Wisdom Passed Down from Women Leaders in Education

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- One Greek, the other American
- Lived in 19th century
- Our purpose to understand
  - who women educators are
  - where we have come from
  - where we are going

Powerfully Influential Women Leaders

- Understanding of women’s lives and accomplishments.
- Relate to current understandings of how women educators are influencing our own contemporary societies.

Influence of Women Educators

Lost Wisdom

- Women's accomplishments can be easily erased
- Women's limited roles in society

"Unless women's part in the development of progressive education is recorded and recognized, their influence will be lost to our understanding" (Hauser, 2006, p. 10).

- Historical research – purpose to provide insights into events for the benefit of subsequent generations.
- Feminist perspective (Young, 2003)
- Conscientization (Friere Institute)
- Record stories of two remarkable women

It's not just any female leaders that need to be heard. It is someone who has been able to subvert the organization to create equality" (Shakeshaft, 2015, p. xviii).

Methodology

- Deep gratitude to Dr. Linda Lyman
- Fulbright
  - Angeliki – Fulbright in Illinois Fall 2013
  - Jenny – Fulbrights in Ukraine Spring 2012 and Latvia Spring 2018

Our stories, our privilege

Bigger than Life Leaders

- Military
- Business
- Americans call it the Lone Ranger myth
- Images fail to inform realistic leadership practices.
- Requires women to negotiate cultural “command and control” leadership notions

- Gardner (2011) “individuals who significantly influence the thoughts, behaviors, and/or feelings of others” (p. 5-6).
- (Bolman and Deal, 2017 “articulated a vision, set standards for performance, and created a focus and direction” (p. 338).
- Collins (2005) “build an enduring greatness through a paradoxical blend of personal humility and professional will” (p. 12).

Laskaridou and Bradley

More Complete Leadership Vision

- Danger when voices of powerful, influential women are not known
- Contemporary societal challenges
  - Globalization
  - Widespread poverty and disparities of wealth
  - Environmental threats
- Understanding of the lives and ways they confronted challenges

Aikaterini Laskaridou (1842-1916)

Highlights of her work and life

- She began her career at a later stage in life.
- She became a role model for female teachers of her time (mature, married, mother).
- She was a visionary and promoter of girls' education.
- At 37 she began a new career path focusing on early childhood education and the free-of-charge training of teachers.

Highlights of her work and life

- Her approach was personal.
- She wrote books for women and teachers.
- She introduced the Froebelian system of pre-primary education in Greece.
- Her innovative work was met by intense resistance.
- Aikaterini is considered the main representative and initiator of pre-school education in Greece.

Lydia Moss Bradley (1816-1908)

- “If you turned an estate worth half a million dollars into a fortune of over two million dollars, you would be **prosperous**. If you were the director of the board of a national bank for twenty-five years, you would be a **leader**. If you donated a city park and endowed a private college, and if you gave money and land to many community projects, you would be a great **philanthropist**. If you accomplished all of this as a woman, you would be **astonishing**, and if you achieved all of this as a woman between the years of 1816 and 1908, you would be **Lydia Moss Bradley**.” (Illinois Early Women).

Wish I’d written this….

Highlights of her work and life

- Industrious
- Thrifty
- Generous and wise in generosity
- Astute businesswoman
- Guided by moral purpose
  - Supported Underground Railway
  - Women's role in society
- "What she knew, she knew well, what she didn't know she sought out in others who did know."

- We propose that women who lead **commit to values, are conscious of their evolving selves, invoke passion and courage, arouse the imagination, create community, and mentor the next generation**" (Lambert and Gardner, 2009 p. 5).

Lambert and Gardner Framework

- Similarities more striking than differences
- Expertise in their work and sought additional information to accomplish goals
- Grounded in democratic principles

Values

- Private individuals
- Aikaterini conscious of her limits but sought to add value to other women's lives (Dimitriadi, p. 119)
- Lydia her "goals in life were of paramount importance…. achieved to the betterment of life for people of central Illinois (Upton, 1994, p. 79).

Consciousness of Self

- Ability to
  - See situations differently
  - Seek out additional knowledge
  - Engage others in “radical” plans
- Aikaterini and Froebelian system of education (Paren 1916)
- Lydia whose daily life aligned to her values
  - a strong work ethic
  - steadfast attention to details
  - willingness to innovate (after thorough research of a problem and possible solutions)
  - impressive generosity.

Inspiring Passion and Courage

- Defied societal female roles in male dominated cultures
- Aikaterini envisioned education system embrace child from pre-school to high school (Kiriazopoulou-Valinaki, 1957).
- Lydia sought to touch the lives of many individuals into the future

Arousing Imagination

- Lambert & Gardner, (2009, p. 127) “Meaning making and knowledge development”
- Creating a “locale for growing values, identity, courage, and imagination”
- Aikaterini – community work in schools
- Lydia – establishment of Bradley University, Laura Bradley Park, St. Francis Hospital, etc.

Building Community

- Requires continuing relationship, guidance, support, and encouragement.
- Aikaterini passionate follower of Greek ideals viewed mentoring as an imperative.
- Lydia and Bradley University

Mentoring

More Alike than Different

- Differences in details
- Similarities
  - Two women living on different continents
  - Different backgrounds
- Used strong intellects, laser like focus, impressive work ethics to benefit their communities

- Vehicle to express
  - their values
  - consciousness of evolving self
  - passion and courage
  - arouse imagination
  - create community
  - mentor future generations

Education

- Who are the forgotten women in your community whose stories could inspire and inform women leaders today?

Invitation