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Yvonne Emily Carnellor
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**AN EXAMINATION OF THE CHARACTERISTICS OF
YOUNG, POTENTIALLY GIFTED CHILDREN FROM
CULTURALLY DIVERSE BACKGROUNDS, AS THE BASIS
FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF APPROPRIATE
EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS**

**A thesis submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the award
of the degree**

DOCTOR OF EDUCATION

from

UNIVERSITY OF WOLLONGONG

by

**YVONNE EMILY CARNELLOR
MEd., BEd. (Deakin)**

**FACULTY OF EDUCATION
1996**

UNIVERSITY OF WOLLONGONG

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*Teach children what to think and limit
them to your ideas. Teach children
how to think and their ideas are
unlimited.*

(Thinking Works, 1994-95).

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ABSTRACT

Despite agreement among scholars and researchers that identification of gifted children should be based on multiple criteria, current research continues to indicate a heavy reliance on an IQ score (Alvino, McDonnell & Richert, 1981; Frasier, 1987). This practice often prevents economically disadvantaged, culturally diverse, bilingual, or minority students from taking part in a gifted program.

Significant numbers of these students do not meet traditional criteria for gifted programs, but possess cognitive, motivational, artistic or creative potentials that clearly enable them to participate in the types of programmed experiences designed to develop and nurture academic and creative behaviours. Gallagher (1988) noted that vigorous efforts to establish programs to search out high intellectual ability in underserved and unserved subgroups (for example, underachieving gifted, culturally diverse gifted, gifted handicapped, gifted females) is a major priority in the field of education.

The purposes of this study were:

- 1) to investigate the characteristics of gifted NESB, Aboriginal and economically disadvantaged students,
- 2) to use these characteristics to investigate new procedures for their identification, and
- 3) to develop an appropriate differentiated Early Childhood Intervention Program that will meet the specific needs of these students.

This qualitative research study, using multiple case study design, investigated the characteristics of academic giftedness displayed by 52 children, aged 5-6 years, from culturally diverse and/or economically disadvantaged backgrounds. A researcher-designed instrument, IPMAI, was used to develop comprehensive intellectual profiles of each child. These were then used as the basis for the development of a proposed gifted program at three school sites in the Illawarra region of New South Wales.

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