In 1986, Larry Daloz completed the first edition of *Effective Teaching and Mentoring*. It was re-issued in 1999 as *Mentor: Guiding the Journey of Adult Learners* with a new preface and an updated final chapter. Researchers and educators will also appreciate the expanded and updated bibliography. In the original preface, Daloz states his purpose. “The primary purpose of this book is to offer new perspectives for understanding adult learners and to suggest in concrete and practical ways based on current developmental theory how we can work more effectively to improve the quality of their educational experience” (p. xvi). Although Daloz acknowledges that mentoring can occur in a variety of settings, the focus of his text is how learning can change the lives of adults through mentoring in higher education. Interspersed with adult development theory are many stories of adults’ experiences in higher education. These stories of individuals illustrate the challenges, struggles, successes, and failures of adult students.

*Mentor* is filled with metaphor, drawing on the myths of Mentor, the advisor to Odysseus, as well as Virgil, Dante’s guide in the *Divine Comedy*. In both of these classic works, the hero is on a strenuous, lengthy, and transformational journey. In both instances, the goal is related to the feminine: Odysseus’ wife, Penelope; and, Dante’s beloved Beatrice. Daloz compares the educational journey of the adult learner to these heroes, noting that his male students often become more caring and compassionate as they progress toward their educational goals, enhancing more feminine attributes. Perhaps because the earlier edition of *Mentor* was criticized for ignoring gender issues, Daloz makes a conscious effort to address the differences
in male and female students, as well as male and female mentors. Daloz stresses that he could not find many examples of female mentors in his literature review. When he asks mentors and students to identify what their duty was to each other, the women name honesty and openness as being central to the mentoring relationship. “Asked why, they explained—sometimes with a hint of exasperation—that obviously you can’t have a nurturant relationship in which there is no trust” (p. 216). The author’s condescending tone often detracts from his findings. Daloz contrasts women with men, who, according to his survey, place more value on activities such as providing guidance and fostering independence. He concludes that women need connection while men need separation.

In addition to his emphasis on a male model of transformational learning with its goal of individualism, Daloz neglects issues of class and ethnicity. He has no examples of how the mentoring relationship might work for learners who come from a culture where individualism is not valued, but the collective good is esteemed. Daloz also demonstrates a bias toward a liberal, pluralistic view of the world. In several of his narratives, he describes the mentor’s challenge in attempting to lead the student away from her strong, Christian values and toward humanism and moral relativism. Three examples are found in the stories of Monique (69-74), Betty (99-105), and Anne (189-202). Although the second edition has less of a gender bias than the first edition, Mentor does not adequately address the diversity of contemporary adult learners.

The author’s extensive use of literary examples from classical literature is further evidence that he is out of touch with today’s adult learner. Daloz’s attempts to update his text include a
passing reference to the film *Educating Rita* (1983) and a glib comparison of the primitive behaviors people exhibit when dealing with “an intransigent neighbor as with Saddam Hussein” (224, 127). One relevant analogy that Daloz uses is his description of Yoda from *Star Wars* as “a mentor’s mentor” as Yoda guides Luke Skywalker “through his transition into adulthood, confirming his value, challenging his ability, and reminding him of his destiny” (203-204).

*Mentor* is organized into three parts, corresponding to the beginning, middle, and end of an epic journey. The sections include: adult learning as development; learning as a transformative journey; and fostering adult learning. Daloz then identifies three primary functions of mentors. They support, challenge, and provide vision (p. 206). Supporting adult learners should include providing structure, expressing positive expectations, serving as an advocate, sharing, and making the mentoring relationship special. Challenging the learner incorporates setting tasks, engaging in discussion, heating up dichotomies, constructing hypotheses, and setting high standards. Daloz summarizes the challenging aspect of mentoring by stating that teachers need to teach their students how to learn, not how to be taught (223). Finally, providing vision should encourage mentors complete the work they have begun in their students through modeling, keeping traditions such as moral decision making and responsible scholarship, offering developmental maps with appropriate readings, suggesting new language to replace dualistic writing, and providing a mirror to extend the students’ self-awareness.

While *Mentor* is widely recognized as an important work in the field of adult education, it is not able to stand alone as the definite work on mentoring. Pairing this text with another, such as Lois Zachary’s *The Mentor’s Guide: Facilitating Effective Learning Relationships*, would create a
more balanced presentation of the topic. Zachary’s text, which has elements of a workbook, includes additional principles of adult education, including collaboration and critical reflection. Zachary illustrates her text with narratives from her experience in the corporate world. Using the two books together would provide a more complete and less biased coverage of the important mentoring relationship.

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References

