Work in Progress

Psychosocial Barriers to Black Women's Career Development

Clevonne Turner, M.S.W.

Work in Progress

 Work in Progress is a publication series based on the work of the Stone Center for Developmental Services and Studies at Wellesley College, and it includes papers presented in the Center's Colloquium Series. *Work in Progress* reflects the Center's commitment to sharing information with others who are interested in fostering psychological well-being, preventing emotional problems, and providing appropriate services to persons who suffer from psychological distress. The publication also reflects the Center's belief that it is important to exchange ideas while they are being developed. Many of the papers, therefore, are intended to stimulate discussion and dialogue, while others represent finished research reports.

 For those papers which were part of the Colloquium Series, each document includes the substantive material presented by the lecturer, information about the speaker, and, where appropriate, a summary of the subsequent discussion session.

Jean Baker Miller Training Institute

 Founded in 1995, the Jean Baker Miler Training Institute bases its work on the Relational-Cultural Model of psychological development, which grew out of a collaborative process of theory building initiated by the scholars at the Stone Center. The Institute offers workshops, courses, professional trainings, publications, and ongoing projects which explore applications of the relational-cultural approach. At the heart of this work is the belief that the Relational-Cultural Model offers new and better ways of understanding the diversity and complexities of human experience.

The Robert S. and Grace W. Stone Center for Developmental Services and Studies

 Creation of the Robert S. and Grace W. Stone Center for Developmental Services and Studies resulted from a generous gift to Wellesley College by Robert S. and Grace W. Stone, parents of a Wellesley graduate. The Center was dedicated in the fall of 1981, and its programs reflect the Stone family's interest in preventing psychological distress. With the creation of the Stone Center, Wellesley College has enlarged its long-established search for excellence. At Wellesley, the Center has the unique advantage of immersion in a community of scholars and teachers who can add the broad perspective of the humanities, sciences, and social sciences to the Center's psychological expertise.

 The Stone Center is developing programs aimed toward the following goals: research in psychological development of people of all ages; service demonstration and research projects which will enhance psychological development of college students; service, research, and training in the prevention of psychological problems.

Psychosocial Barriers to Black Women's Career Development

Clevonne Turner, M.S.W.

About the Author

Clevonne Watkins Turner, LICSW, is Assistant Clinical Director of the Counseling Division of the Stone Center. She is active in the National Association of Social Workers, the Academy of Certified Social Workers and Black Women for Policy Action.

Abstract

Many psychological and social barriers exist which bar Black women from full participation in the work force. This paper attempts to shed light on these barriers and to address some of the hidden realities Black women experience around work on a daily basis. Case histories and coping strategies are freely shared. The Stone Center is working to correct some of these injustices through innovative theories, groups, and projects. We hope that this paper will provide "food for thought and action" to all those who read it, and that you will join us in these efforts.

This paper was presented at a Stone Center Colloquium in February, 1983.

Preface

This working paper could not have been written without the collaboration and shared stories of resilient, multitalented, resourceful Black women who *do* survive and *are* successful in their own ways, even when times are hardest. This "learned talent to survive" was passed on to me chiefly from my mother and her network of women friends, relatives, and neighbors in the Black community. They modeled the difficult yet successful integration of working inside and outside the home, preserving relationships, providing community service, and maintaining dignity and perseverance that surrounded me during my formative years. My father both complemented and supported this model of growth in me.

I, like the majority of Black women in this society, grew up with the notion of getting as much education as I could, working, marrying, and having children as "the norm." Implied in this, and sometimes explicitly said, were two interwoven givens: to make other Black folk proud of me and to uplift the race in some way by making good, myself.

Introduction

To be Black and female in today's society poses unique and complex issues in thinking about, planning for, and working toward a career. This complexity is due, in great part, to Black women's dual minority status. Work is an indispensable part of life for most people. It serves to integrate them into social, political, and economic networks in the society at large. Our society, which values the "Protestant work ethic" as part of its backbone, has insidiously and systematically produced roadblocks of gigantic proportion for Black women, even though they have worked fairly consistently throughout their existence in this country, as well as in their original homelands. They have worked long hours and double shifts

providing manual labor to scientific breakthroughs in order to survive, maintain, and/or improve certain standards of living.

The psychological burden of living with the many false images and myths imposed by this society, while struggling to live and work in it and maintain a positive sense of identity is now over 350 years old. At times it gets extremely heavy. Black women are for the most part aspiring to be in control of their lives in a basically white, patriarchal society. This paper is not intended to take away from the blatant racism also directed at Black men or the bitter sexism pervading the treatment of women, both of which Black women share. It will attempt to shed some light on some of the issues and feelings unique to Black women. It is hoped that by including and developing data on this often overlooked population a more total picture of work issues will evolve.

Throughout this paper, four primary barriers will be interwoven: *racism, sexism, classism,* and *ageism.* I will attempt to illustrate how these rampant forms of discrimination bar Black women from full participation in our society. Case examples from work done at the Stone Center as well as with Black women in various walks of life will be included. The Stone Center material is the result of a two-year nonclinical Search-Research group I co-ran with a Black woman, Dean Sylvia Robinson, who had prior experience as a career counselor. The group focused on career and relationship issues of Black college women. In general, however, our findings dovetailed with the experience of many working Black women with whom I've spoken both within and outside of my clinical practice.

Common themes

To know a Black woman in our society today is certainly not to know all of us. To try to describe our female identity entails looking at a rich, complex, multifaceted person who has not been studied or understood adequately. Primarily we are hidden within the words — Black, female, and often just the word "other." There exists within us much variety in individual as well as in collective identities, behaviors, feelings, styles, personalities, skin tones, religions, philosophies, relationships between ourselves and others, etc. It is very important not to form one description or characteristic way of thinking about Black women. Having said this, there do exist some common themes and threads that most Black women share with each other more than with other women. I have compiled a list of eight to keep in mind:

l) Black women in this country have a history and tradition of combining the roles of worker, wife, and/or mother as the "norm." Paradoxically, this tradition continued despite slavery, as well as in large part because of it.

2) Black women and Black men have a history together of mutual interdependence around work done outside the home in order to achieve some semblance of financial stability and security, as well as to preserve family and community solidarity. Whether low-income or not, these families are characterized by an egalitarian pattern in which neither spouse dominates but each shares decision making and the performance of expected tasks (Hill, 1971).

3) Black women historically have shared and/or carried out the role of "breadwinner" because of a complex set of racial circumstances which denied meaningful employment to Black men. This situation has led to such myths as Black men being seen as shiftless and lazy and the women being seen as matriarchal, superstrong, and emasculating. Subsequently, for survival many of these women had to care for themselves, children, and families. Unlike most women in this predicament, they were systematically degraded and blamed for this plight. This hardship damaged Black male/female relationships and the solidarity of the intact Black family (Beale, 1970; Davis, 1983; McCray, 1980).

4) Black women are the only women in this country to be categorized as "not being human" along with Black men and children. Slave infants and their mothers were seen as "property of the slave master" and could not look to their men for protection as other women and children have done. Death to the men often resulted if they interfered.

5) From 1619 to 1863, Southern white men had legal license freely to abuse Black women, and then labeled them immoral, loose, and sexually degraded. Myths like these and others have continued from that time up to the present. They attack Black women's morals and character while also serving to give male teachers, supervisors, or co-workers a more entitled sense to sexually harass them. This continues to wreak havoc. It sometimes distorts Black women's perceptions of themselves and undermines or destroys the relationships they share with Black men. These women have higher rates of separation and divorce than their white female counterparts, and statistics show them less likely to remarry.

6) Developmentally, Black women have integrated traditional male roles of achievement, autonomy and independence with the more

traditional female caretaking and nurturing roles as a "norm." At the Stone Center, we are evolving a "self-in-relation" theory looking at how women in general develop a primary emphasis on meeting others' needs before their own, and working on cultural differences within it. This theory seeks to examine women's primary sense of self as relational, that is, embedded in mutual empathy in early mother/daughter relationships. It further looks at establishing and maintaining relationships *within* the developmental process rather than through "separation and individuation" as it has been written about for many years. This theory represents a significant part of the Black woman's developmental experience as she adds on other relationships which start with the mother/daughter one and which subsequently tend to heighten rather than diminish her sense of self. Black mothers often have a heavier sense of responsibility to their daughters because of racism and sexism, and are working constantly to instill deeper feelings of self-esteem, confidence, resourcefulness, inner strengths, etc. in Black daughters to help them face adversities better and to resist discouragement when roadblocks are placed in their paths. These daughters usually are taught very early in life to *rely on themselves* as well as to *learn how to care for others.* They are culturally different from their white women counterparts in the way they integrate traditional male achievement orientation with the more female identified empathic style of considering others, nurturing, and caretaking — especially in the broader sense of staying mutually connected with family and the Black community.

7) Black women affected by the remnants of sexism in the Civil Rights Movement and racism in the Women's Rights Movement often feel caught in the middle. They are conflicted about how to resolve these "splits" within themselves. The nurturing relational side wants to heal these splits, while the assertive, achievement side wants to demand equality and support.

8) Most economists, sociologists, and statisticians seem to agree that the Black female, despite her long history in the role of worker, financially accrues fewer benefits than white females, and black and white males. This disparity is reflected in the form of lower-paying, low-status jobs held by the majority of black women, with less access to diversity and upward mobility. Professor Phyllis Wallace, a prominent Black female economist at MIT, provides hard statistical data on these points in her book, *Black Women in the Labor Force* (1980). Black teenage women and parenthetically older Black women are the "poorest" group of women in America today.

A Closer look at the barriers

Because racism and sexism are so closely intertwined, Black women often go through the mental exercise of deciding "which is it this time?" I am referring to the mental gymnastics occurring on a daily basis of decoding which type of discrimination lies behind which interaction, and then deciding whether to respond, how to respond, or being too overwhelmed by strong feelings to respond at all. In an academic or work situation, many women report a syndrome involving switching gears and rotating alliances between various groupings of men and women. This is a survival technique which is quite stressful, but necessary. I call this the "chameleon syndrome" because the women literally "fine tune" and "adapt" themselves in trying to negotiate various work environments. These efforts to decrease the effects of discrimination and conflict, to acclimate in a "suitable fashion," and to work more smoothly with others in the work place are deemed essential as ways to add to overall work effectiveness. Many Black women see these as requirements, as a way "to keep their jobs." It is not necessarily something one is comfortable doing, but something one automatically finds oneself doing as an option to being confrontational or hostile all of the time. It involves employing various communication styles, depending on the "norm" of the group, and incorporates what I call a "healthy paranoia" as a survival skill in learning whom to trust, how to read people, and how to cushion disappointments.

Surviving with stress: Selected case histories

Trying to survive stress sometimes can backfire when a woman doesn't also assume *some* responsibility for having her own needs met. This is illustrated by a forty-five-year-old Black woman administrator working on a predominantly white, co-ed campus, who relates:

I'm completely done in when I get home every night. I know I'm good at my job, even better than most, because I have to be. Everything I do at work is *so* visible; it's like being in a fishbowl. I'm complimented one day for being such a good listener, but no one really listens to me; so I'm cool and distant the next day. I'm forever being told how "strong" I am because I'm a successful single mother of five, but I actually have to argue to take time off from work to attend my kids' parent/teacher conferences. On many levels I feel I am many things to many people:

3

administrator, counselor, committee member, mediator between white men and women in the office, and always "mother confessor," but no one in my office really *knows me* the way I know them. They really seem insensitive to my feelings and needs, but expect *me* always to come through for them.

This theme is echoed in the words of two Black female college students. The first one says:

Women of color often tend to be surrogate mothers to siblings when parents/mothers work outside of the home because of economic necessity. This often is a setup for falling into surrogate mothering roles with other students (both white and of color) who then expect me always to be the strong, giving, nurturing one. Consequently, if I'm not careful, others have a hard time being a support for me.

The second student shares:

Minority women often have to bring to college and to reaffirm continually their own positive sense of self-worth here in order to counteract not always receiving a full complement of positive reinforcement once on campus.

Other times, women expect one type of oppression and are hit with others as incorporated in the words of a successful Black female scientist:

I expected to deal with many difficulties breaking into a mainly white, male-dominated profession which *I accept* as a given. I was not prepared for all of the pettiness and mediating constantly required between my more chauvinistic white male co-workers, competitive white female co-workers, and Black male co-workers who resented some of the status I acquired upon arriving — I was the first Black female there! Occasionally, I'd accept a dinner invitation with one of the Black males and his wife, but I no longer indulge in this because of the suspiciousness from the wife. She was suspicious because I appeared more identified with her husband than with her. This is not to say that everyone I encounter at work does not care about me as a person or a professional, but the *stress* associated with trying to stay on top of my profession, manage my own personal life, and get along with co-workers can be unbearable. I'm beginning to believe that the Black professional woman is the most untrusted and betrayed of all in the work place.

Or consider these poignant words of a seventy-year-old Black female domestic worker who has had to be so concerned with basic survival that it would be ludicrous for her to dwell on her "feelings" or problems in the work place:

My chillun, thank the Lord, is healthy and gets work most of the time. For me, I reckon things is still pretty much the same and I'll never have very much, but I can't complain. We still believe in God and we always had something to eat.

The Inclusion-exclusion phenomenon

Other women relate stories about inclusion/exclusion and the prices they have paid for success. Many of them seem to be in a "limbo predicament," caught between two worlds where achieving a measure of success has separated them emotionally, geographically, socioeconomically, or symbolically from their families or origin or ethnic roots. Some *do* bridge this gap successfully and manage to integrate the concepts of "success" and "staying in touch with who they are" — usually with a mixture of pain, tolerance, guilt, and sometimes with feelings of being tested by the "old ties" to prove that they still can relate and be trusted. This presents a very paradoxical dilemma which has strong emotional, social, and political ramifications. Concerning this, a twenty-seven-year-old Black, single businesswoman relates:

I had never felt as alone or isolated in my life before landing my dream job in a major corporation. I had already relocated myself far from family and friends. However, I soon found that in order to keep my job, I had to conform to company and societal norms while showing the world how successful and fortunate I was by learning quickly to play the corporate game. I became angry, resentful, awkward, and uncomfortable with my white co-workers "in their world." At the same time, I became sadly very distant and "out of step" with the few Black co-workers I encountered, none of whom even worked in my division. Initially, I felt that life had played a mean trick on me, and that the tradeoffs went too far. Now, I find I'm becoming that assertive, progressive Black woman of the 80s with a whole new set of problems. These encompass male/female problems, but center mainly on the difficult tensions with my family around communication, lifestyles, my 'Blackness' being questioned, and our not feeling as positive and accepting of each other.

Feelings of "not belonging"

Black women's lives, emotional histories, and current perceptions of themselves do vary, and sometimes what they feel inside is hidden and not shown on the outside. Take, for example, the words of a thirty-year-old married, Black female sales worker:

When I was told several years ago that I wasn't hired for a certain department store job, I can still remember and feel the uncaring look on the face, as well as the high and mighty attitude, of a certain white female. She was just about my age but short and dumpy and on the prim side. She told me that *I* wouldn't fit into this job because *I* didn't have the right combination of related work experience. The way she said it made me feel like I was in a different time and place. I was transformed instantly in my mind into the too dark, too tall, ugly, lanky slave girl who wasn't attractive enough or smart enough for "Miss Ann" to use in the house. I should go back into the fields and get dirtier, where I belonged. I became so negative about myself and almost everybody around me after that incident, that it was hard for me to feel like I could fit in anywhere. She got to me at a bad time, and I probably disliked myself then more than I imagined she disliked me. I felt angry, but all I said before I left was, "Thank you for your time."

Or the words of a nineteen-year-old, Black female college student in a predominantly white college who shares:

Every time I'm in Professor X's class and he calls on me I freeze, can't get my words or thoughts together, feel dumb, and wish I could just disappear. Funny thing is, I always study more for this class and think I'm prepared until he calls on me with that look that says, "you don't really belong here."

Upon exploration of this syndrome of not belonging, one finds that the pressures of trying to fit in, conform, or communicate in the "acceptable" form of the majority culture results in an anxiety that literally interferes with one's natural abilities and modes of expression. On many levels and at all ages, the feeling or perception that "you really don't belong" serves to complicate career aspirations in the forms of negative projection on one's self, overcompensation, assimilation, homogenization (trying to be like the one with perceived power), overaggressiveness, submissiveness, giving up, anger, isolation, and even fears of failing or of succeeding. I hasten to add that most Black women I've had contact with *do* believe in themselves, *do* have a positive sense of self, and *do* achieve; as one of them put it, "in spite of my oppression and to show them that I can." Though data on emotional coping skills and self-image of Black women is sparse, the literature bears out my observations (Jones & Welch, 1980; Myers, 1980; Jackson, 1973). To go a step further, Black women more often feel good about themselves for "who they are," but feel angry at our society which is perceived and experienced as "racist, sick, and unequal." Ladner (1972) documented this with data for the young urban Black women she studied. In spite of the difficulties presented by sex typing, the Black female generally has emerged with a positive self-concept, high aspirations and expectations.

Additional emotional barriers

Single Black working women and single Black female parents who work outside the home face special emotional issues. One centers around nontraditional lifestyles that are often not supported, fully accepted, or understood by significant others in ways that are meaningful to the women. If these women do not feel the appreciation and emotional support we all need, career goals often are sabotaged, or the women fall short of their full potential — one sometimes can lose hope. Recent mental health statistics show that depression, psychosomatic illness and emotional stress *are* on the rise in Blacks, especially poor, young, Black single women with children. The older Black woman is also at more risk if she is poor or unemployed and living alone. Suicide rates are low, but on the rise. Traditional supports from extended families and the Black church are no longer as powerful in offsetting these problems. More women than men, however, still use these supports regardless of socioeconomic position (McAdoo, 1980).

Refuting the myths

Various myths and lots of confusion have surfaced about Black women retarding the progress of Black men in their pursuit of self-improvement and economic security. Another myth says that these women are better educated than the men. Several researchers (Jackson, 1973; Jones & Welch, 1980) have provided convincing data that demonstrate the higher incidence of career restriction for Black women who receive a college education and refute these myths. In some instances these women *are* hired more often than males because of the perception that they are less threatening to the dominant power structure. According to Wallace (1980), however, Black women are still relegated to the least access to employment

opportunities and positions of real power. These are all ploys in which victims are set against one another rather than allowed to join together to make more meaningful gains. Often when a woman is hired rather than a male, she is paid less, is allowed minimal power, and has little upward mobility. Often there is a downgrading of reporting mechanisms in the system prior to her starting. This can play into the inclusion/exclusion phenomenon in which there is access to certain "middle or low" management areas of work, but little or none to top management and policy making decisions. These women are not generally included in the establishment network or institutional hierarchies. Bell-Scott (1980) has written about the necessity for Black women to understand hierarchies and to learn how to function most effectively in them.

Facts and realities

It must be noted, according to Wallace (1980), that one out of every three Black families in 1977 was headed by a woman, compared with one out of five Hispanic families and one out of nine white families. Black women heading these families were younger, more than twice as likely to be single, and had more children, lower labor force participation rates, higher unemployment rates, higher rates of poverty, and lower educational levels than their white counterparts. It seems a better educated, younger, and highly qualified Black middle class is developing at the same time that a larger Black underclass struggles to survive in worsened economic conditions. Although roughly 30% of these low-income women reportedly combine work and welfare intermittently, Wallace predicts that within the next decade only a "token few" will make significant inroads into new occupations and better jobs. *Poverty* represents, then, an "ultimate barrier" to these women. It will continue to undermine work and career development unless new strategies utilizing combined efforts from those in all income brackets are created and utilized. This will have to include more widespread support systems from the minority as well as the majority populace. This kind of support is precisely what the Stone Center is working on in another one of its projects: innovative groups for low-income mothers in transition to employment. About 80% of the mothers participating in this program are Black women.

Conclusion and coping strategies

I would be remiss to discuss barriers without including a brief look at coping mechanisms. So I'd like to summarize by pointing out a few of the findings from the group at the Stone Center revolving around career and relationship issues facing today's Black woman. They are relevant to the Black female college population as well as to the Black female population at large.

l) In schools and work places there are not enough "hands on" role models and interested mentors for these women readily to identify with, or who also happen to be Black and female. Those women who are prospects for this role are often put in positions where "mentoring" compromises the work they were hired to do. Or they, themselves, develop "role overload" trying to do both. Some do manage. The only option, however, for many Black women is to seek out Black males, and white males and females. As one student put it, "If their advice has your best interest at heart, is sound professionally, includes your world view, and will help you get through the system — take it!"

2) Many Black women rely primarily on themselves or their families as their first resource in "hard times." More traditional counseling and psychotherapy is usually not sought out or accepted unless it is a last resort, or the people in this setting are perceived as "culturally unbiased" and able to help out in a concrete as well as insightful manner.

3) Many Black women work so hard trying to make it academically and in the world of work that it is hard for them to take time out just for themselves. Mothers of these women usually live in this same pattern. Commonly accepted forms of relaxing were more often communal, e.g. "just getting together with others I feel comfortable with to talk, complain, enjoy a homecooked meal, play cards, dance, and 'just be me' without having to shift gears or be strong for somebody." This points to the next theme.

4) The importance of forming a personal support system at school and at work was crucial. This involved finding others who were both the same or different color and sex who understood and reaffirmed for the students who they were as women, and could give them moral support professionally. Sometimes these "supportive others" had to be educated and "brought along," as one woman put it, before mutual coalitions and networks could be formed.

5) Black women need to develop a more *entitled* sense of utilizing whatever resources are at hand or can be added to those already in existence.

In closing, I'd like to say that much more research is needed adequately to define this particular female culture with all of its variations, and to develop a clearer understanding of the Black woman's place in society. As we better understand and reflect each

segment of our population, we come closer to doing the same for all of us and to creating a more harmonious world in which to live and work.

Discussion Summary

After each colloquium lecture, a discussion is held. Selected portions are summarized here. In this session, Dr. Alexandra Kaplan, Dr. Jean Baker Miller, and Ms. Sylvia Robinson, Dean of the Class of 1986, joined in leading the discussion.

Question: I have observed among Black women many of the phenomena you illustrated so well in your paper. I feel, now, that I can better understand and support their struggles for survival and equity. Can other non-Black women learn from these experiences?

Turner: Most definitely. However, keep in mind that white and Black women start in different places and do not share the same work history. White women have not been seen traditionally as "competing" with men in the workplace, although there are exceptions. Black women are often erroneously seen this way. In reality, both Black men and Black women traditionally have had to work for economic stability. There are struggles Black women historically have faced concerning "who should have the job." These will no doubt surface now for many more white women, especially in the fields which are male-dominated. Tensions and competition with men can surface within relationships around primary and secondary breadwinner roles. Egos may be bruised and roles will need to be redefined and broadened. Mutual dependency, complementary self-fulfillment in both sexes, and a greater sense of working harmoniously together often results, too. Both men and other women can be helped ultimately by participation in diverse, equitable job experiences.

Question: Can you tell us more about how you help Black women overcome, psychologically, some of the barriers to career development?

Turner: In a nutshell, by instilling and nurturing within them a greater sense of entitlement to all of the goodies that living and working should provide. I counsel them to become "better consumers" of what life and work have to offer by shifting their attitude away from viewing themselves solely as victims. I advocate constructive activity rather than helpless passivity. Ego-strengthening exercises and constructive on-the-job experiences are planned and sought after as goals, utilizing whatever resources and supports are possible. Learning to ask for what is due her and feeling OK about doing this is often a first step for many. Learning to document for oneself and

others the work one performs and how this is done to benefit one's employer is crucial. Having access to job descriptions is one proven way to attain upward mobility or promotion; enlisting others in the workplace to witness this is also necessary. Adequate training and time to adjust to a job also instill positive self-esteem, security, and a feeling of belonging. Educating others about job needs rather than complaining, all go into feeling "entitled" to be in the workplace.

Comment: The Black women of lower socioeconomic class whom we recruit to work in our federally-funded agencies often have difficulty being assertive and many don't last in their positions. Any ideas about what we can do to motivate them?

Turner: Personally, I don't believe one person can solely motivate another. Listen to what the women have to say about where they have been and are now in the work force, what excites and helps them, and how they want to be involved in the process of motivation and goal direction. Don't assume you are the expert and know what's best for any one of them. Utilize their resourcefulness. For many, your job may be seen as a "quantum" leap away from theirs. They don't see the possibility of obtaining the necessary preparation, training, or support.

Kaplan: It is very important, as I've found in the lower-paid, employed Black mothers' group I work with, to find ways to listen to and to validate the experiences they are having. After creating the right conditions, the women regain the sense that these are meaningful and important. Too often, this is overlooked and then you can't connect with their present and future aspirations and/or needs.

Question: Are there things that all of us should attend to earlier in these women's lives, given the complexity of the issues? What can be done to help young Black girls?

Robinson: A strong and sound family background helps tremendously to give young Black girls a sense that they belong and are cared about without considerations based on race. Many families also complement this with early exposure to Black teachers who further instill belief in themselves as positive, self-affirming women who *will* make it in life. Positive Black role models and exposure to Black women doing well in a variety of careers is vital. Once these girls have a solid base, they can extend this further to a larger white and Black network of supports and people who believe in them.

Miller: All of these suggestions are good, but we have to emphasize that we still have to work to make solid opportunities in agencies and companies for

Black women. There have to be not only jobs to get into, but places for advancement and growth. Motivation has to be attached to concrete and very real goals. There still are not nearly enough good jobs.

Turner: Yes, it is rare for a Black woman or man, regardless of their talent and skill, to go to the top of a major corporation or to be a college president of a majority institution. It was not until 1955 that a Black Woman, Willa P. Playler, became President of Bennett College in Greensboro, North Carolina. She was the first Black woman in the history of America to head a Black women's college. Today, that college again is headed by a man. When more equity exists throughout the work system (from entry level to the top level), Black women can not only just hope for career rewards, but will realize them, too. Ultimately, this benefits all of society.

References

Beale, F. (1970). Double jeopardy to be Black and female. In T. Cade (Ed.), *The Black woman, an anthology.* New York: The New American Library, Inc.

Bell-Scott, P. (1980). Moving up the institutional hierarchy: Some suggestions for young minority and women professionals from the notebook of a novice. *Journal of the National Association for Women Deans, Administrators and Counselors, 43*(2), 34-39.

Davis, A. Y. (1983). *Women, race and class.* First Vintage Books Edition. New York: Random House, Inc. (originally published in 1981).

Hill, R. (1971). *The strengths of Black families.* New York: Emerson Hall Publishers.

Jackson, J. J. (1973). Black women in a racist society. In C. C. Willis, et al. (Eds.), *Racism and mental health.* Pittsburgh, PA: University of Pittsburgh Press.

Jones, J. & Welch, O. (1980). The Black professional woman: Psychological consequences of social and educational inequities upon the achievement of high school careers in leadership positions. *Journal of the National Association for Women Deans, Administrators and Counselors, 43*(2), 29-32.

Ladner, J. A. (1972). *Tomorrow's tomorrow: The Black woman.* Garden City, NY: Doubleday and Company, Inc..

McAdoo, H. P. (1980). Black mothers and the extended family support network. In L. F. Rodgers-Rose (Ed.), *The Black woman.* Beverly Hills, CA: Sage Publications, Inc..

McCray, C. A. (1980). The Black woman and family roles. In L. F. Rodgers-Rose (Ed.), *The Black woman.* Beverly Hills, CA: Sage Publications, Inc.

Myers, L. W. (1980). *Black women: Do they cope better?* Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, Inc.

Wallace, P. (1980). *Black women in the labor force.* Cambridge, MA: Massachusetts Institute of Technology Press.