

Newsletter: June 2022

Welcome to the June edition of the monthly **Jasneath Education** newsletter. If you missed any previous issues, they are available for FREE download at <https://jasneatheducation.com/newsletters> Throughout May there has been a hive of activity at the desk with a focus on Gifted Awareness Week, that ended on the 29th. I hope you were able to find an online or face-to-face event that was useful!

I'm thrilled to see the number of folk subscribing to the **Jasneath Education** site! It's wonderful to see our community building. In response to this, I've made some additions to the website, aimed at supporting our Subscriber Community. In each newsletter I'm providing a summary of a new piece of literature—usually a journal article. If you are a Subscriber and would like to read more deeply, you can download the full article from the Subscriber page on the website. There is also a link from the Subscriber page to some of my recent writing, also available for free download. If you'd like to subscribe, please head to <https://jasneatheducation.com> and scroll to the bottom of the home page, where you'll be able to input your preferred email address.

This month's article summary (page 2 of this newsletter) examines a thought-provoking and important article by Robert Sternberg, which continues the Roeper Review series on 'Expanding Conceptions of Giftedness'. Sternberg considers the place of 'courage' within the gifted realm, and the impact this could have, if nurtured. I hope you find it stimulating.

The next **Jasneath Education** course is currently in 'pre-booking' and will go live shortly. The course covers the social/emotional needs of the gifted, Tall Poppy Syndrome and its impact, and the place of wisdom. There is now a new dedicated free download page for participants in each course, providing additional access to readings. The links to these pages appear within each of the courses. Please note, this is in addition to the Subscriber downloads page.

Asia-Pacific Conference on Giftedness (APCG): 7-10 July 2022

A reminder about the APCG, Taipei, with both face to face and virtual registrations—which are **FREE!** The list of keynote speakers is fabulous, being headlined by Prof. Robert Sternberg. For further information and registration, see <https://www.apcgtaipei2022.org/home.php>



Don't forget, if there are other items that you'd find useful, please let me know, as this newsletter is about providing a service and information, so I would love to be able to respond to your interests and needs. If you have any ideas or requests, please email me at jasneath.education@outlook.com

Dr Amanda J. Harper

Insights from the Literature:

Sternberg, R. J. (2022). The most important gift of all? The gift of courage. *Roeper Review*, 44(2), 73-81. doi.org/10.1080/02783193.2022.2043501

Sternberg's recent writings about the state of humanity, and the role gifted people may play within the solution to this 'world problem'. He has compared and contrasted transactional behaviour, where an individual acts in self-interest, to transformational behaviour, where action is outward, with focus on the betterment of society. Further, Sternberg, Ambrose, & Karami edited the recent Palgrave Handbook of Transformational Giftedness for Education, which brought this topic to the forefront of consideration within the literature (my chapter is linked on the Subscriber's page).

In this latest article, Sternberg (2022, p. 74) notes the current literature "covers many kinds of giftedness as well as talent—intellectual, scientific, musical, artistic, literary, and on and on", but not courage. In defining courage, Sternberg again looks to the literature, highlighting that it has been defined as a willful and intentional act which (a) is executed after mindful deliberation, (b) involves objective and substantial risk to the actor, (c) is primarily motivated to bring about a worthy purpose or a noble good, and (d) is executed despite the presence of the emotion of fear. Rate (2010), in later work developing an explicit theory collected from empirical data, found that the truly necessary elements were (a) intentionality, (b) objective and substantial risk, and (c) a noble purpose (2022, p. 75).

He suggests that courage can occur in response to a specific situation, and/or be a trait; and importantly is extraordinarily difficult to satisfactorily measure in a predictive way (i.e. in a hypothetical situation). Importantly, he states

courage does not, at first glance, fit with the usual list of gifts and talents. It's not typically taught in school. It's not typically even developed in school. To some, it seems subjective: We know the right answer to an IQ-test problem, but what constitutes the right answer to a courage-based problem may seem as though it depends on one's point of view (p. 75).

The usual qualities that are described within the varying definitions of giftedness do not encompass courage, which has 'adaptive intelligence' at its core. He reiterates the importance of identifying transformationally gifted people. The parameters set for definitions of giftedness are based in socio-cultural understanding and the same will be true in defining courage, but if we wish to identify transformationally gifted people then we should identify those from the past who have demonstrated this, and look to their common attributes...and then seek out those people who currently demonstrate transformational giftedness.

Sternberg questions what we should value as 'gifted' - someone with an IQ of 150 who never does anything of note other than get high scores on standardized tests, then just possibly it is worth reconsidering what one means by 'gifted'. Have we become so tunnel-visioned in the field that we cannot see beyond our own narrow conception of what giftedness is? (p. 76).

He argues that all systems used for identifying giftedness are based on societal values, and these are inherent in the 'usual' testing regimes of giftedness, which might need to be reconsidered if we are to value giftedness in courage (which is different from 'normal' courage). Further, Sternberg (pp. 78-79) emphasizes the need to educate for courage. He identifies eight principles as a starting point:

1. Courage is a hard choice;
2. There is a difference between courage, on the one hand, and risk-taking, recklessness, or being a daredevil, on the other;
3. If everyone waits for someone else to be courageous, nothing will change;
4. Courageous people need to form networks;
5. Moments in which one needs to be courageous often are unpredictable and thus are best prepared for in advance;
6. It's not all relative;
7. Courage always will be discouraged by those with agendas to preserve an inequitable or unfair status quo;
8. Act toward others as you would wish them to act toward you.

Of course, society needs [people]...who are gifted in the...traditional senses. But today, more than ever, we need individuals who are gifted in courage... Courage is...a choice...often made under great stress and duress. It is something any of us can find within us when the need arises. We don't need to be born gifted. We do not need to attend gifted classrooms. But it is this gift — freely available to those who are willing to pay the price for it—that just may save our world (p. 79).