ADDRESSING THE LEADERSHIP GAP: PREPARING GIFTED WOMEN TO TAKE THEIR RIGHTFUL PLACES ON THE WORLD STAGE

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INTRODUCTION

Women represent half of the gifted population of the world, yet they are seriously underrepresented in hierarchy-enhancing leadership positions. Current statistics on women leaders in government, the military, corporations, higher education, and science are summarized with special attention given to the effects of discrimination and social construction of gender specific to gifted women in these fields. The interaction of Internal and external barriers to the achievement of potential in gifted women suggests a need for career counseling specific to gifted women. Criteria for successful interventions in higher education are suggested. A review of programs designed to benefit gifted women demonstrates ways in which this criteria may be applied.

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In order that we may all live in peace and prosperity, world leaders must be of the highest caliber. A true leader is a highly intelligent problem solver who inspires others to cooperate in the design of a more constructive world. Such individuals are rare, and we cannot afford to let them go to waste in patriarchal social systems that divide labor by gender. True leaders are found in the gifted population of the world. Half of these individuals are women (Nelson & Smith, 2001). For the purpose of this discussion, gifted women are defined as those who possess both a high level of intelligence and a demonstrated potential for leadership. Achievement is defined in terms of career level.

While there have been increases in the percentages of women in top leadership positions, a significant gap still exists between current representation and equal representation. Women continue to comprise less than 50% of the leadership positions in government, the military, corporations, higher education, and science. Women throughout the world have been relegated to subordinate and/or token status.

Newland (1976) stated that 8% of the population is needed to perform jobs requiring the intelligence of the gifted segment of the population. When we consider that half of this segment is female, while males hold the great majority of the positions, it can be reasonably hypothesized that many of these jobs are "manned" by individuals not intellectually competent to perform them, while gifted women are relegated to positions deemed appropriate for their gender. It is no wonder that so many poor decisions are made by individuals in leadership

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positions. Valuable human resources are wasted when the female half of the high-potential group experiences barriers to achievement.

While the dismantling of patriarchy is beyond the scope of this work, programs that seek to enhance the intellectual development of gifted women can make a difference. This paper will outline the under representation of women in key leadership positions, discuss the interaction among barriers to achievement in gifted women, and review interventions in higher education designed to counter some of these barriers. While the information that follows pertains primarily to the United States, the author is very interested in conditions for gifted women (and all women) in the rest of the world.

UNDER REPRESENTATION OF WOMEN IN LEADERSHIP POSITIONS

To understand the under representation of women in leadership positions, it is important to note that men presently control all of the powerful and forceful institutions that maintain social hierarchy throughout the world. Powerful institutions controlled by men include banking, government, the military, law enforcement, the judicial system, education administration, religion, housing, and health care facilities. These are described as hierarchy-enhancing institutions because they differentially benefit those in power. Careers in which women and members of subordinate ethnic groups predominate are termed hierarchy-attenuating careers; careers focusing on either individuals or issues lacking the power to alter the social hierarchy based on gender and race (Pratto & Espinoza, 2001).

In hierarchy-enhancing roles, men control the promotion, passage, interpretation, and enforcement of laws impacting the opportunities that gifted girls and women have in order to reach their potential. Beginning with a gifted girl's first day in kindergarten, men control the very existence of K-12 gifted programs by controlling funding for both programming and the training of teachers. Men control the enforcement of women's reproductive rights, Affirmative Action, Title IX, and gender pay equity. Men control the enforcement of laws written to protect women from incest, rape, and domestic violence.

As men benefit the most from their control of powerful institutions, they lack motivation to share power equally with women. Men not only benefit from holding power but also from keeping women in subordinate positions. "Men's dependence on women (e.g. for sex, sexual reproduction, homemaking, and childcare) creates incentives for men to ensure that women remain deferent, compliant, and willing to enact subordinate roles" (Rudman & Glick, 2001, p. 745).

It is difficult for gifted women to attain positions of power in hierarchy-enhancing occupations. The hiring decisions are typically made by those who have a personal stake in the status quo and who view males as the most appropriate candidates for top leadership positions (Pratto, Stallworth, Sidanius, & Siers, 1997; Pratto & Espinoza, 2001). Even when she can get hired, a gifted

woman faces negative employment evaluations if she is seen as insufficiently "nice", regardless of her professional competence (Rudman & Glick, 2001).

WOMEN IN GOVERNMENT LEADERSHIP POSITIONS

At the turn of the century, only 42 women throughout the world had served as presidents or prime ministers of countries: Twenty-five of those took office in the 1900's (Carli & Eagly, 2001). While women comprise 52% of the population of the United States, they continue to be underrepresented in government following the 2002 elections. At the state level, women hold 20% of Senate seats and 23% of House seats. Only 5 governors, and 17 lieutenant governors, are women. At the national level, 13 women hold U. S. Senate seats and 60 women hold seats in the U.S. House of Representatives (Women in Office, 2003). At this writing, only one woman has declared herself a major-party candidate for nomination in the 2004 presidential election. This is especially interesting since 57% of the American population responding to a Gallup Poll indicated that this country would be governed better if more women were in political office. Only 17% thought it would be worse governed (Carli & Eagly, 2001).

WOMEN IN MILITARY LEADERSHIP POSITIONS

While women soldiers served in combat in the 2003 Iraq War, women comprised only 14% of the U. S. military force as a whole and only 2% of the top officers at the rank of brigadier general, rear admiral, or higher (Boldry, Wood, & Kashy, 2001). This is ironic when we consider that the military touted the freeing of women from oppressive regimes as a major reason for initiating violence in Afghanistan and Iraq. If there is a positive side to discrimination against women in the military it is that it has boosted the status of African American males. Women are now the primary targets of discrimination. White classmates reportedly told African American male cadets at West Point, "You belong in the Corps…it's the women we don't want" (Francke, 1997, p.73).

WOMEN IN CORPORATE LEADERSHIP POSITIONS

In their analysis of women in management worldwide, Berthoin Antal and Izraeli (1993, p.63) stated that, "Probably the single most important hurdle for women in management in all industrialized countries is the persistent stereotype that associates management with being male." Women's share of management positions worldwide rarely exceeds 20%, and the gender gap widens as positions move higher on the corporate ladder (Women in Management, 1998).

While women comprise 45% of managers and administrators in the U. S., only 4% of the top officers in Fortune 500 companies are women (Carli & Eagly, 2001). The argument that there are not enough women in the pipeline no longer holds true. The glass ceiling, an invisible barrier generally located between middle and upper level management positions, remains firmly in place

for most women (Gutner, 2002). Only 57% of women are promoted one or more times. Generally, CEOs will not promote women beyond middle management (Hughes, 2002). Reasons vary: Carli and Eagly (2001) report that many men, and some women, are turned off by highly competent women because they are seen as violating gender-role expectations for behavior. The same behaviors that are valued in gifted men (e.g. ambition, aggression, and direct communication style) are devalued as "unfeminine" in women (Carli, 2001). To complicate matters further, characteristics stereotyped as feminine also derail women. Women are viewed as being more committed to family than career, hence less available professionally.

Women are rarely included in the "old boys' network". Corporate leaders are more likely to be chosen based on whom they know, and who knows them, than on their skills and accomplishments. Gifted women are passed over for promotion because they are not well connected at the higher rungs of the corporate ladder (Gutner, 2002). It is not in the best interest of the corporate bottom line to ignore gifted women as potential leaders when women are making at least half of the consumer decisions.

WOMEN IN UNIVERSITY LEADERSHIP POSITIONS

Gifted women who came of age in the 1960's faced a very narrow range of both college majors and career options as undergraduates. Many occupations and majors were either closed to women or highly restricted by gender. Public education was an area where a gifted woman could, at least, continue to feel intellectually alive. As a K-12 teacher's salary barely paid a living wage, many gifted women went to graduate school and became professors both in order to continue to grow intellectually and to earn a decent wage. Some of these women sought careers in higher education administration in the 1990's. Here, again, they encountered a gender barrier.

The career ladder to a college or university presidency usually involves previous successive experience as a department chair, academic dean, and chief academic officer. The department chair position is usually an elected position, which can be difficult for women in male-dominated departments to attain. If a woman successfully negotiates this first hurdle, the path to the top only becomes increasingly more difficult.

In 1996, only 24% of academic deans were women (Glazer-Raymo, 1999). There are even fewer women in the pipeline as chief academic officers (provosts, academic vice presidents and deans of instruction at two-year colleges). In 1999, women accounted for only 15% of all chief academic officers at four-year institutions. Only 17% of these served in research and doctoral-granting institutions. According to the *Chronicle of Higher Education Almanac* (2001), only 19% of college and university presidents were women.

WOMEN IN SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY, ENGINEERING, AND MATH CAREERS

In 1996, women enrolled in American colleges and universities earned 26.7% of master's degrees in computer science, 17.2% of master's degrees in engineering, and 32.2% of master's degrees in the physical sciences and science technologies (U.S. Department of Education, 2000). Women currently comprise only 11% of engineers, 5% of geologists, and 16% of architects (Jenkins, 2003). While it is sometimes reported that women earned 47% of all bachelor's degrees awarded in science and engineering in 1996, it is important to note that the degrees were not equally distributed in the field. For instance, women earned 73% of the bachelor's degrees in psychology but only 18% of the bachelor's degrees in engineering (National Center for Education Statistics, 2000).

Only 17 women were among the 72 new members elected to join the prestigious National Academy of Sciences in 2003. Women comprise 8% of the members, but these represent fewer than 14% of the women who are full professors in the sciences (Brainard, 2003). When challenged about their commitment to diversity, the Academy retorted that they were interested in diversity, but not at the expense of quality. Ironically, the illusive definition of "quality" continues to lack scientific objectivity.

BARRIERS TO ACHIEVEMENT IN GIFTED WOMEN

Comprehensive reviews of barriers to achievement in gifted women treat internal and external barriers as separate entities (Arnold, Nobel, & Subotnik, 1999; Hackett & Brown, 2000; Hollinger & Fleming, 1992; Kelly, 1992; Kerr, 1994; Lovecky, 1986; Reis, 2001; Reis, 2002; Ryan, 1999; Stewart, 1999). In reality, these barriers operate within complex interactions. The summary of barriers that follows presents examples of internal and external barriers in relationship to each other.

DENIAL OF GIFTEDNESS IN WOMEN

Perhaps the most insidious barrier to achievement in gifted women is the denial of intellectual giftedness in women. This denial occurs both externally and internally.

External Denial

Outside the field of gifted education, the phrase "gifted women" makes many people uncomfortable. This discomfort expresses itself in a variety of ways, all leading to the denial of the existence of an identifiable group of people known as "gifted women". Some people react with semantic objections to the discussion of gifted women; they want to know what the word "gifted" means. As giftedness tends to be operationally defined in terms of assessments that vary by time, place,

professional preference, and economic exigency, it is an easy target for semantic arguments that frequently begin and/or end with the question, "Well, don't you think everyone is gifted in some way?" By the time the argument has ended, issues surrounding the underachievement of gifted girls and women have been sidestepped once again: Since gifted women have been argued out of existence, it would be pointless to discuss the barriers they face.

The "all women are gifted" argument also appears in discussions among colleagues in women's studies. Here, accusations of elitism and/or racism are frequently leveled at scholars interested in gifted women, even though gifted women are found across all social classes and ethnic backgrounds. Women's studies tends to acknowledge gifted women only *after* they have surmounted barriers to their achievement. Before that point, gifted women do not seem to exist for many scholars in women's studies.

External denial also occurs among men who do not want to compete with gifted women for fellowships, high-status jobs, promotions, and leadership positions. When the intellectual, creative, and leadership potential of gifted women is ignored by both the male-dominated legislators who fund education programs and the male-dominated administrators who prioritize programs, gifted girls do not receive services that would aid in the development of their potential to become world leaders. When budget cuts occur, gifted programs are frequently the first to be cut. Only 30 states even require that gifted students be identified. Mandatory identification does not necessarily lead to programming (Sytsma, 2000). Even when programs exist, there is no guarantee that the specific needs of gifted girls will be met. While lack of programming undeniably affects gifted boys as well, boys still have the advantages of male privilege, an abundance of role models in the curriculum, and mentors provided by the "old boys' network".

Gender-biased curriculum is another example of external denial. Educators speculate that self-confidence is either damaged, or fails to develop, when gifted girls are deprived of female role models and mentors in traditionally male fields (Jenkins, 2003; Kaufmann, 1981). Evidence suggests that programs that include female role models and mentors in traditionally male fields help gifted girls and women visualize themselves in, and prepare for, careers in these fields (Beck, 1989). Curriculum in every academic subject is so male dominated that it is easy for gifted girls to reach a sub-conscious conclusion about the relationship between prescriptive gender roles and occupations long before they profess an interest in hierarchy-attenuating careers like teaching, counseling, social work, and nursing. This "sin of omission" is public education's primary contribution to both the social construction of gender and the denial of giftedness in women.

Internal Denial

External denial leads to internal denial. Perhaps the most tragic form of denial is the self-denial that gifted women often express about their own potential (Arnold, 1994). Gifted girls and women are frequently described, and often describe

themselves, as "overachievers." Gifted boys and men are rarely labeled or self-identified in this way. Gifted women are more likely to attribute their successes to luck rather than ability (Kerr, 1994). This self-denial can lead to low self-esteem (Jenkins, 2003; Kaufmann, 1981). According to Brown and Gilligan (1992), self-esteem in girls peaks at age 11 and then begins to drop. It hits its lowest point in the critically important undergraduate college years when young gifted women are finalizing choices about college majors, careers, and sometimes marriage partners (Arnold, 1994).

Bandura (1977) proposed the theory of self-efficacy regarding career choice. Self-efficacy refers to a person's level of confidence regarding the skills necessary to perform a given occupation. A lack of confidence in such areas as math, science, and leadership, may lead to underachievement and may limit choices regarding college courses and majors. These choices, in turn, limit career options.

Gender, for women, is socially constructed in a way that excludes focus on the self and discourages self-acknowledgement of gifts, talents, and leadership potential. Instead, gifted girls and women are taught to develop qualities that are pleasing to men and boys in order to be socially acceptable: Intellectual superiority is not one of those qualities. According to Phillips, "…growing up in a male-dominated culture, many girls face enormous pressure to judge their self-worth based on narrow standards of physical attractiveness; to put boys and men ahead of themselves; and to conform to very narrow notions of femininity which promote passivity, compliance, and self-sacrifice, while discouraging strength, autonomy, and entitlement to pursue one's own desires" (1998, p.11). A culture of romance on college campuses encourages young gifted women to focus their attention on their appearance and social life rather than development of their intellectual potential in preparation for careers that make the most of that potential (Holland & Eisenhart, 1990).

INADEQUATE CAREER COUNSELING

The social construction of gender creates a "null factor" when gifted girls and women are compared to average girls and women on career choice (Greene, 2003). Gifted women have been virtually "mainstreamed" out of existence by the time they get to college. Longitudinal studies indicate that most gifted girls disappear into a quagmire of marriage, motherhood, and low-paying, dead-end jobs rather than realizing their potential for eminence (Card, Steele, & Abeles, 1980; Josselson, 1987; Josselson, 1996; Kerr, 1994; Sears, & Barbee, 1977).

Career service professionals rarely receive training about the special needs and circumstances of gifted students. A substantial body of work indicates the need for specialized career counseling for all gifted students, particularly gifted girls and women (Dunnell & Bakken, 1991; Fox, Tobin, & Brody, 1981; Gassin, Kelly, & Feldhusen, 1993; Greene, 2003; Hagen, 1982; Hollinger, 1991; Kelly, 1996; Kelly & Cobb, 1991; Kelly & Colangelo, 1990; Kerr & Erb, 1991; Leung, S., Conoley & Scheel, 1994; Maree, 1999; Moon, Kelly & Feldhusen,

1997; Perrone, 1997; Perrone, & Van Den Heuvel, 1981; Reis, 1991; Rodenstein, Pfleger, & Colangelo, 1977; Ryan, 1999; Schroer & Dorn, 1986; Stewart, 1999; Van Tassel-Baska, 1981). Researchers agree that, "It is inappropriate to assume that gifted students can get along without adequate counseling and advising as they attempt to choose a college, a major, and a career path" (Schroer & Dorn, 1986).

While some career theory literature includes issues related to gifted women (e.g. Betz & Fitzgerald, 1987), it generally omits the serious issues of intellectual ability, underachievement, and multipotentiality. According to Kelly (1996), the frequently used congruence model of career counseling is based on assumptions that limit the model's ability to provide adequate career guidance to gifted students, particularly females. First, the model fails to consider student potential and underachievement; Second, the model neglects to consider the effect of sex roles on interests declared by gifted women; Third, the congruence model offers no counseling designed to help gifted women overcome the internal and external barriers to achievement of their full potential.

Individuals providing career counseling need to understand that young gifted women, like all career-minded women, are socially conditioned to seek hierarchy-attenuating careers even though these jobs have limited possibilities for promotion, frequently pay the average salary of a high-school graduate, and deprive both gifted women and society of the actualization of women's potential to make a difference in the world. "I don't care about money or prestige," gifted undergraduate women often declare, "I just want to help people!"

At the very least, educators could point out that government, military, corporate, university, scientific, and other types of leaders are also in a position to help people. Sometimes that realization is all it takes for a young gifted woman to feel good about connecting her true potential with the needs of the rest of the world. Sometimes gifted women become upset or angry with those who suggest alternative careers. Too commonly, however, gifted women are given an interest inventory and pointed in the direction of underachievement.

INTERVENTIONS

Considering the barriers to achievement that gifted women encounter, the design and implementation of successful programs seems a daunting task. However, interventions are successful in combination and over time. For example, the emphasis on encouraging bright high school girls to enroll in advanced math courses has paid dividends. It is gratifying to scan the tables in the U. S. Department of Education's publication *Trends in Educational Equity of Girls and Women* (2000) and note near-equal gender participation in courses like high school calculus. Educators can be part of the solution by implementing programs that enhance confidence and self-esteem, enlighten gifted women with information pertaining to their development across the lifespan, enrich the curriculum with gender-balanced courses that provide role models which include

women in top leadership positions, and encourage gifted women to prepare for careers which actualize their potential.

Examples of successful interventions include the following: The Ohio State University offered an orientation program to first-year honors students that included a one credit course providing individual career counseling (Gordon, 1983). Concentrating on gifted women, Kerr (1983) offered a special career program at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln to gifted male and female high school students that resulted in raising the career aspirations of gifted women. Zaffron and Colangelo (1977) provided group counseling to gifted students that dealt with both personal and career issues. Texas A&M University offered freshman and sophomore honors students a 6-hour group program in career counseling. Gifted women in this group reported an increased awareness of potential for personal conflict and external barriers in their career decisions (Schroer & Dorn, 1986). While this awareness can create discomfort for students, it is important that they understand these conflicts and barriers as a prerequisite to surmounting them.

The Honors Program at St. Cloud State University in St. Cloud, Minnesota has been providing programs to gifted women for over a decade. Two such programs are briefly summarized here.

WINDOWS ON THE WORLD: THE OPENING OF THE AMERICAN MIND

In 1991, the St. Cloud State University Honors Program received a generous grant from the U. S. Department of Education, Fund for the Improvement of Postsecondary Education (FIPSE), to design and implement an interdisciplinary, global, multicultural, and gender-balanced first-year curriculum. Twenty faculty members from seven departments participated, representing the disciplines of history, English, philosophy, mathematics, physics, astronomy, biology, and gifted education.

Faculty spent the first year of the three-year project redesigning their instructional materials to meet the goals of the project. The curriculum was presented to students in years two and three. Female role models were included in every subject area, and female students were given equal leadership opportunities with male students. The project received positive reviews from students, faculty, and outside evaluators (Rockenstein, 1994). While the project was not continued in its entirety, it resulted in additional interdisciplinary, multicultural, and women's studies courses in the Honors curriculum. A follow-up study is currently underway to assess the long-range effects.

THE ATHENA PROJECT: CREATING PATHWAYS TO EMINENCE FOR GIFTED WOMEN AND GIRLS

The success of the Windows on the World project led to the creation of the Athena Project, funded initially in 1997 by the St. Cloud State University President's Office (Rockenstein, 1997). The Athena Project, now in its sixth

year, focuses on gifted women. For the purpose of this project, gifted women were defined as those who had been admitted to the St. Cloud State University Honors Program based on a multiple-criteria identification model that includes such factors as high school rank and grade point average, difficulty of courses completed, standardized test scores, and participation and leadership roles in student organizations. Since its inception, the Athena Project has included two conferences (one national and one regional) for gifted high school girls and college women, formation of a student organization called the Women's Honors College, and an Honors course entitled Psychology of Gifted Women.

Psychology of Gifted Women is a one-semester, 3 credit elective course offered to women in the Honors Program at St. Cloud State University. While the course was not originally designed as an intervention for research purposes, a coffeehouse conversation with Barbara Kerr about the impact of her book on women in the course led to the construction of an instrument, still in revision, for data gathering purposes.

The goals of the course as an intervention correspond to those stated earlier: (1) enhance confidence and self-esteem; (2) enlighten gifted women with information pertaining to their development; (3) enrich the curriculum with gender-balanced courses that provide role models, including women in top leadership positions; and (4) encourage gifted women to prepare for careers which actualize their potential. Texts for the course include Riley's *Inventing the American Woman* (2001 3rd Ed., vols. 1 & 2) and Kerr's *Smart Girls* (1994, revised edition).

CONFIDENCE AND SELF-ESTEEM

These issues seem to revolve around the barrier of internal denial. Denial of giftedness on the individual level is dealt with on the first day of class and throughout the course. Students in the course are very surprised when they see themselves placed on the normal distribution of intelligence test scores. This creates cognitive dissonance that begs to be addressed.

DEVELOPMENTAL ISSUES

Kerr's *Smart Girls* reviews many of the longitudinal studies on gifted women. Students reflect on issues relevant to the development of gifted women across the lifespan, and they see how barriers operate over time. They also realize the need to become personally involved with social issues. Of special concern to students reviewing longitudinal studies on gifted women is the toll sometimes exacted by marriage, motherhood, and dead-end career choices. These issues have significant impact because many students see themselves struggling with priorities around career and family choices in their own lives. On an encouraging note, they read about women termed "integrators" who successfully combined career and family.

ROLE MODELS

Course texts present gifted women from a wide variety of ethnic backgrounds who were influential leaders in their respective fields. Students are astounded to learn of the very existence of so many eminent women. They express anger about the gender bias in their education. They are inspired by the stories of women who overcame both internal and external barriers in order to realize their intellectual, creative, and leadership potential.

CAREER GUIDANCE

Encouraging students to rethink career decisions can be difficult. This type of change has to come from within. Undergraduate gifted women often react defensively when their academic major and career choice are linked with underachievement and the social construction of gender. It hurts to feel that one has been duped. An assignment that I have found to be effective in helping gifted undergraduate women evaluate their situation is the Life Dream Project.

The Life Dream Project is a three-part assignment designed to circumvent defensive attitudes toward low-status, low-paying, dead-end career choices by suggesting an objective, empirical method for measuring both potential life satisfaction and the potential of the career to provide economic self-sufficiency. In part one, students are instructed to research their career choice in terms of salary information and career ladder, including the necessity and cost of additional education. With this information, they compute net income and proceed to part two of the assignment.

In part two, students examine the real estate market and choose their dream home. Using online calculators provided by banks and real estate companies, students learn whether or not they could afford to buy their dream home at any point in their career. Since half of marriages end in divorce, students are not permitted to include the income of a spouse in their deliberations. They also prepare a budget, access their credit reports, and consider the $177,000 cost per child of raising a family.

If students find that they cannot live the kind of life they want to live on the income of the career they have chosen, they submit a revised plan: They either revise their career choice to suit their desired lifestyle or revise their lifestyle to match their career choice. While the long-term effectiveness of this approach could only be determined through a longitudinal study, student journals frequently indicate that this is the most important thing the student has ever done. It is certainly a reality check. As students report their projects orally to the class, there is group support for changing majors and career plans. The reconsideration of career leads students back to their individual strengths.

CONCLUSIONS

The artificial division of labor by gender prevents gifted women from achieving equal representation among the world's most influential leaders. Men who may not be equally qualified to hold leadership positions too frequently fill women's places at the top. This creates a leadership gap. While women continue to make slow progress toward equality in the workplace, they still hold token status in hierarchy-enhancing institutions.

Gifted women continue to experience both internal and external barriers to the achievement of their potential. Barriers, particularly those related to denial, interact in such a way that it is difficult to address them successfully in an educational setting. This should challenge rather than discourage educators, however.

Educators and career counselors at all levels need proper training in evaluating and meeting the needs of gifted students, especially girls and women. Restructuring the curriculum at every level to provide gender balance in every subject area is the responsibility of every teacher.

Career counseling models developed to serve the average student do not meet the needs of the gifted student and may exacerbate the tendency of gifted women to seek hierarchy-attenuating careers by affirming their interests in these areas rather than addressing ability, multipoteniality, and underachievement. Career development must be addressed in both gifted K-12 programs and university honors programs. The development of comprehensive career counseling models is a job for future researchers.

Lessons learned from interventions past and present offer important suggestions regarding the nurturing of potential in gifted women. World conditions can only improve by ensuring that gifted women in every nation have the opportunity to develop their potential.

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