

A STUDY OF THE STUDENTS' ASSESSMENTS OF THEIR CREATIVITY AND SELF-STUDY  
EXPERIENCES: RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN SELF-STUDY AND CREATIVITY

Mary Alemany-Galway

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Mary Alemany-Galway, 1981

## ABSTRACT

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The purpose of this study was to examine the relation between self-study and creativity. The author's belief was that, through the self-study, the students gained greater access to their feelings and therefore to their creativity.

The writer interviewed 15 students (six males and nine females) between the ages of 18 and 22, registered at the New School of Dawson College, to determine their subjective experiences of the Self-study Program and to determine how these related to their experiences in the Creative Arts Program. The New School's educational philosophy is based on the humanistic psychology of A. H. Maslow and stresses self-study as a means of fostering personal growth and assisting the students to determine their own educational goals.

My hypothesis was that there would be a positive relationship between their assessment of their self-study experiences and their evaluation of their creative arts experiences.

In my opinion, the relationship of self-study to creativity in art education is an important one, as it affects the question of what kind of methodology the art teacher will use in the classroom. It is important in teaching art to know if dealing with the student's emotional life will improve his/her creativity. This study examines the relationship between the student's evaluation of his/her self-study and the evaluation of his/her creativity; further research might analyze the interaction between the two and attempt to isolate causal factors.

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### Introduction and Definitions

**Creativity:** The term "creativity", in this thesis, encompasses all descriptions given by the students. In most cases the central idea was "expressiveness".

**Self-study:** The term "self-study", in this thesis, encompasses all descriptions given by the students. Most students described self-study as the study of the self, past, present and future; one's thoughts, emotions, experiences, goals, ideals, relationships and the interaction of the inner world with the outer world.

Self-study at the New School is undertaken in a variety of ways. All the students take part in a self-study process in "the band". The band self-study is mainly a group process which begins by everyone reading out a "profile" or an autobiographical sketch. Band members give feedback to this profile and a dialogue begins between the person and the rest of the band about the meaning and goals of his/her life. Various other exercises, such as values clarifications exercises, are undertaken by the group for the purpose of self-revelation and the sharing of concerns.

The band stays together for at least one semester and in this time the members try to help each other work out important problems. The feedback process where each member of the band tells whoever is in the spotlight what they think of him/her or his/her problem is one of the basic tools used. Evaluation of each member's contribution to the group and personal growth is an important part of the process and usually takes place at the end of each semester.

The same sort of process goes on within the academic "learning" groups. Here the self and its concerns are addressed in relation to the subject which is being studied.

Self-study can also take place on a one-to-one basis between teacher and student. The student contracts with the teacher to see him/her at a specified time each week to talk over his/her problems. Sometimes a group of students or, even a pair of students may contract to do self-study on their own. They are ultimately accountable to a staff member--who evaluates progress and gives grades.

When I began this thesis, I had just finished the course work for the M.A. in Art Education. Although I had learned much, my work had produced many questions about teaching which I wished to pursue.

For example, is it important to deal with the student's emotional life so as to aid his/her creativity? I thought that it was important, but most of my fellow university students disagreed with me. They felt that dealing with a student's emotional life was both dangerous and useless and that the teaching of technical skills should be the most important aspect of an art class.

The environment in which I was teaching, an alternative school within Dawson College, led me to argue very strongly against them. The New School's educational philosophy is based on the humanistic psychology of Abraham H. Maslow (1972), who states that one's emotional needs must be met before self-actualization or transcendence can take place.

Lowenfeld and Brittain (1964) state that in the secondary schools the emphasis in an art course is usually placed on the teaching of technical skills. Little attention is paid to the intrinsic problems of students in spite of the fact that it is from the needs, desires and frustrations of adult artists that great art is made. Accordingly they recommend that the student should be involved in the process of making

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art rather than in the production of technically perfect products.

I decided to start investigating the relationship between the student's emotional life and his/her creativity in the environment in which I was teaching. At the New School, all the students are enrolled in a program of self-study.

Because the New School is founded on the principles of holistic education, self-study is an integral part of all learning processes undertaken here. However, since personal issues cannot always be adequately confronted through another medium, they must also be directly addressed in themselves.

Only the subject can authentically identify what the self is or who his/her unique self might be. We do not demand final orthodox definitions of the self; rather, the student is asked to address him/herself to some self-related project in the manner which is ultimately accountable to some primary resource within the community. The self-study curriculum may be undertaken in many ways; within the Band, with small groups of students, one-to-one basis, with people external to the community or even alone. All self-study is contracted and evaluated, so some evidence of the process must be provided for in the primary resource and perhaps other people involved in the student's particular programme. (Nemiroff, 1976-77, Appendix D, p.1).

Each student is required to join and attend a band each term. The purpose of the band is to foster development of the self in relation to a committed and constant group of peers.

The following is a description of one student's experience of the interrelationship of self-study and the band.

The band experience is a reminder to me, twice a week, that the most valuable and meaningful knowledge that one can achieve is not knowledge of some external subject matter, but knowledge of our own internal subject matter. This bi-weekly experience puts all other academic endeavours into proper perspective, a perspective which says that a vast accumulation of information and know-how is not sufficient to make an individual into an asset, into a fully capable and developed participant of the world. It is only when all this is accompanied by an understanding of self, and the relevance to the self of this information and know-how, that a student has had a true education and becomes whole\*.

Bands are a place to learn about human beings. A band is a group of people with the sole aim of learning more about themselves and others. In an atmosphere of confidentiality, respect and honesty, individuals share matters of vital importance with each other, and through the feedback of fourteen others, achieve a clearer image of themselves.

Skills of leadership, listening, responding, understanding and support are developed and serve to enhance all interactions and relationships in and outside of the band. The insight one achieves into the complex and multi-dimensional lives of those in one's band reaches outward into all spheres of one's life. It shatters and enlarges the incomplete and superficial vision one often has of others being shallow and two-dimensional.

Most important, bands are responsible for making a student feel that he or she is attending a school which caters to all his or her needs, intellectual and emotional, where one feels that he is being seen as a whole person, treated that way and where, consequently, one comes out feeling whole. (Nemiroff, 1978-79, p.7).

\*whole: being in healthy or sound condition; free from defect or damage; well, intact; having all its proper parts or elements.

At the same time, the students involved in this study were enrolled in a creative arts program at the New School. This program consisted of courses in the disciplines of fine arts, film, music, drama, photography and ceramics. The actual content of the courses varied from term to term depending on the interests of the students and the teachers. It seemed to me that through the self-study the students gained greater access to their feelings and therefore to their creativity.

I began my research by interviewing ten students who had been at the school for at least one semester. I questioned them about their experiences in self-study at the school and about their work in creative media.

The next year I interviewed five new creative arts students at the beginning of the first semester and followed their progress



throughout the year in a series of interviews. I also kept a photographic record of their art work.

#### Summary of Research in this Area

Most of the published studies in the area of self-study and creativity have been done in the field of art therapy. What is usually under question is how self-knowledge and therapeutic results can be achieved through art processes. Thomas A. Regelski (1973) writes that the intrinsic qualities and values of the arts can help adolescents realize an authentic vision of self. Many other authors (Hodnett, 1973; Allen & White, 1971) propose the use of art therapy to achieve self-actualization through creativity.

Studies which investigate the effects of self-study on creativity are more difficult to find. Weissman (1972) examined the "Changes in self-regard, creativity and interpersonal behaviour as a function of audio-tape encounter-group experiences". The Semantic Differential, Barron-Welsh Art Scale and the FIRO-B were administered to a group of college students. The audio-tape encounter groups were found to be effective in that group members tended to become more imaginative in their solutions to problems when their thoughts and feelings became more accessible.

In my own study I decided not to use creativity tests because I felt they tested inventiveness but not the kind of creativity which is related to art; i.e., the ability to form symbols which are a true reflection of the artist's inner life.

This is confirmed by Torrance (1964), author of one of the most widely used tests for creativity. He writes that "The activities of the Bureau of Educational Research have not been involved with aspects

of creativity that might be directly applied to considerations peculiar to art education" (p.18).

Beittel (1964), in a study on the applicability of creativity tests, found that the tests used in his study, including some of these developed under J. P. Guilford, were of questionable value for an art population.

#### Method of Research

Since I was interested in the subjective experience of students and since the objectives of the institution under discussion are based on holistic concepts of Humanistic Education, I decided to use a phenomenological method of investigation.

Zurmuehlen (1980) in an article on phenomenology in doctoral research states that the phenomenological approach has become popular, in the last few years, as a method of research in many fields. In the field of art education, she states, Beittel is the art educator most often identified with phenomenology. This methodology "is the examination and description of experience as that experience is in its own terms" (Seamon, 1977, p.3726-A).

Just as the New School endeavours to educate the whole person, "who cannot be dismembered head from heart, cognitive from affective, course from course, school from private life" (Nemiroff, 1977, Appendix G), the phenomenologist seeks a holistic view of the subject's experience.

First, the phenomenologist--psychological or philosophical--accepts, as the subject matter of his inquiry, all data of experience (Erlebnis). I am using the word "datum" in its correct sense: "that which is given." Colours and sounds are data; so are impressions of distance and duration; so are feelings of attraction and repulsion; so are yearnings and fears, ecstasies and disillusionments; so are all the relations--ranging from the crude and obvious to the delicate and intangible--with which the world presents us. (MacLeod, 1964, p.51).

The phenomenological approach is apparent in my interest in the phenomenal world of the student; i.e., how he experiences and sees the external world around him. The students were asked to assess their subjective experiences of the self-study focus and of the creative processes at the school.

Rogers (1964), in an article on phenomenology as a way of knowing, points out that one such important way is "through the formation of inner hypotheses, which are checked by referring to our inner flow of experiencing as we live in our subjective interaction with inner or outer events" (p.111). This he suggests is true for all our daily living, and, although external stimuli may be involved, we check our hypotheses mainly by referring to our inner experiencing of the situation.

He goes on to state that one seeks knowledge of other human beings through "interpersonal knowing" (p.115). One can check one's hypothesis of the other's private world of meanings by asking the other outright if the hypothesis is correct, or by creating a climate which makes it psychologically safe and rewarding for the subject to reveal his internal frame of reference.

In the interviews with the students, I tried to create such a climate, so that through "interpersonal knowing" I could check my hypothesis as to the subjective experience of the students. Later, I studied the interviews and assessed their negative or positive feelings towards these experiences. In this way I tried to find the pattern of meaning which was inherent in these students' experiences at the New School.

Basically my hypothesis was that self-study is beneficial for creativity because it would enable the students to gain greater access

to their feelings and thus to their creativity.

According to Maslow (1972), the healthy person who creates has managed a fusion of both conscious and unconscious forces. If this is a necessary prerequisite for being creative, then it follows that it should be an important part of art education. The art teacher should be able to help the student to integrate conscious and unconscious forces. Certainly Maslow (1972) believes that the creative process can be assisted by a self-study orientation; that self-study helps people to have the courage to face and live with their unconscious drives and thus helps make them available for the creative process.

It is therefore important to investigate a teaching strategy by which this goal may be accomplished and to see how it affects the students and their art work.

#### The Context: The New School

The New School is an alternative program within Dawson College, a CEGEP or pre-university institution in the province of Quebec. The New School's orientation is based on the holistic principles of humanistic education (Nemiroff, 1977). That is, the student is seen as a whole person whose body, mind and emotions are all interrelated and equally important.

The basic premise of humanistic education is that people work best at what has explicit relevance and value to them. Thus the first function of the school is to put the students in touch with their own values and interests. From this basis of self-knowledge, the students are then encouraged to reach towards the full realization of every facet of their human potential.

The New School forms a small quasi-independent unit of 150 students within Dawson College. It occupies two floors of an office building and the students take all their courses from instructors who are on the New School teaching staff. The courses offered are in the Humanities, Social Sciences, Creative Arts and Literature and Language. The classes are small, not more than 15 students, and informal. Each subject is studied on a self-to-subject basis; that is, the student is asked to define what is personally relevant to him/her in the subject matter and then to pursue that area of interest.

There are no pre-ordained classes or schedules. Rather, the teachers form a resource group which is available to students. The students spend some days interviewing the staff and then negotiate and contract to do academic work singly or in groups on the basis of their assessment of their own needs and the convergence of these with a particular teacher's needs.

In an article on the New School, Greta Nemiroff (1977), its director, describes the two compulsory elements within the New School curriculum: the band and self-study.

Each term the student must join a primary affiliative group of approximately 15 students formed around a teacher. These groups are called "bands"; these function as cohesive groups in which the students can experience the declaration of their affiliative needs. Through various exercises, they determine levels of trust, of intimacy and accountability, share feelings and projects, and generally explore the functions groups play in their lives.

Concurrently with this, the students must identify a project of "self-study" and be accountable for it to their academic advisor.

Sometimes a group of students will meet regularly for the purpose of 'self-study' and report on their progress to a teacher. Some students elect to have one to one self-study sessions with a teacher. Each term, new approaches emerge from the students' needs.

In The New School: A Teacher's Handbook (Nemiroff, 1980), we are told that self-study need not be mystified, but rather that it is intended to develop self-examination skills and self-awareness. The New School stresses the value of being in the spotlight, developing the candor and confidence to open oneself to the band and to learn how to use and respond to the resources and perceptions of others. The "self" is treated holistically. The whole person is the subject: past, present, future hopes, needs, fears both public and private. To some extent, self-study removes the scales from the eyes; to another extent, it is an inventory of individual reality, intended to evaluate directions of increased potential. It is also a process of students achieving a deeper understanding of each other.

In the handbook, one of the teachers describes the self-study experience in a band:

One unique feature of the Band is the provision of 14 mirrors. "Mirror, mirror on the wall, how do I come across?"--But these mirrors have feelings. So we also have "Mirror, mirror, how do I affect you?" "What happens if I behave differently today?" The student can develop observation and listening skills, can learn to elicit, receive and provide meaningful feedback. Band members can learn new ways of behaving, and, when appropriate, begin to practise them in a situation which encourages risk for possible change...Is volleyball self-study? While any activity has the potential for self-study, that potential is only actualized when it is addressed. This is the responsibility of each band member. (Nemiroff, 1980, p.14).

#### Background Readings

##### The Validity of Self-study

The question arises as to how successful the self-study experiences are. There are, of course, various degrees of success in the self-study accomplished at the school as evidenced by the student's evaluation of the process.

Even though most psychological analysis is done with a trained specialist, and one can question the very feasibility and desirability of self-analysis, I feel that the attempt is justified.

In her book, Self-Analysis, Karen Horney (1942), discusses the feasibility and desirability of self-study from a psychologist's point of view. She points out that constructive self-analysis can be important for the individual in that it provides a chance for self-realization. She warns that self-analysis is a slow strenuous process, bound to be painful and upsetting, and at times requiring all available constructive energies.

It seemed to me that for the students this is true. Self-study is not a painless process and many individuals fight tooth and nail any recognition of the self. The incentive to self-knowledge must come from within the student. Self-study is only fruitful if the student has an incentive sufficiently powerful to come to grips with the self despite all the ordeals he/she may have to go through.

While a professional analyst has a great deal of knowledge and experience, each person knows him or herself best. In Karen Horney's opinion, this fact constitutes an important asset in self-analysis. It reduces the need for psychological knowledge and the strategical skill required of a professional analyst. The crucial difficulty in self-analysis lies in the emotional factors that blind us to unconscious forces.

Maslow (1972) states that finding out who one is--opening up oneself to oneself--means the exposure of psychopathology. It means identifying defenses, and after that it means the courage to give them up. This is painful because defenses are erected against something which is unpleasant.

But it is worthwhile because, for Maslow (1972), the people who can let down their defenses, who can face the unconscious urges within themselves, are those who can be creative.

He believes that this process can be helped along by psychotherapy. What happens is a fusion of the primary processes and the secondary processes. The unconscious doesn't become frightening any more. Creative persons can live with their unconscious. They can accept their childishness, their fantasy, their imagination, their wish fulfilment, their femininity, their poetic quality, their crazy quality; i.e., they can regress, voluntarily, in the service of the ego.

Maslow (1972) goes on to state that, although in the past our knowledge of primary processes was tainted by its association with pathology, irrationality and immaturity, we have now become aware through the study of healthy people that every human being is both poet and engineer, both child and adult; he/she is both rational and non-rational, both masculine and feminine, and lives in the psychic world and in the world of nature. To be creative one must be available to oneself on both the rational and the non-rational level.

To achieve this fusion within oneself, one can have recourse to psychotherapy or, as Maslow (1972) states, there are the possibilities of self-analysis and self-therapy.

Any technique which will increase self-knowledge in depth should.



in principle increase one's creativity by making available to oneself these sources of fantasy, play with ideas, being able to sail right out of the world and off the earth; getting away from common sense. (Maslow, 1972, p.93).

### Definitions of Creativity

The International Encyclopedia of Psychiatry, Psychology, Psychoanalysis, and Neurology (1977) states that there is no clear definition of creativity accepted by all. The problem of how to evaluate creativity, i.e., what criterion to use, remains unsolved.

Originality or uniqueness is generally stated to be the most important single element in the creative product and in creative thinking in general. This could be in the form of a new solution to a problem, a new way or style of giving expression to an idea or feeling, or any novel discovery or invention.

But originality is not enough. The encyclopedia states that the creative product must also be useful and adaptive to reality. The usefulness of a scientific discovery or theory is easily recognized as a solution to a problem. The creative artist gives expression to an idea or feeling previously unexpressed. Ingenuity, cleverness and aesthetic appeal are also cited by the encyclopedia as being characteristic of the creative product.

I find this definition unsatisfactory as it does not tell us very much about the causes of artistic creativity. Granted that the creative artist gives expression to an idea or feeling. But why does he/she do this? For what purpose is the creative art product made and how does the artist achieve this purpose?

Susanne K. Langer (1964) defines artistic creativity as a way of objectifying feeling so that we can contemplate and understand it.

"Art objectifies the sentience and desire, self-consciousness and world consciousness, emotions and moods, that are generally regarded as irrational because words cannot give us clear ideas of them" (p.80).

I find this definition of the art process much more satisfactory.

#### How the Mind Functions in the Creative Process

Art objectifies or gives form to our subjective experience of reality. But how does the mind function in this process?

What is the nature of the act of creative thought? Harold Rugg (1963) tells us that some autonomous forming process sweeps like a magnet across the chaotic elements of the mind, picks up significant segments and, in a welding flash, precipitates the creative response.

It is generally accepted that there are four stages to the creative act. First a conscious preparatory period of baffled struggle, then a period of relaxation, of forgetting the problem, and finally, a blinding and unexpected flash of insight which is followed by verification.

Harold Rugg explains that the first part of the act is governed by what he calls felt-thought. This refers to the motor qualities of the act which he associates with body-mind gesture; i.e., the pattern you create, in a work of art or in a way of knowing, mirrors the muscular pattern of your whole organism and its particular response to life.

According to Harold Rugg, there are two ways of knowing; an inside identification with the object and an outside measured observation of it. Inside identification is the East's great doctrine of release of the conscious mind, the "no mind" of Tao or Zen. This kind of intuitive knowledge is gained through access to what Rugg calls the transliminal mind. This is a state between the conscious and non-

conscious that has access to both.

The ingredients of creative mind accumulate continuously in the nervous and motor systems in a fusion of perceptual tracings and motor adjustments. Reconstructed below the threshold of awareness, these appear in the transliminal mind as a kaleidoscope of fantasy imagery. New concepts, realistic or autistic, are formed from these four-fold materials--percepts, motor adjustment, images, and old concepts. These constitute the stuff of mind. (Rugg, 1963, p.62).

To have access to this part of the mind one must be able to reach what Rugg calls the "threshold state." This is a conscious state; yet it has access to the unconscious. This state of mind is relaxed and receptive to messages, but it is also magnetic, with a dynamic forming power. It resembles the light trance state of hypnosis, although not hypnotically induced or controlled. It partakes of both the hypnagogic, marking the drowsy state between waking and sleeping, and the hypnopompic, the state between sleeping and waking. There are many ways of reaching this trance state: through drugs, or the meditation techniques of the East. Or, ~~for~~ the western artist, Blake's intuitive way of the imagination, or Cezanne's perception-in-depth. All these give one access to the transliminal, creative mind.

Rugg's study reveals the following factors which are present in this off-conscious state and which he believes contain intrinsically the explanation of the secret of the creative flash. The first is utter concentration of attention on the goal to the exclusion of outer and inner stimuli. The second is the continuous scanning or searching movement of the total organism uninterruptedly seeking completion. The third, the flash of meaning, is achieved when the adjustment of the organism to the demands of the situation has reached a perfect fit.

How is this adjusting, searching process carried on? Rugg tells us that he has found a series of mutually corroborative hypotheses

which supply the most plausible theory:

first, that the brain-mind works continually as a modeling computer, averaging through feedback the organism's learned (stored) assumptions; second, that the brain-mind's alpha rhythm is the mechanism that scans for the best fit; third, that the mind-brain continually computes the changing space-time coordinates; fourth, that the complete freedom of the transliminal state, in which the computing is done, permits a cumulative, organic, motor-feeling factor, a suggesting, determining tendency to complete the act, a motor-adjustment of imminence; fifth, that the total act is carried on in a bipolar fusion of perception of outer-scene and drive of inner stress-system. (1963, p.309).

Rugg concludes his description of the creative act by juxtaposing the foregoing with a theory of knowing via the two-fold symbolic act: felt-thought through gesture-symbol, and verbalized thought through name-symbol.

He states that from conception to the second year of life or up until the development of speech, we know only by the gesture of movement, and with each movement both motor-adjustments and images are being traced on the nervous system.

But from the second year to death, most recorded acts have verbal concomitants. Language via the naming process increasingly becomes the way the child knows and copes with his world. The infant learns to talk by naming things in his environment and thus masters the abstract conceptual meaning of it.

This is a critical stage in the symbolizing process. The word, as name, completes the conceptualizing process. The child starts by ascribing the word "water" to a concrete thing but learns eventually to abstract meaning so that "water" does not only stand for a specific thing but for the idea of water.

As the symbol "water" operates by suggesting a set of meanings, so does a metaphor. As Langer states: "In a genuine metaphor, an image

of the literal meaning is our symbol for the figurative meaning, the thing that has no name of its own" (1969, p.139).

This forming of a metaphor to make a symbol for that feeling or idea which has no name is what Langer (1953) states is the basic process of art.

Art for Langer is a way of knowing, and Rugg shows us that this is done through the two-fold symbolic act described above.

### The Creative Personality

We still have not answered the question which is of interest to artists both young and old--and their audience. Am I an artist? Is this art? How do we judge a work of art? What is the purpose of art?

Daniel Schneider (1954) gives us his criterion for artistic creativity. According to Schneider, artists must have an awareness of the unconscious and be sensitive to dreaming. Above all they must be sensitive to their own impermissible impulses and impossible ideas. They must be able to dream in symbols of great economic power and be able to weave together the radiance of these symbols in such a way and with such an interpretive relation to reality as to create the illusion of something alive so that each who comes to look at, listen or touch their work feels him/herself caught in this dream become art. Thus he/she is stimulated and relieved, via identification with the artist's characters or symbolic objects, in physical pleasure varying from relaxation to orgiastic experience, in spiritual enjoyment of the tragic, comic or contemplative.

The artist communicates his/her vision of reality in such a way that we participate in the emotions generated by this vision and thus attain a better understanding of the world and its meaning.

Like Rugg, Maslow (1971) tells us that, in the inspirational phase, creative persons lose their past and their future and live only in the moment. Creative persons must be able to lose themselves in the experience. They must be able to become timeless, selfless, outside of space, of society, of history.

This experience is always described as a loss of self or of ego, or sometimes as a transcendence of self. There is a fusion with the reality being observed (with the matter-in-hand, I shall say more neutrally), a oneness where there was a twoness, an integration of some sort of the self with the non-self. (Maslow, 1972, p.62).

For creative persons to be able to "trance-out" in this manner, they must have a certain kind of personality, they must be courageous and unafraid of the unknown outside or inside themselves. They must be able to, according to Maslow (1972), let themselves be completely uncritical. They must be able to allow all sorts of ideas to come into the head. Then, and only then, will creative persons become rational, controlled and critical so that they can reject the bad ideas and retain the useful ones. Creative people are those who can be like this when they want to be; that is, they can regress at will in the service of the ego. Truly integrated persons can be both childish and mature. They can regress and then come back to reality, becoming then more rational and critical in their responses.

Baron's book, Creativity and Mental Health (1963), is a thorough study of the creative personality. In the tests that he administered to a group of professional and student writers, he found that both these groups of writers were significantly superior to the general population in social-presence, self-acceptance, capacity for social status, psychological-mindedness, and achievement through independence. They obtained much lower scores in achievement via conformance, and

also made rather lower scores on socialization. Baron, I think, correctly interprets these scores as a resistance to enculturation from the creative individual. The so-called socialization process is often seen by the creative individual as a demand for the sacrifice of his individuality.

These characteristics are very close to those described by Maslow (1968) as being characteristic of the self-actualized person.

1. superior perception of reality;
2. increased acceptance of self, others, of nature;
3. increased spontaneity;
4. increase in problem centering;
5. increased detachment and desire for privacy;
6. increased autonomy, and resistance to enculturation;
7. greater freshness of appreciation, and richness of emotional reaction;
8. higher frequency of peak experiences;
9. increased identification with the human species;
10. more democratic character structure;
11. changed (the clinician would say improved) interpersonal relations;
12. greatly increased creativity;
13. certain changes in the value system. (p.26)

We can see that both Maslow and Baron see the creative or self-actualized person as having independence, courage and openness to experience as part of their personality traits. In addition, the International Encyclopedia of Psychiatry (1977) lists autonomy and self-assurance as well as a liking for complexity and challenge and an interest in a wide range of intellectual subjects as characteristic of the creative personality.

#### Creativity and the Neurotic Process

The encyclopedia goes on to say that there are a few misconceptions which have come to typify the creative individual or the artist. This is the belief that creative people tend to be mentally unbalanced. Although it is true that some highly creative people have been quite

disturbed, the total picture does not support such a relationship. It is true that in several studies, the Minnesota Multiphasic Personality Inventory (MMPI) profiles of creative persons were markedly elevated. This in general would indicate a leaning toward psychopathology. But when these scores are taken in the context of self-reports of the same people and their complete personality, they are more suggestive of complexity and richness of personality, candor in self-description and a general lack of defensiveness. There might be more conflict and turbulence but also superior mechanisms of control.

Schneider points out that part of the process in psychoanalysis is to rearrange the ego-system in such a way that the inappropriate inhibiting and periodically collapsing defenses will be replaced by more appropriate and valid defenses so that the ego becomes stronger. That is, sheer beaten renunciation will result only in pathological transformation, ritualistic religion, or rigidly compulsive character traits which imprison the ego rather than free it for creative transformation.

For Kubie (1961) as well, the measure of mental health is flexibility; i.e., the freedom to learn through experience, to change with changing internal and external circumstances and to be influenced by reasonable argument and the appeal to emotions. It is also the freedom to respond appropriately to reward and punishment and to cease when sated. The essence of illness is the freezing of behaviour into unalterable and insatiable patterns. It is this which characterizes every manifestation of psychopathology, whether in impulse, purpose, act, thought, or feeling.

The influence of this rigidity can be observed in the stereotyped.



repetitiousness of form and content in the works of the musician, the poet or the painter who repeat the same theme in the same style over and over again.

Kubie believes that either the conscious or the unconscious processes, if they have the upper hand, can block access to the preconscious which is the source of creativity.

Therefore, for him, neurosis corrupts, mars and distorts creativeness in every field, and though the artist tends to try and hide his/her unconscious from the probings of the psychoanalyst in fear that getting well will mar his/her creative drive, the opposite is true. For Kubie believes that where unconscious influences play a dominant role, the creative process in science or art becomes almost identical with the neurotic process. The unconscious conflicts are merely transmuted into some socially and artistically acceptable form.

Thus for Kubie the goal is to free the preconscious from both the obstruction of the conscious and unconscious processes. The conscious can evaluate and correct. The unconscious can spur it on. But creativity is a product of preconscious activity.

In artistic creation, Ernst Kris (1952) states, the idea of a public always exists, though the artist may attribute the role only to one real or imaginary person. This, Kris tells us, has been true whenever psychoanalytic investigation of artistic creation has taken place. When artists create, they and the work are one, but when they look upon their work after the phase of inspiration, they see it from the outside. That is, as Maslow would say, they switch from the primary process to the secondary process of rational evaluation.

But in the creation of the insane, the shift back to critical

evaluation is minimized. While in initial phases of psychotic states, productive power increases and the works of art are frequently most significant to the public, in later stages of the psychosis, the work tends to lose its meaning for the public. The endless stereotypical variations of one theme, in word or shape, gain for the insane a new meaning unintelligible to others. These productions are no longer meant to influence the mind of an audience but are intended to transform the external world. Art, Kris states, has deteriorated from communication to sorcery.

Kris goes on to show a collection of psychotic art productions. Here he points out that one is struck by the rigidity and stiffness with which the human figure is rendered. This could be the result of lack of skill or practice, but the same shift into rigidity can be seen in the work of artists who become psychotic.

Kris examines the case of the psychotic sculptor Messerschmidt (1736-1784). When he acted as a portraitist, he remained a master, hardly influenced by his delusions. But when he attempted a series of self-portraits showing various emotions, they seem exaggerated and masklike, superimposed on utter emptiness. Kris tells us that this was an emptiness which Messerschmidt felt in himself when attempting to establish contact with others.

Human mimic expression is addressed to the other person; it aims at contact. It is this contact which is loosened in the schizophrenic process and broken in cataconic conditions. In other words the artist achieves communication; the psychotic cannot because he is out of touch with his own emotions.

The artist, Kris states, creates, not to transform the outer world

as the psychotic does, but to depict it for others he wishes to influence. The task of production has a definite realistic meaning. The artist proceeds by trial and error; he learns and changes. The psychotic artist creates in order to transform the real world, through a kind of magic. He needs no audience and his modes of expression remain unchanged once the psychotic process has reached a certain intensity.

Thus, to be sane, for Kris as well as for Kubie and for Schneider, means to be flexible in relation to reality.

What about those artists Grant (1968) calls the "great abnormals" such as Kafka, Van Gogh, Strindberg, and Edgar Allan Poe? Grant talks about these men, each rated as a genius on the level of his capacities but markedly flawed in their ability to adjust to the normal vicissitudes of life. For the most part, this was due to internal insecurities, real or imagined inadequacies. These led in each case to some degree of emotional crippling almost every time an effort was made to live outside the special terrain of genius. None had happy or fulfilled lives; all expressed their frustrations and internal conflicts in artistic creations which now help us to understand certain common human problems.

As Kubie pointed out, the neurotic artist is blocked and repeats himself in form and content even though he may find a socially and artistically acceptable form of expression. Grant shows this to be true in his study, the Great Abnormals. Kubie believes that the artist can be helped by psychotherapy to become both a better human being and a better artist.

#### Psychotherapy and the Healthy Person's Creativity

But what about ordinary people? How would their creativity be helped by psychotherapy?

Marion Milner (1957), in her book On Not Being Able To Paint, delves into the relationship between her efforts as an amateur to paint and her experiences in psychoanalysis.

In a foreword to this book, Anna Freud points out the similarities between Marion Milner's attempts to rid herself of the obstacles which prevent her from painting with those that prevent her from free association and from uncovering her unconscious mind--sources of an analyst's therapeutic work.

In both ventures, Anna Freud states that there is the same need for circumstances in which it is safe to be absent-minded; i.e., for conscious logic to be absent from one's mind. There is the same unwillingness to go beyond the reassuring limits of the secondary process and to accept the chaos of the primary process as a temporary stage. (Trigant Burrow (1964) explains the primary process as being a state of oneness with the world, a process that derives from the infant's subjective identification with the mother.) There is the same fear of the plunge into non-differentiation (between subject and object) and the disbelief in the spontaneous ordering forces (as in Rugg's mind computer) which emerge. She tells us that it evidently demands as much courage from the beginning painter to look at objects in the external world and see them without clear and compact outlines as it demands courage from the beginning analyst to look at his inner world.

Both are rewarded for their courage by a surprise both in form and content. The result of analysis is the inner experience of formerly unknown affects and impulses which find their final outlet in the ego-process of verbalization and deliberate action. In the creative process in art, the unknown affects and impulses find an outlet in the way the

artist arranges his medium to form harmonies of shapes, colours or sounds. This is achieved, according to Marion Milner, by a joining of that split between mind and body that can result from trying to limit thinking to thinking only in words. Like Maslow she believes that artists must be able to regress to the primary process where they are at one with the world so that they can be creative. And like Rugg she believes that we know with our body as well as with our mind.

Courage, then, seems to be the common ingredient needed both for psychotherapy and for creativity.

#### Courage in Creativity and Self-study

Rollo May (1975) tells us that courage is the main ingredient the artist needs in seeking to know both the inner and the outer world.

Carl Rogers (1970) points out that the courage to overcome fear of change is an important ingredient as well in encounter groups:

Putting it in my own words: encounter groups lead to more personal independence, fewer hidden feelings, more willingness to innovate, more opposition to institutional rigidities. Hence, if a person is fearful of change in any form, he is rightly fearful of encounter groups. They breed constructive change, as will be evident in the chapters that follow. (p.13)

Courage is needed both in self-study and in creativity. The courage to let go of conscious control is needed, as Anna Freud has told us, by both the analysand and the potential artist. Courage to face and to use constructively whatever emotions come up from the unconscious is also needed. Of course in artistic creation one also needs a lot of skill and hard work but without the necessary courage these are useless.

Why is courage needed? Is there any real danger to meet? Yes, I think there is a real danger to which the artist is exposed. As Ernst Kris (1952) tells us, there is the danger that the artist will be overwhelmed by the primary process; the protection against this danger

lies in the function of the ego, in its capacity for sublimation. The artist must be able to regress in the service of the ego but he/she must also be able to control this regression. As Lowenfeld (1964) states, self-expression is the transformation into constructive forms of the feelings, emotions and thoughts of an individual.

#### Implications for Art Education

Therefore in education, and especially in art education, I would suggest that there is a need for a more holistic experience of knowing. Kubie (1961) tells us that the goal should be to free preconscious processes from the distortions and obstructions interposed by unconscious processes and from the pedestrian limitations of conscious processes.

The unconscious can spur it on. The conscious can criticize and correct and evaluate. But creativity is a product of preconscious activity. This is the challenge which confronts the education of the future. (p.148)

Rugg (1963) tells us that, in order to do this, we will have to return to the ways of the old wise men, the ways of intuitive identification with man and the world. He adds that we have had thinking of the rational, analytical kind, but no understanding of the crucial role of the feeling which molds it into felt-thought, thereby bringing about creative discovery. We have had millions of hours of training in logical reasoning but almost none devoted to the cultivation of the imagination.

He goes on to state that under Parker and Dewey, we built schools that were free from external restrictions, but that now we must build schools where the inner freedom of the relaxed, threshold-mind of intuitive discovery is fostered. For, as Marion Milner (1957) argues, educational methods have increased the hate resulting from the primary disillusion; i.e., from the first split between the self and world (or mother). One of the ways of healing that split, at least temporarily, according to her,

is through an art process where the artist merges with the subject, where the boundaries between self and world are temporarily erased.

Indeed, Maslow (1972) tells us that children are capable of peak experiences (emotional ecstasy, intellectual illumination or at oneness with the world) and that the present school system is an extremely effective instrument for crushing peak experiences and forbidding their possibility. The kind of teacher whom he would see as fostering such experiences would be the Taoist helper or the teacher who is receptive rather than intrusive; one who would accept people and help them learn what kind of people they already are. What is their style? What are their aptitudes? What are they good for? What can they build upon? The teacher must be nonthreatening and supply an atmosphere of acceptance of the child's nature, reducing fear, anxiety and defensiveness to a minimum. Above all there would be care for the child and enjoyment of his/her growth and self-actualization. This "brings the child out" and permits the child to be expressive, to act, to experiment and even to make mistakes. Maslow advises suitable feedback at this point, as in T-groups or basic encounter groups, to help the child discover the self.

Lowenfeld (1964) stresses that the psychological environment in an art class may be the most important factor involved in the creative process. He adds that the attitude one has developed toward oneself and the worth that one feels about one's contribution can play an important part in the creative process. He admits that in addition to this there is the problem of developing skills or the means by which creativity can become unleashed. But he feels that, although it is this last area which is usually emphasized, the development of competencies in art will bear little relationship to the development of creativity unless all the factors considered above

are involved in the planning process.

At the beginning of my readings I was trying to find if there was any corroboration for what I felt intuitively; i.e., if there was a relationship between self-study and creativity. I also wanted to find out what other factors were important in this relationship (beyond those of teaching competency in particular technical skills).

After a three-year search, I feel that I have found a way to answer most of my questions. Theoretically, the relationship between self-study and creativity seems to be based on the premise that, to be creative, one must be unafraid of one's self. One must have enough confidence and courage to let go of the conscious process in order to reach the free creative flow of the preconscious process and be mentally healthy enough not to be blocked by the unconscious process.

Self-study can help some to reach this goal. While it can be helpful, I do not think that it is necessary to have art students take part in encounter groups concurrently. Perhaps it would be preferable if self-study could be integrated into the art classroom experience. As Lowenfeld (1964) writes,

A drawing can provide the opportunity for emotional growth and the extent to which this is accomplished is in direct relation to the intensity with which the creator identifies with his work. Although this is not easily measured, the stages of self-identification range from a low level of involvement with stereotyped repetitions to a high level where the creator is truly involved in portraying things that are meaningful and important to him, and where, particularly in young children he appears in the picture himself. It is here that there is the best opportunity for emotional release. (p.23)

Brian Way (1967), in a book on developmental drama, tells us that in teaching one must start from the level of readiness of the student and help him to discover and explore his resources in all aspects of the personality; that is, imagination, the senses, verbalization,



emotion, intellect and the use, mastery and control of the physical self.

I feel at this point that the type of teacher who could help the student enter into the experiences described by Lowenfeld and Brian Way would be the "Taoist", supportive teacher that Maslow describes. For if courage is one of the main ingredients needed for creativity, then one of the main tasks of an art teacher would be to help the student overcome fears.

### The Research Project

As part of my research project, I interviewed 15 creative arts students at the New School of Dawson College to see how they felt about their experiences in the self-study and the creative arts programs. I was interested, as I indicated earlier, in a phenomenological approach and therefore based my study on the students' subjective experience of their situation.

From my background readings I now have a theoretical frame in which to see the relationship between self-study and creativity. At this point I would like to look at the interviews to see if this relationship can be found in the students' subjective concepts of their educational experience.

## Method

### Subjects

The subjects were 15 students (six males and nine females) between the ages of 18 and 22. They were registered in the Creative Arts Program (visual arts, drama, music, film and photography) at the New School of Dawson College in Canada, situated at Montreal, Quebec. Ten of the students (chosen at random and engaged in different areas of creative arts) had spent at least one semester at the New School previous to the interviews. The remaining five students (chosen at random and all involved in the visual arts program) were beginning their first semester at the New School. Their progress was followed throughout the course of one year except for one student who dropped out after the first semester.

### Procedure

First, the ten students (who had spent at least one semester at the New School) were interviewed and these interviews were tape recorded on cassettes. Slides were made of their art work wherever this was applicable.

Similarly the five students (who were just beginning) were interviewed at the start of the first semester and then this was continued throughout the course of one year so as to follow their progress in the self-study and creative arts curriculum throughout that year. These interviews were recorded on cassette tapes and slides were made of their art work wherever possible (approximately half of their total output) so that there would be a record of the creative process.

Transcripts of the interviews dealing with self-study and creativity were typed and are included in the appendix. In the thesis deposited in the Department of Art Education slides of the students' art work are included in the appendix.

A signed release form was obtained from each student. An example of this form is included in the appendix.

The interviews centered around these questions:

1. Do you think of yourself as creative?
2. How would you define your own particular kind of creativity?
3. Do you feel that you've experienced self-study at the New School?
4. How would you define self-study?

In the interviews of the five students who were at the start of their first semester the discussions still revolved around these four main questions. These also included more in-depth discussion of their particular experiences at the school during the two semesters in which the students were followed.

First I will make a synopsis of each interview, stressing the negative or positive feelings of the student towards self-study and creativity and discussing these reactions in the context of their lives. Then a table will be presented correlating the positive and negative involvement of the students in self-study and in creativity.

Criteria for ascertaining positive or negative feelings towards self-study and creativity: the author based her judgment on the students' answers to the four main questions in the interviews.

Feelings towards self-study: In a group situation

Positive: the student asserts that the self-study undertaken was a useful experience in terms of self-understanding and personal growth.

Negative: the student asserts that he/she did not personally benefit from the self-study experiences undertaken at the school.

Non-group self-study: Some students felt negative about their

self-study experiences in a group but positive about doing self-study on their own or on a one-to-one basis. This was also taken into account.

Student's feelings about his/her own creativity:

Positive: the student asserts that he/she thinks of himself as creative and defines his/her own particular kind of creativity. His/her creative work was, if possible, looked at and discussed as to how he/she felt about it and what hopes and plans he/she had for the future.

Negative: the student asserts that he/she feels discouraged about his/her creative work and did not think he/she would carry on with it in the future.

Finally, I will discuss in detail three selected interviews that were of particular interest, showing three different kinds of interaction between self-study and the creative process, the latter as experienced by the students in visual arts studio courses.

Interview no. 1: student feels positive about self-study and  
(Student no. 9) positive about the creative process.

Interview no. 2: student feels positive about self-study and  
(Student no. 7) positive about the creative process but stops all  
creative activity after one year.

Interview no. 3: student feels negative about self-study and  
(Student no. 8) negative about the creative process.

### Results

On the whole, I found that the students who felt positive about their experience of the self-study process also felt positive about their experience of the creative process (in the visual arts, drama, music, film or photography). Those who felt negative towards their self-study experience also felt negative about their creativity--except for one student who felt negative about her self-study but positive about her creativity. There were however five students who, although they felt positive about self-study on an individual basis, did not feel positive about self-study in a group. They did feel positive about their creativity.

Baron (1963) in his profile on the creative personality shows that lower scores are usually obtained by creative people in "Achievement via Conformance and Socialization" tests. Baron interprets these scores as a resistance to enculturation by the creative individual. That is, creative people are less likely to achieve their goals through conformity or assimilation to the standards of a group. They are more likely to set their own goals and carry them through on an individual basis.

This might explain the resistance of the five students to self-study in a group situation. In this situation, the pressures of the group to influence the individual in a particular direction can be very strong, and students who are self-determined may tend to resent it.

### Synopsis of the Interviews

The ten students who had spent at least one semester at the school:

Student no. 1. This student felt positive about his creativity and positive about self-study on a one-to-one basis but ambivalent about group experiences. He is basically insecure in his relationship with people but comes from a family of practising artists and has considerable skill in drawing and painting. He has high goals for originality in creativity and knows he has not reached these yet. Although he is socially insecure and therefore ambivalent about group experiences, he is basically open to new directions and is capable of self-study especially in a one-to-one with a staff member.

Student no. 2. This student felt positive about both her self-study experiences and her creativity. She felt that self-study and the band helped her to express herself verbally and this helped her to express herself through art (drawing and painting). The self-study process also helped her to accept and like herself and thus her work. She learned to trust her feelings and to express these feelings in drawing or painting.

Student no. 3. This student felt positive about both his self-study experiences and his creativity. For him, music and photography are ways of expressing his emotions. He is already an accomplished musician and, although only a year older than most of the students, has already earned his living as a musician. Therefore, though the banding process helped him to face some of his problems, he felt that he acted more as a catalyst in the others' self-study processes. Being already quite mature and self-confident for his age, he did not profit as much from the band experience as others.

Student no. 4. This student was ambivalent about his self-study experiences in a group but positive about self-study on his own. He also felt positive about his creativity. He is productive in many media, imaginative, and given to creating fantasy worlds. But he is not always at ease socially and is, as he states, the kind of student who would do a lot of self-study or introspection on his own. The school did however force some situations which caused reflection. This helped him to examine his inner reality and see it from other points of view and helped him ultimately to be more at ease socially.

Student no. 5. This student felt negative about self-study in a group but positive about self-study on her own. She felt positive about her creativity. For her, being creative consisted in applying her imagination to the construction of a character in drama. She sees herself as introspective and given to analyzing herself, so she does not feel that she got very much out of the self-study in the band as she would have done it on her own anyway. But the school did give her the opportunity and confidence to explore drama as a means of expression.

Student no. 6. This student felt positive about both his self-study experiences and his creativity. He has a strong creative drive in drama and film. He sees any medium as a vehicle for expressing himself and his emotions. He feels that he profited greatly from the self-study experience in that he learned to stop putting on masks and accept himself, and trust others to accept him. However he is still wary of the outside world.

Student no. 7. This student believed that she had had good self-study experiences at the school. She became very creative in her first two semesters of drawing and painting. However, in her third semester

she got frightened because she felt she was revealing too much of her sensitivity in her painting and she couldn't take the criticism of her work by other students. In her fourth semester she stopped drawing and painting altogether and decided to study literature and history in the university.

Student no. 8. This student felt negative about both his self-study and his creative arts experiences at the school. The school counsellor thought that this student was too disturbed to participate in group encounter sessions. He was already seeing a guidance counsellor once a week. His thoughts were often disconnected as can be seen in the interview and his drawings were rigid and caricaturish. Although socially he relaxed a little in the atmosphere of the school he did not gain much, in his own estimation, from the self-study. He left after one semester.

Student no. 9. This student felt positive about both her creativity and her self-study experiences. She came to school because she felt a lack of personal contact with people where she was studying before. She became very involved in the self-study groups in the school and very active in the community. Having dealt with her emotional needs, she started trying out various creative activities. She got very involved in drama and painting and, after some initial struggles in trying to reproduce visual reality, she found that art was an expressive medium and used it to express her emotions and allow a flow of fantasy wherein she eventually developed her own world. For this student, the exploration of her emotions in the self-study groups and the exploration of her emotions in art were closely linked.



Student no. 10. This student felt positive about his self-study experiences and his creativity. He considers himself creative because of the originality of his ideas. He wants to express himself through film and photography but feels insecure about his technical means. In his own opinion he is generally insecure in his dealings with people and therefore often aggressive and loud. He used the self-study in the band to help him work out this problem.

#### Synopsis of the Interviews

The five students who were interviewed at the beginning of their first year and followed throughout the year:

Student no. 11. This student started the year resenting the compulsory nature of the band and the group focus of the school. Her attitude towards self-study in a group remained ambivalent for the rest of the year but she felt capable of, and was given to, much introspection. She felt positive about her creative processes. At the beginning she felt that the band interfered with her interest in the fine arts courses. By the end of the first semester she felt quite happy with the band and felt that she had done much useful self-study.

In the second semester she gained new confidence in her creative development as she acquired some useful technical skills. She now felt very disturbed by the whole idea of compulsory self-study within a band situation and by the feeling that she was being pushed into being a certain kind of person. She did feel however that she had done some useful self-study both in the band and in the self-portrait group. She felt she was also successful, at least to some degree, in fulfilling her desire to be able to express her emotions through art.

Student no. 12. This student felt negative about her self-study experiences and positive about her creativity. At the beginning of the year she thought that bands and self-study were good ideas because they helped people make contact with each other and break down the usual barriers of non-communication in this society. For herself, she felt it would help her to learn more about how she interrelated with other people. At the same time, she was afraid that she did not have the competence to deal with other students' problems, especially deep psychological ones.

She liked the art classes in that they emphasized inter-communication between the students. Through the art classes she clarified her goals in art and decided that she wanted to go to Delorimier Campus for a three-year design course. By the end of the first semester, she expressed satisfaction with her experiences in the band and the self-study. She felt that she had been able to see herself and how she related to other people more clearly. However, by the end of the year she expressed great dissatisfaction with the band, felt it was too conflicting and tiring, and that other people's problems brought down her own energy level especially as she had enough conflicts of her own to deal with. She had applied to Delorimier and was looking forward to dealing with colour, line and form. She agreed that what you do with these reflects what is going on inside you, but this was not the main focus of her art work.

Student no. 13. This student felt positive about self-study on her own but negative about self-study in a group. She felt positive about her creativity. In her first semester she liked her band and the self-study which went on it. She felt that she had learned to speak

out in a group and give feedback and support to other students.

Although she felt that her own self-study had not been that good, she had learned to see her relationships to other people, especially her parents, more clearly. She found the evaluations at the end of the semester very useful, especially in her drawing class.

She said that it was very important for her to express what she felt and what she thought, but that she usually did this in her writing rather than in her drawing and painting. Ideally, her paintings would be politically and socially conscious.

However, by the end of the second semester she felt more confident in her art work than in her written work and felt she would continue with this after she left the New School. Her experience in the band the second semester was not as good as it had been. She felt she could do better self-study on her own and had outgrown the need for a band.

Student no. 14. This student felt negative about both her self-study and her creative processes. When she came to the school she liked the idea of the New School as a place where different sorts of people could get to know each other, but she was apprehensive about self-study and afraid of what she might learn if she looked too deeply into herself.

Although at the beginning of the semester she had expressed great interest in pursuing a career in fine arts, by the end of the semester she had decided to go to secretarial school and to paint only in her spare time. She said that the school had helped her to be less shy with people, but that she had not done self-study in any great depth. However, through listening to other people's problems, she had realized how secure her own family life was, and how important that security, including financial security, was to her. This was one of the factors in her

decision to quit the New School after the first semester and to attend a secretarial school run by nuns.

Student no. 15. This student felt positive about both her self-study and her creative experiences within the school. Although she expected "bullshit" when she came to the school, she found that there was none. She liked the band and the self-study which allowed her to see herself as others saw her. Her second semester band was not as successful but she carried on her self-study in other learning groups and in one-to-ones with her peers within the school. She came into the school wanting to do fine arts. She had already done a lot of imaginative drawing and painting wherein she could let her unconscious feelings flow onto the paper. In the school she acquired skills in reproducing visual reality which she felt would be useful in embodying her fantasies. She is very determined to go on with her studies in fine arts and make her mark as a painter.

Table 1

## Students' Negative and Positive Feelings about Self-study and Creativity

Student	Student's feelings about self-study		Student's feelings about his/her own creativity
	Group self-study	Non-group self-study	
S-1	Negative	Positive	Positive
S-2	Positive		Positive
S-3	Positive		Positive
S-4	Negative	Positive	Positive
S-5	Negative	Positive	Positive
S-6	Positive		Positive
S-7	Positive		Positive and then negative
S-8	Negative		Negative
S-9	Positive		Positive
S-10	Positive		Positive
S-11	Negative	Positive	Positive
S-12	Negative		Positive
S-13	Negative	Positive	Positive
S-14	Negative		Negative
S-15	Positive		Positive

Note. Of the students interviewed at the end of one or more semesters,

5 of 10 had positive self-study experiences correlating with positive creative experiences.

3 of 10 had negative self-study experiences in a group but positive self-study on an individual basis correlating with positive creative experiences.

1 of 10 had negative self-study experiences correlating with negative creative experiences.

1 of 10 had positive self-study and creative experiences but then stopped creating.

Of the students chosen at the beginning of the program and followed throughout the year,

1 of 5 had positive self-study and creative experiences.

2 of 5 had positive self-study experiences on an individual basis correlating with positive creative experiences but felt negative about self-study in a group.

1 of 5 had negative self-study experiences and positive creative experience.

1 of 5 had negative self-study experiences correlating with negative creative experiences.

### In-depth Analysis of Selected Interviews

Having seen the overall picture for the 15 interviews I would now like to discuss, in detail, three interviews which were of particular interest to me.

In Interview no. 1 (with Student no. 9), I was interested in the relationship between the student's self-study experiences and the freeing of creative forces which she said she experienced at the New School.

In Interview no. 2 (with Student no. 7), I was interested in exploring why the student indicated that she had positive experiences in self-study and in creativity but then became 'frightened by the creative process and stopped drawing and painting altogether.

In Interview no. 3 (with Student no. 8), I was interested in the disassociation and lack of affect which can be seen both in the student's relationship to people and in his drawings.

Interview no. 1. This student felt positive about both her self-study experience at the school and her creativity. What interests me about Interview no. 1 is the parallel between the student's self-exploration statements and her statements that indicate a freeing of subconscious and creative forces. That these take place at the same time and in this one environment is, I believe, not just a matter of chance. Maslow (1972) states that the healthy person who creates has managed a fusion of deeper self and conscious self. He believes that it is possible to help this process by psychotherapy. The person who has achieved this integration of primary processes and secondary processes can then "live with his unconscious, his childishness, his fantasy, his imagination, his wish fulfillment, his femininity, his

poetic quality and his crazy quality" (p.89).

In this interview I believe it is possible to see how the student came to the New School in search of closer and more meaningful relationships. She fulfilled this need through the bands and through the explorations of her own emotions in self-study. She then explored her creativity in various media.

I interviewed this student after she had been at the school for two years. She had previously attended Vanier College for two years, majoring in biology. She had chosen biology because she wanted to be outside, in nature, but had found the actual classification meaningless.

(I stands for interviewer and S for student).

I: So then you came here, you came to the New School; at the beginning did you have any particular idea of what you wanted to do here?

S: No, I just wanted to try to do something different. I did not really know what the New School was about. It seemed different, friendlier; there was some human contact and that's what I really needed. Vanier I found was a very cold place; I didn't make connections, especially in the department that I was in. It was all related to subject matter and not related to the self, and that was important to me, and I took a course when I was there called "Reaching Out" and that gave me a taste of what this school could be about and I liked and I wanted to come here and find out.

I: When you came here what did you pick? You must have picked Social Sciences or Creative Arts?

S: I picked Social Sciences.

I: Did you keep to that as a main subject of study?

S: No, not at all. I got involved in drama and art; I took the usual band and a women's study course with A and the following semester I took the sexuality course with B.

I: So you sort of kept a balance between personal things and creative things?

S: Yeah, yeah.





So this student came to the school mainly because of a need for human contact; she needed to get in touch with other people and through other people to get in touch with herself.

I: What was your first band like?

S: I think that my first band was the best band that I had, because I realized that I wanted people; I needed people; I wanted to make contact because I'd been ostracized from everything in the school environment. I had no one to talk to except the teachers who I would talk to mostly on an academic level. On a personal level I had my friends, mind you. But I felt I needed more.

I: Well, another way to grow; your friends tend to stay in the same place.

S: Yeah, I found that more and more as I went to the New School; they sort of stayed with the kind of things they'd been into all the time. I was more into getting to know someone personally but in a group, relating to that in a group. I was really enthusiastic; I was on all the committees; I was really gung-ho. If I met anybody on the bus I would tell them about the New School. Gotta go to the New School. So I was very, very positive when I came here.

I: What happened as you went on?

S: Well, as I went on, a lot of my needs got fulfilled, those particular needs of human contact, closeness, and maybe group feeling, group closeness, and I wanted to start into the academic part. After a lot of difficulties I sort of resolved art was what I would concentrate on more in the school.

Once her psychological needs were filled, this student started to explore what had previously been completely foreign territory for her; that is, the world of creative expression.

I: Art rather than drama? Because you did take part in a play.

S: I'm always torn between art and drama; I really am. They both involve a lot of commitment. Like in drama there's always a deadline over your head. But I feel very real when I'm on stage; I feel very real and so it's a very real moment. Afterwards it's not; I wonder why I do it afterwards.

I: Why?

S: Because the results don't really convey the feelings, the

emotions and everything, the whole experience that went into it. And into the play, you know, four to six weeks of work condensed into four nights, I have to convey all that, you know; same thing with any kind of work, any kind of painting; I'll work on a painting for two months and when it's finished, look at it and say, "Is this all I did for two months?" except that when I was doing it I had no doubt that that's what I wanted to do.

I: Do you think of yourself as a very creative person? Was it a surprise when you came to this school and you started painting?

S: I wanted to come here and try a lot of different things. So that's what I started out doing. I didn't consider myself a creative person. I mean, having been streamlined through high school and CEGEP systems as Pure and Applied Science turns you almost into an automaton.

In exploring her creativity in art and drama this student found a way to express her feelings through the use of colour and personal symbols.

S: I can see where science can become creative later when you've acquired a lot of knowledge.

I: Yeah, but science tends to be built more on a step by step...

S: Right, and that step can be reached much easier; it's a lot more easily accessible to me, 'cause it's just my feelings, just myself, rather than reading knowledge in books and memorizing. I don't go for that; I can do it.

I: In a way, though, if you do get into painting you do have to learn a lot of technical skill and a lot of knowledge.

S: That would be different for me because I would want to do it. I would be curious about other artists or curious about techniques because that's what I would want to do, not because some course instructor said "Read this book."

I: It's more self-motivated?

S: Yeah.

I: You know in the terms we learned in Art History about the painter, formal order, expressive and realistic painters, where would you place yourself? What kind of creativity do you think you have?

S: More expressive, I think. I think a lot of my emotions come out, a lot of personal symbols come out. In the colours I choose, I have them for a reason, maybe. I don't think of it at the time, maybe it's intuitive but it is related

to myself, so it's more an expression of my feelings.

As one can see from the above quote, this student feels that she uses art and drama to explore her emotions. This is parallel to her work in self-study in the school through the band and various other groups.

I: When you went into the band it was mostly as a way of getting contact with other people. Did you find that you got into a lot of self-study?

S: Yes, I've always done a lot of self-study. I've had a self-study group here every term, apart from the band. It started with that first band with B. I was dissatisfied with the band; I said I wanted to do a lot more self-study and I suggested that we have a small group of people who wanted to move faster and to keep journals, to meet at a different time and that's what we did, and [what] we've done every term.

I: So that's been your focus for self-study in the school, which is different from what you've done in the band; you seemed frustrated in the band last semester.

S: This term there's a lot of self-study going on in the band. I can bring out things which I wouldn't [have] been able to say if I hadn't already worked them out in the smaller group.

I: So it's easier to bring it out in a smaller group?

S: Yeah, like a group of about eight; fifteen often has a split in it.

(Fifteen is the usual size for a band).

I: How would you define self-study?

S: Well, I think each person has to define it for themselves. For me, I would say self-study would be getting to understand myself through the eyes of other people, seeing how I appear to them; then I could be more objective when I look at myself, and if I see something I don't like, then I can work on it.

I: The group acts as a mirror where you can see yourself more realistically.

S: More objectively anyways. Sometimes people are way off and I know it. By now I have the confidence to say "You're wrong." Let's say the first term I might not have. I was really trusting, but by now I'm beginning to know who I am and what I want a little better than I did before.

I: Do you find that art works in the same way, the creative

experience works in the same way? Do you see yourself more clearly by picturing it forth?

S: I don't think I see myself more clearly; I think I understand my emotions better, because it's [a] more emotional type of work, and when I put something away and look at it later I'll get a feeling of how I was feeling at the time, so really it's helping me to understand my emotions towards objects or people or situations.

I: Do you see it as a form of self-study?

S: Oh yeah.

As we can see from the above quote, this student sees art as a way of exploring her emotions. One of the reasons for this is that every subject at the school is supposed to be taught in a self-related way; i.e., the teacher tries to encourage the formation of a personal connection between the student and the subject so that the subject of study becomes self-relevant.

I: O.K., when you came in the first semester, what did you do? You took drawing?

S: Yes, I took a Drawing 1 class. We started off putting pins and seeing the distance and marking off dots for the distance, and oranges, doing contour of oranges and that sort of thing.

I: You didn't find it boring?

S: I just found it very frustrating. A lot of it was that I was not a creative person; I could not draw. We went in very early after a few lessons, into the model drawing, and I didn't like that; I couldn't understand what gestures were, so things I saw looked like scribbles on the page and it was just getting me more and more upset. Then I decided, "No, I wasn't going to do any more art." Then we had an evaluation and we talked about it, what I went through, and then things started to look a little better. I started to do one or two things I liked. So that heartened me to go on, try and see what would happen.

Like most students of this age in their first encounter with art, this student's first impulse is to try to copy visual reality, but under the influence of those around her she soon changes direction.

I: When you were in first term, did you do any imaginative drawing at all?

S: No.

I: Nothing that was self-related?

S: No, I would just try to look at something and make it look like what it looked like.

I: Copying reality?

S: Yeah.

I: Was that how the class was structured or was it your own particular thing that you wanted to do?

S: I don't think the class was structured like that; I guess it was my own particular conception of what drawing was. Why would I want to draw anyhow if it wasn't to draw what was already there? And I was very naive about art; I wasn't brought up in a home where we discussed art or went to art galleries. So I really didn't know anything.

I: What made you change from wanting to reproduce reality to thinking you wanted to express your emotions?

S: I think a lot of it was C. I think she pressed a lot for what was good, what lines were good, what strengthened the idea more than what strengthened the reality and I got more support I guess from her in that respect. She didn't demand reality, so I didn't see why I should demand it of myself. So I began to explore on my own where I wanted to go, what I wanted to do. This is the second term now. Then she suggested that we do self-portraits and try to start from there.

It seems that once this student found she didn't have to "stick to reality" she started to search for a symbolic language of her own. This language could be said to spring from the preconscious flow of imagery that Rugg (1963) and Kubie (1961) talk so much about.

S: In the second semester I took a mixed-media course. It gave me a wider outlook; it wasn't just reality and a pencil in your hand; it loosened me up and helped me see better.

I: See all the things you could use to express yourself?

S: Yeah, and I noticed I started looking more; I'd see more things. There's so much to see.

I: Did you do a lot of self-portraits the second semester?

S: The second semester it was stressed, as a way to start off.  
It is more personal of course.

I: How did you feel about this first one? (Slide #1)

S: I found it kind of scratchy. I went over the lines a lot.

I: Do you think it looks like you?

S: In a way.

I: Does it feel like you?

S: Not any more. No.

I: At that time?

S: At that time, yeah. I was going through a lot of troubles.  
I can see that.

I: It looks troubled.

S: This started off as a self-portrait. Then I started going off  
into a fantasy. I started thinking it's a computerized world.  
That's like a computer up there.

I: Your brain is like a computer?

S: Yeah.

I: Do you still see it as a self-portrait?

S: No, not so much. Once all this other symbolism came in.  
It was like a feeling I had at the time. You know, like  
the springs inside the body, very mechanized.

I: No hands.

S: Yeah, it turns into more of an insect body here.

I: What's this? Is it a leaf?

S: It's the hand and then there's a tongue coming out of the hand.

I think the atmosphere at the school and the fact that she was  
constantly delving into her own emotions in various self-study groups  
helped her in gaining access to a preconscious flow of imagery.

I: It seems like a very big jump from trying to capture visual reality even in the self-portrait to something completely imagistic and symbolic.

S: Well, I think a lot of it had to do with what I was feeling at the time; I was feeling very angry and frustrated and I had to get it out and this is what happened.

I: Had you done doodles like this before?

S: No, I was not the doodling type; now I doodle all the time; before, mainly boxes and cubes.

I: How do you think you made that jump from the reality-oriented thing to the completely symbolic?

S: I don't know. Maybe it was a lot of the influence of the people around me.

I: What you saw other people doing?

S: Yeah, what I saw others doing in the class, and a lot of the work in the art room is symbolic. I would talk to the artists; it's an important part of this school, I think.

I: Had you seen any of Miro's work?

S: No, I'd never seen one. I'd never studied any artist, just some I knew of that would float up in a household situation.

I: So this just sort of floated up out of your subconscious, I suppose.

S: Yeah, this was very much just unconscious; I just let it happen, you know; I didn't think about it.

I think one can see a definite progression here from delving into her own feelings in the self-portraits to letting her feelings flow out onto the page in the form of images from the preconscious.

I: Were these the sort of things that were coming out in your self-study groups? (Slide #2)

S: Yeah, I showed it to the group and we discussed it. It was also around the time of N's suicide, so it was on my mind and it was a good way to start to talk about it and our feelings about it.

I: Another self-portrait? Were you feeling better? (Slide #3)

S: Yeah, I was jaunty, wearing my favourite hat.

I: This is a drawing with a water colour? (Slide #4)

S: Yeah.

I: It's more symbolic again?

S: It's when I started thinking about sexuality; I was in my sexuality class. I had a lot of things to think about and this group was good for me.

I: Looks like a dream symbol?

S: Yeah, it was very dreamy. That's a charm my mother gave me. It was also symbolic because around the same time I met this guy I really liked. This was a set of flowers my boyfriend had sent me. (Slide #5)

I: Did you find it more interesting when you got into colour?

S: Oh yeah, that's mostly what I was interested in; when I got into colour, I was hooked.

I: But it took you a long time to get into colour, to try it?

S: Well, I'd always been told I couldn't match colours in clothes, so I thought I couldn't use them.

I: But these flowers had an emotional meaning for you?

S: For sure! They were Valentine's Day flowers, so it meant something.

From this beginning, and especially once she got into colour, this student just took off into an imaginary land of her own that she named "Zero".

S: And in this one it's a landscape and a creature doing an arabesque.

I: Did that just come out? (Slide #6)

S: No, I wanted to do it, 'cause that's when I first started thinking about Zero. When I first met Richard, we started talking about Zero, the land of Zero.

I: Does it exist?

S: Yes it exists in your heart, it sort of symbolizes warmth and friendship, people loving each other, all those types of ideas.



I: When you did it, you actually thought of looking at it both ways?

S: Yeah, 'cause there's a lot more roots and there's a lot more happening down below but I didn't put it in. I just wanted to keep it like here and this in particular.

I: I see. Are those like mountains going up?

S: Yeah, but it's sort of like a dream world.

I: But that's the dream world and the other side is reality.

S: Yeah.

I: So the dream world is happy?

S: And calm, and this is more violent.

I: Reality is violent?

S: Yeah.

I: Do you really see it that way?

S: Yeah, I guess so. Not so much more violent but it is much stronger. I don't know, I don't find that many marvelous things out there. As opposed to the New School where people are more friendly and more outgoing and more willing to be close. Here it seems like one small person against the system--that kind of idea.

I: The system as one big eye; it looks like big brother is watching you. So the bottom is more like your inner world?

S: Yeah, it was more like when I first met Richard and we were talking about Zero, the planet Zero, where he comes from.

I: An inner world?

S: Yeah. It was a kind of game. A way of saying we wanted to be real people to each other and honest. We wanted that kind of relationship; we didn't want that kind of relationship.

I: I don't know why anybody would want that kind of relationship. Then you made a painting out of that?

S: No, that was just a start; then there was this one. (Slide #7)

I: "When I was a child of Zero I was not afraid."

S: Yeah, and that's another Zeronian landscape type of idea. It's like the idea of me being a child on that planet and having no fears, no worries, very happy as a child.

I: Why is the finger pointing?

S: I don't know, I didn't think of that too much, I just sort of wanted it to happen.

I: One eye is looking inward?

~~S:~~ Maybe; this eye here is the same kind of idea. Also this eliminates the need for having facial expression.

I: The hands?

S: Yeah.

I: There's quite a bit of expression in the eyes somehow. They are your eyes?

S: Yeah, like this started out; I did my eyes and I left it at that.

This student seems to have been able, as Maslow (1972) says, to increase her creativity through "making available to [her] self these sources of fantasy, play with ideas, being able to sail right out of the world and off the earth; getting away from common sense" (p.93).

I: I'm amazed at how you always seem to go from a very realistic thing and go off into a completely unrealistic, symbolic thing.

S: It's easy for me to start from something that's real and then sort of go on from there.

I: Do you think it's because you're frustrated with your ability to reproduce reality or do you think it's just where you want to go?

S: I don't think it's because I really want to reproduce reality because if I really wanted to do that I would take up photography. I know that photography is a great medium as well and you can do so many things with photography, I could really appreciate that, but with painting or drawing I've got to go into emotions or feelings.

I: Do you get a picture in your mind first and then you decide to draw it or does it come out in the act of drawing itself?

S: I think in that particular painting, I thought about it beforehand; the details didn't work themselves out till later. I had basically the parts that I wanted--like, I wanted the sun; I wanted the birds; I wanted something hidden in the forest. Beyond that I wasn't really sure. (Slide #8)

I: You have a sort of vision but it doesn't really become definite until you paint it?

S: Yeah, sometimes it changes before I even start it, maybe something else...

I: Well, like that snake, did you have a definite picture in mind when you did that water colour? (Slide #9)

S: I found a snakeskin on the rocks and I was looking at different textures in the snakeskin and I just used that as the basis in my work.

I: It did have a physical basis for it?

S: Yeah. I don't really plan things in advance, maybe very sketchily, like in blocks; I think in blocks and then work out the details.

I: But in a way you've used all these different water colours, all the ideas from the different water colours, and then synthesized them in the painting, because you seem to let yourself go in the sketches and then come together in the painting.

S: Yeah.

This student decided that once she had graduated from the New School she would get a job and save her money and if she found that even without the motivation of the New School she was still interested in painting she would go to an art school.

For this student, the New School had fulfilled the goals of a humanistic education according to Maslow (1972). For Maslow, the ideal college would be one where the student could try to find him/herself, his or her likes and wants, etc. In other words, the chief goal of an ideal college would be the search for an identity, and with it the discovery of a vocation.

In terms of Maslow's proposals, it seems that this student has learned to listen to her inner voice. Presumably she will be able to respond to her inner drives and become a self-actualized human being.

Interview no. 2. What is it that makes it possible for one to become an artist? Maslow (1972) tells us an artist needs skill and talent and must work hard. He also stresses that, to be creative one must have access to the forces of the unconscious. Or as Kubie (1961) states, one must have access to the preconscious flow of imagery without interference from the rational rigidity of the conscious process or the equally rigid symbolic structure of repressed unconscious impulses. One must, according to Maslow (1972), through whatever procedure (some form of self-study is what he proposes), become more familiar and less frightened of one's preconscious and unconscious processes.

This interview interests me particularly because this student showed a lot of skill and talent in painting and drawing right from the beginning. She worked hard at developing her skills for a year but (as can be seen in the interview) she suddenly became frightened of the creative process and gave up painting and drawing altogether.

I interviewed this student at the end of her last semester at the New School. She had been at the school for two years and said that she felt positive about her self-study experiences and positive about her creativity until the third semester when she became frightened and gave up painting and drawing.

I: How long have you been a student at the New School?

S: Two years.

I: You're going to be graduating?

S: This term.

I: Do you know where you're going?

S: I'm going to Mt. Allison next year.

I: Where is it?

S: It's in New Brunswick.

I: It's an art school.

S: Yeah.

I: So you've decided to go to art school.

S: No, I'm not going into art necessarily.

I: But, if it's an art school?

S: I'm going into second year literature and history.

I: So it's not an art school?

S: No, yes it is.

I: But they have literature?

S: You know Alex Colville? He teaches there. It's a regular university.

I: It's a regular university that has a fine arts department.

There seems to be some sort of contradiction here. It seems to me that for this student the most important thing about Mt. Allison is that it has an art department in which she would like to study but to which she doesn't want to commit herself just yet. She admits this herself in the following quote.

I: (con't) and you're not going straight into fine arts.


S: I'm going into second year literature and history but I'm going to keep my nose in fine arts.

I: As a complementary.

S: Yeah.

I: Why don't you want to go directly into fine arts?

S: I don't know; worried about it I guess. You know, when I thought about it, I thought I wanted to try other things first, but I think deep down inside me is a fear.



I: Of really committing yourself to it?

S: Yeah. I might eventually.

I: Are you afraid of not making money?

S: No, not really. I just don't want to limit myself intellectually. I just feel very immature in that way.

In her first semester at the New School, this student only took one drawing class, but from its beginning her talent in the media was very obvious. However, by the third semester she felt that she had gotten into painting and drawing too intensely and she retreated into other subjects and dropped art altogether. (see interview, p.52).

I: When you came into the school, you didn't come in with an idea of doing art?

S: It was a fluke.

I: Coming here?

S: Yeah.

I: Why did you come?

S: No alternative. I didn't have the money to go to Mt. Allison.

I: But why did you pick the New School as opposed to any other CEGEP?

S: I was really hesitant about coming here. It's just that they were so open. I came right at the end of the summer.

I: Did you paint before you came here?

S: No, I went out with a guy who was an artist. He sat me down and told me how to draw.

I: Did that interest you?

S: Yeah, 'cause I wanted to be like him--a sort of emulation.

I: So when you came, did you decide to take art right away?

S: Yeah, I'm really surprised that I did. I took drawing with C.

I: The first semester?

S: Yeah, the first semester was the biggest step for me.

I: Because you tried something new?

S: Well, I went further, you know; that's the time when if anything ever happened in my art it happened. 'Cause that's when I first started to feel comfortable in it.

I: Right in the first class.

S: Yeah, like I was amazed I could even draw.

I: You only took one drawing class that semester?

S: Yeah.

I: The next term did you get more heavily into drawing and painting?

S: I went into it a little heavier; last semester I went into it too intensely. I got done most of the work I did in art last semester. Just over Christmas I decided that I wanted to do other stuff.

I: Right here in the school. So are you doing any drawing and painting now?

S: Only when my tutorial comes over I draw with him.

The following statements suggest that this student thinks of herself as potentially creative but as too young, and in need of much reflection before she can deal with the reality of her experience. She seems to see her creative process as being interpretive and reflective.

I: Do you think of yourself as a creative person?

S: Potentially.

I: What do you think is blocking it?

S: I think my age.

I: How old are you?

S: Twenty. I feel I've experienced a lot but I haven't reflected enough. I feel that's what's going to happen in the next few years. That I'll start to get some meaning out of it.

I: Do you think of yourself as gaining technical skills in the next few years? Do you feel you lack technical skills?

S: Yeah, I don't want to talk about painting--'cause I don't know what's going to happen with that. I can see that maybe some time later. I don't see it in the next few years.

I see a lot of reading and a lot of thinking things out.

I: So you want to reflect. Aren't you afraid of losing those technical skills?

S: I can get those later. I feel I have to reflect a while on the last four years.

I: How would you define your own particular kind of creativity?

S: Elaborate.

I: Do you think you're expressionistic? How do you define the creative process?

S: Interpretive, sort of.

I: An interpretive, self-reflective process?

S: Yeah, like going in and coming out again, reflective.

Schneider (1954) would agree with this student that the creative process is one of "going in and coming out." He tells us that one can never localize creativity as a purely subjective phenomenon. The pole of world is an inseparable part of the creativity of the individual. What occurs is a process of interrelating the person and his or her world.

As we have seen, this student is very much into self-reflection in her art. This is carried through into her self-study.

I: Do you think you've experienced self-study at all in the school?

S: How can you avoid it?

I: My whole band avoids it.

S: How can people avoid looking at themselves?

I: They can.

S: Why would they want to?

I: Maybe they don't like what they see.

S: I don't feel it's something that just happens if you walk into the school. I feel that it's a part of it. It made me stop and look at myself. I guess I'm the better for it; I'm also very aware of all my shortcomings.



I: I'm going to ask you to define self-study in view of your own experience.

S: Just watching the way people react to you. If you're not communicating too well what's inside, then you must change yourself.

I: It's like a reflective mirror--the band especially?

S: Yeah.

I: Have you had self-study experiences outside the band?

S: Yeah, the sexuality group. I guess every group.

According to Vygotsky (1967), creativity must make use of the preconscious process of free association to create new relationships and new patterns. Free associations are necessary to creativity because they free the preconscious system from the rigidity of the conscious end of the symbolic spectrum. Yet at the same time, he explains, they expose it to the distortions and rigidity of the unconscious system.

As we can see in the rest of this interview when this student started being conscious of the meaning of the images which had emerged from her creative process, she became frightened--frightened of becoming the "mad artist" because she could not assign a rational discursive meaning to her symbols and became frightened of how much of her vulnerability people could see in her work. She was able to use the preconscious process in her art but, it seems to me, she became afraid because in doing so she came upon the repressed forces of the unconscious system.

I: Even drawing and painting?

S: Maybe not. I don't know where you draw the line.

I: In drawing and painting do you study mostly techniques?

S: Yeah, we talked a lot about our feelings, about drawing and that sort of thing.

I: About being scared of drawing?

S: Yeah.

I: Do you discuss the images that you portray--what the meanings are of the images?

S: We were just getting into that when I quit.

I: Did that frighten you?

S: It made it more serious, you know; it made it more vague--like all of a sudden you can't just do it; you have to have a reason, a message to get across and I didn't really think I had a message, you know.

I: Why did you think you had to have a message? I think a message comes through anyways whatever you do.

S: Yeah, but I couldn't articulate it.

I: Couldn't you articulate it in paint? Most artists couldn't verbally articulate it.

S: For me, I'd have to be able to verbally articulate it; I don't want to be the mad artist.

I: Wait a minute, you don't have to be mad. When you talk with language you have agreed upon meanings but some feelings we have no words for and the arts communicate these feelings. Most artists won't verbalize.

S: Maybe I was seeing the same thing in my paintings as I do in my first poems. I thought they were really too sensitive, they were like a little girl's. You know what I mean...

I: Yeah, but your paintings are very strong.

S: What have you seen?

I: Just one, I guess; the big nude.

S: She started out--something happened to her--she started out very sensitive; she changed when I brought her back into the studio, because when people started seeing it (the sensitivity), I covered it up.

I: You covered up what was there. Were you afraid of exposing yourself?

S: It's terrible, I didn't even do it consciously, and then I looked at it and I said, "Oh no, something's gone wrong." I was trying to stick to it and then I started being uptight

and people came and were constantly criticizing it and giving their opinion and you start thinking, "Well, maybe they're right."

I: It's better to paint in the dark on your own.

S: I felt stupid in that way because people were saying, "Can't you take criticism?" and no, I can't, and I thought this isn't the place for me.

I: Well, why don't you paint on your own then?

S: I will this summer.

This student became afraid of becoming the "mad artist", afraid of the "vulnerability" people saw in her work and stopped painting and drawing altogether. I consider this case particularly important because there was evidence of much skill and talent in her art work and yet, seemingly through fear of the non-rational preconscious process, she stopped working.

Although she rates her self-study experience as positive, I remember (having been a participant in her first band experience) that she had a lot of difficulty in opening herself up to the group. After this initial experience, self-study probably became easier for her, but we can see the same fear of exposing her inner feelings to the world taking place in her art experience.

Interview no. 3. Interview no. 3 is included here because it seems to me to represent the disturbed, disassociated states of a student's psyche and the reflection of this state in his drawings. The school counsellor confirmed that this student was emotionally disturbed and for this reason he was being seen by a counsellor once a week at the college.

This was the student's first semester at the New School. The school counsellor felt that he was too disturbed to participate in group

encounter sessions, but he did take part in the regular self-study processes within the band.

I: How long have you been at the New School?

S: One semester.

I: Where were you before?

S: At regular Dawson. I spent three terms there studying social science one year and creative arts one semester.

I: What made you leave Dawson and come here?

S: Well I was thinking of leaving regular Dawson because I wasn't happy there. I lacked a lot of basics, really a lot.

I: What kind of basics?

S: Well, love or understanding of myself; I was searching for that a lot. It was in my nature to search for that. I've always been laughed at or rejected or you know I never felt like happy with people. I never felt confident. So the New School looked like a place where, like a different, very different place. So I applied here; first it was one year ago and I got refused because...it would be too long to spend time on this subject. Then I applied for this semester and I entered.

I: So has it fulfilled your expectations?

S: A little bit. I have evolved. I can't say I have not. But I'm still not satisfied. I want more, more, more, always more.

I: More of what?

S: I don't know. I'm not satisfied about the New School, I don't feel good about the New School.

I: What is it that you want that isn't there?

S: I have talks with New Schoolers about it. Few talks. But I'm constantly like expressing this. What was your question again?

I: What is it at the New School that you are looking for--that you are not finding?

S: I need more, more than that. It's not enough. I still feel a bit lonely here. I need to live a lot more. I absolutely need to or else I'll kill myself.

I: When you say you need to live a lot more, what...

S: I need to burn myself before I'm forty.

I: You want to burn yourself out before you're forty?

S: Yeah, I don't want to live beyond forty years old.

I: Why not?

S: Life isn't exciting after forty.

I: Thanks; I think it's exciting.

S: Even if you're old and crummy?

I: I think it's exciting.

S: But it's not as exciting as when you're young.

I: Why, are you that happy right now? But I'm happier than you.

S: You're older.

I: Yes, but you just told me that when you're older you're not happy. But I am, more than you.

S: You're right. But who proves it? Is there a happiness test?

I: No, there isn't. In the time that you've been here, have you had a main subject of study?

S: Self-study.

I: Self-study has been your main subject?

S: Yes.

I: You've done a lot of that?

S: No.

I: You wanted to do a lot of that?

S: Yes.

I: What stopped you?

S: I've been kicked out of the encounter group of D and I just can't stand it. I just don't want to see him again in my life.

I: You're angry at him.

S: Yes. He wants to talk to me about it. I told him, "I'm pissed off at you, I don't want to talk to you again." I want to talk to him but not in his fucking office right now. I'm not interested in being in his office right now.

I: You want to be in the group.

S: No, I want to be in chairs; it's too formal-looking in his office. I know it's his job. I'm not going to be one of his numbers. No way.

I talked with the guidance counsellor at the school as to why he did not want to have this student in the encounter group. He thought that the student was too disturbed to be able to handle such a group, that he needed one-to-one counselling. The student was at that time seeing a guidance counsellor on a regular basis at Dawson College and had been doing so for the past year.

I: So you've done self-study where? In the band?

S: A little bit in the band, not enough. And in my other groups, like creative identity and success with E. I try to expose myself as much as I can, and with my friends--the few I have. Well, I have more than I used to have. I spend hours on the phone. Two hours very easy.

I: You're getting as bad as your mother.

S: My mother isn't so bad. Did I tell you she was bad?

I: You told me she spent all her time on the phone.

S: Yeah, she used to do that a lot.

I: Now you've got the phone.

S: Yeah, I'm taking over the phone. Like I can talk philosophically on the phone. But maybe it hasn't any relevance to what you're doing.

I: Sure it has. So you talk a lot with people from the New School.

S: People from the New School are very busy. So I try to get in contact with people from the New School. I've got to make a phone call right now...

I: So you're taking self-study in the creativity group and in the band a little bit.

S: Yeah, yeah, in the band not a little bit. But I didn't get a lot out of it. I don't have as much confidence yet. They're too...I don't know.

We can see here that although the New School has helped this student to some extent in providing a more secure environment so that he can make more contacts with people, the band and self-study experience has not been very successful for him.

I: Do you think of yourself as creative?

S: Not on paper, not the ordinary kind of creative person. It may look silly, or pretentious; I don't want to be.

I: You don't want to be creative?

S: No, no.

I: You don't want to be pretentious?

S: No. I want to be pretentious but I tend to judge myself a lot, or people will judge me if I tell too much, I'll surprise them too much and then people will be turned off.

I: You're afraid to reveal yourself?

S: Sometimes to certain people.

I: Well, what kind of creativity do you think you have?

S: Well, it's not really creativity. Now I'm just receiving things. I don't want to do anything creative right now. I'm just too mad against what's happening to me. Or, what's not happening. I just feel frustrated, very, very so. I feel bad. I want to escape. It's not like cowardice. It's just that I want to do something different. I want to live my dream, or do something really bad, that people would say, "Uh! A victorian Uh!"

I: You want to shock them?

S: No, I don't want to shock them. I want to liberate myself from my mother, from her influence; she's so influential...well.

I: Do you take drawing?

S: No, folk dancing. Oh I folk danced yesterday; it was interesting. In the festival. I like to dance.

I: What about the clay? Are you enjoying that?

S: Yes, a little.

I: What about the drawing?

S: I want to make others enjoy it; also, my work. Maybe that; I don't know. Sometimes, you know, when people make demands on me I tend to shy off and be put off from the things that I do that other people want me to do.

I: You don't like the pressure.

S: I can't stand it. That's the reason. One of the big reasons why I want to get out this summer, do something.

I: What are you going to do?

S: A good idea I have in my mind is to go on a three-month bicycle trip around Quebec. The person I'd go with is a very interesting person. He's 20 years old and he's travelled.

I: How's the drawing going in your drawing class?

S: Shit, I don't know! I feel strange about drawing class. There's this relationship I have with my...no, we won't go into odd things at the New School where you have to be really intelligent to be...it's because it's me before all, and the New School is only part of my experience.

I: Yes, I know. I'm interested in how the New School relates to the whole of your experience. Have you come to enjoy the drawing classes? I know you weren't enjoying them at the beginning.

S: Oh yes, I felt so bad at the beginning of the New School.

I: Do you feel better now?

S: Well I express myself more easily now. A lot more easily. Without tension or anything. That's good. That's really good. I used to be so...not knowing what to say. More than that, searching for ways to cope with it, without really looking at the problem, and this problem solved itself. It solved easily, well, with the New School.

I: Your problem was relating to people.

S: Yeah, not just relating to people.

It seems to me that it is here fairly obvious that this student's problems are too overwhelming for him to be able to attend to the discipline of any creative endeavour.



I: Can you define self-study?

S: It's looking at your navel.

I: Just looking at yourself.

S: Yeah.

I: What about the other people in the group, what role do they play?

S: They're not so co-operative. What role do they play?

I: Yeah, when you're looking at yourself.

S: Well first it comes from me, right, they give feedback, and... it's a strange question.

I: They tell you how they feel about what you say.

S: Not much.

I: Would you be able to do self-study without them?

S: They've been useful, but I don't know...

I: In what way are they useful?

S: In being curious.

I: Well, let's go on. Does the band give you a place of belonging in the school?

S: It's rather the school as a whole, I feel, not the band, because I feel bad about the band. It's not at all what I thought it would be. I've been deceived.

I: What do you mean? You've been disappointed?

S: Yeah, I've been disappointed.

I: It hasn't been as close a group of friends as you wanted?

S: Yeah.

I: But the school provides a place of belonging?

S: Yeah.

As a whole, the self-study experience in the school has not been very successful for this student. He has done some self-study but not in enough depth to fulfill his needs. Perhaps he needs an in-depth

analysis by a psychiatrist and this is something the New School is not able to supply. Students are sometimes referred to a psychiatrist if a staff member feels that this is what they need. As I said before, this student was already seeing a guidance counsellor regularly at Dawson College. However, the New School did provide a warm and open atmosphere where he could relate more easily with people. One of his worst problems was his inability to make contact with people.

Physically this student shows all the characteristics of someone who is anxious and rigid.

Fear of pleasure is fear of the pain that inevitably develops when an outward-flowing, expansive impulse meets a contracted and bound area of the body. Reich had described the masochistic fear of pleasure as a fear of bursting if the excitation should become too strong. To understand this statement we must look at the individual whose body is tense and tightly held as being in a condition similar to frostbite. He is frozen in his immobility and lack of spontaneity. In a situation of pleasure he is exposed to warmth produced by the flow of blood to the periphery of his body through the action of the parasympathetic nerves. His body tries to expand, but the expansion becomes painful when it encounters the resistance of chronically spastic muscles. The sensation may even be frightening. The individual feels that he may burst or "fall apart." His immediate impulse is to get out of the situation. (Lowen, 1976, p.76).

This rigidity of the body and of the muscles also shows up in this student's drawings. By his own admission, it has always been the face that he has concentrated on, and the drawings from the nude model which he did in class all show a characteristic rigidity.

I: These are the drawings that you did before coming to the school?

S: Yeah, all of them, I was very unable at drawing. It's always been the face that I put more care into.

I: And the body less care.

S: Yeah.

I: My God, this is scary! (Slide #1)

S: Yes.

I: You feel Dr. M is evil.

S: A little bit.

I: There you have him a lot. Did you ever meet him? I did meet him, a very little man.

S: Like a fetus?

I: Hardly. It's all very caricaturish, your stuff. Is that what you wanted to do?

S: Yeah.

I: Is this how you felt? Oh my God!

S: Oh yes, I really dare. I attack the Queen.

I: Do you want to be a cartoonist?

S: Why not?

I: What did you do in class?

S: It begins here.

I: Scribble...contour...what are you trying to learn?

S: Nothing.

I: Is this a self-portrait? (Slide #2)

S: Yeah, do you like it?

I: It's more decisive than the one before.

S: Yeah, I feel more decisive.

I: Is this a model?

S: Yeah, I'm fantastic.

I: No, you're not; some of that is terrible. Look at the body; it's like sticks. No form.

S: Really, don't tell me it's fantastic.

I: You know better.

S: Come on, I could do it from a photograph.

I: Because the form has already been analyzed. Is that your mother?

S: No, that's my grandmother and that's my aunt.

I: Do you think you're going to go on with drawing? Will you do it next year?

S: If I want to.

I: I'm not telling you you have to.

S: I'm not saying I'll be forced to. But if I want to come into a class for no credits it would be nice.

I: Who is going to force you?

S: Myself, or I don't know.

When the individual has to struggle with painful feelings that intrude into his consciousness, objective thinking becomes a matter of self-discipline. Painful feelings always produce a greater disturbance than pleasurable ones, since pain is interpreted as a danger signal. To think objectively when the body is in a state of pain, or lack of pleasure, one has to deaden the body to reduce the feeling of pain. This "deadening" dissociates the mind from the body and makes the quality of one's thinking mechanical or computerized. Creative thinking, which depends on the free flow of unconscious ideas, occurs only when the body is most alive and unburdened. We cannot escape the conclusion that the quality of one's thinking, and probably its content, too, cannot be fully divorced from the emotional tone of the body. (Lowen, 1976, p.136).

There seems to be a parallel between the disassociation of the mind from the body and the rigidity in this student's drawings. The rigidity and stereotyping of his images could be accounted for by the fear of his feelings which is characteristic of him. I think that for someone as disturbed as he is, self-study is not enough; he needs in-depth therapy to deal with his problems. Maybe then his subconscious would be allowed to "flow" and his creativity could be fostered.

#### Discussion

In this study I was interested in finding out the relationship between self-study and creativity. My feeling was that because self-study helps one to gain greater access to one's feelings, it also helps one to be more creative. All my background reading supported this view.

For most of the students in this study, there was found to be a positive relationship between self-study and creativity. This suggests that self-study, by opening one up to the flow of one's feelings, may help one to be more creative.

The students who felt negative about their self-study experiences for the most part also felt negative about their creative arts experiences. For me this implies that those who are afraid of looking into themselves are unable to be creative. The free flow of metaphor images served up by the preconscious process is not allowed to happen.

One student felt negative about her self-study but positive about her creativity. This student went on to take a career-oriented course in graphic design but dropped it after one year. Her ambivalence about self-study was, in the end, reflected in her ambivalence about her creative goals.

One student felt positive about her self-study experiences and her creativity, but suddenly stopped all creative activity because she became frightened by the revelation of her inner-being to others. This, it seems to me, underlines the need for the art educator to help the student deal with his/her inner content as it is given form in his/her work.

For the greater part, my hypothesis that there was a positive relationship between the student's evaluation of his/her self-study and the student's evaluation of his/her creativity was found to be true. This supports the view of Rugg, Maslow and Kubie that in education, and I think especially in art education (Lowenfeld), more attention should be paid to the understanding of the crucial role feeling plays in creativity.

The primary function of art is to objectify feeling so that we can contemplate and understand it. It is the formulation of so-called "inner experiences," the "inner life," that is impossible to achieve by discursive thought, because its forms are incommensurable with the forms of language and all its derivatives (e.g. mathematics, symbolic logic). (Langer, 1964, p.80).

In this way art is always self-study; i.e. in the making of images as metaphors we are making visible our inner states of being. Mind for Langer is not that which knows but that which feels and

. . . a wide neglect of artistic education is a neglect in the education of feeling. Most people are so imbued with the idea that feeling is a formless, total organic excitement in man as in animals that the idea of educating feeling, developing its scope and quality, seems odd to them, if not absurd. It is really, I think, at the very heart of personal education . . . The arts objectify subjective reality, and subjectify outward experience of nature. Art education is education of feeling, and a society that neglects it gives itself up to formless emotion. Bad art is corruption of feeling. (Langer, 1964, pp.83-84).

Thus art education and the education of feeling are, according to Langer, inextricably bound together. Therefore the art educator who teaches only technical proficiency without encouraging in any form the expression of feeling is evading the issue of creativity in his students. The art educator should be able to help the student to gain access to his feelings and to the free flow of the creative preconscious process.

To do this the teacher must be able to accept the students as they are and help them to accept and to know themselves. Thus the teacher will be able to help the student towards self-actualization. In the art classroom, the process of self-discovery can be experienced in the creative art itself if the teacher provides the right atmosphere of security, acceptance, interest and inspiration.

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AppendixTranscripts from InterviewsStudent no. 1

I: Do you think of yourself as a creative individual?

S: Creative? What is creativity?

I: I don't know; that was the next question.

S: As far as adding on to reality...

I: Adding on to reality? What do you mean?

S: Well, that presentation, and not representation, like, presenting another dimensional reality: that's not necessarily trying to put order into the reality that we already know.

I: You mean you're creating another reality?

S: Yeah; sort of adding on, like pebbles on the beach.

I: Like adding pebbles on the beach.

S: Yes; no, I don't think I'm really that creative.

I: Why not?

S: Because what I'm doing is...That's a really hard question; that's a very difficult question. Am I a creative person? I draw and I paint, but I guess I would tend to say, not really...yet.

I: Why not yet? What's stopping you?

S: Because I'm not ready. First of all, I see myself as an art student that doesn't have a mastery of the medium. And until then, I guess I...I guess you can be creative in learning, but the original meaning of creation means putting something into existence from nothing, and I know that man doesn't do that because he already has something to go with. I guess God did that, and so the closest you can get to being creative is when you already have mastered the medium, in the form of skills.

I: But what do you do with that mastery of the medium that is creative?

S: Oh, then! That's another question.

I: Would you consider Klee creative?

S: Yeah.

I: What makes him creative?

S: I guess Klee's creative by transforming reality into another dimension. By giving it a fresh look, like introducing a fresh sight of reality, and not as it necessarily is, but as it might be.

I: What does he let in that people don't usually let in to his view of reality?

S: Many dimensions; not just one. Many planes of vision that I think is really good.

I: Is that the kind of thing you would like to do once you've gained the skills?

S: Oh yes, definitely. I really enjoy Klee's work.

I: So you would aim to have a body of work which would look at reality in a new way, which lets in many different dimensions which we're not usually aware of.

S: Yes, but even going further: adding on to reality in the sense of not pretending to put facts, but just form, like a purist, using the pure aesthetic means. I guess it has to do with most modern art, but Klee especially, personally, because it's presentational and not representational; the content equals form.

I: Do you feel that you've experienced self-study in any form at the school?

S: Yeah, yeah, definitely. Same old thing. I guess it's probably been said so many times before that...oh, especially with relationships between fellow students and the way I see myself inside the school, in relation to people, with the help, of course, of the staff, especially A; she's taught me a great deal about myself, inside the band.

I: Is it mostly in the band that you've done self-study? Have you done any in other groups?

S: Yeah, I did do another group; it was man's consciousness, which was o.k. in itself, but I didn't see it as academic. I tend to like academic courses a lot. Like, the self-study business is o.k., but I think in this school, people tend to dwell on it too much, and it creates a foginess that normally would not be there if people would just go on with more of an emphasis on academic work and these things would flow better, like self-study, like this identity crisis business.

I: Do you think a lot of it is fabricated...a lot of the crises are fabricated? Is that what you're implying?

S: No, I can't generalize. I just know that with certain individuals, this school does not always serve the needs. I think in this school that people can get away with not doing much, and I think it hurts us in the end; it hurts the people that don't do it.

I: They get away with not doing much.

S: Thinking that they're happy dealing with significant problems.

I: Do you think they should deal with academics 'cause they're getting away with not dealing with academics by doing this? Do you think you've done that?

S: To a certain extent, yeah.

I: Do you wish you'd done more academics?

S: Yeah, definitely. I did draw; I was working at art and all that, but the band thing...it's good; it's a good idea, but I think it tends to sink into people too much and get away from reality. But what is reality? I don't know.

I: What academics would you have liked to do? Where would you have liked to put your energies?

S: I guess, developing my writing skills more, but it's just a personal thing. It's always the old thing, "I should have done more."

I: Do you think you could define self-study?

S: Reach in and freak out.

I: Reach in and freak out? Did you freak out when you reached in?

S: No, actually I didn't. Define self-study: the study of the self.

I: How do you manage the study of the self? How does one study one's self?

S: By learning about history. No, I guess being honest with yourself.

I: What part does a band play in that?

S: A group?

I: Yeah. What part do others play in your self-study?

S: Well, we all know that within a band, we choose what we will put forth as far as communicating our self. We all act to a certain extent. But as for getting down to business...what was the question?

I: What about the other people in the band? Do they help you to do the self-study?

S: Yeah, just by giving me feedback, by telling me what impressions they have; whether they think I'm an egocentric bum. Whether they think I have any amount of concern about the people in the group. Which is good, because there's a certain band ethic that's laid out in the beginning and we become very sociable.

I: Do you think it's a bit forced, this band ethic? Do you feel forced into it?

S: In a way. I see the band as being a little dock off the sea of academic subjects, you know. Like you're working on your own thing: writing, art, academics, and the band is the place where you come and share each other's problems, help each other out, talk about how the courses are linked together. If we want, we can discuss our own personal lives. Yeah, I think it's a good thing; I think CEGEPs should have that more. I'm very ambivalent. I'm sceptical about how it makes people act; like, some people act out their selves, which is phony in a way. The reason why it's brought about is because it's so promoted to get close to people and that automatically provokes a kind of fear, like, to open up. We all worry about impressions, about what people will think of us. I believe in a one-to-one relationship with a staff member. I don't believe in staffless bands; I believe it should be directed by a teacher. I believe in teachers.

I: You're not so sure about the students, though?

S: No, I'm not so sure. Like, things can be shared and be constructive with a staffless band, but...

I: You feel there needs to be somebody there to guide them.

S: Yeah. Well, if you're talking about an arty-farty party, it can be all right to just shoot the shit with other students, but... Am I making any sense?

I: Not too much. You seem very ambivalent about the band. On one level, you seem to think it's a good experience, and on another level, you seem to feel that it's a phony experience.

S: Yeah.

I: Are you feeling very conflicted about it?

S: Yes and no.

I: That's pretty ambivalent.

S: Either it's good or it's bad. It can't be in between; if it's in between, it's bad.

I: Oh. So you feel it can be very bad and it can be very good.

S: Yeah. It can be a complete waste of time.

I: Are you satisfied with the band you're in now? This is your second term in it.

S: Yeah, I'm satisfied.

I: But you've had other band experiences that weren't satisfactory.

S: Yeah.

I: Do you feel you've benefited from self-study yourself?

S: I haven't done any course that had self-study as a subject, but I've studied myself and my own relation to other people and also in the group, in the band. It's mainly...What I really like inside the band is the staff member; A I mean; she's really brilliant. She lets us know quite a few things about ourselves that we don't know ourselves, which is good, very precise. Yeah, it's a good experience. That's what we need: groups to communicate!

I: I don't think you're the type, though. I don't think that your basic nature is a very group-like nature.

S: That's my problem.

I: Why do you think that's a problem?

S: Well, inside a group. I don't know, I'm very inside my own world kind of thing.

I: Do you feel that the band gave you a feeling of belonging in the school?

S: Yeah, I do feel a sense of community inside the band when I go there, 'cause I like the people; I've gotten to know them and they're good people. As far as a sense of belonging, not really, but I like to go there; I like to hear what people are about, and I like to communicate, myself, what I'm about, to a certain extent.

I: But it doesn't give you a sense of security as though you belong somewhere. You belong in the art room, I take it. Do you feel secure there?

S: Not really. I feel secure in my room at home. I'm basically a very insecure person.

I: Are you?

S: Yeah, I might give the impression that I'm secure but I'm basically very insecure. I don't know what it depends upon. And one psychological phenomena that has to do with the band is that I have certain feelings that I have to deal with in relating to my family, and my own situation in learning is that I..Inside the band, I will let go of my feelings. This happened on one occasion; I broke up, talking about something that was very significant in my life, and what was happening was that I was camouflaging the pain, you know, myself, so that by talking about it in the band and relating how I felt about it, I would tone down the pain by sort of insulating it inside the band and not really dealing with it in its full intensity, so that's...I don't know about that; I don't think it's good. It's not constructive, like A would say. And I thought about it and I understand that it's definitely true.

Student no. 2.

I: Do you think of yourself as creative?

S: Now I do, but I didn't before.

I: You didn't before?

S: Coming from Delorimier.

I: You didn't think of yourself as creative then?

S: I wanted to create, but...Art was really important to me, but I felt, when I was there, that I didn't have anything to create, that I didn't have any creativity. But now I feel that as long as I'm experiencing the feeling for the things that I do, that I draw, then there's something to create. I don't think that I was feeling, actually feeling, the things I was doing before.

I: It was more imposed exercises.

S: Yeah.

I: Well, how would you define your own particular kind of creativity?

S: What do you mean?

I: Well, do you think you're creative in the visual sense, is that it? But is it imaginative? What do you like to play with? Is it expressive?

S: Right now it's expressive. I used to like to play with colour.

I: What do you express?

S: Each line that I draw will not just be a line; each line will have a feeling and it will all come together into one...



I: Into one whole.

S: Yeah. You know, I'm really influenced by Van Gogh!

I: By Van Gogh? Yeah? You like him. He is very emotive.

S: Yeah, I really like his painting. Each brush stroke is so expressive.

I: Where have you experienced self-study?

S: Through the band, and in art classes.

I: Did the self-study help in that?

S: I realized I had to try things, not be afraid of failure. The band has helped me to express myself more verbally and in a way it helps me express myself more easily in art as well.

I: That's a strange analogy.

S: 'Cause in my profile, I wrote I don't like any drawings that I did because I can't accept myself, you know. If I accept myself, I can accept my drawings.

I: How would you define self-study?

S: Just finding out a million things about yourself.

I: How does the process work?

S: Through interacting with people, sharing...looking at yourself.

### Student no. 3.

I: How do you relate music and photography? What do they have in common?

S: Both are arts that convey emotions.

I: Do you consider yourself a creative person?

S: Yeah, I do.

I: What kind of creativity do you think you have?

S: Primarily musical creativity. I have a fairly good sense of visual creativity, but not as much.

I: Within music itself, what do you think your kind of creativity is? What do you feel you have to contribute?

S: I guess in that I'm very, very good at adapting myself to other people's styles and blending in and listening to someone's piece of music and listening to what they have to say about it and getting a feel for what they want to hear. My goal is to be a studio player.

I: So you think you're a good interpretive musician?

S: I guess that's what it is because I don't seem to have the sort of creativity...Let's put it this way: I haven't created any earth-shattering musical pieces yet, and I'm observant enough to know that I'm not going to.

I: Do you feel you've experienced self-study at all in the school?

S: Oh God...I think I've experienced other people's more than I've experienced mine; I've assisted other people's more than I've helped myself.

I: How have you done that?

S: Well, in that I...though I don't appear to be a die-hard New Schooler or a die-hard self-studier...I do confront people in band situations...and I'm very adept at side-stepping people confronting me. I do do a certain amount of self-study within myself; I think everybody does. Major problems in my life I don't think have been helped by the New School, but they have gotten better during this span of time. But dilemmas in my own life have not been resolved in band situations.

I: Have they been addressed?

S: Yes, to some extent they were, but I don't think people really knew what to ask or what to go for.

I: Do you think the fact that you're older might be hard for them to cope with?

S: But I'm not really much older.

I: You're not only older age-wise but you're also more experienced.

S: I have had some experiences that a lot of the students don't have, but I have a whole lot of the same insecurities and fuck-ups that everybody else has. What bothers me is that a lot of people think I don't. And it's come out in both bands that I've been in that people are intimidated by me, by a certain self-confidence that I have, and I'm articulate.

I: Do you think that if you'd been in a band with people more your own age and experience, you might have got more out of it?

S: Oh, for sure. Well, there was a lot of people in my first band my age, and we formed a pretty united group.

I: But you didn't do much self-study.

S: No; well, self-study...I'm not really sure what it means yet. I know what it means to myself, but I'm not sure if it's the same as what it means to other people.

I: What does it mean to you?

S: The study of the charges that motivate you and keep you going and...the little blind alleys in your life, the dark corners of your mind that you shut aside, the issues...

I: The ones that block you?

S: Yeah, the ones that block you, that you don't want to confront or kind of confront, and then put it aside because it's easier to do.

I: Do you feel that would have been useful for you?

S: No, because I don't think they're that serious any more. I don't have too many serious dilemmas any more. In this period of time, I'm quite stable.

I: So you don't think you need it that badly right now.

S: Not any more.

I: When did you need it?

S: The things that were bothering me and the things that could have been confronted when I came to school I did resolve and I did deal with partially through the banding experience, though not through individual confrontation with them, but just through undergoing the banding process. I suppose when I first came to CEGEP out of high school, like most of the people here, I could have really used it then 'cause I had all sorts of insecurities and questions.

Student no. 4.

I: Do you think of yourself as creative?

S: Yeah.

I: What kind of creativity do you think you have?

S: I think it's a visual creativity because I like doing art and film, and even when I'm writing, I'm envisioning the scene in my head before I write it down usually, unless it's a flow of words and I just get caught up in that.

I: You make up a lot of stories; you seem to make up a lot of things. You fantasize, right?

S: Oh, yeah.

I: In your writing stories, you seem to be fantasy-oriented.

S: Well, I have an affinity towards the grotesque. I like fantasy and science fiction and what have you. I don't like only science fiction and fantasy, but I like it quite a bit.

I: Well, I guess I would call you very imaginative in that you...I don't know too many who can think up stories. Most people, when they write a short story, it's usually based mainly on their own life. They can't make up worlds and characters, while you seem to have quite an imaginative world that you can draw on.

S: Well, actually, what they're following is a pretty good line of reasoning. The thing is, when I was young, I used to read on the average two books a week, so that teaches you a lot of the tricks of the trade, and if you write from your own experience, well, those fantasy and science fiction books are part of my experience. So I can draw from that. If you don't read too much, then you have to draw from your own life experience.

I: So you figure it helped you to live in a lot of different worlds.

S: Oh, yeah. I thought it was good development. Of course, you can get caught up in it too much. That's something you have to guard out for.

I: Do you?

S: I don't think so. People look at me funny, but I don't think so.

I: Do you feel you've experienced self-study at the school?

S: Yeah, but not necessarily because of the school. Well, I introspect a lot, so I think that I would have done it a lot whether I came to the school or not. But the school did force some situations which caused reflection. But I guess in a way, I guess it's part of the school.

I: Have you done any self-study in the bands?

S: Some, but not nearly so much as I've done in some of my other classes. Like this year, F's early protest movements class; that to me was just incredible.

I: Was it very self-related?

S: Yeah, because it couldn't help but be that way. The class ideal was based on the question: "So you're dissatisfied with today's situation in society. What do you do about it?"

And F being F made everybody question their own particular ideals, and ideals that people had believed in for a long, long time. He had vegetarians switching to meat and meat eaters to vegetarians. We had one capitalist who reformed. It was amazing.

I: Well, just the way he posed the question.

S: He had us even question the way we act; like, all these years, have I just been an armchair theorist?

I: So in view of these experiences, can you define self-study?

S: The study of self. I think what it is is organized introspection... at least in this place. Except, I don't think it always works. Like, in my first band, we learned absolutely nothing about each other.

I: What do you mean by introspection?

S: Thinking about yourself, questioning your own ideals, questioning the very way you've acted. Wondering in which direction you're going to spend the rest of your life. That sort of thing.

I: Do you feel that the people in a group help you to do that?

S: Well, personally speaking, I feel that I introspect better when I'm walking along a riverside. The thing is, with another group of people, automatically you're going to feel more inhibited. But the whole advantage with a group therapy, there's a chance that, if you're open and honest, the other people might notice something within you that had never occurred to you before. That's the real advantage, I think.

#### Student no. 5.

I: Do you think of yourself as a creative person?

S: Why, yes. Sure, everyone's creative. Everybody can be creative.

I: Everyone is or everyone can be.

S: Everyone can be.

I: How would you define creativity?

S: To be creative is to be able to apply your imagination or your thoughts to something constructive.

I: In a theatre, where do you apply your imagination?

S: In a theatre. I think I can be creative in theatre; anyone can work on creating a character, and being that character, being something that you're not, in totally immersing yourself in

that character, you're applying your imagination...

I: What about somebody who is not in creative arts; can they be creative?

S: Sure, you can be anything and be creative.

I: Would you consider a housewife creative?

S: Yes; I don't think what you do says whether you're creative or not. It's how you do whatever you do...

I: Do you feel you've experienced self-study at the school?

S: I'm not even quite sure what it is yet. I think so. I know I've gotten to know myself a little better, but I don't know if the school has done that for me or not.

I: You don't feel you've done it in the band.

S: Not really. I don't think I've done any more self-study in a band as that I do just sitting and thinking on my own. Maybe that's just me, because I do sit and think a lot and think about myself. Possibly for people who don't do that, it's a chance; a band is a chance to explore themselves that way. But personally, I can't say I feel more sure of myself now or feel more self-actualized any more because of my experience here. I don't think so.

I: So you haven't been able to use the band in any way?

S: I can enjoy a band very much.

I: For what?

S: Just being with people. Getting to know other people. A band is useful for that and it can be to get to know yourself too. I'm sure it hasn't all been self-studyless or anything.

I: Well, most people feel they can use the band as a reflective mirror, so they can see what other people see in them.

S: Yes, I can see that happening.

I: Has it happened to you?

S: No, probably not. I tend to analyze people anyway, out of my own head.

I: People? Or people's reaction to you?

S: Analyze people. Both, I suppose. I remember that's one thing I learned in a band: that I shouldn't analyze people and I shouldn't

judge people on first appearances. That, I'm often apt to do. In fact, I used to do that a lot, and that's something the band has taught me: that the impression I've had of people when I first meet them turns out to be so different from how I feel for the people when I'm leaving (I'm going away; the term's ending). It's really taught me that my first impressions aren't really valid. I'm really not intuitive, I guess. That's an example of what a band can teach you, but I might have learned that elsewhere just as easily.

I: When you came back at the beginning of this year, you were very gung-ho about the school. Are you feeling a lot less gung-ho now?

S: Yes; I'm really grateful for the experience here. I'm really glad I came back, but two years is enough. I want to go on now. I want to do something else.

I: Do you think you would've gotten into theatre somewhere else? If they had a theatre department, that is.

S: Very possibly not. If I hadn't come here, I would have gone to regular Dawson and I probably would've taken up something like english or sociology. I probably wouldn't've been prompted to let go and do some drama, like I was here.

I: What prompted you?

S: A small group of interested people, all talking about...they want to do some drama; they're not sure what they want to do, but they're interested, and they want to do something together. A lot of people with the same feelings that I had. While in other places, I might not've gotten to know these people's feelings. Well, drama, for example: at the beginning of the year when we shop for academics, we find out that a lot of the people are interested in the same thing, and that is probably what prompted me to do some acting again. Whereas I don't have that opportunity in a regular CEGEP.

I: Well, you could have taken a drama course.

S: Yes, but I wouldn't've had the opportunity to sit and talk with people previously to find out that their interests are where mine are.

I: That it would be the same sort of drama that you'd want to do?

S: Yes.

I: Well, do you have any definition for self-study?

S: No. I can tell you what the philosophy of the school says it should be.

I: What's the philosophy of the school?

S: To give people a chance to look within and find out who you are and what you are and what you want to do with yourself. And to find out where your interests lie and how you can apply your interests in the work you do in school. Um, I don't know if I agree with the philosophy or not. I don't know whether it works.

I: Do you think it worked for you?

S: No, because I don't think this school taught me all that much about myself that I wouldn't've learned just by being myself.

I: But you're contradicting yourself, because you just said...

S: I know. I'm saying that these things happen. I came to realize what I want to do and stuff like that. But I don't know if that's the school that did that for me. I don't think it was. I think it happened to happen here.

I: Well, it's the form of the school that allowed it to happen; you said so yourself.

S: We were talking about going into drama, going into acting. That's not self-study.

I: I know, but what you said about the school didn't have that much to do with self-study, as a place where you can explore your own possibilities is not about self-study, but about a lot of other things...

S: O.K. I was thinking more of self-study exercises and things.

I: But what you said...

S: It sounded like I was talking more about the school, but I was trying to talk about self-study.

I: So you still haven't defined self-study. 'Cause what you gave me before was the official spiel which really doesn't have that much to do with self-study.

S: That's right. And it doesn't really have that much meaning. I still don't know what self-study actually is.

I: What worries me is that you seem to be so much in contradiction with what you say your experience was, and the fact that you don't think the school has fulfilled that promise of letting you discover your own potential.

S: The school does. It fulfills that promise that the potential is there, that you can if you want, and for some people it works and for some it's good, and the school hasn't been harmful to me.



I've really enjoyed it and I can see how beneficial it can be to some people, but how it's helped me, I can't see it.

I: Well, it helped you by allowing you to explore your potential in drama, right?

S: Oh yes, and I was still talking about self-study: whether I've learned more about myself or not. I don't know.

I: So you feel it hasn't helped you as far as self-study goes, but it has helped you explore your own creative potential.

S: That's right.

Student no. 1

I: During the time that you've been here, what do you consider to be your main subject of study? Drama?

S: Yeah, I've been doing mostly drama. I've tried to combine drama and film, but I'm not too sure how that works yet.

I: Aside from drama and film, what else do you do?

S: I concentrated mostly on myself, I did a lot of self-study. I did a lot of minor consciousness groups and sexuality groups. I did some french, and I'm presently teaching at Royal Arthur. So I mostly concentrated on myself...

I: Do you think of yourself as creative?

S: I hope so. Yeah, I do.

I: In what way do you think you're creative?

S: Well, my definition of creativity is one who creates, and by creating, that means that you involve yourself with something that you're deeply interested in. In other words, like you, for instance: when I'm doing drama, I think I'm creative because I'm putting myself... I'm not using anybody else's theories or what have you, you see; I'm creating from myself. I'm starting from nothing and I'm creating a role... anything else... or even a film. I think it's important that it comes from yourself, that you don't use anybody else's ideas.

I: Did you like that film on Renoir yesterday?

S: Yeah; because in that film, he shows what my idea of creativity is; that you have to start from neutral; you have to start from nothing, from scratch, and build... a character, or what have you. That's the only way, for me, that you can be creative.

I: Do you feel that you've done a lot of self-study at the school?

S: Yeah, I think so. Self-study is what you call it. It's a euphemism for, I think, your self. I never understood what self-study meant. What do you mean by self-study?

I: I don't; not what the school means. But what do you think of when you think of self-study?

S: Self-study. For me, what it is, basically, is looking at myself and saying this is you; this is what you are; this is what you will be. And live, don't try to be someone else. It's dealing with myself basically, and dealing with myself honestly. Because before coming to the school, I don't think I did deal with myself, honestly. I looked at myself, I had an idea of what I was, and yet I reacted differently; I wasn't that person when I interacted with people. I was someone else. Because I could not accept myself and because I was not too sure of myself.

I: So you think through the self-study, you've come to accept yourself more.

S: Yeah. Not here because I knew what was there before, but I accept it now better. But yet, I still have a tendency when I get out there, when I step outside that building, when it comes four o'clock, I put on masks, but I know I do that.

I: Do you think it necessary?

S: It's against my principles, but I think so. Otherwise, you'll be shot down at work or in the street if you're different.

I: Well, how do you feel when there's an audience and you're a character in a play, and you're putting across some very real feelings for yourself. How do you feel about that audience?

S: Well, I've always thought of that audience as the last character in the play. We perform for the audience; without the audience, theatre does not exist. So I tend to think of the audience as the sixth character that I've come to share an experience with. At first, I felt paranoid. I was in grade ten and I didn't understand drama that well, but after studying it better and just thinking of the audience as a sixth character, you begin to understand these people are here just to share an experience with you. It's a birth. You're giving birth to a play and the audience is just there to help you out.

I: Do you think that in doing self-study, in getting more accepting of your real self, that it helps you to go down into the reality of the characters, to accept the emotions that are there that come out with the character?

S: Well, when I think on a role, first thing, I don't try to associate myself with a character. I think it's one of the important things, that you have to draw a line right away.

Like what Stanislavsky said: that theatre is not reality; we don't project reality; we project an illusion of reality, and in order to do that, you can't bring in something that's real right away. You have to bring in nothing, and then you start to take on a role, and as you take on the role, you begin to see things that resemble yourself, and if you know yourself well enough, and by seeing that some of these things relate to you. Then you can apply yourself to that and the character comes out as a real person that way.

I: But for that, you have to know yourself pretty well.

S: You do.

I: You could see things in yourself that could make you really scared through that character.

S: Yeah. That's why sometimes, when the play is over, you start taking on that character or you start being yourself through that character, because you've got an excuse. Right now you can say, hey, I'm not being me; I'm being Victor, but yet I am being me. But I can use that as a cover-up.

I: What do you do when that happens?

S: I don't know.

I: Do you stop yourself?

S: Well, you enjoy it for a while; then you have to stop, because if you don't, you lose track of yourself.

I: I find it frightening, taking on a role. There seem to be a lot of forces released in you that are suppressed usually.

S: It's very frightening, yes, but it's also a great feeling. You feel that you can manipulate people through this character. Because when you take on a role and when you have this audience out there and you project these very strong emotions, they can be your emotions, but through this character, you can really throw it at them; because no matter what you say, they'll see you as a character in a play, and it's not yourself.

I: Where do you think you did most of your self-study?

S: It was mostly in the men's groups. It was mostly in the sexuality groups. I think sexual identity was one of the first things that I had to work out, and through that, I discovered more and more of myself. Because first of all I'm a man, and if I can accept that, and what does that mean to be a man, and what does it mean out there in terms of relationships, in terms of behaviour with the family and my sexual behaviour and in terms of my fantasies and all that. Then I'll get to know myself much better.

I: What did the band experience do for you? Do you think it fulfilled Maslow's needs of safety and security and a place to belong?

S: Some bands do. My first band was very good, the second term. When I first came to this school, I thought the bands were absurd. I really bullshitted my way through the first term and I was confronted through evaluations, and then, the second term, little by little I got to know these people and it was like a second family. The atmosphere was such that it was so easy to say what you felt because you didn't feel threatened. But before you do that, I think you need to be confronted. You can't do that if you're bullshitting your way; if you have a negative attitude towards the band..

I: Do you think you have to do self-study within the band to get that feeling of belonging?

S: Sure you do. Because self-study means knowing yourself as well as other people, and if you don't know the people that you're in a room with, there's no way that you can be open, you know. The band will turn into a social rip rap that you can have with anyone in the street.

I: What part do the other people within a group play in the self-study situation?

S: Well, first of all, they're listening to you and then they respond. They're there to give you feedback and sometimes they can relate to what you're saying. They'll say, oh yeah, I've been through that, and this is how I got out of it, you know. And through all this, all the information that's going on throughout the self-study experience, you get to know yourself better. You can cope with your situation better because of the other people.

(Interviews with students no. 7, 8 and 9 are included in text).

#### Student no. 10.

I: What do you consider to be your main subject of study at the school?

S: Photography and film.

I: How do you relate to those subjects? What do you want to do with them?

S: Express myself!

I: Express yourself...?

S: I like film and photography. I've been involved with film for a while, internally. I haven't produced anything, but I can,

walk down the street and see everything in shots and add sound tracks. I'd like to learn the techniques so I could put on film what's in my head.

I: So far you haven't been able to put on film what's in your head.

S: No.

I: You feel you're lacking the technical means.

S: Not any more. Now, I feel ready.

I: Do you think of yourself as creative?

S: Yeah.

I: How would you define the ways in which you are creative?

S: I don't know; when I do something, I feel I add something to it...a flair to it...that some people might not add to it.

I: So it isn't what you do, but how you do it, that makes it creative.

S: Yeah. An example would be: for Ryerson, what I have to do is a photograph of a contrast; the example they gave is something old beside something new, like a grandmother holding a baby. I think I'm going to do a chicken egg beside a bird, right? It's just that extra weird touch.

I: It's the originality of the idea.

S: Yeah.

I: But if you feel you have all the technical means to do film, how come you haven't done any yet?

S: I plan to start shooting this week.

I: So you think it's just a lack of confidence in the technical means.

S: In part. Well, I'm a perfectionist and I see lots of films. I've just spent the weekend seeing 45 films and I've seen good films and I've seen bad films, and I've seen good ideas, but finally it's the ideas that haven't come across because the technique wasn't good. They weren't very watchable, so I want mine to be watchable, but I want them judged not on the shots but what's actually being said.

I: The technique should be something you have down so pat you could forget about it.

S: Exactly. That's why I spend so much time on technique.

I: So you think the technical criteria wasn't hard enough on them.

S: No, no; some of them, the technique wasn't so good but it was enjoyable, and some others...I worked on one...and the idea didn't come across so good but it had the best cinematography and they had an award...so it was right that it was in there as it was technically correct.

I: Technically correct but the idea wasn't that good.

S: The idea was a good idea but it didn't quite make it.

I: So there's more to getting across the idea than just technique.

S: Yeah.

I: What?

S: Creativity. Four people can photograph a building; it can be the same building; it can look four different ways; it's the angle you shoot it at; it's a lot of different things and that all comes from you: how you go about filming this building.

I: Do you think you've experienced self-study in any form at the school?

S: Yes, I think it's been a constant. That's the reason I'm at this school...it's the self-study...because the film and photography I can get at Viger.

I: In the school itself, what were your first experiences with self-study?

S: In the band and in the courses; not in the very beginning, but the courses have an evaluation at the end. So you get an idea in some evaluations of how people see you in a group, and your work, the process you went through to go through the work; not just the work itself, not just: here's my painting, but; what were your trials and tribulations in making that painting?

I: They were looked at in the evaluation?

S: Yeah. In the first band, it was deciding what I felt was wrong with me. No, maybe wrong is the wrong word. How I can improve upon myself and how the band and I want to change. So for the aggressive thing, I said I'm too aggressive and I want to change. I talk over people, so if you find me talking over you...if I talk too loud or too much...tell me about it. I won't take offense, because I told you to tell me; I gave you licence to tell me, and in that way, you can monitor me until I can help monitor myself.

I: So you set that up right from the beginning.

S: Yeah, and people were a little hesitant sometimes to say, but I could read it off their faces. And at one point, it got so I didn't have to have people's faces to monitor me. I'd realize in my mind: you're getting too loud. I haven't toned down totally, that's for sure.

I: That's for sure.

S: But there's something else I've been working on: I've found a more important thing.

I: Lastly you've found a more important thing?

S: Yeah.

I: Well, there must be something beneath that. That seems like just a surface mannerism.

S: Yeah, so I guess I'm getting to the nitty-gritty.

I: Can you define self-study?

S: The ongoing process of improving upon yourself. Humanity is not perfection.

I: What about the role of the other people in the group?

S: The group gives you feedback. It's also good for...you know, if you've done good, it's good to hear that you've done well. It's a good monitor. It's a support group; the band is a support group. It isn't always supportive, but finally you know when they're telling you something bad that in spite of your flaws you're still accepted in the group.

I: 'Cause they care for you.

S: Yeah; there's a trust element and a caring element. You can say something 'cause you know it's going to be listened to and you know it's going to be confidential.

#### Student no. 11.

I: I guess what I wanted to ask you first of all was why you came to the New School.

S: It sort of was a spontaneous kind of decision. I'd been thinking of going to the University of Ottawa in modern languages. Because I had done a bit of that at John Abbott; I'd done two and a half years at John Abbott. I started out in pure and applied science; I couldn't stand that, and I tried a few things, and one of the things I was good at was modern languages, so I thought I'd go into that. And then I started having doubts about university and focusing on modern languages because I had some feelings about

wanting to do fine arts. I've had them for a long time. I did do some when I was in Mexico, you know; I've always drawn and stuff, but...

I: Did you do any at John Abbott?

S: No, I didn't want to do any courses in it. I felt, oh my God, they'll be criticizing my paintings, you know, and I felt, no, I couldn't; I just couldn't. I was tempted to a couple of times, but I was very intimidated by the whole...you know...world of art. Like, I'm not an artist and all this sort of thing.

I: Is it very big there?

S: Actually, their Fine Arts Department is not very big, but it's very serious; academic, in a sense that you're not allowed that much freedom. You have to take certain courses and you have to do what the teachers tell you to do in the courses. This is what I've been told, from the people I knew who were in fine arts.

I: So it's mostly technically oriented.

S: I think so. That's the impression I got. I didn't like John Abbott. I didn't like the atmosphere there, and I didn't feel like I could feel at ease or paint or draw there. I met someone who went to the New School and I thought, "Hey, why not stay in Montreal and go to the New School?" because it'll be loose, and I won't be pressured to be a certain thing or to try necessarily a certain thing. I didn't want the pressure.

I: What is it that you want out of the New School? You seem very definite about it.

S: Well, I want to try a lot of fine arts courses, and I'm doing a lot. I'm doing oil painting, watercolour, drawing and printmaking. I want a lot of feedback from people about their ideas and their feelings about what they're doing in fine arts, and generally with the courses, and I find this doesn't happen too much in a regular CEGEP. So that's what I was hoping for: that people would give a lot of feedback and talk about things.

I: Do you find that they do interact?

S: Well, not as much as I thought they would, but I think it's just that people are shy at the beginning, you know. But there's definitely room for that. But I am disappointed in the sense that I thought people would be more into it, you know.

I: It's much more class-structured than you thought it would be.

S: Well, not so much class-structured, as people are really into their own thing and are hesitant about going round and looking,



"Hey, you did this and this; well, I am, too," but I thought people would be looser.

I: It takes a while.

S: We're just barely beginning. I've really been frustrated because it just seems to take so long to get going, you know, and I have a tendency to just throw myself completely into something, or just get discouraged; let it go and just lose interest. So for a long time, I wasn't doing any drawing or painting, but I've started, just in the past two weeks, again. Which makes me feel better. Because I really feel guilty, too, you know. Here I am supposedly going to school and supposedly wanting to do this. Why haven't I done it yet?

I: Well, we hadn't started classes yet.

S: Yeah, I felt pretty sidetracked.

I: You felt the band was a side thing for you; it wasn't so crucial?

S: Well, I didn't come here expecting it to be so important, sort of thing...

I: You didn't realize...

S: I didn't think this was such a group-oriented place as I get the impression that it is.

I: What did you think the bands would be like?

S: God, I didn't have too much of an idea. I really did not have any idea.

I: So when you came, the main thing in your head wasn't bands at all. I take it it was fine arts.

S: Yeah; I was aware of the band but I didn't. Maybe also because I was so interested in fine arts, I didn't really listen. Then, when I arrived: "Huh, what's happening?", you know; bands are so important. In a sense, I like it, I mean the self-study, but I do it with my friends, too; like, self-study to me is like... just to have decent relationships with people... You almost have to do it, but, uh... I feel the group thing to be really something and I talked about it in band this morning. It was really bugging me, the whole abstract thing of group was bothering me.

I: Group as in a band or the classes as well?

S: Well, even the classes, but more so in band, because it seems like there has been more talk about it, you know.

I: Yeah, what a group is; what a group should be.

S: Yeah, you know. I relate to people as individuals; a group does not mean anything to me; it's just an abstraction, so I didn't feel too comfortable about that, and I was very rebellious. I felt a lot of structures were being imposed on me. I was surprised, because here I was coming to the New School and I was expecting a lot more freedom in terms of structures.

I: A lot of people come expecting a free school, even though they're told.

S: Yeah, I was told this is not a free school; it's humanistic education. But what is humanistic education? And the whole question of what is a human being comes in.

I: What do you think humanistic education is?

S: My idea of what the place was going to be was people interacting on an individual basis more; I mean, this person I like, so I will talk to this person, and maybe if we have something in common, we can really get into things with each other, you know. But it seems we've been placed in these groups which... Not placed, o.k.; I chose to be in this group that I'm in. But there are people there whom I don't particularly like and who I may have very little in common with, so I have to deal with these people and I feel it's sort of sidetracking me from developing more intense relationships with the people that I do like...

I: Who are in the band as well.

S: Yeah, there are a few.

I: I guess the idea is that you learn as well from interaction with the people you don't like.

S: Yeah, I understand that. I think it's too early for me to be judging this whole experience... I have difficulty with that. I don't feel very trusting; I feel, why do these people want to know anything about me anyways; why should I want to know anything about them. But even on a more... To me, in a final sense, it seems very superficial in a sense.

I: The band?

S: Yeah, because usually the people who I talk to most intimately are my friends and their friendship is what makes it meaningful. I could say the stupidest thing and it would mean something because they're my friends. But in band, I'm talking to people who are not necessarily my friends. And it loses some of that personal quality; it becomes more impersonal in a sense.

I: You don't feel they care about you?

S: They do, at a certain level.

I: But not at the same level as a friend does.

S: Yeah, so how can I tell them these really personal things when they don't really care at the same level as a friend would care.

I: Did you bring this up in band?

S: Yeah, I got into it. But they said the purpose is not necessarily for us to be friends anyway. And that for anything to be achieved, that we had to be "close", and the closeness was achieved by being open.

I: Which is like a circle.

S: Yeah, it's a vicious circle, a circular movement.

Looking at her art work:

S: In general, I like realistic things, and I would like to be able to paint realistically, but I'm very afraid to go near it. I feel very incompetent, so I do these flutzy little things. But I enjoy them; I really do.

I: Well, it looks like you would do abstract stuff. There.

S: I would definitely like to try realistic things, but my problem is I really love colours, themselves, you know, and motion, and I don't know.

I: You're an abstract expressionist.

S: I don't know.

I: But I guess you feel that's all you can do for the moment.

S: Yeah, yeah, in a way. These are things I worked on a little longer.

I: Do you think of them as particular places, or just designs?

S: Pretty much just designs. But I like to be able to recall a colour that I loved and put it on paper. Or maybe a shape, just the suggestion of a shape, but I find that more difficult. Forms are really hard to work with.

I: It has a nice looseness to it. It would be too bad if you got very tight as you tried to be realistic.

S: Yeah; well, the thing is I really love the woods, nature, etc.,

and I feel I have to gain some sort of mastery of rules of realistic painting...before I could really express the things that I'm feeling and seeing about this place. But maybe I'm wrong...

End of first semester interview:

S: That painting: it reminded me of my dreams in a sense; the colours. I've just really been wanting to paint my dreams and I can't and it's so frustrating.

I: Why can't you?

S: Because I have this very definite strong image in my mind and I can't put it on paper. I've written down my dreams; I've tried to explain it to myself; I've tried to explain it to other people, and they seem beyond expressing visually at all.

I: They're certain feelings that you'd like to express visually.

S: They're not...

I: When you say "dream", do you actually dream them at night?

S: Yeah. But in the day, it carries over.

I: Do you see it as a particular visual image?

S: Well, a couple of them were very specific visuals, but to paint them, my God, I don't know where I'd start. I have a long way to go before I could.

I: So they're particular visual images.

S: Yeah, they're particular. And then, there's the feelings involved, and if I take that into consideration, it makes it even more complicated.

I: The feelings involved.

S: When I think of two specific dreams, I can't clearly recall the feelings because they were very fast; they were like a flash, snap. I think I fell asleep for five minutes and then woke up. They were so wonderful they made me feel like, after, I felt very good and they didn't make me feel dead any more. At the time, I was working at Manpower, and it was like fuel. The art kept me going somehow. It made me feel very good.

I: Have you tried at all to put them down; even one little sketch?

S: Yeah, I tried one sketch. It was...ugh, you know, and I think I tried a water colour. It didn't come out too good. I'm afraid to try because I'm afraid to fail. For me, that's something that...I've thought of taking that as a major project

next semester, of writing these things down as best as I can, and then doing as many sketches and as many paintings as I have to before I can get really into it. I'm afraid...I'm afraid that I just can't do it, you know. I'm afraid that once I do it, it won't be so great after all. It'll just be another...

I: It'll destroy your vision.

S: Yeah, yeah...

I: How's your band going?

S: Really well.

I: You weren't too happy at the beginning.

S: I was rebelling against the whole thing; it was more of an intellectual rebellion, in the sense I don't like to be forced to do anything on an intellectual level. I can't reject the band on an emotional level because...I don't know...it's been good. But on an intellectual level, I still resent the whole idea that it's compulsory; it makes me angry.

I: Yeah; I have problems with that, too. But you came to the school knowing...

S: You see, I didn't really know. This is why I felt I'd been conned. I felt that they didn't really explain to me that it's compulsory, and that's it. They weren't very explicit in the interviews, and I know I'm not the only one. But the band has been really good; really, really good for me. I always wanted to do self-study, but there's this incredible conflict in me, 'cause I really wanted to do it. Yet on this other level it made me so angry to be there, just to have to be there, you know. And I mean, finally, I ended up doing a lot in the band, and I felt good about it. But it caused a lot of problems in the beginning.

I: If you had to define self-study, how would you define it? Just in terms of the band, of the group; how it works.

S: It's something in a sense that I've always done: examined what I'm doing and why I'm doing it, you know. Where the hell is it all coming from and all that. I've always done that, but it's always been easier to avoid the harder aspects, the big fears, in the sense of sitting down and trying to change that. I might be aware of a lot of fears, but I might not actually do anything about it. But...Well, in a band of self-study, part of it has been just learning to listen to people.

I: How did they help you to do self-study?

S: Well, if I came in with a problem, they would give me feedback,

comments. For me, it was pretty easy 'cause I always had a specific problem that I could bring in. They'd give feedback and suggest you could do this or that.

I: Would it be the sort of suggestions you would follow?

S: Sometimes yes; sometimes no. Sometimes it was just good, talking about it and realizing the problem isn't so enormous; it's important, but it's not insurmountable.

Last interview:

I: How's this semester been?

S: Not too bad. Better than last semester. I've been working harder and more consistently, at least at my schoolwork. I guess I did less the kind of stuff I would do on my own.

I: What subjects were you taking?

S: Model Drawing, Art History, Self-Portrait, Design; that's it. The Self-Portrait I was doing for two credits.

I: So that's why you did all the self-portraits, the paintings and the drawings.

S: Yeah.

I: How come you chose to do it so realistically? I think most people did different kinds of stuff.

S: Well, I think a lot of people...I just saw Z's stuff and she did very realistic drawings. I guess 'cause I wanted to...C suggested to me to try to just look and see what's there, you know. I was just trying to...

I: Does she mean just visually?

S: Yeas; just visually.

I: Just visual reality.

S: Yeah, because she said you'll acquire skills that you need to represent other kinds of realities.

I: Do you think that's true?

S: Maybe; maybe not. I think I've acquired some skills. I don't know if it will help me to represent other kinds of reality. But it's kind of nice to have those skills. 'Cause it gives me confidence. Of course, I may lose that confidence entirely when I have to try something else, you know, and let go of that.

I: Did you like the self-portraits?

S: Some of them, yeah. Um...I really started getting into it when I started using colour. The first drawings were the ones in the sketchbook.

I: Were they in pencil?

S: Yes; contour. I didn't mind the contour, but I mind drawing in general, anyways.

I: What about the Model Drawing class?

S: That I really enjoy. In part, because it's the human body; it's something that you can really feel, you know in some way, you have a feeling for. It's just not this object that could so easily be disconnected from you.

I: But your face is not exactly disconnected from you.

S: No; well, yeah, not at all. I find it much easier to draw somebody else than to draw myself. I think part of it was because I was looking in the mirror. It was hard to convince myself that I was looking at myself.

I: Your mirror image isn't really you.

S: Yeah. Well, it's this cold flat surface, you know. And then you start looking at yourself and you get a bit of an idea, but it's this weird thing, you know. I found that odd, and I found just looking at myself hard...really, really hard...I didn't like looking at myself at all.

I: Why?

S: All kinds of things about looking at yourself; it's vanity. I have definite hangups about that. Maybe I was afraid to see what was really there.

I: Did you talk about those things in the portrait class?

S: No; there wasn't time. We did the usual. You see, I did it for an extra credit, that part of it, so what we usually talked about in the group was what we had all done that week; various projects we'd done. There wasn't time.

I: So you did do the other projects which weren't so realistic.

S: Yes.

I: Did you find the other projects easier to do?

S: Sometimes...I found the written ones hard; I didn't want to do the written ones.

I: What were they like?

S: We had to write an epitaph. I just kind of rejected the idea entirely from the beginning. I did it, but in a very half-assed way.

I: Why? Because it involved your own death?

S: Yeah; I couldn't take it seriously. It just seemed very disconnected about my feelings, about my life at that particular point. Maybe if I'd been into a very death frame of mind...It's the kind of thing that, if you really got absorbed into that, you'd forget about everything else.

I: Did you find you did any self-study in that portrait group?

S: Some; it wasn't as in-depth as I had hoped. But then there was the numbers of people and all that and just the difficulty of anybody getting in-depth. I think maybe towards the end, I got a little bit less hesitant about saying anything. Well, really the only thing that I really didn't want to reveal...The disguise that I did was sort of hard for me to do.

I: Where you disguised yourself as that lady. The very straight lady.

S: Yeah; that's a side of me that's hard for me to show to people, 'cause I really do not want to be that. I try very hard not to be that. But it's in me.

I: Do you think that being is in you?

S: Not to that extreme, but I was just portraying the greatest extreme.

I: You mean, sort of like working in an office and being straight?

S: Yeah, but not just that, but the whole attitude that sort of person would have.

I: Very prim.

S: Prim, tight-assed, self-righteous, dogmatic, which I can be.

I: It was very good; it was very frightening somehow.

S: It was strange because when I was doing it, I had a vague idea of what it should be, but it kept shifting, because first I thought I want to do what my mother thinks I should be, which is sort of like that, sort of straight, sort of conservative and prim. But then I was thinking: that's really what I think that my mother thinks that I should be. It just got in a vicious circle. Then I thought: no, what I'm doing is I'm trying to be what I think my mother is.

I: I notice A also dressed up as her mother.



S: I didn't notice that.

I: I guess we all react against our parents.

Looking at her art work:

I: Do you think anything of the inside of you comes out in the self-portrait?

S: Yeah.

I: What comes out?

S: It's hard to verbalize. It's that look.

I: Wary.

S: Yeah, wary, which I am. I'm suspicious and very wary and very... What's going on here? And maybe it's not so off in being, because I can be at times very tight.

I: Do you think that's what's disturbing about self-portraits; that they reveal parts of your personality?

S: Yeah, I think so.

I: More clearly than a mirror?

S: Yeah. This one didn't really disturb me that much. I don't know if it disturbed me but I felt it somehow more.

I: There's more emotion in it.

S: Well, I think maybe the kind of thing that's happening here is straight on, you know. I mean, it looks like I'm sort of withdrawing, going back like that, in a way. Although, at the same time, maybe I'm looking, but I feel when I look at this that I'm withdrawing.

I: Withdrawing from the intensity of the experience.

S: No, I don't know.

I: Not from the drawing itself?

S: I'm not sure.

I: Do you mean the way that character was withdrawn, the one that you dressed up as?

S: No; I think that's me withdrawn; that's more me. The character is part of me, but...I would feel it's part of me that's been put there, that somehow I've acquired, but this would be more really me, something that I've always been me, and always will be inside.

I: So it's very real.

S: Yeah, I think so.

I: There'd be no point, I guess, in your coming back to the New School. You don't feel you'd have anything to learn from it.

S: Well, it would be hard; I'm having a lot of conflicts being here.

I: What are the conflicts you have?

S: I couldn't be here without being in band, and I have so many conflicts about band and about the whole school. I think it's just such a weird trip.

I: What? The self-study?

S: Yeah; sometimes, not just the self-study; the direction of this school, what I feel is the direction of this school in some ways.

I: What is the direction?

S: Well, the idea of humanistic education here, you know. It seems like there's a certain kind of person that is in a way the ideal, you know. It's sort of implied from various feedback that you get from people; certain kinds of behaviour are acceptable and certain kinds aren't. I mean, it's certainly different from other places. And I start getting wary when people are trying to shape me, you know. I guess I'm just a paranoid person. Well, it's just been a big conflict for me that's been on my mind, and it's been talked about a lot in band and with M. He's talked about it a lot to me; he's very down on this school. It's been hard to deal with.

I: Do you think you got much self-study done?

S: Yeah, I think so.

I: In spite of all that?

S: Yeah, I think that was part of it.

I: That was part of your self-study?

S: Yeah, the conflict. But I'm not too clear on what I could accomplish here if I came back. I mean, as much as I might want to do something very specifically if other people don't go along with that, to a certain extent, I'm not going to be able to do it.

I: In terms of painting? In terms of self-study?

S: Both, maybe. Not so much painting as much as self-study, and

maybe in terms of specific things that I wanted to do.

I: Like what?

S: Like painting more from life, outdoors..

I: A little hard in the winter.

S: Not so much outside; outdoors. But out of the school environment. Actually there was someone who wanted to do that this semester, but I didn't. But if I wanted to do it next year and nobody else did, I couldn't...

I: The group therapy thing is funny because there is a lot of group pressure once you're in the group.

S: And it's so powerful, you know. I find it very frightening. And I guess I've been very angry in band and a very conflictive person. It's blocked them a lot, but it's just that I couldn't deal with that sort of...It made me really angry and scared.

I: With the group pressure?

S: Yeah. Not specifically because they were exerting so much pressure, but because I knew the people and immediately there was a more... there was a stronger connection and there was more concern.

I: But don't you think that's something you have to deal with all the time? I mean, even your boyfriend is exerting a lot of pressure on you.

S: Yeah, I know; and my family and the whole bit. I have to learn to deal with it. But it's hard when people are expecting to do other things.. To me it was just such a major problem. I guess I didn't really express it, but it was such a major problem with me and people were expecting to deal with other things, you know. Not just the specific problem of being in a group, you know, and dealing with those conflicts, but with their own problems and, you know, things like that, and I think I was just blocking, blocking.

Student no. 12.

I: What classes are you taking now?

S: Advanced Drawing, Watercolour, French, Band and Political Science, Capitalist Views in the Third World...Well, that's what I like in the New School; at least people are motivated. Like, in themselves they are motivated; not like in high school; nobody wants to do anything. If you start talking in a class, they get bored. The same thing in an art class; that's why I like it here. I haven't really yet gotten into the art, because we've just begun.

I: So you're just drawing from the model.

S: Yeah, but at least people share the things that they are doing. Like, we'll go after and show each other our drawings and things like that, and that's very good. You know, it really makes me feel good because, like, you're able to see what other people are doing and what you're doing, and to share things. And you don't have much opportunity to do that in a regular CEGEP, 'cause it's very individualistic and everyone sits at their own little table, you know...

I: When you came to the interview, you found out about self-study in the band. What did you think then?

S: Well, I didn't have a very clear idea what it was. But I think it's very valid, what they do here. Because in this society, people don't have too much opportunity to express themselves. And also, it's very repressive, I think, like in high school, you can see people afraid to touch each other or to talk openly to each other, and they have many problems, like, who's to say hello first; stupid things like that. So I think this school is very valid for people who've been to regular high school here and it really makes a difference for them, like, it helps them to talk. I was very surprised people say hello without any problem, to you. You go to a regular high school; it's very repressed...

I: So when you came, the first week you had banding. How did that go?

S: Well, at the beginning, I was very tired. It was exhausting, the banding. I wanted to settle in a band and start working.

I: How are you finding the band?

S: I'm...mm...It's okay. But there are problems obviously in the band.

I: There always is.

S: Yeah. There's different levels of experience in the people in the band. There are people that have experienced a lot; in a sense it makes them more strong and critical of things. And there are people who've just come from their family's house and it's a big contrast and these people are talking about...oh, what happened downtown, and others are shocked or some people have strong psychological problems and people in the band are not mature enough to handle them or to deal with them. So sometimes I think it could be very dangerous.

I: The group thing.

S: Yeah. It could be very dangerous 'cause what happens if this guy is very sick; sometimes he could need more a psychologist than a band.

I: Usually the band leader suggests that he should see a psychologist, tries to get him to see a psychologist.

S: I really feel like I'm not capable of helping someone in the band 'cause I don't know actually. I mean, I don't have the tools. I don't know how to orient that person. To me, it's frustrating, because I know, I see that the person really needs help, and there's not much you can do.

I: If you had to define self-study for yourself, what would you define it as?

S: I don't know; I wouldn't go into self-study.

I: You don't think what you do in the band is self-study?

S: Well, to me, what I do in the band is I learn more about myself, about how I deal with people. I don't really find out how some things affect me, like my childhood, that are very important for me, and presenting them to the band. I don't know if it would solve many things.

I: You don't trust them enough.

S: No, because actually I don't know the problems. Also, what would happen if I told you it really impressed me when my mother cut an apple in four. For you, it would not mean anything. That's why I believe in psychoanalysis.

I: You would really have to go a lot deeper.

S: Yeah, it would have to be something continuous; a band meeting is not enough. It's really valid; it really helps, like I said, because people open themselves; they're more secure because they have to talk and express what they feel, so it helps make them more self-confident. It teaches you also how to deal with people and so on. That's good. But I wouldn't say it goes further than that.

I: It doesn't go as far as psychoanalysis.

S: No, nor can you expect it to do that.

I: But what it does, isn't that part of self-study?

S: Yeah.

I: How does the group help you see yourself?

S: It's hard, because I'm very secure in myself. Like, my group situation is complicated. I think it really helps most of the people there and it helps me in some ways, personally, I'm saying. Generally, it helps a lot of people. But personally, I'm very secure and strong in a group.

I: What you're saying is you don't get as much as someone who's insecure and needs help in a group.

S: I don't think I get as much as some people, and I want to help those people. But it helps me in some things, like I learn about myself and how I deal with people, but it doesn't help me get any deeper.

End of first semester interview:

I: How was the band?

S: It was good.

I: Do you think you got a lot of self-study done?

S: Yeah. Well, the band in general worked well, I think. I have less prejudice against it and it worked well for me too.

I: You were sort of quite against it when I spoke to you.

S: Not against it, but I thought it was kind of risky, because you could get into things you would not be able to solve; like, some people had psychological problems and so on. I don't think we were able to solve at all; there is still that danger there, but at the same time there are other people that achieved a lot by being in the band. I was amazed, especially by some people, that they developed really a new personality, you know. 'Cause they have to talk and express themselves and give their point of view, and that really helped.

I: Did you find that you developed your own personality?

S: No. Well, actually I think that I have a strong personality. But it really helped me in the sense that I learned to relate to many different kinds of people and I learned to be more tolerant; I wasn't very tolerant. I learned, well, to talk about anything, you know.

I: In a group.

S: Yeah. Like some people especially I didn't have anything at all in common, and I learned how to relate to them.

I: If you had to define self-study, do you think you could?

S: No.

I: Well, just what you think it is...

S: Well, I cannot define it because so many people talk about it.

I: Yeah, but for yourself; how did you experience it?

S: Well, studying, how did I react to the group, you know, and things like that. How did I behave towards the problems that were raised in the group.

I: So you are still thinking of going to Delorimier.

S: Yeah; that's why I want to take Design with C next semester. Anyway, I find that's the way I'm oriented in my work.

I: Toward Graphics, you mean.

S: Yeah.

I: So you have a more definite idea of the sort of thing you want to make.

S: Yeah; I've developed, and that makes me feel much better... Now I can make a separation between the things I want to do and the things I don't.

I: So you got a lot out of this semester, if you got that much.

S: Yes, I got a lot. It's been very helpful. I think the whole year is going to be very good for me.

Last interview.

I: What have you been doing this semester?

S: Drawing and Design, and two Political Sciences and band...

I: Are you still thinking of going to Delorimier next year?

S: Yeah, I made application but I don't know what I'll do if I don't get in.

I: If you want to leave Canada, there are easier ways of doing it than going three years at Delorimier. You could always just get a job.

S: Yeah, but I'm not really interested in it. It would be nicer to work in something that I know how to do and that I like.

I: Yeah. What I wonder about, you know, you were asking me about painters and their relation to politics. If art is not just useless, right?... art for art's sake, sort of thing... it seems to me that sort of program is very commercial; that it's really geared towards commercialism, towards turning out people who can sell the capitalist society.

S: Yeah, I think it's very commercial. You see, I will take that program because of many reasons. One: it's free; two: it's three years, it's not too long; three: even though it's commercial

it's very good technically; like, you really learn how to take out a very neat and clean print. The motive, I think, depends on the individual, but technically speaking, they try to make a good designer.

I: You want to use the design for political reasons, is that it?

S: Not only. For artistic reasons, but if there is a need to use it politically I will do it.

I: I just wonder how you resolve that dilemma, 'cause you seemed to be worried about it at the beginning of the semester, you know. About where artists fit in as far as politics go.

S: I still worry about it, but I guess I still worry about how they fit in the whole society. 'Cause people have such an idea of artists: that they are some crazy nuts living in a small room painting all day. That's one aspect. That they really talk about individuals and so on and not about any collectivity, like any collective production. I'm certainly not interested in that, so I have to make a link with my political and social activities; I mean, between the art and that. And I think I have to search for it and I have to work towards that.

I: Mexican painters and Latin American painters...a lot of them are political.

S: Yeah, and they reflect many different political points of view. I'm not necessarily interested in social realism, where they mystify the working class. But certainly I'm interested in connecting.

I: You don't want to come back to the New School at all.

S: I'm tired of bands.

I: How come?

S: Aw, because it's exhausting too much energy, too much mental... I just had a band. I'm very tired of it. Like, personally, now I have some conflicts and plus the band. It's just too exhausting.

I: You have conflicts of your own.

S: Yeah.

I: You can't work on them in the band?

S: No.

I: How come?



S: Because the band is not for that and it's not easy to do it.

I: What is the band for?

S: Aw, are we going to discuss it?

I: I'm interested in your reactions to the band because it's part of the study that I'm doing to relate creativity and self-study. How the art students in the school relate their self-study experience to their creativity. Which is why I usually ask you about it. But you seem to be really down on the band right now.

S: Yeah. Well, I accept band in the school and I think it can do a lot of good things for some people. I guess for myself, too; I learned to relate to people much better. But I just get too tired, you know. There are a lot of conflicts in people, you know. Obviously you're dealing with conflicts most of the time since there are ten to fifteen people in the band and I guess everybody is hiding a conflict. It's natural, but for me personally, I just get exhausted.

I have a lot of conflicts now, and plus coming and hearing other people's... it's just too much, and I'm just waiting to get out of the school and lead a normal life. 'Cause I'm always putting myself in situations that are conflictive situations, and I would just like to be "normal", just work and take a printing course in the summer and not have to worry and hear about my internal conflicts and all that. Try to forget all about it and just think about my work and things that I do. 'Cause, for example, yesterday I was fine, I was very well; so this morning I was o.k., and then I came here and I hurt so much. But I guess it's not only the band problems; it's also my problem how I receive that, how they affect me. But it's just that I can't handle it.

I: Do you think it makes you think too much about your own problems?

S: Yeah, I guess so. It affects me a lot. Well, if you're down, you know, and then comes someone and tells you they want to commit suicide, obviously it won't put you up. So that's more or less the situation. Like, I'm not very good and I try to get the energies to go to school and so forth, and I come to the band and everybody's depressed because they want to go to the mountain and nobody else does, or somebody has trouble with their parents, or another does not know what to do with their life. I know this. I'm not blaming them but I'm just tired of it. It would be much nicer to come on Monday and do a drawing class, and go have coffee; something that has nothing to do with conflict.

I: I guess the thing for me is that art is also a lot about that; it's not only about colours and lines; it's also about what's going on inside you.

S: I think obviously what you do reflects what goes on inside you; it's reflected in your work. But it's also nice dealing only with colours and forms and so forth.

Student no. 13.

I: Are you doing a lot of self-study in the band?

S: We are concentrating on profiles, but we do one profile a day, you know.

I: That's a lot of time.

S: Yeah, it's about three hours for one person and that's a lot.

I: Do people ask a lot of questions?

S: Yeah. I did mine last week and I didn't like it too much because I found it a bit superficial. But it was my fault because I couldn't express very well my feelings.

I: When you wrote them down?

S: Yeah, I tried to express my feelings, but it just didn't work. But I think with time I'm going to be able to express myself better.

I: Do you find it easier when you're talking than when you're writing?

S: Yeah.

I: If you had to define self-study for yourself, what would you define it as?

S: I don't know. I think it's trying to know who you are and what you want, what you feel.

I: How does the group work in that?

S: It's very deep; we concentrate a lot on just one person, trying to get that person to express every feeling, every emotion.

I: What is the group's role in this self-study?

S: Ask a lot of questions. The group helps. In my case, for example, we didn't get very deep, but you can talk about what happened to you, what has happened to you in your life, and people in the band can understand better why you do things, so that...

I: So that they can become your friends.

S: Yeah, and help you have more confidence.

I: As a support group.

S: Yeah.

I: Are you taking painting?

S: I'm taking drawing from a model, ceramics, a graphics course, and creative writing in French. I'm taking arts, and I like literature, and to dance...I love to do all these things, but I would like to concentrate on something and work, devote all my energy to that thing.

Second interview:

I: Do you think you're learning anything from the band?

S: Yeah; mainly to give feedback. And I'm learning to speak English better.

I: What do you mean when you say you're learning to give feedback?

S: Because, you know, it's like a bit of torture for me, giving feedback, because I don't talk too much in my band. It's very hard and everybody has to say something. I start thinking what could I say to him or to her. Now it comes much more naturally, trying to give support and say what I think about what he said.

I: Did you find it hard to speak in groups? Like, you don't seem to have any trouble speaking now. Is it harder in a group?

S: Yeah. Not when there's a focus on me.

I: Do you find it hard to tell people when you don't like them, or when you're angry at them?

S: In the band?

I: Yeah.

S: Yeah, it is hard to say it, but I guess if I don't like someone, I should say it, in the band, you know. Everybody in my band, I see the good sides of them and the bad sides. I like them all.

I: When you talk, do you give both sides?

S: Yeah. But I say it not to hurt them, you know.

I: Are there people who really attack in the band?

S: Yeah. A few, like, who are really attacking constantly.

I: Does anybody attack them back?

S: Yes, sometimes. It depends who they're attacking. Sometimes it

gets very aggressive and you come to school very happy and you go back home very depressed and crying.

End of first semester interview:

I: Mainly, I want to know how you've been doing in your classes.

S: I've been doing pretty well. Do you want me to show you the things I've done?

I: Yeah. How's your band been?

S: My band, it's been really well.

I: You're in E's band.

S: No; G. And I did the evaluation thing and it was really good, very constructive criticism.

I: Of yourself?

S: Yeah. My participation and all that. It was very interesting.

I: Do you find you got a lot of self-study done?

S: Not very intense self-study. I'm learning a lot just from the evaluations. Like in drawing, there wasn't very much communication in that class between the students. During the evaluation we talked a lot and said how we felt during the course and all that.

I: Did people tell you how they felt about you?

S: Yeah.

I: And your drawings?

S: Yeah, and about my participation and all that...

I: Could you define self-study?

S: I don't know. For me, it's trying to...I don't know how to say it. It's really hard. I don't think it's trying to understand more yourself.

I: No?

S: Not really. Self-study has helped me to understand more the people. Maybe me, but...It has helped me understand more my parents, for example, and not be so critical and cruel with them. Not really cruel, but very critical.

I: Hard.

S: Yes; it has helped me do that.

I: How does the band help you do that?

S: Because of everybody's experiences. Everybody talks about them. You start realizing many things that you haven't thought about yourself before. And I start practicing them.

I: So it has altered your behaviour.

S: Yeah.

I: You've seen things in yourself that you wanted to change. Was it because people in the band pointed them out, or just from your own reflection?

S: People in the band started talking about parents, for example.

I: Their own parents?

S: Yeah.

I: Do you find that it helps to talk it out?

S: Yeah, it helps. Like, you get a lot of points of view, you know; different points of view than yours, and it makes a difference; it really changes what you think.

Last interview:

I: Do you think after you finish CEGEP, you'll take art again?

S: Yeah, I think so. I decided to take art.

I: But you have no idea where it's going to lead you.

S: No; no idea. I was thinking of taking art or literature. And I decided to take art.

I: Why?

S: Because this year has been a very creative year; no, I wouldn't say that. But I'm more sure when I draw, and in French, when I write, it hasn't been going that great. It's very subjective.

I: How do you...I was worried about art, how art fits into that idea of a socialist revolution. How would you bring those two things together?

S: In a socialist revolution or in a socialist state?

I: State, I guess.

S: I have problems in figuring out that because I find that it's very important; for me, it's very important to express what I feel, what I think; by drawing or painting, I don't do it. I do it by writing. I express how I feel about all the things... But if I was living under a socialist government or under any government, I wouldn't just paint birds and butterflies. I would paint what I see.

I: What do you mean by that what you see?

S: What's happening with the people, the country...

I: The sort of painting that's done by the Mexican painters: socially conscious painting.

S: Yeah. I would like to do it. I don't know if I'm able.

I: Do you see that ultimately as your goal?

S: Yeah.

I: How's your band been?

S: It's a very different band from last year. It's very original. We do lots of exercises and not only physical exercises but...

I: You're in H's band.

S: No; C. Not physical exercises, but other things, like games from which we would learn something, and it's not going too well. This term has been really short, I find, and we haven't been into anything in depth. Like, there's so many things that we should talk about in that band; everything is so vast, and we haven't concentrated. We talked a bit about families, and we started seeing all these things we could go into depth, but we didn't.

I: Why not?

S: Maybe because it was too hard. It was easier to just have fun.

I: It's too painful.

S: Maybe.

I: What about your own self-study. Do you feel you've done any?

S: No. Just when I'm alone; not in the band.

I: On your own.

S: Yeah. It's because in the band many things have happened, like people with problems. I always feel I don't have that many things to say; I don't have tragic things happening to me and you just can't say how you feel or anything because someone's...

I: Taking up the space.

S: Yeah.

I: The band should be smaller.

S: It is; it's a small band, and yet, it's so large.

I: Do you like self-study?

S: Yeah, yeah.

I: Do you think if you were in a better situation, you would do more?

S: In a better...?

I: In a band where there was more space.

S: No, not really. I don't really think that I want to so much. In the beginning I did; in the first term, but not any more.

I: What has changed?

S: I don't know. I have changed. I find that I know myself more now.

I: Just from growing up, or the self-study you've done in the school, or...?

S: Just from growing up and many other things, other activities, from people I know. Things that have happened.

I: Do you think you've gotten anything out of the self-study at the school?

S: This whole year?

I: Yes.

S: Yeah; I don't know what, though. No, I've gotten things. I've learned, too. With the evaluations I've learned a lot, and also criticizing people. I've learned to give them very constructive criticism.

I: About their behaviour.

S: Yeah. Well, about the things they have made, in drawing class.

I: So through the evaluations, you've learned to see yourself more clearly.

S: Yeah.

I: Or how you work more clearly.

S: Yeah; much more. It's a bit frustrating when it's in the end 'cause you realize all the things you should have done and you should've worked more.

I: Well, there's always next semester; that is, if you come back next semester, you can apply it then.

S: I did, last term. Like, in drawing. Now I find that I'm much more secure in drawing and I like it much more.

Student no. 14.

I: How did you hear about the New School?

S: In the guidance office. The guidance counsellor has a whole lot of brochures on the different CEGEPs, and I was sort of flipping through, and I didn't think I wanted to go to John Abbott 'cause everyone else on the Island goes there...I was going to go to Dawson, Delorimier in Fine Arts, but it's awfully hard to get to.

I: Do you mean, physically, it's hard to get to?

S: Yeah. And I thought about the New School and I chickened out 'cause I thought I'll be the only one going there and it's really different. Then I thought, o.k., some time or other I'm going to take the plunge, and I decided to come.

I: So you decided to come to the interview, I guess, first of all.

S: Yeah.

I: Did you like that? Did you like the interview?

S: Well, some parts I did, and some parts I wasn't too sure about; like, it's hard to understand what the New School is about, just by being told.

I: Yeah...You didn't know anybody who came here before?

S: No, not really closely. Some kids from Dorval, but nobody I could call up and say, "What's it like, anyways?"

I: What concept did you have, just from the interviews, just about bands and self-study?

S: Well, I wasn't too sure about it. The whole idea of self-study; I'd never done anything like that before, but I thought the band sounded sort of like a good idea because it made people who are totally different get together and learn how to work together, and things like that. But the self-study part I wasn't at all sure about.



I: So how do you like your band?

S: O.K.

I: Do you do a lot of self-study in the band?

S: Well, not really, no. Not directly. We're doing self-study. We don't settle down and say o.k., we're going to do self-study, so we sort of do things that are close to it. We've done garbage and flowers, which is when people say the good things and bad things that are happening in their lives right now, and in a way, that's like self-study, because it sort of helps you look at things and figure out what's happening. We haven't done any really heavy self-study, like some of the other bands are getting into.

I: If you had to define self-study, just for yourself, what do you think it is?

S: I think mostly it's just finding out about yourself.

I: How does the group work into that?

S: Well, because you wouldn't be the way you were unless it's reflected from other people. Like, you're a certain way because of the friends you have and because of the family you have. The way other people see you also can affect things; like, you can learn a lot by finding out how other people see you.

I: So it's your interaction with other people that defines your self.

S: Yeah.

I: Do you think you'd like to get into what you call heavy self-study?

S: No, I don't think so. I like to keep more on the surface, 'cause I'm worried I might find something terribly wrong with me, or some terrible complex or problem I have.

I: You don't think you'd know about it already?

S: I think I'd rather just let it hide underneath.

I: It's sort of scary.

S: Yeah...

I: So what have you been doing? Do you take painting?

S: I have a painting class, a drawing class, and a model painting class...J's religion course, and I'm giving a one-to-one creative writing course.

I: You seem really set on this painting and drawing thing. Is it something you plan to carry on?

S: Well, it's really hard to tell. I really, really like it, and the problem obviously is that it's so hard to get anything resembling a career out of it, you know, unless I plan to sponge off my parents for the rest of my life. I've got to think of something else to earn myself a living. But I wanted to come for at least a year, just to get the extra experience of the courses.

I: Would you think of doing two years here, or just one year?

S: I'm not sure. Anywhere from one to four terms. I'm not sure how long.

I: What would make you stop?

S: Because it's such a small school, there's a shortage of teachers, and I'm really set on the Fine Arts things: drawing and painting, and that narrows it down to just C teaching. So a lot depends on what sort of courses are being given next term. 'Cause if it's going to be the same courses, I couldn't take them again without wasting my time and maybe theirs.

I: Where do you think you would go? Delorimier, maybe?

S: I might, or I might go back to John Abbott.

I: Is there creative arts at John Abbott?

S: Yes, there is.

I: Once you did two years of art in a CEGEP, what would you do with it? Would you think of going on to university?

S: Well, I did think of it once, but then I thought, what would I do with it? That's where I am sort of now, wondering if I should just take the CEGEP courses in Fine Arts and then maybe go on to something else in university. A real job sort of thing, and keep painting in my spare time.

I: What sort of job-oriented thing would you like to do?

S: I don't know. I'd hate to just be a secretary. That's one thing I always said: to just be a secretary. But all of a sudden I thought, yes, I want to be something in Fine Arts; go and be something artistic. But I decided maybe I should change my mind and be something else, and that sort of re-opened the field: so much to consider.

I: I guess it's a big gamble to throw yourself into Fine Arts and nothing else.

S: Yeah.

I: What would make you decide to do it?

S: I guess if something proved that I could really do it. Like, if I finished this painting I'm working on and I thought, hey, this is really good; it's almost professional. Then it's worth going on.

I: What do you mean by professional?

S: Well, it looks like the sort of thing someone would buy. It looks like something I'd be satisfied with.

Looking at her work:

I: Do you like doing gestures?

S: It depends. I like gestures better when you have a while to do them.

I: The idea is to do them fast so you don't think.

S: That's exactly it.

I: That bothers you, eh?

S: Yeah. Often as not I make mistakes.

I: The idea is to loosen up your hand so you're not so controlled.

Last interview-first term

I: How are you doing in the band?

S: Oh, fine. The band is really settling down. It was a bits-and-pieces band to start with because there was the original group, and people who couldn't fit into other bands just sort of drifted in there because there was nowhere else to go, but it's working out well, really well.

I: Do you get a lot of self-study done?

S: No, not really. Well, I suppose in a roundabout way, but we never say this is a project that we're going to do for self-study. But we all get a lot of self-study in.

I: How do you get it in?

S: Oh, various things. It's a good question: what do we do. It's hard to pin down. We're starting a fear workshop. Mostly, we sort of just talk. We've done garbage and flowers a few times, and that sort of works 'cause you find out a lot about the person; how their home life goes, and stuff like that.

Also, at the beginning, we did a thing on the family, and how you relate to everyone else in it.

I: What are you learning about yourself? Are you finding out things about yourself?

S: Yeah. Not in a very direct way. You find out things from the other people, I find. It's all sort of reflection, where you learn things more about yourself by seeing what other people do and what other people are like.

I: What about when you do garbage and flowers? Do you get a lot of feedback?

S: Not really. You get a lot of advice...

I: Where would you say, for yourself, the main benefit has been?

S: It's hard to say in a way that doesn't sound terrible. I guess I never appreciated how lucky I was until I saw people who don't have as comfortable a home life. I just took things for granted, because where I come from, everybody is like that. The families are just so, the children are very carefully guarded and taken care of and protected. Almost overly protected, I might say. But you never realize it until you go out and people say, "Well, I hitchhiked to work," and I was never allowed to hitchhike. Just the things you take for granted, and then you find other people don't have them, and it's really a shock.

I: Do you find it's helped you to verbalize your emotions?

S: Yeah. I'm a quiet person by nature, and it's helped me get along with people who you've just met. 'Cause you have to do it in band. And you meet people and you're right off into conversations and talking about your problems and things. There's no time for quiet and shy. I think it's helped me a lot.

I: Yeah; you seem more outgoing. Do you think you'll come back next semester then?

S: No.

I: What are you going to do?

S: I'm taking a secretarial course next term.

I: Why?

S: It's hard to say. It took a lot of thinking and various reasons. I guess the main reason is I thought I work well on my own anyhow. I find that I don't ask much for advice. When I look at something and I say there's something wrong with that picture, I can usually figure it out for myself. For that reason, I

don't need to be taught art as much, when I can get just as much from going off to museums and keeping up with the art group, seeing what other people are doing in the arts. And also, the only way you can really make a living in art is to go by the public in a certain way, a lot of the market, the people who are going to be the ones who buy. So, to a certain extent, you paint to please the public, and the way I paint, I don't know if it would be generally pleasing, and I'm not too sure. That's the biggest reason. The other reason is, I found when I have to do something, I don't like it as much. And if I was making my living, if I had to paint, I wouldn't like it any more. I'd rather have a job that's just...well...a job, a way to get money, get settled, and when I want to do something relaxing that I like to do, I can paint and draw.

I: But why a secretarial job? There's lots of jobs in the world besides that.

S: Yeah, but it seemed...I think I'd be good at it; I have a very logical, organized mind, and I think I'd be good at a secretarial job.

I: Do you think you'd enjoy it?

S: Yeah, I think I'd enjoy it because, from what I've heard from my sister, secretaries sort of become a clique in the office... all the secretaries...and I think I'd like that.

I: You'd like the friendship with the other girls.

S: Yeah. People are really shocked when I say I'm going, because the school I'm going to is the Mother House. Well, the Mother House is a convent, and they have an additional section that's a secretarial school, and it's very much stricter and it's an all girls school and you have to wear skirts and this and that. Very controlled. And people are saying: you're going from the New School to the Mother House! It's going to be a real adjustment.

I: What do you think? Do you think you'll be comfortable there?

S: Oh, yeah.

I: You're a Catholic, I take it?

S: Yeah.

I: So you know what that kind of atmosphere is like; you've probably grown up in it.

S: Not quite that bad, but...

I: I am a bit bewildered why you made the choice. Do you think you

just realized how hard painting was going to be? How much work you'd have to put into it to be really good?

S: No, I don't think that was entirely it, but it might have something to do with it. Just...I'd grown up so used to the security. People have said it doesn't matter; if you're doing something you really, really like, security shouldn't matter. It shouldn't matter if you're poor, but to me, I've grown up so used to having money, it would really matter. I think it would make a difference to me, not having a steady job and knowing where money was coming from, and also...it sounds really weird...I feel too comfortable in this school.

I: What do you mean by that?

S: I found that when I get into a really fine situation, I just laze along and let everything go fine, and things drift along and I don't get enough done. I think I work better if I'm under pressure to do things.

Student no. 15.

I: Did you do drawings and paintings on your own?

S: Yeah. I drew on my own, but I would never look at things and draw them. I still don't know how to do that. It really scares me.

I: You just do it out of your head.

S: Yeah; like, I draw a thought, and then I draw another. Like, I think of something to draw, and then I sort of connect all of these thoughts on the paper. My aunt used to really get off on interpreting and getting all these meanings out of it..

I: Was there a lot of meaning for you?

S: Well, I didn't plan any meaning, but I'm sure there was some unconscious sort of stuff in there.

I: They were just images that came into your head.

S: Yeah.

I: So you came here, and what did you expect?

S: I didn't know what to expect. I was pretty sceptical; I was looking out for bullshit. But there isn't any really.

I: There must be some.

S: I'm sure there's some, but not the way I expected. Like, I thought the whole banding thing and contracting thing and all

that would be really full of it.

I: Yeah, it could be.

S: It could be, but it's not, because people take it pretty seriously... I don't know how my attitude is going to be by the end of next year. Like, it might all just be a drag by then. But now, I like it. I really like this school.

I: So you like the band you got into.

S: Yeah.

I: What band did you get into?

S: J's. It's a good band, though. We were, like, the last one to get together. It's my second choice, but I'm really happy I'm in that one.

I: It's very small.

S: Yeah. There's only twelve of us, and we get a lot done.

I: It's easier...

S: Yeah, 'cause you could do a profile and you could get everyone done in one meeting or two.

I: What kind of things have you been doing?

S: I guess self-study. We did garbage and flowers, and we also added our family into that, like, so we know where each other is coming from. That took two to three weeks. Now we're doing, like, writing a few sentences on each person and yourself. But I guess it's still really first impressions.

I: What do you think self-study is? If you had to define it, could you define it? Just for yourself.

S: Not learning yourself, but taking the time to look at yourself. The way you present yourself to other people, and your way of thinking, and sort of cut your own bullshit and rationalizations and stuff and see what's really there.

I: How does the group function in that?

S: I think we function really well.

I: No; I mean, what function does the group have in your definition of self-study?

S: They're like support. Like, if I find something frightening about myself, it's o.k. 'cause they're there. Also to help me open my eyes.

I: How do they help you open your eyes?

S: Well, like, things we're doing, they'll say things they thought of me, like impressions, and it'll just freak me out because I never thought these things, you know. I don't know; it's really good; it really helps.

I: How are you finding your art classes?

S: I love painting. I never painted before and it's just great. I started on Tuesday, and I just had this smile on my face. It wouldn't go away. I just have a brush with blue on it, and I go blue blue blue; it's just great.

I: You just like the physical action of it.

S: Yeah. Just going like that. It's just plain white, and then you're putting colours on it. Even if you're just making two lines: a red line and a blue line, you're changing the whole image of it. It's great, and also, nothing's final in oil; like, I could just keep on painting the same canvas for the whole term or the rest of my life. The same thing I found with sculpture, I mean ceramic: I didn't want to finish. I was making this head, and like, I kept changing it...It just never stops; I almost didn't want to bake it.

End of first semester interview:

I: Mostly I just want to know how you've been doing during the semester.

S: I'm doing o.k.

I: You did the painting class, and these are the only two paintings you did.

S: Only. Alex Colville does only two a year.

I: But he paints very meticulously.

S: Actually, you could say I did six paintings, because I start, and screw it up, and cover it up. Every time I paint, I'm in a different mood. There's no continuity 'cause there's always something else happening. But I'm left with nothing, 'cause I never stop.

I: You just keep painting over and over again.

S: Yeah; I can't stop.

I: It's not as spontaneous as the drawing or the watercolour, in a way.



S: Yeah, 'cause the canvas and oils and stuff...so it's more important to do it right.

I: So you can't just let it flow.

S: Right. So I do it and it's o.k. But I don't stop; like, I couldn't stop.

I: Is that sort of your goal now? To master reality?

S: No, hardly. It's good to have it, though. I guess I'd like the mastery. I like the superrealist things, too. But it's good to use in my fantasy art. Like, if I could do this and incorporate it...

I: Yeah. It'd be really good. So have you been doing any of your own drawing?

S: No. That's been sort of upsetting me, too. 'Cause I used to not think; just draw. And now I think too much when I draw, which is o.k., 'cause you're supposed to think a lot when you're drawing something, but if you're just drawing something from your mind, you can drive yourself crazy...I have to sort of sort that out...because there's nothing tangible. I find I can't sit down and just draw. Maybe I'll be able to in a while, when I get better at this drawing.

I: How are you doing in band?

S: Good. I finally got their asses going.

I: Are you doing self-study?

S: Well, we were, sort of. But I sort of didn't like how everything was sugar-coated for a while. Like, everyone concentrates so hard on being so nice to everyone. That's all right, but you know if there's something else to say, it should be said, too. So I brought it up once, but when I get too excited and emotional, I just talk off the top of my head and I hurt people. So that's what I did, but by the next week, they realized why I was saying what I was saying and I was right. So it's o.k. They're even thinking of staying together.

I: For another semester.

S: Yeah.

I: Would you like that?

S: I don't know, 'cause there's so many different bands I'd like to try...

I: Do you think you're getting a lot of self-study done in the band?

S: Yes. Not a lot. I'm getting more in my sociology class.

I: The one where you're doing your family.

S: Yeah; it's a pretty heavy class. It's making me crazy.

I: Well, it's hard to deal with those things.

S: It's helped me a lot, though. Like, I've learned a lot about myself and my family.

I: Do most people in the class do themselves? In the family class?

S: There's a lot of emphasis put on the individual and their families. It's a lot; a support group.

I: Sort of like the band should be.

S: Yeah...It was a good experience.

I: Well, it seems to have affected your life.

S: It just got me to think what do I really want; what do I really need. What's really happening here? I'm taking more of an interest in the members of my family. I used to be so passive.

I: What do you do in the band if you don't do much self-study?

S: We do do self-study. But we don't go: Oh, we're doing self-study. We do a lot of garbage and flowers, and we're dealing with people's fears. We're doing dreams a bit.

I: So are you going to come back next semester?

S: Yeah. And next year, too. I really like it here.

Last interview:

I: So how have you been doing? What have you been taking?

S: All art this term.

I: Yeah? What? Drawing and painting?

S: Drawing and painting and a criticism group and Design and Art History.

I: And you also take Self-portrait.

S: No, I dropped out.

I: Why did you drop out?

S: It was too deep. People were trying to be too analytical. Do you want an example?

I: Yeah.

S: See that painting there? There's a little pink planet in the corner. The reason there's a pink planet in the corner is because I wanted to try my alizarin crimson. But I didn't want it such a deep colour, and I wondered what would happen if I mixed it with white, and I sort of knew it would turn pink. Which it did. So I just left it because it's just play, this canvas. We had to bring in something for self-portrait; that is, something we made that's "us". And I felt that was me 'cause it's my first canvas; it's always changing; it's a little warped; it's fantasy. And I said just ignore the pink planet in the corner, 'cause it wasn't intentional; it's not going to stay like that. So someone goes: you know, that pink in the corner reminds me of mommy. So, o.k. People sometimes just look for things to say. And people were just getting too deep about it. It's very simple; I just said what it was.

I: They were trying to psychoanalyze.

S: Not just for me. But for everybody and they were wasting a lot of time doing that and I just wanted a group of people doing self-portraits. So I've been doing that anyways.

I: But you are really interested in doing self-portraits. Did you do more than those two downstairs?

S: Yeah; for a while, I was drawing myself every day. But it wasn't really going anywhere. So I stopped.

I: Why wasn't it going anywhere?

S: Well, maybe it was. C thinks it was. I guess I didn't have too much time lately. 'Cause I've been looking more. I can probably draw it better now.

I: Do you see those self-portraits as a psychological self-study sort of thing, or just trying to paint something that's there.

S: Just trying to paint something that's there.

I: Do you think you want photographic reality?

S: Yeah. Just for that. Like, I'd like to get as close to that as possible for now. Because then, I'd know that I have the technique, and once I know that, I could do what I want with it and no one's going to tell me it's not valid.

I: How's the band going?

S: O.K.; it's a band.

I: What are you doing in it?

S: Dealing with recurring bullshit.

I: What; within the band, or your own?

S: Yeah; no; not in your own. Well, my own, to start with. Others just...I don't know. One day, it's good; the next day, it's bad. Today it was bad, so don't ask me.

I: Why was it bad?

S: Oh, people crying. I can't deal with people crying.

I: Did you get into heavy self-study?

S: No.

I: Why were they crying?

S: It's sunny out.

I: You're such a cynic.

S: Well, some people can cry for anything. I get really uptight 'cause it's not so easy for me to cry, and I start feeling really bad, and what happened and all this. But lots of times it's just a stupid little thing. There's one particular person in our band who just cries all the time, and it's not even for any big reason. All of a sudden the whole atmosphere of the room gets dense. Like, I try to be supportive, but she won't even say why she's crying, and we're always evaluating ourselves, and it goes on and on and on...

I: Do you get any self-study done yourself?

S: I haven't really. A bit; not really in band. I get quite a bit from my learning group and just from people around, people from school. Like, on a one-to-one basis with anybody, I learn more about myself because they're not afraid to say, "Well, I think that when you do this and you..."

I: You mean, because they're involved in the school?

S: Yeah, and they know I am, too, and they know I'm not going to say, "What are you talking about? Don't get deep with me."

I: Do you think you'll come back next semester?

S: Oh, yeah.

I: What will you do after that?

S: Go to university.

I: Are you going to go to Fine Arts college?

S: Of course.

I: It's going to be painting all the way.

S: Yeah. I'm going to college and get a degree in painting.

I: Are you going to become another Georgia O'Keefe?

S: Yes. No, I'm not going to be Georgia O'Keefe. I'm not going to be something that was. There's just going to be a whole revolution, or should I say, evolution of women artists and I'm going to be one of the ones to initiate it. That's all.

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