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The notion of consistency between occupational role-conception and self-concept, as derived from symbolic interactionist theory, has been used with some success in predicting occupational success and satisfaction. It is commonly assumed in these studies that role- and self-concepts must be consistent with one another at all stages of the career process. This study sought to test this assumption by hypothesizing that differences in role-conceptions among classes of nursing students would be reflected by similar differences in self-concepts.

The sample consisted of 205 university-level nursing students, selected from all four academic classes. Three discrete dimensions of role- and self-concepts were empirically identified by factor analysis.

Significant differences of the predicted directions were found between the role-conceptions of freshmen and seniors. However, no such differences were found between their self-concepts. Further, it was found that the degree of consistency between role-conceptions and self-concepts varies from class to class, and from one dimension of the role to another, contrary to previous assumptions.

It was suggested that the saliency of a given dimension of the role for a particular class of students explains the occurrence of this inconsistency between role- and self-concepts. A measure of saliency was constructed from the available data. This measure was found to be positively related to consistency. It is suggested that other researchers in this area should take the saliency of a dimension of

the role into account as a third variable in using role-conceptions  
and self-concepts to predict occupational success.

CONCEPTIONS OF SELF AND ROLE: THEIR CONSISTENCY,  
SALIENCE, AND CHANGE AMONG  
NURSING STUDENTS

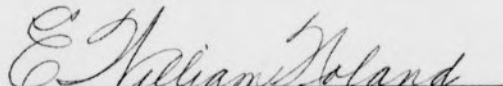
by

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CHAPTER I  
INTRODUCTION

Socialization in its most general sense is a process by which the energies and needs of individuals are brought into harmony with those of social systems. This process has two sides, as can be seen in the study of occupational socialization. From the occupation's point of view, institutions socialize persons in order to adapt or mold them into effective participants of occupational roles. At the same time, occupational socialization is a process in which the individual seeks to acquire the skills and knowledge required to realize an occupational goal.

This paper takes the latter perspective. An underlying pre-supposition of this social-psychological point of view is that work and preparation for it are means by which persons seek to attain valued ends: new statuses, involving both intrinsic and extrinsic rewards. In a very simplistic sense, the dependent variable of this kind of research is the "goodness of fit" between one's values or goals and the rewards obtaining from participation in the occupational role.

Given that this "goodness of fit" is a variable--that some people get what they desire from their work while others perceive a discrepancy--the object of this study is to identify factors that may give rise to this discrepancy. Specifically, interest will focus upon the conceptions persons have both of themselves and of the occupational roles to which they aspire. We take the approach that the



"goodness of fit" between one's goals and the rewards of an occupational role is contingent upon the "goodness of fit" between these two conceptions. In this sense, occupational success and satisfaction are achieved when one's image of himself is consistent with his image of the occupational role. The process of pursuing an occupation is thus one of maintaining such consistency.

This process is made more difficult for the individual by the fact that his conception of the role is likely to undergo change as he progresses through the socializing institution. The socialization process itself is an agent of change in the knowledge he possesses regarding the nature of the occupation. What one believes to be the nature of the role at entry into the socialization process may be quite different from what he learns as time passes. If so, this learning experience would seem to create a degree of inconsistency between one's conception of the role and his conception of himself.

This study seeks to identify ways in which this rise in inconsistency is minimized by students in a nursing school. Specifically, we propose that one way in which this might occur is through the modification of the student's self-concept. Since the image one has of himself is a socially-constructed reality, then the nursing student's immersion in the new social environment of the nursing school and in a "student culture" may make such a modification possible, and may in fact encourage it.

The development and testing of this proposition will serve to test the strength of and locate weaknesses in the more general

theoretical model upon which the study is based. The larger aim of this study is to assist in the development of a more complete theoretical schema which might be useful in applied research in the area of occupational socialization in general, and nursing education in particular.

## CHAPTER II

APPLICATIONS OF THE CONCEPT OF SELF  
IN OCCUPATIONAL PURSUIT

It has become almost a commonplace in the field of occupational socialization to apply George Herbert Mead's formulation of the self to the process. Although Mead spoke mostly of early self-development and not of the later importance of the self in adult role-taking, the interactionist framework has been used most heavily by such theorists as Becker, Strauss, and Hughes. They have done so in concert (Becker et al, 1961) and separately in other theoretical papers and monographs (Becker, 1964; Hughes, 1958; Strauss, 1959). Outside the area of deviance, occupational pursuit and socialization has attracted the lion's share of self theorists' attention. This may be due to the relative ease of observing adult socialization processes as opposed to those of the child. However, Becker and Strauss have made a theoretical argument for more research in the area of adult socialization. They suggest that so much stress has traditionally been placed upon the child's development that later events tend to be construed as mere "elaborations on the theme" (1956:263).

In spite of this attention, the perspective of the self has made dubious progress as a theoretical tool for predicting and explaining behavior. Sociologists have neglected to employ it as such a tool. Miyamoto and Dornbusch note the complaint that the symbolic interactionist perspective has failed to generate testable hypotheses (1956:399). Instead, Mead's formulation has constituted at best an ephemeral body of assumptions upon which ethnomethodological studies

of student culture and emergent definitions of the situation have been based. The classic Boys in White (Becker et al, 1961), for example, is an engrossing participant-observation study which deals more with emergent student norms and "studentmanship" than with the development of the self. Simpson's study of nursing students (1956) has more to do with the social environment of the nursing school than with the development of the professional self, although its title suggests otherwise. Those few studies that have actually developed and tested hypotheses from the framework of the self (Miyamoto and Dornbusch, 1956; Kuhn, 1960; Quarantelli and Cooper, 1966) are rightly regarded as pioneering works. However, these are for the most part experimental studies which were not conducted in the context of a particular social environment.

In an effort to break the elusive concept of the self into smaller, more malleable parts, such terms as "self-image" (Simpson, 1956), "identity" (Strauss, 1962), and "self-concept" (Super, 1951) have been employed. Though some of these are simply variations in semantics, some are not; and they have brought about considerable divergence among researchers who work within the symbolic interactionist sphere. This divergence may be seen either as an indication of symbolic interactionism's fruitfulness as a source of ideas, or of its proneness to confusion and misapprehension.

#### The Self-concept

One useful construct derived from Mead is the self-concept. The greatest problem in getting a grasp on the self is that it will

not "stand still;" it has no definite locus. The self per se can be found neither in the individual nor in others, as it exists only in relationship between the two (Mead, 1934:195). To study the self as a single concept would therefore be to study social process itself in a holistic sense, which cannot be done systematically.

The best that can be done, it seems, is to consider one side of the relationship. That is, if it is assumed with Mead that the self exists when a person is an object to himself, his perception of that object becomes a useful theoretical concept. Theoretically, it would be possible to consider the other side of the self; the perceptions of others. This approach is taken when persons are asked to rate each other in various qualities, as when sociograms are constructed. In either event the self is considered to be an object seen through the eyes of persons as part of their social worlds--as an object of knowledge. The self-concept is thus no more illusory than the knowledge people construct about government policies, the values of goods, or the supernatural. As part of the wealth of knowledge one possesses regarding the social world, the self-concept is used in making sense of the world and in guiding behavior. It is, in sum, a datum of knowledge a person has about himself as part of his social world. We assume that it is one that is highly salient to him in guiding his action.

#### Occupational Choice Studies

The self-concept has been actively employed by those oriented toward occupational counseling, most notably by Donald Super (1951,

1963a). The self-concept is here much more a predictive tool, in contrast to its passing mention by the sociologists. The guiding theory among these students is that career pursuit is a process in which the actor chooses an occupational role that is consistent with the kind of person he thinks he is. The general orientation is expressed by Super:

In expressing a vocational preference a person puts into occupational terminology his idea of the kind of person he is; that in entering an occupation, he seeks to implement a concept of himself; that in getting established in an occupation he achieves self-actualization. The occupation thus makes possible the playing of a role appropriate to the self concept. (1963a:1)

In effect, the person matches his conception of himself with a learned conception of an occupational role. Starishevsky and Matlin illustrate this process metaphorically, using the terms "psych-talk," "occtalk," and "self-to-occ dictionary" (1963). In their terms, the conceptions persons have of occupational roles exist as labels which they have come to attach to the requirements of them ("occtalk"). At the same time, their self-concepts exist as labels which they associate with their own social and psychological traits ("psychtalk"). These two sets of labels may not be of comparable form, since they refer to different kinds of objects. The "self-to-occ dictionary" is a set of logical or conceptual linkages by which they may be compared. The task of the vocational counselor is to help the person acquire a realistic "dictionary" and thus to insure that he makes accurate and valid translations.



The similarity between role-conception and self-concept constitutes a criterion by which the choice of a career is made. Thus career pursuit becomes a process of "self-actualization," reminiscent but not identical to Maslow's (1943) use of the term. This has been demonstrated by Stephenson (1961) in his study of medical students. He showed that pre-med students described themselves in terms very similar to the way they described physicians. Englander (1960) used a control group in a similar study, in which those aspiring to be teachers showed greater similarity between their self-concepts and teacher-role expectations than did the general public. While it may not be possible to predict with much accuracy the particular occupation a person will choose, these studies do suggest that self-concepts are highly consistent with conceptions of already-chosen occupational roles.

#### Beyond Occupational Choice

One criticism that may be made of the occupational choice literature is that it does not go far enough chronologically into the process of career pursuit. Research interest in the adolescent's future seems to wane as he makes a firm commitment to one career or another. Once the aspiring physician enters medical school, once the college student chooses a major, the research task seems to be completed. One can conjecture, however, that much goes on between initial entry into a career and one's final vocational outcome that may upset even the best vocational predictions. College students change majors or drop out, sociologists become businessmen, nursing

students become housewives. To use a well-worn term, occupations are forever "becoming."

The act of choosing an occupation is a natural focus of the vocational counselor, for it constitutes a clearly visible decision on the part of the actor. As such, it enables the researcher or the counselor to easily identify the chronological arrangement of the variables under study. Conditions existing prior to the occupational choice are regarded as independent variables which influence the "outcome" of the decision. By analyzing the act of choice in this way, the researcher "freezes" a part of the career process as if it were a static and discrete event.

The same theory used in these studies of occupational choice may be extended for use in predicting occupational success and satisfaction. This extension is made possible by a reconceptualization of the concept of "choice." It is not necessary to consider a person's initial occupational choice as the only career decision he makes, or even as one of several. Ginzberg et al (1951), Becker (1960), and others have conceptualized career pursuit as a process of continual decision-making. At any time, alternative career paths are open to the individual. The nursing student, for example, may withdraw from school at any time. If she were to do so, it might be said that she "decided" to quit. However, we can also imagine that another student who remains in the program also makes a decision of sorts. Continually faced with the alternative of leaving school, she decides to remain in the program. Since she has selected among alternatives, it may be said that she too has made a decision.



Of course, this kind of decision is of such a tacit nature that we tend not to think of it as a decision at all. Further, people do not make such taken-for-granted decisions with awareness of them; nursing students do not reassess their career decisions upon awakening each morning. By the same token, we do not decide whether to live or die every day even though suicide is always an available alternative. When we speak of the process of decision, then, we do not mean the considered weighing of alternatives and the making of a conscious choice among them. Rather, we refer to the tacit kind of decision to allow situations to continue as they are; a decision made by default. Nonetheless, this process of continual decision-making may be studied in much the same manner as is the more visible choice of career. Instead of predicting one's decision to pursue one career or another, we can attempt to predict decisions to remain in careers or leave them. Kibrick and Tiedeman have done so in demonstrating that nursing students whose self-concepts were at odds with their conceptions of the nurse role exhibited a higher rate of withdrawal than those whose self-concepts were consistent with their role-conceptions (1961). Brophy (1959) found a positive relationship between inconsistency of role- and self-concepts and career satisfaction.

The findings of these studies suggest that consistency between role-conceptions and self-concepts provides a basis for decisions to remain in careers as well as decisions to embark upon them in the first place. Conversely, inconsistency between a person's self-concept and his conception of a particular occupational role

tends not only to steer him away from choosing the occupation, but may also "turn him off" to it once chosen. The conclusion may be drawn that consistency is related to "survival" in careers. In general, those who maintain this consistency are more likely to remain in the occupation than are those who do not.

## CHAPTER III

## CHANGING CONCEPTIONS OF ROLE AND SELF

At the point of entry into a career the conception one has of the chosen occupational role is consistent with the conception he has of himself. This is assumed to be the basis of the person's commitment to the career in the first place. However, it should not be taken for granted that this role-conception is necessarily an accurate one. Indeed, to make this assumption would be to disregard the necessity of an occupational socialization process at all. The reason that entrants into occupations are socialized is to inculcate in them the "true" conception--that is, the conception held by the socializing institution--of the role, as practiced by those who are already full members in the occupational system. The occupation, in other terms, seeks to impose an "institutional role-conception" upon the entrant. Thus a person's conception of the role is likely to undergo change as he progresses through the socializing institution.

The Student Nurse

The socialization of the nurse has been a popular area in which to study occupational socialization in general. One reason for this is the fact that nursing schools and their participants are readily accessible to researchers in universities. Further, in their concern for professionalization and academic quality, nursing educators and professional associations have sought to benefit from the behavioral sciences. Various nursing organizations have provided considerable funding for such research.

A more important reason for the attraction of occupational researchers to the nursing profession is the sheer amount of ideology and myth attached to it. A consequence of this is that nursing students must learn a great deal in terms of informal aspects of the role; or perhaps we should say that they must unlearn a great deal. Davis has said that:

What especially commends nursing to social scientists engaged in such areas as the professions, the social psychology of work, and complex organizations is that it is an instance par excellence of 'the exception that proves (tests) the rule.' (1966:xx)

It is more likely, however, that nursing is not an "exception," but rather the exaggeration that proves the rule. We are interested in nursing not because it is different from other professions, but because it possesses some of the characteristics of a profession to a very high degree.

The existence of a great deal of myth and ideology surrounding the nursing profession implies that many persons enter the career with inaccurate or incomplete knowledge of the role. That is, many are likely to choose the career on the basis of this inaccurate knowledge, thus seeking to realize expectations and goals which may not be satisfied. The fact that persons often do make career choices on the basis of insufficient or inaccurate information has been noted by Ginzberg et al (1951) and by Caplow, who states that occupational choices are often based upon the "trivial" (1954:218). The career aspirant may have failed to engage in adequate exploration prior to

committing herself to the career. Many a career decision is made, according to Caplow, "in the schoolroom, apart from the real world" (1954:220).

One reason vocational commitments are made "unrealistically" is that curricula required to enter many careers have lengthened, requiring many prospective entrants to make vocational choices early (Caplow, 1954:220). Not all such "premature" career choices are forced by the occupational selection system, however. Simpson found that many nursing students had decided to become nurses as early as age thirteen, even though no special early preparation for nursing school is necessary (1956:30). She also observed that the three major influences on initial choices to enter nursing were: experience with a professional model (mother or friend who was a nurse); "personal shock or crisis" (such as a death in the family); and a religious or quasi-religious "calling" to the profession (1956:26). Such considerations seem to constitute bases for unrealistic career choices.

According to the vocational counselors' ideal model of occupational choice, a person having a vague interest in a particular career would follow up such interest by engaging in a measure of "exploratory behavior" to obtain more complete information regarding the suitability of the role for her.\* She would seek to find out as much as possible about the occupation before jumping headlong into it. But while it could be said of many esoteric vocations that there

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\*Jean Pierre Jordaan (1963) provides a thorough review of the literature concerning the nature of exploratory behavior.

is a dearth of information available to those who wish to enter them, there is in a sense too much information available regarding the nurse role. The public myth of the nurse is a strong and persistent one. Further, it is likely to appear as such "common knowledge" and self-evident truth that the prospective nurse never thinks to question it. The nature of this public image is described by Reisman and Rohrer:

The legends of Florence Nightingale have remained relatively undisturbed in the image of the nurse portrayed by our mass media. In these, she remains predominantly "the lady with the lamp," with compassion, understanding, and attention for each of her patients individually. The reality must come as a shock to those of the general public who encounter the nurse when they are patients in the hospital. (1957:15)

That this image does not accurately describe the nurse role is a common observation (Simpson, 1956:232; Olesen and Whittaker, 1968:106; Haas et al, 1961:88). Further, this image is indeed a part of the beginning nursing student's role-conception, as has been noted by Williams and Williams. They found that 93 percent of the nursing students in their study mentioned "infrequent visits to ill relatives or friends, or television and movies" as pre-nursing school sources of information about nursing. At the same time, only 35 percent mentioned recruitment literature from their high school or from the profession itself as such a source (1959:21). Strauss observes that most women enter nursing because they expect to deliver bedside care to patients, yet many of them are eventually "urged up the administrative ladder" (1966:98).



### A Simplified Model of Socialization

In light of this information, we may conceive of the role-conceptions of entrants into nursing school as rather widely distributed along a continuum in terms of their sophistication or naivete. This continuum may be visualized as ranging from highly "accurate" role-conceptions (identical or very similar to the institutional role-conception), to highly "inaccurate" or "naive" ones (at great variance with the institution). This distribution is shown graphically at the left of Figure 1 as a normal one, although the skewness of the curve would depend on the effectiveness of the student selection and recruitment process. The major goal of the institution is to inculcate its conception of the role into as many students as possible by the end of their senior year; to teach them how to "be" nurses. This ideal condition is shown at the right of Figure 1 as a highly skewed distribution of students' role-conceptions, the mode of which is at or very near the institutional role-conception.

With regard to the development of the individual student, the nursing school experience should ideally bring about a modification of each one's role-conception towards that of the institution. This ideal model of the student's progress is shown in Figure 2. The shape of the curve is unimportant here although one might expect it to be S-shaped, reflecting the cumulative nature of learning. That students' conceptions of informal aspects of the nurse role do in fact undergo considerable change has been observed by Simpson:

Figure 1

Hypothetical Distributions of the "Sophistication"  
of Freshmen and Seniors' Role-conceptions

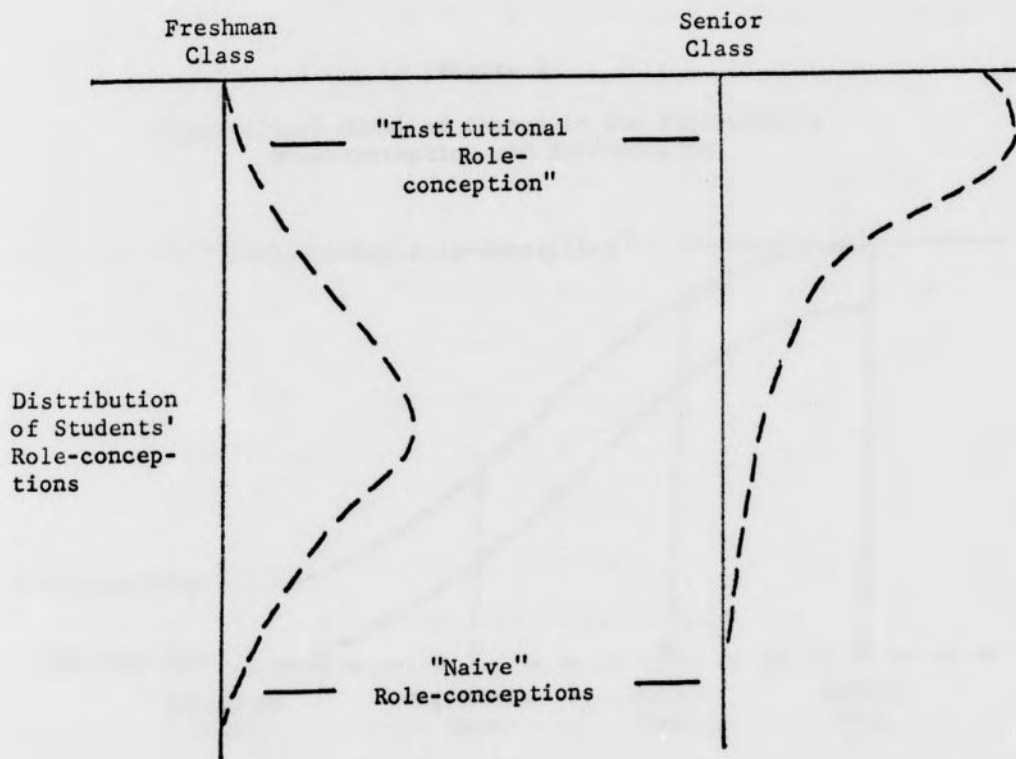
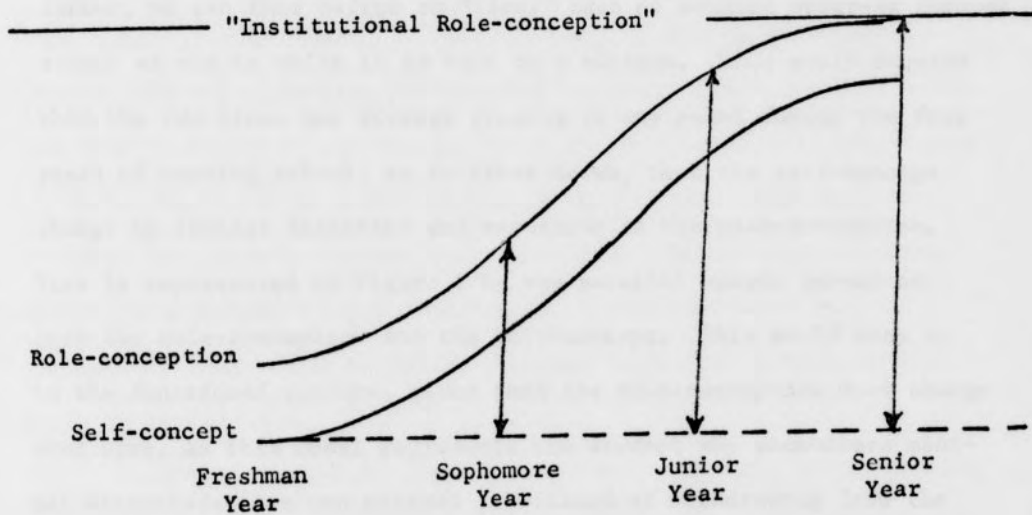




Figure 2

Hypothetical Model of Change in the Individual's  
Role-conception and Self-concept



When they entered the school as freshmen they saw the nurse as the embodiment of the characteristically feminine virtues; but as they progressed through their training, they came to look upon nursing more as a task-oriented, impersonal career. (1956:201)

The student's self-concept may also be applied to this illustration. We have assumed that upon entry to nursing school, the student's self-concept is similar to her conception of the nurse role. In Figure 2 this is shown by the closeness of the two lines at the point of entry. Since inconsistency between role-conception and self-concept is related to dissatisfaction and withdrawal from the career, we can thus define an "ideal" case of student progress through school as one in which it is kept to a minimum. This would require that the two lines not diverge greatly at any point during the four years of nursing school; or in other terms, that the self-concept change in similar direction and magnitude as the role-conception. This is represented in Figure 2 by the parallel upward curves of both the role-conception and the self-concept. This would seem to be the functional outcome, given that the role-conception does change over time, as this model represents the student who encounters minimal dissatisfaction and minimal likelihood of withdrawing from the career.

The contrasting possibility is that the self-concept remains constant during the four years of nursing school. This is represented by the horizontal dashed line in the illustration. As indicated by the vertical arrows, those students for whom this is the case would experience growing inconsistency between their role-conceptions

and self-concepts as they progress through school. It is presumed that these students would constitute Brophy's dissatisfied group or those who withdrew from school in the Kibrick and Tiedeman study.

Given the deleterious consequences of inconsistency, the self-concept is unlikely to remain constant. There exists a process of "natural selection" by which students experiencing a very great deal of inconsistency are likely to withdraw from school and thus leave the population under study. Assuming that most students do finish the program without a great deal of trouble, the modification of the self-concept is a more likely occurrence than the growth of inconsistency from year to year. The modification of the self-concept is thus a form of adaptation to changing circumstances. Further, assuming that students do not become increasingly dissatisfied and unsure of their decisions to enter nursing as they progress through the program, consistency between role-conception and self-concept must remain at a relatively constant level. If so, the theory of the research dictates that self-concepts must change in accordance with role-conceptions.

That the conception one has of himself can undergo change over a period of time can be explained by more than one theoretical schema. One possible explanation is that a person might adapt his image of himself in order to achieve consistency between his self- and role-conceptions. This point of view would regard such change as "coping" or "defensive" behavior, as described by some gestalt and Freudian psychologists (Hilgard, 1949; Lazarus, 1966).

While such an explanation may be useful at the level of the individual, it does not describe the mechanism by which this change occurs. A more sociological explanation is that the self-concept, being a socially-constructed reality, is continually being changed and modified as social situations and environments are. Exposure to new categories of significant others, new demands, and new experiences all may place the individual in novel situations and focus his attention upon new "looking glasses." That the self emerges from social interaction implies that new forms of interaction with new others can modify the self. Similarly, the self-concept is also in the process of continual emergence and re-emergence.

CHAPTER IV  
CONCEPTUAL AND OPERATIONAL DEFINITIONS

The Self-concept

The self-concept is a term that is related, but not identical, to the self per se. It may be thought of as a component part or subunit of the self. The "whole" concept of the self refers to a process, not to a single thing or concept that can be directly observed. As Blumer suggests, in order for a person to have a self, one must act upon oneself (1970:283). For Blumer, then, the self connotes action and not simply structure. It is within this line of thought that one finds a preference for the terms "minding behavior" and "selfing behavior" over the terms "mind" and "self."

Mead's original formulation also implies action, but of a different kind. For Mead, "selfing behavior" is cognitive action --thought and reflection--rather than some sort of outward action. He stresses the importance of "seeing" the self from the point of view of others; of "thinking" as a conversation with the self (1934: 141). The self is, in Meadian terms, the process of being an object to oneself (Morris, 1934:xxiii). When one has a self, the external world (especially the attitudes of others) is related conceptually to the world as it exists within the person. In so internalizing the world, he adds to that world "under the skin." This "internal" world, a cumulative body of past selfing experiences, is the self-concept. Hence, while the self is a process of being an object to oneself, the self-concept is that object as perceived. While for

Mead the self is both "subject and object" (1934:136), the self-concept is only object. The self-concept is thus a set of beliefs and knowledge, with meaning and value attached, that a person has regarding who and what he is (LaBenne and Greene, 1969:10).

#### The Role-conception

Role, like the self, is a relational and processual term. That is, it exists only among persons, not within them. A role-conception, however, is a cognitive structure that exists in the perceptions of an individual.

The conception one has of a role constitutes for him a datum of knowledge according to which he guides his behavior. This is not to say that people always conform to role expectations as they perceive them. A person might, for one reason or another, deliberately deviate from what he believes is appropriate role behavior. This assumes that the person's conception of the role is in accord with those held with other members of the role-set. It goes without saying that this is not always the case; inappropriate behavior can also arise from an "inaccurate" conception of the role. Such is the case when, for example, a child does not understand why he is punished, or when a person commits a faux pas.

Structure. The propositions discussed earlier and the theory that guides them suggest that there should be similarity between the nature of role-conceptions and self-concepts. This is not to say that they must be similar in their content; this is a proposed



relationship and not a known one. Rather, the structure of the role-conception is comparable to that of the self-concept. This is an important consideration because role- and self-concepts may be operationalized in various ways. A role-conception may, for example, be defined as one's knowledge of the particular behaviors expected of persons in a given social position. On the other hand, one might define the role-conception in terms of Ralph Turner's view of role: not as conformity to prescribed behavior among others, but as consistency in orientation to these others (1962). The definition of "role" and thus of the role-conception requires further specification.

Kibrick and Tiedeman neglected this question when they tested the hypothesis that inconsistency leads to withdrawal from nursing school. To measure the role-conception they used the student's knowledge of various specific behavioral expectations of the nurse role. Their measure of the role-conception included assessments of:

- a. the student's knowledge of the training program
- b. her knowledge of nursing activities
- c. her conception of the ideal nursing student
- d. her knowledge of the norms pertaining to relationships with superiors
- e. the role-conception held by the faculty (1961:65)

This variety of measures encompasses more than one definition of the role-conception. The self-concept, on the other hand, was measured in terms of the student's own assessment of her personal social and psychological traits. Thus, the comparison of the two amounted to one between "apples and pears." Taves et al used a similar measure

of the role-conception (1963). Their "Hospital Station Role-conception Inventory" assessed the respondent's beliefs about the specific behavioral expectations of nurses in on-the-job situations.

While this manner of operationalizing the role-conception is not conceptually incorrect, it does not seem useful in drawing comparisons between it and the self-concept. There would seem to be no basis for comparison between conceptions of behavior expectations and one's conception of what kind of person he is. Further, it is more likely to be useful in the study of experienced practitioners of occupational roles than of those still in the process of learning about them. It must be assumed, after all, that the student nurse operates on the basis of a more vague image of what a nurse "is" rather than on the basis of particular ideas about her specific duties. Although a person's conceptions of particular behavioral expectations are legitimately considered part of his role-conception, it is unlikely that they have much meaning to the student or the neophyte. Finally, particularistic elements of role-conceptions do not encompass the ideological content of the nurse role. More useful for the purposes of this study are those conceptions persons have of "what kind of person" a nurse is in her work relationships with significant others. We are here concerned with those aspects of the student's role-conception regarding her orientations to such significant others as patients, faculty, and peers. This involves conceptions of the nurse's personal traits, and characteristics of her manner of interacting and getting along with these others.



Operationalizing the role-conception in this way provides a basis by which it may be compared with the nursing student's conception of herself. Both are defined as traits of persons, not as expectations for behavior or as descriptions of tasks. Consistency may thus be measured as the discrepancy between one's description of herself and her description of the nurse.

Epistemic considerations. The self-concept is a personal construct; an abstraction of all "selfing experiences" into simplified terms and labels. As such, it cannot be measured directly by the researcher. But while self-concepts and role-conceptions must be inferred, their measurement requires less in the way of assumptions than does the measurement of many other social-psychological variables. Since the self-concept and the role-conception exists only phenomenally, they must be obtained by self-report (Wylie, 1961:23). They are defined purely as cognitive events and not as predispositions to behave. Thus there is no need to observe the results of the thing measured to infer its existence. The self-concept and the role-conception are assumed to exist in the cognitive world of the respondent; they are not constructs applied by the researcher to his actions. Therefore, the only problem of validity is to insure that they are communicated intact by the respondent to the researcher.

This is easier said than done, for it cannot be assumed that the concepts used by the respondent to describe himself are understandable to the researcher. The preceding discussion of the "structure" of role- and self-concepts illustrates only one way in which

communication between them may be confused. Given that each individual sorts and organizes his realities, thoughts, and conceptualizations in a unique way, the validity of a measure of self- and role-conceptions depends upon the accuracy of the "translation" from respondent to researcher. One problem is that self- and role-conceptions are multidimensional. That is, there is an unlimited number of characteristics that one may perceive about oneself or about a role. While the researcher is interested in the respondent's perceptions of only a few of these characteristics, he cannot assume that all members of his sample share his interests.

One approach to this communication problem would be to take the ethnomethodological tack of "empathizing" with the members of the population under study; of becoming immersed in their ways of thinking and communicating. This is a non-scientific approach, insofar as the goal of the scientist is to abstract generalities from phenomena which can be understood by other scientists. Hence, if the researcher must express himself in the language of his respondents, his colleagues are in turn forced to "empathize" with him in making sense of his work.

A similar approach to this problem is to use an unstructured measuring instrument such as the Twenty Statements Test. The data gathered by such an instrument is valid on its face (assuming the respondent tells the truth); it is his own expression of what he thinks he is. However, the unsystematic nature of the data--the very virtue that lends it its validity--undermines its usefulness to the researcher. Data collected by this type of instrument does not in itself reveal the order that is assumed to exist in phenomena. The

only way to perceive this order would be to extract generalities or patterns from the data on the basis of the researcher's own conceptualizations. When this is done, the "face validity" of the instrument is defeated.

Another alternative is for the researcher to predetermine the categorizations by which self-concepts and role-conceptions are to be ordered. This would be done by providing the respondent with a set of labels or characterizations in terms of which he would then describe his self- and role-conceptions. He would then express what he believes himself and the role to be in the terms provided in the instrument. Here the researcher still imposes his own categorizations upon the respondent's conceptions. However, in this case it is the respondent who makes the translations, not the researcher. This provides an advantage that is not at first apparent. The amount of "error" due to inaccurate communication between respondent and researcher is reduced by this method, because each respondent is better able to understand and communicate with the researcher--expressing his own ideas in the researcher's terms--than is the researcher to make sense of hundreds of different words and labels that respondents are likely to express on their own.

Of course, this instrument is not free of weaknesses. In directing the responses of persons along the lines of research interest, the researcher places restrictions on his data. He automatically excludes from the analysis many aspects of role- and self-concepts which the members of his population may be aware of. Some of these aspects may

even be important ones, in the sense that the respondents consider them to be central elements of themselves or of the role. However, this restriction is necessary not only to keep the data-collection instrument manageable in its size, but also to guide the research along the intended path.

Dimensions. The number of aspects, or dimensions, of oneself that may be identified is undefined. Super (1963b:20) uses the term "self-percepts" to refer to various bits of information that one can have about himself. Rose notes that persons have "multiple me's," one corresponding to each of their roles (1962:11). In the construction of an instrument to assess the self-concept, then, it is problematic which aspects of the subject's self-concept are to be called out. Mead asserts that:

There are all sorts of different selves answering to all sorts of different social reactions. It is the social process itself that is responsible for the appearance of the self; it is not there as a self apart from social experience. (1934:142)

In a sense, the data-gathering procedure itself is such a social situation, and it must be structured in such a way as to call out particular aspects of the self that are useful to the theoretical framework at hand.

There is also a purely methodological reason for thinking in terms of particular dimensions of self- and role-conceptions. Throughout the development of the basic proposition of this research it has been implied that role- and self-concepts are ordinal in nature.

Their predicted change has been expressed in directional terms; that they are "positively" or "negatively" related to academic class. A holistic notion of the self-concept or role-conception as a thing in itself cannot be visualized in these terms. A change in one's "total" self-concept can only be a nominally-measured phenomenon. The breaking of role- and self-concepts into dimensions, however, allows for thinking of them in ordinal terms. When one's conception of himself is divided into particular categories of traits, we can determine the extent to which the respondent believes he possesses each trait. One such dimension of a person's self-concept might be his height. A change in that aspect of the self-concept would of course mean that the person perceives himself to be taller or shorter than he once did. To break these conceptions into dimensions is analogous to breaking persons' "orientations toward life" into attitudes, for in both cases we are interested not in the "whole person," but in particular aspects of his existence. For example, we are certainly not very interested in nursing students' conceptions of how tall they are, but we are quite concerned with their conceptions of other social-psychological characteristics.

More specifically, the dimensions of self- and role-conceptions that are relevant to this study are those that might be expected to guide the actor to a decision to enter or to remain in nursing. While it would be foolhardy to assume prior knowledge of what these dimensions are, educated guesses must be made in order to construct a measuring instrument that is brief enough to be useful.



Simpson noted the following features of the nurse role that were evaluated highly by student nurses:

- a. service to others
- b. glamour and adventure
- c. job security
- d. the chance to work with people rather than with things
- e. acquisition of skills useful in marriage
- f. prestige as a member of the "health team" (1956:55)

These features were used as guidelines in the study of papers written by 79 junior nursing students at UNC-G on the topic "What Is a Nurse?" Although a methodologically rigorous content analysis was not performed, careful examination of the papers revealed some rather pronounced categories of response:

a. altruism: A great many of the students expressed the belief that the nurse is one who helps people in a self-sacrificing sense. This was stated in such terms as "love for mankind," "giving of oneself to others," "dedication to human life," and through the quotation of biblical passages.

b. emphasis on skills: Many students mentioned the technical skills possessed by the nurse. These included medical, technical, and organizational skills, as well as the ability to "deal with people."

c. efficacy: The next most prominent category of response concerned the power the nurse possesses to make people well and comfortable. This notion is exemplified by this student's paper:



In the summer of 1969 I was an exchange student to Peru. While I was in Peru I had an experience which helped me decide that I wanted to become a nurse. I lived in a small town in which medical help and facilities were very limited. My Peruvian sister, Rosa, developed a respiratory problem and as a result became critically ill. I wanted to help desperately but I did not know what to do. I then began to think about going to school to learn to be a nurse so that I could help others that became ill like Rosa. This is mainly what nursing means to me, learning the correct procedures that should be used with the ill and then using this knowledge to help the sick get well.

professionalism: A fourth popular response concerned the professionalism and prestige of the nurse. Included here were references to "being a member of the health team," "serving the community," "running the ward," and "coordinating the work of physicians."

The extraction of these patterns of response simplifies the construction of the data-collection instrument by pointing the way to aspects of the role that are likely to be salient to the nursing student. Of course, there is no way of knowing at this point whether items mentioned frequently in these papers are truly relevant, but their utility lies in the fact that they may be used as guides and sources of ideas in generating items for the instrument.

Structure of the instruments. The instruments used to measure role-conceptions and self-concepts were of similar construction to that used by Brophy (1959). For the self-concept, a list of 47 traits was presented, each of which was followed by five blanks. The respondent was to use each of the words in the list to complete the sentence, "I am a(n) \_\_\_\_\_ person," then to check one of the blanks to

indicate how much of the time the statement described herself. For the role-conception, an identical list of traits was to be used in completing the statement "A good nurse is a(n) \_\_\_\_\_ person." The respondent was to check one of five blanks following each of these words to indicate how important this trait was to good nursing. The final form of the entire instrument is shown in Appendix A.

Dimensions of the role-conception were isolated by performing factor analysis on the responses of the entire sample, the specific procedure being principal-axis factoring with varimax rotation. The process was repeated several times, each time deleting items from the analysis which seemed to constitute factors in and of themselves. This "boiling down" process led to the isolation of three discrete dimensions. The dimensions and the items which constitute them are shown in Table I. These dimensions seem to cover a fairly wide range of thought concerning the nurse role. The "altruism" dimension is one whose probable existence has been hinted at throughout this paper and in the literature. This is roughly equivalent to what Reisman and Rohrer had termed the "Florence Nightingale" lay image of the nurse. The "glamour" dimension has been discussed by Simpson (1956). It comprises traditional feminine ideal traits, a factor which still seems to be meaningful to nursing students. The "studiousness" dimension seems to encompass notions students have about the intellectual and technical demands of the nurse's job.

The same factor-analytic procedure was performed on the self-concept items. Again, items were deleted which did not correlate with

TABLE I  
 CORRELATION COEFFICIENTS OF QUESTIONNAIRE ITEMS  
 WITH DIMENSIONS OF THE ROLE-CONCEPTION

Item	Dimension		
	Altruism	Studiosness	Glamour
Friendly	.590*	.119	.058
Generous	.617*	.104	.113
Kind	.656*	.042	-.097
Loving	.663*	.021	.126
Merry	.455*	.116	.354
Self-sacrificing	.501*	.107	.117
Tender	.544*	-.028	.151
Intellectual	-.011	.671*	.072
Serious	.255	.446*	-.026
Studios	.167	.698*	.022
Attractive	.185	-.009	.507*
Feminine	.320	.013	.571*
Fashionable	.107	.036	.807*
Glamorous	-.093	.065	.668*

\*Used in computing scores on this dimension of the role-conception.

any of the major dimensions defined by the other items. When only three dimensions were left, they compared very closely in content and meaning with the role-conception dimensions, as shown in Table II. Their similarity is so close that it seems reasonable to consider them equivalent dimensions of the different conceptions. That is, students exhibiting great discrepancy between responses on equivalent dimensions of self- and role-conceptions are to be considered to be experiencing inconsistency between them. Hence, the dimensions of self-concepts have been given the same labels as those of the role-conceptions.

Scores were obtained for each respondent on each dimension of the role-conception and the self-concept. These ordinal-level scores were computed by the formula:

$$\begin{aligned} & \text{Factor Score Coefficient}_a (X_a - \bar{X}_a / \text{Standard Deviation}_a) \\ & + \text{Factor Score Coefficient}_b (X_b - \bar{X}_b / \text{Standard Deviation}_b) \\ & + \dots \end{aligned}$$

where the subscripts  $a$ ,  $b$ , etc. identify the item included in the dimension;  $X$  refers to an individual's response to the item, and  $\bar{X}$  refers to the mean of all responses to the item. This scoring method was taken from Nie et al (1970:226). This method yields ordinal-level data which approximates a normal distribution around a mean of zero when all items are used in computing the scores. However, items exhibiting a factor loading smaller than  $\pm .400$  on any given dimension were not used in computing the scores for that dimension. Thus, means of the scores are not necessarily at zero, nor are their

TABLE II  
CORRELATION COEFFICIENTS OF QUESTIONNAIRE ITEMS  
WITH DIMENSIONS OF THE SELF-CONCEPT

Item	Dimension		
	Altruism	Studiosness	Glamour
Friendly	.533*	.223	.120
Generous	.663*	.007	.202
Kind	.753*	.267	.111
Self-sacrificing	.488*	.110	.133
Tender	.576*	.059	.248
Ambitious	.095	.591*	.121
Businesslike	-.074	.493*	.262
Efficient	.219	.515*	.077
Persistent	.068	.551*	.028
Purposeful	.224	.705*	.094
Studios	.175	.697*	-.001
Attractive	.176	.176	.615*
Charming	.260	.171	.848*
Clever	.244	.260	.591*
Glamorous	.134	-.059	.522*

\*Used in computing scores on this dimension of the self-concept.

distributions normal.

Each respondent is thus assigned six scores, one for each dimension of both her role-conception and self-concept. Descriptive statistics regarding these variables are given in Tables XXXI and XXXII of Appendix B.

#### Time and Change

The study of socialization is the study of change. In assessing changes in students' role- and self-concepts with time, the most desirable research design would be a longitudinal one. This approach has been taken by a few researchers who were able to follow one class of students through the entire schooling process (Becker et al, 1961; Olesen and Whittaker, 1968). By this method, changes that take place in the behaviors or beliefs of persons can be observed on an individual basis. Differences observed between one point in time and another may be assumed to be the result of change since comparisons are made of the same individual at one time and another. The only assumption necessary to infer that change has taken place in terms of a particular variable is that the measurement instrument is reliable. Further, by statistically controlling for influences outside the school itself, or by assuming their impact to be randomly distributed throughout the sample, the inference may be made that changes observed are the result of the socialization process.

Although this is the methodologically ideal design for the study of change, it is found in only a very few major studies. It is an expensive design; the ideal study of the socialization of nurses would



take at least four years to perform. An alternative to the longitudinal study of process is the cohort design. This method is acceptable if two essential assumptions are met: (a) that each group (in this case, each academic class of students) is similar at entry into the process; and (b) that the forces presumed to cause the expected change (the socialization process) remains constant over time. Although these must remain assumptions, some empirical evidence has been found to support them. The dean of the school of nursing assures that the method of selecting students for the program has not changed substantially for the past four years, although she notes that applicants have become somewhat more sophisticated in terms of their abilities to cope with difficult social situations; for example, caring for male patients and the like. The assumption of constancy of the socialization process requires more qualifications. In the academic year 1972-73 the school of nursing instituted the inclusion of a new course, "Introduction to Principles and Practice of Nursing," into the required curriculum. This course is required in the sophomore year, thus the sophomore classes of 1972-73 and 1973-74 have been exposed to this course while others have not. That is, the sophomores and juniors of the population in this study have taken the course. It is unknown what effect this variation in socializing experiences will have had upon their conceptions of the nurse role and of themselves. However, we can imagine that its effects would not significantly alter the orientations of these students. It is probable that role- and self-concepts are much more influenced by informal socializing experiences

than by didactic teaching; they are more "acquired" than "learned."

By using the cohort design in this research, the variable "time" will be measured in terms of the student's academic class. Hence, we do not compare the same individuals before and after "treatment" but instead compare presumable identical groups of people at various stages of development. If one group is found to differ significantly in terms of a given variable, it will then be inferred that such difference is the result of the groups' differing experiences; the result of being more or less advanced in their progress in the institution.

#### Summary of Hypotheses

The general proposition that self-concepts change in accordance with role-conceptions may now be elaborated upon in terms of particular dimensions. Further, it is now possible to predict the directions of the changes proposed.

Changes in role-conceptions. Predictions of the direction of changes in role-conceptions are based upon literature cited earlier regarding the lay image of the nurse role (Reisman and Rohrer, 1957; Simpson, 1956; Strauss, 1966; Davis, 1966). In general, it is expected that role-conceptions will change from "naive" ones to more sophisticated ones that more closely approximate the institutional role-conception. In other terms, we expect that role-conceptions will change in a direction "away from" the lay image of the nurse. Those dimensions that are central elements of the lay image will exhibit a decline in

importance as students progress through nursing school, while those which are not part of this lay image will increase in importance. These hypotheses are summarized in Table III.

Changes in self-concepts. Self-concepts are expected to change in the same direction as role-conceptions. Thus, the hypothesized change of each dimension of the self-concept is also described by Table III.

TABLE III  
 PREDICTED RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN ACADEMIC CLASS  
 AND DIMENSIONS OF ROLE-CONCEPTIONS  
 AND SELF-CONCEPTS

<u>Independent Variable</u>	<u>Direction of Relationship</u>	<u>Dependent Variable</u>
Academic Class	Negative	Altruism
Academic Class	Positive	Studiosness
Academic Class	Negative	Glamour

CHAPTER V  
SAMPLING AND COLLECTION OF DATA

Questionnaires were administered to 205 students of the School of Nursing of the University of North Carolina at Greensboro, during the last week of classes of the academic year 1973-74. Students responded to the questionnaires during class periods, so that the process could be overseen and respondents' questions could be answered. The tactic of administering the instrument during class periods was seen as the only feasible method, since the sample was to comprise only nursing students. By reaching them as a group in various nursing classes, maximum return was insured.

The sample from which data were collected does not constitute the entire population of the nursing school, nor was it randomly selected. This is due to the fact that, while upperclass students all share one or two common class meetings and can thus be approached as a group, underclass students are scattered throughout the curriculum of freshman and sophomore courses. At no time are all the freshmen gathered together in a classroom composed entirely of nursing students. Therefore, considerable hardship is imposed upon the instructors of freshman courses when twenty minutes or so must be set aside so that the few nursing students in the class may respond to a questionnaire. The percentage of the population of each academic class included in the sample varies; 67 percent of the seniors being represented, while only about one-fourth of the freshmen are included. Data concerning the population and sample sizes of each class are shown in Table IV.

TABLE IV  
POPULATION AND SAMPLE SIZE, BY CLASS

Class	Sample Size	% of Total Sample	Population Size	% of Total Population	% of population Sampled
Freshman	37	18.0	145	30.9	25.5
Sophomore	66	32.2	138	29.5	47.8
Junior	54	26.3	115	24.6	47.0
Senior	47	22.9	70	15.0	67.1
Other*	1	0.5			
Total	205	100.0%	468	100.0%	43.8%

\*One student did not indicate class on the questionnaire.

The administration of questionnaires only to students enrolled in particular courses constitutes a systematic selection of particular students for the sample. This poses a problem of bias, since one might conjecture that the students included in the sample are, by virtue of their enrollment in the classroom sampled, immersed in social and academic situations different from those not selected. On the other hand, each classroom situation constitutes a course required of all nursing students of a given academic class. Therefore, since data were collected at the end of the academic year it is safe to assume that those not included in the sample have been exposed to the same experiences and influences as those present in the sample. The source of sampling bias--enrollment in a particular course--does not constitute a difference between those represented in the sample and those not represented.



CHAPTER VI  
TESTS OF HYPOTHESES

Changes in Role-conceptions

It has been hypothesized that the socialization of the student nurse includes not only formally-prescribed duties and techniques, but also informal and nebulous general orientations to nursing as well. That is, it is expected that students acquire new revised images of the personal and social characteristics of what kind of person a nurse "is" as well as instruction pertaining to what she does. Specifically, we hypothesize that scores on the "altruism" and "glamour" dimensions of the role-conception are inversely related to academic class, while scores on the "studiousness" dimension are positively related to it.

In testing these hypotheses, scores on each of the role-conception indices were grouped into three categories. The "middle" or "moderate" score category is composed of cases whose scores fall within one-half of one standard deviation to either side of the mean of the total sample's scores. Those more than one-half of one standard deviation above or below the mean were placed in the "high" or "low" categories, respectively. The results are shown in Tables V, VI, and VII.

Significant differences among classes are found only in terms of the glamour dimension, although the directions of change are as predicted for all dimensions. That the nurse role appears less glamorous to students of each succeeding class could be expected as the mythical lay image of the nurse is discarded. It is noteworthy that

TABLE V  
 CONCEPTIONS OF THE ALTRUISM OF THE NURSE, BY CLASS

Role- conception	Class				Total
	Freshman	Sophomore	Junior	Senior	
Low Altruism	18.9% (7)	24.2% (16)	37.7% (20)	45.7% (21)	31.7% (64)
Moderate Altruism	37.8 (14)	36.4 (24)	30.2 (16)	30.4 (14)	33.7 (68)
High Altruism	43.2 (16)	39.4 (26)	32.1 (17)	23.9 (11)	34.7 (70)
Total	100.0% (37)	100.0% (66)	100.0% (53)	100.0% (46)	100.0% (202)

Gamma= -.252

Probability of chi-square greater than .05

TABLE VI  
 CONCEPTIONS OF THE STUDIOUSNESS OF THE NURSE,  
 BY CLASS

Role- conception	Class				Total
	Freshman	Sophomore	Junior	Senior	
Low Studiousness	51.4% (19)	30.3% (20)	29.6% (16)	23.9% (11)	32.5% (66)
Moderate Studiousness	27.0 (10)	34.8 (23)	37.0 (20)	34.8 (16)	34.0 (69)
High Studiousness	21.6 (8)	34.8 (23)	33.3 (18)	41.3 (19)	33.5 (68)
Total	100.0% (37)	100.0% (66)	100.0% (54)	100.0% (46)	100.0% (203)

Gamma= .198

Probability of chi-square greater than .05

TABLE VII  
 CONCEPTIONS OF THE GLAMOUR OF THE NURSE, BY CLASS

Role- conception	Class				Total
	Freshman	Sophomore	Junior	Senior	
Low Glamour	10.8% (4)	43.1% (28)	48.1% (26)	41.3% (19)	38.1% (77)
Moderate Glamour	43.2 (16)	32.3 (21)	27.8 (15)	30.4 (14)	32.7 (66)
High Glamour	45.9 (17)	24.6 (16)	24.1 (13)	28.3 (13)	29.2 (59)
Total	100.0% (37)	100.0% (65)	100.0% (54)	100.0% (46)	100.0% (202)

Gamma= -.205

Probability of chi-square less than .05

this difference is most pronounced between members of the freshman and sophomore classes. The sophomore year is the year in which students are exposed to their first introductory course in nursing. It appears that this course may play a significant part in demystifying the nurse.

The same might be said of the studiousness dimension. Here too, much of the difference that is found among classes occurs between freshmen and sophomores. Apparently the student's encounter with the institutional role-conception through various courses in the life sciences and in nursing promotes a redefinition of the nurse from the "lady with the lamp" to a skilled technical worker.

The fact that differences in role-conceptions occur irregularly among classes--as shown by these two examples--leads us to question the wisdom of including all four classes in the analysis. The chi-square statistic, for example, is misleading when differences in the distributions of several groups are slight, even when the overall difference between the lowest and highest group is fairly large. In other terms, a significant but gradual "change" between the freshman and senior year is likely to exhibit a misleadingly low value of chi-square. Further, the gamma coefficient is upset when relationships are nonlinear. If, for example, the altruism dimension of the role-conception rises and falls from one class to the next, gamma will be low, even if there is a great difference between the freshman and senior classes.

For these reasons, it seems useful to compare only freshmen and seniors in terms of their role-conceptions, in "before-and-after" fashion. We are more concerned, after all, with overall change than with fluctuations that may occur from year to year as the result of the particular emphases of the curricula encountered in each academic year. The same results are shown, then, in Tables VII, IX, and X, which exclude sophomores and juniors from the analysis.

Here the differences are much more visible. As expected, seniors are less likely to consider the nurse as altruistic than are freshmen. Their academic, clinical, and social experiences have given them clearer--or at least different--ideas about the amount of "tender loving care" the nurse is able to render under actual work conditions.

Seniors are also less likely than freshmen to consider the nurse a glamorous person. They have apparently found that skill and hard work are more important to the successful fulfillment of the nurse role than are attractiveness or charm. Also as predicted, seniors tend to think of the nurse more as a studious person than do freshmen. Their experience in meeting the demands of the curriculum --learning techniques, memorizing anatomy and drugs, and similar tasks--probably account for this difference.

#### Changes in Self-concepts

Given these differences in role-conceptions among classes and the assumption that self-concepts should be consistent with them, it is expected that self-concepts show relationships with class that are



TABLE VIII  
 CONCEPTIONS OF THE ALTRUISM OF THE NURSE,  
 FRESHMAN AND SENIOR CLASSES

Role- conception	Class		Total
	Freshman	Senior	
Low Altruism	18.9% (7)	45.7% (21)	33.7% (28)
Moderate Altruism	37.8 (14)	30.4 (14)	33.7 (28)
High Altruism	43.2 (16)	23.9 (11)	32.5 (27)
Total	100.0% (37)	100.0% (46)	100.0% (83)

Gamma= -.444

Probability of chi-square less than .05

TABLE IX  
 CONCEPTIONS OF THE STUDIOUSNESS OF THE NURSE,  
 FRESHMAN AND SENIOR CLASSES

Role- conception	Class		Total
	Freshman	Senior	
Low Studiosness	51.4% (19)	23.9% (11)	36.1% (30)
Moderate Studiosness	27.0 (10)	34.8 (16)	31.3 (26)
High Studiosness	21.6 (8)	41.3 (19)	32.5 (27)
Total	100.0% (37)	100.0% (46)	100.0% (83)

Gamma= .448

Probability of chi-square less than .05

TABLE X

CONCEPTIONS OF THE GLAMOUR OF THE NURSE,  
FRESHMAN AND SENIOR CLASSES

Role- conception	Class		Total
	Freshman	Senior	
Low Glamour	10.8% (4)	41.3% (19)	27.7% (23)
Moderate Glamour	43.2 (16)	30.4 (14)	36.1 (30)
High Glamour	45.9 (17)	28.3 (13)	36.1 (30)
Total	100.0% (37)	100.0% (46)	100.0% (83)

Gamma= -.659

Probability of chi-square less than .01

similar to those shown by the role-conceptions. Data pertaining to these hypotheses are shown in Tables XI, XII, and XIII (including all classes) and Tables XIV, XV, and XVI (including only freshmen and seniors). None of the differences in self-concepts is significant. In fact, the gamma coefficients show that, except in the case of the studiousness dimension, the differences that occur in the sample alone are almost nil. Thus, the hypotheses predicting changes in self-concepts must be rejected.

#### An Unexamined Assumption

One important step in explaining the failure of a hypothesis to be supported is to re-examine untested assumptions upon which it is based. One such assumption in this case is that consistency between role-conceptions and self-concepts remains constant throughout the four-year schooling period. It was proposed that as students' conceptions of the nurse role changed, so would their conceptions of themselves. That is, the independent variable "time," as measured by academic class, was to have caused changes in the role-conception. This change was, in turn, expected to be responsible for changes in the self-concept. However, intervening between the independent variable role-conception and the dependent variable self-concept is the presumed constant, consistency. If consistency had indeed remained at a constant level, any change in the role-conception should have brought about a similar change in the self-concept. If the change in self-concept is not found to occur as predicted, then we expect that consistency between role- and self-concept must not be constant; it

TABLE XI  
ALTRUISTIC SELF-CONCEPTS, BY CLASS

Self- concept	Class				Total
	Freshman	Sophomore	Junior	Senior	
Low Altruism	37.8% (14)	31.8% (21)	35.2% (19)	27.7% (13)	32.8% (67)
Moderate Altruism	29.7 (11)	33.3 (22)	27.8 (15)	42.6 (20)	33.3 (68)
High Altruism	32.4 (12)	34.8 (23)	37.0 (20)	29.8 (14)	33.8 (69)
Total	100.0% (37)	100.0% (66)	100.0% (54)	100.0% (47)	100.0% (204)

Gamma= .026

Probability of chi-square greater than .05

TABLE XII  
STUDIOUS SELF-CONCEPTS, BY CLASS

Self- concept	Class				Total
	Freshman	Sophomore	Junior	Senior	
Low Studiosness	35.1% (13)	34.8% (23)	31.5% (17)	19.1% (9)	30.4% (62)
Moderate Studiosness	32.4 (12)	42.4 (28)	40.7 (22)	29.8 (14)	37.3 (76)
High Studiosness	32.4 (12)	22.7 (15)	27.8 (15)	51.1 (24)	32.4 (66)
Total	100.0% (37)	100.0% (66)	100.0% (54)	100.0% (47)	100.0% (204)

Gamma= .196

Probability of chi-square greater than .05



TABLE XIII  
GLAMOROUS SELF-CONCEPTS, BY CLASS

Self- concept	Class				Total
	Freshman	Sophomore	Junior	Senior	
Low Glamour	27.0% (10)	33.9% (21)	41.5% (22)	29.8% (14)	33.7% (67)
Moderate Glamour	54.1 (20)	41.9 (26)	30.2 (16)	38.3 (18)	40.2 (80)
High Glamour	18.9 (7)	24.2 (15)	28.3 (15)	31.9 (15)	26.1 (52)
Total	100.0% (37)	100.0% (62)	100.0% (53)	100.0% (47)	100.0% (199)

Gamma= .040

Probability of chi-square greater than .05

TABLE XIV  
ALTRUISTIC SELF-CONCEPTS, FRESHMAN AND  
SENIOR CLASSES

Self- concept	Class		Total
	Freshman	Senior	
Low Altruism	37.8% (14)	27.7% (13)	32.1% (27)
Moderate Altruism	29.7 (11)	42.6 (20)	36.9 (31)
High Altruism	32.4 (12)	29.8 (14)	31.0 (26)
Total	100.0% (37)	100.0% (47)	100.0% (84)

Gamma= .078

Probability of chi-square greater than .05

TABLE XV  
 STUDIOUS SELF-CONCEPTS, FRESHMAN AND  
 SENIOR CLASSES

Self- concept	Class		Total
	Freshman	Senior	
Low Studiousness	35.1% (13)	19.1% (9)	26.2% (22)
Moderate Studiousness	32.4 (12)	29.8 (14)	31.0 (26)
High Studiousness	32.4 (12)	51.1 (24)	42.9 (36)
Total	100.0% (37)	100.0% (47)	100.0% (84)

Gamma= .341

Probability of chi-square greater than .05

TABLE XVI  
 GLAMOROUS SELF-CONCEPTS, FRESHMAN AND  
 SENIOR CLASSES

Self- concept	Class		Total
	Freshman	Senior	
Low Glamour	27.0% (10)	29.8% (14)	28.6% (24)
Moderate Glamour	54.1 (20)	38.3 (18)	45.2 (38)
High Glamour	18.9 (7)	31.9 (15)	26.2 (22)
Total	100.0% (37)	100.0% (47)	100.0% (84)

Gamma= .111

Probability of chi-square greater than .05

must not be the same for each academic class. The next step, then, is to test this assumption.

Measuring consistency. The notion of consistency implies that those persons who are "high" on one variable are also "high" on another. In terms of the variables at hand, we mean that persons scoring high on one role-conception index should also score high on the equivalent self-concept index. When this condition is met, that person may be said to be "consistent" in terms of that dimension. Conversely, if a person scores high on a dimension of the role-conception and low on the equivalent dimension of the self-concept index, that person is said to be experiencing inconsistency.

Yule's Q is an especially appropriate statistic for measuring the number of persons experiencing inconsistency in a sample or subsample. Its very manner of calculation provides a corrected ratio of "consistent" observations to "inconsistent" ones. Blalock (1972: 418) uses the terms "concordant pairs" and "discordant pairs" in this respect. By dichotomizing the scores on both the role-conception and self-concept indices for each dimension, frequency tables may be constructed to which the Q statistic may be applied. The dummy table shown below illustrates how consistent and inconsistent persons may be identified. The value of Q thus constitutes a measure of consistency found in the sample--a group-wide measure of consistency.

This method was used to determine the prevalence of consistency on each of the three dimensions for each class. Scores on the role-conception and self-concept indices were dichotomized by dividing at

TABLE XVII

IDENTIFICATION OF PERSONS EXPERIENCING INCONSISTENCY  
BETWEEN ROLE-CONCEPTIONS AND SELF-CONCEPTS

Role- and Self-concepts in Terms of  
A Given Dimension

Self- concept	Role-conception	
	Low	High
Low	Consistent	Inconsistent
High	Inconsistent	Consistent



the median of the entire sample's scores. Tables relating role-conception scores to self-concept scores, as illustrated by Table XVII, were constructed for each class. Table XVIII below summarizes these data by providing the Q coefficients computed from the tables.

These coefficients show that consistency is indeed variable. In terms of the altruism dimension, there is a steady decline in consistency through the junior year. At the same time, the studiousness dimension exhibits a steady increase in consistency throughout all four years. The glamour dimension fluctuates in nonlinear fashion. Thus, the assumption that consistency must remain high and relatively constant throughout the career-pursuit process is an erroneous one. This helps explain how it is possible, within the dictates of the theory at hand, for self-concepts to change independent of role-conceptions.

It may be recalled that the altruism dimension of the role-conception showed a decline over the four years of nursing school, while the altruism dimension of the self-concept remained relatively stable. This may be seen as a divergence between role-conception and self-concept in terms of this dimension. This divergence is reflected in Table XVIII by the decline of consistency on this dimension through the first three years. On the other hand, the role-conception in terms of studiousness increased over four years, while the self-concept remained fairly constant. This might be envisioned as a convergence between role- and self-concepts, reflected in the rise in consistency on this dimension through all four years. The irregular and nonlinear

TABLE XVIII  
 Q COEFFICIENTS SHOWING CONSISTENCY BETWEEN  
 ROLE-CONCEPTIONS AND SELF-CONCEPTS,  
 BY CLASS

Class	Dimension			N
	Altruism	Studiosness	Glamour	
Freshman	.863**	-.159	.588*	37
Sophomore	.567*	.164	.000	66
Junior	.488	.358	.588*	54
Senior	.767**	.533	.309	47
Total Sample	.655***	.270	.307*	204

\*Probability of chi-square less than .05  
 \*\*Probability of chi-square less than .01  
 \*\*\*Probability of chi-square less than .001

changes in role- and self-concepts in terms of glamour produce equally irregular changes in the consistency coefficients for this dimension. It can be seen that for the most part, the wider the role-conception and self-concept diverge, the lower the value of Q; that is, the greater the inconsistency for that class.

In sum, we have found that observed changes in role-conceptions were not accompanied by corresponding changes in self-concepts because consistency between the two was not a constant. However, the theory providing the basis of this research dictates that consistency between role-conceptions and self-concepts should be high and relatively constant at all stages of the career process. These are the horns of an apparent dilemma: while a decline in consistency between role- and self-concepts helps explain the failure of self-concepts to change with role-conceptions, such a decline tends to undermine the very theory upon which the original hypothesis is based. We have found that consistency is a variable; the question remains: how is this possible under the assumptions of this theoretical schema?

The fractionalizing of role- and self-concepts into dimensions provides a solution to this dilemma. While it is necessary to assume that self-concepts are for most students consistent with their conceptions of the nurse role, this need not be the case for all dimensions nor at all stages of the career process. One dimension of the role may be more important than another as a criterion for career decisions. For example, if a nursing student conceives of herself as short and of nurses as tall, this might be considered inconsistency in terms of

the "height" dimension. Yet this inconsistency would be unlikely to cause the student to reassess her situation, become dissatisfied, or leave school. The height of the nurse is simply not a salient dimension of the nurse role. On the other hand, one's intellect or altruism may be a very salient dimension, in terms of which inconsistency could effect great changes in a student's feelings about her career and her plans to continue in it. Thus, one variable that must be taken into account in interpreting the results of the hypotheses tested earlier is the salience of a dimension. The assumption that consistency remains at a constant level throughout the socialization process may be modified to say that: students for whom inconsistency is high tend to experience dissatisfaction and may consequently leave the program, only when the dimension on which the inconsistency exists is an important, or salient, one.

Further, the salience of a dimension may vary with time; that is, with academic class. It is easy to imagine, for example, that the reasons freshmen enter nursing school are not the same as the reasons juniors remain in it. Decisions to enter a career may be based upon consistency in terms of one dimension of role- and self-concepts, while decisions to remain or leave the program may be based upon perceptions of consistency in terms of another dimension. If career choices are based upon the "trivial," we would assume that later career decisions made by more sophisticated students are based upon other less trivial criteria. Thus, the criteria upon which career decisions are made at various points in the career process may be wholly different.

This discussion leads to the development of the proposition that consistency is related to salience. That is, when self-concepts are found to diverge from role-conceptions, we might deduce that the salience of the dimension under study is low. If a particular class of students manifests a high degree of inconsistency, they may be either highly dissatisfied and ready to quit, or they may not perceive that dimension of the role to be very important.

#### Measuring Salience

No direct method has been included in the data-collection instrument to measure the salience of particular dimensions of the role. However, it is possible to construct from the data at hand a method whereby salience may be inferred or suggested. To do so, it is necessary to return to the original logic of the research. It has already been argued that consistency between role- and self-concepts is of "survival value" of a sort. That is, students who exhibit inconsistency between them are more likely not to "survive" in the program. They drop out of the program for various reasons: they become disenchanted, perform poorly, reassess their original choice of the career, and so on. Using this argument, it is possible to argue that consistency itself is a measure of salience; that where consistency is low, salience must also be low. This is the same logic by which the propositions above are developed, however, thus to use consistency as a measure of salience would be to provide a circular explanation of the phenomenon. What is needed is a measure of salience which is independent of the measure of consistency.

This requirement can be met by inferring salience from a measure of consistency taken for each class, while the variations in consistency among classes are controlled. In essence, this procedure treats each class independently of the others, as if it were a sample in and of itself. Thus, we "ignore" the fact that a given class may exhibit greater consistency than another in terms of overall discrepancies between role-conceptions and self-concepts. Instead, we are concerned only with whether, for each independent subsample, those who score "high" on a given dimension of the role-conception also score "high" on the equivalent self-concept dimension. This is accomplished by re-grouping scores on the six role- and self-concept indices according to the median of scores for each class. In this way, each person's score on a given dimension of the role- or self-concept is categorized as "high" or "low" by comparison only to members of her own class. These new groups of scores are then used to construct frequency tables similar to those used earlier in measuring consistency. If these tables show relationships between role-conceptions and self-concepts that are significant--that is, unlikely to have occurred by chance--it must be inferred that there is some underlying factor influencing the relationship. As has been discussed throughout this paper, this factor is assumed to be a "need" of some sort to achieve consistency between the two. If this "need" exists --in spite of the overall discrepancy between role- and self-concept scores already reported--then that dimension will be considered a salient one.



Likewise, if there is no relationship between role- and self-concept for one of these independent subsamples, then we can assume that the dimension is not a salient one for members of that class. That is, individuals "survive" in spite of the fact that no consistency whatever is found between role-conceptions and self-concepts. Hence, in maintaining the assumption that consistency is necessary for "success," "survival," or "satisfaction," we can determine whether it seems more or less necessary for one class than for another. The degree to which consistency is necessary for "survival" in the program is the salience of the dimension under consideration.

Tables XXXI and XXXII of Appendix B show the medians of each dimension of role- and self-concepts for each class. These are the medians according to which scores were dichotomized to construct the tables measuring salience for each class.

#### Variations in Salience

Earlier it was suggested that variations in the salience of a particular dimension of the role among classes might explain the failure of self-concepts to vary with role-conceptions. Specifically, it is expected that the self-concept will change with the role-conception only when the dimension under consideration is a salient one; when it constitutes a criterion by which students are "selected out" (or "select themselves out") of the program. That is, consistency is necessary only when the dimension of reference is a salient one. In operational terms: a dimension is salient when the relationship

(Yule's Q) between role-conception and self-concept for the class under study is significant; that is, unlikely to have occurred by chance. The frequency tables relating self-concepts to role-conceptions for each class were constructed, and the Q coefficients computed from these tables and used as measures of salience are summarized in Table XIX below.

The first three years. For members of the freshman class, the only significant relationship between role-conception and self-concept is found on the altruism dimension. This very high value of Q suggests that the idealized altruistic image of the nurse is instrumental in one's decision to enter nursing school. Stated differently, those persons who describe themselves similarly to the way they describe the nurse in terms of altruism have made a commitment to nursing. Altruism thus constitutes a criterion--in fact, the only clearly visible one here--by which persons decide to become nurses.

The salience of the altruism dimension declines steadily through the junior year, however. Being similar to the nurse in terms of altruistic orientations to the career is not an essential factor in fulfilling one's role as an upperclassman. Stated another way, juniors still fulfill their roles adequately (we assume) in spite of the fact that consistency in terms of this dimension is quite low. This inconsistency has not caused them to withdraw from school, nor can we expect that juniors are any more dissatisfied as a group than are freshmen. Inconsistency in terms of the altruism dimension is "tolerable" for sophomores and juniors.

TABLE XIX

Q COEFFICIENTS SHOWING THE RELATIVE SALIENCE  
OF EACH DIMENSION OF THE ROLE, BY CLASS

Class	Dimension			N
	Altruism	Studiosness	Glamour	
Freshman	.815**	-.264	-.127	37
Sophomore	.720**	.297	.224	66
Junior	.358	.358	.486	54
Senior	.746**	.579	.579	47

\*\*Probability of chi-square less than .01

At the same time, the salience of the studiousness dimension exhibits a steady rise throughout the first three years. This dimension becomes increasingly important to survival in the nursing school as the years pass. As coursework becomes more technical and increasing academic demands are made upon students by the institution, one's studiousness in comparison to the nurse becomes of major concern. In other terms, the ability to consider oneself "as studious" as a nurse comes to carry greater "survival value;" it becomes of prime importance if one is to function successfully in the role.

The salience of the glamour dimension also shows a steady rise through the first three years. It seems likely that the labelling of oneself as less glamorous than a nurse is a function of the perception that one does not "have what it takes" to be a nurse. Labelling oneself as more glamorous, on the other hand, would seem to imply a feeling of disenchantment with the role--that nursing is not as glamorous as one expected it would be. These kinds of perceptions become of increasing concern to students as they progress through the program. The fact that the studiousness dimension of the role rises in salience while the altruism dimension declines is in accord with Becker and Geer's discussion of the apparent decline of idealism of medical students as they progress through medical school (1958). They observed that the appearance of cynicism among upperclassmen was actually not a decline in their altruistic desire to cure the ill. Rather, medical students were forced by the demands of the institution to set idealistic orientations aside, and to become concerned

with acquiring technical skills instead. Students became neither more nor less idealistic; they simply found that idealistic intentions were no longer useful in guiding their behavior. It no longer mattered whether or not they were idealistic. Becker and Geer note that:

The student becomes preoccupied with the technical aspects of the cases with which he deals because the faculty requires him to do so. He is questioned about so many technical details that he must spend most of his time learning them...

As a result of the increasingly technical emphasis of his thinking the student appears cynical to the non-medical outsider, though from his own point of view he is only seeing what is "really important." (1958:53-54)

The findings presented here suggest that a quite similar transformation occurs in the "student culture" of the nursing student. Although they become no less altruistic as they progress through the school, the "issue" of altruism becomes less meaningful and less relevant as the years pass. Considerations of altruism give way to those having greater "survival value;" namely, one's ability to cope with the intellectual and technical demands of the institution as a student nurse.

The senior year. Relationships between self- and role-conceptions among members of the senior class require a different kind of interpretation. Since data were collected at the very end of the academic year and thus at the end of the seniors' schooling, the pressures and demands of the institution are not of great concern to the students. Therefore, consistency between role-conceptions and self-concepts is no longer a concern in terms of one's decision to remain

in school or one's definition of her own success. There are no aspects of the situation that are "crucial." Since all members of the sample have "survived" and are about to reap the rewards of their efforts, the "survival value" of particular dimensions of the role is of no importance.

Perhaps because of this, we see a sudden increase in the salience of the altruism dimension of the role. The pressures of the institution having been lifted, seniors can again "afford the luxury" of thinking about their larger goals and orientations to the profession. They will soon no longer be students, but will be practicing nurses; no longer simply in school, but a part of the health care system. This realization likely resurrects the importance of one's orientation to the community and to humanity, and one part of this orientation is altruism.

The studiousness dimension also reaches its peak in salience at this time. This is open to many interpretations. Perhaps graduating seniors recognize the importance of maintaining the proper level of scholarship; not simply to pass exams and "get through," but to continue to learn new techniques, carry out scholarly research, and generally keep abreast of the profession. Perhaps more important, the practicing nurse can less afford to make mistakes than can the student, for at stake may be a person's life and not simply a grade. Thus studiousness is a more important concern than ever.



### Salience and Change

The concept of salience may help explain the failure of self-concepts to vary with role-conceptions. It has already been found that the degree of inconsistency present in a given class of students in terms of a particular dimension indicates this failure. Salience, in turn, can now be seen as a variable which may explain how such high degrees of inconsistency can exist.

The hypotheses regarding changes in self-concepts have been modified to state that self-concepts will change with role-conceptions only when the dimension under consideration is a salient one. Stated another way, consistency will be high only when the dimension is salient. If a given dimension of the role is of little importance as a criterion by which satisfaction and success are assessed, there is no compulsion for one's self-concept to change.

When the Q coefficients measuring salience are compared with those used to measure consistency, it can be seen that salience tends to follow consistency quite closely, even though the two measures are measured independently (Tables XVII and XIX). This suggests that salience is positively related to consistency; that among classes in which there is a great deal of inconsistency on a given dimension, that dimension tends to be accorded little importance. This is especially visible in terms of the altruism dimension. As the role-conception and self-concept move apart, the salience of the dimension declines. This may be interpreted to mean that the decline in salience is responsible for the low degree of change in the

self-concept; and that if the salience variable had remained constantly high, the self-concept would have shown significant change over the four-year period.

In terms of studiousness, self-concepts exhibit a rapid climb between the sophomore and senior years, as they approach role-conceptions (Table XII). At the same time, the coefficient measuring salience also rises to a statistically significant level in the junior and senior years. As studiousness becomes a concern of students, their conceptions of themselves in terms of studiousness change in the direction of their conceptions of the nurse role.

In the case of the glamour dimension, salience does not vary directly with consistency. Note the high degree of consistency among freshmen, while the salience of the dimension is low. The glamour dimension is a difficult one to interpret because it can never be known whether consistency between role-conception and self-concept is the "cause" of remaining in the program or the "effect" of it. Freshmen, for example, are likely to feel quite as glamorous as the nurse by virtue of their new status, even though glamour does not constitute a criterion by which they have decided to enter nursing.

## CHAPTER VII

CONSISTENCY, SALIENCE, AND THE DEFINITION OF  
PARTICULAR ELEMENTS OF THE SITUATION

In Chapter II it was noted that inconsistency between role-conceptions and self-concepts is related to withdrawal from careers and to the redefinition of certain crucial elements of one's career situation. The Brophy study demonstrates that one such crucial definition that may act as an intervening event between inconsistency and withdrawal is one's satisfaction with the career. That is, inconsistency itself does not lead directly to withdrawal, but rather causes the person to reassess her feelings about the career. This reassessment may in turn cause one to decide to leave the program. This notion has a good deal of intuitive truth, as it seems that if one were to ask a former nursing student why she left school, she would most likely say that she "did not care anymore," or "was not getting anywhere," rather than saying that she was "experiencing inconsistency between her role-conception and her self-concept."

However, it also seems likely that the general term "dissatisfaction" as used by Brophy encompasses a rather broad range of feelings. Further, these feelings may be based upon the student's cognitive and calculated definition of particular elements of her situation. In this sense, we speak not only of affect--of one's "satisfaction" or "happiness" with the career--but also of one's knowledge of the way things are. For example, one element of the situation which may contribute to "dissatisfaction" might be one's

definition of how well she is doing in the program. Certainly a person who considers herself to be failing as a student would be likely to feel dissatisfaction. The definition of one's success in school is not an emotional state per se, although it surely contributes to negative feelings about one's position as a nursing student. Rather, it is a definition of reality, to which values and emotions may be attached. These redefinitions of certain elements of the situation are thus intervening events between the experiencing of inconsistency and withdrawal from the program. Further, they constitute sources of "play" or "slack" in the theoretical model being used here. That not all students who experience inconsistency between role-conception and self-concept withdraw from the program is possible when one considers the fact that persons may "lean" toward withdrawal, or may be "somewhat" dissatisfied. Whether one leaves nursing school depends not only upon the amount of inconsistency experienced, but also upon the extent to which that inconsistency affects one's definition of her situation.

It seems, then, that the concepts we have employed throughout this paper might be lent further validity as explanatory tools if it were found that they were related to students' definitions of particular elements of their situations. By relating consistency in terms of particular dimensions of the role to particular definitions, it is possible to validate the usefulness of the concept of consistency. Second, the concept of salience may be given further support if those dimensions of the role which have been found to be salient ones

are more influential in affecting definitions of the situation than less salient dimensions. Finally, we can observe the kinds of questions that are of concern to each academic class. If inconsistency on a given dimension is related to, for example, students' perceptions of their own success, this would suggest that one's perception of her success is part of the situation which is of concern; it is on students' minds.

Students' definitions of three such elements of the situation were assessed in this study. The first is the student's definition of her own success in the program. As mentioned above, this is likely to be a definition that affects career decisions, since a negative assessment on the part of the individual is likely to bring about a measure of dissatisfaction. This variable was measured by the single question, "How well would you say you are doing in school?" Six responses were possible, ranging from "poor" to "excellent." These responses were grouped into three categories containing roughly equal numbers of respondents. The lowest category contains those responding "poor," "acceptable," or "average." The middle category includes those responding "well," and the high category includes those responding "very well" or "excellent."

A similar variable is the student's perception of the chances that she will finish the program. This has been included because it seems that those who believe it unlikely that they will finish will tend to reassess their careers, and will more probably withdraw from the program than others. This was assessed by the question, "What



do you think are the chances that you will complete the nursing program and earn your degree?" A range of five responses was possible, which were dichotomized according to whether the student was "positive" she would finish or had responded with less assurance.

The third definition of the situation measured was the student's perception of the chances that she would practice for three years or more if and when she earned her degree. Respondents were told to consider plans for graduate study as "practice" in this regard. Five responses were possible to this question, ranging from "not very likely" to "positive." These were dichotomized in the same manner as the chances-of-finishing variable; one group composed of those who were "positive" they would practice, and the other composed of those less sure.

For each class, tables were constructed which relate these variables to consistency in terms of each of the three dimensions of the role. The tables are identical to those used earlier to show the prevalence of consistency in each class, except that the percentages shown in the cells and in the margins represent the percent of the total number of persons in the cell who have defined a particular element of their situation in a certain way. This resulted in the construction of forty-five tables, including those representing the entire sample, so it was considered unfeasible to present them all in this paper. Only those which suggest relationships between role-conceptions or self-concepts and definitions of elements of the situation are shown here. These are Tables XX through XXX below.

The freshman class. The most visible relationships among the freshmen involve the effects of the studiousness dimension. Those who consider themselves "less studious" than the nurse tend most to be unsure that they will finish the program (Table XX), and also tend most to consider their work as "below average" (Table XXI). Fully 71.4 percent of those who believe the nurse to be studious and themselves as not, evaluate their work to be below average.

In addition, those who consider the nurse to be an altruistic person tend to regard their work as poorer than do others. This is shown by the higher percentages in the right-hand column of Table XXII. While we have no way of determining the direction of causality, it seems reasonable to infer that attributing lofty goals to the role is dysfunctional to adequate performance as a student. Perhaps those who score high on this dimension of the role-conception have a somewhat "unrealistic" image of their future and of their present duties.

The sophomore class. The altruism dimension plays a part in sophomores' intentions to practice in the future. In general, those who see themselves as altruistic persons tend to be more sure that they will practice, but the lowest percentage of persons who are sure of this is found among those who see the nurse as altruistic and themselves as not (Table XXIII). This suggests that among sophomores the actual practice of nursing is still considered a somewhat selfless task, and that the more altruistic one perceives herself to be, the more she desires to actually work curing the ill.



TABLE XX

CONSISTENCY ON THE STUDIOUSNESS DIMENSION AND  
PERCEPTIONS OF THE LIKELIHOOD THAT ONE WILL  
FINISH THE PROGRAM, FRESHMEN

Percent Positive They Will Finish the Program

Self- concept	Role-conception		Total
	Low Studiousness	High Studiousness	
Low Studiousness	36.4% (11)	14.3% (7)	27.8% (18)
High Studiousness	76.9 (13)	50.0 (6)	68.4 (19)
Total	58.3% (24)	30.8% (13)	48.6% (37)

TABLE XXI

CONSISTENCY ON THE STUDIOUSNESS DIMENSION AND  
PERCEIVED ACADEMIC SUCCESS, FRESHMEN

Percent Who Believe They Are Doing  
"Below Average"\* in School

Self- concept	Role-conception		Total
	Low Studiousness	High Studiousness	
Low Studiousness	54.5% (11)	71.4% (7)	61.1% (18)
High Studiousness	15.4 (13)	33.3 (6)	21.0 (19)
Total	33.3% (24)	53.8% (13)	40.5% (37)

\*A student is considered to perceive her work as "below average" if her response to the questionnaire item was either: "poor," "acceptable," or "average" since the responses were distributed around a modal response of "good." Thus a response of "average" falls below the mode.

TABLE XXII

CONSISTENCY ON THE ALTRUISM DIMENSION AND  
PERCEIVED ACADEMIC SUCCESS, FRESHMEN

Percent Who Believe They Are Doing  
"Below Average" in School

Self- concept	Role-conception		Total
	Low Altruism	High Altruism	
Low Altruism	16.7% (12)	60.0% (5)	29.4% (17)
High Altruism	33.3 (3)	52.9 (17)	50.0 (20)
Total	20.0% (15)	54.5% (17)	40.5% (37)

TABLE XXIII

CONSISTENCY ON THE ALTRUISM DIMENSION AND  
PERCEIVED LIKELIHOOD OF PRACTICING,  
SOPHOMORES

Percent Who Are Positive They Will Practice

Self- concept	Role-conception		Total
	Low Altruism	High Altruism	
Low Altruism	47.4% (19)	28.6% (14)	39.4% (33)
High Altruism	71.4 (7)	54.2 (24)	58.1 (31)
Total	53.8% (26)	44.7% (38)	48.4% (64)

As was found among the freshmen, a relationship exists between inconsistency on the studiousness dimension and one's perception of her academic success (Table XXIV). Those who consider themselves less studious than the nurse tend to conceive of their work as poor. The most dramatic relationships among this class, however, are found in terms of the glamour dimension. First, glamour has become for these students highly related to their perceptions of their chances of completing the program (Table XXV). This may mean that those who see themselves as less glamorous than the nurse tend to reconsider their career choice. It may, on the other hand, indicate that persons who have already come to believe that they might not finish the program tend to feel less glamorous. Again, the glamour dimension is a difficult one to interpret. In terms of students' intentions to practice, those who are experiencing inconsistency on the glamour dimension tend to be less sure that they will actually be nurses after they receive their degrees (Table XXVI). It does not appear that whether one considers nursing to be highly glamorous or not makes any difference in this definition; only that the role-conception and self-concept are in accord. Sixty-five percent of those who consider both the nurse and themselves as unglamorous are sure that they will practice; likewise 58.3 percent of those who see both the nurse and themselves as glamorous are also positive. Here it is the consistency, not the role- or self-concept alone, that determines one's intention to practice.

TABLE XXIV

CONSISTENCY ON THE STUDIOUSNESS DIMENSION AND  
PERCEIVED ACADEMIC SUCCESS, SOPHOMORES

Percent Who Believe They Are Doing  
"Below Average" in School

Role- concept	Role-conception		Total
	Low Studiousness	High Studiousness	
Low Studiousness	33.3% (21)	52.9% (17)	42.1% (38)
High Studiousness	23.1 (13)	21.4 (14)	22.2 (27)
Total	29.4% (34)	38.7% (31)	33.8% (65)



TABLE XXV  
 CONSISTENCY ON THE GLAMOUR DIMENSION AND  
 PERCEIVED LIKELIHOOD OF FINISHING  
 THE PROGRAM, SOPHOMORES

Percent Who Are Positive  
 They Will Finish

Self- concept	Role-conception		Total
	Low Glamour	High Glamour	
Low Glamour	60.0% (20)	38.5% (13)	51.5% (33)
High Glamour	60.0 (20)	69.2 (13)	63.6 (33)
Total	60.0% (40)	53.8% (26)	53.8% (66)

TABLE XXVI

CONSISTENCY ON THE GLAMOUR DIMENSION AND  
PERCEIVED LIKELIHOOD OF PRACTICING,  
SOPHOMORES

Percent Who Are Positive  
They Will Practice

Self- concept	Role-conception		Total
	Low Glamour	High Glamour	
Low Glamour	65.0% (20)	30.8% (13)	51.5% (33)
High Glamour	36.8 (19)	58.3 (12)	45.2 (31)
Total	51.3% (39)	44.0% (25)	48.4% (64)

The junior class. An interesting relationship exists between inconsistency on the altruism dimension and juniors' intentions to practice in the future (Table XXVII). First, it is generally true that those who consider nursing to be a self-sacrificing profession tend more to be sure that they will practice. However, the relationship between inconsistency and one's future plans is irregular. Those who consider themselves to be less altruistic than the nurse are likely to be positive that they will practice. Apparently these students fit the description of the "ritualist" as discussed by Merton (1957:140-153). They do not subscribe to the goals of the profession as they define them, yet they intend to practice it anyway. For these, nursing must appear to be "a job" rather than "a calling." On the other hand, those who consider themselves to be more altruistic than the nurse are for the most part unsure that they will practice. This suggests that these are students who are disenchanted with the profession; who want to "serve mankind" but find that nursing is not the serving profession they had expected it to be.

Quite a strong relationship is found between glamour and students' definitions of the quality of their work (Table XXVIII). Those who consider themselves to be less glamorous than the nurse show a tendency to define their work as below average, as has been found among members of other classes. But the fewest people who define their work as below average are found among those who consider both nursing and themselves as unglamorous. This suggests that a realistic appraisal of the value of "glamour" as unimportant brings

TABLE XXVII  
 CONSISTENCY ON THE ALTRUISM DIMENSION AND  
 PERCEIVED LIKELIHOOD OF PRACTICING,  
 JUNIORS

Percent Who Are Positive  
 They Will Practice

Self- concept	Role-conception		Total
	Low Altruism	High Altruism	
Low Altruism	44.4% (18)	63.6% (11)	51.7% (29)
High Altruism	22.2 (9)	62.5 (16)	48.0 (25)
Total	37.0% (27)	63.0% (27)	50.0% (54)

TABLE XXVIII

CONSISTENCY ON THE GLAMOUR DIMENSION AND  
PERCEIVED ACADEMIC SUCCESS,  
JUNIORS

Percent Who Believe They Are Doing  
"Below Average" in School

Self- concept	Role-conception		Total
	Low Glamour	High Glamour	
Low Glamour	4.5% (22)	50.0% (10)	18.8% (32)
High Glamour	12.5 (8)	14.3 (14)	13.6 (22)
Total	6.7% (30)	29.1% (24)	16.7% (54)

about a more healthy attitude towards achievement and work. The most successful students are those who take their career seriously, as a profession and as a job requiring skill, not glamour.

The senior class. Probably the most noteworthy finding concerning the seniors is that neither students' perceptions of the chances that they will finish the program nor their perceptions of the quality of their work are affected by any of these dimensions. This is probably due to the fact that these are no longer crucial elements of the situation. Since they are about to graduate, such considerations are no longer important to seniors. This is also reflected in the very small percentage of students on the whole who feel that they are doing below average work, and the very high percentage who are sure they will complete the program.

However, considerations of whether or not to practice upon graduation are affected by these dimensions. Those who consider themselves studious are much more likely to actually practice than those who do not (Table XXIX). Apparently they recognize that the practice of their profession requires studiousness on the part of its participants. Glamour also affects this definition of the future (Table XXX). Inconsistency in terms of this dimension seems to inhibit intentions to practice, although feeling less glamorous than the nurse is more inhibiting than feeling more glamorous. The greatest percentage is found among those who feel that nursing is a glamorous profession and that they too are glamorous. A full 78.6 percent of these students are positive that they will practice for at least three years. This



TABLE XXIX  
 CONSISTENCY ON THE STUDIOUSNESS DIMENSION AND  
 PERCEIVED LIKELIHOOD OF PRACTICING,  
 SENIORS

Percent Who Are Positive  
 They Will Practice

Self- concept	Role-conception		Total
	Low Studiosness	High Studiosness	
Low Studiosness	30.0% (10)	37.5% (8)	33.3% (18)
High Studiosness	75.0 (8)	61.9 (21)	65.5 (29)
Total	50.0% (18)	55.2% (29)	53.2% (47)

TABLE XXX  
 CONSISTENCY ON THE GLAMOUR DIMENSION AND  
 PERCEIVED LIKELIHOOD OF PRACTICING,  
 SENIORS

Percent Who Are Positive  
 They Will Practice

Self- concept	Role-conception		Total
	Low Glamour	High Glamour	
Low Glamour	53.8% (13)	25.0% (8)	42.8% (21)
High Glamour	41.7 (12)	78.6 (14)	61.5 (26)
Total	48.0% (25)	59.1% (22)	53.2% (47)

table seems to define two types of persons who actually enter the practice of nursing. The first type consists of those who see both nursing and themselves as not very glamorous; as "a job." These persons are found in the upper left cell of the table. The other group consists of those who still picture the profession as one in which beauty, charm, and grace are highly prized, and who are ready to fit into that image. It would be interesting to see how well each group fares after a year or two on the job.

Summary. The findings of these tables are mixed. There are some rather dramatic relationships between role-conceptions and/or self-concepts and definitions of certain elements of situations. However, in only a few of these tables is there found a strong relationship between consistency per se and these definitions. One problem here is that cell frequencies in the tables are quite small in some instances, so that percentages can become rather misleading. A more important problem is that there are actually two kinds of inconsistency that may exist between role-conceptions and self-concepts. On the one hand, a person might consider herself to be more studious, altruistic, or glamorous than the nurse. On the other, she might see herself as less so. These tables have shown that the two kinds of inconsistency are not identical in their effects. They are, in fact, two qualitatively different experiences, and must be treated as such.

Another methodological problem is that it is impossible to know what elements of the student's situation are likely to be affected by role- or self-concepts. In this study, three have been

identified, although certainly more must exist. Whether or not these definitions are indeed intervening events between inconsistency and withdrawal from school or dissatisfaction cannot be known by the design of this research.

Finally, this analysis neither supports nor refutes the usefulness of the concept of salience as an explanatory tool. It would be expected that the most salient dimensions would have the greatest impact upon the definition of particular elements of the situation; however, this has not been the case. It can be suggested that the importance of the particular element of the situation is itself a variable that must be taken into account. The mere fact that a salient dimension of the role does not affect certain definitions of the situation does not deny that the dimension is salient. It may be that the element of the situation is inconsequential in affecting career decisions. However, this must remain conjecture.

## CHAPTER VIII

## SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

Although the number of hypotheses tested in this study is small, there are several areas in which findings of both theoretical and methodological note have been put forth. These findings, their implications, and their limitations are discussed below.

Dimensions of Role- and Self-concepts

The isolation of the altruism, studiousness, and glamour dimensions of both role-conceptions and self-concepts may constitute a significant benefit to those working in the area of nursing education. The ability to treat role- and self-concepts in ordinal terms has been discussed earlier, and its advantages are clear. Differences or changes in these variables may be assessed in a directional manner, as particular dimensions of them may be observed to "rise" or "decline" or to be "higher" or "lower" for one group than for another. The dimensionality of these variables also provides a conceptually more valid construct. The study of dimensions of role- and self-concepts, rather than of the concepts per se, constitutes a "middle ground" between unwieldy holistic role- and self-concepts on the one hand, and trivial "self-percepts" (Super, 1963) on the other. This middle ground is needed because we can be fairly sure that persons do not have such "global" conceptions of themselves or of roles that can be expressed or measured with any reliability. At the same time, we must question the relevance of very particularistic images that persons

have of various aspects of themselves. The study of either kind of concept raises problems in observation and measurement, because in either event the researcher imposes a great deal of interpretation upon the reports of his respondents.

While the dimensions extracted in this study are a first attempt, further research of this type might lead to the development of more sophisticated instruments and more valid and reliable indices. More items may be generated for the indices, and more dimensions will probably be isolated. It is important to note here that only three dimensions have been discussed in this study, but any number of such dimensions might be found to exist in the conceptions nursing students have about themselves and the nurse role. Reisman and Rohrer (1957) have discussed at length the "bureaucratic" aspect of the nurse role, for example. Hence, the concepts used here do not by any means exhaust the range of tools available to researchers in this area.

#### Changes in Role- and Self-concepts

We have found that the conceptions students have regarding their occupational role do undergo significant change during the socialization process. This suggests that some degree of informal socialization does occur in nursing school, although we cannot know how effective this is in producing the desired "product." More important, we have found that role-conceptions and self-concepts are not inexorably linked. The notion that consistency between the two is necessary must be modified to take into account the salience of the



dimension under consideration. Some aspects of the role are more important than others, and the importance of a given dimension varies among classes as well. We have suggested that one reason for this variation is the changing social climate of the nursing school, especially the changing nature of the demands made upon the student as she progresses through it. The process of pursuing a career is one of risk-taking and survival. The student desires not simply to let things happen as they may; she has a considerable investment in her success and completion of the program. Therefore, considerable attention is paid by her to those elements of the role and of herself which determine success or failure. Such elements are the ability to pass exams, efficient performance in labs and practica, and other academic and technical exercises. They do not include the expression of lofty goals or clean morals, for the most part. Thus, considerations of altruism decline in importance, giving way to those of successful performance of the tasks demanded by the institution. This brings to mind the fact that the student nurse is, after all, a student. As such, she must succeed in performing the student role before she can play the professional role.

Taking the salience of the dimension into account, we have found that consistency between role-conceptions and self-concepts is functional and desirable for the individual; that when the dimension under consideration is salient, consistency is high. This suggests that there is a compulsion to maintain consistency between them, or at least that there exists a process of selection whereby only those who

do maintain such consistency survive in the program. Whether or not students actually make an effort to maintain consistency is an interesting question, and one that could be considered within the framework of a participant-observation study. This method would be most useful because the identification of such consistency-maintaining efforts would likely occur within small-group processes and within the development of "student culture." Several studies of this type have been done (Olesen and Whittaker, 1968; Williams and Williams, 1959; Becker et al, 1961), but none has specifically approached this issue.

Limitations must be imposed upon the interpretation of the findings concerning the salience of dimensions. In a sense, the operationalization of the measure of salience is circular, since its logic derives from the theory of the research itself. We have inferred salience from a measure of within-class consistency, on the assumption that the "cause" of the consistency must be the salience of the dimension. It would be helpful to have a measure of salience which is truly independent of consistency.

#### Career Decisions and Definitions

Finally, the findings concerning the effects of inconsistency upon particular career decisions and definitions of the situation are highly suggestive. Especially relevant might be the student's perception of the likelihood that she will actually practice after receiving her degree. The nursing profession has been plagued with the

problem of getting its members to fill the positions that exist for them (Davis, 1966). Being primarily still a women's profession, a great many of its practitioners spend only a few years practicing before the demands of marriage and the family draw them away. In fact, many graduates of nursing schools never practice at all, as suggested by our data. Only 53 percent of the seniors in the sample were "positive" that they would practice for three years or more after graduation. Thus, the nursing profession receives very little return on the investment it makes in training personnel. It seems that further study of self-concepts and role-conceptions might bring about the development of some tools which might predict the likelihood that a senior, or even an incoming freshman, will serve the profession after earning her degree.

### Conclusion

This study began with the testing of a highly simplified theoretical model regarding the construction and modification of various conceptualizations by nursing students. From this model, a small set of hypotheses was developed and tested: that the conceptions students have of themselves would change over time to accommodate changes in role-conceptions induced by the nursing school. These hypotheses proved to constitute a weak point in the theoretical structure, as they were not supported by empirical evidence.

This occurrence has a salutary effect in that it causes the researcher to examine in greater depth the theory upon which the

research is founded, and to look beyond the narrow theoretical confines to which he has, however inadvertently, become committed. In this case, the failure of the research hypotheses to be accepted has brought about the identification of an intervening variable between inconsistency and dissatisfaction or withdrawal from careers. That the salience of a dimension is not constant causes us to qualify our hypotheses and findings concerning changes in self-concepts. However, this should not be construed as a "watering down" of the findings, nor as a muddying of the theoretical waters in the area. The fact that other variables must be taken into account in explaining discrepancies between career expectations and career rewards provides us with a more complete explanatory schema, not an incomplete one.

The findings of this study have taken a step toward the development of a more complete theoretical model by which actual problems of occupational recruitment and socialization may be explained and predicted. We have taken an orientation which concentrates heavily on the functional problem of maintaining a close "fit" between career goals and career realities. Essentially this is the problem of maintaining motivation and satisfaction among prospective career practitioners. Given the current demand for health practitioners, this will undoubtedly become part of the much larger problem of recruiting, training, and organizing manpower to fill positions in a health-care system which is sure to expand.

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MATHS EDUCATION STUDY

This questionnaire is designed to find out what teaching students think about themselves and their chosen career. We ask that you respond to every item to the best of your knowledge and as honestly as you can. Your responses will be coded and analysed numerically, so your identity will remain anonymous. Do not put your name on this sheet. It is hoped that the results of this study will help us understand the kind of problems and decisions facing students here during their school career. You thus have the opportunity to contribute to the knowledge that is used by researchers and educators to improve school processes and environments. Your help and your answer is very greatly appreciated.

**APPENDIX A**

**THE DATA-COLLECTION INSTRUMENT**

1. Sex  Male  Female

2. Age \_\_\_\_\_ (write in the space of years)

3. Year/level of study  Freshman  Junior  
 Sophomore  Senior  
 Other \_\_\_\_\_

4. Mother's education (Check the highest level of education achieved by your father)

Did not finish high school

High school graduate

Some college work

College graduate

Some graduate study

Advanced degree



## 5. Father's occupation:

- Higher executive, professional, proprietor of large business
- Manager, lesser professional, proprietor of small business
- Clerical and sales, technician, farmer
- Skilled labor
- Unskilled labor

## 6. What do you think are the chances that you will complete the nursing program and earn your degree?

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Not very likely | <input type="checkbox"/> Probably will finish    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> About even      | <input type="checkbox"/> Most likely will finish |
|  | <input type="checkbox"/> Positively will finish  |

## 7. If and when you do finish, what do you think the chances are that you will practice nursing for at least three consecutive years? (If you plan on doing graduate work, count that as practicing for three consecutive years).

- |  |                                      |
|--|--------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Not very likely | <input type="checkbox"/> Probable    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> About even      | <input type="checkbox"/> Most likely |
|  | <input type="checkbox"/> Positive    |

## 8. How well would you say you are doing in school?

- |                                     |                                    |
|-------------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Poor       | <input type="checkbox"/> Well      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Acceptable | <input type="checkbox"/> Very well |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Average    | <input type="checkbox"/> Excellent |

9. What kind of nurse do you ultimately want to be?

\_\_\_ General-duty nurse in a  
hospital setting

\_\_\_ Clinical specialist of  
some sort

\_\_\_ Nursing administrator

\_\_\_ Nursing educator

\_\_\_ Private-duty nurse

\_\_\_ Public health nurse

\_\_\_ Nurse practitioner

\_\_\_ Other, or don't know

10. Which of the following was most influential in your decision to become a nurse?

\_\_\_ Parent who is or  
was a nurse

\_\_\_ Parent in a related  
field

\_\_\_ Good friend in nursing

\_\_\_ Counselor

\_\_\_ Experience as a nurse  
aide or related work

\_\_\_ Personal crisis or  
tragedy

\_\_\_ Other

PART II. This part of the questionnaire attempts to find out what kind of person you see yourself as. Use each of the words in the list below to complete the sentence "I am a(n) \_\_\_\_\_ person." Then indicate how much of the time this statement describes you by checking one of the blanks that follows the word:

SELDOM (SEL)	OCCASIONALLY (OCC)	ABOUT HALF OF THE TIME (HALF)	A GOOD DEAL OF THE TIME (GOOD DEAL)	MOST OF THE TIME (MOST)
SEL	OCC	HALF	GOOD DEAL	MOST
ADVENTUROUS	_____	_____	_____	_____
AMBITIOUS	_____	_____	_____	_____
AUTHORITATIVE	_____	_____	_____	_____
ATTRACTIVE	_____	_____	_____	_____
BRAVE	_____	_____	_____	_____
BROADMINDED	_____	_____	_____	_____
BUSINESSLIKE	_____	_____	_____	_____
CHARMING	_____	_____	_____	_____
CLEVER	_____	_____	_____	_____
COMPETITIVE	_____	_____	_____	_____
DEMOCRATIC	_____	_____	_____	_____
ECONOMICAL	_____	_____	_____	_____
EFFICIENT	_____	_____	_____	_____
DETACHED	_____	_____	_____	_____
FEMININE	_____	_____	_____	_____
FRIENDLY	_____	_____	_____	_____



	SEL	OCC	HALF	GOOD DEAL	MOST
FASHIONABLE	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
GENEROUS	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
GLAMOROUS	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
HUMOROUS	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
INTELLECTUAL	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
KIND	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
LOGICAL	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
LOVING	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
MEDDLESOME	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
MERRY	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
MODEST	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
MOTHERLY	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
OPTIMISTIC	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
OUTGOING	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
PATIENT	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
PENSIVE	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
PERSISTENT	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
POISED	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
PURPOSEFUL	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
REASONABLE	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
RELIGIOUS	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
SELF-SACRIFICING	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
SERIOUS	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
SOCIABLE	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____

	SEL	OCC	HALF	GOOD DEAL	MOST
STUDIOUS	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
STUBBORN	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
TACTFUL	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
TEACHABLE	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
TENDER	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
TOLERANT	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
WIFELY	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____

PART III. This part of the questionnaire attempts to find out what kind of person you think would make a good nurse. Use each of the words in the list below to complete the sentence "A good nurse should be a(n) \_\_\_\_\_ person." Then check one of the blanks following the word to indicate how important you believe this trait is to good nursing:

UNIMPORTANT (UN)	OF LITTLE IMPORTANCE (LITTLE)	HELPFUL (HELP)	QUITE IMPORTANT (QUITE)	ESSENTIAL (ESS)	
	UN	LITTLE	HELP	QUITE	ESS
ADVENTUROUS	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
AMBITIOUS	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
AUTHORITATIVE	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
ATTRACTIVE	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
BRAVE	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
BROADMINDED	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
BUSINESSLIKE	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
CHARMING	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
CLEVER	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
COMPETITIVE	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
DEMOCRATIC	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
ECONOMICAL	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
EFFICIENT	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
DETACHED	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
FEMININE	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
FRIENDLY	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
FASHIONABLE	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____

	UN	LITTLE	HELP	QUITE	ESS
GENEROUS	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
GLAMOROUS	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
HUMOROUS	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
INTELLECTUAL	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
KIND	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
LOGICAL	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
LOVING	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
MEDDLESOME	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
MERRY	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
MODEST	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
MOTHERLY	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
OPTIMISTIC	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
OUTGOING	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
PATIENT	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
PENSIVE	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
PERSISTENT	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
POISED	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
PURPOSEFUL	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
REASONABLE	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
RELIGIOUS	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
SELF-SACRIFICING	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
SERIOUS	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
SOCIABLE	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
STUDIOUS	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____

	UN	LITTLE	HELP	QUITE	ESS
STUBBORN	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
TACTFUL	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
TEACHABLE	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
TENDER	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
TOLERANT	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
WIFELY	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____

PART IV. Your own beliefs about what kind of person makes a good nurse may not always correspond with the opinions of other nursing students. This part of the questionnaire attempts to find out how much, in your opinion, your beliefs disagree with those of other nursing students. For each word in the list above, determine whether or not you think most of the nursing students you know would disagree with the response you have made. If you think they would disagree with the response you have given, circle the word. Otherwise, leave it as it is. Circle as many words as you think is necessary.

PART V. In general, to what extent do you think most of the nursing students you know would agree with your beliefs about what kind of person makes a good nurse?

- \_\_\_\_\_ They would agree wholeheartedly
- \_\_\_\_\_ They would agree for the most part
- \_\_\_\_\_ They would agree with some things, disagree with others
- \_\_\_\_\_ They would disagree for the most part
- \_\_\_\_\_ They would strongly disagree

PART VI. This last part of the questionnaire attempts to find out what kind of people you most associate with. Please complete each of the statements below by checking the blank that best indicates your own feelings. The meanings of the blanks are as follows:

NON-NURSING MAJORS (NON)	FRESHMEN (FR)	SOPHOMORES (SOPH)	JUNIORS (JUN)	SENIORS (SEN)	
	NON	FR	SOPH	JUN	SEN
I most enjoy the company of:	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
I feel most comfortable with:	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
I have the most respect for:	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
Most of the people I know well are:	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
Those who like me best are:	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
Outside of class, I spend the most time with:	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
When I need advice about school, I usually ask:	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
When I feel depressed, I like to talk to:	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
If I could choose my friends completely, I would choose mostly:	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
Those who know me best are:	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
I tend to think most like:	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
Most of my really good friends are:	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____

## APPENDIX B

## SUPPLEMENTARY TABLES



TABLE XXXI  
 MEDIANS OF SCORES ON ROLE-CONCEPT  
 INDICES, BY CLASS

Class	Dimension		
	Altruism	Studiosness	Glamour
Freshman	-.642	-.544	-.160
Sophomore	-.737	-.211	-.392
Junior	-.957	-.187	-.460
Senior	-1.147	.013	-.175
Total			
Sample	-.872	-.202	-.144

TABLE XXXII  
 MEDIANS OF SCORES ON SELF-CONCEPT  
 INDICES, BY CLASS

Class	Dimension		
	Altruism	Studiosness	Glamour
Freshman	-1.601	-.722	-.072
Sophomore	-1.778	-.930	-.079
Junior	-1.798	-.740	-.184
Senior	-1.803	-.352	.064
Total			
Sample	-1.783	-.782	-.066

TABLE XXXIII  
 PERCEIVED LIKELIHOOD OF FINISHING  
 THE PROGRAM, BY CLASS

"What Do You Think Are the Chances that You Will Finish the Program and Earn Your Degree?"

Perceived Likelihood	Class				Total
	Freshman	Sophomore	Junior	Senior	
Less Than Positive	51.4% (19)	42.4% (28)	13.0% (7)	4.2% (2)	27.4% (56)
Positive	48.6 (18)	57.6 (38)	87.0 (47)	95.7 (45)	72.5 (148)
Total	100.0% (37)	100.0% (66)	100.0% (54)	100.0% (47)	100.0% (204)

TABLE XXXIV  
 PERCEIVED LIKELIHOOD OF PRACTICING,  
 BY CLASS

"What Do You Think Are the Chances that You Will Practice Nursing for at Least Three Years If and When You Do Earn Your Degree?"

Perceived Likelihood	Class				Total
	Freshman	Sophomore	Junior	Senior	
Less Than Positive	72.2% (26)	51.6% (33)	50.0% (27)	46.8% (22)	53.7% (108)
Positive	27.8 (10)	48.4 (31)	50.0 (27)	53.2 (25)	46.3 (93)
Total	100.0% (36)	100.0% (64)	100.0% (54)	100.0% (47)	100.0% (201)

TABLE XXXV  
 PERCEIVED ACADEMIC SUCCESS,  
 BY CLASS

"How Well Would You Say You Are Doing in School?"

Perceived Success	Class				Total
	Freshman	Sophomore	Junior	Senior	
Poor to Average	40.5% (15)	33.8% (22)	16.7% (9)	4.2% (2)	23.6% (48)
Good	32.4 (12)	44.6 (29)	64.8 (35)	36.2 (17)	45.8 (93)
Very Good to Excellent	27.0 (10)	21.5 (14)	18.5 (10)	59.8 (28)	30.5 (62)
Total	100.0% (37)	100.0% (65)	100.0% (54)	100.0% (47)	100.0% (203)