

Book Review

Elaine S. Wiener

Cheating, Dishonesty & Manipulation: Why Bright Kids Do It

Kate Maupin, M.A.

Great Potential Press, Inc.

Paperback, \$22.90, 306 pp.

ISBN 978-1-935067-29-0

Kate Maupin has woven together beautifully crafted words about a topic that is not easy to digest. Who wants to read about children who are so gifted that to amuse themselves they lie and cheat? Their parents don't want to know this. Their teachers do not want to know this. And the rest of society does not want to know about this chicanery, either!

But we had better start listening, and we had better understand WHY our most successful and blessed-with-high-ability children are behaving this way.

Kate Maupin has a gift for language and declares:

When we are made aware of their falsehoods, we are allowed a brief glimpse into the minds of these amazing children with intellects so UNDERUSED that they turn their brains into Rube Goldberg machines, prolonging simple activities into detailed machinations with the same basic, if pointless, result.

UNDERUSED? Listen to Ms. Maupin's words with opinions and research worthy of this whole book on the subject:

The cheating culture in the United States has risen to epic proportions...The numbers continue to rise as students age, suggesting that cheating behaviors become habitual and that students do not grow out of it.

Apparently this is a known phenomenon.

As early as 1939, [the famous] Leta Hollingworth, an educator and investigator into the lives of the 'self' of the young, gifted child, warned that many high-ability students hide their talents to avoid rejection or ridicule. The deception that they learn and practice is a result of the way they feel about how they are perceived. Hollingworth called for support for these students and for recognition of the so-called 'benign chicanery' that they were capable of as a way to cope with their giftedness.

Now that tells us WHY.

I know Leta Hollingworth's words. I read them, I studied them, and I took them with me throughout my career. But where did they go? Did I go on with my life and forget them? And here we are in 2015 with this same problem so entrenched that perhaps people don't even notice.

Think of the recent scandals on Wall Street. Were they accomplished by grown-ups who used to be our gifted students with UNDERUSED intellects?

Kate Maupin reminds us that *their reasons for cheating are varied and sometimes complicated, but they all seem to have one thing in common: the ability to create the most beautiful, intricate, and sometimes, seemingly pointless falsehoods and deceptions. They are the best deceivers in the world.*

The remainder of this book is composed of stories about students and a wonderful bibliography, which provides references for studies proving many points made through Maupin's words.

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