

Alanen Aulis. **Generativeness in Erikson's Stage of Development theory**

– Generativeness is the key concept in Erik H. Erikson's life cycle theory. As Erikson himself points out, this concept includes everything that makes us humans not only beings capable of learning but also of teaching. Generativeness, a concern for the coming generation and society as a whole, develops in a person's adulthood and, according to Erikson, acts as a link joining an individual's life cycle and the generational cycle, the interaction between concurrent generations, and the overlapping development of people of different ages. The community's values and structures are shaped by the interaction of generations and they in turn regulate the development of individuals.

The author takes particular interest in examining the conditions under which an adult's productive and creative activity are generative in the sense put forward by Erikson. Light on this issue is shed by a study in which Erikson analyses Ingmar Bergman's film *Wild Strawberries* applying his theory.

The author believes that Erikson's theory goes deeper into the essence of human development than any other known life cycle analysis. At the same time he is also puzzled why so little attention has been attached to the core of the theory - the generational cycle and generativeness. From the point of view of adult education, it is particularly interesting to observe that Erikson's concept of education as the actualisation of generativeness corresponds to the humanistic idea of life-long education. *Aikuiskasvatus* 2/1994.