

ED 031 747

CG 004 281

By-Groth, Norma Jean

Vocational Development for Gifted Girls--A Comparison of Maslovian Needs of Gifted Males and Females  
Between the Ages of Ten and Seventy Years.

American Personnel and Guidance Association, Washington, D.C.; Oxnard School Dist., Calif.

Pub Date Mar 69

Note-8p.; Paper was presented at the American Personnel and Guidance Convention, Las Vegas, Nevada,  
March 30-April 3, 1969.

EDRS Price MF-\$0.25 HC-\$0.50

Descriptors-\*Cognitive Ability, \*Females, \*Gifted, \*Goal Orientation, Males, Needs, \*Vocational Counseling

Gifted girls and women have the unique aspect of attempting to fulfill needs in both the affective and the cognitive domains. Using Maslow's hierarchy of needs, this study was designed to formulate some guidelines for the vocational counseling of gifted girls and women by ascertaining their developmental need levels. Need levels were compared with those of gifted boys and men. A cross-sectional study was used to determine the developmental needs from 10 to 70 years. Data was collected from 361 gifted males and females. This data consisted of three wishes made by each subject. The wishes were used projectively to reflect the needs and valences of the individuals. Results are given in terms of valences: maturity, fantasy, physiological, safety, love, self-esteem and self-actualization. Conclusions and implications are that the years 14 and 40 are apparently traumatic for gifted women. By 40, love needs have been satiated and the suppressed cognitive needs come to the surface. At 40, many women find resistance in fulfilling these goals due to age, fear, or other external factors. References and data tables are included. (Author/SJ)

THIS DOCUMENT HAS BEEN REPRODUCED EXACTLY AS RECEIVED FROM THE  
PERSON OR ORGANIZATION ORIGINATING IT. POINTS OF VIEW OR OPINIONS  
STATED DO NOT NECESSARILY REPRESENT OFFICIAL OFFICE OF EDUCATION  
POSITION OR POLICY.

ED0 31747

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION & WELFARE  
OFFICE OF EDUCATION

CG 004281

## VOCATIONAL DEVELOPMENT FOR GIFTED GIRLS--A COMPARISON OF MASLOVIAN NEEDS OF GIFTED MALES AND FEMALES BETWEEN THE AGES OF TEN AND SEVENTY YEARS.

by

Norma Jean Groth

Oxnard Union High School District, Oxnard, California

(Prepared for APGA, 1969)

Bunting (1961) observed that we have never really expected women to use their talents and education to make significant intellectual or social advances. Parish (1961) maintained that American women have not used their brains because our culture told them not to. The cultural shadow of Kluckholm's (1953) genteel lady (an ornament for her husband and a testimonial to his wealth) as the epitome of femininity, still lingers. However, Lewis (1968) reflected a more recent trend in thinking when he commented that society is crippled when the talents of a substantial portion of its members are not effectively utilized. He suggested we should be concerned with women as persons with individual needs and abilities. Women should be encouraged to discover and respond to the unique aspect of themselves.

Gifted girls and women have the unique aspect of attempting to fulfill needs in both the affective and the cognitive domains. According to Maslow (1954), basic needs will increase valences and dominate psychological behavior until the need has been wholly or partially satisfied. The hierarchical order of needs are physiological, safety, love and belongingness, self-esteem, and self-actualization. At the highest level, self-actualization, the individual is free to utilize his full potential.

The purpose of this study was to formulate some guidelines for the vocational counseling of gifted girls and women by ascertaining their developmental need levels. Need levels were compared with those of gifted boys and men. Do both sexes resolve their deficit needs and progress toward self-actualization?

### DESIGN AND PROCEDURE

A cross-sectional study was used to determine the developmental needs from 10 to 70 years. Data was collected from 361 gifted males and females. Each person was asked to write down three wishes. It was assumed that wishes could be used as a projective device to reflect the needs and valences of the individual. Afterward, the wishes were categorized by three judges (author, gifted teen-ager, and gifted adult) into Maslow's hierarchy of needs. Percentages were charted for the various age levels. Average maturity valences for both sexes were plotted by first assigning each hierarchical stage a number weight from 1 to 6. Fantasy (an added category to take care of the unrealistic wishes) was given a weight of 1, physiological, a weight of 2, etc. Self-actualization had a weight of 6. Then, the adjusted means of the wishes were used to determine the average maturity valences. Maturity was defined as having deficit needs relieved or fulfilled and functioning at the self-actualizing potential. The correlation between maturity valences and maturity achievement was not determined.

The boys and girls in the age range 10 to 14 years were attending the 1968 Summer Workshop for Gifted Children at San Fernando State College, Northridge, California. The total population (55 girls and 77 boys) in the 6th, 7th, and 8th grades was used. Students were asked to write their three wishes, age, and sex on a blank piece of paper. The author collected the data. Workshop entrance required an intelligent score of 130 and above on the CTMM or Stanford Binet. Students came from suburban homes near Los Angeles.

Men and women, ages 15 to 70, were members of Greater Los Angeles MENSA--an organization with the single entrance requirement of an intelligence score on the 98th percentile or higher on standardized tests such as the CTMM, SB, or Cattell. Together, the men and women totaled 228. The 129 women represented slightly more than half of the female population of Los Angeles MENSA. (The total membership of 1200 plus is mostly male.) A request for three wishes was included in individual questionnaires which were mailed by the MENSA members in order to protect their anonymity. The questionnaire included other psychological questions designed by the author. From 400 questionnaires sent, the first 228 returned were used for this study. Lack of time necessitated a cut off point. This was considered a limitation since the returns are still arriving at the approximate rate of 3 a day.

Wishes were categorized according to Maslow's hierarchy of needs. Physiological needs were interpreted as essentials for biological survival and concern for longevity and/or health. Wishes for security and/or money or things that money could buy were put under safety. It was assumed that money is apt to signify safety and security in our culture. Desires for belonging to groups and wanting interpersonal relationships were categorized love and belongingness. Self-esteem was interpreted as desire for greatness in realistic careers. Altruistic wishes for mankind were put under self-actualization. A category for fantasy wishes was added since some of the wishes were for an infinite number of wishes, etc.

## RESULTS

### 1. Maturity Valences

Overall, the 1 to 6 point chart indicated females (mean = 4.2) have more maturity valences than males (mean = 3.9). Both sexes interspersed regression with progression in fulfilling deficit needs. The widest maturity gap between the sexes appeared at the 14th year. Males were the least mature at 11, 13, and 14 years. Their peak of maturity was 70 years. They were more mature than females at 10, 12, and 40 years. Women were least mature at 11, and the most mature at 70. They gained in maturity valences between 12 and 14, 40 and 50, and 60 to 70 years. A steady regression was indicated between 14 and 40 years of age for women.

### 2. Fantasy Valences

Fantasy peaked at 14 for males and at 12 years for females. Men stopped fantasy wishes at 60 while women stopped them at 50. Apparently, women become more realistic at an earlier age than men do.

### 3. Physiological Valences

With the exception of the 15th to 20th period, males' concern over physiological needs mounted until they peaked at 70. They desired sexual potency (to age 80 or for life), health, and longevity. Physiological needs for females clustered between 20 and 60 years. The peak came between 51 and 60. Women wanted to retain good health. Both sexes desired the ability to get by with less sleep so that more could be accomplished.

### 4. Safety (Security and/or Money) Valences

While both sexes were the most insecure at 10, males showed more overall concern for this category than women. This need did not appear after 60. Some frankly wanted luxury. Many saw money as a means to freedom from mundane breadwinning tasks. They wanted to be free to use their intellect for creativity.

5. Love and Belongingness Valences

Males peaked in valences at 13. Generally, they had fewer problems in this area than females. Females peaked at 10 years. From girlhood throughout womanhood, love and belongingness needs remained high. Love see-sawed with esteem (career) and actualizing needs. The data indicated unresolved conflicts in these areas for both girls and women.

6. Self-Esteem (Career) Valences

Males were most concerned about careers from 15 to 20 years of age and indicated no interest after 60. Women peaked in these valences at 14, 41 to 50, and 61 to 70.

7. Self-Actualization Valences

Men were much more interested in self-actualization than boys. They peaked at 61 to 70 with 2/3 of the wishes in this category. (The rest of the wishes in this age group were physiological.) Females indicated high valences from 13 to 20, 41 to 50, and 61 to 70. (Women 61 to 70 had 2/3 of their wishes for self-actualization and the remaining 1/3 went to esteem.

#### CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS

For gifted females, this study indicated a continuous regression line for maturity valences from the age of 14 to 40 years. (Conversely, males increased in maturity valences during this period.) The years 14 and 40 are apparently traumatic ones for gifted women.

An increase in esteem (careers), and self-actualization desires is accompanied by a decreased interest in love and belongingness for 14 year old girls. From 14 to 40, love needs pre-empted career and intellectual needs. This supported the Matthew Study (1960). She found the career interest for girls peaking at 14 and then declining through the high school years. Others have found low career interest for girls continuing at the college age.

Two possible explanations for this developmental behavior are society and biology. Society inculcates the idea that marriage and children are the fulfillment of a woman's destiny, and the epitome of femininity. Also, most girls have begun menstruation at this age. "Physiological changes," (Lewis, 1968) "accompanying the menarche include a leveling off of systolic blood pressure, a decline in pulse rate, and a sudden drop in basal metabolic rate. Such changes may have important effects on the girl's temperament and energy level, until her body has adapted to them."

In order to avoid social criticism and ostracization, many gifted women conform to the societal values of femininity which include the belief that women are emotionally and intellectually inferior to men. Gifted girls and women learn to appear dumb. However, the role playing of feigned stupidity is frustrating since it denies cognitive fulfillment. Somewhere around the age of 40, the level of frustration mounts to the motivation point. By this age, the love and belongingness needs (child bearing, etc.) have been relieved or satiated. It is at this point, the suppressed cognitive needs (as expressed in esteem, careers, and self-actualization), indicated at 14, bubble to the surface. Gowan (1968) assigned ego integrity as the developmental task of the 40's. Lewis (1968) warned that regardless of the degree of commitment which a girl makes to her vocational plans, it is probable that their long term fruition will come about only after a prolonged hiatus during her child bearing years.

Gifted women, at 40, may find resistance in fulfilling their goals. External resistance may come from the home (significant others), employers (fear of emotionality during menopause), and schools (some graduate schools overtly or covertly exclude because of age). Internal resistance may come from fear of competing with the younger and/or more experienced. Adding to this problem, the mask of dumbness is apt to peel off unevenly.

Approximately 1 out of 300 gifted women go on to complete their doctorates. Perhaps more gifted women could be helped to fulfill their affective and cognitive potential if vocational counselors could gear guidance toward fulfilling developmental needs. This would include more flexible admission procedures, refresher courses and opportunities for part time work and/or schooling, and a plethora of psychological support.

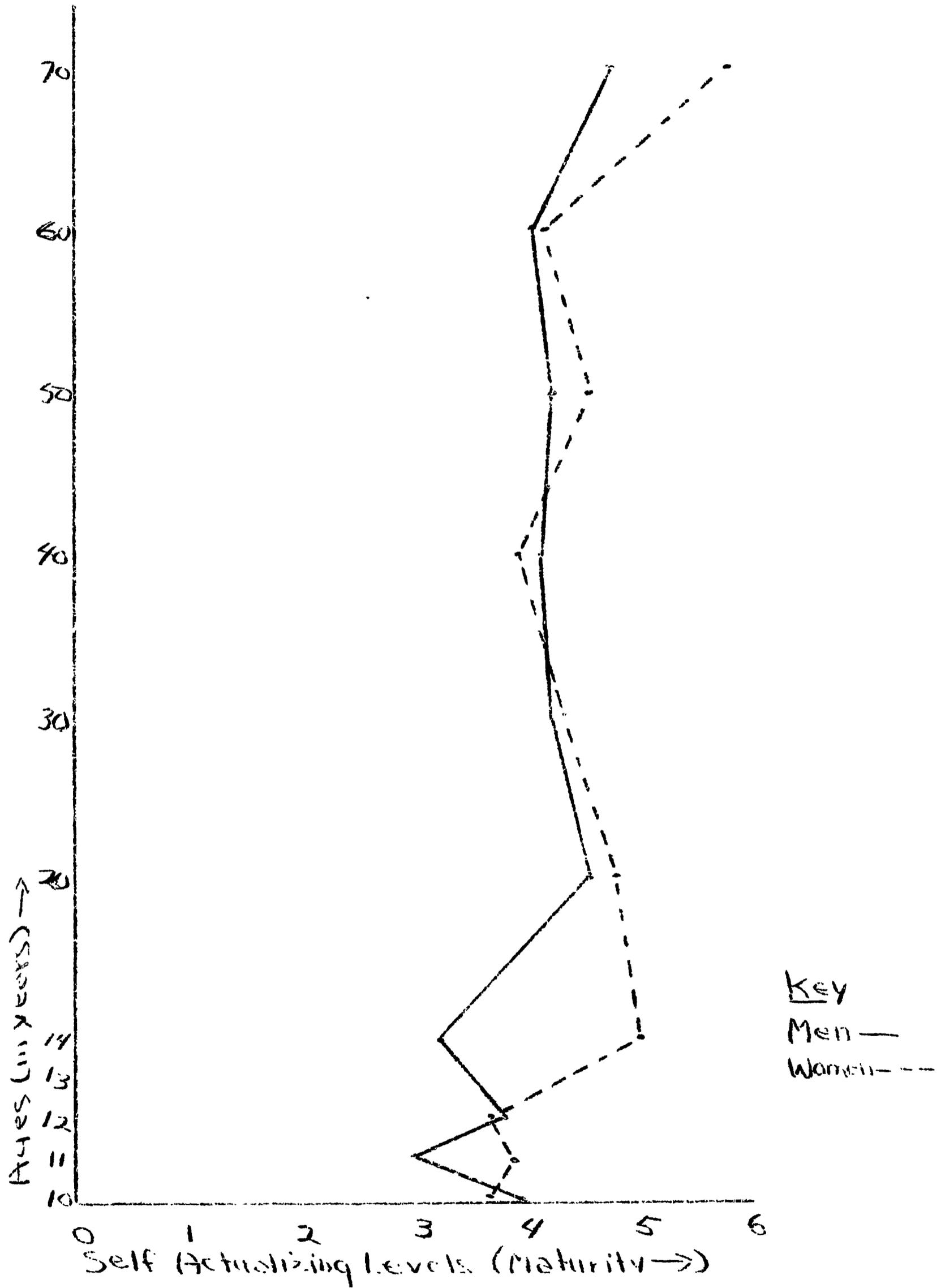
#### REFERENCES

- Bunting, M. A Huge Waste: Educated Womenpower. New York Times Magazine, May 7, 1961.
- Gowan, J. C., "The Guidance of Creative Children", Journal of Women Deans and Counselors, 1968.
- Kluckhohn, F., "American Women and American Values", L. Brysen (ED.), Facing Future's Risks, New York: Harper, 1953.
- Lewis, E. C., Developing Women's Potential, Ames, Iowa: Iowa State University Press, 1968.
- Maslow, A. H., Motivation and Personality, New York: Harper, 1954.
- Matthews, E., "The Marriage-Career Conflict in the Career Development of Girls and Young Women", Doctoral dissertation, Harvard University, 1960.

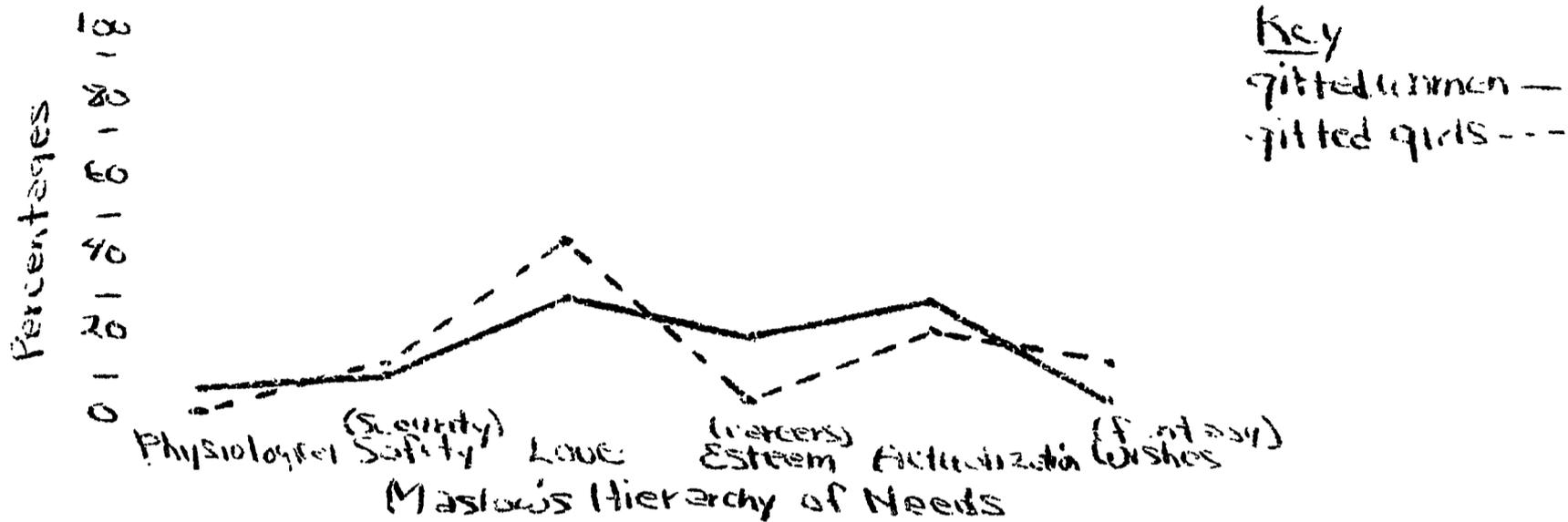
The author is continuing research in this area while she is working on her doctorate at the University of Southern California. For an exchange of information, her mailing address is:

2257 Montrose Drive,  
Thousand Oaks, California 91360

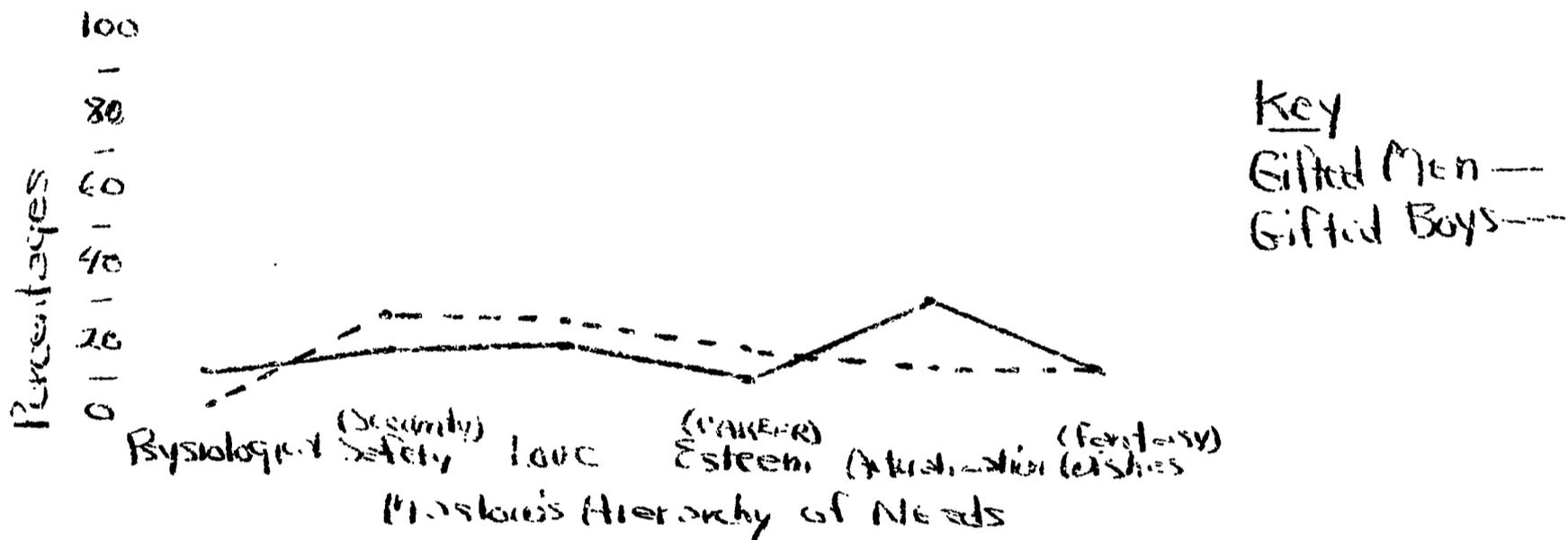
# MEAN MATURITY VALENCES FOR AGES 10 TO 70 YEARS (GIFTED)



# GIFTED WOMEN AND GIRLS



# GIFTED MEN AND BOYS



N = no. wishes in age group  
 % = percent of wishes in age group  
 M = Mean - adjusted

PROBLEMS (DEFICIENCY OF NEEDS) - GIFTED BOYS AND MEN

Age	BOYS										MEN									
	Fantasy Wishes	Physic-logical	Safety (Security)	Level Belonging	Self Esteem (Achieve)	Sell C	TOTAL	Age	Fantasy Wishes	Physic-logical	Safety (Security)	Low + Belonging	Self Esteem (Achieve)	Sell C	TOTAL					
10	N 02 M 2 % 05	N 00 M 0 % 00	N 15 M 45 % 42	N 07 M 28 % 20	N 08 M 40 % 22	N 04 M 24 % 11	N 56 M 3.9 % 100	15 to 26	N 02 M 2 % 10	N 00 M 0 % 00	N 02 M 6 % 10	N 05 M 20 % 25	N 05 M 25 % 25	N 06 M 36 % 30	N 20 M 4.5 % 100					
11	N 09 M 9 % 15	N 02 M 4 % 03	N 12 M 36 % 20	N 15 M 60 % 26	N 09 M 45 % 16	N 12 M 24 % 20	N 59 M 3.0 % 100	21 to 30	N 03 M 3 % 05	N 08 M 16 % 13	N 11 M 33 % 18	N 08 M 32 % 13	N 14 M 70 % 23	N 17 M 102 % 28	N 61 M 4.2 % 100					
12	N 11 M 11 % 15	N 00 M 0 % 00	N 28 M 84 % 50	N 22 M 88 % 29	N 17 M 85 % 17	N 13 M 78 % 14	N 91 M 3.8 % 100	31 to 41	N 03 M 3 % 03	N 15 M 30 % 15	N 23 M 69 % 23	N 21 M 84 % 21	N 07 M 35 % 07	N 30 M 180 % 30	N 97 M 4.1 % 100					
13	N 07 M 7 % 26	N 01 M 2 % 03	N 03 M 7 % 11	N 09 M 36 % 39	N 02 M 10 % 07	N 05 M 30 % 17	N 27 M 3.5 % 100	41 to 50	N 00 M 0 % 00	N 12 M 24 % 17	N 14 M 42 % 20	N 14 M 56 % 20	N 12 M 60 % 17	N 17 M 102 % 25	N 67 M 4.2 % 100					
14	N 07 M 7 % 30	N 00 M 0 % 00	N 06 M 18 % 25	N 05 M 20 % 20	N 05 M 25 % 20	N 01 M 6 % 04	N 44 M 3.2 % 100	51 to 60	N 03 M 3 % 08	N 09 M 18 % 23	N 04 M 12 % 10	N 05 M 20 % 13	N 06 M 30 % 15	N 13 M 78 % 33	N 90 M 4.0 % 100					
15	N 36 M 36 % 15	N 03 M 6 % 01	N 64 M 112 % 22	N 58 M 232 % 25	N 41 M 205 % 17	N 35 M 210 % 15	N 237 M 3.7 % 100	61 to 70	N 11 M 11 % 04	N 46 M 92 % 16	N 54 M 162 % 18	N 53 M 212 % 18	N 44 M 220 % 15	N 87 M 522 % 27	N 275 M 4.1 % 100					

Key  
 N = no. wishes in age group  
 % = percentage of wishes in age group  
 M = means - adjusted

# MASLOW'S HIERARCHY OF NEEDS - GIFTED GIRLS AND WOMEN

		GIRLS						WOMEN							
Age	1	2	3	4	5	6	TOTAL	Age	1	2	3	4	5	6	TOTAL
	Fantasy Wishes	Physio-logical	Safety (Security)	Love + Belonging	Self-actualize (careers)	Self-actualize			Fantasy Wishes	Physio-logical	Safety (Security)	Love + Belonging	Self-actualize (careers)	Self-actualize	
10	N 04 M 4 % 11	N 00 M 0 % 00	N 07 M 21 % 19	N 20 M 80 % 56	N 01 M 5 % 03	N 04 M 24 % 11	N 36 M 3.7 % 100	15 to 20	N 00 M 0 % 00	N 00 M 0 % 00	N 05 M 15 % 13	N 13 M 52 % 33	N 15 M 25 % 13	N 12 M 96 % 41	N 39 M 4.1 % 100
11	N 06 M 6 % 14	N 00 M 0 % 00	N 06 M 18 % 14	N 14 M 76 % 45	N 01 M 5 % 02	N 10 M 6 % 24	N 42 M 3.7 % 100	21 to 30	N 02 M 2 % 03	N 06 M 12 % 08	N 07 M 27 % 13	N 25 M 10 % 35	N 11 M 55 % 15	N 17 M 114 % 26	N 72 M 11.3 % 100
12	N 12 M 12 % 20	N 00 M 0 % 00	N 10 M 30 % 17	N 21 M 84 % 35	N 05 M 15 % 05	N 14 M 84 % 23	N 60 M 3.7 % 100	31 to 40	N 01 M 1 % 08	N 12 M 24 % 10	N 16 M 48 % 13	N 45 M 180 % 36	N 21 M 105 % 17	N 27 M 156 % 23	N 124 M 3.7 % 100
13	N 02 M 2 % 10	N 00 M 0 % 00	N 01 M 3 % 04	N 13 M 40 % 48	N 01 M 5 % 04	N 07 M 42 % 34	N 21 M 4.4 % 00	41 to 50	N 01 M 1 % 07	N 11 M 22 % 10	N 12 M 36 % 10	N 30 M 120 % 26	N 25 M 125 % 22	N 35 M 210 % 31	N 114 M 4.5 % 100
14	N 00 M 0 % 00	N 00 M 0 % 00	N 00 M 0 % 00	N 02 M 8 % 33	N 02 M 10 % 33	N 02 M 12 % 33	N 06 M 5 % 100	51 to 60	N 00 M 0 % 00	N 04 M 8 % 17	N 03 M 9 % 13	N 08 M 32 % 35	N 03 M 15 % 13	N 05 M 30 % 22	N 23 M 4.1 % 100
TOTAL	N 24 M 24 % 15	N 00 M 0 % 00	N 24 M 72 % 14	N 72 M 288 % 44	N 08 M 40 % 05	N 37 M 222 % 22	N 165 M 3.9 % 100	61 to 70	N 00 M 0 % 00	N 00 M 0 % 00	N 00 M 0 % 00	N 00 M 0 % 00	N 02 M 10 % 33	N 04 M 24 % 66	N 06 M 5.7 % 100