



The Social & Emotional Development  
of Gifted Students

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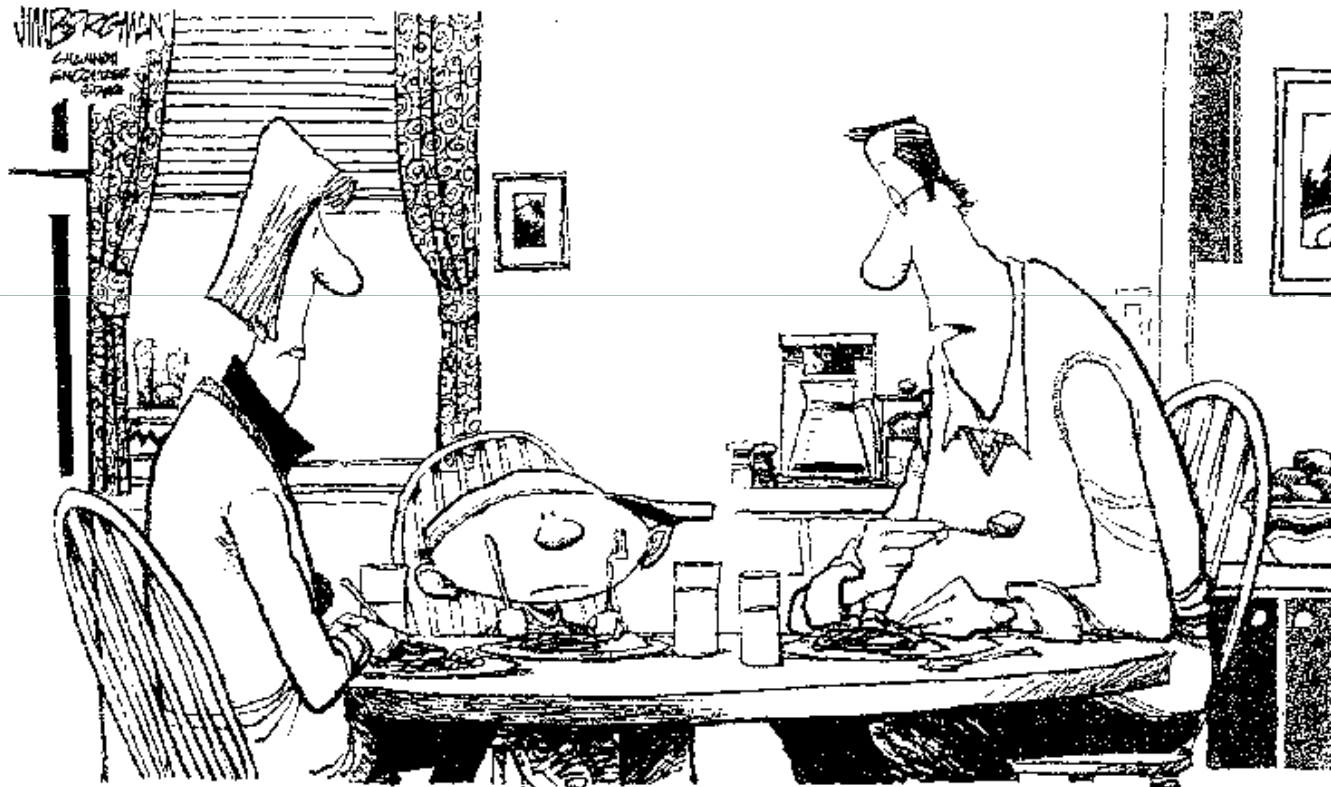


# What do we know about Gifted Students?

Gifted students are the most heterogeneous group of people to study because they can vary the most on the most number of variables.



# Contemporary Lives of Gifted Students



"WELL, YES, WE COULD READ YOUR BLOG... OR YOU COULD JUST  
TELL US ABOUT YOUR SCHOOL DAY."

# Myths about Gifted Students

## The Gifted . . .

- are more prone to emotional disturbances
- have everything going their way
- can succeed without help
- should be valued mostly for their brain power
- are more stable and mature
- should assume responsibility for others
- enjoy being examples to other children
- have abilities that are always valued by their families
- excel or exceed the norms in all areas of development
- need to be disciplined more than others
- will always reveal their giftedness
- are high achievers with high motivation to excel in school



# Gifted Characteristics

## Personality

Insightfulness

Intensity

Sensitivity/Empathy

Need to Understand

Non Conformity

Perfectionism

Perseverance

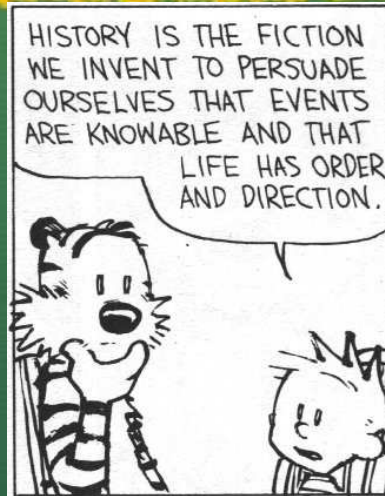
Acute Self-Awareness

Need for Mental Stimulation

Excellent Sense of Humor

Need for Precision/Logic

Questioning Rules/Authority



## Intellectual

Capacity for reflection

Passion for Learning

Early Moral Concern

Complex Thought Processes

Exceptional Reasoning Ability

Divergent Thinking/Creativity

Analytical Thinking

Facility with Abstraction

Intellectual Curiosity

Rapid Learning Rate

Vivid Imagination

B. Clark



# ✦ Endogenous Characteristics

- Originate from characteristics of the individual
- Examples in Gifted Students:
  - Overexcitabilities
  - Asynchronous Development
  - Perfectionism
  - Excessive Self-Criticism
  - Multipotentiality



# Exogenous Characteristics

- Emerge as byproducts of the interaction of characteristics of the child with the environment
- Example in Gifted Students:
  - Desire for academic engagement within a school environment not accepting of students who are very serious about learning

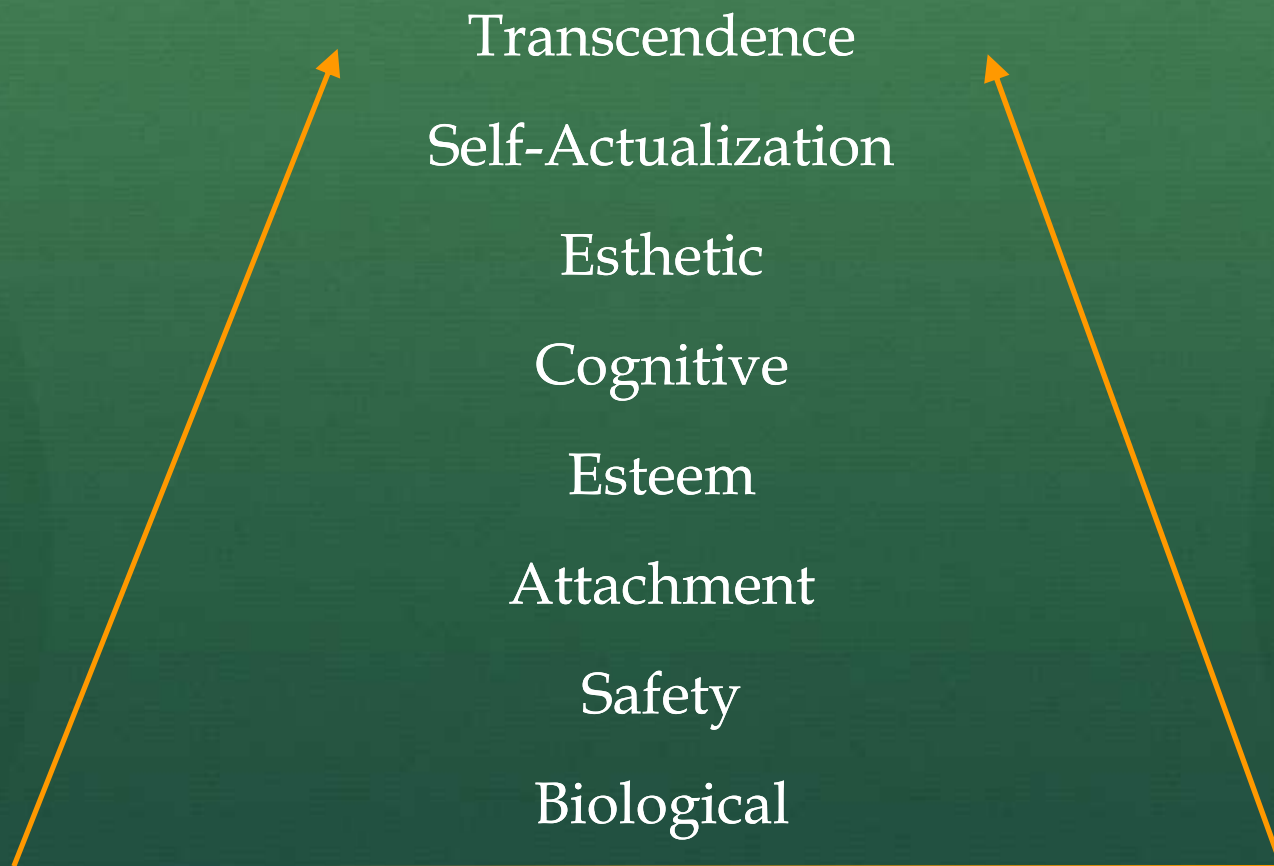


# Issues in Development

- Gifted students are children first
- Many psychological and social needs are the same for gifted and nongifted students
- Developmental Examples:
  - Making Friends
  - Dating
  - Transitions in school



# Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs



# Erikson's Psychosocial Stages

<u>Stage</u>	<u>Approximate Age</u>
Trust vs. Mistrust	0 - 1 ½
Autonomy vs. Self-doubt	1 ½ - 3
Initiative vs. Guilt	3 - 6
Competence vs. Inferiority	6 - Puberty
Identity vs. Role Confusion	Adolescent
Intimacy vs. Isolation	Early Adult
Generativity vs. Stagnation	Middle Adult
Ego-integrity vs. Despair	Late Adult

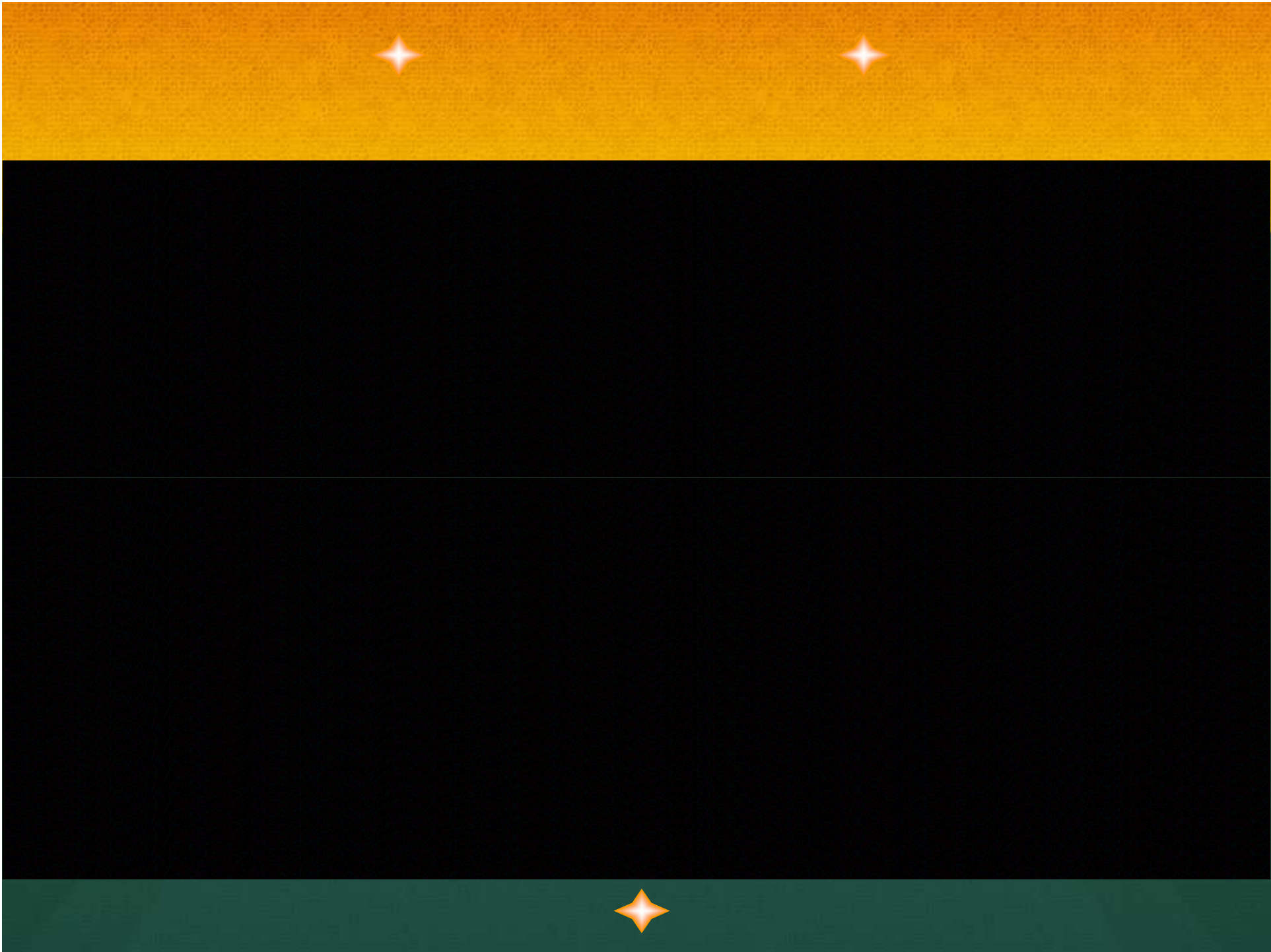


# School-Based Issues



"Mr. Wickers called me 'gifted' in front of the whole class. I'm ruined."





# School-Based Issues

- Schools are largely social enterprises.
- Is being gifted a social handicap?
- Stigma of Giftedness Paradigm
  - Gifted students want to have normal social interactions
  - They learn when others discover their giftedness, they will be treated differently
  - They learn they can manage information about themselves that will enable them to maintain a greater amount of social latitude



# Social Coping Goals

## Standing out

- Students bring attention to themselves to be known as gifted, e.g., mad scientist, brain

## Blending In

- Students want to blend in with others, not stand out

## Disidentifying

- Students want to be thought of as something other than a gifted student



# How Students Cope with their Giftedness

- Underachieve
- Identify with Non-intellectual Group
- Downplay Abilities
- Deny Giftedness
- Intellectualize Reactions to Perceived Social Difficulty
- Manage Information
- Sit Quietly
- Suicidal Behavior



# Contemporary Issues of Gifted Adolescents

- The diagnosis of ADHD and patterns of comorbidity
- Increases in the numbers of children on medication
- The increase of cyber bullying



# Contemporary Issues of Gifted Students

Increases in the percentage of children living in poverty

- Disappearance of gifted males
- Influence of long-term experiences of anxiety
- Change in relationship patterns from geography-based to interest-based
- Increased time spent on computers
- Being in constant communication with friends





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