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A STUDY OF THE CHARACTERISTICS AND PERCEPTIONS OF MULTI-TALENTED ART STUDENTS WITH HIGH PERFORMANCE STANDARDS IN SELECTED MONTANA SECONDARY SCHOOLS

by

MARK JAY SULLIVAN

A professional paper submitted in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree

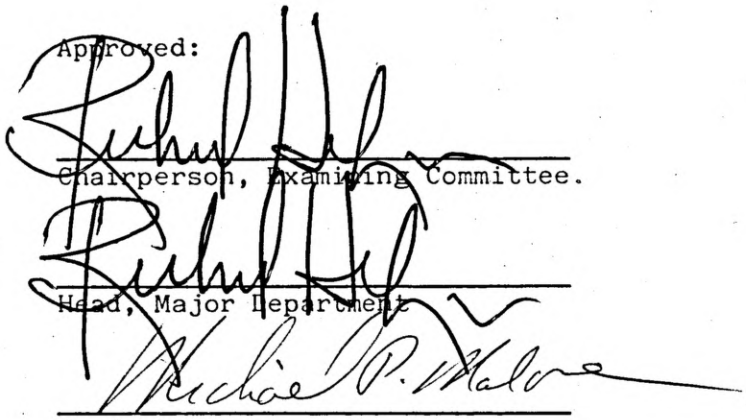
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ABSTRACT

This study attempted to search out and record a body of information concerning a particular type of gifted student -- multi-talented art students (MTAS). MTAS were defined for the purposes of this study as students excelling in art, academics and at least one co-curricular activity.

The writer hoped to answer questions concerning MTAS' perceptions of their talents, their motivations, their relationships, their characteristics, their pressures and frustrations, and their career decision making processes. The writer hoped the information garnered would benefit educators by providing information about a unique type of student, and also serve as a point of departure for further in-depth studies.

To achieve this end, the writer followed the following procedures: 1) Establish a working definition of MTAS, 2) review current literature, 3) identify students for participation in this study from selected Montana high schools, 4) utilize questionnaires and interviews to gain information from identified MTAS, their parents, teachers, and counselors, and 5) descriptively present data and apparent significant points.

Some major conclusions reached as a result of this study were: 1) Achievements of MTAS can be primarily attributed to self-initiated drives, 2) MTAS perceive that the benefits of being involved in a variety of activities outweigh the pressures and frustrations inherent in being multi-talented, 3) though able to discontinue certain activities for the benefit of other interests, MTAS prefer to find a way to stay at least partially active in all their interests even while focused on one major career interest.

The major recommendations made as a result of this study were the following: 1) More in-depth studies are needed to better understand multi-talented students, 2) truly gifted students, such as multi-talented art students need freedom to explore more in-depth experiences in conjunction with structured school programs, 3) multi-talented art students need a more thorough, structured guidance program to present them with tools to make career-oriented decisions, 4) secondary art teachers need to have structured lessons designed to challenge multi-talented art students to utilize their interests in art projects, and 5) prospective art teachers and teachers in general need training to prepare them for the unique situations they will encounter in dealing with multi-talented art students and other gifted pupils.

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

The responsibility of schools to meet the needs of the vast array of individual students being served has long been recognized as a basic function of education, but with the advent of programs for the talented and gifted students as well as the provisions of Public Law 94-142, this function has been extended to a legal requirement for providing "Least Restrictive Learning" environments for multi-talented students as well as children with learning handicaps.

Sellin and Birch noted (1980:197-198), ". . . the Individualized Education Program (IEP) required for handicapped pupils under P.L. 94-142 (The Education for All Handicapped Children Act of 1975) certainly did not aim chiefly at gifted and talented pupils, even though many handicapped school children also are exceptional. Yet the IEP concept is so meaningful it already has been adopted for use with highly able pupils. . . ."

With the increased emphasis on serving gifted students, efforts were made to recognize areas of giftedness. Philip Safford (1978) proposed that the possible performance capabilities of the gifted student may be categorized in the areas of academic, kinesthetic, creative, productive thinking and psychosocial skills.

The public perception of the talented student has often been one of assuming a lack of problems for one "blessed" with talents which are

rewarded in traditional school settings.

> Movies, television shows and books have portrayed the gifted child as inherently superior to most people. He is often shown as completely stabilized and well adjusted in his personality development. . . . The child's immediate environment, the community, often regards him as a 'super-brain' even though it may have a low regard for high intellectual abilities. (Love, 1970: 93)

Other researchers have, however, pointed to special needs of talented students. Hildreth (1966) noted that gifted students were often expected to perform at levels of older children and consequently developed feelings of inferiority, isolation and solitariness. Abraham pointed to other attitudinal problems of gifted youngsters.

> Frustrations and anger may be among their possessions, both resulting from the boredom which often accompanies waiting for others to catch up. Because they usually recognize their own abilities and realize that they are developing habits of laziness, their reaction may be one of indignation towards themselves. Dissatisfaction with one's own habits sets up the most distasteful kind of scapegoat. (Abraham, 1958:196)

Another problem inherent in serving gifted students is based on the realization that certain pupils are talented in a number of performance areas. Some authorities have pointed to the logical interrelationship between noted talents. Dickinson stated:

> Take dancing: involved are (at least) superior physical strength, control and coordination, intellectual ability to grasp the concept to be demonstrated, originality in creating individual style, social intelligence to grasp the response of the audience, critical ability to detect errors.
>
> What are commonly considered 'talents' -- painting, writing, athletic abilities and such -- do not develop without ability to memorize, reason, judge, innovate, correct. Capacities commonly thought of as 'intellectual' do not develop by themselves, either,

> but require a 'doing' situation -- material to memorize, reason about, judge of, improve and change. (Dickinson, 1970:14)

Recent research on left brain/right brain modality has prompted educators to characterize a student as gifted creatively (predominantly a right brain function) or gifted intellectually (math, language, logic, and rationality being left brain functions). Meeker has, however, proposed that a person's talents, attitudes, and characteristics are a corporate process which utilize an interchange between both hemispheres of the brain. "Left brains are linked intimately to their right counterparts. No sharp lines separate such functions unless they are artificially drawn and arbitrarily imposed." (1975:67) The multi-talented individual therefore seems to defy this easy categorization as being creative or intellectual.

This writer has long been interested in that special group of gifted students who appear to excel in a number of performance areas, and, thus, he was led to investigate their characteristics and perceptions (by self and others) that would lead to better understandings necessary to effectively serve the multi-talented student. Since this research project is intended to meet partial requirements for a graduate program in art, for the purposes of this study the problem will be further restricted by approaching the study from the viewpoint of the multi-talented art student.

Statement of the Problem

The problem of this study will be to search out and record a body of in-depth information concerning the multi-talented art student. By locating this student and using questionnaires and interviews an attempt will be made to pinpoint some of their characteristics and perceptions. The study will not be used as an analysis of intelligence or aptitude and how they are affected or inherited, but as a useful tool to help educators, parents, and counselors better understand and deal with the multi-talented art student.

Need for the Study

> The attitude that has prevailed and persisted among both educators and the public is that the gifted can get along without special help. (Goldstein, 1978:6)

Despite the above-noted lack of public concern, schools during the 1980's are searching for a better means to gain understanding necessary to serve gifted students. A preliminary review of literature has shown that very little has been written concerning the talented individual who excels in areas that are categorized as left-brain functions as well as those classified as right-brain functions.

There seems to be a need to find out more about these unique students. Especially lacking seems to be knowledge of multi-talented students' self-perceptions and efforts should be made to determine whether these perceptions differ from those of his or her parents or teachers.

Knowledge of the perceptions and characteristics may have a

prime significance to public school educators. Curricula, course design, teaching strategies, career guidance, and personal counseling all depend on our perceptions of the student's needs. A study of this nature will hopefully help to remove barriers that are built around the multi-talented student -- barriers erected through lack of investigative study.

Questions to be Answered

Questions to be answered by this study are as follows: (For the purposes of this proposal the multi-talented art student will be referred to as MTAS.)

1. Who does the MTAS perceive as being the most influential in promoting a desire for multi-talented capabilities: parents? teachers? self?
   Why has the MTAS broadened instead of specialized?
   What are future considerations for the MTAS: broaden? specialize?

2. Does the MTAS perceive his/her multi-abilities as advantages or disadvantages in:
   Academic achievement?
   Social relationships?
   Relationships with instructors?
   Relationships with brothers, sisters, parents?
   Relationships with the opposite sex?
   Present job opportunities?
   Future job opportunities?

3. Does the MTAS see himself/herself as being more or less:
   Masculine/feminine?
   Academically able?
   Socially acceptable?
   Introverted/extroverted?
   Physically able?
   Healthy?
   Mentally adjusted?

Well-rounded?

Do the parents, counselors, teachers of the MTAS see them as being more or less:
(same as above)

4. Does the MTAS participate in more or fewer activities compared to other students? Why? Is there pressure to be involved in many activities? From parents? Self? Teachers? Others?

5. What good things have happened to the identified MTAS because of his/her multi-abilities? Bad things?

6. Which sex in this study represents the majority of identified MTAS?

7. What is the identified MTAS' cumulative GPA?

8. How does the MTAS perceive the importance of grades? Overall? In certain areas? In interesting areas? In required areas?

9. Does the MTAS perceive in himself/herself a general ability that helps him/her in art? In non-fine arts areas?
Memorization?
Perception?
Foresight?
Hindsight?
Identifying relationships?
Others?

10. Where did the MTAS receive his/her motivation for each performance capability?

11. Does the MTAS use his/her talents outside of school activities?

12. How does the MTAS, his/her parents, teachers, and counselors rate their programs in elementary school? Middle or Junior high school? High school?

13. At what age did the MTAS perceive of themselves as being talented?
When did the parents become aware?

14. What does the MTAS perceive as being his/her "right-brain" strengths?
"Left-brain strengths?

15. Has the MTAS received adequate career guidance: in the student's eyes? In the counselor's eyes? In the parents' eyes? In the teacher's eyes?

16. What are some frustrations in choosing a career for the MTAS?

17. Does the MTAS perceive of a major move to enable career opportunities?

18. Does the MTAS foresee career opportunities in art or some non-art area? What does the MTAS want? Is there parental pressure? Social pressure? Monetary concerns? Personal concerns?

19. Are there fears for the MTAS in choosing to devote one's self to strictly the creative world? The intellectual world?

20. How does the MTAS split his/her time up? In the future?

21. Does the MTAS perceive his/her talents as being more learned or inherited?

22. How big of a factor is boredom in affecting the MTAS's life?

23. Do the identified MTAS think they are as talented as people seem to think they are?

Procedures

The general procedures are as follows:

1. Review current literature on the characteristics and perceptions of multi-talented art students.

2. Generate an extended set of questions to be garnered from the art faculty at Montana State University and from people the writer considered to be multi-talented in creative and intellectual areas.

3. Gain consent for study and, in appropriate situations, guarantee anonymity: graduate committee, counselors in selected school systems, appropriate teachers in selected school systems, selected MTAS, parents of selected MTAS.

4. Develop survey questionnaires for selected MTAS, parents, counselor, teachers in appropriate areas.

5. Develop an interview instrument for the writer-MTAS interviews.

6. Collect the data from the interviews and questionnaires.

7. Descriptively present findings.

8. Develop conclusions and recommendations.

Limitations

This study will be limited in the following ways:

1. The results of this study will be greatly affected by the researcher's decision to study talented students with high performance standards in three specific areas: art, academics, and at least one co-curricular activity. Choosing students excelling in different areas could possibly affect the number of students in the study as well as their general characteristics.

2. While the study was to be completed in larger secondary school settings to yield a substantial population index, the number of students identified was a function of the criteria established and number of respondents was considered less critical than the extensiveness of the data collected.

3. The study will rely on a descriptive presentation of the survey of data in which the researcher will record and present the data noting apparent significances.

4. Schools involved in the study will be five large secondary institutions in Montana.

5. The majority of sources considered in the development of this paper will be from the Montana State University Library, a personal library that includes works on gifted education and art education, and other libraries through inter-library loans.

6. This study will not yield specific recommendations for direct changes in a school's curriculum to accommodate the multi-talented art student. Rather, this study will yield recommendations for further study, as well as useful, descriptive information for the art educator concerning multi-talented art students.

Definition of Terms

The writer will extend this section to include necessary terms

which demand presented definitions for the purposes of arriving at contextual comprehension. However for the purposes of the proposal an attempt will be made to clarify the procedural definition of a multi-talented art student.

Multi-talented art student -- Love noted that "there is no one accepted authority for a definition of giftedness . . . . One educator lists 113 definitions of giftedness." (1970:94).

In an article by Isaacs published in Readings in Gifted and Talented Education, the question is asked who are the gifted?

> Some say they are the top 2% of the population, the top 5%, the top 10%; those with IQ's over 140, over 135, over 130, over 120; those scoring in the top 5% on tests of creativity, and so on. The definitions are as varied as the educational programs serving them. For our purposes, let's say that gifted and talented children are those who are clearly superior to their peers in academic excellence, creative talent, or both. (1978:5)

For the purposes of this study the writer has chosen to define the MTAS as a student who is considered to be clearly superior to their peers in three performance areas: art, academic and co-curricular (music, dance, drama, athletics, speech, journalism or creative writing, and student government are examples of certain co-curricular activities).

Although this study examines specifically the multi-talented art student, this should not be confused with another term often utilized by the writer: multi-talented student. For the purposes of this study, the term will be utilized to note the generally talented student with interests in a variety of activities, as compared specifically to the multi-talented art student.

Summary

Educators have noted the importance of serving students with special needs, such as the gifted student -- possessing talents exceeding that of his or her peers, and, therefore, requiring special programs designed to meet their unique needs.

The gifted, though possessing many traits that enable them to succeed in a variety of areas, can experience frustration, boredom, pressure, and, subsequently, need guidance and counseling, as any student often does.

The writer has chosen to study a particular category of gifted students -- multi-talented art students -- and their motivations, perceptions, and frustrations. By searching out and recording a body of information concerning these students, the writer hoped to better understand their unique view of their world, their talents, and their decision making processes. More precise knowledge of these students, as collected by this study, was intended to benefit the educator, and the art educator in particular, and help remove barriers erected around these "gifted few" because of lack of investigative study.

The writer hoped to answer questions pertaining to the multi-talented art student's perception of his or her needs, motivations, relationships, pressures, frustrations, present education, and career decision making processes.

The writer intended to utilize questionnaires administered to

multi-talented art students, their parents, a school counselor, and a school art teacher. An interview conducted by the researcher with the student was to be utilized to gain more in-depth information. The students were to be selected from large Montana high schools and chosen to participate in the study on the basis of perceived excellence in art, academics, and at least one co-curricular activity. Teachers' and counselors' recommendations would serve as the prime method for choosing participants. The information was then to be presented descriptively and apparent significant points were to be noted.

The following chapter will examine ideas about multi-talented art students garnered from a review of literature.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

In this chapter a review of literature will be presented pertaining to multi-talented art students and multi-talented students in general. Much of the information presented is generated by the writer's research in the area of education for children considered "gifted" -- a term used to designate a child with abilities far exceeding his or her peers. Information will be categorized under the following subheadings: 1) Characteristics of Multi-talented Students, 2) Multi-talented Students' Motivations, 3) Multi-talented Students' Relationships, 4) Pressures and Frustrations, 5) Career Choices, and 6) Multi-talented Art Students.

Characteristics of Multi-talented Students

Students who seem to excel in many activities rather than just a single, emphasized activity, have always garnered a peculiar respect from peers and associates. This sort of respect has not always led to positive relationships or a healthy well-being for the talented boy or girl. But it has and will continue to set these few learners apart from their peers, to isolate them with terms such as "multi-talented" or "gifted". Interest in these students has prompted teachers to formulate educational philosophies which in turn have generated teaching strategies such as accelerated learning programs for talented students, and special schools for the "gifted few". This respect for these chil-

dren and the potential they display for performing with such excellence in so many activities has motivated educators to design more effective means for serving these gifted students.

It has long been noted that gifted children often seem to have an innate ability that allows them to succeed in many, often very diverse activities. (Drews, 1961:79) Many gifted students will choose one area of interest in which to focus the majority of their attention. Yet there exists a category of gifted learners who, having an ability which allows them to succeed in many areas, choose to do just that -- succeed in a variety of areas. Lark-Horowitz, Lewis, and Luca noted this special ability and proclaimed,

> The obvious difference between the average and the gifted child is that the gifted not only knows something better than others, but knows it better and also experiences it in a manner denied to the non-gifted. (1967:124)

Many experts have tried to characterize these multi-talented students and gifted children in general. Drews noted the following characteristics:

1. Early physical and mental development.
2. Curiousity, alertness, observance, interest in many things, a desire to be informed.
3. Interest in books, especially reference books -- dictionaries, encyclopedias, atlases -- and biographies.
4. Pursuit of an interest over a long period of time with intense concentration.
5. Easy and rapid learning.

6. Reading, computing, and communicating with ease.

7. Enjoyment of abstractions -- generalizations, making analogies, handling complexities, and using flexible, divergent approaches.

8. Qualities of leadership and responsibility.

(1961:13)

Gene I. Maercoff (1978) also noted:

> Their attention span is longer, their learning rate is faster, their potential for abstraction is greater, their sensitivity is keener and their need for exploration in depth is overwhelming. Their drive for perfection makes them fearful of mistakes, and they are themselves discomfited by mental capabilities they possess but do not yet fully understand. (Goldstein, 1978:15)

The multi-talented gifted students are often not ideal students. "Some are non-conformists and refuse to abide by the rules." (Drews, 1961:16). They seem more attentive to details, and to underlying causes of events, and will often very vocally proclaim their perceptions to the point of disruption.

Along with this perception to causes and effects is a general ability to foresee "what might happen" as Leese (1974) pointed out, "One of the attributes of the gifted, is an extended power to project the future and to conjure with what train of events an act may precipitate." (1974:131).

Their curiousity and self-confidence in their innate abilities often lead to involvement in many areas, especially during their school years when a student is presented with a variety of activities to choose from.

> Extracurricular participation plays a large part in the school life of most superior students. Many surveys and research reports have shown that they participate in more activities of all kinds than other students and that they are especially active in music and art programs. (Drews, 1961:79)

Goldstein also pointed out these children seem to have talents in art, music, writing, drama, and dance (1978:5). This produces the impression that these children do not mold to normal sex characteristic stereotypes. Although the boys are often athletic and possess leadership qualities they also seem to possess sensitivity to beauty and emotions and other traditional feminine qualities. Gifted females also seem to possess traditional male qualities such as tendency toward leadership and interest in the male dominated worlds such as medicine, law, and science. (Drews, 1961:69)

Multi-talented Students' Motivations

> Motives may be defined as those social and psychological drives which move men to seek mastery of, or to allow themselves to be molded by, the people, forces, and institutions in their environment. (Drews, 1961:27)

Inheriting a special "talent" does not insure that a gifted boy or girl will automatically be destined towards rich learning experiences and eventual success. Drews pointed out that one's utilization of his or her talents depends on many motivational factors. Indeed, if the motivational drive isn't strong enough a student may be content to allow "themselves to be molded by the people, forces, and institutions in their environment" whether beneficial or detrimental. The fact re-

mains that there are many gifted children who are not known as such because environmental influences either stifled their drives or never challenged them to produce all they were capable of producing. (Love, p. 42)

Motivation begins with the parents for they are the child's first motivators. The gifted child learns quickly what is expected of him or her by parents concerned that the child produces what he or she is capable of producing. A child will explore and take risks if prompted by parental rewards. This quickly diminishes as usually the gifted child's motivation becomes self-initiated. "The bright child is motivated to do this exploring and risk-taking both by the high expectations of his parents and by his own inner developmental drives." (Drews, 1961:33) Isaacs noted the importance of individual drives connected with "self-initiated activities".

> It is interesting to note how infrequently the writer's interviews with successfully functioning creative persons reveals these individuals feel no one person was responsible for inspiring or motivating them. Instead they feel their progress was the result of self-initiated activities. (Isaacs, 1980:184)

Gifted pupils recognize the talents they possess, and through their self-initiated activities, soon learn to trust their ability to succeed in all they attempt. Trusting in their abilities can build a positive self-concept, which is a main factor in guaranteeing success. Success breeds a positive self-concept which breeds more success. Sisk noted:

> If an individual views himself as a person with valuable strengths, he enhances his self concept. As his self concept grows, he is free to discover new strengths, which in turn further develop and improve his self evaluation. (1972:229)

This self-generating pattern of success and confidence is often the cause for multi-talented students choosing to broaden into many areas rather than focusing on one main interest. Sisk also wrote:

> If one values himself, believes himself to be capable, and generally expects to succeed in what he attempts, he is more free to venture into the unknown, challenging himself with new goals. Through what Carl Rogers refers to as "openness to experience he may then discover new strengths and potentials within himself. (1972:229)

A gifted child's motivation to try something new may simply be a result of feeling confidence that he or she will succeed. Yet, the multi-talented gifted child is able to relate their various activities. They see patterns and relationships, how one interest indirectly or directly affects another activity. Recognizing relationships among a variety of activities can feed the multi-talented child's curiousity, inspiring him to explore new activities. The gifted, multi-faceted child "can acknowledge his experience, allow it entrance to his consideration and relate it in some fashion to the existing ideas he holds of himself and the world". (Sisk, 1972:229) This type of motivation encourages the multi-faceted, gifted student to not only try new activities, but also to succeed. This can also be a result of what Sorell recognizes as an urgency to express in these gifted few:

> If we accept the need in the creative person to express himself and an urgency about doing it, we are usually surprised when need

> and urgency spill over into artisitic activities lying beyond the boundaries of his metier, of the discipline he chose or which chose him. There is the writer who paints, the painter who writes, the architect who composes, the composer who writes and paints; and a variety of variations in which talents mingle with equal power or with varied artistic degree. Our surprise is ill-founded. Should we not rather expect a genius to be a genius in whatever he chooses to do and should we not wonder why all of them do not do everything and do everything equally well. (Sorell, 1980:233)

Sorell also noted that these multi-talented people never regard being too involved with too many activities as a danger to success.

> A major talent cannot help but unfold all his forces and energies and in doing so he is never aware of dissipation as a danger. No one can have enough talent, but, on a certain level, he can easily have too many. . . . A minor poet does not become less minor for being also a mediocre painter. (Sorell, 1980:233)

The young multi-talented student may view himself as an extraordinary person able to do many things well. Yet, he may be unaware that the world will judge him one talent at a time. A young painter may feel the success of his artwork is related to the many hours in which he practices his singing, yet his superiors may see deficiencies in his art due to too much time spent on his other interest. A multi-talented student's value system and related motivational factors often differ from that which he or she will encounter in, say, a public school system.

There are other problems encountered as a result of the gifted student's motivation to succeed in any and all activities. Drews pointed out that "many of them, because they are acutely aware of quality, strive for more than time or energy or their current abilities

permit." (1961:58) This pressured attitude is often encouraged and maintained by educators while trying to inspire these students to greater achievements and possibly unrealistic heights.

Their desire to succeed can be a double-edged sword. For just as it can motivate them to try new activities and to do well in them, it can also cause them to shy away from possible failure. They may not chance a so-so performance. "Because bright, creative students are often more sensitive to criticism than other students, they may stop taking risks once they are burned." (Johnson, 1981:26)

A certain type of motivation that may have negative side effects for all gifted children is the notion of their talents as "gifts". This implies that since they are "given" something they should return the favor and give something back to the world. Dickinson stated:

> The gifted, in particular, have much to offer the world. They -- and the adults who rear them -- have a greater responsibility for the general welfare than the less bright or talented. They have an obligation to make the most of themselves, if only for the benefit of their world. (1970:82)

This attitude, while attempting to inspire, can be an awesome burden of responsibility for a young person to bear. It may, and often does, motivate the gifted student, but in a restrictive way. It can diminish their self-concept, by belittling their achievements, and reducing all they've done to "gifts" given to them, and demanding something in return.

Multi-talented Students' Relationships

Sisk stated that one's "concept of self emerges from an interaction of how man sees himself and how others see him by stressing that every human being gets much of his sense of his own reality from out of what others say to him and think about him." (1972:229) This contradicts a myth that Lyon (1981) noted, that the gifted will do fine on their own. "They do not need special help." (1981:14) Sisk's "concept of self" and resultant successes or failures are based as much on one's relationships as well as one's view of one's self. A gifted student, just as the non-gifted student, needs care and attention to develop a positive, productive self-concept.

The most vital early influence is the child's relationship with the parents. This can be crucial in determining whether a gifted child will become a productive learner. "Numerous studies of the development of talent show that it most frequently appears in homes where parents themselves are well-educated and emphasize the 'life of the mind', or in homes in which parents themselves may not be highly educated, but nonetheless place a high value on learning." (Drews, 1961:29)

What may initially delight the parents can later be a burden, as the child grows and becomes a thinking, questioning person. This places an additional pressure of the gifted child as well.

> At times highly intelligent and unusually creative students may feel that their gifts are both a blessing and a curse -- a blessing that allows them to make perceptions that others miss, a curse that causes them to question school, parents, and self. (Johnson, 1981:29)

As he grows, the gifted child sometimes becomes even more alienated as he tries to deal with institutions and bureaucracies. Leese pointed out:

> . . . [the gifted child] soon earns himself the reputation for being an annoyance and irresponsible when he swiftly picks holes in tradition, convention, the fumblings of the self-satisfied and the compromise decisions of the bureaucracies. (1974:164)

School years can place additional burdens on the child as well as those around him. The gifted child is often frustrated by students who don't share the same interest in learning. The gifted child can become inhibited in peer relationships because of the "egghead" label. (Johnson, 1981:29) Their constant striving for perfection and supremacy can alienate them from the classmates who do not hold such goals. Their love of argument, immodesty, and less pronounced difference among the sexes can also alienate their classmates. (Drews, 1961:69)

The teacher also has a special task, "for the talented youngster, activities which use his more advanced abilities may be crucial in his motivation to achieve." (Drews, 1961:30) Since the superior student is alert and creative in many areas, it is difficult for him to accept the need for drill and discipline in basic skills. Johnson noted that "unfortunately, educators and parents often ignore the dissatisfaction gifted students express as long as they continue to earn A's and B's and stay out of trouble." (1981:27) In advising teachers on how to handle gifted, multi-talented students, Drews had this to say:

> To develop a self-concept that realistically measures up to academic talent, the able student needs opportunities for enriched curricular experiences. To do well in the usual course of study is not enough, particularly, for the gifted students. Time spent on material already mastered leads these young people to adopt negative attitudes towards school and learning. This wasted time could be used to broaden interests and skills that would serve for present and future advanced learning experiences. (1961:25)

Pressures and Frustrations

The researcher has already noted earlier in this chapter some of the pressures and frustrations of the gifted, multi-talented student: peer pressure, problems in school, and frustrations in handling a world of people with different values and perceptions. Yet, still it is often assumed that because children are exceptionally intelligent and talented they have no major problems in learning and developing. Johnson noted, "many gifted students have problems that are not simply academic but social and emotional and those problems are preventing them from taking full advantage of their potential." (1981:27) Isaacs, in her studies of the writings of highly creative people, noted the ultra-sensitivity and complexity of their lives and suggest they suffered in trying to come to grips with their talents. (Goldstein, 1978:6)

School life, as noted, can be especially trying because of both the enormous peer pressure encountered and the student's exposure to the concept that one must succeed to keep from becoming a failure. "On the surface they seem very mature, leading teachers to overlook evidence that they are suffering from severe feelings of self-doubt or isolation from

peers." (Johnson, 1981:27)

Drews points out that often a gifted student, although usually multi-talented and successful in almost all endeavors, can possibly hinder his or her special area of giftedness by striving for success in all subjects. "Is it really desireable for the highly creative student to achieve high academic standing in all academic courses? . . . If this highly creative student works hard to achieve success in his prescribed school subjects, will he thereby do violence to his special area of giftedness by depriving it of time and energy?" (Drews, 1961: 35)

Special note has already been made of the importance of a positive self-concept and how it frees a person to explore and take risks -- essential tasks for learning. Dickinson has noted the precarious nature of the gifted student's self-concept. Whereas the self-concept is usually positive and healthy (because the student trusts his ability to achieve success), it can easily plummet. The gifted child criticizes himself even more severely than most. "He is already very quick to grasp how a thing should be done, or how a person should behave, even though he cannot control his various functions in the way he visualizes he should." (Dicksinson, 1970:69) The student can develop an unrealistically low self-concept.

> Extreme anxiety and even despair are more common in gifted than in average people simply because their bright minds can see evil but their emotional development is not mature enough to cope constructively. In short, they are groping for a workable

> philosophy of life, and -- more than most -- they need help with the project. (Dickinson, 1970:79)

Career Choices

Choosing a career can be a special problem for the gifted, multi-talented student. Many people don't understand why it should be a problem for the gifted. It seems like it should be a blessing to have so many options available. But, as with other aspects of their lives, for the gifted child, choosing a career can be both a blessing and burden.

Nathaniel Brunden pointed out that for an individual to achieve a "state of integration" and function effectively with a healthy self-concept, the individual has to learn to function on two levels.

> He must learn . . . to preserve contact with external reality and with internal reality -- with the objective requirements of a situation and with its emotional meaning to him; with the facts and with the appraisal of the facts; with what he may have to do and with what he feels he may have to do. (1973:4)

For the multi-talented student, to achieve a successful producing career, he has to distinguish and choose to follow either "what he may have to do or what he feels he may have to do."

> Awareness of interests and talents presents special difficulties. Bright boys and girls have wider interests and greater talents than average students. Because of this, a selection of an interest for lifetime emphasis may be more difficult for them. Everywhere they look they see challenge and feel equal to it. (Drews, 1961:74)

To some creatively gifted students, our society's "material" standards can be confusing. Whereas they are at ease learning for learning sake with no overriding utilitarian purpose in mind, our society judges career achievements by material standards, not intellectual ones. "We make conformity to the group, the price of acceptance to the group . . . we conceive of knowledge as being basically utilitarian in purpose, not as an end in itself." (Drews, 1961:28)

The gifted suffer particularly from the pressure of deciding on life work too early. They have many talents and are interested in many activities. Most do not get the time they need to sample and consider career paths, without penalty. "Where it used to be possible for a person to finish college then choose a vocation, nowadays he is asked to decide by the time he is thirteen years old what he wants to do with the rest of his life." (Dickinson, 1970:70) Getting stuck in an undesireable profession and being unable to change is a common fear of the multi-talented students. "Children can make mistakes, and are either stuck with a choice of vocation that is not right, or forced to spend time and money making up courses required by changing to another field." (Dickinson, 1970:70)

Yet, there is also a problem in considering professions that need to be chosen early in life. Many creative, multi-talented students have an interest in fields where one's peak quality will normally occur in their late twenties or thirties. For these students especially, they

have to choose between the advantages of high academic standing in all areas or the immediate development of special talents in relation to future goals. (Drews, 1961:36)

Multi-talented Art Students

The gifted, multi-talented child who also excels in visual art is a unique person, due, mainly, to the unique experience of creating art. Viktor Lowenfield, a recognized authority on art education, speaks of the integrative nature of art:

> As a child produces [art] he brings his feeling, his thinking, and perceiving into integrative relationships in such a manner that he cannot separate one from the other. (Lowenfield, 1968: 34)

Thompson (1977) noted that a work of art is a dynamic force, and provides information about relationships. He states that it also provides basic education and "basic processing skills -- perception, interpretation, understanding and expression." (Goldstein, 1978:110) The gifted artist has unique skills of perception and creative expression.

Lowenfield felt that artistic talent is a "rare gift" with which not many individuals are blessed. "Talent is not something you or I determine. It must be in the child. . . ." (Lowenfield, 1954:175)

Lark-Horowitz, Lewis and Luca pointed out that "there appears to be no radical difference in kind between the gifted and the average child in art, but rather a gradual stepping up of a number of related

abilities plus a strong tendency to experience something visually and even try to suggest, represent, and symbolize types of experience in visual terms." (1967:139)

The gifted artist child is often interested in other art work and art history. He has a sincere desire to learn, an acute visual memory, and a very fertile imagination. He represents movement more so than his peers, and organizes or "composes" in a more thought-out manner. The talented child's drawings show a greater range of subject choices, and he appears more responsive to unusual subjects, wanting to make new ideas his "own".

Many students may be strong in one aspect of art, but the gifted will be strong in a number of artistic aspects. "He may combine excellence in form, grouping, movement and use of color." (Lark-Horawitz, Lewis, Luca, 1967:139) Although a single outstanding quality may not be indicative of real talent, several remarkable qualities may.

The multi-talented artist may seek to combine his or her talents into one creative experience. Jane Filstrup (1978) recorded this comment made by a young multi-talented artist named Mark:

> I like to do not only picture art, but get involved in other arts. I would like to blend them together and use them in a unique way. (1978:484)

The multi-talented artist sees aspects of art in all the other activities they engage in. They may not be direct parallels, or clear artistic concepts, but the multi-talented artist may see nuances, or

indirect relationships between his art and, say, his sports activities. Drews speaks of this highly creative, multi-talented student:

> They have a high degree of tolerance for uncertainty, asymmetry, and ambiguity, and they enjoy the ordering of complex situations, and resist early and simple solutions. They seem to be quite ruthless with themselves and even with others when they are intensely involved in the pursuit of an intellectual commitment, and they are insatiable in their thirst for knowledge, for variety, and for involvement in intellectual activities. (Drews, 1961:34)

The multi-talented art student due to the uniqueness of his activities may have unique problems. In school he may have to adjust his attitude from dealing with the unstructured, "free" atmosphere, to the structured atmosphere of, say, a math class. The student intent on succeeding in art as well as other school disciplines, has to account for the amount of time it takes to produce art. Another group of problems center on the multi-talented art student and how he or she is treated by parents, peers, and teachers.

Authorities have noted the danger of trying to push a young gifted artist into "adult art" too fast. They note that a child can be pressured into becoming a young, "adult" artist and thereby hinder their youthful, creative urges. The danger is particularly inherent if the child can copy an image well, causing parents and teachers to marvel at his copying and discourage any individually initiated efforts. Lowenfield stated:

> The special skills [drawing, copying] in some instances, may even obstruct the child's creative development. This is especially true when the parents, impressed by the skillful copying of their

> children, proudly point at it as a special achievement. By giving their child such encouragement they promote skills, but discourage independent thinking and creative attitudes. (1954:37)

Also, Lark-Horowitz, Lewis and Luca point out:

> Accelerated development can be harmful and the period of true child art should be prolonged and proper instruction should keep the child's development on a child-level so as to keep the creative urge alive. (1967:130)

For the multi-talented child artist, this problem may be even more keen, because of the variety of people he or she will encounter in other areas besides art. These people, teachers or peers, may not understand art well enough to encourage the multi-talented art student to creatively produce. Because of their ignorance of art, they may constantly demand stereotyped art from these kids -- the student's employer will want a sign made that looks like the magazine article, or the teacher will want a bulletin board made that looks like a picture in the history book. The multi-talented students want to feel needed, and will take on these jobs, not knowing that they are utilizing only a small part of their artistic talent.

Lowenfield pointed out the example of a teacher, hoping to combine a history lesson and an art lesson, asks the students to illustrate an event in history. "The child will have no personal involvement with historical event . . . history will suffer and art will definitely not be art . . . it will at best be a poor illustration of a poor event because the event has not taken place, not taken hold of the child, nor has the art experience become meaningful to the child." (1968:35) He

berates the education system that likes to use art experiences as mere illustration.

The multi-talented student will encounter this even more. Seeking for success in music he will do the posters for the concerts; seeking for success in student government he will letter the signs advertising the dance; seeking for success in chemistry, he will make the bulletin board look like the teacher wanted -- probably regular, neat, balanced, and stereotyped. Non-art fields often demand stereotyped art from these multi-talented students.

> These stereotypes may not only thwart creativeness in the arts, but creativeness in general. (Lowenfield, 1968:62)

> An important part of any creative act is self-identification, the ability to identify with one's own work . . . the work then becomes an extension of his own self. (Lowenfield, 1968:41)

Another problem encountered by the multi-talented art student in particular was noted by Brent and Marjorie Wilson. In their studies (1976) they noted the important role that boredom had played in producing artists. They quoted artist/illustrator/writer Maurice Sendak as saying, "I was just the kind of child who has to live in fantasy as he does in reality . . . probably it's because I was very easily bored." (Wilson and Wilson, 1976:433) The Wilsons feel that it is crucial that a child be given the time to develop a fertile imagination, and that this won't happen if the child is constantly pressured to produce in a variety of activities.

> It seems that without boredom, fantasy has little opportunity to develop . . . we'll never know how many potentially artistically gifted young people have been destined to remain ordinary because of the concern of parents and teachers, anxious to keep them forever occupied with lessons for tennis, swimming, gymnastics, for art, the piano, or guitar; with summer camps and tightly structured school days; with sports or anything else that organizes and regulates every available moment . . . . (Wilson and Wilson, 1976:433)

Summary

Multi-talented students, students seemingly gifted in many areas, seem to have abilities that enable them to learn quicker, understand in greater depth and experience knowledge in a manner exceeding their peers. Among their characteristics are insatiable curiosity, enjoyment of abstractions, and keen perceptions. They are more likely to be involved in the arts and are very adept at foreseeing what a chain of events may cause. Also, there tends to be a less pronounced difference between the sexes among gifted, multi-talented students.

Often, their main motivation to explore new activities, take risks, and succeed in all they do, is self-initiated. They trust their abilities and believe themselves capable of succeeding. This, in turn builds a healthy self-concept, prompting them to explore new activities and take new risks. Yet, they perceive patterns, and relationships in all they do, often content to learn for learning's sake. They rarely perceive any danger in becoming involved in too many activities which can lead them to strive to succeed in more than time, energy, or their current abilities will permit. Their drive to succeed can also cause them

to shy away from activities that may result in failure.

Parents are an unmistakable influence in inciting these multi-talented students to be producers at an early age. The gifted child, because of their acute perception and penchant for mature thinking, may rebel later against conforming parental attitudes, and structured bureaucracies such as public school. School can also be a time of alienation from their peers, and frustration from dealing with the drills and repetition of the classroom.

Gifted children need special attention because of the special problems and frustrations they deal with, most of them self-generated in trying to deal with their perceived talents. Time spent on homework in which they feel they have to succeed, can take time away from innate talents. Their self-concept can decline because their acute perceptions can cause them to be overly critical of themselves.

Choosing a career can be a special blessing or burden on the multi-talented student; a blessing for having so many options, a burden in having to choose one at the expense of their other interests. They feel confident that they have the ability to achieve, yet are fearful of making a wrong decision. Their value systems often don't coincide with our society's perceived importance of material wealth. The multi-talented student may feel pressured to decide too early. Yet, they can also feel regret in not deciding early enough, for many of their artistic interests require a peak performance level early in life.

Multi-talented art students have special concerns and problems owing to the unique activity -- creating visual art. Creating art itself draws upon many differentiated talents and enhances many learning, perceiving and experiencing skills. The multi-talented artist often seeks to combine other interests into the creation of art. They see relationships between their art and their other interests. Some authorities, parents and teachers, due to their ignorance of the creative process, may pressure the student to keep producing stereotyped images that may increase their copying, illustrating ability yet decrease their ability to produce creatively. The student active in many diverse fields has to often utilize his art ability in a stereotyped, uncreative fashion. Another problem peculiar to multi-talented art students is that the creative process takes time for thinking or for fantasizing. Well-meaning parents or teachers, seeking to keep the gifted pupil active, can monopolize the students' time and energies.

The following chapter will outline the procedures involved in conducting the survey component of this project.

CHAPTER III

PROCEDURES

The problem of the study was to search out and record a body of in-depth information relating to the characteristics, perceptions and concerns of multi-talented art students with high performance standards. Student responses were then to be tabulated and compared with perceptions of parents, art teachers and counselors.

This chapter will describe the nature of the study, means of conducting a review of related literature, criteria for selection of students, procedures utilized for selecting the secondary schools to be involved in the study, the development of questionnaire and interview instruments, methods for collecting data, and methods utilized for organizing the data.

The Nature of the Study

From the inception of the study, the researcher's goal was to create a setting wherein students, parents, teachers, and counselors would feel free to express their perceptions concerning a set of specific and general questions intended to bring about a better understanding of the multi-talented art student.

Survey research was chosen as the type of educational research to be employed in the study. Borg and Gall (1979:27) pointed out that, "survey research typically employs questionnaires and interviews in order to determine the opinions, attitudes, preferences, and percep-

tions of persons of interest to the researcher." They also noted that, "Studies involving surveys account for a substantial proportion of the research done in the field of education." (Borg and Gall, 1979:283).

Procedural tasks involved criteria for selection of high school students who were recognized as being exceptionally talented in art, then determining which of these students also excelled in academic and co-curricular school activities. Questionnaires and interview forms were to be developed to elicit perceptions from students, art teachers, parents and counselors. Secondary schools had to be selected wherein permission would be granted to conduct the study and cooperation given to the researcher. A schedule of school visitations would then be established to collect data. Upon display of the data, conclusions and recommendations would then be presented.

Review of Related Literature

To accommodate the need for a review of related literature, the researcher initiated a computer search for sources. Descriptors were chosen based on a consultation with library officials. These descriptors fell into two categories -- talented artists and the psychological aspects of being gifted. Descriptors cross referenced in the first category were "talent", "creativity", "achievement", "gifted", and "artists". Descriptors for the latter area included "exceptional child research", "self actualization", "self-concept", "self-esteem", "self-evaluation", "psychological characteristics", and "adolescents".

The computer search yielded a bibliography of one hundred sources. From this bibliography pertinent authoritative references were organized into the review of literature with the following sub-categories being addressed:

Characteristics of multi-talented students

Multi-talented students' motivations

Multi-talented students' relationships

Pressures and frustrations

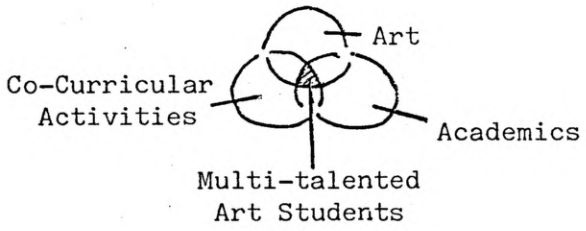
Career choices

Multi-talented art students

Criteria for Student Selection

For the purpose of this study the writer chose to define the multi-talented art student as a student who is considered to be clearly superior to their peers in three performance areas: art, academics, and one co-curricular activity (such as music, drama, dance, journalism, student government, clubs or service organizations).

The index to talent in art was gained by asking the head of the secondary school art program for a list of those students considered exceptionally talented in art. The academic index was either membership in National Honor Society or an accumulative grade point average of at least 3.1. Talent in a co-curricular activity will be based upon recognition of achievement by the school counselor or certain leaders of co-curricular activities in question.



As to the reliability of professional judgment in recognizing gifted students, Love noted that "several studies indicate that out of a group of at least one hundred (gifted) students, 90 percent can be identified by teacher judgment alone." (1970:95)

For the purposes of this study, the list of multi-talented art students was restricted to secondary school seniors. It was hoped that the senior level student would have a better sense for the extent and perceived value of the secondary school curriculum, could give more in-depth responses and would be more concerned with career choices or post-secondary school decisions.

The emphasis on meeting the criteria for selection was considered of paramount importance to establishing larger sample sizes. Additionally, the extent and degree of questioning took precedence over restriction or limitations of questionnaire format.

Emphasis should be placed on the arbitrariness of the categories chosen for selection. The writer, being an art teacher, was concerned that the students selected were art students. Indication of an ability to perform well in academics and at least one other co-curricular activity other than art were conditions the writer chose to limit the par-

ticipants to a certain kind of student. The categories were chosen to select students who were dealing with situations similar to this author's own personal concerns. Choosing a different category such as multi-talented music students, or dropping the academic requirement might have directly affected the number of students involved. Still, the concepts explored, although collected from students strong in art, academics, and one other co-curricular activity, may be applied to multi-faceted students in other areas.

Secondary School Selection

When choosing secondary schools to be involved in the study, the researcher opted to utilize major Montana high schools having the largest possible school enrollments. There were four assumptions inherent in selecting the larger high schools. First, since the selection criteria were extremely critical and restrictive, it was assumed that there was a greater probability of locating a larger number of multi-talented art students at larger schools. Second, it was assumed that due to a larger number of students competing for high attainment levels of recognition, the students who did emerge from the selection process would be strongly qualified. Third, larger schools usually have a greater variety of co-curricular activities and often allow students more opportunity to explore them in depth. And finally, the larger school setting would normally have a more comprehensive art curriculum. It is not the intent of the researcher to conclude that multi-talented

would not be found at smaller schools. Yet, because of the nature of the study and the process of selection being utilized, there appeared to be a greater chance of locating the undeniably qualified multi-faceted art student at a larger institution.

The secondary schools selected were Billings Senior High School, Billings West High School, Bozeman Senior High School, Great Falls Senior High School, and C. M. Russell High School (Great Falls). These schools represent the four largest high schools in Montana, and the twelfth largest -- Bozeman Senior High School, the latter being chosen due to its willingness to serve the researcher as a pilot setting in which procedures were validated.

Development of Questionnaires and Interview Instruments

Borg and Gall (1979:295) commented that, "many of the questionnaires that are received by principals, superintendents and other educators appear to have been thrown together by the graduate student during the short break between lunch and her two o'clock class." They note that the lack of well constructed questionnaires has created negative attitudes toward surveys and often prompts respondents not to complete the survey instruments.

Questionnaire quality may be improved by constructing items according to a set of rules intended to avoid ambiguity. Borg and Gall (1979:297) proposed the following criteria:

1) Clarity is essential. If your results are to be valid an

item must mean the same to all respondents . . . .

2) Short items are preferable to long items because short items are easier to understand. . . .

3) Negative items should be avoided since they are misread by many respondents; i.e., the negative word is overlooked, resulting in the respondent giving an answer that is opposite to his real opinion.

4) Avoid 'double-barreled' items, which require the subject to respond to two separate ideas with a single answer. . . .

5) Do not use technical terms, jargon, or 'big words' that some respondents may not understand. . . .

6) Finally, it is very important that an effort be made to avoid biased or leading questions . . . . (1979:297)

Anonymity on questionnaire response was promised to each respondent. This assurance of non-identification was given in consideration of their level of maturity, the degree to which questions involve answers that the respondents might give if identified and probable effect of anonymity on the willingness of respondents to participate in the study.

Authorities have pointed to the necessity to pretest the questionnaire.

> In addition to the preliminary check that you make of your questions in order to locate ambiguities, it is very desireable to carry out a thorough pretest of your questionnaire before using it in your study. For the pretest you should select a sample of individuals from a population similar to that from which you plan to draw your research subjects. (Bog and Gall, 1979:301)

This was accomplished at Bozeman Senior High School and no

questionnaire or interview items were considered ambiguous by respondents -- students, teachers, counselors or parents. Therefore the pretest sample was included in the final data.

Borg and Gall (1979:302) also noted that:

> Perhaps the most important single factor in determining the percentage of responses you will obtain is the letter of transmittal used with your questionnaire. This letter must be brief but yet must convey certain information and impressions to the subjects if you are to obtain a satisfactory percentage of responses. . . . Whenever possible, the purposes of the study should be explained in such a way as to make the subject feel that the study is significant and important.

Letters of transmittal were developed according to authoritative guidelines (Borg and Gall, 1979) and effectiveness was assured in that the researcher received support and cooperation from all respondents. (See Appendices A, B, C, D, E, and F)

Questionnaire items were both in "closed form" (only certain responses permitted) and "open form" (subject makes any response he wishes in his own words). Interview questions were predominantly "open form" or "closed form" questions which might require definition of terms by the interviewer.

Questions were formulated according to three main categories under investigation. The first category of questions attempted to center in on the student's motivation for seeking a broad range of activities in his/her high school career rather than focusing in on one main interest, and the perception of the value of having diverse talents. The second category was the student' personal traits, strengths,

and weaknesses, as well as a self-assessment concerning talents and achievements. The final area to be considered concerned aspects related to a career choice and post-secondary education. (See Appendices G, H, I, and J). The questions were formulated and based on discussions with art professors, public school art teachers, education professors, multi-talented adults, and this writer's own personal experiences and concerns.

The questionnaires were designed to probe the student's perceptions concerning the aforementioned categories. Questionnaires to the counselors, art teachers, and parents were designed to compare their perceptions of the student to the student's self-assessment.

The interview process included recording the student's responses to the questions in the student interview instrument (See Appendix K), asking them to respond to any questions on the questionnaire that they wanted to elaborate on, and, finally, an open-ended question in which they could say anything they wanted to say about the study in general.

Methods of Collecting Data

Because this study involved direct contact with school districts and their students, appropriate channels of communication and permission to conduct the study had to be established.

The problem of obtaining permission from all people and public officials involved was lessened due to the nature of the study itself. No extensive review of a student's private records was required. Stu-

dents, school officials and parents involved were assured that all responses collected and published were to be kept strictly anonymous and no participant was to be identified by name, but only reported in grouped data.

The first step in opening communication with the schools was to phone the principal to explain the study. A letter describing the study more in depth was then sent to the principal (See Appendix A), with a follow-up call to arrange a time for the actual study to take place. To follow ethical procedures the school district art supervisor was also contacted (See Appendix B). Letters were also prepared as needed to inform counselors and art teachers at each school as to the nature of the study (See Appendices C and D).

Upon receiving permission from the principal to proceed the researcher then asked to meet the art department chairman. This person then referred the researcher to an art teacher who had the necessary knowledge of student aptitudes. This teacher became the authoritative contact with the art portion of the process. The art teacher provided a list of senior students considered to be excelling in the school art program. Upon completion of that list, this teacher assisted in collecting student names from the rest of the art staff. All art teachers were instructed carefully to consider nothing else but whether a student was performing with a clearly superior degree of competency when compared with other art students. They were to consider beginning senior

art students as well -- if they seemed to be progressing rapidly or performing with a strong artistic sense.

This list of exceptional senior art students was then taken to the counseling department. Since all counseling departments encountered were different in design, initial contact had to be established with someone to explain how their department functioned, and to introduce the researcher to a counselor who could assist in the study.

With the counselor's assistance, the names of the exceptional art students were checked to see if they were maintaining a cumulative grade point average of 3.1 or above, and/or if they belonged to the National Honor Society. If the student was performing well academically as evidenced by their GPA and/or National Honor Society membership, they remained on the list of talented art students which continued through the third and final selection category.

The final category was an investigation into these students' co-curricular activities so as to select the students excelling in at least one other activity outside of art. The co-curricular activities included music, drama, dance, journalism, yearbook, clubs, service organizations, and student government. Three methods were utilized to review a student's activities: 1) to check open records available to the counselor concerning involvement and achievement in school sponsored activities; 2) to contact a teacher or counselor either familiar with the student or any specific activity in question; 3) to ask the

students themselves. When utilizing the third procedure, students were told that as a part of the study, the researcher was interested in what sort of activities they were involved in besides art. They were not told that they were being considered as possible participants for the study based on their achievement in these activities. The counselor, who, by this time, had a firm understanding of the project, then assisted in making a final selection of multi-talented art students with high performance standards in art, academics, and co-curricular activities.

After selection, the students were contacted and the project explained in detail. They were given a letter of explanation addressed to them and another addressed to their parents or guardians (See Appendices E and F). Also, they were given two questionnaires -- one for each of them to complete (See Appendix G), and one to be completed by their parents (See Appendix H). By returning the completed questionnaires, it was understood that the researcher had their approval to proceed with the interview portion. Counselors and art teachers were asked to complete questionnaires also (See Appendices I or J). The interview process took approximately an hour and completed the collection of data -- parent, art teacher, counselor, and student questionnaires for each school, and an interview for each student.

Organizing and Displaying Data

When appropriate, data garnered from questionnaires has been displayed in tabular form. Upon displaying the data, generalizations and apparent significance will be noted.

All responses to open questions on the questionnaires or interviews will be recorded in the appendices and generalizations will be drawn by the researcher from the set of responses.

Summary

The problem of this study was to record a body of information concerning the ideas and perceptions of students identified as multi-talented art students with high performance standards.

Five high schools were selected and contacted. A process to identify students based on possession of art prowess, high scholarship performance, and involvement in co-curricular activities was initiated. This process was aided by the school's art department head and the counseling department.

After selection, questionnaires were administered to the students, their parents and to the art teacher and counselor involved in the identification procedure. A final interview with the student was also used to collect information.

The data was then displayed and apparent significance noted. Included in the study was a review of related literature.

The next chapter will display information garnered from the questionnaires.

CHAPTER IV

PRESENTATION OF DATA

In this chapter, the researcher will present and describe the data collected from questionnaires and selected questions from student interviews. A more comprehensive treatment of the interviews conducted and questions asking for narrative responses, as well as a presentation of pertinent comparisons will be discussed in Chapter V. A complete record of interview responses can be found in Appendix L. Separate sections will present data collected from: (1) student questionnaires, (2) student interviews, (3) parent questionnaires, (4) counselor questionnaires, and (5) art teacher questionnaires. When appropriate, tables will be utilized to graphically display the data.

Student Questionnaire Responses

The following section will present and discuss responses collected from the student questionnaire. Presentation will be according to the order of occurrence on the questionnaires (Appendix G).

As noted in the previous chapter, five high schools, representing the first, second, third, fourth, and twelfth largest secondary schools in the state, were chosen as participating schools for this study. A large number of senior students in these high schools were recognized as being talented in art.

The sample size of the group to be studied was reduced when the requirement that the senior artists be performing above their peers in

other school subjects as well, was administered. Only one of every three talented senior art students had strong academic performance indices as well as an art aptitude. (Table I) When the last requirement, being superior to one's peers in at least one co-curricular activity, was taken into account, the ratio was reduced to one of every five.

When asked for a list of their strong senior art students, a number of the art teachers forewarned the researcher that the majority of their students were not excelling in other academic areas. The main reason given by these teachers was that most often students that do well in art don't seem to function well in other more structured classroom settings. The teachers noted that, indeed, the type of student who was strong in art and academics represented a deviation from the typical strong art students they dealt with.

Nineteen students from the five high schools qualified in all three areas. Of these, thirteen were able to participate in the study, the number being reduced by the lack of availability of those six unable to participate, due mainly to illness and school sponsored trips. Of the total number of students who qualified, the average G.P.A. was 3.4, and the average amount of high school art taken was a little over two years. (Table II). One student was currently maintaining a 4.0 G.P.A., and three students had taken four full years of art.

Females represented the majority of the participants selected for the study, as three of every four multi-talented art students selected were females.

TABLE 1

SCHOOLS, ENROLLMENTS, AND NUMBER OF STUDENTS SELECTED FOR STUDY

Montana High School	School Enrollment	Size-Rank	Talented Senior Art Students	Art + Academics	Art + Academics Co-Curricular (MTAS)	% MTAS of Talented Senior Art Students
Billings Senior High School	2133	1	24	4	3	12.5
Billings West High School	1835	2	24	7	6	25.0
C.M. Russell High School	1750	3	18	8	5	28.0
Great Falls Senior High School	1692	4	13	6	3	23.0
Bozeman Senior High School	1100	12	14	4	2	14.0

TABLE 2

STUDENTS SELECTED FOR STUDY, GRADE POINT AVERAGES, AMOUNT OF HIGH SCHOOL ART TAKEN

Student	Male	Female	Participation in Study	Cumulative GPA	Number of Semesters of High School Art
A	X		Yes	3.1	2
B		X	Yes	4.0	8
C	X		Yes	3.6	2
D		X	Yes	3.8	2
E		X	Yes	3.1	8
F		X	Yes	3.1	4
G		X	Yes	3.7	2
H	X		Yes	3.33	6
I		X	Yes	3.6	8
J		X	Yes	3.35	6
K		X	Yes	3.4	6
L		X	Yes	3.2	6
M	X		Yes	3.83	5
N		X	No	3.12	3
O	X		No	3.1	4
P		X	No	3.16	3
Q		X	No	3.11	4
R		X	No	3.38	2
S		X	No	3.8	3

Totals	Total Males		Total Females			Average GPA	Average Number of Semesters of High School Art
	#	%	#	%	Number of Participants		
19	5	26	14	74	13	3.4	4.4

When asked, "Do you think that you are more multi-talented than the majority of students your age?", eleven respondents answered "yes" and two answered "no". As a part of this question they were asked if art was their strongest area. The results were evenly split, six answering "yes" and seven responding "no". Some students, especially those taking art for their first year, voiced their surprise at being considered "talented" in art by their teachers, even though they considered themselves "multi-talented".

When asked if having a variety of talents helped or hindered them in certain aspects of their life, most felt that their multi-interests benefitted them in the areas in question, including schoolwork, family and peer relationships, and present job opportunities. (Table III) While some students acknowledged some problems, "I don't have enough time for things", ". . . it does put a strain on my family", ". . . it's hard to keep my grades up in all areas", "there's no time to find and hold a part-time job", the majority were confident that, either directly or indirectly, their multi-talentedness was a benefit to these certain aspects.

In an attempt to pinpoint the main influence that caused these students to choose to become involved in many activities, the following question was asked: "Who or what was the main influence that caused you to become involved in the many activities you are involved in?" The students were given a list of possible influences and asked to rate them in order of importance. All but one student rated themselves as

TABLE 3

STUDENT RESPONSES: EFFECTS FROM POSSESSING A VARIETY OF TALENTS

Category Affected	Number of Students Answering "Helped"	Number of Students Answering "No Effect"	Number of Students Answering "Hindered"
Schoolwork	8	1	4
Social relationship with peer	8	3	2
Relationship with family	9	1	3
Relationship with opposite sex	9	3	1
Present job opportunities	9	1	3

the prime infleunce for their multi-involvement. (Table 4) Parents, brothers and sisters, and peers also seemed to rate high as major influences. Rating low were teachers, counselors, and the student's environment.

Next, students were asked to rate themselves according to possession of certain characteristics. Five characteristics and their opposites were listed as extremes of a five-point scale. Students were asked to decide which end of the spectrum they should be placed and to circle the degree to which they perceived that characteristic in themselves. The five pairs of opposite characteristics were: (1) not intelligent/intelligent, (2) people don't like to be around me/people like to be around me, (3) not physically fit/physically fit, (4) extroverted/introverted, (5) more feminine characteristics/more masculine characteristics. (Table 5)

It was found that the students generally felt that they were intelligent, liked by the people around them, and physically fit.

The final two characteristics produced responses more evenly distributed across the scale. The majority felt they were neither introverted nor extroverted or had shown aspects of both dependent on the situation which prompted the behavior.

Concerning the feminine/masculine scale, the two respondents who chose "4" and "5" (very masculine) were both males, and the one who chose "1" (very feminine) was a female. The remaining two males and eight females were distributed through the three middle degrees. (Table 6)

TABLE 4

STUDENT RESPONSES: INFLUENCES CAUSING THEM TO BECOME INVOLVED IN VARIETY OF ACTIVITIES

Influence	Number of Students Responding: "Most Important Influence"	"Second Most Important Influence"	"Third Most Important Influence"	"Fourth Most Important Influence"	"Fifth, Sixth or Seventh Most Important Influence"
Parent	0	5	2	5	1
Teacher	0	1	5	0	5
Counselor	0	0	0	0	9
Self	12	0	1	0	0
Peers	1	2	2	4	2
Brother or Sister	0	4	1	2	5
Environment	0	1	2	1	9

TABLE 5

STUDENTS' SELF ASSESSMENT OF CHARACTERISTICS

Characteristic	On a scale of one to five between the opposing characteristics, number of students responding:					Opposite Characteristic	Mean Response
	One	Two	Three	Four	Five		
"Not intelligent"	0	0	1	9	3	"Intelligent"	4.1
"People do not like to be around me"	0	1	2	4	6	"People like to be around me"	4.2
"Not physically fit"	0	0	4	6	3	"Physically fit"	3.9
"Extroverted"	2	3	6	2	0	"Introverted"	2.6
"More feminine chacteristics"	1	4	6	1	1	"More masculine characteristics"	2.8

TABLE 6

MALE AND FEMALE RESPONSES TO MASCULINE/
FEMININE SCALE OF 1 TO 5

Male Responses (4 total)

	Number of students responding:					
	1	2	3	4	5	
Feminine Characteristics	0	1	1	1	1	More Masculine Characteristics

Female Responses

	1	2	3	4	5	
More Feminine Characteristics	1	3	5	0	0	More Masculine Characteristics

At this point in their lives, the students seemed to feel that having many interests had instigated more good experiences than bad. One student, though, when asked, "Has more 'good things' or 'bad things' happened to you as a result of your many interests", answered "about the same". The remaining twelve students answered "more good things".

The student respondents split on the importance of high grades. Although having high grades in all school subjects was a requirement for participation in the study, only eight respondents said "yes", noting that it was important to achieve high grades in all subjects. The remaining five responded "no" to the question.

The majority of students had found ways to continue utilizing their talents outside of school activities. Concerning utilization of their talents beyond school sponsored activities, given the choices "often", "seldom", and "never", ten students chose "often", and three chose "seldom."

Students were then asked to rate themselves concerning certain general abilities and specific artistic abilities. Given a scale of "1" through "5", ("1" being very low and "5" being very high) students were to choose the degree to which they possessed the specified abilities. In general, these multi-talented art students rated themselves on the higher end of the scales concerning general abilities such as "organization", "expressing yourself," "memorization," "understanding others," and "identifying relationships." (Table 7). Although they also generally rated themselves high in the artistic abilities noted,

TABLE 7

STUDENTS' SELF-ASSESSMENT OF GENERAL ABILITIES AND ARTISTIC ABILITIES

General Abilities	On a scale of 1 to 5, 1 being very low, and 5 being very high, number of students who answered					Mean Response
	1	2	3	4	5	
Memorization	0	1	7	3	2	3.5
Identifying Relationships	0	0	1	9	3	4.1
Learning from Past Experiences	0	1	1	6	5	4.1
Predicting Outcomes	0	2	4	5	2	3.5
Expressing Yourself	2	0	2	5	4	3.7
Organization	1	1	3	6	2	3.5
Understanding Others	0	0	0	8	5	4.4
Ability to Learn Fast	0	0	3	9	1	3.8
Artistic Abilities						
Memorizing Images	0	0	6	3	4	3.8
Composition	0	1	5	5	2	3.6
Imagination	0	0	1	8	4	4.2
Expressing Ideas or Emotions	1	1	2	5	3	3.4
Ability to Come up With Unusual Ideas	0	2	3	3	5	3.8
Reproducing an Image	1	2	5	3	2	3.2
Abstraction	0	2	5	2	2	3.4

the outcome seems to point out that there was more of a reluctance to rate themselves extremely high, especially in the areas of "reproducing an image", "abstraction", "expressing ideas or emotions", and "composition".

When asked to rate their school's art program and the training they received, most gave their schools high marks: ten rated it "strong", two students rated it "average", and one student felt the school's art program was "weak".

The students were asked, "Is it important to you to have private instructors for your various talent areas, other than public school teachers?" The results, six answering "yes", and seven answering "no", were contingent on the students' interest areas. One of the five students currently taking music lessons pointed out that "a person needs more in-depth study than they can get at school." Yet, one student, with more of a focused interest on art, stated "private instruction in painting really wouldn't do any good, because it's what's inside that makes art, not what's fed into you."

A broad range of careers were noted when the students were asked which careers they may choose to pursue. (Table 8) Six students were very definite about what careers they foresaw. One wanted to be a musician, three wanted to be commercial artists, one wanted to be a child development specialist, and one felt a real calling to do missionary work. The rest, although unsure as to the permanence of their decisions, tentatively noted other career choices such as psychology,

TABLE 8

STUDENT CAREER CHOICES

Possible Career Pursuits	Number of Students Choosing That Career
Scientist	1
Musician	2
Radio Broadcaster	1
Missionary	1
Educator	1
Psychologist	2
Child Development Specialist	1
Commercial Artist	3
Fine Artist	3

fine art, radio broadcasting, science, and education.

The researcher then asked the students who "was assisting them most" in making this career choice, and developing a plan to actualize their choice. Five students replied "myself", seven noted their parents, one responded "teacher", one responded "a friend", and one gave credit to his pastor.

When asked if they were to attain the career of their choice, where would they hope to be living, only two students responded "Montana", although others replied "medium-sized" or "small" towns. Other answers ranged from New York, Phoenix, Oklahoma, and Washington to Europe and Hawaii.

When asked if it has been difficult or easy to decide on a career, five students responded "easy" and eight responded "difficult". These corresponded closely with those who had or didn't have a definite career already chosen.

Attempting to pinpoint some of their present priorities, the researcher then asked the multi-talented students to list their activities (specifically including "art" and "schoolwork") rate them according to "most important", "second most important" and so on. Realizing the time demands placed on a student involved in high school music, four students placed music as the "most important" activity at present. (Table 9) As the question was open-ended as to the other activities, responses were varied: three chose art as their principal activity, one placed schoolwork on the top of the list, and church,

TABLE 9

STUDENT ASSESSMENT: PRIORITIZED LIST OF CURRENT ACTIVITIES

Area	Number of Students' Responses as to Which Area is:			
	Most Important	Second Most Important	Third Most Important	Fourth or Fifth Most Important
Schoolwork	1	4	4	4
Art	3	3	6	1
Music	4	1	0	3
Job	0	0	1	0
School annual	1	0	0	0
Self-development	0	1	0	0
Sports	0	0	2	3
Speech	1	0	0	1
Government	0	2	0	1
4-H	1	0	0	0
Woodworking	0	0	0	1
Drill team	0	0	0	1
Drafting	0	1	0	0
Church	2	0	0	0
Floral designer	0	1	0	0

school annual, 4-H, and speech all received acknowledgment from some students as important activities.

Ideas about "talent", what it is, where it comes from, and how is it developed, were varied among those who expressed an opinion on the matter. They were given three statements to choose which best described their views. One student chose, "Talent is something you are born with (like art talent or music talent or mathematical talent)". One student chose, "Everybody is born the same, so talent is something we learn as we grow older". The majority, eleven students, picked the statement, "Talent is a combination of what you are born with and what you are taught". Yet, when asked if "anyone can learn to produce art as well as you can", (an indication of the second statement about talent) nine students said "yes", the remaining four responded "no".

The next question sought an indication of whether multi-talented art students were able to utilize their talents in their other activities or classes. When asked, "Do you use your art abilities in other classes or interest areas?", twelve said "often", one responded "seldom". When asked if they used their other talents or abilities in any of their art projects, twelve, again, said "often", and one (a different student than in the previous question) responded "seldom".

Finally, the students were asked that if they were to attend college, would they continue to take at least some art courses. As a possible index as to how much they enjoyed art, twelve said "yes", even though there were only six students choosing art or commercial art as

a career. The one respondent who said "no" was still planning to produce art as a hobby and just couldn't foresee enough time in college to take an art course.

Student Interview Responses

The following section will deal with responses collected from student interviews conducted by the researcher. Some interview questions, those which are "open questions" (questions asking for less specific responses), will be examined in Chapter V. The following questions from the interview instrument are those which asked the respondent to choose from a more limited choice of answers.

One question asked in the interview was, "How long before you decided to focus in on one main interest?" Five respondents had already decided which career interest they definitely wanted to pursue. The eight students, undecided about a career choice, had definite ideas about when this choice should be made. Yielding to what one student termed the "demands of society", the undecided felt the decision to focus in on a career had to be made very soon. Five students responded "one year", two responded "two years", and one said "three to four years".

They were then asked if being multi-talented and having a variety of interests had made them more able or less able to handle competition in the "real world for jobs and prestige". Twelve said that they were "more able" due to factors such as the ability to handle pressure, to shoulder responsibilities, to work with people, and to

persevere to ensure success. One student, though, thought very deeply and replied "less able". That student felt intimidated competing with people who focus all their energies on one activity: "If I had gone into one specific area earlier, I'd be more prepared to compete in that area."

When asked if having a variety of interests had kept them from excelling in anything, eleven answered in the affirmative. A lack of time and energy as well as from being involved in an abundance of activities had kept them from excelling in certain areas. Two students insisted, however, that the multi-involvement spurred their achievements and that their variety of activities enhanced each other.

These students had previously been asked on the questionnaire if they utilized their "talents" outside of school activities. During the interview, the researcher asked them if they were able to utilize their artistic aptitude outside of school sponsored activities. Twelve said "yes" citing such instances as posterwork for clubs, graphics and design work for their employers, and "artsy-craftsy" items for parents and friends. One student responded "no", due to the fact that few people knew that that student had artistic aptitude as well as other more noticed talents.

When asked when they realized that they had artistic talent, two responded "junior high" and the rest stated "grade school", "at a very early age", or "as long as I can remember I've always been artistic."

Considering recent literature on left-brain/right-brain modes of thinking, the researcher decided to record students' self-perceptions concerning left-brain characteristics (pertaining to the part of the brain which apparently processes the analytic, verbal, temporal, rational, and linear modes of thinking) and right-brain characteristics (pertaining to the part of the brain which apparently processes the creative, non-verbal, non-temporal, non-rational and holistic modes of thinking).

Using definitions based on descriptions supplied by Betty Edwards in Drawing on the Right Side of the Brain (1979:40), the reseacher gave the students pairs of opposite characteristics, one right-brain characteristic and the opposite left-brain function, and directed them to pick the characteristic which portrayed qualities that they possessed. They were, however, given the option to pick both -- should they feel that opposing qualities surfaced under different circumstances. They were not informed of the relationship of these questions to left-brain/right-brain research.

The results showed that these multi-talented art students did not consistently or predominantly function in one mode. The students seemed to utilize as many left-brain functions as right-brain functions. When asked if they were more verbal or non-verbal, six replied "non-verbal (right-brain), three replied "verbal" (left-brain) and three replied "both". When asked if they were more synthetic (apt at putting

things together to form wholes) or analytic (apt at taking ideas apart such as figuring out a problem ste-by-step or part-by-part) three replied "synthetic" (right brain), eight chose "analytic" (left brain) and two replied "both". The results were evenly divided in those choosing left-brain/right-brain attributes when given the pairs "concrete/symbolic", "non-rational/rational", "intuitive/logical", and "holistic/linear". The group of responses, concerning "temporal/non-temporal," was heavily weighted toward the left-brain characteristic, temporal, or the ability to handle time, such as being able to organize your time efficiently. Three stated that it was difficult to organize their time, and that they were more concerned about the present instead of the future or the past (non-temporal), while ten stated they were "good at handling time".

When asked if they were being pressured by anyone as to what role their art ability will play in their future, nine students replied that no one was pressuring them. Four students confided that there was pressure on them from an outside source concerning how they should utilize, or not utilize, their art aptitude. All four replied that the pressure felt was the result of their parents' concerns that they have a practical job to support themselves. They felt that their parents perceived a career in art as a "shaky" way of making a living.

Although the terms "creative" and "intellectual" are not necessarily opposite, the students involved in this study seemed to make a

TABLE 10

STUDENTS' PERCEPTIONS OF PERCEIVED TRAITS ASSOCIATED WITH RIGHT BRAIN OR LEFT BRAIN MODES OF THINKING

Activities Associated With Right Brain Modes of Thinking		Activities Associated With Left Brain Modes of Thinking	
Specific Trait	Number of Students Selecting Trait as a Characteristic of Themselves	Number of Students Selecting Trait as a Characteristic of Themselves	Specific Trait
Non verbal	9	7	Verbal
Synthetic	5	10	Analytic
Concrete	8	8	Symbolic
Non temporal	3	10	Temporal
Non rational	10	10	Rational
Intuitive	8	8	Logical
Holistic	8	5	Linear
Totals	51	58	

distinction between the two terms. When asked, "Do you predict you will become more or part of the creative world or intellectual world in the future," eleven responded "creative" and two said "intellectual". Those not choosing to go into art often said they will still choose a career that allows them to utilize their "creative energies". The eleven students who chose the creative world expressed a fear of being bound to more unchallenging and conforming sorts of jobs.

One question during the interview stated, "Some people feel that being an adult means having to let go of certain interests in order to concentrate on your main career activity. If you have to let go of some of the things you do now, will it be easy, difficult, or will you be able to do it at all?" Three students, those having already chosen a career, replied it would be "easy". Seven acknowledged that their present activities are very important to them and it would be very difficult to have to let go of any of them, even to enhance their main career focus. Three responded that if they have any choice they will try to keep them all because there are some they "never want to let go of." These three students insisted that rather than letting go of any activities first, they will, instead, figure "some way to work it all in". One student, while being frustrated because of an inability to choose a career, still held to a goal of seeking the "ideal job" that would utilize all of her current talents and activities.

When asked if they are as talented as people perceive them to

be, nine stated that they are more talented than people know, possessing potential bounded only by "the time to go as far as I can". Three said that they were less talented than people perceived them. One said that this was an unwanted pressure to be perceived as "outstanding" in everything. Another said, "I'm just an ordinary person . . . I just work harder".

The students were shown a scale from 1 to 5, with "not happy, not well adjusted, dim outlook on life" on one extreme, and "happy, well-adjusted, happy outlook on life" on the other extreme. The majority chose either "4" or "5" (the "happy" end of the scale). They used adjectives such as "confident", "successful", "well-rounded", and "appreciative" to describe their reasons for happiness.

TABLE 11

STUDENT PERCEPTION OF GENERAL OUTLOOK ON LIFE

Not Happy, Not Well-Adjusted, Dim Outlook on Life	On a Scale of 1 to 5, Number of Students Choosing:					Happy, Well-Adjusted, Happy Outlook on Life	Mean Response
	1	2	3	4	5		
	0	1	2	6	4		4.0

Parent Questionnaires

The following section will display and describe responses to questions from the parent questionnaire. Only those questions which

asked the respondent to choose from a limited set of questions will be discussed here. "Open questions", those not requiring a response chosen from a limited set, will be discussed in Chapter V. The parents were given the option of filling out the questionnaire jointly or only having one parent answer all the questions. Three instances where the parents disagreed will be noted in the text.

According to the parents' biographical data, all but one family had been settled in their current town from 12-50 years. A variety of occupations were represented by these parents of multi-talented students.

These parents of the multi-talented art students involved in the study were then asked if they thought having multi-abilities helped or hindered their child in certain categories: (1) schoolwork, (2) peer social relationships, (3) family relationships, (4) finding a current job, (5) finding a future job or satisfying career. Most felt that their child was benefitted in all these categories due to their multi-involvement. While some acknowledged their child's difficulty in finding time to accomplish everything (which may hinder their schoolwork, or keeping a present part-time job), all felt that their child's peer relationships were strengthened. (Table 13) One father disagreed with the mother and felt that involvement in diverse activities hindered the student concerning finding a present means of part-time employment. Another father disagreed with the mother stating that he felt their

TABLE 12

PARENTS' YEARS OF RESIDENCE IN PRESENT CITY AND OCCUPATION

Parents of Student	Years of Residence in City	Father's Occupation	Mother's Occupation
A	12	Insurance Sales & Mgt.	
B	12	Claims Supervisor	Dance Instructor
C	17	Teacher/Coach	Math Tutor
D	24	Teacher	
E	4		Realtor
F	30	Mechanic	Company Supervisor
G	27	Teamster	Montessori Directress
H	7	Business Owner	Business Manager
I	20	Technician	Artist
J	16		Deputy Clerk of U.S. Dist. Ct.
K	50	Boiler Operator	Nurse
L	18	Contractor	Psychologist
M	17	Custodian	Nurse

TABLE 13

PARENT RESPONSES: EFFECTS ON THEIR SON OR DAUGHTER FROM POSSESSING MULTI-ABILITIES

Category Affected	Number of Parents Answering "Helped"	Number of Parents Answering "No Effect"	Number of Parents Answering "Hindered"
Schoolwork	10	1	2
Social Relationship With Peers	13		
Relationship With Family	10	2	1
Finding a Job at Present	9	2	3
Find a Future Job or Satisfying Career	11	1	2

child's multi-talentedness was hindering the student's chances in finding a future, satisfying career.

The parents were then given five-degree scales with opposite characteristics on the extremes of the scales. The pairs of extremes were: (1) not intelligent/intelligent, (2) easy to get along with/hard to get along with, (3) not physically fit/physically fit, and (4) extroverted/introverted. They were asked to circle the degree on the scale corresponding to how they perceived that characteristic in their child.

All felt their child was intelligent. The remaining three categories had responses more evenly spread, although the responses tended towards "extroverted", "physically fit", and "easy to get along with".

When asked if being multi-talented had caused any frustrations or problems for their son or daughter, eight said "yes", noting such problems as "lack of time to herself", "weakening her chances to excel in one category", and "excessive responsibility that creates unnecessary burdens". Yet, when asked if it was important for their child to be involved in other activities outside of school-sponsored activities, all thirteen respondents replied "yes". So, although a majority of parents noted frustrations in their child from being involved in diverse activities, all still seemed to encourage their child to become involved in outside activities in addition to their school activities.

Ten responding parents felt that their child had a good art

TABLE 14

PARENT PERCEPTIONS OF MULTI-TALENTED CHILD'S CHARACTERISTICS

Characteristic	On a Scale of "1" to "5", Number of Parents Choosing:					Opposite Characteristic	Mean Response
	1	2	3	4	5		
Not intelligent	0	0	0	9	4	Intelligent	4.3
Easy to get along with	3	4	5	1	0	Hard to get along with	2.3
Not physically fit	0	1	3	3	6	Physically fit	4.1
Extroverted	2	5	4	2	0	Introverted	2.5

program in their present school system. The remaining three felt their child's high school art program was "average".

When asked the question, "For your child's various talent areas, do you feel it is important for him/her to have private instructors outside of public school teachers?", two said "yes", two said "no", and the remaining nine replied "in a few areas, yes".

The majority of parents remembered recognizing artistic aptitude in their son or daughter at a very early age. When asked when they first realized that their child had a superior artistic ability, eleven replied "grade school", "preschool", or "5 years" or younger. Two respondents hadn't considered their child as having superior artistic aptitude until they were notified of this study which included their children.

The parents were then asked if, in their perception, their child's school system had done a very good job in educating their child about future career options and how to actualize them. The majority, ten respondents, felt the school system had done only an "average" job concerning career education. The remaining three felt the school's program for career education was "very good".

In order to garner the parents' general perceptions of what constitutes "talent", they were asked to respond to the following: "Do you feel your child was basically "born" with his/her talents, or do you feel he/she was learned the skills he/she possess?" No respond-

ent chose the following: "Born with specific talents that other people aren't born with." One father, while disagreeing with the mother, chose: "Learned the talents he/she possesses as anybody can learn a skill". Thirteen chose: "A combination of being born with specific talents and experiencing quality learning situations".

When asked if their son or daughter is (a) "as talented as everyone thinks", (b) "more talented than people know", or (c) "less talented than people know", and majority, eight respondents chose (a). The remaining five thought their child was (b) "more talented than people know".

Although only four respondents predicted their child would enter an art related field, twelve respondents felt their child would continue to produce art as a hobby or "sideline job".

The parents were then asked the following question: "Some people feel that part of growing up is being able to decide to discontinue certain activities to focus in on one main interest. If this is true, do you feel your child will be able to do this with ease?" No respondent chose: "He/she will never be able to decide". Five chose: "He/she will easily decide", corresponding with the five students who had already chosen a career. The majority, eight respondents, chose: "He/she will decide, but only with great difficulty", echoing their child's concern over letting go of certain activities that are presently very important.

Counselor Questionnaires

The following section will examine responses garnered from the counselors' questionnaires having a limited set of possibilities. Open questions, those not requiring a response chosen from a limited set, will be discussed in Chapter V. Although the questions were about multi-talented students in general, if a question reminded the counselor of a specific student or experience, they were asked to relate this to the researcher. Knowing that there will always be talented students who don't fit into a general description of a "multi-talented student", they were also asked to mention the exceptions as well. A total of five counselors completed the questionnaire, one from each high school participating in the study.

The counselors were first asked to determine whether a student with multi-talents and a variety of activities was helped or hindered by their involvement in diverse activities. In all the categories listed, such as academic achievement, relationships with peers, family and instructors, and present and future career options, the majority of the counselors felt that being multi-talented helped the student. One counselor did have a concern that being multi-talented isolated the student from his/her peers who didn't take classes and activities quite so seriously. Other counselors also noted the problem of making time for all their activities, as one in particular reasoned that this would hinder the student who also wanted to work part-time.

TABLE 15

COUNSELOR RESPONSES: PERCEPTION OF EFFECTS ON STUDENTS FROM BEING MULTI-TALENTED

Area Affected	Number of Counselors Choosing "Helped"	Number of Counselors Choosing "No Effect"	Number of Counselors Choosing "Hindered"
Academic Achievement	5	0	0
Social Relationship With Peers	4	0	1
Relationship With Instructors	5	0	0
Relationship With Family	4	1	0
Relationship With The Opposite Sex	3	2	0
Present Job Opportunities	4	0	1
Future Career Options	5	0	0

TABLE 16

COUNSELOR PERCEPTIONS OF CHARACTERISTICS
OF MULTI-TALENTED STUDENTS

Characteristic	On a Scale of "1" to "5", Number of Counselors Choosing:					Opposite Characteristic	Mean Response
	1	2	3	4	5		
Not intelligent	0	0	1	3	1	Intelligent	4
Not socially acceptable with peers	0	0	1	3	1	Socially acceptable with peers	4
Introverted	0	0	1	4	0	Extroverted	3.8
Not physically fit	0	0	3	1	1	Physically fit	3.6
Not mentally healthy	0	0	1	2	2	Mentally healthy	4.2

The counselors were then given a five-degree scale with opposite characteristics representing the extremes. The counselors were asked to circle the number on the scale that best described the multi-talented, high performance oriented student, in a general sense. According to these counselors the multi-talented student, was generally intelligent, socially acceptable with their peers, extroverted, physically fit, and mentally healthy.

A separate question was utilized to examine the question of msculinity/femininity. The counselors were asked, "Do you feel that multi-talented students exhibit traits of the opposite sex (males having some traditionally feminine characteristics; females possessing some traditionally feminine characteristics), more so than their peers?"

While acknowledging the difficulty in generalizing rather than examining specific circumstances, two counselors replied "in some cases", three counselors replied "no", and none chose "yes".

In order to gain a comparison of student/counselor/teacher perceptions, the counselors were also asked to assess certain aspects of their school art program and career guidance programs. All five counselors when given the choices of "strong", "weak", and "average", responded "strong" when asked to rate the art program at their respective high schools. When asked if students received adequate career guidance as a result of their school programs, given the choices "yes", "no", and "in some areas", four counselors responded "yes", and one

said "in some areas". Yet, when asked if there was an adequate effort to provide guidance for students interested in an art career, only three said "yes", one said "occasionally", and one responded "no".

The counselors were also provided a scale with "happy, well-adjusted, bright outlook on life" at one extreme, and "unhappy, not well-adjusted, dim outlook on life" at the other. They seemed to believe that in general the multi-talented students tended to exhibit behaviors on the "happy" end of the scale.

Art Teacher Questionnaires

The following section will examine data collected from questionnaires completed by one art teacher from each high school involved in the study. Those questions asking for general responses, not limited to a small set of possibilities, will be examined in Chapter V.

First, the art teachers were asked questions designed to assess their perceptions of multi-talented students and performance in the classroom. Four of the five responded "yes" when asked if they were aware that the students chosen for this study had talents in other areas as well. Only three of the five noted they were aware that the selected students were also doing well in all of their other academic disciplines as well as their art classroom performance.

When asked if the multi-talented art students seemed to be able to spend adequate time in furthering their art abilities, given the choices "often", "occasionally", and "seldom", three art teachers

TABLE 17

COUNSELOR PERCEPTIONS OF MULTI-TALENTED STUDENTS' OUTLOOK ON LIFE

Unhappy, Not Well-Adjusted, Dim Outlook on Life	On a Scale of "1" to "5" Number of Counselors Choosing:					Happy, Well-Adjusted, Bright Outlook on Life	Mean Response
	1	2	3	4	5		
	0	0	0	3	2		4.4

responded "often", and two, "seldom".

Asked if they noticed these students utilizing or combining other talent areas in completing art projects, three art teachers replied "often" and two responded "occasionally".

The art teachers were also asked to record their perceptions of whether these students were "helped" or "hindered" by having a variety of interest areas and talents. The majority believed that these multi-talented students were helped in the following areas: academic achievements, peer relationships, relationships with instructors, present job opportunities, and future career options. They seemed to feel that the major beneficial effects were derived from a general feeling of success and the opportunity to gain insights from a variety of experiences. These experiences were seen as contributions in an indirect manner to all aspects of the students' lives.

TABLE 18

ART TEACHER PERCEPTIONS: EFFECTS ON STUDENTS FROM POSSESSING MULTI-ABILITIES

Category Affected	Number of Art Teachers Choosing "Helped"	Number of Art Teachers Choosing "No Effect"	Number of Art Teachers Choosing "Hindered"
Academic Achievements	3	1	1
Peer Relationships	5	0	0
Relationships With Instructors	5	0	0
Present Job Opportunities	4	1	0
Future Career Options	3	1	1

When asked specifically if a student chose to pursue an art career, would he/she be helped or hindered by their multi-talents and diverse involvements. Four art teachers thought multi-talentedness would definitely help students handle the real world of competition and prestige. One wasn't sure, but did not convey any reasons for his reservations.

Similar to earlier questionnaires, the art teachers were also given pairs of opposite characteristics with a five-degree scale separating them and asked to circle the degree to which they perceived that characteristic in multi-talented art students. The majority felt these students were basically intelligent, socially acceptable, extroverted, physically fit and mentally adjusted. They often noted to the researcher that their responses would definitely change if they were to consider some of their strong art students who did not qualify as a multi-talented student with high performance standards in other areas as well as art.

When asked to rate their own art programs, four art teachers involved in the study responded "strong", while one rated his program as "average", and none replied "weak". Yet, when asked if their school had an adequate program for career guidance in the art field only one teacher replied "yes". While acknowledging that most aspects of art career guidance were handled by the art department rather than the guidance program, two art teachers responded "average". Two said that,

"no", there wasn't an adequate program for career guidance in this area.

The following question was then asked, "Does knowing that an art student, who is multi-talented, and has other interests, affect how you treat him/her as a student (such as in the demands you ask of him/her in class projects, deadlines, career guidance, etc.)?" Two teachers responded that they do handle these students differently due mostly to time demands of their other involvements. Two replied that they treat them differently "occasionally", although for different reasons -- one asking more of them because of their talents, one asking less because of their commitment to other areas besides art. One teacher replied that he doesn't treat them any differently than a typical art student.

Finally, the art teachers were also asked to circle a degree on a scale to assess whether they perceived multi-talented art students to be "unhappy" or "happy". They all agreed that generally, these students tend toward the extreme described as "happy, well-adjusted, bright outlook on life".

TABLE 19

ART TEACHERS' PERCEPTIONS OF MULTI-TALENTED ART STUDENTS' CHARACTERISTICS

Characteristic	On a Scale of "1" to "5", Number of Art Teachers Choosing:					Opposite Characteristic	Mean Response
	1	2	3	4	5		
Not intelligent	0	0	0	2	3	Extremely intelligent	4.6
Not socially acceptable	0	1	1	2	1	Socially acceptable	3.6
Introverted	0	0	1	3	1	Extroverted	4
Not physically fit	0	0	0	3	2	Physically fit	4.4
Not mentally adjusted	0	0	0	5	0	Mentally adjusted	4

TABLE 20

ART TEACHER PERCEPTIONS OF MULTI-TALENTED ART STUDENTS' OUTLOOK ON LIFE

Unhappy, Not Well-Adjusted, Dim Outlook on Life	On a Scale of "1" to "5", Number of Art Teacher Choosing: 1	2	3	4	5	Happy, Well-Adjusted, Bright Outlook on Life	Mean Response
	0	0	0	2	3		4.6

Summary

In order that general comparisons could be made concerning the perceptions of multi-talented art students, their parents, their counselors, and their art teachers and how each perceives aspects of present school activities, personal life, and possible careers of these students, questionnaires were administered to all four groups of respondents directly involved.

Preliminary examination of the responses garnered from these students revealed that they generally are happy students, with a bright outlook on life. They believe that because they were born with some multi-abilities, and because they are people who persevere to achieve success, they have basically enhanced their past school life, and helped to ensure their future success in some satisfying career. Most believe their multi-abilities contribute in a meaningful, beneficial way to their well being, and feel that it will be difficult to give up

some of their diverse involvements to focus in on a main career activity. Yet the majority feel they could let go of certain activities if their main career focus demands it of them.

Their parents, art teachers and counselors also felt that, basically, these students' multi-talents had contributed beneficially to their well being. All acknowedged that a problem these students may experience is having enough time to adequately handle all of their varied interests. Yet most felt that any frustations caused by being multi-talented and involved in many activities, were overshadowed by benefits such as being exposed to many viewpoints, forming habits such as striving for a high degree of success, and the strengthening of their relationships with family, peers, and instructors.

The next chapter will examine the interview open-ended responses, and will compare student responses to responses of their parents, teachers, and counselors.

CHAPTER V

INTERVIEWS, COMPARISONS, AND OBSERVATIONS

The following chapter contains perceptions collected from interviews with students identified as multi-talented art students and responses to open-ended questions on parent, counselor, and art teacher questionnaires. Certain student responses will be compared to parent responses and displayed in tabular form. These interview responses, comparisons, and certain observations noted by the researcher, will be discussed under the following categories: 1) characteristics of the multi-talented art student, 2) motivations, 3) school life, 4) pressures and frustrations, 5) career decisions. A complete record of student responses to interview questions can be found in Appendix L.

Characteristics of the Multi-talented Art Student

As noted earlier, the students involved in the survey attributed their "talents" to inherited traits as well as learning experiences. To further probe their ideas concerning the nature of "talent" and how they viewed themselves as a "talented" persons, the researcher asked the students to elaborate on the question of what "talent" entails. One student, while acknowledging that he had "something inside" of him that other people didn't have, felt that talent had more to do with "drive and ambition". Because of that, he felt people can "disinherit their talent". Most others felt the same way, that inherited traits are secondary to drive, ambition, and hard work. One girl stated, "My

art? . . . anybody can do what I do . . . it might be easier for me, I guess . . . it depends on ambition, or gumption". Another student pointed to a perceived "dualism" in American thought. She felt that the origin of talent prompts opposing viewpoints. First, some people believe that one must be born with talent to achieve success. ("Like the person that says to me, 'Boy I could never do art work like you, 'cause I just wasn't born with the talent'.") The second opposing viewpoint involves the "American dream" ideal, that "you can do anything you want if you work hard enough". Most students interviewed mentioned that they believed a "little of both". Yet, they invariably attributed their achievements and successes to drive and hard work rather than merely inborn talent. "Drawing? . . . well, I know I'm born with something extra, but anyone can learn to draw . . . It has a lot to do with learning and expectations".

Since most felt that they were born with "something extra", the students were asked if they had one general ability or quality that was instrumental in enabling them to accomplish the things they had done. The researcher received a wide range of responses. Many attributed their successes to an inborn qualities such as a desire to persevere, "high expectations", a "desire to learn", and an "ability to push myself". Others noted personality traits such as optimism, even temperament, an ability to express one's self, and an "outgoing personality". Two students noted that they had "good foresight", being able

to visualize outcomes and foresee solutions.

Table XXI shows the similarities between student perceptions and those of their parents, counselors and art teachers concerning four specific pairs of characteristics: intelligent/not intelligent, hard to get along with/easy to get along with, physically fit/not physically fit, and introverted/extroverted.

Although the art teachers and counselors were describing multi-talented students in general, their mean responses differed little from the student's self-perception and the parents' perceptions of their child. The mean responses from all four groups of participants show that they felt multi-talented art students are generally extroverted, physically fit, easy to get along with, and intelligent.

The students were also asked if boredom or laziness played major roles in deciding their interests or how far they pursued them. Partly due to their ability to learn new skills rapidly, most acknowledged that laziness was often a main concern that they had to struggle to overcome. One student said, "I'm not really lazy, but I feel I am". He quickly explained that by this he meant that if there was an "easy route" he would take it, yet he couldn't be too lazy because he was accomplishing so much.

As a part of this question the researcher asked the students how they reacted when they became bored with a certain activity. The majority said they would normally halt that activity, go on to some-

TABLE 21

COMPARISON OF STUDENT SELF-PERCEPTION OF CHARACTERISTICS WITH PARENTS', COUNSELORS', AND ART TEACHERS' PERCEPTIONS

Scales of 1 to 5 With Opposing Characteristics on the Extremes	Self-Perceptions of Students	Parents' Perceptions of Their Child	Art Teacher's and Counselor's Perceptions of Multi-talented Art Students in General	
	Mean Student Response	Mean Parent Response	Mean Counselor Response	Mean Art Teacher Response
"1" / "5"				
not intelligent/intelligent	4.1	4.3	4.0	4.6
hard to get along with/ easy to get along with	4.2	3.7	4.0	3.6
not physically fit/ physically fit	3.9	4.1	3.6	4.4
extroverted/introverted	2.6	2.5	2.2	2.0

thing else, and "maybe or maybe not go back to the activity I got bored with". Very few claimed to be able to persevere through an activity with which they became bored. Interestingly enough, the respondents who had already set their career goals on a firm course, were the ones who claimed to be able to "keep on working on it (a task) until it's done, even if I'm bored". The students, who stated that they found themselves leaving an activity because of boredom, related that often they never went back to the forsaken activity. One student added, "I sometimes regret leaving some stuff behind and never finishing it up, but I try not to regret it -- I like to weigh a decision, make it, do it and don't look back".

It is interesting to note that although these students seem to acknowledge that they have characteristics that enable them to succeed in many areas, still, they seemed to desire at least some degree of normalcy. "I don't see myself as a special person. . . . I'm not any different than the average person." Another student implored teachers to "not be fooled by images", for he felt that teachers tended to notice the "outside shell" and forget that multi-talented students are people with "the same, regular people problems" on the inside.

Counselors and art teachers did seem to have a fair idea of one facet of these students' "inner shells". When the students were asked to choose a degree on a five-point scale with "not happy, not well-adjusted, dim outlook on life" at one extreme and "happy, well-

adjusted, happy outlook on life" on the other, the mean response was 4.0 (toward the "happy" end). When counselors and art teachers were also asked to respond to the same scale according to their perceptions of multi-talented students in general, the counselors' mean response was 4.4 and the art teachers', 4.6.

Motivations

Many of the interview questions were designed to probe the motivational drive prompting these students to do well in art, schoolwork, and their many activities.

The initial question for each interview was, "Why have you chosen to broaden your interests rather than focusing in on just one main interest?" By far the majority seemed to echo the following student's statement, "I don't know, I like all the things I do and I can't or couldn't decide which one I'd like to focus in on." This indecision was common among all students questioned. They were happy to have varied talents and successes, yet unhappy that they felt they had to choose one area to focus on for career purposes. They were happy to already have achieved so many goals, yet somewhat unhappy knowing their goals could have been higher had they been concentrating all their energy on main interest. Yet, when asked, most responded that they would probably do the same thing if given a second chance to live life. "It's so important to be a well-rounded person, and so important to do what you like." "I just get interested in new activities . . . I can't

get tied down in one interest, 'cause then I feel closed in . . . claustrophobia". "When all of a sudden I find I can do something new, that I haven't done before, I want to continue in it 'til I can do it real well."

When asked why their son or daughter had chosen to become involved in many activities, the parents pointed out to the researcher that their children had "inquiring minds", and that they had been "exposed to a wide variety of interests". It appeared to the researcher that a direct reason for these students to be motivated to seek out a broad range of activities, was due to parental guidance. One parent stated, "We have attempted to make our children aware of the fact that the world has many attributes and they may find great pleasure in looking at everything instead of a single goal."

If this is true, that the parents are a prime motivational force in, at least, initiating the student's desire for breadth and variety, then the researcher would expect a high degree of correlation between students' and parents' perceptions of the effects of being multi-talented.

Tables XXII, XXIII, and XXIV illustrate the amount of agreement between the students' perceptions and the parents' perceptions of the effects of being multi-talented and involved in a variety of activities. The tables are designed such that the number of students and parents who agree will be displayed in a diagonal from bottom left to top right.

Each set of a parent and their child is recorded in the box that corresponds with how they both felt. For example, in Table XXII two students said they were hindered in their family relationship while their parents said that the students were helped; eight students and their parents agreed that the student was helped; one student said she was helped while her parent said that her multi-talentedness had no effect on the family relationship.

Table XXII shows that there is a high degree of agreement between students and their parents on whether multi-talentedness is affecting their family relationships. The majority agree that it benefits the family relationship. One student and her parent did agree that being involved in a variety of activities hindered the family relationship. That parent commented that the hinderance was due to her child being away from home so much.

Table XXIII had less agreement between parent and child about whether multi-talentedness helped or hindered the student's schoolwork. Six sets of parent and child did agree that multi-talentedness helped the students' schoolwork. One art teacher commented that "multi-talented students seem to be able to carry over aspects of one class to another". Yet one student felt that that had very little to do with why he wanted to be involved in a variety of activities. "It doesn't work that way. People seem to think that since I'm good in art and good in music, I should be able to naturally carry over parts of my

TABLE 22

STUDENT/PARENT AGREEMENT CONCERNING THE EFFECT OF MULTI-TALENTEDNESS ON THE STUDENT'S RELATIONSHIP WITH THE FAMILY

		Parents: helped	Parents: no effect	Parents: hindered
Students	hindered	2	0	1
	no effect	0	1	0
	helped	8	1	0

TABLE 23

STUDENT/PARENT AGREEMENT CONCERNING THE EFFECT OF MULTI-TALENTEDNESS ON THE STUDENT'S SCHOOLWORK

		Parents: helped	Parents: no effect	Parents: hindered
Students	hindered	3	0	0
	no effect	1	1	0
	helped	6	1	1

music into my art. I suppose in a way I do -- I mean indirectly. For example I can view art as a musician or music as an artist. But still, it's not so easy to carry over aspects of one into another. First of all, they both take time. Just because I'm good in art doesn't mean I have to practice my instrument less or vice versa. Second of all, the correlations aren't so obvious. Music and art are very different mediums and I have to struggle, for instance, to come up with a work of art with a direct link to music or that looks like it was done by someone who knows music. Indirectly, I guess, my music and art feed each other. But, directly, it only means I have to work twice as hard as everybody else so I can excel in music and art both."

Table XXIV shows that there was considerably less agreement between students and their parents on the question of whether being involved in a variety of activities helps or hinders the student in current part-time employment. Three students said they were hindered while their parents remarked that the students were helped. Four students said they were helped while their parents said they were hindered. Five sets of student/parents did agree that the students' current employment opportunities were helped by being multi-talented. The disagreement was attributed to different reasons. For example, one parent felt that the student was helped because he had more experience, and more talents that could make him a good employee, while the student said he was hindered because he had very little free time for work.

TABLE 24

STUDENT/PARENT CORRELATION: THE EFFECT OF MULTI-TALENTEDNESS ON THE STUDENT'S CURRENT PART-TIME EMPLOYMENT

	hindered	3	0	0
Student	no effect	1	0	0
	helped	5	2	4
		helped	no effect	hindered
			Parents	

The students were asked to pinpoint why they chose to do so well in all their classes and to strive for high marks even in classes that were not important to their interests. Most noted that initially, in the primary grades, it was parental support, encouragement and discipline that motivated high grades. But since then it had become a "personal quest" to do well. "When I get a low grade I know I'm sloughing off 'cause I know I can do better." This personal pride that caused them to work hard in all classes was often the cause for the students to find new areas of interest to add to their variety of activities in which they excel. "I won't work hard in something or get good grades any more just to please someone else, . . . I shouldn't do something I feel that I have to."

Yet, the students seemed to be very concerned about how a good transcript can impress future prospective employers, and provide scholarships for study. The students were asked if their town had helped or

hindered their pursuits. The researcher wondered if the students perceived their environment as a motivating influence. The students were quick to mention past teachers, and experiences that caused them to pursue certain interests. But few mentioned their community as having anything to do with motivation. The musicians felt lucky to be in larger communities that had more music opportunities. Yet, most felt their art interest would have blossomed regardless of the type of community in which they had lived.

One counselor noted that the student's very nature can become the prime motivational factor. They are motivated to succeed and to become involved because, "They see themselves as successful, capable people". Then it becomes a cycle of increased involvement. Their successes in a variety of activities increases their desire for more success and more variety. "They feel very good about themselves, . . . about their potential". As one student stated, "When your satisfied with yourself, you become free to seek out new stuff . . . more stuff".

School Life

One characteristic that these students all had in common was their ability to handle the mechanisms of school life. One student pointed out, "It's not maybe so much that I'm a good artist, but I know how to turn out an impressive project to fulfill an assignment." Another said, "I'm good at taking tests. I know what to write on essays and I know how to memorize efficiently for true-false and multiple

choice tests." One student coldly pointed out, "I know how to play the teacher's game and beat them at it."

The art teachers were asked if they noticed any artistic similarities among the students identified as multi-talented as well as talented in art. The majority noted some positive similarities such as "work that is neat, well thought-out, and had a good grasp of concepts". One noted that they were more receptive to art history concerns and not afraid to be different. Two stated that the students were more inclined to abstraction and more willing to incorporate it into projects. One teacher felt the opposite, though: "I think because they use art in a commercial way at such a young age (posters and projects for other disciplines) they tend to get tied into realism. Sure they can work easily between abstraction and realism concepts. But when assigned a problem, they tend to formulate starting ideas from a realistic view-point." When asked if they thought the students' multi-abilities and variety of talents and activities detracted from their performance in the art class, most teachers said that it didn't, but usually qualified their answers. One teacher said, "He (a multi-talented student) would sure be further along if he didn't have to spend so much time with his other activities."

The students usually agreed with the teachers, counselors, and parents in praising the quality of art education at their current high schools. They did, however, have definite ideas on how to improve it.

One wanted a more professional art atmosphere to simulate real-life art experiences. One wished the teachers would use stricter and "weed out the guys who don't take the class seriously". Another wanted more in-depth projects. One student wanted more emphasis on the basics of drawing and composition while another student desired more freedom to explore.

Most students acknowledged that their artistic talents were being utilized outside the art classroom. They were doing posters for clubs and plays, lettering signs for their employers, doing bulletin boards for other classrooms. They seemed to have mixed emotions about what an art teacher referred to as a "premature commercial emphasis". One girl was tired of people utilizing her talent but didn't know how to refuse requests. "They ask me to do something, and I do it well . . . then they ask me over and over until they start to expect it of me." Another felt proud that people recognized her talent and wanted to give her opportunities to utilize her interest in art: "It makes me feel good being 'used' in a way I want to be."

The art teachers were asked if they treated the multi-talented art students differently than other talented art students, knowing that they had other important concerns rather than focusing on art as a main activity. The teachers pointed out that there were too few of them (multi-talented art students) to adjust teaching strategies to account for students interested in, say, music as well as art. They

usually pointed out that their curriculum usually had enough freedom for the student to allow personal concerns to "creep in" to class projects, if the individual motivation was there. No teacher admitted to allowing variances in class projects such as deadline extensions even though these students often had a myriad of activities that they were attempting to negotiate all at once. "I try to treat all my students the same," said one teacher.

Even though these teachers enjoyed these multi-talented pupils and admired them for their energy and talents, none claimed to have any structure for allowing these students to utilize their other talents in class projects, except on an informal basis such as challenging them to adjust a project if they desired. One student had a very definite feeling about this. "Art teachers got to push us to express, . . . to let us do more. You (referring to the researcher as an art teacher) shouldn't hold us back by making us do what everyone else is."

Pressures and Frustrations

The students were asked the following question during the interview: "Is there ever unwanted pressure from anyone to become involved or remain involved in the activities you participate in?" One girl replied, "Teachers and parents pressure me to choose a major and I'm not sure I even want to go to college. So I chose one and tried to drop physics to get into a class that sort of related to it (a college major). But the physics teacher wouldn't let me out. 'Don't be a quit-

ter', he said." This was the most reoccurring theme when asked about their frustrations. One student said, "It's funny. A teacher will tell me to not get so involved cause it'll stretch me too thin. But if I say to that teacher, 'Okay, so I'll drop out of your speech team,' then the teacher will plead with me to stay involved with that activity."

The researcher found that the M.T.A. students seemed to handle the pressure to succeed very well. They even seemed to crave the excitement and challenge to perform well. But they became very frustrated if teachers or parents tried to prioritize the students' lists of activities. "Mom won't let me drop the violin when I wanted to," "It's neat when I try something new and do well, but then it's like that teacher or that new thing owns you." "I tried drama, and did okay . . . then the drama coach wanted me to be a dramatist." "Teachers shouldn't be so one-minded 'cause there may be other things that are more important to me than their classes."

Some students could not allow themselves to let go of certain activities, while others feel pressured by others to remain in certain activities they could easily drop if they desired.

Both kinds of multi-talented students expressed as the most common frustration, lack of time. "I really, <u>really</u> need more time to myself, I guess." A counselor noted that recently she'd been noticing a lot more anxiety in these M.T.A. students: "They try to do so much

and do it all well -- sometimes it's really overwhelming for them." One student stated, "It's hard to please people for quantity and quality when I'm doing three times as much as the typical student."

On the questionnaire these students all seemed to feel that all their activities benefitted them indirectly. "They add up to what I am -- I'm not an artist, journalist, or a student body officer . . . I'm an artist-journalist-student-body officer." Some felt that they wanted to do all they were doing and resented it when circumstances enlarged the importance of one of their activities and didn't allow them time to be concerned with their other activities. One admonished teachers to, "Be careful what you push on us as students . . . all things add up . . . so if you take all my time I have to give up something else". Most of these students felt that this frustration of finding time for all their activities would be alleviated as soon as they decided "what I really want to do".

When art teachers and counselors were asked if they had noticed any frequent frustrations or pressures on MTA students, an item mentioned by teachers, counselors, parents and students was the frustration of having to work side by side in classrooms with students who don't take classroom learning quite so seriously. "They're a real distraction," said one teacher, "for me and for the good kids." A counselor stated, "most frustrations seem to be encountered in working with and around other students who do not set similiar high-performance standards."

One art teacher said these students were "not very adept at handling defeat or failure" and wondered if it may cause these students in the future to only attempt goals they feel confident in fulfilling. Another said that due to a combination of talent and a tendency to drift from one area to another, they can get in the habit of "excelling even while remaining dormant -- dormancy could still be A's & B's while not working up to potential."

Parents also agreed that their multi-talented children most frequent pressure was organizing their activities into "a mere 24-hour day". "Time. She never has enough time." "It's been hard for her to do both (sports and music) -- trying to do both probably weakened her chances to excel in either." Even the parents, probably the main motivators for MTA students, had dual desires for their children. They urged their children to get involved in a myriad of activities, yet urge their children to focus in, prioritize, and resist new activities that would stretch them too thin because of a lack of time. The same parents that wanted their child, "to try things, to look at life from many viewpoints, and to never do a half-way job in anything," also mentioned that their son was finding it "hard to do everything because sifting products and choosing the ones you have time for can be tough decisions". Most parents realized this, though, and acknowledged that their job was now to help their child to decide on a focus. "She has received so much recognition as a reward for her hard work -- ribbons,

awards, scholarships. But . . . time. She never has enough time." One student summed up his ideas about his new task -- focusing instead of broadening, and how he wants teachers, parents, and counselors to help him, "Trust me. Don't interject your ideas into mine. Then I can trust you."

Career Decisions

One of the reasons high school seniors were chosen for this study was because of the "crossroads" aspect of deciding post-high school decisions. Many people feel that MTAS are unique because of their variety of options open to them for future careers.

The students were asked who or what was the main force influencing their career decisions. While acknowledging some counselor's help, and "the usual parental concern that I eat okay as well as like my job," the students felt their career decision was self-initiated. Most felt that there was not enough information taught on art careers -- either in fine art or commercial art, and that they really weren't quite sure what an art career would really be like. One student said, "It didn't hit me until I asked myself, could I do art every day . . . I don't think I can."

Except for the few who had already decided, choosing a career was viewed by most MTAS as a complex problem. There were no real money concerns, or relocation concerns, just basically, "What job do I pick that I know I'll be happy at?" One student mentioned how hard it was

to visualize what might be her priorities ten years from now, for she was unsure of the demands of a career and how much free time it left her. As mentioned before, most students, when asked to visualize the future, suspected that they would choose one of their activities or interests as a career and hopefully keep their other interests going "on the side" or as a "hobby". A few MTAS were still considering the goal of finding a career that entailed all or many of their interests.

While the majority of counselors asked responded that, yes, their guidance program was adequate for people interested in pursuing art as a career, the students and teachers usually felt that their school lacked an adequate art career guidance program. "All that is here is whatever I can slip into my classroom," said one teacher. "They'll (the counseling department) help us if we ask them, but they don't know much about art schools, or careers in art."

Since one of the chief concerns of a multi-talented art student is deciding among his or her career options, the researcher asked counselors to express their perceptions of what obstacles MTAS encounter in choosing a career, and if they counseled these students any differently than other students. One counselor replied that there were no special obstacles in being multi-talented and he didn't treat them any differently. This contrasted sharply with the counselor who realized the pressure these students are under to decide. "More options mean more hard choices to make, especially when people push you to earn

money." She recommended that counselors advise these students to be "creative" in choosing job opportunities that will allow them to use all their talents. She and other counselors felt that special care was needed in counseling these students about colleges and careers to meet their interests.

Art teachers were asked if these students would be helped by a varied background should they choose to pursue a career in art. These teachers generally agreed with the students that MTAS would, indeed, benefit from a background of experience in a variety of fields in which they were exposed to. One felt that MTAs would be more adept at problem-solving skills. Another felt the students would make ideal commercial artists because they were used to dealing with all kinds of people and understanding many viewpoints. "It'll make them good communicators -- and that's what 90% of commercial art is." One thought it would help the fine artist also -- "more sources of inspiration". One student did express a concern, "I can draw and run and sing; but how would I compete with a person who just draws, I mean <u>really</u> draws."

The students were asked the open-ended question, "Are you worried about your future." A few were decidedly concerned that they hadn't made a decision on a career just yet. They felt that the decision had to be made inside the next year or two. The majority, aside from the usual concerns such as money to go to college, seemed confident. "I've succeeded so far . . . I'll figure out how to succeed

in the future". "I'm glad I have options." "Well-roundness gives me a little security."

Summary

Utilizing interviews and open-ended questions the researcher attempted to garner more in-depth perceptions of the students and their parents, counselors, and teachers. The students spoke candidly of their love of success, and frustrations because of a lack of enough time for all they wanted to do. They acknowledged that boredom and laziness affected them, but were generally confident of their abilities and proud of their achievements.

There was a high degree of agreement in some areas between student perceptions and parent perceptions concerning the benefits of being multi-talented and involved in many activities.

At this stage in life the students seemed self motivated, and claimed personal pride as the main motivation in achieving all they had.

Their main frustration in school was devoting enough time to all they wanted. They were frustrated and often felt teachers misunderstood their motives or unique situations. Another annoyance was enduring an atmosphere with many peers who were not quite so serious about learning and achieving as were they.

Parents acknowedged the mixed feelings stemming from their children being involved in many and varied activities. While admitting to the benefits of building well-roundedness and character, they felt

the negative aspects of too many demands placed on their children's time and energies.

The students were generally confident about choosing a career that would support them and fulfill their desires to be happy. Many noted the difficulty in choosing an option when so many are at hand. All desired a more complete program to help make these career choices, especially in the art field.

The following chapter will contain a summary, conclusions and the researcher's recommendations.

CHAPTER VI

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

In this chapter the writer will present a general summary, delineate conclusions reached in response to the questions to be answered by this study, and present recommendations made as a result of this study.

Summary

The problem of this study was to search out and record a body of in-depth information concerning multi-talented art students in selected Montana secondary schools. By locating these students and using questionnaires and interviews, the writer hoped to pinpoint some of their characteristics and perceptions. The study was not intended as an analysis of intelligence, aptitude, or how they are affected or inherited, but more as a useful tool for educators, parents, and counselors so that they could better understand and deal with multi-talented art students (MTAS).

The writer hoped to answer the following questions:

1. Why have the MTAS chosen to broaden instead of specialize, and who or what was most influential in promoting their desire for multi-talented capabilities?

2. Do MTAS perceive their multi-abilities as advantages or disadvantages in academic achievements, social relationships, relationships with instructors, parents, family, the opposite sex, and considering present and future job opportunities?

3. Do MTAS see themselves as more or less masculine/feminine academically able, socially acceptable, introverted/extro-

verted, physically able, healthy, mentally adjusted, and well-rounded from their peers? Are perceptions of MTAS different than that of their parents, art teachers, and counselors?

4. Do MTAS participate in more or fewer activities compared to other students and is there unwanted pressure to do so?

5. What good and bad things may have happened to MTAS as a result of their multi-abilities?

6. Which sex seemed to represent the majority of MTAS in this study?

7. What is the identified MTAS' cumulative GPA?

8. How do MTAS perceive the importance of grades?

9. Do MTAS perceive a general ability in themselves that enables them to succeed in certain activities?

10. Where do MTAS receive their motivation for each performance capability?

11. Do MTAS utilize their talents outside of school activities?

12. How do the MTAS, their parents, teachers, and counselors rate the art programs encountered in public schools by the identified MTAS?

13. At what age do MTAS perceive themselves as being talented in art?

14. What do MTAS perceive as being their "right-brain" strengths and their "left-brain" strengths?

15. Have MTAS received adequate career guidance?

16. What are some frustrations in choosing a career for MTAS?

17. Do MTAS perceive a major relocation as necessary to further their career goals?

18. Do MTAS foresee a career in art or non-art area and what are some concerns in choosing such a career?

19. What are some of MTAS' fears in choosing a career?

20. How do MTAS allocate their time and how might it change in in the future?

21. Do MTAS perceive their talents as learned or inherited?

22. What factor does boredom play in MTAS' lives?

23. Do identified MTAS think they are as talented as people seem to think they are?

In order to answer the preceding questions and complete the study, the following procedures were followed:

1. Establish a working definition of a multi-talented art student for the purposes of this study.

2. Review current literature on the characteristics and perceptions of multi-talented students and categorize the information in the following areas:

   a. Characteristics of multi-talented students,

   b. multi-talented students' motivations,

   c. multi-talented students' relationships,

   d. pressures and frustrations,

   e. career choices, and

   f. multi-talented art students.

3. A selection process was designed to identify multi-talented art students. For the purposes of this study they were students considered superior to their peers in art, academics, and at least one co-curricular activity.

4. Five Montana high schools were chosen, consent was gained from authorities, and students were selected from the senior populations according to counselors' and art teachers' recommendations. The five schools chosen were:

Great Falls Senior High School
C. M. Russell High School
Billings Senior High School
Billings West High School
Bozeman Senior High School

5. Questionnaires were designed and administered to the students, their parents, art teachers, and counselors. The questions were designed to gain perceptions of multi-talented art students' characteristics, relationships, motivations, pressures and frustrations, and the task of choosing a career.

6. A final interview with the students was conducted by the researcher.

7. The data and findings were then collected and descriptively presented.

This study was limited in the following ways:

1. Only multi-talented students showing superior talent in art, academics (all other school classes) and at least one co-curricular activity were selected to participate in this study.

2. While the study was to be completed in larger secondary school settings to yield a substantial population index, the number of students identified was a function of the criteria established and number of respondents was considered less critical than the extensiveness of the data collected.

3. Data garnered from the survey was to be descriptively presented.

4. Only large Montana secondary schools were utilized.

5. The majority of sources were from the Montana State University Library, a personal library of works on gifted education and art education, and other libraries through inter-library loan.

6. The study sought to yield recommendations for further study as well as useful, descriptive information for the art educator.

Utilizing current, related literature, the researcher sought information currently published pertaining to gifted education, multi-talented students and artistically gifted students.

Multi-talented students, students seemingly gifted in many areas, seem to have abilities that enable them to learn at a faster rate, understand in greater depth and experience knowledge in a manner exceeding their peers. Among their characteristics are insatiable curiousity, enjoyment of abstractions, and keen perceptions. They are more likely to be involved in the arts and are very adept at foreseeing what a chain of events may cause. Also, there tends to be a less pronounced difference between the sexes among gifted, multi-talented students.

Often, their main motivation to explore new activities, take risks, and succeed in all they do, is self-initiated. They trust their abilities and believe themselves to be capable of succeeding. This, in turn, builds a healthy self-concept, prompting them to explore new activities and take new risks. Yet, they perceive patterns, and relationships in all they do, and are often content to learn for learning's sake. They rarely perceive danger in becoming involved in too many activities which can lead them to strive to succeed in more than time, energy, or their current abilities will permit. Their drive to succeed can also cause them to shy away from activities that may result in failure.

Parents are an unmistakable influence in inciting these multi-talented students to produce at an early age. The gifted child, because of their acute perception and penchant for mature thinking, may rebel later against conforming parental attitudes and structured bureaucracies such as public school. School can also be a time of alienation from their peers and frustration from dealing with the drills and repetition of the classroom.

Gifted children need special attention because of their special problems and frustrations -- most of them self-generated in trying to deal with their perceived talents. Time spent on homework in which they feel they should succeed, can take away time from innate talents. Their self-concept can decline because their acute perceptions can cause them to be overly critical of themselves.

Choosing a career can be a special blessing or burden to the multi-talented student -- a blessing for having so many options, a burden in having to choose one at the expense of their other interests. They feel confident that they have the ability to achieve, yet, are fearful of making a wrong decision. Their value systems often don't coincide with our society's perceived importance of material wealth. The multi-talented student may feel pressured to decide too early. Yet, they can also feel regret in not deciding early enough, for many of their artistic interests require a peak performance level early in life.

Multi-talented art students have special concerns and problems

owing to the unique activity of creating visual art. Creating art itself draws upon many differentiated talents and enhances many learning, perceiving and experiencing skills. The multi-talented artist often seeks to combine other interests into the creation of art. They see relationships between their art and their other interests. Some authorities, parents and teachers, may pressure the student to keep producing stereotyped images that may increase their copying, illustrating ability, yet decrease their ability to produce creatively. The student active in many diverse fields often has to utilize his art ability in a stereotyped, uncreative fashion. Another problem peculiar to the multi-talented art student is that the creative process takes time for thinking and fantasizing. Well-meaning parents or teachers, seeking to keep the gifted pupil active, can monopolize the student's time and energy.

Utilizing information gathered from questionnaires completed by the respondents, the researcher attempted to get a basic idea of how the students, their parents, counselors, and art teachers perceived certain questions the study attempted to answer.

Preliminary examination of the responses garnered from multi-talented art students revealed that they generally are happy students, with a bright outlook on life. They believe that because they were born with some multi-abilities, and because they are people who persevere to achieve success, they have basically enhanced their past school

life, and helped to ensure their future success in some satisfying career. Most believe their multi-abilities contribute in a meaningful, beneficial way to their well-being, and feel that it will be difficult to give up some of their diverse involvements to focus in on a main career activity. Yet the majority feel they could let go of certain activities if their main career focus demands it of them.

Their parents, art teachers and counselors also felt that, basically, these students' multi-talents had contributed beneficially to their well being. All acknowledged that a problem these students may experience is having enough time to adequately handle all of their varied interests. Yet, most felt that any frustrations caused by being multi-talented and involved in many activities, were overshadowed by benefits such as being exposed to many viewpoints, forming habits such as striving for a high degree of success, and the strengthening of their relationships with family, peers, and instructors.

Utilizing interviews and open-ended questions the researcher attempted to garner more in-depth perceptions of the students and their parents, counselors and art teachers.

The students spoke candidly of their love of success, and frustrations because of a lack of enough time for all they wanted to do. They acknowledged that boredom and laziness affected them, but were generally confident of their abilities and proud of their achievements.

There was a high degree of agreement in some areas between stu-

dent and parent perceptions concerning the benefits of being multi-talented and involved in many activities.

At this stage in life the students seemed self-motivated, and claimed personal pride to be the main motivation in achieving all they had.

Their main frustration in school was devoting enough time to all they wanted. They were frustrated and often felt teachers misunderstood their motives or unique situations. Another annoyance was enduring an atmosphere with many peers who were not quite so serious about learning and achieving.

Parents acknowledged the mixed feelings stemming from their children being involved in many and varied activities. While admitting to the benefits of building well-roundedness and character, they perceived negative aspects of too many demands placed on their children's time and energy.

The students were generally confident about choosing a career that would support them and fulfill their desires to be happy. Many noted the difficulty in choosing an option when so many are at hand. The multi-talented art students in this study desired a more complete career guidance program to help make these career choices, especially in the art field.

Conclusions

Based upon this study the following were concluded:

1. The achievements and successes of MTAS can be attributed generally to a self-initiated drive to learn, to experience, and to succeed.

2. Although parents, important people, and important events may be the cause of initial drive and success, MTAS' involvement in a broad range of interests is primarily dependent on inherent curiosity, ambition, and ability to perceive in-depth benefits in all they attempt.

3. During high school years, MTAS benefit from involvement in a variety of activities, even though the activities may require more time and energy than the MTAS has to offer.

4. MTAS' relationships with parents, instructors, and their social life with their peers is benefitted from their involvement in a variety of activities.

5. MTAS' present job opportunities are hindered because of a lack of time to be steadily employed.

6. MTAS' future job opportunities, though hindered by their inability to choose a main activity on which to focus, are generally enhanced due to their success in adapting to many situations and viewpoints, their innate drive to succeed, and their multitude of perceptions garnered from a variety of experiences.

7. MTAS are less distinctly characterized as more masculine or more feminine. Compared to their peers, they are perceived as being more academically able, more able to adjust to different social situations, neither more introverted nor more extroverted, more physically fit, more healthy, and more well-rounded.

8. MTAS participate in more activities than their peers.

9. Students successful in art, academics, and at least one curricular activity, as those qualifying for this study, are more often female.

10. To MTAS, grades are secondary to the importance of having in-depth, valuable learning experiences and the personal pride of succeeding.

11. There appears to be no one characteristic, ability, or trait that enables MTAS to succeed in all they do.

12. MTAS seek experiences to utilize their abilities outside of school activities, and often do so.

13. MTAS' artistic prowess, though often utilized, is dulled and restricted by well-meaning teachers, employers, and parents, who thrust uncreative, stereotyped art experiences upon them.

14. MTAS' artistic ability emerges at a young age.

15. Identified MTAS in selected Montana secondary schools are generally pleased with the art programs they've encountered. The parents, counselors, and art teachers give high marks to the art programs as well.

16. MTAS are capable in thought processes associated with the right hemisphere of the brain as well as those associated with the left hemisphere of the brain.

17. MTAS have not received adequate guidance from their school's career guidance program, especially in the field of art.

18. Counseling departments in the schools have neither the manpower nor knowledge of how to adequately benefit MTAS in their task of choosing a career.

19. MTAS are more concerned with the quality of their job experience rather than the money benefits or location of a job.

20. MTAS, though refusing to bow to unwanted pressure, will be as likely to choose a job in a non-art field as well as an art-related field though all seek to keep art-related experiences as some part of their lives.

21. MTAS will hesitate in making a career choice for fear of choosing one interest at the expense of other interests, though they will be able to make crucial career choices if they perceive that it is important to do so.

22. MTAS will continue to participate in many, diverse activities well into adult life, as they are easily bored and depend on many activities to stay content.

23. MTAS believe that hard work is a key to their success, though they admit to an ability to perceive and achieve in all they attempt that appears to be inborn in them and not in the majority of other people.

24. MTAS represent only a very small portion of student populations in secondary school systems.

Recommendations

Based on this study, the following are recommended:

1. More in-depth studies are needed to better understand multi-talented students and their motivations and frustrations.

2. The truly gifted young artists and multi-talented students need more freedom from the mundane and unimportant parts of public school in conjunction with a thorough program designed to provide more in-depth experiences that only the gifted will truly need and appreciate.

3. Multi-talented art students need a thorough, structured guidance program that, at an early age, can start to provide them with the tools needed to make critical career-oriented decisions, especially those concerning careers that demand early decisions.

4. Secondary art teachers need to have structured lessons designed for students with multiple interests which challenge them to utilize the related concepts inherent in their various activities.

5. Prospective art teachers and teachers in general need training to prepare them for the unique situations they will encounter in dealing with multi-talented art students. A more thorough understanding of gifted students' unique talents, motivations, and critical career decisions is needed as an integral part of teacher-training programs.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

LETTER OF TRANSMITTAL TO SCHOOL PRINCIPAL

This letter is written to enlist your consent and cooperation in conducting a research project which would involve a few selected multi-talented art students in your high school.

My name is Mark Sullivan. I am presently engaged in developing a graduate study at Montana State University; a study that prompts my contacting you. My research project is under the direction of Professor Richard Helzer. Validation of procedures to be utilized was accomplished at Bozeman Senior High School with the cooperation of Mr. Louis Gappmeyer, Principal; Mr. James Olsen, counselor; and Mr. Ray Campeau, art coordinator.

I grew up in Montana, graduating as salutatorian from Bozeman Senior High School in 1974. I obtained degrees in art education and music education from Linfield College in McMinnville, Oregon, in 1978, graduating summa cum laude. Since returning to Montana, I became further involved in education--as an art and drama instructor at Poplar High School, as an art resource and workshop leader for the Office of Public Instruction, and, most recently, as a Master of Arts student in Fine Arts at Montana State University.

As a topic for my graduate study, I have chosen an area that should, hopefully, be of interest to secondary school educators. I am interested in examining the characteristics and perceptions of a very particular type of student. For the purposes of my study, I have chosen the term "multi-talented art student". These students are perceived as excelling in at least three school-related areas--art, academics, and co-curricular activities.

I have long been interested in a study concerning these seemingly "gifted few" who are "good at almost everything they do". What are their future concerns--for college? For a career? What are their frustrations? What are their priorities? Who or what influenced their successes? Do they perceive their broad array of talents as a hindrance or a benefit--in their school, in their social life, for a future career? Do they perceive a future in art or some other area? The preceding are a few of the questions that I hope to adequately deal with by conducting this study.

I would like your permission to locate the multi-talented art students in your school and make them the focal point of my study. If permission is received, I plan on administering questionnaires to the students, their parents, their art teachers and their counselors, as well as an in-depth interview with each student. Locating these multi-talented students will be a coordinated effort by myself, the art teachers, and the counselors. A major effort will be made to avoid uncomfortable situations for the students and their parents. The emphasis will be on recording their ideas and perceptions. Complete anonymity will be assured and information accumulated will neither refer to student nor school, but will be reported only in grouped data. I would assure you that efforts will be made to use as little time as possible and interviews would be conducted at times of least conflict.

I can foresee many benefits in finding more about these special students. The first and foremost is to enable teachers, counselors, and administrators to better serve the unique needs of the multi-talented students. Curriculum needs, career concerns, and social aspects of giftedness will be addressed in the recommendations based on the study. I think we all agree multi-talented students are a tremendous resource who need to be appropriately nurtured.

I sincerely hope that you will be able to give me the needed consent to conduct this study. I will be calling you in a few days to ask you if it will be possible to conduct my study in your school. If I can further clarify the study, or need to complete any requirement beyond your permission, I will be happy to do so. I have enclosed a letter for a counselor and the head of your art department. Please forward these letters to the appropriate persons.

Thank you for your consideration in this matter. My hopes are that we can proceed beyond this introductory step as soon as possible, and that the results of the study will be beneficial to the education of the multi-talented art students.

Respectfully submitted,

Mark Sullivan
Graduate Student
Montana State University
Home Address:
1403 South Bozeman
Bozeman, Montana 59715
587-8065

APPENDIX B

LETTER OF TRANSMITTAL TO
DISTRICT ART SUPERVISOR

This letter is written to enlist your support and cooperation in conducting a research project which is intended to examine the characteristics and perceptions of the multi-talented art students in selected Montana high schools.

Attached is a copy of a letter sent to principals in your district which, I hope, explains the purposes of my study. If this research project is approved, input and cooperation from all parties involved will be critical to its success.

As noted in my communication with the principals, I can assure you that all information collected for the study will be treated anonymously and presented only in grouped data. Also, I shall try to ask for as little of your time as possible.

This letter is to inform you as to how I intend to utilize art teachers and counselors. The art teacher will note senior students who have excelled in art endeavors. This list of students would then be matched with lists noting students who have excelled in academic areas (and have thus been awarded membership in National Honor Society) and other student lists of students who have excelled in "co-curricular" school related activities such as music, drama, student government, speech, athletics, dance, journalism, and creative writing. Students who appear on all three lists will be considered "multi-talented art students". I will then ask teachers and counselors to finish short questionnaires. Interviews and parent/student questionnaires will also be utilized.

I will certainly appreciate any assistance you may give me since it is my hope that this study will help us better serve these multi-talented students.

I shall keep you informed as to the progress of this project, and hope to meet you personally in the near future.

Respectfully submitted,

Mark Sullivan

APPENDIX C

LETTER OF TRANSMITTAL TO ART TEACHER

This letter is written to enlist your support and cooperation in conducting a research project which is intended to examine the characteristics and perceptions of the multi-talented art student in selected Montana high schools.

Attached is a copy of a letter sent to your principal which, I hope, explains the purposes of my study. If this research project is approved, your input and cooperation will be critical to the success of the project.

As noted in my communication with your principal, I can assure you that all information collected for the study will be treated anonymously and presented only in grouped data. Also, I shall try to ask for as little of your time as possible.

Your role in this study would be to note senior students who have excelled in art endeavors. This list of students would then be matched with lists noting students who have excelled in academic areas (and have thus been awarded membership in National Honor Society) and other student lists of students who have excelled in "co-curricular" school related activities such as music, drama, student government, speech, athletics, dance, journalism, and creative writing. Students who appear on all three lists will be considered "multi-talented art students". I will then ask that you complete a short questionnaire concerning your perceptions of these students.

I will certainly appreciate any assistance you may give me since it is my hope that this study will help us better serve these multi-talented students.

I shall keep you informed as to the progress of this project, and hope to meet you personally in the near future.

Respectfully submitted,

Mark Sullivan

APPENDIX D

LETTER OF TRANSMITTAL TO SCHOOL COUNSELOR

This letter is written to enlist your support and cooperation in conducting a research project which is intended to examine the characteristics and perceptions of the multi-talented art student in selected Montana high schools.

Attached is a copy of a letter sent to your principal which, I hope, explains the purposes of my study. If this research project is approved, your input and cooperation will be critical to the success of the project.

As noted in my communication with your principal, I can assure you that all information collected for the study will be treated anonymously and presented only in grouped data. Also, I shall try to ask for as little of your time as possible.

Your role in this study would be to note senior students who have excelled in academics (and have thus been awarded membership in National Honor Society). We would then need to compare that list to another list of students who have excelled in co-curricular activities such as music, drama, student government, speech, athletics, dance, journalism, and creative writing. Students who appear on these two lists as well as a list of exceptional senior art students will be considered "multi-talented art students". I will then ask that you complete a short questionnaire concerning your perceptions of these students.

I will certainly appreciate any assistance you may give me since it is my hope that this study will help us better serve these multi-talented students.

I shall keep you informed as to the progress of this project, and hope to meet you personally in the near future.

Respectfully submitted,

Mark Sullivan

APPENDIX E

LETTER OF TRANSMITTAL TO THE PARENTS OF A STUDENT IDENTIFIED AS A MULTI-TALENTED ART STUDENT

My name is Mark Sullivan. I am presently working on my Master of Arts degree in Fine Arts at Montana State University. As a part of my degree requirements, I have chosen a topic for my professional paper that concerns you and your daughter/son.

I grew up here in Montana, graduating second in my class at Bozeman Senior High School in 1974. From there I went to Linfield College in Oregon, obtaining degrees in art education and music education, graduating Summa Cum Laude in 1978. Prior to coming back to Bozeman to continue my graduate work, I taught in the Poplar school district as a high school art and drama instructor. My experiences as a teacher and student, as well as my interests in art, music, drama, and dance prompted the topic for my study.

I am interested in recording the perceptions and characteristics of a particular type of student: a student whom I have chosen to call the "multi-talented art student". For the purposes of my study, this student is one who excels in three areas: art, academics and co-curricular activities (music, drama, speech or others). I am convinced that because these special students are a tremendous resource, they deserve a special understanding. It is my hope that this understanding will enable teachers, parents, and administrators (among others) to better meet the needs of these young adults with high performance standards.

A selection process was established to locate multi-talented senior art students. The identification procedure was an informal process based on the recommendations of school officials and indices to exceptional talents. Your daughter's/son's performance capabilities in art, academics, and various co-curricular activities have qualified her/him to be one of the students selected for the study. I would, therefore, appreciate the opportunity ask for your and your daughter's/son's cooperation in completing a questionnaire as a part of my study. The questions that I would like to ask your daughter/son are concerned mostly with her/his ideas concerning her/his future plans, her assessment of the education she/he has received so far, and her perceptions about the "talents" she/he possesses.

This study does not require an examination of your daughter's/son's records. Any information utilized will come strictly from questionnaires and a personal interview with your daughter/son. The responses collected and published in this study will be kept strictly anonymous and no participant or school will be identified by name, but only reported in grouped data. Upon completion of the study, a copy of the professional paper will be presented to the high school and I will notify you and your daughter/son so that it can be made available to you.

Enclosed is the questionnaire designed for a parent (or parents, if they desire that a joint response be recorded) to complete. If you would like to be a part of this study, please read over the questionnaire and fill out any or all of the questions to the best of your knowledge. As I will be in your area for the next couple of days, it will be most convenient to respond immediately and have your daughter/son return it to his school where I will collect it. Otherwise, they can be sent to my Bozeman address or given to the counselor noted.

Thank you for your consideration in this matter. I wish the best of luck to you and your daughter/son.

Respectfully submitted,

Mark Sullivan
1403 South Bozeman
Bozeman, Montana 59715
(406) 587-8065

Master of Arts Student
Montana State University

APPENDIX F

LETTER OF TRANSMITTAL TO A STUDENT IDENTIFIED AS A MULTI-TALENTED ART STUDENT

This letter is intended to inform you that you have been identified as a multi-talented art student. You are to be congratulated in establishing a record of excellence.

My name is Mark Sullivan and I have recently been in contact with your school officials as well as your parents. Your teachers and counselors recommended you to be a part of my study of multi-talented art students. I am conducting this study as one of the requirements of my degree in the Master of Arts program in Fine Arts here at Montana State University.

I graduated from Bozeman Senior High School second in my class in 1974, earned degrees in art and music education from Linfield College in Oregon in 1978, and taught art and drama at Poplar High School prior to coming back to Bozeman for further studies. My interest in the arts has prompted my desire to conduct a research project that will help parents, teachers, counselors and administrators better understand and meet the needs of students like yourself.

I am interested in determining how you perceive of your talents; your strengths, successes, and concerns. These are all important to me as an educator so that I can better understand you, the student.

If you agree to participate in this study, it will only involve completing a short questionnaire and allowing me to interview you. Your responses will be kept anonymous--yet they will be extremely important, as they will be the core of my study. You won't be asked to reveal anything uncomfortable. The questions may even be useful to you by helping to focus in on your desires and needs. I expect that this will not take much of your time.

If you would be willing to be a part of this study, please read the enclosed questionnaire and answer the questions as best you can. Inside the next two days I will contact you to collect your questionnaire and to have a brief discussion about some of your perceptions.

I hope this will be an enjoyable experience for everyone involved. If possible, I would also like to see some of your art work.

Congratulations on being identified as a multi-talented student and best wishes in furthering your education.

Respectfully submitted,

Mark Sullivan
Master of Arts Student
Montana State University
Home Address:
1403 South Bozeman
Bozeman, Montana 59715

APPENDIX G

A STUDY OF THE CHARACTERISTICS AND PERCEPTIONS OF MULTI-TALENTED ART STUDENTS IN SELECTED MONTANA SECONDARY SCHOOLS

ITEM: Student Questionnaire

NAME _____ AGE _____

PRESENT HIGH SCHOOL _____

HOME TOWN _____ PARENT _____

SEX _____ HONOR SOCIETY yes no PRESENT GRADE POINT AVERAGE ____

NUMBER OF SEMESTERS OF HIGH SCHOOL ART _____

FUTURE OCCUPATION (If you have chosen one) _____

The following questions will ask you a little about your strengths, your frustrations, your present projects, your past achievements, and what you perceive as being a possible future for yourself. Many questions will be covered more in depth when I interview you later. All of your responses will be kept strictly confidential and will only be reported in grouped data collected from other students like yourself.

---

1. Do you think that you are more multi-talented than the majority of students your age?

   Yes _____ No _____

   Is art your strongest area? Yes _____ No _____

2. Does having a variety of talents help you or hinder you:

	help	hinder	no effect
in your schoolwork?			
in your relationships with your peers?			
in your relationship with your family?			
in your relationship with the opposite sex?			
in any job you might have at present outside of school activities?			

3. Who or what was the main influence that caused you to become involved in the many activities you are involved in? Number the following ("1" being the prime influence, "2" being the next most important influence, etc.):

_____self _____teachers _____counselor _____brother or sister

_____parent _____peers _____environmental influences

_____other:_____

4. I have listed some extreme characteristics. Circle the number on the scale where you think you belong:

not intelligent	1 2 3 4 5	intelligent
people don't like to be around me	1 2 3 4 5	people like to be around me
not physically fit	1 2 3 4 5	physically fit
extroverted	1 2 3 4 5	introverted
more feminine characteristics	1 2 3 4 5	more masculine characteristics

5. Do you feel that more good things or bad things have happened to you as a result of your many interests?

_____more good things _____more bad things _____about the same

6. Do you think it's important to get good grades in all subjects?

_____Yes _____No

7. Do you utilize your talents outside of school activities?

_____often _____seldom _____never

8. On a scale of 1 to 5, with 5 being very high and 1 being very low, rate yourself in the following abilities:

General Abilities:

_____ Memorization
_____ Identifying relationships
_____ Learning from past experiences
_____ Predicting outcomes
_____ Expressing yourself
_____ Organization
_____ Understanding others
_____ Ability to learn fast

Artistic Abilities:

_____ Memorizing images
_____ Composition
_____ Imagination
_____ Expressing ideas or emotions
_____ Ability to come up with unusual ideas
_____ Reproducing an image
_____ Abstraction

9. Do you feel that your school's art program, and the training passed on to you because of it, is a strong program or a weak one?

_____ strong _____ weak _____average

10. Is it important to you to have private instructors for your various talent areas, other than public school teachers? _____yes ____no. If yes, what private instruction do you receive, or wish you received, or have received in the past?

11. What career would you like to pursue? _____

Circle the one who has assisted you most in developing a plan to attain your career goals? _____teacher _____counselor
_____parent other:_____

12. Where would you like to live if you had the job of your choice?

_____

13. Has it been difficult or easy to choose a career?
_____ difficult _____ easy

14. Using "schoolwork" as one item, and "art" as another, list your activities or specific talent areas (such as speech, dance, music, etc.). Then number them: 1 meaning, "the one most important to me", 2 meaning "the one second most important to me", and so on.

_____ schoolwork
_____ art
_____ _____
_____ _____
_____ _____
_____ _____
(if there are more list them in the space available)

15. Because of your talent(s), you have been able to accomplish many tasks. Circle the following statement that best describes how you view "talent".

"Talent is something you are born with (like art talent or music talent or mathematical talent)."

"Everybody is born the same, so talent is something we learn as we grow older."

"Talent is a combination of what you are born with and what you are taught."

16. Do you think anyone can learn to produce art as well as you can?
Yes _____ No _____

17. Do you use your art abilities in other classes or other interest areas? _____ often _____seldom _____never

Do you use any of your other talents or abilities in any of your art projects? _____ often _____seldom _____never

18. Will you take any more art courses if you continue on to college?
Yes _____ No _____

APPENDIX H

A STUDY OF THE CHARACTERISTICS AND PERCEPTIONS OF MULTI-TALENTED ART STUDENTS IN SELECTED MONTANA SECONDARY SCHOOLS

ITEM: Parent Questionnaire

NAME OF PARENTS _____

SON OR DAUGHTER INVOLVED IN THIS STUDY _____

CITY _____ YEARS OF RESIDENCE IN THIS CITY _____

PARENTS' OCCUPATIONS _____

Your child is perceived by the school officials I contacted as being multi-talented--in art, in academics, and in some other co-curricular activities. The purpose of this questionnaire is to record, in some fashion, your perceptions of your son/daughter, and how he/she is affected by being multi-talented. All responses will be kept strictly confidential and reported anonymously or as a part of grouped data collected from other parents such as yourself. You need only answer the questions you feel comfortable about sharing with me.

Mark Sullivan, MSU Graduate Student

---

1. Why do you suppose your child is involved in many activities rather than focusing all his/her energy on just one main interest?

2. Do you think your child's multi-abilities help or hinder him/her:

	help	hinder	no effect
in his/her schoolwork?			
in his/her social relationship with peers?			
in his/her relationship with the family?			
in finding a job at present?			
in finding a future job or satisfying career?			

3. I have listed below some extreme characteristics. Circle the number on the scale where you think your multi-talented son or daughter belongs:

not intelligent	1 2 3 4 5	intelligent
easy to get along with	1 2 3 4 5	hard to get along with
not physically fit	1 2 3 4 5	physically fit
extroverted	1 2 3 4 5	introverted

4. What are some of the good things that have happened to your child as a result of his/her multi-talents?

5. Do you think being multi-talented has caused any frustrations or problems for your son/daughter? _____yes _____no If so, are there any you can relate to me?

6. Do you believe that it is important for your child to be involved in other activities outside of school sponsored activities? _____yes _____no

7. To the best of your knowledge, do you believe your child has had a good art program to learn from in his/her present high school? _____yes _____ no _____average

8. For your child's various talent areas, do you feel it is important for him/her to have private instructors outside of public school teachers?
_____ yes _____ no in a few areas, yes _____

9. When did you first realize your child has a superior artistic ability?

10. Do you think your child's school system has done a very good job in educating him/her about future career options and how to go about actualizing that career? _____yes _____no _____average

11. Do you feel your child was basically "born" with his/her talents, or do you feel he/she has simply learned the skills he/she possesses?

(born with specific talents that other people aren't born with)	(learned the talents he/she possesses as anybody can learn a skill	(a combination of being born with specific talents and experiencing quality learning situations)

12. Do you think your son/daughter is as talented as everyone seems to think?

(as talented as everyone thinks)	(more talented than people know)	(less talented than people know)

13. What sort of career do you think your child will choose?

14. If your son/daughter chooses a career that is not art-centered, do you suppose he/she will continue to produce art? _____yes ____no

15. Some people feel that part of growing up is being able to decide to discontinue certain activities to focus in on just one main interest. If this is true, do you feel your child will be able to do this with ease?

_____ (he/she will easily decide)
_____ (he/she will never be able to decide)
_____ (he/she will decide but only with great difficulty)

APPENDIX I

A STUDY OF THE CHARACTERISTICS AND PERCEPTIONS OF MULTI-TALENTED ART STUDENTS IN SELECTED MONTANA SECONDARY SCHOOLS

ITEM: Art Teacher Questionnaire

This questionnaire attempts to record your perceptions of superior art students whom we have identified as being multi-talented and high performance oriented as well. You are asked to keep in mind the students selected for this study as well as multi-talented art students in general. All responses will be kept strictly confidential or reported in grouped data collected from other teachers such as yourself.

NAME_____

SCHOOL_____ YEARS AT SCHOOL_____

CLASSES YOU NORMALLY TEACH_____

_____

_____

1. Were you aware that the superior art students chosen for this study had multi-talents in other areas as well as art? _____yes _____no

   Were you aware that the students chosen for this study were also doing well in all their other classes as well? _____yes _____no

2. Do the multi-talented art students in your classes seem to be able to spend adequate time in furthering their art abilities?
   _____often _____occasionally _____seldom

3. Have you noticed the multi-talented art students utilizing or combining other talent areas in completing art projects?
   _____often _____occasionally _____seldom

4. Do you believe that having a variety of interest areas and talents has helped or hindered your multi-talented art students:

	helped	hindered	no effect
in academic achievements			
in peer relationships			
in relationships with instructors			
in present job opportunities			
in future career options			

Comments:

5. If a multi-talented art student chooses to go into art, do you suppose his/her being multi-talented will help or hinder them in handling the competition in the professional art world?

6. I have listed some extreme characteristics below. Circle the number on the scale where you think your multi-talented art students generally belong.

not intelligent	1 2 3 4 5	extremely intelligent
not socially acceptable	1 2 3 4 5	socially acceptable
introverted	1 2 3 4 5	extroverted
not physically fit	1 2 3 4 5	physically fit
not mentally adjusted	1 2 3 4 5	mentally adjusted

7. What would you guess would be the chief frustration encountered by the multi-talented students when dealing with life in the public school?

8. Are there any noticeable similarities in the artwork of your multi-talented art students (in technique inclinations or handling of art concepts such as an inclination to abstraction, or an inclination to realism, or a preference for crafts, etc.)?
   If so, what are some of the artistic similarities?

9. How do you rate your art program? _____strong _____weak _____average

10. Does your school have an adequate program for career guidance in the art field? _____yes _____no _____average

11. Do your multi-talented art students' varied interests ever detract from what they are capable of producing in art, in your perception?

12. Does knowing that an art student (who is multi-talented) has other interests affect how you treat him/her as a student? (Such as in the demands you ask of him/her in class projects, deadlines, etc., or in trying to help answer career questions?)
_____yes _____no _____occasionally

If so, how might you treat him/her differently than other talented art students who are focused in on art as their main interest?

13. Circle the number on the following scale that best describes the multi-talented art students you are acquainted with:

unhappy, not well-adjusted, dim outlook on life	1 2 3 4 5	happy, well-adjusted bright outlook on life

APPENDIX J

A STUDY OF THE CHARACTERISTICS AND PERCEPTIONS OF MULTI-TALENTED ART STUDENTS IN SELECTED MONTANA SECONDARY SCHOOLS

ITEM: Counselor Questionnaire

By asking you to fill out this questionnaire I hope to gather a counselor's insights about students we consider to be multi-talented and high performance oriented. Although the questions are about multi-talented students in general, if a question brings a specific student or experience to mind, please feel free to relate this to me. Knowing that there will always be talented students who don't fit into a general description of a "multi-talented student", please feel free to mention exceptions in space available. Remember, the student this study is concerned with, is one who has set extremely high performance standards for himself/herself, and, yet, still prefers to be involved in many activities rather than just one main focus (for this study--art, academics, and co-curricular activities).

NAME_____

SCHOOL_____ YEARS AT PRESENT HIGH SCHOOL_____

---

1. Do you feel a multi-talented student's combination of talents and activities, along with his/her high performance standards, help or hinder the student in:

	help	hinder	no effect
Academic achievement?			
Social relationships with peers?			
Relationships with instructors?			
Relationships with family?			
Relationships with opposite sex?			
Present job opportunities?			
Future career options?			

Comments:

2. I've listed, below, some extreme characteristics. Circle the number on the scale that best describes the multi-talented, high performance oriented student, in a general sense:

not intelligent	1 2 3 4 5	very intelligent
not socially acceptable	1 2 3 4 5	socially acceptable (with peers
introverted	1 2 3 4 5	extroverted
not physically fit	1 2 3 4 5	physically fit
not mentally healthy	1 2 3 4 5	mentally healthy

3. Do you feel that multi-talented students exhibit traits of the opposite sex (males having some traditionally feminine characteristics, females having some traditionally masculine characteristics), more so than their peers?

_____yes _____no _____in some cases

4. In your years of counseling, have you observed any re-occurring frustrations that most multi-talented, high performance oriented students seem to encounter?

5. How would you rate the art program in your high school?

_____strong _____weak _____average

6. Do you feel that students receive adequate career guidance as a result of your high school's programs?

_____yes _____no _____only in some areas

In art, specifically, do you believe there is an adequate effort to provide guidance for those interested in an art career?

_____yes _____no _____occasionally

When counseling a student you know to have a variety of interests or talents (such as the type of student this study is concerned with), do you do anything different when he/she asks you for career guidance?

7. What obstacles do you feel a multi-talented student encounters in choosing a career?

8. Circle the number on the following scale that best describes the multi-talented students you are acquainted with:

unhappy, not well-adjusted, dim outlook on life	1 2 3 4 5	happy, well-adjusted bright outlook on life

APPENDIX K

A STUDY OF THE CHARACTERISTICS AND PERCEPTIONS OF MULTI-TALENTED ART STUDENTS IN SELECTED MONTANA SECONDARY SCHOOLS

ITEM: Student Interview
To be used in conjunction with the student questionnaire

NAME_____ SCHOOL_____

1. Why have you continued to broaden your interests instead of focusing in on just one main interest?

2. How long before you decide to focus in on one main interest?

3. Do you think broadening has made you more able or less able to handle competition in the real world for jobs and prestige?

4. Do you think that having a variety of interests has kept you from excelling in anything?

5. Could you elaborate on question #2 of the questionnaire?

6. Concerning question #3, is there unwanted pressure from anyone to become involved in the things you participate in?

7. Can you relate some good and bad experiences concerning question #5.

8. What are the importance of grades to you? Overall? In courses you like? In required courses?

9. Do you have one general ability or quality that is instrumental in enabling you to accomplish the things you do?

10. Who or what motivated your high performance in your talent areas?

11. How have your abilities helped you outside of school activities? Has your art ability been of some use?

12. What could have been done differently to strengthen the various art programs you have encountered in public schools?

13. At what age did you know you had artistic talent?

14. Which of the following seem to describe qualities that you possess?

VERBAL
ANALYTIC
SYMBOLIC
ABSTRACT
TEMPORAL
RATIONAL
DIGITAL
LOGICAL
LINEAR

15. Which of the following seem to describe you or the qualities you possess?

NONVERBAL
SYNTHETIC
CONCRETE
ANALOGIC
NONTEMPORAL
NONRATIONAL
SPATIAL
INTUITIVE
HOLISTIC

16. Who has been the main influence in trying to decide on a career? Has your school helped or hindered in this endeavor?

17. What are some of your frustrations in choosing a career?

18. How do you think you will utilize your art abilities in the future? Is there pressure from anyone other than yourself concerning what role art will play for you?

19. Do you predict you will become more a part of the creative world or the intellectual world in the future? (Is there parental pressure, social pressure, monetary concerns, personal concerns?)

20. Concerning question #14 on the questionnaire, how do you think it will be ten years from now?

21. Elaborate on question #15.

22. Does boredom ever play a role in deciding your interests or how far you pursue them? Do you have any lazy qualities that play a major role?

23. Are you worried about your future?

24. Are you as talented as people think?

25. How has the town you've lived in the most affected your pursuits?

26. Circle the number on the scale below that best describes you.

not happy, not well-adjusted, dim outlook on life	1 2 3 4 5	happy, well-adjusted happy outlook on life

27. Some people feel that being an adult means having to let go of certain interests in order to concentrate on your main career activity. If you have to let go of some of the things you do now, will it be easy, difficult, or will you be able to do it at all? Which ones could you let go of easily enough?

APPENDIX L

STUDENT RESPONSES TO INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

Writer's note: similar responses will not be repeated.

1. Why have you continued to broaden your interests instead of focusing in on just one main interest?

   . "Go through stages where I burn out and need other things to do."
   . "That's the way I am . . . I've never been forced."
   . "I'm more aware these days, and I want to try new things."
   . "I don't like to limit myself, and I can't make decisions without exploration."
   . "New activities are a challange, I see things I like and I go for it."
   . "I don't know what I want to do."
   . "I get bored with stuff fast, . . . like to stay busy."
   . "I get claustrophobia doing just one thing."
   . "If I can do something well, I want to continue working at it."
   . "I want to keep my options open."

2. How long before you decide to focus in on one main interest?

   . "Society demands that I choose soon . . . 3 - 4 years."
   . "I've already decided."
   . "right after college."
   . "one year." "two years."
   . "I never will, probably."

3. Do you think broadening has made you more able or less able to handle competition in the real world for jobs and prestige?

   . "much more able. I'm adaptable and have lots of options."
   . "it's helped . . . I can better express myself."
   . "my record should impress colleges and employers."
   . "more able, . . . I can handle pressures."
   . "more, . . . I'm in the habit of doing things well and have lots of qualifications."
   . "more, . . . I impress people 'cause the things I do are not common."
   . "less, I guess . . . if I'd focused in on one specific thing I'd be better prepared to compete."
   . "definitely helped . . . I can see more points of view than other people."

. "helped . . . I've learned much about organizing and meeting deadlines."

4. Do you think having a variety of interests has kept you from excelling in anything?

. "yes . . . I could have been a great basketball player . . . I always want to take more school subjects."
. "yes . . . I don't have time for everything."
. "yes . . . I wanted to try drama."
. "no . . . I would have burned out and stagnated if I'd done just one thing."
. "yes . . . but I'm not sad 'cause I like what I'm doing."
. "I could do anything if I had time and wanted to do it . . . my GPA isn't as high 'cause of my involvement."
. "yes . . . I had to settle for second best in my track abilities."
. "not necessarily . . . although I might have been further along in something."

5. Could you elaborate on question #2 of the questionnaire?

. "Working with lots of different people helps me to understand other people's opinions . . . my communication skills have increased."
. "I have confidence in 'people' things."
. "being in art helps to release my frustrations and succeed in other stuff."
. "My boss uses my talents in lots of ways."
. "My interests have hindered me a little 'cause my friends give me a bad time 'cause I take stuff so seriously."
. "It's hard for me to find peers who think like me."
. "I'm interested in everything I do."

6. Is there unwanted pressure from anyone to become involved in the things you participate in?

. "last year I wanted to drop physics and couldn't . . . also, my mom pressured me to join track and didn't want me to drop out . . . if you get involved in a new activity it owns you."
. "I wanted to drop out of a service club, but the supervisor said I should be the one that others should look up to."
. "Once you become involved with an activity, parents, teachers expect you to stay involved . . . I regret to leave stuff behind, but I realize that I have to weigh a decision then make it."

. "A teacher will tell me to not get so involved, . . . so I say, 'Okay, so I'll drop out of your speech team,' then the teacher will plead with me to stay involved with that activity."
. "My father didn't want me to go the artistic route, so I did other things to keep him happy."
. "In clubs, I couldn't devote all the time I needed to, . . . I feel guilty when I can't give something the time it needs."

7. Can you relate some good and bad experiences concerning question #5?

Good experiences:
. "honors clubs and achievements"
. "I got a good job because of my many talents."
. "movies and books are more vivid to me."
. "I profit from being used . . . it's good that people need what I can offer."
. "I've already made a name for myself."
. "I've been able to have special art shows."

Bad experiences:
. "it's always so hard to figure how to organize my time."
. "I get in the habit of only relying on myself . . . I don't trust other people to get things done."
. "I have too many conflicts."

8. What are the importance of grades?

. "to impress future prospects."
. "somebody down the line is going to view what I've done."
. "I can't see any reason for not doing well."
. "I want to do my best . . . a low grade means I'm not trying."
. "I need to learn as much as possible."
. "I don't like to waste time. . . I don't want to let me and the teacher down."
. "In a bad class I'm still worried about my transcript, so I'll play the teacher's game and beat them at their own game."
. "I've got to do the best I can 'cause their's always something to be found."

9. Do you have one general ability or quality that is instrumental in enabling you to accomplish the things you do?

. "I'm an optimistic person . . . I believe I can do things."
. "even temperament"
. "I'm one of a family of perfectionists."
. "I'm a good planner . . . I'm good at seeing how things will turn out."

. "ethusiasm for learning."
. "I'm good at visualizing things."
. "expressing myself."
. "perseverance."
. "I'm able to push myself, but I don't have superhuman qualities."
. "I can step into any crowd."
. "I like to challange myself."

10. Who or what motivated your high performance in your talent areas?

. "teachers" ". . . myself ". . . friends"
. "parents"

11. How have your abilities helped you outside of school activities? Has your art ability been of some use?

. "I do a lot of poster work and layouts."
. "I do displays for my boss."
. "I see things different."
. "Art has helped my music performance . . . I improvise better."
. "the boss uses me constantly . . . they'll ask me to do something over and over then they start to expect it of me."

12. What could have been done differently to strengthen the various art programs you've encountered in public schools?
. "art shouldn't be graded in a cruel way that cuts it down."
. "we deserve a little more freedom in what we're doing--not so many structured activities."
. "more basics are needed. . . better drawing classes."
. "art teachers need to take their classes more seriously."
. "need more definite deadlines on projects, I don't like lazy kids who get away with stuff."
. "we need to be pushed harder . . . more in-depth projects."
. "it should be more career oriented."
. "it needs more relationship between art and music program."

13. At what age did you know you had artistic talent?

. "young." ". . . junior high." ". . .elementary school
. "I never noticed 'cause I always just used it."

Questions 14 and 15 are tabulated and displayed in Table X.

16. Who's been the main influence in trying to decide on a career?

. "myself" ". . . parents and teachers a little."

Has your school helped or hindered this endeavor?

. "I haven't got much guidance from the school's guidance office."
. "I've gotten some general encouragement but I still need to find out a lot more about my career choices."
. "both. . . they give me information but the school also pushes me too hard."
. "the career center has helped."
. "the school hasn't helped at all."

17. What are some frustrations in choosing a career?

. "not knowing the first step, the second step . . ."
. "not knowing everything I can choose from."
. "figuring out something I could do every day."
. "knowing what I could do best in."
. "I could be great at anything. . . it's hard to choose and leave interests behind."
. "where do I want to be is hard to decide."
. "should I go with the money or the interest."
. "I can't choose one."
. "none . . . I know what I want to do."

18. How do you think you will utilize your art abilities in the future?

. "I'll always keep producing art, even just on the side."
. "professional illustrator."
. "art will help me in whatever career I choose."
. "it'll by my hobby. . . for my own pleasure."
. "possibly art education."

Is there any pressure from anyone other than yourself concerning what role art will play for you?

. "no . . . no pressure."
. "my parents are worried . . . they want to make sure I'm well off . . . they say 'what can you do with art 'cause it's a shaky field'."

19. Do you predict you will become a part of the creative world or the intellectual world in the future?

. "creative."

Is there parental pressure, social pressure, monetary concerns, or personal concerns?

. "well, I want security (money) but I want happiness more."
. "most people don't think much of art majors I guess . . . I want to be an intellectual also."
. "I don't want a thinking and writing sort of job . . . I want to continue creating things."
. "money won't decide things for me."
. "I'd rather do important jobs and not care about money."
. "I hope I can pay for college."

20. Concerning #14 on the questionnaire, how do you think it will be ten years from now?

. "art will be more than important to me than music, if I get the career I want."
. "art will probably drop to just a hobby."
. "a lot of the important things I do now will all be less important then."
. "important things like family or world problems will probably take over top priority then."

21. Elaborate on Question #15.

. "it's more important what you learn and not what you are born with . . . but both make up what talent is."
. "talent has a lot to do with ambition and gumption."
. "it's more important what you are born with."
. "every body's born with something . . . it depends on how you develop it."
. "if you really want to you can do anything."
. "people born with talents have it easier."
. "you can be anything you want . . . but you can disinherit your talents."

22. Does boredom ever play a role in deciding your interests or how far you pursue them?

. . "boredom will happen easily . . . I just keep at it."
. "if I get bored I let go of an activity for a while . . . but I'll come back to it."
. "if boredom happens I'll stop and reevaluate why I'm doing it."
. "I've got to keep busy or I'd be terribly lazy."
. "I often need a push from someone."

23. Are you worried about your future?

. "I worried about some of the places I feel I have to go to."
. "I trust myself to handle whatever comes."
. "I worried 'cause I should know what I have to do by now."
. "it won't be too tough if I continue being able to do what I want to do."
. "money! . . . for college."
. "no worries . . . well-roundedness gives me securities."
. "no worries . . . I trust God."
. "I want to live day to day . . . but I'm afraid the world won't let me."
. "I wish I knew what I wanted to do."
. "I have to hurry up and decide what career to shoot for if I'm going to get anything done."

24. Are you as talented as people think?

. "sometimes I have to play 'stupid' to get along with other kids."
. "I haven't been able to show all the things I can do."
. "I'm more talented than people know."
. "less . . . I'm just a hard worker."
. "I can do unique things."
. "I'm limited by what people expect of me."
. "I'm only bounded by time to go as far as I can."

25. How has the town you've lived in the most affected your pursuits?

. "none." ". . . not much."
. "I at least had some options to choose from."
. "sports are too important here."
. "I don't think bigger cities and stronger programs would have strengthened my abilities."
. "I like smaller towns."
. "I'm jealous of bigger cities 'cause you can do anything you want."

Question 26 is tabulated and displayed in Table XI.

27. Some people feel that being an adult means having to let go of certain interests in order to concentrate on your main career activity. If you have to let go of some of the things you do now, will it be easy, difficult, or will you be able to do it at all?

. "It would be difficult, but I could do it . . . I could go back

later and pick up those things that I want to."
. "I won't pick a career that I have to sacrifice."
. "If I see something I could do if I'd kept with it, I get regret having left it."
. "I'll try to figure out how to work something in before I drop it."
. "I don't know . . . I want to learn how to dance but I don't want to drop anything to do it."
. "I've learned to sacrifice."
. "I'll do it without hesitation if it's necessary."
. "I'll always try to keep my various activities going."

The writer then asked the students, "Is there anything else you want to tell me; considering I'm a teacher, what do I need to know about students such as yourself?" The following are some of the responses:

". . . classes for talented kids are important . . . push kids with talents . . . they are capable of a lot."

". . . teachers can be so 'one-minded' . . . encourage all interests and never discourage a kid from trying new things."

". . . be careful with what you're pushing--you could push me out of your activity . . . we enjoy all things and they all add up to what we are."

". . . give us more leeway and more time. . . it's everthing that's important not just one activity."

". . . push us to express more . . . don't hold us back by making us do what everyone else is."

". . . there's six other teachers -- they all want the same amount of effort . . . think about that."

". . . I don't see myself as a special person . . . I'm no different from anyone else."

". . . it's so important to be well rounded . . . it's important to do what you like."

". . . teachers notice the outside shell . . .don't be fooled by images . . . your paper [the writer's research topic] is a great idea 'cause people have got to start seeing other sides other than the obvious."

". . . when you are so involved it's hard to please an art teacher for quality and quantity."

". . . be a friend I can converse with . . . don't interject your ideas into mine."

". . . I'm multi-talented 'cause I'm satisfied with myself and my relationship with Christ . . . when you're satisfied with yourself you are free to seek out new things."

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