

<sup>8</sup>Bernard R. Blishen, "The Construction and Use of an Occupational Class Scale", Canadian Society, Sociological Perspectives, (Toronto: Macmillan, 1961) pp. 477-485.

the index for housewives, occupation of head of household was used.

As Davis expressed it, "in our society a married woman's social status is generally determined by her husband's occupation, not her own".<sup>9</sup>

A. Occupation. No separate hypothesis was proposed about occupation, but it is an important component of the measure of social status. Yet occupation is important in its own right since it "also appears to be highly related to participation in adult education".<sup>10</sup>

B. Source of Income. Source of income was used in developing the index of social status. McGuire and White point out that the kind of income appears to be more important than the amount. The reputed main source of income is symbolic of placement in the community.<sup>11</sup>

C. Educational Background. "Amount of formal schooling appears to be the most significant determinant of participation in all forms of adult education which has been studied".<sup>12</sup> No specific hypothesis on educational background was proposed in this study, but this characteristic served as one component in the index of social status.

Social Participation Score. A scheme for calculating social participation scores, devised by Lionberger and Coughenour,<sup>13</sup> was used

<sup>9</sup>Davis, et al., op. cit., p. 18.

<sup>10</sup>Brunner, et al., op. cit., p. 96.

<sup>11</sup>McGuire and White, op. cit., p. 9

<sup>12</sup>Brunner, et al., loc. cit.

<sup>13</sup>Herbert F. Lionberger and Milton C. Coughenour, Social Structure and Diffusion of Farm Information. Research Bulletin 631, (Columbia, Mo.: University of Missouri, College of Agriculture, April 1957).

in this study. This scheme is a modification of the Chapin Social Participation Scale,<sup>14</sup> but it is simpler to use and utilized data which was relatively easy to procure. Each participant was rated on the number of memberships in community organizations, weighted by the amount of participation in each organization. For purposes of analysis, Lionberger and Coughenour's classification of scores was used--none (zero score), low participation (1 to 9 score), and high participation (score of 10 and over).

Social participation is significant to identify the type and extent of participation in civic, social, community, or professional organizations or clubs in order to evolve the social participation score. Brunner reports that "people active in formal organizations tended to have more education and higher incomes and socio-economic status than others".<sup>15</sup>

Previous Participation. Previous experience within the last three years in other educational courses was another characteristic identified in this study. Within three years was stipulated to lessen the effect of memory loss and to reveal a consistent pattern of participation in adult education rather than a sporadic pattern. Adults who are products of our formal educational system may well identify the lecture with the acquisition of fact, information, and knowledge,

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<sup>14</sup>F.S. Chapin, "Social Participation and Social Intelligence", American Sociological Review, vol. 4, no. 2 (April 1939).

<sup>15</sup>Edmund deS. Brunner, The Growth of a Science (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1957), p. 108.

and understandingly may hesitate to try other educational methods. However, adults who have had experience with the study-discussion or other methods may perceive that satisfying educational and other goals are attainable by methods other than lectures.

Sex. Sex is another characteristic frequently studied in adult education programs. It is a particularly important factor in interpreting other characteristics such as age, occupation, and marital status, as well as being a fundamental factor in describing any profile of participants. Verner and Newberry conclude that the participation of women increases as social status and the degree of urbanism increases.<sup>16</sup>

Marital Status. The marital status of adults has consequences for the social roles they are called upon to play and in turn the extent of their social participation. Verner and Newberry point out that "married persons are generally more active members of formal organizations than either single or widowed persons".<sup>17</sup>

### III. PROCEDURE

All data for this study was collected from participants by means of a questionnaire<sup>18</sup> which was distributed to seven lecture classes and

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<sup>16</sup>Verner and Newberry, op. cit., pp. 210-211

<sup>17</sup>Ibid.

<sup>18</sup>A sample of the questionnaire is included in the Appendix.

thirteen study-discussion groups during the fourth and fifth week of operation of the two programs. The questionnaires were distributed, completed, and collected together before the evening's program was introduced. No one refused to complete a questionnaire, although a number of participants had dropped out of the program or were absent on the particular evening the questionnaire was administered.

The questionnaire was devised to pose nine questions to the participants to reveal the characteristics chosen for this study. Direct questions produced data on the following characteristics: length of residence, age grouping, marital status, sex, educational background, number of memberships in formal organizations, extent of participation in these formal organizations, occupation of participant or of head of household, main source of income, and extent of participation in educational courses within the last three years.

The resultant data was analyzed by applying a Chi Square test for statistically significant differences at the .01 level.

An additional questionnaire containing two further questions was given to the control group which was composed of participants in the lecture and in the study-discussion groups dealing with the topic "The Ways of Mankind". The first question was intended to reveal the extent to which those enrolled in the control group were aware of a choice of method being available on this particular topic. The other question was open-ended and searched for reasons for choosing this particular group. The answers given were analyzed to determine if geographic

location of the groups, or if location of residence of the participant was a factor in selection by the participant of a particular group, or if some other factors were present which were not inherent in the methods studied.



## CHAPTER IV

### CHARACTERISTICS OF PARTICIPANTS

The comparative characteristics of all participants in lecture classes and in study-discussion groups are analyzed first in this chapter followed by a summary of the similarities and differences of adult participants in the two methods. Finally, a comparison is made between lecture and discussion participants in the control groups where the subject matter was held constant.<sup>1</sup>

#### I. LECTURE AND DISCUSSION PARTICIPANTS COMPARED

A general explanation of the data collected from all participants in the lecture classes and all those in the study-discussion groups is presented here under the various categories of characteristics.

Sex. A study of the data procured from adults in all lecture classes reveals a ratio of four women to one man or 79.2 per cent women. Participants in all the discussion groups studied were distributed in a ratio of seven women to three men. Thus, women accounted for 68.8 per cent of the discussion participants.

Age. Median age in lecture classes was thirty-five years, with more than one-third of the participants being twenty-nine years or

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<sup>1</sup>A detailed summary of all data collected in this study is presented in Appendix "B".

younger. As Table I on page 27 reveals, one-half of the lecture participants (49.5 per cent) were younger than thirty-five years. The remainder were distributed fairly evenly throughout the other age categories.

In the discussion groups the median age was forty-one years. There were few younger people. Only 7.8 per cent were twenty-nine or younger. Almost 61 per cent were forty years and older as shown in Table I.

Educational Background. Lecture participants included a high percentage of university graduates. Over a third reported having graduated from university. With another one-quarter reporting some university experience, it is apparent that 60 per cent of the lecture participants have been involved in higher education at some point in their life cycle. The high level of educational background among the lecture participants is given further support in Table II on page 27 which shows that only 10 per cent had not completed high school.

A study of the discussion participants reveals that 63 per cent had high school graduation or less. Only 19.8 per cent were university graduates. As Table II indicates almost 26 per cent of the discussion participants had not completed high school.

An examination of these discussion participants who had not completed high school tells us that exactly one-half were forty-five years or older, compared to 38 per cent in this age category in the total discussion population.

TABLE I  
AGE OF PARTICIPANTS  
IN LECTURE AND DISCUSSION GROUPS

Age in years	Lecture		Discussion	
	N	%	N	%
29 or younger . . . . .	64	36.0	9	7.8
30 - 34 . . . . .	24	13.5	19	16.5
35 - 39 . . . . .	23	12.9	17	14.8
40 - 44 . . . . .	18	10.1	26	22.6
45 - 49 . . . . .	22	12.4	17	14.8
50 - 59 . . . . .	20	11.2	20	17.4
60 and older . . . . .	7	3.9	7	6.1
Total	178	100.0	115	100.0

TABLE II  
EDUCATIONAL BACKGROUND OF PARTICIPANTS  
IN LECTURE AND DISCUSSION GROUPS

Educational Level	Lecture		Discussion	
	N	%	N	%
Left before Grade 8 . . . . .	1	.6	4	3.5
Completed Grade 8 . . . . .	4	2.2	3	2.6
Some high school . . . . .	13	7.3	23	19.8
Completed high school (Grade 12)	53	29.8	43	37.1
Some university . . . . .	43	24.2	20	17.2
University graduate . . . . .	54	30.3	20	17.2
Advanced degree . . . . .	10	5.6	3	2.6
Total	178	100.0	116	100.0

Among the eighteen lecture participants represented in the 10 per cent not completing high school, exactly one-half were forty-five years or older, yet in the total lecture group only 27.5 per cent fell into this age group.

Marital Status. An examination of marital status in lecture groups reveals that 49 per cent were married and 41 per cent were single. Separated, widowed, and divorced accounted for the remaining 10 per cent.

Only 15 per cent of the discussion participants were single, while 75.6 per cent were married. The remaining 9.6 per cent included separated, widowed, and divorced. The 15 per cent single were distributed in a ratio of 8 women to 2 men as compared to a 7 to 3 ratio in the total discussion population. The married participants were 63 per cent women and this compared with the 68.8 per cent women for the total discussion population.

In the lecture classes 68 per cent of the married participants were women compared to the 79.2 per cent women in the total lecture population.

Occupation. Table III on page 30 indicates the distribution of occupations. Almost 35 per cent of the lecture participants are accounted for in the professional, managerial, and proprietary categories. Another 31 per cent are housewives. When housewives are distributed among the occupational categories in terms of the occupation of the head of the household, we find an 18 per cent increase in the upper categories. Professional, managerial, and proprietary

occupations then account for 52.8 per cent of the lecture participants. The other 13 per cent of the housewives are distributed fairly evenly into the other occupational categories.

Only 20 per cent of the discussion participants reported professional, managerial, or proprietary occupations, but 46 per cent were housewives. The housewives reported the head of the household in occupations accounting for another 26 per cent in the upper categories. Thus, when housewives are distributed into the occupation of the head of the household, the professional, managerial, and proprietary categories account for 46 per cent of the discussion participants as indicated in Table III. The remaining 20 per cent of housewives are evenly distributed among four other categories.

Clerical occupations were indicated by 19.7 per cent of the lecture participants, while sales were indicated by 3.3 per cent. The category of blue collar, which included technical, construction, industrial, mechanical, transportation, communication, and skilled workers, accounted for almost 8 per cent. In the total lecture population studied (N=178) only one service worker, a janitor, was enrolled.

Discussion participants reported 16.5 per cent clerical occupations and 8.7 per cent in sales. Blue collar occupations accounted for almost 8 per cent. Not a single discussion participant listed a service occupation. Some 4 per cent of the discussion participants reported that they were retired and no longer active in the occupation listed.

TABLE III  
OCCUPATIONAL GROUPING OF PARTICIPANTS  
IN LECTURE AND DISCUSSION GROUPS

Occupational Grouping	Percentage in Lecture Classes			Percentage in Discussion Groups		
	Occupation of all Participants	Housewives Distributed into Occupation of Head of Household	% Increase Attributed to Inclusion of Occupation of Head of Household	Occupation of all Participants	Housewives Distributed into Occupation of Head of Household	% Increase Attributed to Inclusion of Occupation of Head of Household
Professional	29.7	44.4	14.7	12.2	26.1	13.9
Managerial and Proprietary ...	5.1	8.4	3.3	7.8	20.0	12.2
Clerical .....	19.7	22.5	2.8	16.5	21.8	5.3
Sales .....	3.3	5.1	1.8	8.7	13.0	4.3
Blue Collar .....	7.9	11.1	3.2	7.8	13.9	6.1
Service .....	.6	.6	0	0	0	0
All other.....	2.8	7.9	5.1	.9	5.2	4.3
HOUSEWIVES .....	30.9	0		46.1	0	
Total	100.0	100.0	30.9	100.0	100.0	46.1

Out of the total lecture group only four participants were retired. This represented 21.2 per cent of the total lecture population and their previous occupation is included in the total listing.

Social Status. The McGuire-White Index of Social Status provides for five levels--an upper class, an upper and a lower middle class, and an upper and a lower lower class. In this study only four lecture participants (N=178) fell into the upper class to account for 2.2 per cent. The bulk of the lecture participants studied were distributed into the next two levels--45.5 per cent in upper middle and 43.8 per cent in lower middle. The two lower classes accounted for 8.5 per cent with only one participant falling into the lower lower category.

A study of social status among discussion participants indicates that only one adult (0.9 per cent) scored sufficiently to be assigned to the upper class. Upper middle accounted for 36.5 per cent and another 47.8 per cent fell into lower middle. Only one discussion participant fell into lower lower class, but 13.9 per cent fell into upper lower.

Social Participation Score. Based upon the Lionberger-Coughenour Social Participation Score, three levels of participation in community organizations were set: (1) none, (2) low, and (3) high. Almost 25 per cent of the lecture participants reported no participation. Sixty per cent report low participation and 15 per cent a high participation score as indicated in Table IV on page 33.

Some 21.8 per cent of the discussion participants reported no

participation in community organizations. Over one-half reported low social participation scores. The remaining 26 per cent had a high score as presented in Table IV.

Memberships in Community Organizations. The 75 per cent of lecture participants reporting memberships in community organizations denotes an impressive record. While only 15 per cent had a high participation score, and while 21 per cent hold membership in only one organization, some 54 per cent of the lecture participants reported two or more memberships and of these 14 per cent hold four or more as shown in Table V on page 33.

While among the discussion participants 21.8 per cent hold no memberships in community organizations, some 60.8 per cent report two or more memberships and this includes the 21.7 per cent who hold four or more memberships.

Length of Residence. A study of length of residence in present neighborhood reveals a high degree of permanence among lecture participants. Only 20 per cent have resided in their present neighborhood less than two years, while 55 per cent have resided more than five years. Table VI on page 36 indicates that most changes of residence have taken place within the area of metropolitan Vancouver. Almost 80 per cent of the lecture participants have resided in Greater Vancouver for more than five years. Only 6 per cent have resided less than two years in Greater Vancouver.

Table VI also reveals that very few discussion participants



TABLE IV  
SOCIAL PARTICIPATION SCORE FOR PARTICIPANTS  
IN LECTURE AND DISCUSSION GROUPS

Score	Lecture		Discussion	
	N	%	N	%
None . . . . .	44	24.8	25	21.8
Low . . . . .	107	60.1	60	52.2
High . . . . .	27	15.1	30	26.0
Total	178	100.0	115	100.0

TABLE V  
NUMBER OF MEMBERSHIPS IN COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONS REPORTED  
BY PARTICIPANTS IN LECTURE AND DISCUSSION GROUPS

Number of memberships	Lecture		Discussion	
	N	%	N	%
None . . . . .	44	24.8	25	21.8
One . . . . .	38	21.3	20	17.4
Two . . . . .	49	27.5	27	23.5
Three . . . . .	22	12.4	18	15.6
Four . . . . .	16	9.0	13	11.3
Five or more . . . . .	9	5.0	12	10.4
Total	178	100.0	115	100.0

are newcomers to the community. Only 11 per cent have resided less than two years in their present neighborhood or 5 per cent in the Greater Vancouver area. Over 66 per cent report more than five years residence in their present neighborhood. Within the Greater Vancouver area almost 86 per cent of the discussion participants have resided more than five years.

Previous Participation in Educational Courses. A substantial number of the lecture participants were participating in their first educational program within recent years as indicated in Table VII on page 36. Twenty-seven per cent had not participated within the last three years. Analyzing the type of participation of the 73 per cent who had participated in some educational activity, whether it be other lecture courses, discussion groups, seminars, or workshops, reveals that most of their previous experience was with lectures. Slightly more than 60 per cent of the total lecture population studied had participated in other lecture courses, but only 13 per cent had participated in discussion courses, almost 24 per cent had taken part in three or more lecture courses, while only 3 per cent had participated in three or more discussion groups. Tables VIII and IX on page 37 summarize these figures. All data is based on participation within the last three years.

Discussion participants evidenced a high degree of previous participation in educational courses. Only 9.6 per cent reported no participation within the last three years as indicated in Table VII.

The remaining 90.4 per cent had taken part in some type of educational course. Most of this previous experience was centered around lecture courses and discussion groups. While 40 per cent had participated in lecture courses, some 75 per cent had previous experience in discussion courses. As summarized in Tables VIII and IX on page 37, over 31 per cent had taken three or more discussion courses, although only 6 per cent had participated in three or more lecture courses.

## II. SIGNIFICANCE OF COMPARATIVE CHARACTERISTICS

The significant differences and similarities between characteristics of lecture participants and of study-discussion participants, as determined by the Chi Square Test, are outlined in this section.<sup>2</sup>

### A. Similarities in Characteristics.

When characteristics of all adults enrolled in the lecture classes were compared to all adults enrolled in discussion groups and tested for significance by the use of the chi square test, five characteristics revealed no statistically significant difference at the .01 level of confidence between lecture and discussion participants--(1) sex, (2) social status, (3) social participation score, (4) memberships in community organizations, and (5) length of residence.

Sex. Lecture classes enrolled 79.2 per cent women compared to

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<sup>2</sup>A summary of the results of the Chi Square Test is included in Table XI on page 47.

TABLE VI  
LENGTH OF RESIDENCE OF PARTICIPANTS  
IN LECTURE AND DISCUSSION GROUPS

Length of Residence in Years	Lecture				Discussion			
	In Present Neighborhood		In Greater Vancouver		In Present Neighborhood		In Greater Vancouver	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Less than 2 . .	35	19.8	11	6.2	13	11.4	6	5.3
2 to 5 . . . .	44	24.9	26	14.8	25	21.9	10	8.8
More than 5 . .	98	55.3	139	79.0	76	66.7	98	85.9
Total	*177	100.0	*176	100.0	114	100.0	114	100.0

\*Difference in totals due to two incomplete questionnaires.

TABLE VII  
PARTICIPATION IN OTHER EDUCATIONAL COURSES BY PARTICIPANTS  
IN LECTURE AND DISCUSSION GROUPS

Participation within the last three years	Lecture		Discussion	
	N	%	N	%
Did participate . . . . .	130	73.0	104	90.4
Did NOT participate . . . . .	48	27.0	11	9.6
Total	178	100.0	115	100.0

TABLE VIII  
PREVIOUS PARTICIPATION IN LECTURES  
BY LECTURE AND DISCUSSION PARTICIPANTS

Number of LECTURE courses participated in within last three years	Lecture Participants Studied		Discussion Participants Studied	
	N	%	N	%
No participation . . . . .	70	39.3	69	60.0
1 or 2 courses . . . . .	66	37.1	39	33.9
3 or 4 courses . . . . .	26	14.6	7	6.1
5 or more courses . . . . .	16	9.0	0	0
Total	178	100.0	115	100.0

TABLE IX  
PREVIOUS PARTICIPATION IN DISCUSSION  
BY LECTURE AND DISCUSSION PARTICIPANTS

Number of DISCUSSION courses participated in within last three years	Lecture Participants Studied		Discussion Participants Studied	
	N	%	N	%
No participation . . . . .	155	87.0	29	25.2
1 or 2 courses . . . . .	18	10.1	50	43.5
3 or 4 courses . . . . .	4	2.3	20	17.5
5 or more courses . . . . .	1	.6	16	13.9
Total	178	100.0	115	100.0

68.8 per cent in discussion groups. While this difference is statistically significant at the .01 level of confidence,<sup>3</sup> it was ruled out at the .005 level. This particular characteristic was judged at the .005 level to reduce the chance of error because the distribution was violently skewed by data from the Ways of Mankind control lecture group. This particular group enrolled all women and the sample collected was small (N=11). The data collected revealed no obvious reason for the complete absence of men from this group.

Social Status. No statistically significant difference at the .01 level was found in social status as between lecture and discussion participants. In both populations the bulk of the adults fell into two classes. Upper middle class accounts for 36.5 per cent of the discussion participants and 45.5 per cent of the lecture participants. Lower middle class participants were represented by 47.8 per cent in discussion and 43.8 per cent in lectures. Thus, these two social status classes together accounted for 84.3 per cent of the discussion participants and 89.3 per cent of the lecture participants.

Social Participation Score. As Table IV on page 33 summarized, 24.8 per cent of the lecture participants scored "zero" compared to 21.8 per cent of the discussion participants. Sixty per cent of the lecture participants scored "low" compared to 52.2 per cent of the

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<sup>3</sup>The chi square test result was 6.693 compared to a rejection value of 6.635 at the .01 level of confidence.

discussion participants. This slight tendency toward a higher participation score on the part of adults in discussion groups is confirmed by the "high" score which includes 26 per cent of the

discussion participants, but only 15.1 per cent of the lecture participants; however, the chi square test shows that this was not a statistically significant difference at the .01 level of confidence.

Memberships in Community Organizations. Although this characteristic forms the foundation for the calculation of the Social Participation Score, it has been analyzed separately to provide a further dimension to our understanding of the participant population. Table V on page 33 attests to the very close relationship between lecture and discussion participants in terms of their memberships in community organizations. Among the lecture participants, 21.3 per cent hold one membership, 27.5 per cent hold two, 12.4 per cent hold three, 9 per cent hold four, and 5 per cent hold five or more.

Discussion participants reported that 17.8 per cent hold one membership, 23.5 per cent hold two, 15.6 per cent hold three, 11.3 per cent hold four, and 10.4 per cent hold five or more. The slight tendency for discussion participants to hold more memberships, coincides with their slightly higher participation score but this difference was not sufficient to be statistically significant at the .01 level.

Length of Residence. This was another characteristic which evidences a close relationship between adults in lectures and adults in discussion groups. The chi square test revealed no statistically significant difference at the .01 level in length of residence either in present neighborhood or in Greater Vancouver. As Table VI on page 36 indicates, most of the population studied have lived in Greater Vancouver more than five years--79 per cent of the lecture participants

and 85.9 per cent of the discussion participants. Even in comparing length of residence in present neighborhood, a majority of the participants have resided more than five years--55.3 per cent in lectures, 66.7 per cent in discussion. Again the close relationship between lecture and discussion participants in respect to length of residence is evident.

#### B. Differences in Characteristics.

More significant for the purposes of this study were the characteristics of adults which showed statistically significant differences. Upon application of the chi square test to the data from all lecture participants and from all discussion participants, statistically significant differences at the .01 level of confidence were found in six areas--(1) age, (2) educational background, (3) marital status, (4) occupation, (5) previous experience in lecture classes, and (6) previous experience in discussion groups. Table X on page 46 illustrates these results.

Age. Pronounced differences are revealed in an investigation of the ages of participants in lecture and discussion groups. Median age in lectures was 35 years and in discussion it was 41 years. While in lectures 49.5 per cent were 34 years or younger, in discussion only 24.3 per cent fell into this category. On the other end of the age scale, in discussion groups 59.9 per cent were 40 years and older compared to 37.6 in lectures. Fifty years and older accounted for



15.1 per cent in lectures but 23.5 per cent in discussion. The relative older age of discussion participants is quite apparent in Table I on page 27.

Educational Background. Statistically significant differences were revealed between lecture and discussion participants in terms of their educational background. Some 63 per cent in discussion had high school or less, compared to 39.9 in lectures. University graduates accounted for only 19.8 per cent of the discussion participants but 35.9 per cent of the adults in lectures. Table II on page 27 attests to the higher educational background of the lecture participants.

Marital Status. Married participants accounted for three-quarters of the total discussion population, but only one-half of the lecture participants. Separated, widowed, and divorced accounted for almost identical percentages--9.6 in discussion and 10.0 in lectures. Table XIII on page 54 illustrates the statistically significant difference in participation by single adults.

Occupation. A substantially greater number of housewives participated in discussion groups, 46.1 per cent compared to 30.9 per cent in lectures. The remainder account for 29.7 per cent in professional occupations among the lecture participants as compared to only 12.2 per cent among adults in discussion. As Table III on page 30 indicates, the other occupational groups showed only small differences between lecture and discussion participants. However, these differences were statistically significant.

When the housewives category was eliminated and distributed into the other seven occupational categories on the basis of the occupation of the head of the household, the resultant distribution was distorted in one category--managerial and proprietary. While housewives (through head of household occupations) add only 3.3 per cent to managerial and proprietary in lecture classes, in discussion they add 12.2 per cent.

Almost one-half of the housewives in lecture classes reported the head of the household to be in the professional grouping, while in discussion groups housewives reported almost one-third in professional and another one-quarter in managerial and proprietary occupations.

One other occupational category revealed considerable differences. Thirteen per cent of the discussion participants reported sales occupations compared to 5.1 per cent of those in lectures.

Previous Experience in Lecture Classes. Discussion participants reported 60 per cent who had not participated in other lecture courses within the last three years, while lecture participants reported 39.5 per cent who had not participated previously in lectures. This difference was statistically significant. The greater previous participation in lecture courses by the lecture participants studied was also reflected in the 23.6 per cent who had taken three or more lectures courses compared to only 6.1 per cent of the discussion participants included in this study and reported in Table VII on page 36 and Table VIII on page 37.

Previous Experience in Discussion Groups. Tables VIII and IX

on page 37 reveal a paradox. Only 25.2 per cent of the discussion participants reported no previous discussion experience within the last three years, while 87 per cent of the adults in lecture classes reported no previous experience in discussion. The chi square test revealed this difference to be statistically significant.

Some 31.3 per cent of the discussion participants had previous experience in three or more discussion courses but only 2.9 per cent of the lecture participants had such intensive experience in discussion.

### III. CHARACTERISTICS IN "WAYS OF MANKIND" CONTROL GROUP

Although all the lecture and discussion groups dealt with subject matter in the liberal arts, there were small differences in the actual topic offered. In an attempt to isolate any differences which might be attributed to the subject matter, the data obtained from "The Ways of Mankind" lecture class and discussion groups was analyzed separately.

First, the question of awareness of choice was studied. Based upon replies to the question, "Were you aware that there was a choice available between enrolling in a lecture class or enrolling in a study-discussion group for the WAYS OF MANKIND course?" awareness of choice available was determined. Almost unanimous awareness was evidenced by both Mankind lecture and Mankind discussion participants. The answers revealed:

	<u>Were aware</u>	<u>Not aware</u>
Mankind lecture participants	10	1
Mankind discussion participants	21	1

Thus, choice of method by most participants in the Mankind control groups was made with an awareness that there was a choice of method available. It is interesting to note that fifteen of the discussion participants (N=22) had had previous experience in discussion compared to only one of the lecture participants (N=11), while eighteen in the Mankind discussion groups or 81.8 per cent had experience in lectures compared to 72.7 per cent in the Mankind lecture class. Therefore, adults enrolled in Mankind discussion groups revealed greater previous experience with both methods compared to adults in the Mankind lecture class who evidenced no previous experience with discussion.

The reasons given for the choice of method were analyzed to determine if geographic location of the group was a factor in this choice. Only one participant in the total Mankind control group (N=33) made mention of location by reporting, "nearness to my residence". This participant was also identified as the one adult in Mankind discussion who was not aware of the availability of a choice in method. All other Mankind participants gave reasons considered inherent in the particular method chosen.

Adults enrolled in the Mankind lecture class gave reasons such as: "Expected to get more", "Enjoy lectures", "Not enough time to do reading", "Felt I need to know more to enter a discussion group".

Adults enrolled in the Mankind discussion groups reported: "Wanted to discuss", "Wanted to meet new people", "Knew the leader", "Had previous experience in discussion groups".

When Mankind lecture classes were compared to Mankind discussion groups, statistically significant differences at the .01 level of confidence were found in the same six categories as found in the total groups, namely: (1) age, (2) educational background, (3) marital status, (4) occupation, (5) previous experience in lecture classes, and (6) previous experience in discussion groups.<sup>4</sup>

However, two characteristics which evidenced no significant differences between the total lecture and the total discussion populations, did reveal significant differences between Mankind lecture and Mankind discussion. One of these characteristics was social status. Mankind discussion participants were distributed as follows:

Upper class	0 per cent
Upper middle class	50.0 per cent
Lower middle class	40.9 per cent
Upper lower class	9.1 per cent
Lower lower class	0 per cent

Mankind lecture participants were distributed thusly:

Upper class	0 per cent
Upper middle class	9.1 per cent
Lower middle class	81.8 per cent
Upper lower class	9.1 per cent
Lower lower class	0 per cent

It was noted that if the upper and lower middle class categories are combined into one class, then both distributions become identical as follows:

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<sup>4</sup>Complete comparative data is presented in Appendix "B".

Upper class	0 per cent
Middle class	90.9 per cent
Lower class	9.1 per cent

Because the data is confined to only three classes out of a possible five, and because of the ease with which the frequencies can be manipulated as shown above, as well as because of the small sample (N=11) available from the Mankind lecture group, it is possible that the difference is not as significant as first concluded.

The other characteristic was social participation score, which revealed no statistically significant difference at the .01 level between all lecture and all discussion groups, but which did produce a significant difference between Mankind lecture and Mankind discussion, as shown in the following table.

TABLE X  
COMPARISON OF SOCIAL PARTICIPATION SCORES

Social participation	Percentage of Participants			
	Control Lecture	All Lectures	Control Discussion	All Discussion
Zero score . . . . .	36.4	24.8	31.8	21.8
Low score . . . . .	63.6	60.1	31.8	52.2
High score . . . . .	0	15.1	36.4	26.0
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Again it is possible that the small sample in the Mankind lecture control group (N=11) which distributed into only two categories out of a possible three, has distorted the distribution curve beyond permissible limits and rendered the statistically significant difference meaningless.

TABLE XI  
CHI SQUARE TEST FOR SIGNIFICANT DIFFERENCES  
BETWEEN CHARACTERISTICS OF PARTICIPANTS IN LECTURE CLASSES  
AND IN STUDY-DISCUSSION GROUPS

Characteristics Tested	Degrees of Freedom	Chi Square	
		All Groups	Control Groups
Sex . . . . .	1	6.693**	1021.352
Age . . . . .	6	43.638	50.154
Occupation . . . . .	6	38.050	1382.579
Marital Status . . . . .	4	37.539	95.130
Educational Background.	6	45.594	795.065
Social Status . . . . .	4	7.620*	204.275
Social Participation Score . . . . .	2	8.492*	1341.449
Length of Residence in Present Neighborhood	2	6.275*	1.431*
Previous Participation in Lectures . . . .	3	25.128	188.272
Previous Participation in Discussion . .	3	548.300	2442.240

\*Not a significant difference at the .01 level.

\*\*Not a significant difference at the .005 level.

## CHAPTER V

### SUMMARY AND COMPARISONS

This chapter will synthesize the findings from this study of the data collected from participants in lecture courses and in study-discussion groups. Relevant portions of the data and the findings of several other investigations are then compared with this study.

#### I. SUMMARY

Adults in this study who participated in lecture classes and in discussion groups were found to have a number of characteristics in common. Almost three-quarters of the participants were women. The difference of about 10 per cent between the sexes in lecture and discussion groups was not statistically significant.

The bulk of both populations fell into two social status classes. Close to 90 per cent were contained in the upper middle and in the lower middle classes.

In terms of social participation, over one-half scored "low". Nevertheless, this represented considerable community activity. Three-quarters of those studied reported memberships in community organizations. Almost three-fifths of both populations studied held two or more memberships. Discussion participants revealed a slightly higher degree of social participation and held more memberships, but this difference was not statistically significant.



Both populations revealed a certain tendency towards permanence in residence. Eighty per cent and more had lived in the Greater Vancouver area for more than five years. Only about one in twenty had resided less than two years in Greater Vancouver. Even within this larger community the participants in this study did not indicate any particular mobility. About 60 per cent had resided more than five years in their present neighborhood within the Greater Vancouver area.

A few striking and statistically significant differences were also revealed in this study. Adults participating in lecture classes and those in discussion groups revealed pronounced differences in age. The adults enrolled in discussion groups were significantly older than those enrolled in lecture classes. One-half of the lecture participants were less than thirty-five years of age, while 61 per cent of the adults in discussion groups were forty years or older.

Educational background was another source of statistically significant differences. Sixty per cent of the lecture participants were university graduates or had received some education beyond high school, compared to only 37 per cent of the discussion participants. While only 10 per cent of the lecture participants had not completed high school, in discussion groups almost 26 per cent had not completed high school.

Married adults comprised about one-half of the lecture participants, but three-quarters of the discussion participants were married. Both groups only had about 10 per cent in the category of separated, divorced, or widowed.

Discussion groups attracted more housewives; almost one-half of the discussion participants compared to one-third in lecture classes.

Occupations of the participants or of the head of the household evidenced significant differences between lecture and discussion groups. Forty-four per cent in the lecture classes cited professional occupations compared to 26 per cent in the discussion groups. However, adults in discussion groups accounted for 20 per cent in managerial and proprietary occupations while only 8 per cent of the lecture participants reported these occupations. Service workers were almost non-existent in both populations. Blue collar occupations and sales occupations accounted for very few participants, while one-fifth of both lecture and discussion participants reported clerical occupations.

Few of the participants were retired from active work--4 per cent in discussion and about one-half this percentage in lectures.

Discussion participants in this study evidenced a substantially higher record of previous participation in discussion courses. Three-quarters reported previous participation in discussion compared to 13 per cent of those who were enrolled in lecture classes. Conversely, the lecture participants in this study reported 60 per cent previous experience in lecture courses, while those enrolled in discussion groups reported 40 per cent. Discussion participants on the whole showed a considerably higher record of previous participation in educational courses generally--over 90 per cent, while 73 per cent of the lecture participants reported previous participation in educational courses.

This study also revealed that the specific topic within the

general area of the liberal arts had little apparent influence upon the type of adult who enrolled. When the subject matter was held constant, the characteristics of participants showed no significant differences when compared to the rest of the populations studied. Although two characteristics, namely social status and social participation score, evidenced some statistical differences, these differences were viewed with caution because of the smallness of sample in one lecture class and because this same class inexplicably skewed in terms of sex. As Table XII on page 52 indicates, the characteristic of sex has a profound influence on social status class. Women evidence a trend toward lower status compared to the men. This is even more pronounced among single women. Therefore, Table XII would appear to support the contention that the distortion in the one lecture class in terms of sex might have profound influence on social status and social participation.

The differences evidenced by these two characteristics, therefore, were not accepted as conclusive evidence of any fundamental difference between the participants in one specific subject matter area as compared to the rest of the populations studied. However, the need for further research seems indicated to re-test the characteristics of adults when subject matter is held constant.

Finally, in this study the geographic location of Evening Classes or of Living Room Learning groups was not considered by participants to be a conscious factor in their choice between educational opportunities.

TABLE XII  
INFLUENCE OF SEX ON SOCIAL STATUS  
IN LECTURE CLASSES

Social Status Categories	Percentages in Lecture Classes			
	Total	Male Only	Female Only	Single Female
Upper Class . . . . .	2.2	5.4	1.4	0
Upper Middle Class . . . . .	45.5	59.5	41.8	34.9
Lower Middle Class . . . . .	43.8	27.0	48.2	57.1
Upper Lower Class . . . . .	8.0	5.4	8.6	8.0
Lower Lower Class . . . . .	.5	2.7	0	0
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

## II. COMPARISON WITH OTHER STUDIES

Interesting and revealing comparisons can be made with a number of other studies which report on the socio-economic characteristics of adults. Such comparisons, however, are restricted to those studies which report some data in a form comparable to the data collected for this investigation.

Canada Census, 1956. A comparison of the age of the discussion and lecture participants with the population of Vancouver, as reported

in the 1956 census,<sup>1</sup> reveals that the age distribution of adults enrolled in discussion groups is more nearly comparable to the total population than that of the lecture participants, although both show differences that are statistically significant when compared to the total community. As Table XIII on page 54 indicates, lecture participants account for almost double the proportion of younger people, thirty-four years of age and under, as are found in the total community. Conversely, only about one-half as many adults aged forty-five years and over are found in lecture classes. The significant differences in age between lecture and discussion participants is also found to exist between lecture participants and the total population of the community.

Neither discussion participants nor lecture participants have any relationship to the general community in terms of distribution by sex. While both lectures and discussions attract a preponderance of women, the census figures reveal that women account for only 50.1 per cent of the total Vancouver population over 19 years of age.

In terms of marital status, the adults studied are dissimilar to the total population of the community as outlined in Table XIV on page 54. While the total community reports 24 per cent single, the lecture participants studied report 41 per cent, but the discussion participants account for only about 15 per cent of the single adults.

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<sup>1</sup> Dominion Bureau of Statistics, Census of Canada: 1956, Population. Bulletin 4614 (Ottawa; Queen's Printer, 1957).

TABLE XIII

COMPARISON OF AGE OF POPULATION IN VANCOUVER  
COMMENCING AT TWENTY YEARS WITH AGE OF PARTICIPANTS  
IN LECTURE AND DISCUSSION GROUPS

Age in Years	1956 Census %	Lecture %	Discussion %
34 or younger . . . . .	29.4	49.5	24.3
35 to 44 . . . . .	21.2	23.0	37.4
45 and older . . . . .	49.4	27.5	38.3
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0

TABLE XIV

COMPARISON OF MARITAL STATUS OF POPULATION IN VANCOUVER  
WITH MARITAL STATUS OF PARTICIPANTS IN LECTURE  
AND DISCUSSION GROUPS

Marital Status	1956 Census %	Lecture %	Discussion %
Single . . . . .	24.2	41.0	14.8
Married and Separated . . .	64.9	51.2	76.8
Widowed . . . . .	9.5	6.7	5.2
Divorced . . . . .	1.4	1.1	3.5
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0

The Adult Learner at University. The Dominion Bureau of Statistics in 1962 released figures on adult participation in university sponsored courses in British Columbia. These data include both credit and non-credit part-time courses, but still serve as useful comparison with two specific non-credit part-time courses in the liberal arts.<sup>2</sup>

Age shows a statistically significant difference at the .01 level for discussion participants, but not for lecture participants, as revealed in Table XV on page 57. Adults enrolled in Evening Classes are comparable in age to all adults enrolled in university sponsored part-time courses. On the other hand, Living Room Learning enrolls a decidedly older participant.

The discussion participants reveal no statistically significant difference at the .05 level when marital status is compared to that of all adults enrolled in university sponsored courses in British Columbia; however, lecture participants reveal a much higher proportion of single adults. Table XVI on page 57 shows only 18.8 percent are single in the total university sponsored part-time population, but Evening Classes in the liberal arts enrolled 41 per cent who are single.

A comparison of educational backgrounds in Table XVII on page 58 confirms that there is no statistically significant difference at the .05 level between Evening Class participants and all participants enrolled in university sponsored part-time courses in British Columbia. Living Room Learning participants, however, reveal significant differences.

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<sup>2</sup> Dominion Bureau of Statistics, The Adult Learner at University. Preliminary release, June 3, 1962 (Ottawa: Dominion Bureau of Statistics, Education Division, Adult Education Section) (Mineographed).

Relatively fewer have had any university training and a greater ratio have high school or less.

California Comparative Study. Although the major purpose of Hill's study<sup>3</sup> at the University of California at Los Angeles was to assess the relative effectiveness of two methods, some of his data provide for useful comparisons with this investigation.

Statistically significant differences at the .01 level were found in comparing educational background in both lectures and discussions as portrayed in Table XVIII on page 58. Hill found no significant differences at the .05 level between discussion and lecture participants with respect to education, but this present study did find such differences. Also in this study both lecture and discussion participants evidenced significant differences when compared with Hill's sample. At the University of British Columbia both lecture and discussion participants reported lower educational attainment.

Table XIX on page 60 presents data on number of memberships held in community organizations. No significant differences were revealed at the .01 level. Both the California study and this present study conclude that the population studied is active in voluntary organizations. Marital status shows significant differences for both lecture and discussion participants. Although discussion in both studies had only 14 per cent single participants, the California program reported another 14 per cent were divorced, compared to 3.5 per cent in this

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<sup>3</sup>Hill, op. cit.,



COMPARISON OF AGE OF ADULT PARTICIPANTS IN UNIVERSITY  
SPONSORED PART-TIME COURSES IN BRITISH COLUMBIA  
WITH AGE OF PARTICIPANTS IN LECTURE AND  
DISCUSSION GROUPS

Age in Years	* University Sponsored %	Lecture %	Discussion %
34 or younger . . . . .	53.2	49.5	24.3
35 to 44 . . . . .	28.2	23.0	37.4
45 and older . . . . .	18.6	27.5	38.3
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0

\* Includes all credit and non-credit part-time courses.

TABLE XVI

COMPARISON OF MARITAL STATUS OF ADULT PARTICIPANTS  
IN UNIVERSITY SPONSORED PART-TIME COURSES  
IN BRITISH COLUMBIA WITH MARITAL STATUS OF PARTICIPANTS  
IN LECTURE AND DISCUSSION GROUPS

Marital Status	* University Sponsored %	Lecture %	Discussion %
Single . . . . .	18.8	41.0	14.8
Married . . . . .	77.4	48.9	75.6
Widowed, Separated, or Divorced . . . . .	3.8	10.1	9.6
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0

\* Includes all credit and non-credit part-time courses.

TABLE XVII

COMPARISON OF EDUCATIONAL BACKGROUND OF ADULT PARTICIPANTS  
IN UNIVERSITY SPONSORED PART-TIME COURSES IN BRITISH  
COLUMBIA WITH EDUCATIONAL BACKGROUND OF PARTICIPANTS  
IN LECTURE AND DISCUSSION GROUPS

Educational Level	*University Sponsored %	Lecture %	Discussion %
Less than Grade 8 . . . . .	.3	.6	3.5
Completed Grade 8 . . . . .	1.9	2.2	2.6
Some High School . . . . .	11.1	7.3	19.8
Completed High School . . . . .	30.7	29.8	37.1
Some University . . . . .	32.2	24.2	17.2
University graduate . . . . .	23.8	35.9	19.8
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0

\*Includes all credit and non-credit part-time courses

TABLE XVIII

COMPARISON OF EDUCATIONAL BACKGROUND OF PARTICIPANTS IN  
LOS ANGELES PROGRAM WITH EDUCATIONAL BACKGROUND OF  
PARTICIPANTS IN VANCOUVER PROGRAM

Educational Level	Lectures %		Discussions %	
	UCLA	UBC	UCLA	UBC
Completed Grade 8 or less . . . . .	0	2.8	.8	6.1
Some High School . . . . .	2.1	7.3	3.6	19.8
Completed High School . . . . .	11.1	29.8	14.2	37.1
Some College . . . . .	39.6	24.2	32.8	17.2
College graduate . . . . .	24.7	30.3	23.1	17.2
Advanced degree . . . . .	22.5	5.6	25.5	2.6
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

study. While the California lecture study revealed that 17 per cent were single, this present study of lectures uncovered two and one-half times as many single participants, or 41 per cent, as indicated in Table XX on page 60.

Experimental Discussion Project Test Centers. Analysis of data collected for The Fund for Adult Education from group participants in test center study-discussion programs in the United States during the year 1956-57 was provided by Burch.<sup>4</sup>

More than 50 per cent of the registrants in Test Center discussion groups were under 40 years of age and about 5 per cent were 60 years or older. In the present study only 39 per cent of the discussion participants were less than 40 years of age, although only 6 per cent were sixty years or older. Living Room Learning participants tended to be older than their counterparts in American programs.

In the Test Center populations women outnumbered men by a ratio of six to four, which compares closely to the 69 per cent women found in Living Room Learning groups.

Educational background compared as follows in percentages:

	<u>Test Centers</u>	<u>Living Room Learning</u>
High school graduation or less...	13	63
College graduates . . . . .	54	20

Obviously, the study-discussion program conducted by the University of

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<sup>4</sup>Burch, op. cit., pp. 56-57.

TABLE XIX

COMPARISON OF NUMBER OF ORGANIZATIONAL MEMBERSHIPS HELD  
BY PARTICIPANTS IN LOS ANGELES PROGRAM WITH THOSE  
HELD BY PARTICIPANTS IN VANCOUVER PROGRAM

Number of Memberships	Lecture and Discussion Combined	
	U.C.L.A. %	U.B.C. %
None . . . . .	20.9	23.3
1 . . . . .	20.0	19.3
2 . . . . .	12.7	25.5
3 . . . . .	20.9	14.0
4 . . . . .	11.8	10.1
5 or more . . . . .	13.6	7.7
Total	99.9	99.9

TABLE XX

COMPARISON OF MARITAL STATUS OF PARTICIPANTS IN  
LOS ANGELES PROGRAM WITH MARITAL STATUS OF  
PARTICIPANTS IN VANCOUVER PROGRAM

Marital Status	Lectures %		Discussions %	
	UCLA	UBC	UCLA	UBC
Single . . . . .	17.0	41.0	14.6	14.8
Married . . . . .	74.9	48.9	64.8	75.6
Separated . . . . .	.9	2.3	2.4	.9
Widowed . . . . .	2.1	6.7	4.0	5.2
Divorced . . . . .	5.1	1.1	14.2	3.5
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

British Columbia is attracting a considerably greater number of participants with lower educational background than the study-discussion program in the United States as represented by the test center data. The reasons for such significant differences are beyond the limits of this investigation and require further research.

The Test Centers also reported that 42 per cent had lived in their respective communities for nine years or more. Only 20 per cent had lived there two years or less. A casual comparison with Living Room Learning suggests a similar pattern of established residence.

Almost the identical percentage of adults in Test Center discussion groups were listed as housewives (45 per cent) as in the Living Room Learning groups (46 per cent). In terms of occupation in the Test Center groups 46 per cent were executives, proprietors, professionals, and semi-professionals. This is identical with the experience of Living Room Learning.

Evening Class Test of a Methodology. In February of 1962 Jones undertook a study of Evening Class participants at the University of British Columbia.<sup>5</sup> His data was collected only about four months after the data collected for this study and provides an excellent basis for comparison. The February study produced evidence that 55.6 per cent of the participants were women, compared to 79.2 per cent in this study of data collected in the Fall of 1961. Another difference was revealed

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<sup>5</sup>Jones, op. cit.

in the number of housewives reported. Jones found 47.7 per cent of his total lecture sample were housewives compared to only 30.9 per cent found in the lecture classes in the present study. The reasons for the higher proportion of working women in the present study as compared to Jones's study, are not evident from the data collected. Future research seems warranted on the influence of subject matter and of seasonal variations on the kinds of adults enrolled in Evening Classes.

However, as Tables XXI and XXII on page 63 and Table XXIII on page 64 signify, there were no statistically significant differences at the .05 level in years of schooling, in marital status, or in occupation, as between the lecture participants in the Fall of 1961 and those in the Spring of 1962. Thus, the data collected on these three characteristics was given credence.

TABLE XXI  
YEARS OF SCHOOLING OF EVENING CLASS PARTICIPANTS IN  
FALL OF 1961 COMPARED TO EVENING CLASS  
PARTICIPANTS IN SPRING OF 1962

Years of Schooling	%	%
	Fall 1961	Spring 1962
1 to 8 years . . . . .	2.8	4.1
9 to 12 years . . . . .	37.1	34.0
13 years and over . . . . .	60.1	61.5
None or not listed . . . . .	0	.4
Total	100.0	100.0

TABLE XXII  
MARITAL STATUS OF EVENING CLASS PARTICIPANTS IN  
FALL OF 1961 COMPARED TO EVENING CLASS  
PARTICIPANTS IN SPRING OF 1962

Marital Status	Fall 1961 %		Spring 1962 %	
	Male	Female	Male	Female
Single . . . . .	27.0	44.7	27.0	36.6
Married . . . . .	73.0	45.4	71.3	56.5
Widowed . . . . .	0	8.5	1.1	5.5
Divorced . . . . .	0	1.4	.6	1.4
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

TABLE XXIII

OCCUPATION OF LABOR FORCE (MALE AND FEMALE) IN  
EVENING CLASSES IN FALL OF 1961 COMPARED TO  
THOSE IN EVENING CLASSES IN SPRING OF 1962

Occupational Grouping	Percentage in Lecture Classes	
	Fall 1961	Spring 1962
Proprietary and Managerial . . . .	7.3	10.1
Professional . . . . .	43.1	40.7
Clerical . . . . .	28.4	20.9
Sales (including commercial and financial . . . . .	4.9	11.2
Blue Collar (including manufacturing, mechanical, construction, trans- portation, and communications)	11.4	8.5
Service (including personal) . .	.8	3.5
All Other . . . . .	4.1	5.1
Total	100.0	100.0



## CHAPTER VI

### CONCLUSIONS

This study has determined that there are statistically significant differences in the kinds of people served by different adult education methods.

A pronounced difference was found in the age of participants in university sponsored non-credit liberal arts programs. Lecture classes attract almost one-half of their participants from the age group of thirty-four years or younger. Discussion groups have few young people and a disproportionately strong attraction for the older adult with some 61 per cent forty years of age or older.

While the older adult may have attitudes more deeply rooted or more firmly fixed, this apparently did not deter him from enrolling in discussion groups in the liberal arts. The choice of discussion by the older adult suggests that there is validity in the conclusion already enunciated by Powell to the effect that the older adult seeks opportunity to "think about what he already knows. This is the opportunity that the informal study-discussion process attempts to give him".<sup>1</sup>

It was hypothesized at the beginning of this study that there is no significant difference in age. This hypothesis must be rejected.

Compared to the 1956 census data for Vancouver, discussion groups

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<sup>1</sup>Powell, op. cit., p. 3.

attract more middle aged adults than the community average but fewer older adults. But lectures attract almost double the community average of adults thirty-four years or younger. However, the lecture experience is statistically comparable to the age of all adults enrolled in university sponsored part-time courses in British Columbia. Consequently, adults enrolled in the discussion groups are decidedly older than those enrolled in the total university sponsored part-time courses as well as being older than adults in the lectures. Living Room Learning participants also tend to be significantly older than their counterparts in American study-discussion programs.

While adults whose formal education does not go beyond high school may feel that university sponsored courses are beyond their capacity, a substantial number of these same adults (63 per cent) seem motivated to take part in Living Room Learning study-discussion groups sponsored by the University of British Columbia. The British Columbia experience tends to contrast with the findings of Kaplan. His study in California led him to suggest that people who typically participate in liberal arts discussion programs have already had a great deal of formal schooling.<sup>2</sup> However, adults enrolled in Evening Class lectures on liberal arts topics fit this description more closely. Most of those studied in Evening Classes (60 per cent) have had some university experience and their educational background is very similar to that of adults enrolled in all university sponsored part-time courses in British Columbia.

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<sup>2</sup>Kaplan, op. cit., p. 12.

Yet both lecture and discussion participants in this study report lower educational attainment than the participants studied by Hill in his comparative study of lecture and discussion methods. Living Room Learning participants also evidenced considerably lower educational attainment than study-discussion participants in American Test Centers.

The discussion program appears more attractive to married adults (75.6 per cent) while only one-half of the lecture participants are married. The unmarried lecture participants in this study evidence a stark contrast (41 per cent) to the single adults reported for the total community (24 per cent), or to the single adults enrolled in all university sponsored part-time courses in British Columbia (18.8 per cent), or to the single adults studied in the California comparative study (17 per cent).

This contrast to other studies was not duplicated by the data from adults in the Living Room Learning program. To the contrary, the 14.8 per cent single adults in discussion groups closely approximated the experience of all university sponsored part-time courses (18.8 per cent), and of the California comparative study (14.6 per cent), although it did not fit quite so closely to the 1956 census data (24.2 per cent) for Vancouver.

Although the comparative study in California revealed no significant differences between marital status of lecture and discussion participants, this present study revealed highly significant differences between adults drawn from the Vancouver area.

More housewives were attracted to Living Room Learning than to Evening Classes dealing with the liberal arts. But both programs attracted a sizeable percentage of housewives. Both programs also are characterized by a high proportion of women. In discussion groups most of these women are married and are housewives. Although almost 80 per cent of lecture participants are women, most of these are single and young. Although there is no evidence of statistically significant differences in the sexes as between discussion and lecture participants, there is a stark converse relationship noted in relation to the community, since the census revealed only 50.1 per cent women in the total community. There may well be sustenance in the conclusion that men tend to pursue courses for occupational, professional, or career purposes, while women, and particularly those not in the labor force, tend to be interested in a more liberal education.

While it might be expected that adults who are retired and have ample leisure time would be attracted to liberal arts programs, this study did not substantiate such an expectation. Very few--4 per cent and less--were in evidence in either program studied.

Participants in both programs were concentrated in the upper echelons of the occupational pyramid--professionals, managers, and proprietors. Adults in lecture classes tend disproportionately to be professionals. Clerical occupations accounted for about one-fifth. Sales and skilled "blue collar" occupations are moderately represented but service and unskilled are practically non-existent in both programs.

The housewives in lecture classes are apt to have husbands who are in professional occupations. Housewives in discussion groups tend to have husbands in managerial and proprietary occupations as well as in the professions. The concentration of discussion participants into the upper occupational groups parallels the experience of the American test centers.

Despite a number of seeming similarities in occupation between adults in lectures and those in discussion groups, there was a statistically significant difference noted.

This study re-emphasizes the maxim that familiarity (and possibly satisfaction) with one type of educational experience will encourage a tendency towards choice by the participant of that type of experience in future enrollment. Thus, adults in lectures tended to have been exposed previously to other lecture courses but to very few discussion groups. Conversely, adults in the discussion groups tended to have had most of their previous experience with other discussion groups. Discussion participants on the whole showed a considerably higher record of previous experience in educational courses. There was a significant difference between adults enrolled in these two programs, demonstrating that we must reject the hypothesis that there is no significant difference in previous experience with either lecture classes or study-discussion groups.

In a number of characteristics, no statistically significant differences were evident. Adults in both kinds of program were above

average in terms of social status. Rather than imply that adults of a particular socio-economic status choose a particular kind of educational opportunity or choose a particular method of learning, this study suggests that an adult with high social status is more apt to be involved in continuing education in any form. The adults studied did not evidence any significant differences in social status as between those enrolled in discussion groups and those enrolled in lecture classes. The hypothesis that there is no significant difference in socio-economic status must be accepted.

The adults in both programs are alike also in their degree of social participation. These are busy people belonging to a number of community organizations. In this respect they are very similar to the adults in the California comparative study. The varying intensity of social participation by adults does not appear to influence their enrollment in any particular program. While there is still room for future speculation that it is the liberal arts subject matter which attracts adults who are active in community affairs, this study indicates that both the discussion participant and the lecture participant are fairly equally involved in community activity. We must accept the hypothesis that there is no significant difference in social participation score.

Although there may be social implications to participating in Living Room Learning and while such participation may provide an opportunity to meet people and make new friends, it was overwhelmingly clear in this study that adults enrolled in the discussion groups were not

newcomers to the community. To the contrary, these adults evidenced roots in the community by their relatively long period of residence in both the larger community and in their respective neighborhood. This study also revealed that the adults enrolled in liberal arts lecture classes evidenced the same residential permanence. Therefore, the hypothesis that there is no significant difference in length of residence in the community must be accepted. The highly mobile individual in our society, so often identified by the sociologist, was conspicuously rare in both the discussion and the lecture program. This pattern of established residence coincides with the experience of American Test Centers.

Geographic location within the community of the lecture classes or of the discussion groups was not an important factor in the choice of a particular program. These adults also did not choose a particular kind of program because it was the only one that came to their attention. Their choice was based on other factors.

This study makes it clear that in the non-credit liberal arts program sponsored by the University of British Columbia, there are significant socio-economic differences between those adults enrolled in lecture classes and those enrolled in study-discussion groups. The data in this study represents further evidence for the conclusions drawn from the literature on adult education to the effect that adults who participate in university extension classes are above average in socio-economic status.

This study has also raised a serious question as to the validity of applying findings on socio-economic characteristics of American populations to the Canadian scene without further comparative studies. Several characteristics, but educational background in particular, have revealed stark differences between this British Columbia study and the several American investigations which were cited. It may be that cultural differences are a factor that need future attention.

The need for caution is exemplified further by Hill's comparative study of lecture and discussion methods. Hill concluded, "In general, the same kinds of people were attracted by both methods".<sup>3</sup> But this conclusion does not fit the evidence collected from adults living in Vancouver.

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<sup>3</sup>Hill, op. cit., p. 84



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## APPENDIX A

Department of University Extension  
THE UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA

Do not sign your name.

(76)

(1)

Check how many years you have  
lived in Greater Vancouver

Check how many years you have  
lived in your present  
neighborhood

Less than 2 years	From 2 yrs to 5 years	More than 5 years

(2) Check your age group:

- ☐ 29 years or younger  
☐ 30 to 34 years  
☐ 35 to 39 years  
☐ 40 to 44 years  
☐ 45 to 49 years  
☐ 50 to 59 years  
☐ 60 years or over

(3) Check one: ☐ Single?

- ☐ Married?  
☐ Separated?  
☐ Widowed?  
☐ Divorced?

(4) Sex: ☐ Male

☐ Female

(5) Check how much formal education you have had:

- ☐ Left school before completing grade 8.  
☐ Completed grade 8 but did not attend further.  
☐ Attended high school but did not graduate.  
☐ Completed high school, grade 12.  
☐ Attended university but did not graduate.  
☐ Graduated from a university (B.A. or equal).  
☐ Received an advanced degree (M.A. or higher).

(6) In how many civic, social, community, or professional organizations or clubs do you hold membership? \_\_\_\_\_

Check to what extent you participate in each group:

	Hold a membership	Attend meetings occasionally	Attend meetings regularly	Member of a committee	Hold an office
Organization #1					
Organization #2					
Organization #3					
Organization #4					
Organization #5					
Organization #6					
Organization #7					
List more if required.					

(7) What is your occupation (or the occupation of the head of your household)? \_\_\_\_\_

If retired, then check here \_\_\_\_ and list your former occupation.

If a housewife, check here \_\_\_\_ and list your husband's occupation.

If you are self-employed, then check here \_\_\_\_.

If you are an employer, then how many persons do you employ? \_\_\_\_\_

(8) What is the main source of your income? Check one category.

(If you are a housewife, then check the source of your husband's income)

- ☐ Inherited income.
- ☐ Profits, fees, royalties; including executives who receive a share of the profit.
- ☐ Income from investments.
- ☐ Salary, commissions, and regular income on a monthly or yearly basis.
- ☐ Wages on an hourly basis; piece-work; weekly cheques as distinguished from monthly.
- ☐ Income from "odd jobs"; or seasonal work.
- ☐ Social assistance; public relief; charity.

(9) Within the last 3 years have you participated in any educational courses involving 3 or more meetings?      Yes ☐      No ☐

If yes, then please indicate how many courses of each type:

- Attended  lecture courses
- Attended  discussion courses
- Attended  seminars and workshops
- Attended  other types of courses

THANK YOU VERY MUCH FOR YOUR COOPERATION.

## APPENDIX B

TABLE OF FREQUENCIES AND PERCENTAGES  
FOR ALL CHARACTERISTICS STUDIED

Characteristic Studied	Number of Participants							
	Discussion Groups				Lecture Groups			
	Control		Total Groups		Control		Total Groups	
	D <sub>c</sub>		D		L <sub>c</sub>		L	
	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%
<u>SEX</u>								
Male . . . . .	7	31.8	36	31.2	0	0	37	20.8
Female . . . . .	15	68.2	79	68.8	11	100.0	141	79.2
Total	22	100.0	115	100.0	11	100.0	178	100.0
<u>AGE</u>								
29 years or younger	2	9.1	9	7.8	2	18.2	64	36.0
30 - 34 years . . .	0	0	19	16.5	1	9.1	24	13.5
35 - 39 years . . .	4	18.2	17	14.8	1	9.1	23	12.9
40 - 44 years . . .	6	27.3	26	22.6	3	27.3	18	10.1
45 - 49 years . . .	6	27.3	17	14.8	2	18.2	22	12.4
50 - 59 years . . .	4	18.2	20	17.4	1	9.1	20	11.2
60 years and over .	0	0	7	6.1	1	9.1	7	3.9
Total	22	100.0	115	100.0	11	100.0	178	100.0
<u>OCCUPATION</u> (Housewives distributed)								
Professional . . . .	8	36.4	30	26.1	3	27.3	79	44.4
Managerial, proprietary	7	31.8	23	20.0	0	0	15	8.4
Clerical . . . . .	1	4.5	25	21.8	5	45.4	40	22.5
Sales . . . . .	4	18.2	15	13.0	0	0	9	5.1
Blue Collar . . . .	2	9.1	16	13.9	1	9.1	20	11.1
Service . . . . .	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	.6
All others . . . . .	0	0	6	5.2	2	18.2	14	7.9
Total . . .	22	100.0	115	100.0	11	100.0	178	100.0
<u>OCCUPATION</u> (Housewives withdrawn)								
Professional . . . .	4	18.3	14	12.2	2	18.2	53	29.7
Managerial, proprietary	4	18.2	9	7.8	0	0	9	5.1
Clerical . . . . .	1	4.5	19	16.5	5	45.5	35	19.7
Sales . . . . .	1	4.5	10	8.7	0	0	6	3.3
Blue Collar . . . .	1	4.5	9	7.8	0	0	14	7.9
Service . . . . .	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	.6
All others . . . . .	0	0	1	.9	0	0	5	2.8
Housewives . . . . .	11	50.0	53	46.1	4	36.3	55	30.9
Total	22	100.0	115	100.0	11	100.0	178	100.0



(continued)

Characteristic Studied	D <sub>c</sub>		D		L <sub>c</sub>		L	
	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%
<u>MARITAL STATUS</u>								
Single . . . . .	2	9.1	17	14.8	5	45.5	73	41.0
Separated . . . . .	0	0	1	.9	0	0	4	2.2
Widowed . . . . .	0	0	6	5.2	1	9.0	12	6.7
Divorced . . . . .	1	4.5	4	3.5	0	0	2	1.1
Married . . . . .	19	86.4	87	75.6	5	45.5	87	48.9
Total	22	100.0	115	100.0	11	100.0	178	100.0
<u>SOCIAL PARTICIPATION SCORE</u>								
Zero . . . . .	7	31.8	25	21.8	4	36.4	44	24.8
Low . . . . .	7	31.8	60	52.2	7	63.6	107	60.1
High . . . . .	8	36.4	30	26.0	0	0	27	15.1
Total	22	100.0	115	100.0	11	100.0	178	100.0
<u>EDUCATIONAL BACKGROUND</u>								
Left before grade 8 . . . . .	0	0	4	3.5	0	0	1	.6
Completed grade 8 . . . . .	0	0	3	2.6	1	9.1	4	2.2
Some high school . . . . .	5	22.7	23	19.8	1	9.1	13	7.3
Completed grade 12 . . . . .	8	36.4	43	37.1	8	72.7	53	29.8
Some university . . . . .	6	27.3	20	17.2	0	0	43	24.2
University graduate . . . . .	3	13.6	20	17.2	1	9.1	54	30.3
Advanced degree . . . . .	0	0	3	2.6	0	0	10	5.6
Total	22	100.0	116	100.0	11	100.0	178	100.0
<u>SOCIAL STATUS INDEX</u>								
Upper class . . . . .	0	0	1	.9	0	0	4	2.2
Upper middle class . . . . .	11	50.0	42	36.5	1	9.1	81	45.5
Lower middle class . . . . .	9	40.9	55	47.8	9	81.8	78	43.8
Upper lower class . . . . .	2	9.1	16	13.9	1	9.1	14	7.9
Lower lower class . . . . .	0	0	1	.9	0	0	1	.6
Total	22	100.0	115	100.0	11	100.0	178	100.0
<u>MEMBERSHIP IN COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONS</u>								
Nil memberships . . . . .	7	31.8	25	21.8	4	36.3	44	24.8
One . . . . .	2	9.1	20	17.4	3	27.3	38	21.3
Two . . . . .	3	13.7	27	23.5	2	18.2	49	27.5
Three . . . . .	6	27.3	18	15.6	2	18.2	22	12.4
Four . . . . .	1	4.5	13	11.3	0	0	16	9.0
Five or more . . . . .	3	13.6	12	10.4	0	0	9	5.0
Total	22	100.0	115	100.0	11	100.0	178	100.0

(continued)

Characteristic Studied	D <sub>c</sub>		D		L <sub>c</sub>		L	
	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%
<u>LENGTH OF RESIDENCE IN NEIGHBORHOOD</u>								
Less than 2 years . . . .	4	18.2	13	11.4	2	18.2	35	19.8
2 to 5 years . . . . .	5	22.7	25	21.9	2	18.2	44	24.9
More than 5 years . . . .	13	59.1	76	66.7	7	63.6	98	55.3
Total	22	100.0	114	100.0	11	100.0	177	100.0
<u>LENGTH OF RESIDENCE IN GREATER VANCOUVER</u>								
Less than 2 years . . . .	1	4.6	6	5.3	1	9.1	11	6.2
2 to 5 years . . . . .	3	13.6	10	8.8	2	18.2	26	14.8
More than 5 years . . . .	18	81.8	98	85.9	8	73.7	139	79.0
Total	22	100.0	114	100.0	11	100.0	176	100.0
<u>PREVIOUS PARTICIPATION IN EDUCATION COURSES</u>								
Participation within last 3 years . . . .	19	86.4	104	90.4	10	90.9	130	73.0
No participation within last 3 yrs. . . .	3	13.6	11	9.6	1	9.1	48	27.0
Total	22	100.0	115	100.0	11	100.0	178	100.0
<u>PREVIOUS PARTICIPATION IN LECTURE COURSES</u>								
1 or 2 lectures . . . . .	15	68.2	39	33.9	8	72.7	66	37.1
3 or 4 lectures . . . . .	3	13.6	7	6.1	0	0	26	14.6
5 or more lectures . . . .	0	0	0	0	0	0	16	9.0
No participation . . . . .	4	18.2	69	60.0	3	27.3	70	39.3
Total	22	100.0	115	100.0	11	100.0	178	100.0
<u>PREVIOUS PARTICIPATION IN DISCUSSION COURSES</u>								
No Participation . . . . .	7	31.8	29	25.2	10	90.9	155	87.0
1 or 2 discussions . . . .	10	45.5	50	43.5	0	0	18	10.1
3 or 4 discussions . . . .	4	18.2	20	17.4	0	0	4	2.3
5 or more discussions . . .	1	4.5	16	13.9	1	9.1	1	.6
Total	22	100.0	115	100.0	11	100.0	178	100.0