

## Rejoinder

**Jane Piirto**

The editor of this journal, Dr. Nancy Miller, has asked me to respond to Dr. Piechowski's comments about my ethnography here published. He justifies his position in rejecting our statistical study when it was sent to him by a journal in 2001, yet does not recount the fact that we had already discussed the study over my kitchen table before it was submitted to a journal, and he had already voiced his objections, and we had discussed the choices (to include outliers or not to include them) and had decided not to include the outliers. Dr. Falk, who was at the table as well, supported this decision, and so did my colleague Dr. Michael Pyryt, whom I contacted on the matter. Both are knowledgeable about statistics. My feelings were that Piechowski had had a chance to give his input, and that he was abusing his power as a so-called "blind" reviewer, to reject the study on which he had already given his opinion. When I questioned him on this, he said, "Well, there are so few people who can critique a Dabrowski study, of course they would send it to me." I still feel that he should have returned the study and had the editors send it to another peer reviewer. When I re-submitted the study in 2009, I asked the journal editor not to send it to Dr. Piechowski. The APA Publication Manual permits researchers to request that certain papers not be sent to certain reviewers and I did that.

After comments from the reviewers in 2009, I revisited the original data. When I revisited the data, I found that data had originally been entered in error, and so last spring I re-entered all the data (105 scores each for 114 participants) and I asked 3 of the original coders to code the new data. Piechowski was one of these coders. This OEQ comparison study is currently submitted. I thought that I was done with the Dabrowski theory when I wrote this ethnography, but I guess I'm not, as I still hold a lot of data and feel that it should be included in the ongoing studies. I would like to see more comparison studies with both the OEQ and the OEQ-II.

Dr. Piechowski's comment that some of the vocational students were gifted because they had high scores on overexcitabilities introduces the controversial question of just what is giftedness? As a special educator, I must teach my students that the definition of giftedness changes when the borders change, and while it might be an interesting discussion at a cocktail party to wonder "Is she *truly* gifted?" the service to gifted students is provided to those who fit within a geographical boundary—a state's or a city's—and who meet the criteria defined by the lawmakers. Thus, in my view, giftedness is a social construction, its definition mandated from state to state, nation to nation. The vocational students are, by Ohio state rule, not permitted to be identified as gifted in Ohio, and Dr. Piechowski's circular reasoning, that since they scored high they were gifted is

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troublesome. He assumes that high overexcitability equals giftedness. I, on the other hand, question that assumption, and prefer to trouble the definition waters by wondering whether the presence of intensity, or overexcitability, is indeed a defining quality of giftedness. This is a question and a discussion that cannot be conducted in the present forum, for lack of space and time.

Piechowski and I continue to be friends. We talk often on the telephone. He has stayed at my house for a week annually, while teaching in our summer honors institute. I stopped by his house for a night while driving cross-country late in 2009. We enjoy each other's company and have wonderful talks about books, music, and life.

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