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Social and Emotional Education of the Gifted: The Discoveries of Leta Hollingworth

Linda Kreger Silverman

Leta Stetter Hollingworth was concerned with the unique adjustment problems that gifted children experience. In her writings we find insights into the nature of these problems, their impact at different levels of giftedness, and solutions that could be implemented today. Although in any one article she limited her discussion to five or six of these "perplexities," as she called them, I found a total of 11 different issues among her writings on this topic. This article synthesizes Leta's thoughts on the psychosocial development of gifted children and presents her program for "emotional education" of the gifted.

What does it feel like to be a gifted child? What types of adjustment problems are unique to the gifted? Are there "special perplexities in the life of the gifted child, and at what point in the range of intellect (do) these perplexities begin?" (1942, p. 255)¹. What do these children need for optimal adjustment to occur? These are among the questions Leta Stetter Hollingworth raised and attempted to answer in her lifetime.

Why were questions such as these important to her? She was not particularly interested in predicting the next generation of eminent adults or

¹ All citations with the date but not the author's name are by Leta Hollingworth.

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in searching for a set of universal principles of development. Instead, she was fascinated with the minds of gifted children and sought to understand each child's personal experience. She prized the *individual* (Pritchard, 1951); she considered individual lives irreducible to statistical averages. Pritchard (1951) suggested that her lack of faith in highly statistical research was due in part to her training as a clinical psychologist and in part to her temperament. Consistently ahead of her

Linda Kreger Silverman, Ph.D., is a licensed psychologist and director of the Gifted Development Center, Denver, Colorado. She also serves as editor of Advanced Development: A Journal on Adult Giftedness and of Understanding our gifted. Leta Hollingworth is her matron saint.

time, the innovative case study methodology she developed to assist her in systematizing her observations, such as photographic records, (Zimmerman, 1985) is just now coming into vogue in the era of naturalistic research.

Perhaps it was her struggle to understand her own troubled childhood or the inner conflicts that inevitably arose between her giftedness and her role as a female in society that drew Leta Hollingworth to explore the inner recesses of the gifted child's psyche. Another plausible explanation is rooted in the unusual depth of her compassion. Her niece, Margaret Overton, wrote:

She believed that life was very precious, talent was a blessing to be nurtured and shared for the good of others, and that people were to be cherished and helped (M. C. T. Overton, personal communication to Pat Johnson, November, 1975).

And this is what Leta sought to do with her own talents: to help the children she studied. To help them, she had to understand them. This meant spending a great deal of time with gifted children—listening to them, observing, questioning, valuing them. The richness and enduring quality of the insights she has left us attest to her enormous investments of time and love. We have much to learn from her.

Special Perplexities of Gifted Children

Leta Hollingworth really knew gifted children. As a clinician, a researcher, and a gifted person herself, she was able to enter their worlds, to learn from them. She recognized their loneliness, their isolation, their imaginary worlds, their argumentativeness, their zeal for accuracy, their impatience with superficiality and foolishness, their desire to find like minds, their occasional resorting to "benign chicanery" (1939, p. 589), and the healing

power of their sense of humor.

The reason gifted children had been ignored by society, according to Leta's account, is that they were not "socially annoying": "Society studies that which is socially annoying. The school attends to those who give it trouble" (1931, p. 1). At the time of Leta's writing, several researchers had found the gifted to be superior to the average in emotional stability and control (Hartshorne & May, 1927; Terman, 1925). The major flaws of gifted children were seen as "laziness," which Leta attributed to boredom; impatience with drudgery; and talkativeness, which she felt was the result of the "fertility" of their ideas and "their eagerness to communicate and question" (1932, p. 243).

Leta ascribed the complexities of gifted children's adjustment to their deviation from the norm during childhood (1942). Terman (1931) perceived the problem similarly:

Precocity unavoidably complicates the problem of social adjustment. The child of eight years with a mentality of twelve or fourteen is faced with a situation almost inconceivably difficult. In order to adjust normally such a child has to have an exceptionally well-balanced personality and to be well nigh a social genius. The higher the IQ, the more acute the problem. (p. 579)

With the loss of the concept of mental age in modern testing, we have become blind to this problem. Elsewhere (Silverman, 1989), I've suggested that expecting a six year old with a nine year old mind to relate well socially to other six year olds is comparable to expecting a short nine year old to fit in well with six year olds.

An idea still novel today, Leta recommended "emotional education" (1939, p. 585) for the gifted to help them deal with the special problems that beset them in their early years. She only listed five or six of these issues in any one article, but collectively she addressed 11 specific concerns:

- finding enough hard and interesting work at school
- adjusting to classmates
- being able to play with other children
- not becoming hermits
- developing leadership abilities
- not becoming negativistic toward authority
- learning to "suffer fools gladly"
- avoiding the formation of habits of extreme chicanery
- conforming to rules and expectations
- understanding their origin and destiny from an early age
- dealing with the special problems of being a gifted girl. (1926, 1930, 1931, 1939, 1940a, 1942)

The Problem of Work

To understand Leta Hollingworth's ideas more fully, it is important to know something about educational practices during her era. At the time of her research on giftedness (from November 4, 1916, until November 27, 1939), each grade level had a set curriculum consisting of basic academic subjects. Children who mastered the curriculum at a more rapid rate were automatically advanced, as they had been in the one room country schoolhouses. Children who had difficulty were held back as long as it took for them to pass the grade-level tests.

Most gifted children were advanced at least one or two years, and half-years of acceleration were common. Terman (1931) located the brightest students for his study more accurately by selecting the youngest child in a class than by relying on the teacher's judgment. In Terman's sample, 85% were accelerated, with the average rate of acceleration being approximately 14% of age (Stein & Heinze, 1983). Witty (1930) reported that his subjects were typically advanced two to four "half-grades," about 16% of their age (p. 19). Even so, both researchers considered gifted students to be educationally retarded (Terman, 1916; Witty, 1930). Witty indicated that the children in his

study appeared "to have a knowledge of educational subject matter at least two years in excess of their grade placements" (p. 19).

Apparently acceleration of a year or two was an insufficient solution to boredom. The curriculum was still geared to the average child, which left the gifted child with little to do. Moderately gifted children, though two years advanced, could achieve excellent grades without serious effort (1930). Leta frequently remarked that gifted children received "daily practice in habits of idleness and daydreaming" (1942, p. 258), because only a small portion of their abilities was needed for their schoolwork. Worse, they built up expectations of an "effortless existence" (1930, p. 442). Children beyond the moderate level were intolerably bored all the time. Leta is often quoted as saying that "children of 140 I.Q. waste half their time. Those above 170 I.Q. waste practically all of their time" in school (1939, p. 586). At 180 IQ, children tended "to regard school with indifference, or with positive distaste, for they find nothing interesting to do there" (1931, p. 3).

Leta's writings are replete with specific examples from her case studies. Readers will be well rewarded by perusing her original works, not only because of the rich anecdotal material included but also for a glimpse at the questioning techniques she employed to understand the child's view of the world, as shown in the following example:

A case in point is that of a six-year-old boy of I.Q. 187, who was reported as too immature for the work of the first grade, because he would not attend to the lessons given, but would "go off by himself, lie down on his back, and look up at the ceiling." This child's mental age was twelve. He could read as well as sixth grade children ordinarily can, according to standard tests. He could perform all the fundamental processes of arithmetic, could square numbers and could read numbers to the billions. Bored with the ma-

terial being presented to beginners, yet not knowing how to formulate his difficulty, he simply drifted away from the teacher and the group, as his childish solution of the situation. When asked what he did lying on the floor, he said, "Oh, mostly mathematical calculation, or my imaginary land." (1930, p. 443)

Placing highly gifted children with students 3 or 4 grades more advanced in order to meet their intellectual needs created even more serious problems. They were too small for the seats, could not write rapidly enough, were unable to participate with their classmates in athletic activities, were out of their depth socially and emotionally, and were likely to be treated as babies (1930, 1931).

In a later article (1942) describing gifted students grouped together, Leta mentioned yet another work-related problem growing out of the versatility of gifted children. Instead of finding them one-sided, as so often claimed, she discovered that they typically had so many interests and capabilities that they were likely to spread themselves too thin and be unable to finish all their projects or attain a level of perfection that suited them. This is a typical observation of modern teachers as well.

The Problem of Adjustment to Classmates

The standard practices of acceleration for bright students and failure for disabled students created a precarious social situation in the classroom. The age span in a typical classroom was often four to five years (1931), with the older, physically more developed students envious of the younger, physically smaller accelerates. Gifted children were terrorized in these situations and had no idea how to cope with or escape from the class bullies, with whom they could not compete in size or strength.

The gross indignities and tortures thus suffered are directly a penalty of being gifted; for little boys of like age, in the grade proper to their age,

do not come into classroom contact with these over-age bullies to anything like the same extent, and hence do not become targets for the latter. (p. 5)

Although failing students is not as prevalent today, the modern version of "the over-age bully" is created by the "red shirting phenomenon": holding young boys back on general principle of assumed immaturity. This trend spreads the age-span in the classroom and increases the social hazards for gifted accelerates. It has recently come under attack by the National Association for the Education of Young Children (1988), but it is still widely practiced in the United States.

The Problem of Play

The difficulties the gifted face in forming friendships stem from the infrequency of finding persons who are "like-minded." "The more intelligent a person is, regardless of age, the less often can he find a truly congenial companion" (1942, p. 253). This truism has oft been quoted, but not always credited.

Many of the highly gifted children Leta (1942) studied developed habits of solitary play, not because they were unfriendly and ungregarious by nature but, rather, because their efforts to relate to others were quickly defeated. Other children did not share their interests, vocabulary, or the same desire to organize their activities.

These children typically were attracted to athletic activities such as swimming, skating, horseback riding, walking, and other pursuits that did not depend upon being included in a group (1931, 1942). Only one child in six that Leta found above 180 IQ related well to other children and had typical play interests in childhood. The other five "were unpopular with children of their own age because they always wanted to organize the play into a complicated pattern, with some remote and definite climax as the goal" (1931, p. 7).

Whereas children above 170 IQ often showed uncommon play interests, children in the 130 to 145

range tended to share the interests of other children (1926). Leta concluded that one reason for moderately gifted children's adjustment in play was that they seek and are accepted by older playmates. They tend "to play with others of like mental age" (1926, p. 136).

Hollingworth (1927), Terman (1931), and Witty (1930) all described gifted children as seeking older playmates, having play interests of children their mental ages, having a sophisticated level of knowledge about games typical of children much older than themselves, spending a great deal of time reading, and engaging in several hobbies and collections. Reports by Leta's group indicated that they knew:

more games of intellectual skill, such as bridge or chess; that they care less, age for age, for play which involves predominantly simple sensori-motor activity, without a "score"; and that gifted girls are far less interested in traditional girls' play, as with dolls or tea sets...the gifted enjoy more complicated and more highly competitive games...and outdoor sports hold a high place with the gifted, being almost as popular among the gifted as reading is. (1926, p. 136)

Terman (1925) also observed that gifted children played alone slightly more than average children. Witty (1930) concurred; the children in his sample engaged in the same number of play activities as average children did but were somewhat more solitary and sedentary in their play.

The Problem of Social Isolation

Leta was deeply concerned with the psychological isolation of highly gifted children. She noted (1940a) that isolation occurs at both extremes of the IQ continuum, but not at the same degree of difference. It tends to occur at 30 points below the norm, but not until 50 or 60 points above the norm. The reason she proposed for this is interesting. Isolation begins to take effect in retarded children when their inadequacies are

perceived by others, but it does not begin to take effect on the personalities of gifted children until it is felt by the individuals themselves. With higher IQs come increased awareness and greater risk of social alienation.

Leta (1939) observed that the majority of children above 160 IQ played little with other children "because the difficulties of social contact are almost insurmountable" (p. 588). "Reading, calculation, designing, compiling collections, constructing an 'imaginary land,' evoking imaginary playmates" were the forms of play most prominent among the recreational interests of children above 170 IQ (1931, p. 6). Adding to conditions that contribute to isolation was the fact that many of the gifted children in Leta's studies (1942) were only children, or were children whose brothers and sisters differed widely from them in age, providing little social experience in the home. Many of the children solved the problem of loneliness by inventing imaginary playmates. Others absorbed themselves in reading, which furthered their isolation.

That highly intelligent persons succeed as often as they do in developing well balanced personalities seemed remarkable to Leta (1940a). Their resiliency suggested that compensating functions accompanied high intelligence to help the gifted overcome social hazards. She listed these as *self-sufficiency*, the tendency to *dominate* situations rather than submit to them, and being endowed with a keen sense of *humor*, which she regarded as a "saving sense" (1940a, p. 274). The problem of isolation apparently decreases with age; as adults, the gifted naturally seek and find their own kind (1942).

The Problem of Leadership

In 1938, just before the outbreak of World War II, Leta predicted with uncanny accuracy: "The times cry out for leaders to guide the people safely in a world where, without vision, more people will perish in more different ways than have ever

perished before" (written in 1938 as a speech, published in 1939, p. 575). She believed that high intelligence is a requisite of leadership—"No one has ever advocated stupidity as a qualification for a leader" (1939, p. 575)—but that other traits were needed as well: "integrity, independence, originality, creative imagination, vitality, forcefulness, warmth, poise, and stability" (The Development of the Harvard National Scholarship Plan, 1936-1937, as quoted in Hollingworth, 1939, p. 577). To these traits Leta added "audacity, capacity for nonconformity, the love of beauty, and cold courage" (p. 577). She believed that there was a high correlation between these personality traits and giftedness. She also noted parenthetically, "(I would say there cannot be a very high intelligence without a love of beauty)" (p. 578)—an observation I have found particularly thought-provoking.

The special problem that besets the gifted is that in order to be selected as "a leader of his contemporaries, a child must be more intelligent, but *not too much more intelligent*, than those who are to be led" (1939, p. 581). Leta (1926) observed that a group having an average IQ of 100 would most likely choose a leader whose intelligence was in the range of 115 to 130 IQ. A child having an IQ of 160 would be an unlikely choice for leadership in such a group but could become a leader in a gifted group having a mean IQ of 130. Children in the 125 to 155 range are "enough more intelligent than the average to win the confidence of large numbers of their fellows, which brings about leadership...but those of 170 IQ and beyond are too intelligent to be understood by the general run of persons with whom they make contact" (1942, pp. 264-265).

Warner's earlier study (1923) indicated that leaders and followers are similar in mental age rather than in chronological age. Later researchers of leadership further confirmed that if the discrepancy between the group's intelligence and the child's

intellectual level is too great, communication will pose a major barrier to leadership (Stogdill, 1974).

Avoiding Negative Attitudes Toward Authority

Negativism toward authority tends to develop when the gifted child perceives those in authority as illogical, irrational, erroneous, or unjust (1939, 1940a, 1942). "It is especially unfortunate, therefore, that so many gifted children have in authority over them persons of no special fitness for the task, who cannot gain or keep the respect of these good thinkers" (1942, p. 261).

In some cases, gifted children may rebel against all persons in authority because of earlier negative experiences. If they are mishandled in their youth, some gifted individuals become incapable of dealing with subordination of any kind. Because some form of subordination usually precedes leadership positions, their contentiousness might render them ineffectual in the work world. Negativism and cynicism can seriously hamper one's career goals. Fortunately, Leta (1942) noted that gifted children are endowed with a keen sense of humor and, with maturity, seem to be able to surmount cynicism in most cases.

Learning to "Suffer Fools Gladly"

A lesson which many gifted persons never learn as long as they live is that human beings in general are inherently very different from themselves in thought, in action, in general intention, and in interests.... This is one of the most painful and difficult lessons that each gifted child must learn....It is more necessary that this be learned than that any school subject be mastered. Failure to learn how to tolerate in a reasonable fashion the foolishness of others leads to bitterness, disillusionment, and misanthropy. (1942, pp. 259-260)

It is ironic that this important piece of Leta's wisdom has been so misunderstood in modern times. We put the emphasis on the "fools" and become offended, whereas

Leta's emphasis was on the "gladly," as this next passage clearly indicates: "The highly intelligent child must learn to suffer fools gladly—not sneeringly, not angrily, not despairingly, not weepingly—but gladly, if personal development is to proceed successfully in the world as it is" (1939, p. 586).

An essential responsibility of special programs for the gifted, in Leta's thinking, was to teach these children tolerance and how to handle the apparent foolishness of others with patience and love. This was a major part of her "emotional education."

Avoiding Habits of Extreme Chicanery

Leta's views on "chicanery" also have been lost to modern times, and they are equally instructive. A basic part of emotional education was teaching children to differentiate between "benign" and "extreme" chicanery (1939, p. 589). She considered extreme chicanery (trickery), conducted for the purposes of self-aggrandizement, to be immoral. She was concerned that gifted children might develop habits of extreme chicanery simply out of boredom with their contemporaries—habits that could become fixed as a way of life (1940a).

Nevertheless, Leta condoned "benign chicanery" as a necessary skill for self-protection of the gifted. Gifted children tend to be honest and straightforward with their thoughts—often to their detriment. Learning when not to tell the truth is an important skill to be mastered. "Perhaps the arts of benign chicanery are absolutely necessary to a child of highest intelligence, compelled to find his spiritual way through mass education" (1939, p. 589).

She gave as examples the cases of two Speyer School students whom their previous teachers thought to be hard-of-hearing:

Both of them have very keen ears, but they had learned not to hear the insupportable drill on things they had known for years, and in self-defense they listened so little that

their teachers thought them deaf. At Public School 500 their hearing is good—almost too good! (1939, p. 589)

Her infusion of "the arts of benign chicanery" into the emotional curriculum of the gifted may be one of her most unusual contributions:

Guidance in regard to this matter of chicanery is absolutely necessary. Here we have one of the most delicate of all aspects of the training of a leader. By teaching these children that they should at all times act with complete candor and straightforwardness, in all sorts of company, shall we be educating them for self-destruction? (1939, p. 589)

The Problem of Conformity

Highly intelligent children tend to be more easily disciplined than their less gifted peers (1931). But Leta did point out one troublesome area when gifted children are placed together in special classes: orderly discussion! Gifted children have difficulty remaining silent when they have an idea they want to express, and so "the tendency is for everyone to speak at once, each striving to outspoke the others" (1931, p. 9). It is no easy task to get them to hold their tongues, "to listen quietly and respectfully to others, to speak according to some order of procedure, and to restrain their disappointment at failure to be heard at all" (1931, p. 9). But, she found that, in time, the children gradually learn self-government in these respects.

A second problem she identified was that, if given the choice, gifted children avoid routine drudgery, such as learning the multiplication tables, in favor of more stimulating projects (1931). The third, and most salient, issue of conformity she described was their tendency to argue.

There is with intelligent children a stronger tendency to argue about what is required of them than is found with the average child. This tendency to argue as to the why and wherefore of a requirement is met

both at home and at school, and calls for thought in proper handling on the part of parents and teachers. (1931, p. 10)

One of the reasons so many gifted children seem like "walking arguments" is their need for "exactness in all mental performances" and their "keen love of precise facts" (1927, p. 4). They cannot resist the temptation to set someone straight if they perceive the slightest loophole in a statement. This tendency appears to increase with higher levels of intelligence.

To cope with this characteristic, as part of her program of emotional education Leta introduced special training in "disputation" to the eight children who scored above 170 IQ at the Speyer School (1939, p. 584). This program was designed and conducted by Dr. Herbert Carroll:

A training in forensics is here contemplated, covering the whole area of argument: argument with oneself, involving logic and the psychology of thinking; argument with others in private, involving etiquette and the art of polite disagreement; argument in public, involving parliamentary law, the rules of order, the nature of evidence, and the art of the persuasion of crowds. (1939, p. 585)

This curricular device needs to be rediscovered and implemented in today's gifted programs.

Understanding Origins and Destinies

One of the conspicuous symptoms of intellectual acumen, according to Leta, is early interest in origins and in destinies. "Where did the moon come from?" "Who made the world?" "Where did I come from?" "What will become of me when I die?" "Why did I come into the world?" (1931, p. 11)

Leta observed that children do not begin to require logically coherent answers to these questions until they reach the mental age of 12 or 13 years of age. She discovered that religious ideas and needs also originate whenever these children develop to a

mental level past 12 years of age. The higher the IQ, the earlier the child develops a pressing need for an explanation of the universe. In cases of children who tested above 180 IQ, a desire for a systematic philosophy of life and death developed when they were only 6 or 7 (1931, p. 11). Problems of good and evil plague the gifted at an early age (1940a). They are also interested in an explanation of reproduction at a "tender age" (1931, p. 12).

Gifted children's dysynchrony in development leads to difficulties unlike those of other children. Intellectually they are adolescent, but their emotional control and physical powers are still very young. Problems of right and wrong, and evil in the abstract, become troublesome for very highly gifted children. They have the awareness but not the emotional maturity to deal with their awareness (1931, p. 12).

Special Problems of the Gifted Girl

Leta (1926, 1931, 1942) found that gifted girls were less interested in traditional girls' play and that they showed a preference, instead, for boys' books and boys' play. They were more competitive and aggressive than girls were "supposed to be." Some mothers were very concerned about their girls becoming "tomboys" and tried to break them of it (1931, p. 8). Terman also found that gifted girls deviate significantly from the norm in the direction of masculinity (Stein & Heinze, 1983). The masculine identification of gifted girls makes sense in light of the relationship between masculinity, independence, and achievement. The feminine role is too restrictive for many gifted girls.

The intelligent girl begins very early to perceive that she is, so to speak, of the wrong sex. From a thousand tiny cues, she learns that she is not expected to entertain the same ambitions as her brother. Her problem is to adjust to a sense of sex inferiority without losing self-respect and self-determination, on the one hand, and without becoming morbidly aggressive, on the other.

This is never an easy adjustment to achieve, and even superior intelligence does not always suffice to accomplish it. The special problem of gifted girls is that they have strong preferences for activities that are hard to follow on account of their sex, which is inescapable. (1931, pp. 8-9)

What is Needed for Optimal Adjustment?

Leta (1940a, 1942) concluded from her research that a certain level of intelligence is "optimal" for adjustment to school and society: 130 to 150 IQ. Within this range the individual "comprehends more clearly, but not too much more clearly" (1940a, p. 274) than the majority and can, therefore, become accepted as a leader. The person's vocabulary and interests have enough in common with contemporaries to enable cooperation and mutually fulfilling relationships. Beyond this range mutual rejection tends to occur.

Special Classes

The prognosis for children beyond 150, however, does not have to be bleak. Leta's solution to the social and emotional problems of the highly gifted, and to the development of their leadership abilities, was segregated classes of children with similar abilities. She did not try to accelerate the content in these classes, because getting students to learn more rapidly was not her goal. Instead, her aim was to create happier, more well-adjusted human beings. She was not opposed to acceleration, however; the main form of it that she employed was compressing a full day's work into half a day—a practice now referred to as "telescoping" or "compacting."

This left half the day for enrichment. Her afternoon curriculum was designed largely around the students' interests. She asked them to select topics for individual and group projects, had them read biographies of famous individuals, taught them the etiquette of argument, allowed them

to engage in lively discussions, introduced modern languages, literature, and the history of civilization, and involved them in other enrichment activities not usually a part of the school curriculum (1930, 1940b). After three years she found that students in this enriched program did just as well in their academic subjects as students who had studied nothing but academics, that they had learned a great deal besides, and that they were *happier*, having found friends and true peers—some of them for the first time in their lives. They weren't bullied, and they weren't bored (1930).

In smaller communities that couldn't provide special classes, Leta (1931) recommended "a moderate degree of acceleration, combined with enrichment of the curriculum" (p. 4). Both of these provisions are essential today.

Non-Elitism

It is not surprising that there was a great deal of skepticism when Leta began these special classes in the 1922-23 school year at P.S. 165. People were afraid that putting all these gifted children together would cause "elitism." Exactly the opposite proved to be true (1930). Children used to being at the top of their classes without trying learned humility, not arrogance, when they discovered other children just as smart as themselves. She noted with amusement that the children adjusted easily to losing their place as the best in the class but that some of their parents couldn't adjust. A few parents removed their children from the special program so their children could continue to enjoy the privileged position of being head of their class. Ironically, this is exactly what breeds arrogance.

Maturity

If special classes are not possible, the next best alternative is growing up! Many problems of the gifted child are a function of age and tend to lessen after the child reaches age 12. Leta (1931) observed that most of her students' problems began to disappear as they developed greater

physical and mental maturity.

To have the intelligence of an adult and the emotions of a child combined in a child's body is to encounter certain difficulties. It follows that (after babyhood) the younger the child, the greater the difficulties, and that adjustment becomes easier with every additional year of age. The years between four and nine are probably the most likely to be beset with the problems mentioned.

The physical differences between a child of six whose IQ is 150 and children of nine years (whose mental age corresponds to his) are unbridgeable, and so are the differences of taste, due to differences in emotional maturity. (p. 13)

High school is much easier than elementary school, because the curriculum is adapted to the brighter students.

It is *during childhood* that the gifted boy or girl is at the mercy of guardians, whose duty it is to know his nature and his needs much more fully than now they do. (p. 14)

Conclusion

A half-century later, the psychosocial development of the gifted and the other issues to which Leta devoted her career still stand outside mainstream psychology. "She considered as central issues what most of the rest of the discipline considered quite peripheral" (Shields, 1988, p. 6). But for those of us who are concerned with the welfare of the gifted, these issues remain of central importance. Gifted children are still underchallenged in school most of the time, and many are still in danger of becoming socially isolated. Little is being done to help them develop leadership ability or learn the differences between themselves and others. Leta's research on the benefits of special class placement could be used today to combat the growing trend toward egalitarianism in our schools that continues to punish the gifted.

Emotional education is an idea whose time has come. Gifted chil-

dren need exactly the kind of curriculum, programming, and appreciation for their social and emotional development that Leta Hollingworth provided almost 70 years ago. Through her rediscovery in gifted education, I hope we will be able to implement many of her timeless ideas in modern programs for the gifted.

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WRITING FOR THE ROEPER REVIEW

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Leta Hollingworth's Legacy to Counseling and Guidance

Barbara Kerr

How does one describe the legacy of Leta Hollingworth to counselors when so many of them have never heard her name? Many of Hollingworth's gifts to the helping professions come to us indirectly. Although her research articles and books were largely forgotten in the decades of the 1950s and early 1960s, along with the accomplishments of so many women scholars, her work nevertheless lived on among the educators and psychologists she trained. And, belatedly, we are able to experience her ideas directly through the republication of her books, the restoration of her place in the history of psychology (Shields & Mallory, 1987), and the recent coming together of scholars and practitioners to honor her work at the Leta Hollingworth Conference in Lincoln, Nebraska.

I believe Leta Hollingworth's contributions to counseling and guidance can be described in three major categories: As a model of the scientist-practitioner, as a de-bunker of myths about the psychology of women, and as the first and greatest counselor to the gifted and talented.

A Model of the Scientist-Practitioner

The "scientist-practitioner" is an ideal toward which many counselors and psychologists aspire. Since the Boulder Conference (Shakow, 1965), the goal of professional psychology training programs has been to educate scientist-practitioners. This type of professional is one who combines scholarly and therapeutic

expertise. More important, however, is that scientist-practitioners base their practice on research, and they form research questions from the experience of practice. Therefore, according to this model, the counselor must seek a balance between scientific inquiry and helpful responsiveness (Garfield, 1982).

One of the earliest examples of the scientist-practitioner was Leta Hollingworth. Her faith in the scientific method as a means of discovering truth was profound. She believed that science could enlighten where religion was no longer potent. A poem she wrote included the line (Hollingworth, 1943, p. 107):

*God has never spoken since mankind
Let go fair, flashing fancy and seized
thought.*

She also believed that science was the servant of humankind, and that innovations in psychological technology could be used in the service of democracy. For example, she saw objective intelligence testing as a means by which talented children of all races, classes, and ethnic backgrounds could be brought to the attention of educators and given an equal opportunity to develop their talents (Hollingworth, 1926).

As a true scientist-practitioner, however, she was well aware of the limits of the scientific method in helping individuals. Whether working with her students, clients, or research subjects, she never failed to acknowledge the uniqueness of each individual's case. She often was

Barbara Kerr is at the University of Iowa. She is a Contributing Editor for this journal.

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