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Inequity for Women in Psychology: How Much Have We Progressed and What Work Still Needs to Be Done?

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All along the question of marriage interferes with the woman's assured planning. Can a woman become a fanatic in her profession and still remain marriageable? Yes, she can, for I know some, but I think a woman must be abnormally bright to combine charm with concentration. These women make the synthesis by being charmingly enthusiastic. The Woman Problem comes up again after the professional woman has acquired a husband and a couple of children, with the culture pressing to give her a heavy responsibility in the home, with her husband noting, perhaps, that his own success demands his own job-concentration. (Boring, 1951, pp. 681)

While prominent psychologist E.G Boring's views in his 1951 piece published in *The American Psychologist*, titled *The Woman Problem*, may currently be viewed as offensive and outdated, he was quite ahead of his time in considering the impact cultural expectations and gender roles play in women and men's career and relationship decisions. However, he did not challenge these expectations nor work to change them, as evidenced by his many writings on the subject, barriers he placed in front of women in academic institutions, and his own marriage to a psychologist who gave up her career to raise their family (Mitchell, 1983; Rutherford, 2015). Instead, the title of his piece emphasizes how he placed blame on women for their lack of career success in psychology during this time period compared to men. While acknowledging that social pressures encourage women to focus on responsibilities at the expense of their careers, E. G. Boring fails to hold the field accountable for its complacency and perpetuation of hierarchical social structures. The words within this piece imply that he held the view that it was rarely possible for women to enjoy both prominent careers and happy families, both which could be enjoyed by men during this era (Boring, 1951; Valentine, 2010). E.G. Boring viewed psychological science as an inherently masculine endeavor for which the majority of women were simply not suited. He espoused this view despite the success early women psychologists were having in experimental laboratories across the world even with the substantial barriers in place (Rutherford, 2015; Valentine, 2010). While he felt there were several notable exceptions to the notion that women could not be pure scientists, he, like most in the field of psychological science, felt it would be very difficult, if not impossible for women to also be productive in family life (Boring, 1951). He also actively engaged in blatant sexism and behavior that contributed to hostility toward women in academia, which left lasting impressions on the field as he was incredibly influential for decades (Mitchell, 1983; Rutherford, 2015). He pointed to biological differences and tradition as the reason women were dissuaded from achieving notoriety in psychology, once stating about his collaboration with psychologist Alice Bryan:

I initiated [collaboration with Alice Bryan] because she was a feminist who saw women as denied their professional rights, and I was on the other side thinking that women themselves for both biological and cultural reasons determined most of the conditions about which she complained. (Boring, 1961, pp. 72)

Views about the natural place of women and men were pervasive at this time, with many individuals believing there were innate differences between the sexes and their abilities and obligations that barred them from scientific achievements.

While Boring, and many other prominent psychologists of the time, found marriage and scholarship in psychology incompatible with the social expectations of women, he noted how marriage tended to enhance men's careers. He described his views of how marriage impacts men's and women's careers quite differently:

Nearly all men are married, and a married man usually manages to make his marriage contribute to his success and prestige. Most of the married women do not receive the same professional support from their husbands and the unmarried women have no husbands...In general, marriage is not an asset for most professionally ambitious women psychologists. (Boring, 1951, pp. 681)

Boring's own wife, Lucy May Day Boring, was a promising student of E.B. Titchner's who earned her doctorate in 1912 (Furumoto, 1998). After terminating her psychology career after the birth of their first of four children, she continued to contribute to E.G. Boring's success with little credit. In a personal correspondence with Laurel Furumoto in 1983, she stated that "in spite of four children, I managed to keep up my interest in Psychology, and read (and advised) every book and article my husband wrote. That I consider my chief contribution" (as cited in Furumoto, 1998). It is likely that much of E.G. Boring's success was made possible by his wife's assistance at home, which included her support and contributions to his academic work in which he held solo authorship and credit. His assessment in *The Woman Problem* of why men and women attain unequal career successes paralleled his experience in his own marriage where his gifted wife focused on bolstering his career by sacrificing hers to take care of the family responsibilities. Boring was willing to point out societal expectations in *The Woman Problem*, but did not view them as unfair, unequal, or problematic.

The Socially Created Career – Family Dilemma

The Borings' arrangement was not unique for the time period and mirrored the larger inequities between the number of women and men in psychology and their ranks and positions. To understand the trajectory of women's roles in psychology,

one must begin with looking at the beginning of psychology as a scientific field. In a historical review of the first American women psychologists, Furumoto and Scarborough (1986) found that unmarried women were more likely to achieve more stable employment and success in their careers, while married women often ended their careers post-doctorate or had less stable and successful tenures. Women commonly had to decide between a career or marriage and family (Valentine, 2010). Women were heavily socialized to prize relationships with spouses and raising children over personal endeavors including careers.

For a woman to achieve success in psychology during the late 19th century and early 20th century, she had to be of a privileged family background, have significant resources, and either forgo marriage or find an exceptionally progressive partner. Even when all these conditions were met, women were mainly relegated to teaching at women's colleges or undergraduate focused universities (Furumoto & Scarborough, 1986). Often, when women were engaged in conducting psychological science, it was well known that they would not be afforded the same opportunities as their male counterparts and would be discouraged to continue should they become married. They received fewer financial resources for laboratories than men and some were not even awarded the degrees in which they completed all the required coursework. Some university administrations would allow women to participate in all required responsibilities for the doctorate, yet would not award the degree when the requirements were complete. In this time period, marriage was often synonymous with motherhood and most married couples produced children. While a man's involvement with marriage and children would not be a subject upon his career evaluation or considerations, a woman's relationships were highly and inexplicitly tied to her career trajectories and outcomes. This inequity was reinforced by academic institutions that would not hire married women altogether (Milar, 2000). Women often took unpaid lecturer roles in colleges with less prestige or the less respected emerging field of applied psychology if they continued a career in psychology at all.

Women psychologists in the early 20th century were greatly impacted by the societal and institutional barriers to caring for one's family and simultaneously obtaining success in their careers. There are numerous examples of early career psychologists who ended their careers prematurely after obtaining their doctorates. Further, tracing women's career trajectories of this time period is difficult as many of the women who obtained their doctorates were rarely seen in the field again (Furumoto & Scarborough, 1986). There are also several examples of women facing the dilemma of career versus family. This dilemma had significant impacts on who achieved the most career success in psychology. For instance, Florence Winger Bagley ended her career to support her husband and raise their children while her husband obtained a successful and renowned career as an educator (Scarborough & Furumoto, 1987). Helen Thompson Woolley was eventually

hospitalized for a psychiatric break that appeared to be related to issues of gender inequity, such as moving several times during her marriage for her husband's career, subsequent job instability and reputation damage, and the stress of raising her children alone after her divorce (Rodkey, 2010). She would never work again after this time despite being named by Cattell as one of the *American Men of Science* most prestigious (Scarborough & Furumoto, 1987). Obviously, the irony of the publication named *American Men of Science* is difficult to miss. After Frances Rousmaniere left her career, she struggled to feel fulfilled by what she believed were her duties to her family and tried to reduce her boredom explaining, "When I am washing dishes, I hope it will always be possible for my husband to read aloud to me-often, if not always" (Scarborough & Furumoto, 1987, p. 196-197).

While women could choose to remain unmarried, these unmarried women were often expected to care for their aging parents as this was primarily the daughter's responsibility (Furumoto and Scarborough, 1986). This impacted career options and ability to focus solely on their research. Additionally, not having the flexibility of moving for career advancement due to caring for aging parents, negatively impacted women's career courses. Several prominent early psychologists, such as Mary Whiton Calkins and Margaret Floy Washburn, described having to forego job opportunities to care for family members.

Early evidence provides support for the idea that women did not leave their careers because they wanted to or because they were dissatisfied. Instead, women often terminated their careers because there was a clear pressure of the decision between family and career in early psychology. Women had to make a tough decision between family and career, while men were not faced with this same dilemma. Prominent early psychologist Leta Stetter Hollingworth suggested that significant social devices were in play that impacted women's choices and further posited:

The fact that child-bearing is in many respects analogous to the work of soldiers: it is necessary for the tribal or national existence; it means great sacrifice of personal advantage; it involves danger and suffering, and in a certain percentage of cases, the actual loss of life. Thus we should expect that there would be a continuous social effort to insure the group-interest in respect to population, just as there is a continuous social effort to insure the defense of the nation in time of war. It is clear, indeed, that the social devices employed to get children born, and to get soldier slain, are in many respects similar. (Hollingworth, 1916, pp. 19-20)

This immense social pressure, combined with the limited opportunities women were afforded in psychology, resulted in many women leaving the field

prematurely. During this time period, women were actively and purposely kept out of psychology. Even the most high-achieving scholars of the era faced discrimination and obstacles created by gender roles and expectations. For example, Mary Whiton Calkins, became the first female president of the American Psychological Association despite Harvard withholding her earned doctorate (Scarborough & Furumoto, 1987). Margaret Floy Washburn was the first American female to obtain a doctorate in psychology and APA's second female president (Martin, 1940). Despite these pervasive efforts to exclude women and the significant barriers present, there were women in the field who achieved impressive accomplishments.

Challenging the System

Early attempts to challenge the patriarchal system in the field of psychology were met with resistance and penalty. For instance, Helen Thompson Woolley did try to appeal her termination after her psychiatric hospitalization with an 11-page complaint about her treatment and broken verbal agreement regarding renewed employment by her old supervisor, but noted:

The promise was, of course, not put into writing. Such promises rarely are. It was in the nature of a gentleman's agreement...when one party in a gentleman's agreement is a woman, with no written evidence of the agreement, it counts for little. That I did not understand at the time. (As cited in Rodkey, 2010)

Several early women in psychology worked to publish articles that denounced the idea that sex differences are natural and the permeating concept of women's inferiority that often kept them out of the research labs and psychological societies (e.g., Hollingworth, Thompson Woolley, Georgene Seward, Mildred Mitchell). These women fought against enormous societal and institutional obstacles despite using science to back their agendas. Other early women in psychology fought against the patriarchal structure in the field by pushing for inclusion in prominent psychological societies and joined the larger women's suffrage movement. It is hypothesized that many of these women faced some backlash due to their fight against convention (Rossiter, 1982). On the other hand, perhaps due to professional and personal backlash, some early women in psychology found it safer to conform to gender roles and stereotypes as much as possible than to challenge the inequitable system (Capshew & Laszlo, 1986). In response to the career-family dilemma, some psychologists, like Ethel Puffer Howes, advised women to shift their focus to less demanding and more flexible career avenues should they marry. She asserted it would be difficult for women to maintain focus and concentration in demanding

careers if distracted with children. In 1922, Howes highlighted the impact of societal structure:

Now, let it be admitted at once that equal or commensurate rewards and opportunities, incentives, and achievements of women are not to be expected in the present organization of society, until women do enter the field as fully and as freely as men do. (Howes, 1922, pp. 445)

Howes understood intimately how combining career and family was near impossible for women at this time, as she struggled in her own life to make both these endeavors successful, with little eminence achieved. Helen Ridgely wrote to Christine Ladd-Franklin about how women “ought to be taught that she cannot serve two masters, that if she chooses the higher path of learning, and wants to do herself and her sex justice, she must forgo matrimony” (as cited in Scarborough & Furumoto, 1987, pp. 71). Clearly, the women of early psychology well understood the dilemma of being a woman who wants to study and teach psychological science in well-respected universities. Further, some early women in psychology, when attempting to gain access to psychological societies, purposely, and likely strategically, distanced themselves from the suffrage movement. For instance, highly successful and respected Florence Goodenough actively avoided being associated with women’s issues and proclaimed, “I am a psychologist, not a woman psychologist” (as cited in Capshew & Laszlo, 1986). Women’s place in psychology was so fragile at the time, it is quite understandable women might come to approach this reality and make sense of their situations with different strategies.

Formation of the National Council for Women Psychologists (NCWP)

By the early 1940s, after decades of pursuing careers in psychology, women finally had a potential opening to expand their impact. World War II was progressing, meaning more psychologists were approached to help with the aftermath of war, shifts in society, and military needs. Women worked to make the best of a difficult situation by offering their services in a variety of psychological domains. However, they were often thwarted and left completely out of viable job opportunities. Eventually, after their pleas were ignored by the leaders of mainstream psychological organizations, approximately 50 women psychologists formed the National Council for Women Psychologists (NCWP) with the hopes of advocating for women’s issues in psychology (Schwesinger, 1943). This outside organization was needed to put pressures on the standard psychological organizations of the time. The NCWP quickly grew to 240 women in the field. Despite the formidable collective effort to gain more prominence for women in psychology, the goals of the organization were not able to progress as they had hoped as women in psychology were up against a larger, systemic mistrust of women’s abilities

(Capshew & Laszlo, 1986). Other committees focused on progressing the needs of women in psychology were also forming, but the representatives chosen for leadership positions were often chosen due to being noncontroversial by avoiding feminist causes, as evidenced by Chauncey Louttit's comment, "...she has no personal axe to grind nor is she neurotically concerned over the supposed discrimination" (Louttit, 1941). It is believed by some scholars that women were up against a system that viewed science and the status quo as fair, meritocratic, objective, and most importantly, naturally masculine (Capshew & Laszlo, 1986; Rutherford, 2015). Often, many woman psychologists themselves avoided confronting the inequities present in psychology, for reasons one can only speculate. By the end of wartime, the NCWP expanded women's work in applied psychology by using effective organizing strategies and by lobbying psychological organizations and other entities. However, it had not tackled the inequities in academia and psychological science.

Progress: The Women's Movement of the 1960s

While it is clear that many early American psychologists acknowledged the pressure society puts on women to place their families above their careers or abandon their careers altogether after birthing children, few faulted these standards or worked to change them. Those that did challenge the system were typically those who were oppressed themselves and thus less likely to be heard or respected in their arguments. Instead, gender roles and the status quo were regarded as natural, inevitable, and acceptable. Inequities were seen as a product of the natural differences between men and women, rather than socially constructed phenomena.

As the social context began to change in the 1960s with widespread social justice movements such as the women's movement, acceptance increased regarding challenging the sexism and discrimination within psychology. The larger social context of the 1960s brought questions about the legitimacy of dogma concerning the seemingly innate differences between the sexes that dictated whether men's or women's domains would be career or family. As the women's movements of the early 20th century and then of the 1960s progressed, more women were entering the field of psychology. In 1969, the Association for Women Psychologists (later changed to Association for Women in Psychology) was formed. Initial petitions focused on anti-discrimination policies, abortion rights, and the termination of overt sexist practices in American Psychology Association (APA; Tierfer, 1991). Several years later, in 1973, after pressure from the AWP, a task force within APA was compiled to examine women's positions in psychology (Mednick & Urbanski, 1991). This task force then determined there was a need for and interest in a division focused on the psychology of women. Thus, Division 35, the Psychology of Women Division was formed within the APA. APA at-large distanced itself from "political" issues at the commencement of AWP and Division 35, but through

collective action, persistence, and a more open social atmosphere, some progress was eventually made within APA. It should be noted that the change that occurred thus far, had little to do with systemic, institutional changes and more to do with individual and group action on the part of women affected. Larger, systemic changes aimed at the social structure were yet to occur.

Women's Increasing Numbers in Psychology

In 1984, women received an equal number of doctorates in psychology as men for the first time (Howard, 1987). By the late 1980s, more women were earning doctorates in psychology than men (National Science Foundation, 2005). But how did the gender ratio change in favor of women in psychology? Was it that admissions committees were now incapable of holding biases towards women? Was it that women were welcomed into psychology? Were barriers, such as inequitable marriages and childrearing that impacted many women's ability to attend graduate school eliminated? The evidence seems to favor the idea that there were systemic shifts that impacted a reduced number of *men* pursuing careers in psychology, leaving an opening for women. It has been hypothesized that as a field's attractiveness declines, men leave, making room for more women, which in turn further reduces the number of men (Strober, 1984). Further, former president of the American Psychological Association, Dorothy Cantor remarked, "Usually women get blamed when a profession loses status, but in this case, the trend started first, and men just evacuated" (As quoted in Willyard, 2007). As women have always attempted to enter the field, they seized this opportunity and entered as qualified and capable professionals. Once again, it was the larger patriarchal system, not individuals, that most greatly impacted the field of psychology and the "progress" made.

However, this gender ratio shift was not well received by all and new terms emerged to describe the changes in psychology, such as the "feminization of psychology" (Howard, 1987). Mixed reactions to the gender ratio change were seen, with some viewing this as progress, and others fearing for the future of psychology. Some worried there would be "too many" women in psychology, and thus, not enough men – a reaction that was not present when women were few in the field (Grady, 1987). Ostertag and McNamara point out:

In spite of decades of greater numbers of men in psychology, no one has ever asked if too many men were entering the field. The implication seems to be that an oversupply of women would have a negative impact on the field. (1991, pp. 366)

Popular psychology publications, such as *gradPSYCH* by APA and *Psychology Today*, have released articles speculating the impact more women than

men as therapists will have on the field of psychology, using words such as “insidious”, “extinction of male psychotherapists”, and “psychology needs men” to describe the proposed impact of the trends (e.g., Willyard, 2011; Diamond, 2012). The response of some graduate programs has been to admit male candidates preferentially (Goodheart & Markham, 1992). The reactions seen to the gender ratio shift look quite different to the reactions seen when men vastly outnumbered women in psychology and blatantly excluded women. Further, the number of women in a field does not mean the field is led by women and their interests (Goodheart & Markham, 1992). Despite the number of women, women are still less likely to be in positions of prestige and power at rates proportional to their numbers.

Modern Psychology Career Trends and Disparities

One might read the above historical exclusion of women, combined with current gender ratio, and feel we have finally “made it” when it comes to equality in the field of psychology. However, a case will be made that psychology has not yet treated men and women psychological scientists equitably and has too often approached fixing inequities from an individual, rather than systemic level, similar to the approach used throughout history. Alice Bryan’s astute observation in 1984 remains true today, “[the woman problem] has not yet been fully resolved in this profession and perhaps never will be as long as it is viewed under that rubric rather than as part of the larger issue of sex-related roles in a democratic society” (as cited in Capshew & Laszlo, 1986). While the field of psychology has progressed greatly over the past century, the same societal and structural barriers and traditional gender roles prevalent in the past are still impacting women’s advancement in psychology and help explain career trajectory disparities. An analysis beyond the sheer number of women in psychology is needed to uncover the disparities of career prominence and prestige that continue to linger in modern psychology.

Salary

Women have been earning doctorates in psychology at higher rates than men since the late 1980s, with the most recent report from the National Science Foundation finding that 72 percent of new doctorates were earned by women and 28 percent earned by men (2015). However, women in psychology with a doctorate still earn 80 cents for every one dollar that men make for similar positions (Wicherski, Mulvey, Hart, & Kohout, 2011). Another report found that the average salary for female psychologists was found to be \$80,000 per year, while the average for males was \$91,000 (APA, 2017). This salary gap widens for ethnic and racial minorities. The magnitude of the gender pay gap depends on the work setting, with health settings having the largest wage gap between men and women, with men making an average of \$39,648 more than women (Nigrinis, Hamp, Stamm, & Christidis, 2014).

Leadership Positions in Psychological Organizations

The most prominent positions in psychology associations and organizations continue to be held disproportionately by men despite the significantly higher rate of women in the field and in the organizations (Olos & Hoff, 2006). In the American Psychological Association, only 8 of the previous 20 Presidents were women, despite the field and APA membership being majority women during that time period. In the Society for Industrial and Organizational Psychology, only 7 of the past 20 presidents were women. For the American Board of Professional Psychology, only the most recent three presidents were listed on their website and all three are men. In the Association for Psychological Science, a more equitable 11 out of 20 of the previous presidents were women, which is in line with the general gender makeup of the organization as a whole. However, considering that the majority of doctorates in psychology have been obtained by women over the past almost 30 years, both the gender makeup of membership and leadership are significantly different from the general population of psychologists.

Fellowships and Awards

Fellowships in psychological organizations are typically known as special designations and recognition of significant and extraordinary contributions to the field of psychology at a national or international level (e.g., APA website). However, it has been proposed that E.G. Boring suggested the fellowship system in 1925 to control the number of women holding distinguished titles as the number of women in psychology was increasing (Capshew & Laszlo, 1986). While the number of women in the APA increased from 18% to 30% from 1923 to 1938, fellowship status awarded to women rose from only 18% to 19% (Mitchell, 1951). The historical legacy of APA's earlier attempts to limit women's advancement in psychology continues to have a substantial impact. For instance, while there are 42,878 female and 29,264 male associate and member membership types in the APA, fellow designations are awarded to women only 33.1 percent of the time (APA Center for Workplace Studies, 2017). Interestingly, the APA Center for Workplace Studies demographics report of psychologists highlighted the growing gap between gender in the field, with women as the majority, but the report does not cover disparities in leadership roles (2015).

Historically, the Society for Experimental Psychologists (SEP) excluded women's membership altogether. In the SEP, only 70 of the 277 fellow designations have been awarded to women (per their website). According to the organization's website, in the Association for Psychological Science, only 20 out of 52 of the 2017 fellowships were awarded to women. In their most recent picture of leadership (in 2015), 6 of 28 are women and of the last 16 prestigious awards, 4 went to women. Clearly, despite the field of psychology being dominated by

women, fellowship status in prominent psychology organizations is not yet reflecting the overall number of women in psychology.

Academia

In academia, the gap between men and women remains large. Full professor positions in psychology are over two-thirds occupied by men while less prestigious, lesser paid, and less stable lecturer positions are two-thirds held by women (Willyard, 2011). Assistant and Associate professor positions are nearly half held by men and women alike, despite the larger number of women graduating with doctorates in psychology. As obtaining tenure takes approximately 5-7 years, it seems surprising that more women are not in these prestigious, secure positions despite more women earning doctorates in psychology for the past nearly 30 years. However, it has been pointed out that women are more likely to take a break in their tenure clocks if having children, yet academia rewards those who can work more hours and pick up responsibilities last minute (Willyard, 2011). The key tenure track years also coincide with typical childbearing years for professional women.

A widely researched phenomenon called the pipeline shrinkage problem explains how women may be earning the majority of the doctorates in psychology, but they are less represented in higher academic positions as the prestige of positions increases (e.g., Windall, 1988). Several factors, such as gender expectations and socialization, familial responsibilities, and reduced access to quality mentorship may impact these disparities.

Gender socialization impacts both how men and women behave and how men and women are perceived. Scientists are viewed as needing to be assertive and competitive (hallmark characteristics of men), despite the assertion that curiosity and persistence (more often associated with women) may be more relevant (Georgi, 2000). Vague tenure guidelines and gender socialization may impact individuals' ability to achieve tenure. This impacts women uniquely as women are socialized to behave more passively as to not be perceived negatively. The recommendation from experts in the field is to be sure to speak up and not be passive if one is over assigned obligations in teaching than what allows one to focus on the other, often more prized domains like research productively (Leis-Newman, 2011). This may create extra obstacles for women in clarifying the expectations of the balance between research, teaching, and service. Additionally, studies examining the content of letters of recommendation, a highly valued tool to determine academia hiring decisions, find that women are more likely to be described in communal terms, rather than agentic, even when controlling for productivity (Madera, Hebl, & Martin, 2009; Sheehan, McDevitt, & Ross, 1998). Individuals described with more communal characteristics were more likely to receive negative hireability ratings. Letters about women applicants were also more likely to include social positions, such as mother and child.

Another area important for success in academia is mentorship. Mentorship is seen as a vital, behind-the-scenes way to learn important information about the department and reduce the likelihood of causing conflicts that impact others' perceptions (Leis-Newman, 2011). However, if there are fewer women in the most powerful professor designations, it may be more difficult for women in academia to establish mentors. As professor Guerda Nicolas points out, an added barrier, especially for women of color, is even believing one is suited to academia if they do not typically see professors who look like them (as cited in Leis-Newman, 2011).

Finally, the issue of who takes on the primary child-rearing responsibility warrants examination. Even with increased equality between men and women, women are still more likely to have to take on major child-rearing responsibilities, despite their career aspirations and responsibilities (Raley, Bianchi, & Wang, 2012). In highly educated dual-earner couples, after the birth of a child, women were found to spend significantly more time doing housework, childcare, and total work (which included employment) than men, while men spent more time than women at their employment (Yavorsky, Dush, & Schoppe-Sullivan, 2015). As Leis-Newman points out in an APA article on securing tenure recommendation,

In an ideal world, all future professors could do brilliant research and nurture the minds of tomorrow while heading up innovative committees and finding time to have children or hobbies. But in lieu of that, seasoned academics warn that candidates need to know what exactly is expected of them to achieve tenure. (Leis-Newman, 2011, pp. 76)

Beyond Sheer Numbers – Looking to the Past for Answers

In our current system, we have not yet made substantial changes that alleviate the extra burden women may face due to the larger patriarchal social system. While it is not known at this time exactly why women are consistently paid less, achieve full professor status less often, are nominated for fellowship status less often, and hold fewer leadership roles in psychological and academic organizations, it is clear that the mere increase of women in the field of psychology has not translated to positions of power and prestige.

While individual efforts are important, such as advice to “lean in”, be strategic with mentorship, and ask for what you want, strategies to substantially increase women's numbers in important leadership and full professor positions need to be focused on the system as a whole. One important difference to consider moving forward is how psychology perpetuates the current patriarchal societal system or how it disrupts this toxic system. However, we can learn from past strategies to determine the best course of action to make the individuals in the field of psychology not just treated *equally*, but *equitably* as well. In a 1998 study of the career paths of prominent academic counseling psychology women, social factors that impacted women psychologists' careers persisted (Williams et al.).

Approximately one-third of the women had no children and almost half were unmarried. This rate of childlessness in this prominent women psychologist sample is higher than the average rate of childlessness in the general population during the same time period, with between fifteen and twenty percent of women in the overall population aged 40 to 44 being childless (Pew Research Center, 2015). The rate of childlessness in the prominent academic psychologist sample mirrored that of educated women with doctorates during the time period. Overall, the Pew Research Center has found that more educated women have a higher rate of childlessness. Many senior women faculty choose to not marry and do not have children, while senior male faculty typically do have families (Bailyn, 2003; Hewlett, 2002a; Hewlett, 2002b). Former president of Society for Industrial and Organizational Psychology Ann Howard poignantly describes how social conditions greatly impact women's decisions, stating:

I did not intend to have a career in Industrial-Organizational psychology. I did not intend to have a career. American values of the 1950s molded my world view and circumscribed my role to marriage and children - nothing more, nothing less. By 1950s mores, I failed. I am redeemed in the 1990s, but my career plodded hesitantly along the way. I have tremendous admiration for the single-minded women who pursued careers as I-O psychologists in times and circumstances even more difficult than mine. I can only blame my own weakness for being swayed by cultural messages not in my best interest. I could have accomplished more with my career if I had taken charge of it from the start. At the same time, I miss the children I never had. (Howard, n.d.)

All thirteen prominent counseling psychologists in the Williams and colleagues study also stressed the importance of having a support system and external resources to support their careers (1998). One participant even described her divorce as allowing her to change career paths and become high achieving in academic psychology. While historically, marriage and children have presented as barriers to academic success in psychology for women, this need not be the case. This study supports the idea of providing support for women in their career and family choices as a means of opening the doors for women's career success. While male psychologists also marry and have children, many are not impacted as severely in their careers (Hewlett, 2002a). The act of marriage and production of children does not equal less career opportunity, but the gender roles that continue to persist on a societal level that are tied to marriage and motherhood can equal less career opportunity for women. It is vital that the "choice" that women often face between career and family is removed so they can more freely choose and achieve, just as men can.

Previous systemic changes that occurred that made psychology more accessible for women include childcare being available at APA conventions, the ability to stop the tenure clock after having a child, and the increasingly common paternity leave. These efforts are far-reaching and disrupt the patriarchal system that dictates women's choices and options. It is recommended, based on the analysis of women throughout the history of psychology, that the field and the impactful establishments in the field focus on systemic changes and challenges to a system that treats men and women quite differently. The prevailing disparities between women and men in psychology point to a larger problem of systematic inequity that has yet to be fully addressed by the field of psychology as a whole. Similar to the time of E.G. Boring and his assertion of the *Women Problem*, the field of psychology continues to struggle with acknowledging ways in which it does not support women's achievements and access to leadership roles.

At this point, there is a general perception of equality in the field. However, the discrepancies reported above provide support for the idea that equal treatment does not translate to equal ratios of opportunities and advancement. While achieving equality is a noble and important goal, men and women psychologists being treated equally is only effective if all those in the field are treated equitably first. As stated eloquently by MIT scholar Lotte Bailyn:

But equality is still not the same as equity, and this definition ignores important aspects of equity. Equating equity with equality assumes the workplace is completely separate from the rest of life and thus ignores the fact that people have lives outside of their work. By being gender-neutral, this first definition ignores the different life experiences of men and women and makes the current 'male' model of the ideal academic normative. It assumes that women can follow this model as easily as men, and, if they do, will be seen as successful and as central as their male colleagues. Neither of these assumptions is true. (Bailyn, 2003, pp. 139)

If our field wants to make access to opportunity the same for men and women in psychology, it cannot do so without considering how larger social contexts influence women's career advancement. Further, due to the stated mission within psychology, this field has a responsibility to reduce the impact these larger inequities have on women psychologists.

Psychology's longstanding focus on "the individual" may have a role in fallible attempts at achieving equity. There has been an overemphasized focus on the individual women being responsible for her own "rising above" and advancement in the field rather than considering how the larger systemic and social context is impacting women's ability to excel at the same level as men in the field. This doubly disadvantages women of color by failing to consider their unique social contexts. E.G Boring's *The Woman Problem* is a prime example highlighting this overemphasis on individual women versus systemic problems in the field of

psychology. Women in psychology have been faced with numerous obstacles unique to their position as women in society, such as the family-career dilemma, systemic sexism, and a lack of access to quality mentors. This overemphasis on finding strategies to achieve for individual women, versus addressing and dismantling oppressive societal structures may be contributing to continued disparities in leadership and positions of prestige.

Because equity focuses on giving everyone what they need to be successful, the goal of equitable treatment in psychology is needed before we can see true change and equality, which will be reflected in leadership, position attainment, and salary. This means redefining academia and what is expected to achieve. What we currently view as necessary, for a successful academic career, for instance, are actually social constructions (Bailyn, 2003). This means looking hard at our current academic, institutional, and psychological organization structures to determine how they provide a disservice, or even an obstacle, for women rather than assuming our institutions are gender-neutral in psychology.

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