

Education Update: Why Do Women Score Lower Than Men On The SAT?

Stop The Exploitation Of Mexican American Women In The U.S.A.

When I sit down to write my weekly articles, there are times when I am more inspired than others. This week is certainly an occasion when specific educational concerns lead me to energetically address what I perceive to be serious problems in the development and nurturing of the female black student.

It is not that certain gender disabilities revealed by analyses conducted by the College Entrance Examination Board aren't universally applicable regardless of race... but, it is the case that the old conundrum raises its ugly head; "some of us are more equal than others". I can well attest to this, drawing from my years of teaching and tutoring students of all races and socioeconomic groups at Portland State University.

Before I quote here from the literature and statistics, let me reveal the nature of my most immediate concerns. They are shared by a number of black parents and teachers; not only in this community, but across the nation. Despite the yeoman efforts and commitment on the part of black women's organizations, from social and educational to Greek-letter Society, the grants and funding for programs to "develop and nurture" black female youth lags tragically behind that devoted to the "ENDANGERED BLACK MALE". Not that this is not a prime concern.

Those familiar with my observations and comments through the years can have no doubts about my position that it is only by the strength, sacrifice and wondrous Commitment of the black woman that our race has survived the trauma and travail of this land (see my book citation at the end of this article). It follows that it is absolutely essential that we devote at least an equal amount of time, resource and effort to the socialization, tutoring and special needs of our young females.

It will take a second article to detail my perceptions of what is needed in terms of specific programs and techniques required to address the problem. In the meantime, let us examine some of those "quotes from the literature" (College Entrance Examination Board). As stated, we will present our

own taxonomy of educational objectives next week.

"Twenty years ago, women received higher average verbal scores and men had higher math scores. Although the differences were significantly larger in math than in verbal, relatively little public attention was paid to these score disparities, perhaps because of some underlying assumption that the rightful domain for girls was verbal and for boys it was math. Although the difference in math has continued to be approximately 50 points during the past two decades and longer, there has been a slow shift in the average verbal scores. By 1972, the average verbal scores for women became slightly lower than for men. In 1988, women's average verbal score was 13 points lower than men's, and the average math score was 43 points lower. (Verbal and math scores are both reported on a 600-point scale from 200-800.)

Some Explanations

One of the most obvious reasons that women's scores are lower than men's is that more women than men take the SAT. When dealing with average scores on tests that are taken by self-selected populations, a higher percentage of test takers usually results in lower average scores. The number of women taking the SAT increased significantly by the early 1970s, while the number of men taking the test decreased. In 1964, women represented only 44 percent of the SAT-taking population. Since 1981, women have constituted 52 percent of all test takers usually results in lower average scores. The number of women taking the SAT increased significantly by the early 1970s, while the number of men taking the test decreased. In 1988, about 50,000 more women than men took the SAT. (See Figure C.)

More women than men are taking the SAT, but it is also important to look at who these women are and what their backgrounds are. For example, the women who choose to take the SAT are, according to information provided by themselves, more likely to come from families where neither parent has attended college. (See Figure D.) We do not know why this is the case. Some

have speculated that the women's movement has helped these young women recognize the importance of education, or that young men from similar families are more likely to drop out of high school, or to enlist in one of the military services, or to seek employment immediately after high school. Whatever the reason for the larger proportion of women from families with less formal education. The unfortunate fact is that many of these students probably have not received the same parental encouragement and academic support that students from college-educated families often receive.

The larger numbers of female SAT takers also include more women from racial or ethnic minorities. Another unfortunate reality is that educational opportunities available to many minority students are not the same as those available to white students.

Although boys and girls are generally enrolled in the same schools and have similar educational opportunities as their classmates, the fact is that girls are less likely to be enrolled in solid college-preparatory courses. Minority females are even less likely to pursue these more challenging courses. Although the abilities measured by the SAT are generally not taught in a specific course or curriculum, the general verbal and quantitative reasoning skills included on the test are usually a broad objective or, at the very least, a by-product of a good college-preparatory curriculum. Solving problems, drawing inferences, identifying distinctions, and interpreting both verbal and mathematical information (skills measured by the SAT) are developed in many ways both in and out of school but students who have had more formal training in school are usually at an advantage.

The Math Gap

On average, the women who take the SAT have taken fewer math courses than men, particularly the more advanced college-preparatory courses. The differences are even more pronounced when the data are reviewed by racial/ethnic group. For example, data about course-taking patterns of black

and white men and women reveal that whites are more likely to take advanced math courses than blacks, and that men are more likely to take these courses than women. Black females are only about half as likely as white males to be enrolled in courses such as pre-calculus or calculus.

A similar pattern is evident in the sciences. Figure G shows the percentage of Mexican American and white males and females who took different science courses. Mexican American women are much less likely to be taking advanced science courses than either Mexican American or white men.

Research has been conducted to determine the extent to which these differences in background can account for the average score differences between men and women. Although all of the verbal differences can be explained by background differences, only about one-half of the difference in math scores has been accounted for. This is an area that deserves further investigation and research."

Well, there you have it, the official view. What do you think readers? I certainly expect to hear from you, which will permit me to incorporate some of your ideas next week. Now for that book citation I promised you. It is a must for all who revere, respect and love the black woman, or wish to study her journey in work force.

"Labor of Love, Labor of Sorrow: Black Women, Work and the Family, From Slavery to the Present" by Jacqueline Jones.

The African American author developed this book from course material in a course in women's history while a professor at Wellesley College; Priceless documentation, notes, statistics and photos. The narrative style and prose of this black history classic is excellent as well.

Order from The Scholar's Bookshelf, 51 Everett Drive, P. O. Box 179, Princeton Junction, N.J. 08550, (609) 799-7233. Stock No. 629D9, \$13.95 including shipping.

This is a discount firm, original publisher was Vintage Books, N.Y. 1986.

Oregon Weekly Unemployment Benefit Amounts to be Increased

Weekly unemployment benefit amounts will go up slightly in Oregon on July 1, 1992.

The maximum benefit per week will be \$271 as of the first week in July. It is currently \$259 per week. The minimum benefit paid will raise from \$60 per week to \$63 per week. The change affects new claims filed during or after the first week of July.

The calculation is done on an annual basis and is required by law. It is based on a percentage of the average wages paid in Oregon.

Open House At New DBE Supportive Services Office

The Oregon Department of Transportation, Civil Rights Section, is holding an OPEN HOUSE at the NEW DBE SUPPORTIVE SERVICES OFFICE.

Our supportive services consulting team is now providing professional business services which are available to women and minority owned construction contractors.

Come meet the staff and learn about the wide variety of management, technical, marketing, and legal resources that are available to DBE's interested in performing construction related contracts financed by the U.S. Department of Transportation. The open house will be held on July 1st, from 3-7pm at:

Keith Crawford & Associates
4300 NE Fremont Avenue
Suite 230
Portland, OR 97213
335-3118 (Portland)
800-243-3188 (OR)

Play It Safe This Summer

Fun, sun, and summer vacation. We all look forward to the lazy days of summer, can be the most dangerous time of the year.

Summer sports such as bicycling, rollerblading, tennis, and swimming all pose serious threats from muscle strains to death. Summer athletes can play it safe on those hot summer days.

While bicycling, always wear an approved helmet with a chin strap. The helmet should sport a sticker certifying that it has passed stringent testing standards by either the American National Standards Institute or the Snell Memorial Foundation. If you don't see one of these stickers, don't buy the helmet.

"Bike helmets are also great protection for skateboarding or rollerblading," says Jim Williams, a safety specialist with the County Companies insurance group. "For these activities you should also wear elbow and knee pads along with a good pair of gloves. These items will keep you safe from cuts and bruises in case of a fall."

If you sustain a muscle strain, always remember RICE. RICE stands for Rest, Ice, Compression, and Elevation. The first care for injuries is rest. Many times these injuries will heal themselves if given the proper care. If constant pain occurs, apply ice for 20 minutes. Coldness restricts the blood vessels, slows bleeding and prevents swelling. It also numbs nerve endings to reduce pain. Never put ice directly on the affected area. Wrap the ice in plastic and place in a towel, then put it on the sore muscle or joint.

Compression with an elastic bandage on the area will keep the swelling down. However, if it is wrapped too tightly, numbness, cramping, or pain beyond the bandage and injury itself may occur. Always test the bandage for tightness after wrapping the injury.

"Elevation to an injury also helps. By elevating the injured area above the heart, gravity will assist in the drainage of the painful areas, decrease the blood supply and reduce swelling. This should be continued while you sleep," adds Williams.

If you experience an inability to move the injured area or cannot place weight on it, you should consult a physician. Follow this rule: If you can't decide whether or not to call the doctor, you'd better call the doctor.

Keeping safe during summer sports sounds like a tough job, but remember, if you use your head you can't go wrong.

52nd NNPA Convention



Robert Bogle, second from left, Publisher of the Philadelphia Tribune and President of the National Newspaper Publishers Association, chats with participants in the Association's 52nd Annual Convention recently in Baltimore, MD. With Bogle are, from left, Virgis Colbert, Vice President, Plant Operations, Miller Brewing Company, Jack Kemp, Secretary, U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development and George L. Knox III, Vice President, Public Affairs, Philip Morris Companies Inc. One several prominent figures to address the convention, Kemp told representatives of the Association's 205 weekly newspapers that "I believe with all my heart that my party will never be whole again until Black folks believe that the party of (President Abraham) Lincoln did not desert them."



Demenica Berry from One Stop Records gives Brittany Joachins from Tigard, Kris Kross CDs, while visited One Stop Records. Brittany who is the 1991 Tiny Tot Young Miss of America age 5, also she received a Batman T-Shirt. Thanks One Stop Records

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