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THE PUBLIC RELATIONS EFFORTS OF SOUTH DAKOTA COLLEGES  
AND UNIVERSITIES AS REFLECTED BY THE ATTITUDES  
OF SOUTH DAKOTA HIGH SCHOOL SENIORS

BY

DANIEL F. JORGENSEN

A thesis submitted  
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the  
degree Master of Science, Major in  
Journalism, South Dakota  
State University

1974

THE PUBLIC RELATIONS EFFORTS OF SOUTH DAKOTA COLLEGES  
AND UNIVERSITIES AS REFLECTED BY THE ATTITUDES  
OF SOUTH DAKOTA HIGH SCHOOL SENIORS

This thesis is approved as a creditable and independent investigation by a candidate for the degree Master of Science, and is acceptable as meeting the thesis requirements for this degree, but without implying that the conclusions reached by the candidate are necessarily the conclusions of the major department.

✓ \_\_\_\_\_ Date

\_\_\_\_\_ Head, Department of Journalism Date

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The writer also wishes to thank his wife, Susan, for her patience, cooperation and understanding in making this study a reality.

DFJ

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

Chapter	Page
I. INTRODUCTION . . . . .	1
<u>Statement of the Problem</u> . . . . .	6
<u>Objectives of the Study.</u> . . . . .	8
<u>Review of the Literature</u> . . . . .	10
II. METHODOLOGY. . . . .	14
<u>Construction of the Questionnaire.</u> . . . . .	16
<u>Questionnaire Pre-test</u> . . . . .	17
<u>Selection of the Sample.</u> . . . . .	17
III. FINDINGS OF THE STUDY. . . . .	23
<u>Organization of the Data for Analysis.</u> . . . . .	23
<u>Findings</u> . . . . .	24
IV. CONCLUSIONS. . . . .	38
<u>Implications</u> . . . . .	38
<u>Suggestions for Further Study.</u> . . . . .	43
APPENDICES . . . . .	45
BIBLIOGRAPHY . . . . .	53

## LIST OF TABLES

Table	Page
1. College Education Is Necessary in Today's Society . .	26
2. South Dakota Colleges and Universities Are As Good As or Better Than Those in Other States. . . .	27
3. From Whom Do You Obtain Most Information About College?. . . . .	28
4. Do Radio and Television Stories Affect You in Selecting A College or University You Would Like To Attend?. . . . .	29
5. Do Brochures About Schools Have a Strong Influence on High School Students in Selection of a College or University? . . . . .	30
6. News Stories About a School, Its Programs and Its Students Influence Me as to Whether or Not I Would Select That School. . . . .	31
7. News Stories About a Student I Know Influences My Opinion About His School . . . . .	32
8. Films or Television Programs About a School Influence Me In Choosing That School. . . . .	33
9. Posters About a School Influence Students in Choosing That School. . . . .	34
10. Course Catalogs Are Important to Students in Making a Selection of Schools . . . . .	35
11. Visits From College Personnel or Students to My School Affect My or My Classmates' Selection of That School. . . . .	36
12. High School Events Held on a College Campus Influence My College Choice . . . . .	36

## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

There have been numerous studies concerning the public's opinion of higher education. Most of these studies have concluded that the public has great esteem for colleges and universities, but that the level of information generated by these schools is appallingly low.

A 1966 Scannell study noted that information levels found have been especially discouraging for college and university public relations officers who have prepared mountains of information in an effort to inform the public about their specific institutions and to a lesser extent higher education in general.<sup>1</sup>

A modern public relations program involves a great deal more than the polite answering of inquiries or criticism. It embraces a wide range of communications activities from preparation of speeches, reports and publications, to contact with representatives of the mass media and liaison with the publics of the institution. In the process of carrying out an effective public relations campaign, it is fair to ask the question: "Is

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1 Donald F. Scannell, "Mass Media Use, Information, and Opinions Concerning Higher Education," Unpublished doctoral dissertation abstract, University of Minnesota, June 1966, p. 1.

the program reaching the public and in turn having an effect on that public?"

"Public understanding of schools," according to Gordon McCloskey, "depends partly on information. Facts alone do not determine viewpoints or decisions, but without information, rational opinion and action are impossible."<sup>2</sup>

Colleges and universities must seemingly prove their utilitarian worth. They are accepted as institutions for instruction, but also as more than that in terms of community service and in enlarging the domain of knowledge. But their public relations task is a difficult one. They must pay close attention to the publics with whom they interact directly, says Stephen Withey, as well as those with whom they have only media contact, and the orientations and perspectives of these are often not identical.<sup>3</sup>

If one knows of a socially-serving function of a college or university, one's attitudes tend to be favorable. If one has some means of making use of the product of a college or university, either in one's own life or in the lives of one's children, many of one's attitudes tend to be favorable, Withey adds. It is this interlocking aspect of social roles and social evaluation that is

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2 Gordon McCloskey, Education and Public Understanding, (New York: Harper & Row, 1967), p. 185.

3 Stephen B. Withey, "What Are the Attitudes of the Public Toward Higher Education?" Survey Research Journal, (November 1961), p. 23.

important to consider in planning the public relations for higher education. Most people claim that they get most of their facts, as well as their attitudes, about colleges and universities in face-to-face conversation, as well as through personal experience.<sup>4</sup> Therefore, if the public relations effort reaches out and creates topics for discussion among the various publics, it can often enhance its image among those publics.

Perhaps the most difficult thing to remember for a public relations practitioner is that most people have few, if any, images of an institution of higher education. "Often the public is only 'aware' in a general sense of what is going on within the boundaries of the institution."<sup>5</sup>

During the summer of 1971, a Gallup Poll was taken which showed that 56 per cent of the populace would vote against raising taxes for education. The overwhelming public response during that poll was "they wanted more information about education."<sup>6</sup>

The public's appetite for more information relates to only one aspect of communication. While it is essential to tell the public about the schools, it is also incumbent on educators

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4 Withey, p. 21.

5 Leo Bogart, "Use of Opinion Research," in Otto Lerbinger and Albert Sullivan, Information, Influence and Communication (New York: Basic Books, Inc., 1965), p. 385.

6 Dr. George Gallup, The Gallup Poll, (New York: Random House, 1972), p. 2321.

to listen to the public's responses to information, and, after serious examination, to use the feedback to improve future communication. "Communication plays a key role in shaping both attitudes and opinions that influence the public's behavior toward education."<sup>7</sup>

Harvard officials note that a college and a business, despite their many differences, have a fundamental similarity in public relations. Neither can function without public consent. Both have "publics" that have to be satisfied if they are to do their jobs. A college must try to satisfy the public that the job it is doing is worthwhile.<sup>8</sup>

Doing well and telling about it is not sufficient for higher education public relations, because the external publics of the university are not in agreement with many of the directions of the university. Education of the public through various public relations functions is needed. "You must keep the public informed concerning purposes, accomplishments, and needs; improve the public image of both educators and education; and establish public confidence in education."<sup>9</sup>

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7 Keith W. Atkinson, "Communication: Closing the Widening Gap," The Clearing House (Sept., 1971), p. 27.

8 "How Harvard Does It," Saturday Review (Sept. 14, 1963), p. 76.

9 Robert M. Barr, "The Role of Higher Education as Seen by Students, Faculty, Trustees and Alumni, and its Effect on University Relations," Unpublished M.S. thesis, Ohio State University, 1970.

So how does the public relations program of a higher education institution meet the publics' need to know? The only answer is to find out first what affects those publics concerning the institution, and then in turn to concentrate on the areas reflected as important.

First, what are the publics the institution serves? Obviously, one is the students attending the institution. Another is their parents. A third is the community in which the college is located. Another is the state populace within which the institution is located. And finally, there is the public composed of potential students and their parents.

Do each of these distinct publics reflect the same attitudes toward higher education? Is each similarly affected by the public relations efforts of colleges and universities? Do they look on higher education as a boon to society and the economy or just another drain on their tax dollars?

These are some of the questions which the public relations officer in higher education must be able to answer before he can properly prepare and implement his program.

"At this time, when adequate education is of unprecedented importance to individuals and the nation, honest and effective public communication designed to create the largest possible amount of awareness and understanding is a key responsibility of education leaders."<sup>10</sup>

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10 McCloskey, p. 26.

### Statement of the Problem

The problem then for public relations specialists is broad. There are many questions to be answered from all the publics.

This study, however, will concentrate on one small, yet vital, public--the public composed of high school seniors. If this public is "aware" of what the South Dakota colleges and universities have to offer, then the public relations programs of those schools are having some effect. If the students are preparing for a college career, then it is important to the future of the state's higher education that they are aware of the costs and the offerings of its schools.

I chose this public because it is one which is generally ignored in surveys of this nature.

Daniel Gladstone, a high school senior from New Jersey, supported this thinking in a personal opinion column in "Saturday Review." He said that high school seniors rarely or never have a say in what occurs in their school or what will occur in the college or university they are planning to attend. Yet, in both cases, they as students are exposed to the decisions made by others and have to abide by them. Why, he asks, can't the high school seniors let their opinions be known?<sup>11</sup>

Often, these students also tend to reflect the thinking of their parents and can thus be regarded as an adequate gauge

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<sup>11</sup> Daniel Gladstone, "High School Seniors Should Have A Voice," Saturday Review (May 21, 1966), p. 62.

by which to measure an even larger segment of public thought concerning higher education.

Generally, we may consider the influence of background factors on high school students as threefold--home experiences, school experiences, and post high school experiences.<sup>12</sup>

Therefore, perhaps an even broader public attitude can be presented through a survey of high school seniors, since they may also be reflecting the thoughts of friends both older and younger.

In past decades, many children of unskilled laborers were found not to be interested in going on to college. This attitude probably reflected the thinking of the parent, who had found his own experiences with any education as disheartening or unprofitable.<sup>13</sup> "Most students, by the time they reach college age, will have attitudes and responses that are deeply rooted in their pasts," McCloskey says.<sup>14</sup>

"And," he adds, "the more (students) perceive education as a means of further achievement and satisfaction, the more favorable their attitudes toward it will be."<sup>15</sup> If the communications specialist can generate interest through his efforts, then perhaps

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12 Gardney Murphy and Rensis Likert, Public Opinion and the Individual (New York: Russell and Russell, 1967), p. 68.

13 Murphy and Likert, p. 85.

14 McCloskey, pp. 34-35.

15 McCloskey, pp. 43-44.

he can cause the student to take a second look at whether or not to attempt higher education. From the communications standpoint, McCloskey continues, it is important to note that the opinion-forming process opens minds, generates interest, and influences actions, particularly when the person's existing conditions are considered unsatisfactory.<sup>16</sup> Often, a student's favorable change in opinion toward a form of education takes place while his attitudes remain unchanged toward education as a whole. He's willing to give the new segment a chance even though past experiences have been bad.<sup>17</sup>

#### Objectives of the Study

Therefore, the main objectives of the study are to find the attitudes and opinions of the high school seniors toward not only the South Dakota colleges and universities, but also toward the public relations techniques employed by those schools. And, in like manner, to find whether a large segment of this public is willing to give higher education a try and considers it important in today's society.

Is it the belief of these students that South Dakota colleges and universities are as good as those in other states? Does cost affect their decision about going to college or going in-state instead of out-of-state? Does the parental occupation

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16 McCloskey, p. 53.

17 McCloskey, p. 57.

determine whether or not the student will go on to college? Do the students believe higher education in today's society is a necessity? Is religion important in school choice? These are questions which arise in conjunction with whether or not the student will attend college in South Dakota.

Related to this, of course, are the influences of public relations programs on those students. Does the student come in contact with the mass media? If so, does he determine attitudes and opinions by radio, television or newspaper stories about colleges in South Dakota? Do efforts by college personnel affect him? Are poster-brochure campaigns effective? Do college course catalogs play an important part in his decisions about particular schools? Do friendships have an effect?

Eminent sociologists tell us that perhaps more than any other thing, friendships or respect for peers influence attitude and opinion. If a close friend chooses to go on to college, then there is a good chance you will do likewise. As students grow, they are more strongly influenced in decision-making by classmates, teachers, club members, etc., than by any other method. "Attitudes are rarely individual affairs but largely are borrowed from groups to which we owe our strongest allegiance."<sup>18</sup>

Elihu Katz and Paul F. Lazarsfeld, eminent students of relationships between communications and attitudes, have found that the benefits of conformity tell us that individuals will

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18 McCloskey, pp. 41-42.

generally desire to adhere to the opinions, attitudes and habits of those with whom they are motivated to interact.<sup>19</sup>

"Public relations is an applied social and behavioral science in many ways," according to Edward J. Robinson. "It measures, evaluates and interprets the attitudes of various relevant publics, and it develops, executes and evaluates a program to earn both public understanding and acceptance."<sup>20</sup>

To find whether public relations efforts of the South Dakota colleges and universities are meeting this important function and to answer the above-mentioned specifics are the objectives of this study. I believe an adequate and interesting measurement of student attitude can be found through the response.

#### Review of the Literature

One often hears of studies of this nature being done annually to determine the effects of a college's public relations efforts. Surprisingly, however, a survey involving perhaps one of every college's most important publics--the high school senior--has been an often talked about subject which has received little serious consideration in terms of actual survey research.

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19 Elihu Katz and Paul F. Lazarsfeld, Personal Influence (New York: Free Press, 1955), p. 62.

20 Edward J. Robinson, Public Relations and Survey Research (New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts Meredith Corp., 1969), p. 5.

The bulk of the related literature found dealt with general statewide surveys of adults; general surveys of the community within which the college operates--again of adults; or surveys of college alumni and friends.

The key sources for past research were the American College Public Relations Association (ACPRA); "Journalism Quarterly"; "Public Relations Journal"; "Public Relations Quarterly Journal"; Masters Abstracts; American Doctoral Dissertations; The Reader's Guide to Periodical Literature; Journalism Abstracts; and the SDSC and SDSU theses lists.

The ACPRA lists several colleges and universities which have conducted what they considered similar surveys. The studies came from Frostburg State (Maryland) College; West Virginia University; State University of New York at Binghamton; the University of Nebraska; State University of Iowa; The Wisconsin Higher Education Study; the benchmark national project handled by the University of Michigan; the University of Michigan's in-state survey in four parts; and South Dakota State University.

Of these surveys, only the State University of Iowa study of 1949 was significant. That study, completed for a master's thesis by Robert S. McGranahan, was designed to find out how high school seniors actually felt about college. Although the survey was not aimed at precise instances of public relations efforts, it did, in a sense, represent a test of the effectiveness of various publicity methods used by the Iowa colleges and universities.

The key question on that survey was "What are the most important things you consider in choosing the college or university you plan to attend?" A list of items, divided into five groups, was presented for the seniors to check. Such varied items as the college yearbook, the college bulletin and pictorial booklets, "my superintendent," "my coach," opportunities for scholarships, etc., were listed, with students asked to select a "first most important," "second most important," etc., item in each of the groups.<sup>21</sup>

One drawback to that study was the response rate, which showed only a 35.9 per cent questionnaire return rate.<sup>22</sup>

The study did show that many seniors were thinking of attending small colleges close to home.<sup>23</sup> This response was similar to one given by parents in a 1971 Wisconsin survey, which indicated that they too would select small colleges close to home for their children.<sup>24</sup> The Iowa study pointed out that many of the respondents started thinking about attending college as early as the sixth grade.<sup>25</sup>

Also in his study, McGranahan found that the students

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21 Robert S. McGranahan, "After High School--What Next?" ACPRA Journal, Vol. 1, No. 3 (April 1950), pp. 29-33.

22 McGranahan, p. 29.

23 McGranahan, p. 30.

24 "Wisconsin Higher Education Study," Market Opinion Research, Wisconsin University (June 1971), p. 7.

25 McGranahan, p. 32.

relied heavily on the college course catalog, college booklets, and college brochures for their information. A small number (6.2 per cent) looked to news stories for college information. McGranahan noted that nearly three-fourths of his respondents were from schools with enrollments of fewer than 400. "This is a surprising find because it indicates the importance of reaching this group through public relations efforts," he said.<sup>26</sup>

The only other study somewhat similar to this was by Donald F. Scannell, News Bureau Director and Associate Professor of Journalism at South Dakota State University, whose 1966 doctoral dissertation on "Mass Media Use, Information, and Opinions Concerning Higher Education," pointed to the need for further research on local, state, regional and national levels so action programs for colleges could have facts rather than mere hunches on which to base planning.<sup>27</sup>

Scannell noted that his findings suggested the need for special efforts to communicate with special segments of the public which tended to be interested in higher education, and that further research was needed to study the relationship of information and a college publics' various opinions.<sup>28</sup>

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26 McGranahan, p. 32.

27 Scannell, p. 10.

28 Scannell, p. 10.

## CHAPTER II

## METHODOLOGY

In his book series The Gallup Poll, George Gallup, dean of national pollsters, makes this statement:

I believe that human behavior is predictable, and, in fact, that we as researchers can make progress best by making predictions and learning from our mistakes as we make them...it would be folly to argue that behavior can be predicted with perfect accuracy. It can't and never will be. But, already enough evidence has been accumulated in a number of different fields to prove it (behavior) can be predicted with a high degree of accuracy.<sup>29</sup>

With this statement in mind, the writer began his research to determine attitudes of South Dakota high school seniors toward the public relations efforts of higher education.

Due to limitations of both time and money, the writer selected the mail questionnaire survey as the method to approach this problem and obtain data from throughout the state.

The use of the mail questionnaire for social research has often been challenged by authorities on the basis of low response in contrast to the interview method, which often yields 100 per cent return on a given sample. Furthermore, criticism has been voiced that persons who return mail questionnaires are not identical to those who do not, thus automatically biasing the return.

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29 Gallup, p. viii.

"The greatest fear of researchers concerning low mail response is caused by the fact that experience shows the percentage of replies varies by economic class," noted Mildred Parten, an authority on polls and surveys. "Lack of representativeness thus occurs which biases the findings."<sup>30</sup>

Support for this statement comes from numerous sources. Daniel Katz and Hadley Cantril, authorities on communications and sociological behavior, noted that high income people tend to respond with greater frequency to questionnaires--about 40 per cent more on the average.<sup>31</sup>

"Returns of less than 40 per cent are common," noted Fred N. Kerlinger, in his book Foundations of Behavioral Research,<sup>32</sup> and Fred T. Schreier, in his book Modern Marketing Research, agreed: "The rate of return is usually very low; often less than 40 per cent."<sup>33</sup>

However, the writer believes that by utilizing a stratified sampling technique, combined with an easy-to-read questionnaire, and by then appealing to the student sample, based on the need for their representation through response, that better than

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30 Mildred Parten, Surveys, Polls and Samples (New York: Harper and Row, 1950), p. 392.

31 Daniel Katz and Hadley Cantril, "Public Opinion Polls," Sociometry, 1:155-79 (1947).

32 Fred N. Kerlinger, Foundations of Behavioral Research (New York: Holt, Rinehart & Winston, 1964), p. 397.

33 Fred T. Schreier, Modern Marketing Research (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1963), p. 198.

average results would occur. Also, it is the researcher's belief that high school seniors of today are more responsive than in the past and therefore would return the questionnaire without excessive prodding. And, because South Dakota is basically an agriculturally-oriented state with a low population, those who did respond could be considered by the researcher as most representative of the entire sample based on earlier findings by Parten indicating "the more homogeneous the universe, the fewer the cases required to yield a reliable sample of it."<sup>34</sup>

#### Construction of the Questionnaire

The questionnaire was constructed on a four-page format with slightly more than a page devoted to background data such as age, sex, college choice, family information, etc. The remainder was a list of statements with which the students could rate their own feelings on a five-point scale from "strongly agree" to "strongly disagree." The questions were first developed during a mass communications class. Suggestions for public relations-type questions were submitted by Mr. C.F. Cecil, SDSU University Editor and officer in the South Dakota College Public Relations Association.

Members of the class took copies of the initial questionnaire and made suggestions as to question clarification or bias. Care was taken to insure that no questions were biased toward

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<sup>34</sup> Parten, p. 294.

South Dakota State University or that no mention of the fact that the researcher was a student at South Dakota State University was made. This was done so that none of the respondents would feel obligated to mark SDSU if they were at a loss for any other answer.

### Questionnaire Pre-test

Pre-test of the questionnaire was made March 19, 1973, at Gary High School, a small school 50 miles northeast of Brookings. Five girls and five boys from the senior class completed the questionnaire. Then each went over his or her responses with the writer indicating suggestions for adding, deleting or clarifying questions. Of the group tested, six planned to attend college, one to attend vocational school, and three to start working following high school graduation. Final changes and clarifications based on the pre-test were approved by the researcher's adviser before the final questionnaire was prepared.

A copy of the questionnaire and accompanying letter to students selected for the survey sample appears in Appendix B.

### Selection of the Sample

For the sample, the proportional stratified sampling technique was employed. Stratified sampling consists of first classifying the universe into two or more strata or classes and then drawing a sample from each. The final selection of the sample from within each stratum is done randomly.

The advantage of this type of sampling, according to Parten, is that it allows the drawing of a relatively small sample which represents the stratum in exactly the same proportion as they occur in the universe.<sup>35</sup> Stratified sampling is frequently recommended as the most efficient procedure for insuring representativeness, Parten adds, because it insures proper representation of the attributes and variables which the investigator considers most important for the subject of the survey.<sup>36</sup> Also, an estimate of the characteristics of the total can be secured in a much shorter time, since the sample is small. "This time-saving advantage is especially important in our modern, dynamic society," according to Parten, "since conditions change so rapidly that unless short-cut methods are devised for measuring social situations, the data is out of date before the survey is completed."<sup>37</sup>

Parten also points out that a large number of returns is a foolish waste of money since small samples allow the investigator time to insure the accuracy of each return.<sup>38</sup> Robinson contends that the size of the sample needed bears little relationship to the size of the population. "As the sample size increases from 10 to 50 to 100, the information obtained

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35 Parten, pp. 226-27.

36 Parten, p. 228.

37 Parten, p. 109.

38 Parten, p. 110.

increases sharply. As it goes further, however, the amount of any new information levels off sharply."<sup>39</sup>

For the sample, the writer chose one per cent of the approximately 13,000 high school seniors in South Dakota.<sup>40</sup> A great misconception, according to Parten, is that the sample surveyed should be at least 10 per cent of the total population. An optimum sample in a survey is one which fulfills the requirements of efficiency, reliability, representativeness and flexibility.<sup>41</sup>

Gallup supports this one per cent sample range and never exceeds it in his surveys and polls. His normal sample for any given poll is 1,500. His normal universe is the voting population.<sup>42</sup> He further states that most survey organizations try to operate within an error range of plus-or-minus four per cent.<sup>43</sup>

In order to draw this stratified one per cent sample, the South Dakota high schools were first broken down by size of community they were serving, i.e., 1) serving community of 600 or less; 2) serving between 600 and 4,000; and 3) serving above

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39 Robinson, p. 69.

40 "A Master Plan for Public Higher Education in S.D.," Pierre, S.D., 1970, p. 2.

41 Parten, p. 293.

42 Gallup, Public Opinion Polls (Princeton University Press, 1948), p. 71.

43 Gallup, Public Opinion Polls, p. 69.

4,000.<sup>44</sup> From this, the writer determined there were 94 schools in the first category, representing approximately one-fourth the state's population; 90 schools in the second category, again serving approximately one-fourth the population; and 30 schools in the third category, serving the remaining half of the population. Of that number, 155 are located east of the Missouri River and 69 are west of the Missouri River.

Approximately two-thirds of the state's population also live east of the river.<sup>45</sup>

Based on the stratified sampling technique, 18 schools representing all areas west of the river and 36 schools representing all areas east of the river were selected for the sample. To aid in the survey, counselors at these 54 schools were then contacted for help. A copy of the letter sent to the counselors is located in Appendix A. Personal phone calls were also made to many of these counselors. From the lists of students compiled through the counselors' cooperation, the random sample was then selected.

Each school on the list was assigned a value based on which of the three categories it represented. Then for each list, names were chosen according to numbers of students represented on that list. In some cases, particularly for the larger

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<sup>44</sup> South Dakota Department of Highways letter dated May 3, 1973, to the author.

<sup>45</sup> S.D. Dept. of Highways letter.

schools, the counselors did not send lists, but agreed to draw the sample from their lists utilizing the writer's sampling techniques. This was done. In all, approximately 4,200 student names were involved. List sizes ranged from 800 to 12. For the smaller schools, one student was selected from each list. In each case it was the ninth name on the list. For the middle-sized schools, one, two or three names were selected from each list, depending on whether the school was just above the small school category or well into the medium-size category. Again the ninth name was selected first, followed by the 41st name, followed by the 50th name. This provided a sample of 65 students.

The remaining sample of 65 was from 16 schools, the smaller of which had three names chosen, and the larger four, five or six. Pierre, being centrally located, was also given a six-name sample. In each case, the number of students on the list was divided by the number of sample names needed from that school, and the sample drawn accordingly. For example, the list with 800 names was divided by six, i.e., every 133rd name was selected.

The letter to each student in the sample (see Appendix A) and a copy of the questionnaire was then mailed on Oct. 1, 1973. A self-addressed, stamped envelope bearing a post office box number in Hartford, S.D., was included, again to help omit bias by not identifying a particular city with a South Dakota college or university. Seventy-one students in the sample responded on this first mailing.

On Nov. 1, 1973, a follow-up post card was mailed to each student on the sample to remind him or her of the need for completing the questionnaire. From this mailing, the writer received 16 more responses, two of which were blank. A final follow-up card was mailed Nov. 14, 1973, but no further responses were obtained. Thus, the final response was 87 returns, 85 of which were valid.

### CHAPTER III

#### FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

The purposes of this study were (1) to determine the attitudes and opinions of South Dakota high school seniors toward South Dakota colleges and universities; (2) to detect their reactions to public relations techniques utilized by those colleges and universities; and (3) to find what segment of this group was willing to give higher education a try and considered it important in today's society.

To study these three areas, several key portions of the questionnaire were analyzed. These questions dealt with whether or not the students were going on to some form of advanced education; whether they considered college training necessary in today's society; feelings of the students toward colleges and universities in South Dakota; and questions regarding what are termed "public relations" techniques.

Complete responses to the questionnaire, although not included in this chapter, are shown in the copy of the questionnaire in Appendix B.

#### Organization of the Data for Analysis

The key data obtained from the survey was deemed by the writer as best portrayed in table form, indicating response by both number and per cent of the total in each key question.

The statistical results from each table could then lend themselves to discussion by the writer, since data could be more easily analyzed.

Additional data considered important to the analysis of those key questions in table form is reported first in order to familiarize the reader with the statistical makeup of the sample group.

### Findings

As noted in Chapter II, 85 valid responses were obtained, representing a 65.4 per cent response rate. Of these, 82 indicated sex, while three listed neither male nor female.

Concerning their plans following high school graduation, 55 respondents (64.7 per cent) answered they were planning to attend a college or university in South Dakota. Eight students, or 9.4 per cent, indicated they planned to attend a vocational school in the state.

Nine students (10.6 per cent) indicated plans to attend a college, university or vocational school out of state, while three more, an additional 3.5 per cent, indicated they were considering this same action.

Only eight students (9.4 per cent) indicated they were not planning to continue their education beyond high school.

Of those responding to the questionnaire, 47 indicated that one or both of their parents had attended a college or university. This was a 55.3 per cent ratio of all respondents.

Thirty-three of the respondents indicated they had a brother or sister in a college or university, and of this number 22 had brothers or sisters in South Dakota colleges and universities.

Seventy-three respondents had been on a college campus, primarily to visit friends or relatives or to attend college events both high school- and non-high school related.

Concerning occupation of the chief wage earner in the home, 23 students noted that the wage earner was a farmer or rancher. Eleven students indicated the chief wage earner was a business manager, six that he was a salesman, and five that he was an engineer. The remainder indicated occupations in 21 different areas.

As mentioned in Chapter II, many of the questions were rated from "strongly agree" to "strongly disagree" to portray the respondents' attitudes toward certain statements. A rating scale of 1-5 was attached by this writer to those responses based on the following formula:

1=Strongly Disagree; 2=Disagree; 3=No Opinion; 4=Agree; 5=Strongly Agree; and 9=No Response.

This formula is followed by the writer within the table boundaries to show response to particular statements within the questionnaire.

Table 1 presents attitudes of the respondents toward college education in today's society. The majority of the students indicated they felt it was important, although a significant number (more than 35 per cent) believed it was not.

TABLE 1

## COLLEGE EDUCATION IS NECESSARY IN TODAY'S SOCIETY

Responses	All Students and Per Cent
1	3 (3.5%)
2	27 (31.8%)
3	8 (9.4%)
4	35 (41.2%)
5	10 (11.8%)
9	2 (2.4%)
Totals	85 (100%)

Response to the statement about whether South Dakota colleges and universities are as good as or better than their out-of-state counterparts is portrayed in Table 2. The writer deemed it necessary to show group response of students planning to attend school in-state, out-of-state, vocational school, or simply planning not to attend any education institution. Through this question, the writer sought to establish whether students believed in-state institutions were similar in quality to those in other states or whether this was an important reason for going out-of-state or for not attending a college or university. Response showed that these groups (out-of-state, vocational, and students not planning to continue on) did not feel adversely

toward the in-state schools, and that, in fact, most students held South Dakota schools in high esteem.

TABLE 2

SOUTH DAKOTA COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES ARE AS GOOD AS  
OR BETTER THAN THOSE IN OTHER STATES

Response	Plan to attend S.D. college	Plan to attend voc. school	Plan to attend out-state	Plan not to attend	All
1	1	0	0	0	1 (1.2%)
2	3	0	1	0	4 (4.7%)
3	12	4	1	0	20 (23.5%)
4	23	2	3	7	36 (42.4%)
5	16	2	2	1	21 (24.7%)
9					4 (3.5%)
Totals	55	8	10	8	85

Table 3 indicates the influence of associates of the respondents in the matter of providing information about colleges and universities. Response here clearly indicates that high school counselors are playing an important role in providing college information to the students, followed closely by friends.

The low response concerning college personnel is perhaps surprising, since many of the South Dakota colleges and universities have been seeking to increase contact with high school students in an effort to provide them with facts about college education. Efforts along this line have been made through the ever-expanding College Days program, which the colleges and universities in South Dakota staff jointly at numerous locations throughout the state.

TABLE 3

## FROM WHOM DO YOU OBTAIN MOST INFORMATION ABOUT COLLEGE?

Selections	Number of students responding and per cent of total
High School Counselor	28 (32.9%)
Parents	5 (5.9%)
Friends	21 (24.7%)
Teachers	5 (5.9%)
Brothers & Sisters	8 (9.4%)
College Personnel	4 (4.7%)
Several of the Above	2 (2.4%)
All of the Above	11 (12.9%)
No Response	1 (1.2%)
Totals	85 (100%)

Tables 4-12 concern the nine public relations questions in the questionnaire. They make up the nucleus of the survey, since they will indicate to South Dakota college and university public relations practitioners the student response toward their efforts. A favorable response rate on these questions could reflect back on the decision to stay in a South Dakota college or university instead of going out-of-state, on to vocational school, or simply not going on to higher education.

Table 4 presents the data on whether radio or television stories about a college influence the students in selecting that college. Indication is that this medium does not rank highly with this generation.

TABLE 4\*

DO RADIO AND TELEVISION STORIES AFFECT YOU IN SELECTING  
A COLLEGE OR UNIVERSITY YOU WOULD LIKE TO ATTEND?

Response	Males	Females	All
Yes	7	21	28 (32.9%)
No	28	25	54 (63.5%)
No Response			3 (3.5%)
Totals	35	46	85 (100%)

The influence of college brochures on students concerning

\*The remaining tables show the distribution for male and female respondents. In none of the tables, however, are the differences between the two groups statistically significant.

selection of a college is depicted in Table 5. Most of South Dakota's colleges have gone heavily into this technique, primarily through the high school relations offices. Most brochures contain facts about the school, about particular programs, etc., supplemented with color as well as color and black and white photos of the school and its students. The author viewed copies of the various brochures employed by South Dakota colleges and universities in the South Dakota State University High School Relations Office.

TABLE 5

DO BROCHURES ABOUT SCHOOLS HAVE A STRONG INFLUENCE ON HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS IN SELECTION OF A COLLEGE OR UNIVERSITY?

Response	Males	Females	All
1	0	1	1 (1.2%)
2	5	10	15 (17.6%)
3	12	8	20 (23.5%)
4	17	23	41 (48.2%)
5	2	4	6 (7.1%)
9			2 (2.4%)
Totals	36	46	85 (100%)

Table 6, which shows the influence of new stories about the school and its programs on school selection, touches on that aspect of public relations dealing with readership of daily and

weekly newspapers. All of the students indicated they read at least one daily newspaper and often supplement that with a weekly. Thus, the favorable response toward this medium indicates it is an important part of the overall public relations program.

TABLE 6

NEWS STORIES ABOUT A SCHOOL, ITS PROGRAMS AND  
ITS STUDENTS INFLUENCE ME AS TO WHETHER  
OR NOT I WOULD SELECT THAT SCHOOL

Response	Males	Females	All
1	0	0	0
2	9	7	16 (18.8%)
3	8	3	11 (12.9%)
4	15	28	44 (51.8%)
5	4	7	11 (12.9%)
9			3 (3.5%)
Totals	36	46	85 (100%)

Table 7, like Table 6, is also newspaper-oriented. This, however, tries to determine if reading about a student who is an acquaintance has a positive effect on the high school student during the college selection process. The response rate here indicates that it is not nearly as important to the high school

student. He appears to be turning more heavily to stories about the school itself rather than to stories about those he knows.

TABLE 7

NEWS STORIES ABOUT A STUDENT I KNOW INFLUENCES  
MY OPINION ABOUT HIS SCHOOL

Response	Males	Females	All
1	0	2	2 (2.4%)
2	12	11	23 (27.1%)
3	11	11	23 (27.1%)
4	8	19	27 (31.8%)
5	5	3	8 (9.4%)
9			2 (2.4%)
Totals	36	46	85 (100%)

Table 8 presents the data on films or television programs as an influential factor in selecting a school. The response indicates indecisiveness concerning this variable, since those saying they are influenced are nearly equalled by those saying they are not. A large percentage holds no opinion on this subject.

In terms of posters as an influential means of attracting high school students to college, the colleges must largely rely on aid from high school counselors to whom they direct those

TABLE 8

FILMS OR TELEVISION PROGRAMS ABOUT A SCHOOL INFLUENCE  
ME IN CHOOSING THAT SCHOOL

Response	Males	Females	All
1	0	2	2 (2.4%)
2	12	11	23 (27.1%)
3	11	11	23 (27.1%)
4	8	19	27 (31.8%)
5	5	3	8 (9.4%)
9			2 (2.4%)
Totals	36	46	85 (100%)

posters. Generally, according to the SDSU High School Relations Office, these posters are placed in counselors' offices or placed in the school hallways by the counselors themselves. Perhaps this indirect approach to the students is the reason for the relatively high percentage (34.1 per cent) of students who said they either disagreed or strongly disagreed that posters about a college or university influenced students in choosing that school. In addition, a good percentage (24.7 per cent) had no opinion. Complete response ratio is listed in Table 9.

Table 10 reflects the attitudes of students toward college course catalogs as an important influencing factor in college

TABLE 9  
 POSTERS ABOUT A SCHOOL INFLUENCE STUDENTS  
 IN CHOOSING THAT SCHOOL

Response	Males	Females	All
1	1	2	3 (3.5%)
2	12	12	26 (30.6%)
3	11	10	21 (24.7%)
4	8	20	29 (34.1%)
5	4	2	6 (7.1%)
Totals	36	46	85 (100%)

choice. The overwhelming response in favor of course catalogs shows this as a major factor in the final selection process. On the response of "No Opinion," the eight who answered this were those eight who had indicated they were not planning to continue their education.

Tables 11 and 12 are tied closely to the high school relations efforts of the overall public relations program. Table 11 presents the response on visits from college personnel as an influencing factor. It is clearly shown that visits of this nature are important to the student. More than 76 per cent responded that these visits helped in selection of a college.

Table 12 contains data on the influence of high school events held on a college campus in terms of influencing college

TABLE 10  
 COURSE CATALOGS ARE IMPORTANT TO STUDENTS  
 IN MAKING A SELECTION OF SCHOOLS

Response	Males	Females	All
1	0	1	1 (1.2%)
2	0	1	1 (1.2%)
3	4	4	8 (9.4%)
4	18	22	41 (47.2%)
5	14	18	34 (40.0%)
Totals	36	46	85 (100%)

selection. A slight majority (50.6 per cent) indicated these events did play a role in their selection. Often, events of this nature are handled jointly by the High School Relations Office and the college's News Bureau. The latter usually handles the informative process, while the former takes care of the students once they are on campus.

In addition to this data, the writer also sought opinion of the students through a "comment" section in the questionnaire. Eighteen students chose to utilize this section, responding as to why they chose a certain college; why vocational schools are better than colleges; reasons for going out-of-state; types of public relations techniques which influence them; and thoughts on whether college was important to them individually. The comments

TABLE 11

VISITS FROM COLLEGE PERSONNEL OR STUDENTS TO MY SCHOOL  
AFFECT MY OR MY CLASSMATES' SELECTION OF THAT SCHOOL

Response	Males	Females	All
1	0	0	0
2	3	4	7 (8.2%)
3	6	4	10 (11.8%)
4	18	25	44 (51.8%)
5	9	13	22 (25.9%)
9			2 (2.4%)
Totals	36	46	85 (100%)

TABLE 12

HIGH SCHOOL EVENTS HELD ON A COLLEGE CAMPUS  
INFLUENCE MY COLLEGE CHOICE

Response	Males	Females	All
1	2	2	4 (4.7%)
2	13	10	23 (27.1%)
3	6	6	13 (15.3%)
4	9	16	25 (29.4%)
5	6	12	18 (21.2%)
9			2 (2.4%)
Totals	36	46	85 (100%)

are included in Appendix C where they are grouped by discussion topic. The writer believes these opinions are of value to public relations practitioners and reveal interesting thoughts on college choice. A review of these comments further substantiates the tabled data concerning the strongest and/or weakest types of public relations techniques.

## CHAPTER IV

## CONCLUSIONS

The object of this study was to determine attitudes of the key public of South Dakota colleges and universities--the high school seniors. Because of the high response rate (nearly double the percentage of the earlier McGranahan study in which valid conclusions were drawn)<sup>46</sup> the author believes valid conclusions about this public's attitudes can also be drawn.

The author believes that the sample drawn from this public can be regarded as most representative of the entire public, since the group as a universe is highly homogeneous in nature.

Implications

A key implication of the findings is that a high proportion of the high school seniors are looking toward some form of education after high school graduation. More than 90 per cent are planning on either a college or vocational education. And, in addition, 53 per cent of the respondents believe a college education is necessary in today's society.

In terms of how South Dakota colleges and universities are regarded by these students, 67.1 per cent indicated they

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<sup>46</sup> McGranahan, p. 30.

believed the in-state schools were as good as or better than those in other states, and only 5.9 per cent felt they were not.

In terms of what public relations techniques most influenced the students in selecting South Dakota colleges and universities, several conclusions can be drawn.

First, the college course catalog is still the most important public relations implement in helping the student decide. More than 87 per cent of those responding said this was an important factor in their decisions. This supports the McGranahan findings, which showed that nearly 50 per cent of his respondents considered the course catalog the most important influencing factor (the highest single influencing factor in his study).<sup>47</sup>

A second interesting finding is that related to visits by college personnel. Nearly 78 per cent of the respondents indicated that such visits were important to them in deciding about a college education. Yet, it is apparent that the South Dakota colleges and universities have not been utilizing this important technique. The author draws this conclusion based on Table 3 in Chapter III. That table reflects the response as to where the students gain most information about college. Only four students (4.7 per cent) listed college personnel. The high affirmative response rate toward visits, however, indicates that

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<sup>47</sup> McGranahan, p. 30.

the students are eager to listen to college personnel and make college selections based on these presentations.

The third highest affirmative response toward a public relations technique was in the area of news stories about a college and its program. Nearly 65 per cent of the respondents said these types of news stories affected their selection of a college. This indicates a drastic change from the students in the McGranahan study, since only 6.2 per cent said they were affected by news stories.<sup>48</sup>

News stories about students the respondents knew, however, did not obtain such a favorable response, since only 41.2 per cent indicated these stories affected their choice of college. However, this figure is also significant, since the earlier study concerned all types of newspaper stories.

College brochures appear to be an important source of information for the students, and 55.3 per cent said they are influenced by these publications. This compares with 42.9 per cent in McGranahan's survey. In that 1950 study, this figure was considered by the author as "a large number,"<sup>49</sup> which indicates to this researcher that the present figure is also significant in the overall public relations effort.

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<sup>48</sup> McGranahan, p. 30. (The McGranahan study was conducted in 1950, before most colleges and universities had increased their public relations efforts to present-day levels, perhaps a significant factor in this drastic percentage change).

<sup>49</sup> McGranahan, p. 30.

Public relations practitioners have noted in numerous writings that it is important that students be brought on campus for high school events, since once they have seen the school and its program, they will be influenced in their final college choice. However, the students seemed somewhat undecided on this technique. A slight majority (50.6 per cent) did indicate these events were influential, but a large percentage (31.8) said they were not, while 15.3 per cent were undecided. This may be an area that needs a closer look by public relations practitioners either in making such visits more attractive or in possible reduction of such events. A question of this nature was not asked in the McGranahan survey.

Although 41.2 per cent of the respondents indicated that posters about a school were influential, 34.1 per cent said they were not, and 24.7 per cent had no opinion. As noted in Chapter III, perhaps this technique would be more influential if the posters went directly to students rather than the school or its counselors. The students have indicated that personalized techniques, such as visits or brochures are important to them, and the author believes this is why the posters drew the lower approval rate.

This question, too, was omitted from the McGranahan study.

The advancement of the electronic media (radio and television) and the improvement in filming techniques prompted the author to ask questions on the effect of these areas. The students still seemed indecisive about them.

Some public relations practitioners feel these media are just starting to make their mark and in the next 10 to 20 years will surpass the print media as the more influential factors on decision-making. "Radio and television provide new powerful means of conveying facts, ideas and impressions," notes McCloskey. "They can influence both opinions and attitudes, because as they are more finely developed, people will turn to them more for the facts they need."<sup>50</sup>

"The printed word has dominated public relations efforts," Robinson adds, "but as technological developments occur in the spoken word fields, and a reduction in cost and increase in adaptability follows, the dominance of the printed word may become a thing of the past."<sup>51</sup>

Concerning films or television programs, 41.2 per cent said they were influenced by them, perhaps already a significant figure. News stories on radio and television got a lower endorsement at 32.9 per cent, a figure which SDSU's radio-television specialist said was "surprisingly high."

Based on these various findings, the author concludes that the overall public relations program of South Dakota colleges and universities is somewhat influential and perhaps an important part in the decision of many South Dakota students to stay in-state rather than going out-of-state.

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50 McCloskey, p. 483.

51 Robinson, p. 155.

Out-migration studies by Hogan<sup>52</sup> and Schmidt<sup>53</sup> indicated that their survey respondents left South Dakota for out-of-state schools because educational opportunities were greater, and because their career preferences could be better met by an out-of-state institution. The current group of high school seniors indicates in this survey that they are staying in-state for the same reasons. This indicates to the author that the public relations practitioners have successfully gotten their schools' messages across to this key public.

#### Suggestions for Further Study

1. A similar study should be completed every five years to determine if there is a change in the attitudes of high school seniors, particularly toward the public relations techniques.
2. A similar study should be conducted using South Dakota college students as the universe so as to determine the reasons they have for staying in-state and finding what factors influenced them in their decisions.
3. A similar study should be conducted using parents of prospective college students as the universe to find whether their attitudes and opinions coincide with their childrens'.

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<sup>52</sup> Edward Patrick Hogan, "The Reasons for Out-Migration of South Dakota Youth" (unpublished Doctoral dissertation, St. Louis University, 1969), pp. 91-100.

<sup>53</sup> Gregory Lee Schmidt, "The Reasons for Out-Migration of Selected Student-Athletes From South Dakota" (unpublished Master's thesis, South Dakota State University, 1973), pp. 32-33.

4. A survey of South Dakota high school counselors should be made to determine whether they are influenced by the South Dakota college and university public relations techniques prior to advising their students as to college choice. This could be a most important survey, since counselors received the highest percentage of student response to this survey's question on who provided most information about colleges and universities.

## APPENDIX A

## LETTER TO COUNSELORS

Dear Counselor:

I am sending this letter as a plea for help. I am a graduate student at South Dakota State University, and in order to complete my thesis questionnaire survey, I need to draw a sample of high school students from throughout the state.

Since my questionnaire is public relations-oriented, I have decided to survey high school seniors on their attitudes and opinions of South Dakota colleges and universities.

What I need from you is a list of juniors (next year's seniors) and their home addresses. From this list, I will draw a representative sample to send the questionnaire.

If you have any questions prior to sending me this list of names and addresses, feel free to contact me at the SDSU News Bureau. I have enclosed a stamped, self-addressed envelope for your convenience. I hope you will be able to provide me with this list before summer vacation, since I hope to begin drawing the sample this summer.

Sincerely,

Dan Jorgensen

## APPENDIX B

## LETTER TO STUDENTS AND QUESTIONNAIRE

Dear Student:

I am a graduate student at a South Dakota college, and the questionnaire I have enclosed is part of my research thesis for my Master's degree. For my thesis, I am conducting an attitude survey of high school seniors in South Dakota concerning South Dakota colleges and universities. You are one of a one per cent sample taken from the 13,000 seniors in the state, so your participation in this survey is of utmost importance.

Because I do not wish to influence any selection of questions that you may make in this questionnaire, I will not list the college I am attending.

I would like to stress that even if you do not plan to attend college, it is still important that you fill out this questionnaire, since you will have a voice in the future of our colleges and universities as a South Dakota citizen. Attitudes of all high school students is what I hope to portray through your sample group.

I hope you will take 15 or 20 minutes, fill out this questionnaire and return it as soon as possible in the self-addressed, stamped envelope. Your individual answers will be kept in strictest confidence, and please do not put your name on the questionnaire. Results of the survey will be made available to the public sometime next spring.

Thank you for your participation.

Sincerely,

Dan Jorgensen

High School \_\_\_\_\_ Age \_\_\_\_\_ Male 36 Female 46

I plan to attend a college or university in South Dakota

55 Yes 21 No 9 Maybe

I plan to attend a vocational school in South Dakota

8 Yes      No      Maybe

I plan to attend school in another state 9 Yes      No 3 Maybe

If yes, which state? 7 different states

8 I do not plan to attend a college, university or vocational school. If checked, what are your plans?

Either work, get married or enter the military

If I were to choose a college in South Dakota today, I would pick:

6 Augustana 4 Black Hills State 1 Dakota State 0 Dakota Wes-

leyan 0 Huron College 1 Mount Marty 2 Northern State

0 Presentation College 3 School of Mines 1 Sioux Falls

College 40 South Dakota State University 11 University of

South Dakota 5 USD-Springfield 1 Yankton College 5 None

My main interest or area of study in college would be 24 areas

Do you have or have you been offered a scholarship to a college or university?

     Yes 82 No

If I were offered a scholarship to college, I would accept it.

45 Yes 2 No 38 Perhaps

Did either of your parents attend college? 47 Yes 38 No

If yes, where? 35 different locations

Do you have brothers or sisters now attending college? 33 Yes      No

If yes, where? 24 different schools

Have you ever been on a college campus? 73 Yes 9 No

If yes, which one(s)? 58 different schools

Why were you there? Primarily for high school events, or to visit friends or relatives

What is your religion? 9 religions

What is the occupation of the chief wage earner in your home?

Too numerous to list

What daily and weekly newspapers do you read?

Too numerous to list

What radio and television stations do you listen to and watch?

Too numerous to list

Do radio and television news stories about colleges affect you in selecting a college you would like to attend?

28 Yes 54 No

From whom do you obtain most information about college?

28 High School Counselor 5 Parents 21 Friends 5 Teachers

8 Brothers-Sisters 4 College Personnel 2 Several of the

Above 11 All of the Above 1 None of the Above

The following key should be used for answering remaining questions

SA=Strongly Agree A=Agree NO=No Opinion D=Disagree  
SD=Strongly Disagree

A college education is necessary in today's society.

10SA 35A 8NO 27D 3SD

Brochures about schools have a strong influence on high school students in selection of a college or university.

6SA 41A 20NO 15D 1SD

News stories about a school, its programs and its students influence me as to whether or not I would select that school.

11SA 44A 11NO 16D 0SD

News stories about a student I know influence my opinion about his school.

3 SA 27A 22NO 26D 5 SD

South Dakota colleges and universities are as good as or better than those in other states.

21SA 36A 20NO 4 D 1 SD

Cost of education in South Dakota influences my or my friends' decisions about attending school here.

28SA 34A 12NO 9 D 0 SD

My estimate of what one year in school costs would be:

8 \$500-\$1,000 22\$1,000-\$1,500 37\$1,500-\$2,000 16\$2,000-\$2,500

2 More than \$2,500

It is less expensive to attend school in South Dakota than in other states.

13SA 45A 17NO 4 D 1 SD

Films or television programs about a school influence me in choosing that school.

8 SA 27A 23NO 23D 2 SD

When did you first begin thinking about attending college or vocational school?

22Grade school (if so, grade    ) 199th grade 1510th 1911th 7 12th

Posters about a school influence students in choosing that school.

6 SA 29A 21NO 26D 3 SD

Course catalogs are important to students in making school choice.

34SA 41A 8 NO 1 D 1 SD

Visits from college personnel or students to my school affect my or my classmates' selection of that school.

22SA 44A 10NO 7 D 0 SD

Religion plays an important role in my choice of schools.

3 SA 7 A 21NO 37D 15SD

South Dakota colleges are hotbeds of riot and dissension.

0 SA 1 A 11 NO 30 D 41 SD

High school events (such as debate, music clinics, sports events, etc.) held on a college campus influence my college choice.

18 SA 25 A 13 NO 23 D 4 SD

A wide variety of majors (areas of study) at a college is important to me.

19 SA 43 A 15 NO 5 D 1 SD

A college graduate makes more money than a non-college graduate.

10 SA 27 A 24 NO 20 D 2 SD

It is important that a college have good, safe dormitories.

26 SA 47 A 7 NO 2 D 0 SD

It is important that a college have good athletic teams.

12 SA 27 A 15 NO 22 D 7 SD

It is important that a college have good physical education and recreation facilities.

29 SA 44 A 5 NO 2 D 2 SD

A college or university should be a place to do more than study.

29 SA 50 A 3 NO 1 D 0 SD

It is important that a college have good liberal arts facilities, i.e., music, theater, speech, art, dramatics, etc.

20 SA 47 A 14 NO 2 D 0 SD

Comments:

## APPENDIX C

## COMMENTS

Influences

News stories about a school's programs strongly influence me as to whether or not I choose that school, but stories about students do not influence me at all.

I can't really say that what I see on television or hear in school really influences my college choice. Religion does have a large part in my decision, and that is why I will probably be attending a private college. Athletics are also important to me, but I suppose not as important as other things.

The college I go to must have social activities as well as excellent areas of study. I must agree that catalogs and college personnel speaking to me is a big asset. A day in which we seniors can examine colleges of our choice is also an asset.

A successful college has to do a lot of recruiting. I enjoy seeing films, pamphlets, etc., on the South Dakota colleges because college is a great financial investment, and I want to be sure the one I choose has something to offer me.

A college I choose has to offer an expansive background in different things such as music, art, speech and drama, and many varied subjects for a well-rounded education. Extensive sports programs do not add to a school, except in prestige and school spirit. However, students should not neglect developing their bodies as well as their minds.

The choice of school should be dependent on what the student's main interest is, and also how well the school teaches that subject, i.e., facilities, teachers, etc.

Perhaps an important question left out here is "why the student picked the school he or she did."

On your questions about different things affecting my choice of colleges, I answered disagree mainly because I want to take forestry, and I know of only one school in the state offering that subject to any extent. If I were interested in some other field of study, then I am sure that some of your examples might influence my decision.

Since I have no brothers or sisters older than me who have gone to college, I really don't know what to expect.

If I were to choose a state school, SDSU would be my choice. If it were an in-state private school, Augustana is the best in my opinion. The money involved is not the most important factor, and I don't come from a wealthy family--but it's better to go to a good school than to waste your money on a cheaper one.

In selecting a college, I have been looking for some particular programs which are unrelated to my main interest. I have been looking for programs in environmental studies, Norwegian, and piano. I would like to go to a larger school than any of those in South Dakota. I am planning on going to Mankato State to study medical technology.

If I were to choose now, it would be School of Mines, because of the type of choices that school offers.

### College Necessity

I don't know if I'm sold on the idea of college yet. To me it seems like an extremely advanced high school, only more liberal. Some people fit right in to that type of education, but others don't. College isn't for everyone. There are only three good colleges in South Dakota--SDSU, USD and Augustana.

As a senior, I'm still uncertain about college. I am strongly considering going for a year, then deciding if I want to go on. The first year after high school graduation is a lost year anyway, until you decide what you want to go into as a career.

I don't believe a person needs a four-year college degree to succeed. And, I believe the amount of money one makes is dependent on the field he is in.

### Vocational Schools

I don't believe a complete college education is necessary so I plan to attend a college that offers vocational-type training. If I decide to go on from there, I always can. Blue collar workers are in more demand and higher paid than white collar workers anyway.

I feel if you know what you want to do and it's something you need schooling for, you are better off going to a vocational school than a college.

I feel vocational schools are very popular. You can learn a trade much faster and cheaper, and don't have to take courses you are not interested in, such as colleges make you do.

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