



SENG Journal: Exploring the Psychology of Giftedness

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From the editors

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From the Editors

Tracy L. Cross, Ph.D. 
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Welcome to the *SENG Journal*. We are pleased to share this first issue of a new journal that extends the field of gifted education. It is exciting to work with the SENG organization and William & Mary Libraries to produce a journal that not only fills a niche, but also, we hope, will promote more scholarship on the psychology of giftedness. The field of gifted education has produced a number of high-quality journals, but the field of psychology has not fully embraced the domain of giftedness. While research on the psychology of gifted individuals may appear in gifted education journals and in psychology journals, it is not the objective of those journals to address the psychology of giftedness. In creating the *SENG Journal* (*SENGJ*), we want to draw attention to the significance of psychology in a unique population. Over the past 40 years, we have sought as editors to inspire and encourage authors to explore new conceptions and take new directions in the field. *SENGJ* allows us to focus more intently on the psychology of giftedness, not narrowing our conceptions as we do so, but expanding on them as we ask our readers to think more broadly about giftedness – what it is, who we are talking about, and how to help them as they make the most of their potential.

The scope of *SENGJ* is broad, encompassing varied definitions of giftedness and areas of psychology. It is a peer-reviewed journal that publishes biannually, in March and September, with empirical articles, reviews of research, theoretical explorations, and interviews with thought leaders and experts about the psychology of giftedness. The tagline of the journal, "Exploring the Psychology of Giftedness," was chosen very purposefully. Psychology is an enormous discipline. To give you an idea of the breadth of this field, the American Psychological Association has 54 divisions. In every one of them, there is the possibility of researching exceptionally able individuals in myriad ways. Our professional friends who are service providers in the clinical or counseling arena emphasize the endogenous characteristics of gifted individuals, addressing the unique issues and struggles that are impacted by their abilities and sensibilities. While this focus is incredibly important, an emphasis on this as the sole conception of the psychology of giftedness creates limitations on our understanding and, for some, contributes to the image of gifted individuals as a population in need of extra mental health support. The woes of gifted individuals are easily dismissed by those who make the naïve assumption that giftedness is an advantage and a less privileged group is more deserving of our attention. Research can be cited to support both sides of the argument: some gifted individuals are psychologically healthy, even robust (Martin et al., 2010; Simonton, 2014; Terman, 1925) and some suffer from mental illness and psychological challenges (Berndt et al., 1982; J. Cross & Cross, 2015; Missett, 2013). Certainly, from our research on suicide among gifted individuals, we know that some suffer great psychological distress (T. Cross & Cross, 2018; T. Cross et al., 2002; T. Cross et al., 2006; T. Cross et al., 2020). We want *SENGJ* to be an outlet for research on this aspect of the psychology of gifted individuals, but there is so much more that fits under this umbrella.

Intelligence research has a natural place in the psychology of giftedness. Intelligence testing has long been how we identified who is in our population of

interest (e.g., Bracken, 2021). An IQ score has become a historical proxy for giftedness, but it is far too narrow a construct to encompass the fullness of the concept (Wai & Worrell, 2021). An allegiance to IQ as the definition of giftedness has limited our understanding (T. Cross & Cross, 2020) and stunted the growth of our field. It has unnecessarily painted us into a conceptual corner. As we have inched past this powerful conception, it has become clear that we need a more appropriate, multidimensional view of the psychology of giftedness and a more effective means of applying what we learn (T. Cross & Coleman, 2005; T. Cross & Cross, 2021). To date, few researchers have specialized in the relationship of achievement or performance (outcomes) and psychological development as the foundation (input). Subotnik and colleagues (2011, 2019; Olszewski-Kubilius et al., 2015, 2016; Worrell et al., 2021) have been the leaders in this movement within gifted education, fostering the shift to a talent development model. The talent development framework provides the impetus for the field to more fully realize new areas of the psychology of giftedness that can be pursued or illustrated. We want *SENGJ* to be a welcoming outlet for this kind of research.

Social psychology has a place in *SENGJ*, as well. The impediments to success experienced by those with exceptional potential have both endogenous and exogenous foundations. Our relationships with others play an important role in the development of talent (Coleman & Cross, 1988; J. Cross et al., 2018; J. Cross et al., 2019; T. Cross et al., 1991). Understanding the impact of environment, including the psychology of others as it relates to giftedness, is critical.

One of the most exciting features of *SENGJ* is its status as an open access journal. The paywalls of the publishing world have been closing in on researchers. As publishers have monetized the work of authors, libraries have seen increasing costs to access information. Researchers who are not affiliated with an institution that has the funds for such access may be left with an incomplete understanding of their interest area. The gifted student with a burning desire to learn more about an academic topic will almost certainly hit a paywall that restricts their ability to learn. Jack Andraka, a high school student who invented an affordable, reliable test for pancreatic cancer at age 15 (Tucker, 2012), described in detail the barriers to his research in a TedX talk (Andraka, 2013). Our institution, William & Mary (W&M), is committed to making research accessible, affordable, and sustainable. Through its Collections and Research Initiative, W&M Libraries partners with an open access platform, bepress Digital Commons, to support Scholarworks, which will provide a home for *SENGJ*. The journal will be freely available to readers around the world and to authors, as well, as there are no fees required to publish their work. We are thankful for W&M's support as we lead the way in open access publishing in our field.

We also are pleased to have an array of researchers with an interest in the psychology of giftedness on our *SENGJ* Advisory Board. These professionals have already given their time and expertise to the development of this first issue of the journal. We look forward to working with them as we pursue this important enterprise. We also want to thank our peer reviewers for their contributions to the quality of articles in *SENGJ*. Their commitment to the peer review process is what will ensure we are producing a journal of the highest caliber.

Finally, we have the SENG organization to thank for making the creation of *SENGJ* possible. Founded by James T. Webb in 1981, SENG has built a community of support for gifted individuals and those who care for them. Through programs, training, and a library of resources, SENG offers information to foster positive development. We are pleased to be a part of this organization, which underwrites the cost of *SENGJ*'s production.

We look forward to your involvement with *SENGJ*. We hope you will consider submitting your research to the journal. If you are interested in serving as a peer reviewer, please contact us with information about your expertise.

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