May 1997

Leadership for Learning: Narratologic Pedagogy and Knowledge Construction in Higher Education

Susan M. McCabe
East Tennessee State University

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LEADERSHIP FOR LEARNING:
NARRATOLOGIC PEDAGOGY AND KNOWLEDGE CONSTRUCTION
IN HIGHER EDUCATION

A Dissertation
Presented to the Faculty of the
Department of Educational Leadership
and Policy Analysis
East Tennessee State University

In Partial Fulfillment of
the Requirements for the Degree
Doctor of Education

by
Susan Marie McCabe
May 1997
APPROVAL

This is to certify that the Graduate Committee of

Susan Marie McCabe

met on the

7th day of March, 1997.

The committee read and examined her dissertation, supervised her defense of it in an oral examination, and decided to recommend that her study be submitted to the Graduate Council, in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Education.

Dr. Marie Hill
Chair, Graduate Committee

Signed on behalf of
the Graduate Council

Interim Dean, School of
Graduate Studies
Leadership and learning are human activities occurring within an interpersonal, social context. This study was concerned with rendering the lived experiences of leaders and learners as intelligible, allowing for understanding of factors affecting knowledge construction and learning in higher education settings. The individual, personal experiences of teachers and learners were explored in order to identify factors that can be influenced by teacher leadership. Phenomenology was the philosophical and methodological structure of this study.

Fifty-two nursing students enrolled in a senior level course at a regional state university participated in the study, as well as the two course co-teachers. All participants engaged in a narratologic journaling process that reflected their personal experiences with learning. Journals were kept for a 12 week-period, and narrative data reflecting individual learners and leaders’ personal engagement with learning were collected at six discrete intervals during the study.

The textual data were systematically analyzed, consistent with qualitative research processes, using constant comparative methods, and assisted by QSR NUD.IST computer software.

Sixteen major themes and 36 sub-themes representing meaningful expressions of the lived lives of participants were identified. The lived lives of participants are about power, tension, mistakes, expectations, and most significantly about caring. Examination of the interrelationship of themes led to identification of factors impacting leadership and learning within the study classroom. Three interrelationship theme clusters were found and represent the study’s major findings. The interrelationship clusters are reported as three conceptual models reflecting what it is to be a learner or leader in the classroom of study. These models are (a) the positive power of leadership, (b) tension and learning, and (c) leadership for learning, and lead to identification of pedagogy seen as positively impacting knowledge construction in a higher education classroom setting.
INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD APPROVAL

This is to certify that the following study has been filed and approved by the Institutional Review Board of East Tennessee State University.

Title of Grant or Project: Narratologic Strategies and Knowledge Construction.

Principal Investigator: Susan McCabe

Department: Educational Leadership and Policy Analysis

Date Submitted: 7/17/96

Institutional Review Board Chair: Dr. David Walters, MD
DEDICATION

This study is dedicated to the many teachers who have taught me what it is to be a learner, to the many students who have taught me what it is to be a teacher, and to my loved ones for giving me the courage to be both. I will forever be grateful to all.
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I wish to acknowledge the invaluable support, encouragement, and resources supplied by the members of my dissertation committee. Dr. Gresso, Dr. Hill, Dr. Hillis, and Dr. Knight have exemplified teaching and are powerful role models of excellence in leadership. I wish to thank the members of my dissertation committee for allowing me the freedom to explore and learn, stumble and grow, all within the confines of a supportive learning environment. They have given me the gift of voice.

I wish to extend special thanks to Dr. Marie Hill who embodies all of the findings of this study regarding engaged and powerful teachers. This study would not have been possible without her constant guidance, caring, wisdom, and wit.
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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

How do we know what we know? Why do we know a particular set of knowledge, rather than some other set? The answer to these questions is contained in the blend of interpersonal and intra-personal experiences commonly called learning. Our composite experiences of learning largely occur in formal, traditional, structured educational settings. These educational experiences can be satisfying or dissatisfying, effective or ineffective. One person succeeds in the same classroom where another fails. Such are the experiences of formal education. Why?

This study is concerned with exploring factors that affect learning in higher education settings. Learning is explored as a reflective, contextual, culturally-linked phenomena of knowledge construction that can be influenced by teaching leadership. The study examines the personal experiences of teachers and learners in attempts to understand the phenomena of knowledge construction through exploration of factors that affect learning.

Background: Epistemology and Leadership

Each person shapes and is shaped by his or her knowledge. Standardized testing and academic performance, society's formal measures of our knowledge, often configure the direction of lives. Career paths as well as perceptions of self-worth are determined by one's level of success in negotiating the process of education (Schommer, 1993).
Knowledge is continuously built and communicated, shared and sought out, and ultimately we change and are changed by knowledge.

**The Interplay of Learning, Leadership, and Culture**

It is assumed that the goal of teaching and learning is knowledge, but little attention is paid to how knowledge is constructed and communicated (Giroux & McLaren, 1986). Much is written regarding learning theory; far less can be found regarding the process of coming to know, or how teachers impact that process (Tierney, 1991).

Popular perception often regards the teacher as responsible for knowledge acquired by a learner. But just how the teacher influences knowing is often overlooked in pursuit of more practical concerns. Teaching is leadership in practice. For better or worse, teachers are the leaders of their classrooms. Academic leadership has been a much written and reported phenomena, but it is most often regarded as an administrative function. Far less is understood regarding the intentional process of leadership useful in promoting a learning environment.

Leadership in teaching is a cultural and contextual process. Cultural differences form the context within which teaching and learning occurs. Differences in cultural background can both make education work and limit knowledge acquisition. Teachers come in all shapes, sizes, and colors, as do the students they teach. Teachers and students at times understand each other, and at times cannot comprehend the lives of each others. Cultural similarities continually dance with cultural differences in learning
environments. The cultural dance occurs within the context of a school possessing a culture all its own.

This study explores leadership as a contextual, cultural phenomena that influences learning environments (Cox, 1994; Gardner, 1995; Senge, 1990). While much is known regarding knowledge construction, less is known regarding the effects of culture on the process of coming to know, and little is known regarding how the teacher as leader can impact knowledge construction in the cultural context of the classroom environment.

Culture is represented in two common ways in educational literature. The two representations of culture have common properties but are used in very distinct and separate ways. The two representations may be seen as two phenotypes of the construct culture. Culture is addressed as an organizational phenomenon (Achilles, 1992; Cox, 1994) in the first phenotype, and as racioethnic characteristics of individual learners (Banks, 1988; Singer, 1994) in the second phenotype. Discussions of both cultural phenotypes refer to culture as a factor in knowledge construction. But how these two phenotypes of culture interface in learning environments is not clear, and how a teacher's cultural orientation affect this mixture is even less clear.

The Complex Web of Meaning: Scientific Inquiry and Knowing

The approach of inquiry for this study is based on Heideggerian phenomenology, reflects works of Ricoeur (1978), Sarbin (1986), Polkinghorne (1988), and others and portrays an interpretive, narratologic perspective. This study is informed by those works, and they represent the philosophical, conceptual perspective that guides this study.
Philosophical interpretive inquiry of Heidegger maintains that objective awareness, objective knowledge, is impossible (Heidegger, 1962). Heideggerian truth is contextual, and occurs only within our engagement with the world that surrounds us. Heideggerian phenomenology emphasizes the impossibility of laying aside one's cultural context when attempting to understand and comprehend truth. Ontologic sources of understanding arise from shared cultural experiences (Heidegger, 1962). In this fashion, Heideggerian philosophy becomes not only the theoretical framework but the methodological process of this journey of inquiry.

Heideggerian phenomenology sees human experiences as being captured and understood in narratives. Meaning of human experience is interpretive and can be found contained within narratives, and understanding of the human experience is only possible through examination of the personal narrative (Polkinghorne, 1988). Narrative interpretation consists of organized collection of personal accounts, thematic examination of content for perceived significance, then comparison of thematic content for meaningful patterns comprising a comprehensive whole (Chinn, 1994; Denzin & Lincoln, 1994; Heidegger, 1962; Miles & Huberman, 1994; Sandelowski, 1991).

The study is designed as a post-modern journey of inquiry. Modernistic inquiry assumes reality as either objective or subjective. The dichotomization of reality as subjective or objective has lead to a belief that subjective knowledge is prone to error (Denzin & Lincoln, 1994), and not as valuable as objectification. Such thinking has fostered an over reliance on a scientific process of isolating cause and effect patterns until understanding is at best blurred, at worst lost (Wheatley, 1992).
Post-modernistic inquiry assumes experiences and perceptions are legitimate pathways to understanding (Denzin & Lincoln, 1994; Miles & Huberman, 1994). Post-modernistic inquiry represents an acausal interpretive process stressing control and prediction as antithetical to understanding (Chinn, 1994; Sorrell, 1994). Such post-modern approaches look to understand human beings in the here-and-now of their personal experiences and is believed by many to be appropriate to study human phenomena (Denzin & Lincoln, 1994; LeCompte & Preissle, 1993; Miles & Huberman, 1994; Van Maanen, 1983).

One emerging post-modern method of inquiry, based in hermeneutics, is that of interpretive narratology. Narratology assumes that human beings think, perceive, and imagine in the narrative (Coles, 1989; Sandelowski, 1991; Sarbin, 1986). To be human is to be a narrator, to have a story. Narration is seen as a process, with the product, stories, being amenable to interpretation. The meaning of an experience, as lived by the person, can be found contained in the narrative. Narratives become a way of organizing experiences, classifying episodes, and identifying personal perceptions of causality (Sarbin, 1986).

Learning, leading, and teaching are the human phenomena of interest in this study. Narratives produced by learners and leaders, representational of the lived lives of students and of teachers, will be used to gain understanding of the phenomena of interest.
The Study

Statement of the Problem

In his classic work, Kuhn (1970) argued existing conceptual frameworks within a field eventually fail to function in enhancing comprehension. When the prevailing framework no longer explains or predicts phenomena, contradictions of observations emerge, and existing theory fails to be predictive or directive. When prevailing frameworks fail, argues Kuhn, new paradigms must emerge. Current prevailing frameworks in educational leadership fail to completely explain or predict the phenomena of leadership in learning.

The goal of education is learning, and knowledge construction is fundamental to that process. Teaching is leadership. The teacher is customarily seen as the leader of learning-experiences, which traditionally occur in a social cultural context of the classroom. It is this social, cultural context of coming to know that impacts the ultimate outcome of the process; learning. In the concern to identify theory-based practice models for educational leadership, little attention has been paid to the leadership role of the classroom teacher in influencing the coming to know, the knowledge construction process of learning. How leadership and culture of the learning process impact individual perceptions of coming to know is not well defined. Pedagogic approaches that address contextual issues of culture and that are effective in facilitating the coming to know of learners need to be further identified.
The Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study is to gain understanding of the phenomena of knowledge construction through examination of factors that influence knowledge construction. Understanding will be gained by exploring individual perceptions of learning and classroom leadership in a higher education setting. Factors that impact learning and knowledge construction will be explored in the hopes of identifying those that may be influenced by teacher leadership. The study attempts to share one effort at emergent, inventive pedagogy and to encourage others to join in the building of new theories, new paradigms of knowledge construction.

This study is a post-modernistic journey. As with any journey, directions are born of the prevailing winds, but ultimate outcomes may be yet unknown.

The Research Questions

Several questions guided this study. The research questions provided a compass, directing methodology for the journey of inquiry by framing narrative expressions. The four research questions were:

1. How does individual knowledge construction occur in higher education settings?

2. What factors influence the social process of knowledge construction?

3. How are individual perceptions of knowledge construction affected by teacher's classroom leadership?

4. What is the interface of racioethnic culture and organizational culture in the
process of knowledge construction?

The Research Design

The personal contexts in which learning and leadership occurs are central to this study. Being a leader is often self-interpretating and cultural identity is often self-categorized. Therefore, one reliable source of information to answer the research questions is the individual person.

Qualitative research is concerned with hearing stories in one's own voice, understanding contextual meaning, describing patterns and processes of connectedness, and in revealing the personal nature of phenomena (Chinn, 1994; LeCompte & Preissle, 1993). Leadership will always involve relationships and is always interpersonal (Burns, 1978; Covey, 1994; Nannus, 1992).

The individual voice, the individual stories of leader and learners, was seen in this study as dialectics. The stories were seen to form the link between educational theory and practice, between educational ontology and epistemology. For these reasons phenomenology was both the philosophical and methodological framework for this study. A qualitative design based on Heideggerian phenomenologic approaches was used.

The Conceptual Framework for the Study

The study draws from the body of knowledge on schema theory, critical theory, and leadership theory. The study is grounded in a post-positivistic paradigm that emphasizes inductivity, nonlinear understanding, and non-reductionistic examination.
Data Collection and Analysis

A phenomenologic qualitative approach was employed in this study. Hermeneutic interpretation of personal narratives was used to explore personal meaning (Polkinghorne, 1983; Miles & Huberman, 1994) of leadership and learning in one higher education classroom. Data for this study consisted of the textual narratives of leaders and learners in one higher education nursing classroom.

Significance of the Problem

Learning theories exist that guide understanding of instruction. Leadership theories exist that guide administration of learning environments. Little work exists that guides leadership as a classroom process influencing learning.

Culture has been examined as a factor impacting learning, but culture has been dissected into two parts; organizational and racioethnic. How learners construct knowledge and what factors influence individual knowledge construction in higher education settings remains a murky area.

Overview of the Study

This study is a starting point from which to understanding leadership and learning from a broad, modernistic, and contextual perspective. As a qualitative process, it is also a personal journey. This study is heavily steeped in critical theory and in post-modernistic thinking, and is a search for a holistic theory of leadership and learning. It relies heavily on personal narratology, both extra discursive and intra discursive, as a method of
inquiry. This study is presented as a three-part voyage.

Section One. Contained in Chapter 2, this section includes a review of the literature regarding the three areas of interest: learning, leadership, and culture. What is known and unknown regarding these phenomena will be reviewed. Engagement with this groundwork will form the basis of the second section, planning for the personal engagement of the researcher to the research.

Section Two. Contained in Chapter 3, this section plans the science, and reflects the use of phenomenology as both philosophy and methodology. This section discusses the narrative as root metaphor and identifies methodologic procedures appropriate to engaging researcher and participant in order to seek answers to the proposed research questions.

Section Three. This section, contained in Chapters 4 and 5, will contain the personal and will discusses the findings from the research process. This section will look for a conceptualization of leadership for learning that emerges from the extradiscursive and intra discursive data. This section, being both convergent and divergent, will also be the point of connectivity. It will connect the narrative of learners with that of leaders and attempt to discover a new paradigm of leadership for learning. As with most inquiry, the ending point of this study is also a beginning point. The anticipated understanding will inevitably lead to future inquiry.
Limitations of the Study

This study is, by design, a personal one with methodologic procedures influenced by that corporeal process. The post-modernistic perspective and emphasis on personal narratology is both the strength and limitation of this study. The personal nature of the representation needs to be remembered. Findings represent only one interpretation of the data, the one of most significance and importance to the researcher. Other limitations of the study are listed below.

1. The study examines the interface of learning, leadership, and culture in a higher education nursing curriculum setting only. All other arenas and environments of learning have been purposefully excluded from this study.

2. The use of personal writing as inquiry presumes a certain subjectivity that picks and chooses, eliminates and contains. Such a process limits certain awareness of the nature of what is examined.

3. The study offers personal narratology, as oppositional to factual data, and thus may be limited by the personal non-reductionist nature of interpretations.

4. Grounded in critical thought, the study is most interested in understanding, thus limiting prediction and recommendations that are better suited to larger, more quantitative studies.

Definitions

To proceed with inquiry, and to provide a road map for that inquiry, the following definitions are presented.
**Learning.** Learning is a reflective, contextual, culturally-linked phenomenon of knowledge construction that can be influenced by teaching leadership. Learning is gradual, dynamic, nonlinear, and cumulative. Learning is a mental process facilitated by participation in activities and occurring therefor through social experiences (Dewey, 1938).

**Knowledge Construction.** Coterminous with "coming to know," knowledge construction is the building block of learning. It is a dynamic, nonlinear process of engagement with knowledge in social settings. Knowledge construction is a communal and contextual process that ideally is empowering to a group. Knowledge is seen as distributed among people and their artifacts, including language, culture, and social institutions (Banks & Banks, 1993; Dewey, 1938; Vygotsky, 1987; Wells & Chang-Wells, 1992).

**Leadership.** Behavior of the individual, and in rare situations of the group, that significantly affects the thoughts, feelings, and behaviors of a significant number of other individuals. Leadership is best accomplished through the fashioning of stories, primarily of identity, by the leader (Gardner, 1995). Because leadership affects thinking and behavior, leadership is seen as being highly able to affect learning.

**Leadership for Learning.** Coterminous with teaching, it is a reciprocal process contributing to and facilitating the learning of others. Leadership for learning is a socially interactive and contextual process of engagement characterized by mutuality,
guided by values, and that intentionally shapes and directs the knowledge construction of others. Leadership for learning creates group power from the combined capacities of the individuals (Burns, 1978; Covey, 1994; Gardner, 1995; Senge, 1990; Sergiovanni, 1990).

**Culture.** A set of learned patterns, of and for behavior, that regulate interaction and allow for mutual interactions among pluralities of people, establishing them into a particular and distinct human group (Banks & Banks, 1994; Bandura, 1978). Culture is often localized in concrete, publicly accessible signs, the most important of which are instances of communication and discourse (Goodenough, 1981; Urban, 1991).

**Racioethnic Culture.** Descriptive characteristics that distinguish a subgroup of individuals as having commonalities. Characteristics include national, religious, linguistic, gender, racial, ethnic, and professional orientation (Banks, 1994; Cox, 1993; Giroux, 1992; Giroux, 1994).

**Organizational Culture.** Application of psychological knowledge and methods relevant to the study of individual culture to the study of human behavior in educational environments, placing emphasis on artifacts, procedures, and interpersonal climate. Organizational culture conceptualizes and expresses an organizations values, ideals, and attitudes. Organizational culture gives meaning and reality to members and as such supplies a sense of identity for, and assimilation into, the organization (Cunningham & Gresso, 1993).
**Narrative.** A symbolic account of human actions, having temporal dimensions, that contains a recognizable pattern of events. The narrative, coterminous with story, is a central organizing structure for human experiences and for knowledge transmittal (Benner, 1984; Carter, 1993; Sarbin, 1986). Narratives are reflective of the culture of the storyteller, and the culture of the context of their construction (Polkinghorne, 1988; Ricoeur, 1978). Narratives have rhythm, pacing, and time orientation.

**Narratologic Pedagogy.** Mutual storytelling and narrative construction that is both a teaching and a critical thinking methodology (Thayer-Bacon, 1993). The root metaphor of this pedagogy is the narrative, which assumes that humans attempt to construct meaning in knowledge by formulation of a story.

**Journaling.** A structured form of narrative reporting that entails the conscious written expression of experiences of the individual in story form. Journal narratives reflect lived content and are contextual expressions of prevailing cultural conventions of the creator (Bruner, 1987; Polkinghorne, 1988; Reinertsen & Wells, 1993).

**Education.** Is the formal process of learning in which students actively construct knowledge, relative to a particular discipline, in socially mediated ways. Knowledge gained through formal education is both reflective and contextual.
CHAPTER 2
REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

This study is concerned with knowledge construction, yet it is difficult to espouse just what knowing is. Knowing is often best defined by the knower, with the knower interpreting what he/she does, or does not, know.

It is commonly accepted that teachers teach and students learn during the process of coming to know some subject matter. The teacher-student interface is commonly accepted with little attention to "coming to know" as a separate, distinct aspect of formal education.

Every day teacher-student interactions function to build and exchange knowledge. In the process teacher and student change and are changed by that knowledge. Yet questions of the nature of knowing and the construction of knowledge are seldom common to discussions of educators or students, left instead to philosophers and epistemologists.

This study is concerned with coming to know as an essential aspect of the process of formal higher education. It will be argued that construction of knowledge is an essential formal function of teaching and is best accomplished through leadership for learning. It is leadership, with intentful attention to cultural factors, that should frame and direct the coming to know process of learning.

This chapter is divided into four parts. The first three parts address the three phenomena of interest to the study; knowledge construction and learning, culture, and
leadership. Given the often difficult process of separating these three phenomena, the final part of the chapter discusses both the convergence and divergence of the phenomena of interest and their linkages to this study.

**Coming to Know: Multiple Pathways for Learning**

The nature and substance of knowledge have been debated since the dawn of time. Philosophers have contemplated it, researchers have studied it, and teachers have explored it. Yet controversy remains regarding the concepts of knowledge and learning. Many voices have been raised calling for fundamental changes in the process of learning. Some individual (Bennett, 1991; Brown, Collins, & Dunguid 1989; Garrison, 1995) argue that the problem with formal education today is an inadequate epistemology to guide teaching and learning.

There is evidence that college students begin their studies with preconceived epistemological beliefs about what they do and do not know, what they can learn, and how learning occurs (Baxter-Magolda, 1992; Hofer, 1994; Perry, 1981; Schommer, 1990). While data support that individual epistemological beliefs of college students affect academic performance (Crouse & Rhodes, 1992; Harris, Schoen, & Hensley, 1992; Schommer, 1993), little work exists regarding pedagogic ability to influence such beliefs. There exists a shared presumption that epistemological beliefs impact knowledge construction, but little attention to how this process occurs, or how teachers’ can impact the process (Hofer, 1994).

Beliefs about knowledge can shape academic behaviors and are related to
motivation and cognition (Pintrich & De Groot, 1990; Pintrich & Schrauben, 1992). Teaching is about learning and learning is about knowing. But learning is not simply a set of coordinated cognitive processes (Gorrell, 1992). How do people learn? How do people come to know?

Senge (1990) maintains that human beings are designed for learning, yet cries for educational reform clearly indicate that learning and knowing, at least as commonly measured through standardized evaluation processes, is not perceived as uniformly occurring. Curriculums and postulates of learning are inexorably linked, and improvement in learning is predicated on clarification of the process of coming to know.

**Historical Roots of Coming to Knowing**

Knowing has long been conceived in black and white terms; as true or untrue. Either something is known, or it is not known. Either knowledge is correct, or it is false. Evaluation and measurement of the efficacy of the formal education is commonly predicated on this linear, either-or, single pathway concept of coming to know.

Since the classic work of Descartes's (1596 - 1650) "Cogito, ergo sum", approaches to understanding the world have emphasized logical thought and deductive reasoning. Dominant contemporary pathways to scientific understanding still mirrors this three century old convention (Wheatley, 1992). Cartesian based scientific methodology remains the dominant paradigm for inquiry and understanding of the world around us (Denzin & Lincoln, 1994; Fenstermacher, 1994; Hathaway, 1995; Miles & Huberman, 1994). Typified by linear conceptualization of causality, quantification, and prediction,
scientific methodology approaches problem solving using reductionism as its tool, and mechanistic functioning as its root metaphor. Formal processes of inquiry in disciplines such as education and nursing continue to be controlled by assumptions of the Cartesian pathway to knowing (Bunting & Campbell, 1994).

This paradigm dominates the higher education landscape, with behavioral-based performance evaluation common for testing knowing. Didactic "expert" teaching remains the mainstay teaching approach in classroom environments. Knowledge constructed within this social context is usually intended to be used in social environments, but remains individually evaluated in a similar fashion for all learners. Pathways to knowing that diverge in nonlinear ways, or that reflect unique, individual, or contextual perceptions are seldom recognized and rarely fostered in formal higher education.

Ways of Knowing: Framing the Question

Conscious awareness of the prevalent paradigm is essential to a cogent discussion of coming to know. The prevailing scientific paradigm acts as a lens through which understanding of knowing can occur (Hathaway, 1995). The paradigm dictates what is considered data, what is the role of researcher, what is considered worth knowing, and what is considered knowledge. Consequently, how a problem is perceived, understood, and explored is directly linked to paradigmatic conceptualization of knowing reality. This in turn directly impacts how a discipline's specific knowledge base is taught to students, as well as how evidence of "appropriate" learning will be configured. The dominant paradigm plays a crucial role in how knowledge is applied, legitimimized, and transmitted.
Problems of the Cartesian Model of "Coming to Know"

Recently polemic conversations in both education and nursing literature have questioned the adequacy of the empirical method dominating as the singular pathway to knowing (Clandinin & Connelly, 1994; Clandinin & Connelly, 1995; Donovan, 1985; Druzec, 1989; English, 1994; Girioux, 1992; Sorrell, 1994; Tierney, 1994). Many voices question if solutions for a postmodern society can be found using thinking patterns and tools of the past. Seeking new pedagogy to foster educational reform (Diekelmann, 1991; Hooks, 1994; Noddings, 1992; Van Manen, 1991) is thought by some to require a new epistemologic approach. Blanket acceptance of one linear pathway to knowledge is increasingly being challenged.

Two concerns can be seen as arising out of acceptance of the traditional epistemological model. The biggest issue lies in the manner in which teaching and learning is conceptualized using the modernistic epistemological model. The second, and perhaps more insidious issue, is that of power and equality.

Issue One: Mechanization and Behavioral Pedagogy. The first issue, how teaching and learning is conceptualized, is fundamentally about behavioral pedagogy. Behavioral pedagogy remains a dominant theme of the process of formal higher education. Rooted in the Cartesian paradigm, and based on a single mechanistic concept of human behavior (Tyler, 1949), behavioral pedagogy follows a linear black-white pathway to "coming to know". It fosters belief of a single view of human behavior, a single path to knowledge, and encourages teaching that is static, linear, and content oriented (Benson & Griffith.
Behavioral pedagogy limits acceptance of the learner as creator of their own knowledge and discourages personal meaning as important in knowledge construction (Fullen & Hargreaves, 1991; Giddens, 1995; Giroux, 1992; Gorrell, 1992). To discourage personal meaning is to limit, and in some cases silence, divergence.

Knowledge in many professional disciplines is still seen as coterminous with facts. The knowledge base of many professions consists primarily of undiscussed, undisputed, and taken for granted factual data. Reality is assumed as self-evident. This becomes particularly problematic in practice-based disciplines, such as nursing and education, by limiting problem solving choices, fostering unrealistic expectations of truthful, knowable solutions for all problems, and by establishing control of systems as an expectation for leaders.

The clearest limitation of behavioral pedagogy lies in its conceptualization of knowledge flowing in one direction, from teacher-expert down to student. Knowing becomes equated with accumulating and spewing back information. The relative, contextual issues of the expression of knowledge remain absent (Lather, 1991; Lewis, 1990). With behavioral pedagogy it is possible for learners to correctly perform "knowledge" but to have no engagement with that knowledge. A student can proceed through higher education with learning experiences lacking in wholeness and meaning (Goodlad, 1984; Goodlad, 1994; Komoski, 1990). This leaves the learner with no understanding of the relative use or importance of that knowledge, and no ability to integrate that learning with other knowledge.
Frantic calls for development of critical thinking skills in curriculum's highlight this lack of engagement (Jacobs, Ott, Sullivan, Ulrich, & Short, 1997). Engagement is learning how to learn (Senge & McLagan, 1993; Skoe, 1994). It is connected learning. Engagement occurs when the learner is motivated and enthusiastic about content, and finds personal meaning and importance in the content to be learned. Disengagement from the content results in disconnected, personally unmotivated learning (Berliner, 1992; Csikszentmihalyi, 1991). Students who are not engaged with the content have decreased learning, not because they cannot learn, but because they do not have interest in learning.

The Second Issue: Power and Hegemony. The second issue of the acceptance of the traditional epistemological models centers on issues of power. Educational systems are a reflection of society as a whole, and generally represent the meta-narrative of the dominant power group. Voices have been raised discussing the balance of power in formal educational settings. Such questions are issues of the social function of education. Does education exist as a method of social reproduction, limiting social production as some have argued (Giroux, 1992; Kincheloe & McLaren, 1993), or as a mechanism for social production?

The critical theory movement has heightened discussions of schools existing as agents of hegemonic power groups in order to perpetuate and confirm hegemonic power (Belenky, Clinchy, & Goldberger, 1986; Moccia, 1988). Hegemonic power can validate meta-narratives supporting one "correct" view of knowledge and actively foster its
continuation at the expense of divergent or "incorrect" knowledge.

Hegemonic power is often used to validate particular knowledge. Members of the dominant culture often have "correct" behaviors propagated by association with a dominant epistemologic view (Gilligan, 1982; Freire, 1989). They know how to get a teacher's attention, how to react, behavior, and speak in a classroom setting. Critical theory explains this knowledge as relating to dominant hegemonic group membership. Hegemonic power assumes a right way, and by contrast, wrong ways of operating. Thoughts and actions not sanctioned by the dominant cultural group become "wrong", other knowledge less correct (Rinehart, 1994).

Those who have power often want to keep it. The process by which they keep it is often circular. They have power, so they control pathways to knowledge. A dominant "correct" set of knowledge is thus established, which is socially reproduced through the process of mainstream education. Those without the "correct" knowledge are kept marginalized by dominant meta-narratives (Apple, 1990; Simon, 1992). Figure 1 diagrams the notion of divergent pathways to knowledge construction.

**Understanding Learning: The Traditional Approach**

Multiple theories of learning exist, mirroring epistemology. Just as with the epistemological models on which they are built, the dominant learning theories are heavily steeped in the traditional scientific method.

Traditional theories of learning, especially as applied to higher education settings, have relied heavily on three interrelated constructs to guide teaching action. Those
Figure 1. The post modernistic concept of divergent pathways of coming to know as reflecting the influence of multiple factors.
constructs include the innate capacities of the individual, efforts of the individual toward learning, and opportunities available for learning (Merrian & Caffarella, 1991).

Individual differences in abilities have been addressed by theories such as multiple intelligence (Gardner, 1993; Guilford, 1988; Sternberg & Wagner, 1986), and learning style theory. Behavioral and cognitive theories describe typical efforts and modes of thinking, remembering, or problem solving. Humanistic and social learning theories discuss learning and learning styles as they relates to social and interpersonal performance.

Commonalities of the above models can be identified. Most notably all of the theories contain some combination of cognitive and affective components (Merrian & Caffarella, 1991), and represent important aspects of psychomotor and cognitive functioning. The theories differ mainly over which of these two constructs is seen as dominant (Bandura, 1978; Hofer, 1994; Nehls, 1995).

Cognitive and behavioral theories are among the most prevalent and are particularly positivistic models. They generally conceive learning in linear terms, and are structural models. Although the positivistic nature of current learning theories is not often discussed, the belief of knowledge as quantifiable, measurable, and testable persist in today's educational environment (Banathy, 1995; Benson & Griffith, 1991; Giroux, 1994).
Knowledge as Structure: Modernistic Learning Models

The roots of the dominant epistemologic model viewing knowledge as structural can be traced to systems of ancient philosophy. Starting with Plato's universe of good and perfect absolutes, Descartes built a philosophy of rationalism of innate knowledge. Rationalism asserts that one develops knowledge by string contemplation of innate concepts. Tyler's (1949) concept of an orderly curriculum presupposed an engineered, linear pattern to knowledge. The possibility of engagement and personal meaning having nonlinear patterns is antithetical to structural epistemology.

Modernistic epistemological models have been heavily influenced by knowledge-as-structure beliefs rooted in ancient thought. Cognitive learning theory is one prime example of the translation of these beliefs into a learning model, reflecting concepts of logical thinking and deductive processing.

Cognitive Model. Cognitive learning theories relate one's ability to learn to the way in which one perceives, organizes, stores, and retrieves information. Cognitive learning theory builds heavily on the work of such individuals as Piaget (1969); Blumenthal (1977), and Bruner (1960). Piaget's naturalistic research typifies cognitive models and has profoundly affected current understanding of knowledge construction and processing. Cognitive learning theory reflects a theoretical background in both biology and philosophy, building on concepts of cognitive structuring.

Cognitive structures are identified as patterns of physical or mental action that underlie specific acts of intelligence. The cognitive structures are seen as corresponding
to chronologic stages of development (Eisner, 1982; Salthouse, 1982; Tennant, 1991). As learning occurs, cognitive structures are created that reflect individual sense of self and environment.

Primary cognitive structures are seen as age dependent. Piaget's model of chronological conceptualization included his developmental stages of sensorimotor, pre operations, concrete operations, and formal operations structuring (Piaget, 1969). The final stage of formal operations, which encompasses the adult years, involves abstractions as the primary cognitive process. Cognitive structures, no matter how named or defined, are fundamentally viewed as linear and sequential in nature (Glaser & Pellegrino, 1978).

Cognitive structures change and adapt using the two modes of assimilation and accommodation. Assimilation requires interpretation of events in terms of existing cognitive structure while accommodation requires changing cognitive structure (Piaget, 1969) in order to make sense of the surrounding environment.

Cognitive learning theory presupposes that human development is a process of cognitive development. Cognitive development is viewed as constant efforts to adapt to the environment through assimilation and accommodation. Cognitive theory remains as a model reflecting epistemology as cumulative, linear, and developmentally sequenced (Merrian & Caffarella, 1991). Use of a cognitive learning theory implies that effective teaching behaviors focus on structuring the content of learning activities (Ackerman, 1969; Bee, 1987) in sequential and linear ways.

Current cognitive theory has embraced a new root metaphor, no less mechanistic
than past roots, the computer (Neisser, 1967). With language such as storage, retrieval, and data manipulation, new interpretations of cognitive flexibility define it as a function of both the manner in which knowledge is represented and the processes that operate on those representations (Spiro, Feltovich, Jacobson, & Coulson, 1991; Jehng & Chang, 1993).

The Behaviorist Model. Behavioral learning theory is the flip side of the cognitive paradigm. Rooted in Watson's early works, and refined most notably by Skinner (1979), learning is seen as a function of change in overt behavior. Using this epistemological model, changes in behavior are seen to result from complex stimuli-response dyads.

Learning results from an individual's response to a stimulus occurring in the environment and the relative proximity of one stimulus to another. A response produces a consequence, such as a behavior, and when a particular stimulus-response pattern is reinforced, the individual is conditioned, or learns to respond (Hergenhahn, 1972; Thorndike, 1927).

Reinforcement is a key concept of behavioral theory (Skinner, 1953). Reinforcement can take many forms and is anything that strengthens the desired response. Reinforcers can be perceived as either negative or positive, but always as having major consequences for the learning of the individual.

The behavioral models give life to didactic, rote teaching styles. While arguably useful in adult learning, it is interesting to note that Skinner rejected the notion of a behavioral theory of learning, seeing, his work as useful only in understanding
developmental activity (Skinner, 1953).

**Schematic Model.** Schema theory is perhaps closest to viewing learning as nonlinear. Schema theory views learning as a dynamic process of knowledge construction, continuously building new knowledge from old. While viewing learning overall as a sequential process, schema theory allows for learning as a social process, influenced by personal meaning found in knowledge.

Patterns of association develop that become the building blocks of cognition. These building blocks, or schemas, are based on experiences, and are foundational in understanding the process of knowledge construction (Shuell, 1992). A basic observation by Dewey (1938), that human beings learn by doing and by experiencing, remains significant today and is applicable to schema theory.

Schema theory supports the existence of two types of schemas (Cervero; 1992). Declarative schemas are those building blocks comprising factual learning content. Procedural schemas represent social, cultural, contextual learning, and are manifested as our knowledge regarding "how to do" something (Merrian & Caffarella, 1991).

According to schema theory, learning occurs in three ways (Anderson, 1990; DiVesta, 1984; Rumelhart & Norman, 1978). The first, accretion, is the learning of new factual, declarative data. Tuning, the second method, is the process of slow, gradual refinements to our schema to adjust to new input. Restructuring, the last method, is the reconfiguration of old schema, or the production of new ones.

These three methods address the nonlinear, post-modernistic nature of schema...
theory. Traditional teaching methodologies target accreation only, thus doing little tuning or restructuring schema, and adding little to procedural schema development, and express knowledge in rigid terms.

Declarative knowledge schemas, together with procedural schemata allow for an integrated, albeit very individualized, world construct. This explains very divergent patterns of learning. Often two people will be sitting somewhere, listening to information. When one discusses what he or she heard with others exposed to the same information, dramatic differences often exist. Schema theory attempts to explain these differences.

Banks and Banks (1993) discusses how all learning is continuously shaped by social interaction and engagement. Banks (1993) and others (Giroux; 1992; McLaren, 1993) conceive knowledge in a culturally constructed context. How people arrange their patterns of schemas is highly culturally depended, owing largely to procedural schema production. Accreation learning gets patterned into schemas that represent an individual’s gender, ethnicity, racial, and other cultural features. Declarative knowledge is influenced by the cultural, procedural aspects of cognition (Cervero, 1992; Mezirow, 1991). Schema patterning based on cultural variables slightly alters, and makes partially subjective, any new learning.

The Contrary Position: What’s Wrong with These Approaches

One of the major criticisms of the modernistic paradigms of learning is the emphasis on personal failure when learning does not occur (McLaren, 1993; Giroux, 1992; Banks & Banks, 1993). It becomes tempting to see lack of knowledge construction
as related to the learner. Modernistic epistemology does not go far enough in establishing a learning theory that is supportive of social context learning environment as having influence on knowledge construction.

Modernistic inquiry assumes reality as either objective or subjective. The polarization of reality has lead to a dominant belief that subjective is prone to error. Objective is analogous with truth. Such thinking has fostered an over reliance on a scientific process of isolating cause and effect patterns until understanding is at best blurred, at worst lost.

But if a Cartesian-based pathway to knowing is not the only acceptable path, how else is knowing accomplished? If the Cartesian black-white, right-wrong linear approach to understanding knowledge is rejected, one must accept the existence of more than one pathway for knowledge construction. What is the alternative paradigm?

**Understanding Learning: Post-modernistic Approaches**

Post-modern epistemology represents an acausal, interpretive process stressing control and prediction as antithetical to understanding. These approaches assume multiple pathways to knowing, and look to understand human beings in the here-and-now of their personal experiences. Post-modernistic inquiry assumes experiences and perceptions are legitimate pathways to understanding, and are concerned with personal meaning as foundational to knowledge construction. Post-modern models are believed by many to be appropriate to study human phenomena (Chinn, 1994; Lather, 1986; Sorrell, 1994), and are increasingly being used as the basis of formal inquiry in such fields as nursing and
education.

Post-modernistic voices conceive knowledge and learning in contextual, nonlinear ways (Wheatley, 1992; Senge, 1990; McLaren, 1993, Hooks, 1994) that do not impose, quantify, or measure knowing. This paradigm supports no absolute beginning or ending to knowledge and emphasizes self-knowing as a central organizational point for learning.

In post-modernistic learning theories, knowing occurs through relational understanding (Skoe, 1994) and meaning is derived by viewing ideas in cultural context (Benson & Griffith, 1991; Combs, 1982; Cox, 1994; Urban, 1991). Personal meaning is not removed, but rather is viewed as essential to the learning process (Gorrell, 1992; Habermas, 1979; Ricoeur, 1991). The post-modernistic perspective conceptualizes the learner's active construction of meaning as a more durable knowledge than that gained through behavioral or cognitivistic processing.

Post modernistic orientations to learning are grounded in critical theory and become useful in understanding the process of learning without a unilateral focus on individual failure. The emphasis of these theories is on systems flaws as opposed to individual flaws.

**Personal Meaning and Knowledge Construction**

Many have long espoused that learning is a social act, generating and guiding behaviors (Polkinghorne, 1988). Coming to know occurs through exposure to social experiences (Dewey, 1938; Gardner, 1985; Lave & Wenger, 1991; Vygotsky, 1978). While not all experiences are genuine or equally useful to learning, all experiences
modify the individual. This modification affects the quality of subsequent experiences (Sabrin, 1986).

Concepts of social construction of knowledge have begun to appear with increased frequency in professional literature. As an epistemological model, social construction theories support learning as a social act, occurring in social settings, with knowledge often produced and held by a group rather than by an individual. Knowledge is seen as an issue of interpretation, an issue inexorably linked to values and culture (Bickel & Hartrup, 1995; Lave & Wenger, 1991; Giroux, 1992). Rooted in past work of Dewey (1934), such models recognize coming to know as a social cultural act, and seek a root metaphor that is humanistic, not mechanistic. Different cultural contextual variables produce different knowledge construction, producing individual differences in learning (Haraway, 1991, Kennedy, 1993; Wasser & Bresler, 1996). Understanding of knowledge becomes personal and related to interpretation and context.

Formal education is a process of social experiences that contribute to individual learning. Formal education is a human phenomenon comprising learning, leading, and teaching. Education represents the lived lives of students and of teachers within the classroom environment. A teacher's behavior is often intentionally scripted toward a clear predetermined goal of producing certain outcomes in the learner. A learner's behavior is often unscripted and based on an unclear, more individualized and personal goal. Personal meaning affects the learning process within the learning environment. If one assumes the goal of learning and teaching is knowing, what social experiences produce the most effective learning, the most effective experiences for knowledge
construction? How does the teacher’s behavior impact that process? These questions are, at their heart, questions of what is quality teaching.

One emerging post-modern method of inquiry, and increasingly accepted pathway to knowledge, is that of interpretive narratology (Denzin & Lincoln, 1994; Hopkins, 1994; Taylor, 1992). Such an approach is phenomenologic in nature, seeks to make visible the meaning and nature of lived experiences and provides the foundation for a post-modern learning theory.

Based on Heideggerian philosophy (1954), and refined by others such as Ricoeur (1978), Schon (1983), and Polkinghorne (1988), the narratologic perspective suggesting the foundational mode of human existence lies in interpretation and understanding. Understanding is a form of being, rendered explicit by interpretation, by language. In this approach, the language, the narrative, unveils what it is to be human.

Hermeneutic is the tool of the interpretive school. Through hermeneutic processing of the narrative, human experiences can be captured, understood, and explored with others. It is the narrative that discloses the meaning of the human experience. For Heidegger (1962) we exist hermeneutically; we exist by constructing interpretive meaning all around us.

Finding Voice: The Narrative Tradition

Interpretive narratology assumes understanding of the human experience is possible through examination of the personal narrative. Narrative interpretation consists of the organized collection of personal accounts, thematic examination of content for
perceived significance, and comparison of thematic content for meaningful patterns comprising a comprehensive whole.

Philosophical interpretive inquiry of Heidegger maintains that objective awareness, objective knowledge, is impossible. Heideggerian truth is contextual and occurs through our engagement with the world that surrounds us. Heideggerian phenomenology emphasizes the impossibility of laying aside one's cultural context when attempting to understand and comprehend truth. In this fashion, Heideggerian philosophy becomes not only a theoretical framework, but a methodological process.

Traditional epistemologic models of coming to know represented a single view of human behavior and a single path to knowledge. Knowledge was conceptualized as flowing in one direction and as equated with accumulating and spewing back information. The interpretive, naturalistic paradigm gives expression to the relative, contextual issues of knowledge construction. Power is more equal and more voices are inclusive in interpretive approaches to coming to know. Interpretive paradigms reflect a required belief that interpersonal experiences can exert powerful influence on the construction of new knowledge (Baldwin, 1992). It is the personal interpretation that gives rise to the "ah ha", to the very individualized moment when the pieces of reductionistic knowledge fall into place and teacher and learner join in shared knowledge.

But how do the traditional and the post-modernistic epistemologic models of pathways to knowledge affect concepts of learning and knowledge construction?
Learning and the Narrative Tradition

The human impulse to narrate (White, 1980) is being recognized as scholars across disciplines begin to rediscover narratology as a human process of knowledge construction (Banks, 1988; Bell, 1988; Sandelowski, 1991; Sarbin, 1986). The educational value of writing in journals, diaries, and autobiographies is well established (English, 1994; Smith, 1994), but its use of a common pedagogic structure is limited by continuation of myths of the nonscientific value of "subjective" experiences (Denzin & Lincoln, 1994; Nehls, 1995; Sarbin, 1986).

Supporters of hermeneutic interpretive models of coming to know (Heidegger, 1962; Merleau-Ponty, 1962) suggest self-interpretation and the process of construction of knowledge and meaning are universal constants. Being human means that experiences and events give rise to knowledge, and thus to behaviors. Understanding how and why students learn what they come to learn is a matter of the communicative understanding of meaning (Clandinin, 1991; Diekelmann, 1990; Hopkins, 1994).

The story of lived experience becomes a set of narrated events of knowledge construction (Tochon, 1992), with the narrative being the oral or written discourse reporting the event. In this fashion, narratives begin to form the basis of pedagogic methodology.

The Past-Future Experience: Toward Narrative Pedagogy

It would be hard to find a student who did not have a story to tell. Students come to higher education settings with a wealth of formal learning experiences. Students have a
learning history consisting of experiences that have both facilitated and stunted learning. Current learning behaviors, actions, and often outcomes are predicated on that history. It is in their story that understanding of the learning process can occur.

The world is language in a post-modern perspective. Constructions of narratives categorize the world, give it shape, and provide meaning. That world is representational and contextual (Atkinson, Heath, & Chenail, 1991; Guba, 1990; Leininger, 1985). In this approach language mediates social reality (Ricoeur, 1992) and gives rise to human action. People make meaning about events and experiences by making stories.

Stories have powers of engagement. This power resides in the story's ability to stimulate and foster knowledge construction (Bruner, 1987; Sarbin, 1986). In the telling and hearing of stories, one alters, reconfigures, and creates new patterns of connection, new knowledge. Stories often touch people in unexpected and unanticipated ways, provoking new understanding and awareness. Such an approach to coming to know assumes an intimate link between the knower and the thing to be known.

Narrative approaches can be both pedagogy and process (Nehls, 1995). Narrative pedagogy assumes teachers are both learner and teacher, and learners are both learners and teachers (Diekelmann, 1991; Taylor, 1992). In this dynamic interactive process, partnerships and communities of learners are formed fostering lifelong learning behaviors. The learning community together negotiates the direction, management, and evaluation of the learning experience. In this fashion, learning is a lived phenomenon reflective of the interests, needs, and resources of the community of participant learners (Nehls, 1995; Diekelmann, 1990). Figure 2 diagrams the storied nature of knowing.
Figure 2. A diagram showing coming to know as a process, social in nature, affected by cultural variables, and transmitted in narratives.

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Knowledge and Culture in Education

Education presupposes people will learn something, and remember it later. Higher education rests on this assumption and attempts to translate it to behaviors of knowing when and how to perform tasks and jobs in the real world. The real world is a cultural one. Cultures have built into them constructs of relevancy. Culture affects what you are able to see, what information you attend to.

Culture has multiple taxonomic features, and no one single definition exists on which all scholars can agree (Segall, 1986). With its roots in anthropology, most of the work on culture alludes to socially transmitted behavioral patterns and component structures such as beliefs, values, and institutions (Banks & Banks, 1993). Culture provides a body of problem solving strategies that work consistently and, therefore, defines correct actions and thoughts. Culture in this fashion is self-perpetuating and represents learned patterns of what is important to particular groups (Schein, 1985).

Education and Cultural Phenotyping

Failure to develop a consensus over cultural definition has not, however, discouraged the application of concepts to education. Regardless of its precise meaning, culture is being increasingly seen as a critical factor influencing behavior and learning throughout all stages of development and in all settings (LaFromboise, Coleman, & Gerton, 1994). Culture has long been recognized as an important issue in education (Banks & Banks, 1993; Banks, 1994; Giroux, 1994; Malin, 1994; Goodenough, 1981). References to culture are plentiful in educational literature.
Culture has a duality of context and exists as two phenotypic entities. Traditional application of culture to education has focused on a racioethnic lexicon and is reflected in the collective works of multicultural education (Henderson, 1992; May, 1993; Salyer, 1992; Singer, 1994). With increasing frequency, culture has been used as a means of understanding the nature and complexity of organizations (Cunningham & Gresso, 1993). Used in this context, application of culture to the learning process has lead to increased emphasis on school culture, with educational leadership embracing organizational cultural theorems for administrative practice (Cunningham & Gresso, 1993; Lightfoot, 1994; Senge, 1993).

The significance of both phenotypes of culture has not been lost on those interested in educational theory development. The very existence of education rests on the assumption that people will learn something and remember it later. This assumption translates to behaviors of knowing when and how to perform tasks and jobs in a person's very real, very cultural world (Piaget, 1969; Kilgore & Pendleton, 1993; Petri & Mishkin, 1994).

The more individualized concept of racioethnic culture is becoming an increasingly common topic in literature pertaining to educational theory. Concerns for multicultural education, increasing patterns of cultural diversity, frequent geographic relocation and cultural displacement of individuals are all cited as contributing to educations increased ethnic cultural focus.
Cultural Phenotypes: Racioethnic Cultural Phenotype

Conceptually, two phenotypic uses exist for the concept culture. Cultural nomenclature is frequently applied to connote a decidedly racioethnic orientation. Bandura's (1978) view of reciprocal determinism reflects the somewhat circular process that often occurs in defining racioethnic culture. This more traditional, anthropologic use of the word culture defines behavior being influenced by, and influencing, a person's cognition and social environment. Used in this manner, culture is seen as an aggregate pattern of beliefs, attitudes, values, and behaviors that form the individuals view of reality. This set of patterns serves as a perceptual screen through which an individual comes to understand and react to his or her particular environment (Banks & Banks, 1993).

Racioethnic culture provides a person with the knowledge of and for individual behavior (Kroeber & Kluckhohn, 1952). In this fashion, culture influences one's perceptions and responses in very behavioral terms (Triandis, 1972). Variation in this phenotype of culture produces individual variations, albeit subtle, between persons in social systems. Variations in such aspects as time orientation, method of communication, perceptions of power and authority, and personal space boundaries can be significant. Culture affects knowledge construction and establishes relevancy and priority of information.

Racioethnic cultural phenotyping regulates social interactions and establishes ground rules for communication processes (Kroeber & Kluckhohn, 1952). Racioethnic
cultural patterns are generally conceptualized as being invisible to the individual, and
experienced by that individual as normal way of acting, feeling, and being (Hall, 1959).
The outgrowth of this use of culture in education has been increased awareness of the
importance of cultural diversity, attention to multicultural curriculum, and a lessening of
ethnocentric teaching behaviors. But how racioethnic culture impacts the social
construction of knowledge is much less clear.

Organizational Cultural Phenotype

With increasing frequency, educational literature is replete with references to a
second usage of the term culture. With its theoretical roots taken from the business world,
this concept of culture has been applied as a means of understanding the nature and
complexity of organizations. When used in this context, cultural definitions range from
the broad-based view of the informal understanding of the way things are done within an
organization (Cunningham & Gresso, 1993; Deal & Kennedy, 1982), to the more
complex definition of symbols, ceremonies, and myths that function to communicate
underlying values and beliefs of an organization to its employees (Ouchi, 1985).

With its roots in the field of anthropology (Erickson, 1987), the literature contains
several definitions of organizational culture (Bates, 1987; Davis, 1982; Schein, 1985), all
having common defining attributes. Organizational culture is typically defined in terms of
a shared orientation that hold an organization together and gives it an identity (Hoy &
Miskel, 1991). Organizational culture is a collective, social conceptual thinking, derived
from learned behaviors, and gives meaning and reality to organizational community
members (Cunningham & Gresso, 1993).

Shared values and behavioral norms are highlights in all definitions of organizational culture. Shared values represent basic preferences and assumptions subscribed to by most individuals within a group. Because these shared values have usually existed over time, it is likely they are taken for granted and have, therefore, been dropped from conscious expression and awareness. Shared values are generally subtle and invisible. They are generally inferentially noted through interaction with people, or through careful examination of symbolic manifestations such as stories, icons, and rituals (Hoy & Miskel, 1991).

Behavioral norms are very visible patterns of behavior within an organization (Kotter, 1994). Norms are powerful self-reinforcing structures that prevent divergence and failure to follow prescribed patterns of behavioral interaction. The self-reinforcement of behavioral norms is generally coercive in nature and may support a positive work environment, or powerfully reinforce negative functioning.

Organizational culture should be viewed as existing in all social units. It develops with enough interaction among group members for them to acquire a shared culture, and is at the heart of all subsequent social interactions. Leifer (1979) refers to organizational culture as unobtrusive methods of organizational control.

Organizational culture determines how people interact with each other, how communication flows, how rewards are distributed, how power relationships are defined, how time is viewed, and what's important to that organization. It is the "template" representing an organizations norms, values, philosophies, and informal activities (Bissell
and regulating the behavior of all employees. By definition, organizational culture touches all aspects of the human experience.

The organizational cultural phenotype has also gained increased importance in the educational arena. Starting with Theory Z (Ouchi, 1985), up to more contemporary works, educational leadership has embraced application of organizational cultural theorems to administrative practices. This attention to cultural awareness reflects a paradigmatic change in educational leadership, and reflects an increased systems perspective. Attention to culture mirrors the shift from older scientific management principles to more social, humanistic epistemological models.

The outgrowth of education's acceptance of the organizational phenotype of culture has led to the development of administrative approaches to complex systems through attention to establishment and maintenance of school culture. Such practice models posit that organizational culture provides identity, distinguishing members of one organization from another (Cunningham & Gresso, 1993).

**Cultural Layering: The Point of Engagement**

Racioethnic and organizational cultural phenotypes merge through the process of cultural layering. Cultural layering occurs when individual racioethnic cultural factors are superimposed on organizational cultural factors. Cultural layering is reflective of Heidegger's (1962) and Gadamer's (1981) contention that one's own cultural context cannot be removed while attending to the construction of any other knowledge. In this fashion, cultural layering becomes the fulcrum for the process of engagement with
knowledge. It is the point at which personal interpretation shifts and sorts through available information, ultimately finding meaning that can be expressed in the narrative form. Cultural layering implies that culture cannot be separated from epistemology.

Understanding of the belief structures and ideology of practice professions is essential to effective education within those professions. How a profession socializes new members, how it categorizes information, and how its beliefs are reflected in practice are all part of the profession's cultural identity. How an individual's racioethnic culture changes and is changed by the professional culture is an unclear process. It is however contained in the process of cultural layering.

This study is concerned with learning in higher educational settings. The cultural layers within such systems are enormous. Complex cultural layering includes the interaction of the personal racioethnic culture of both learner and teacher, the culture of higher education, and the culture of the professional discipline of study.

The Culture of Nursing

Nursing, as a scientific practice domain, has a distinct culture reflecting the social and historical roots of the profession's development. Logical, positivistic models of epistemology dominate nursing science. The ready embrace of this epistemology reflects nursing's historical foundations that are broadly and strongly built on borrowed knowledge from related disciplines such as medicine, psychology, and biology. The reflection of Cartesian scientific methodologies in these fields has been reflected in the development of nursing knowledge (Eberhart & Pieper, 1994). The biomedical model,
which is at the heart of nursing's history, is reductionistic and reflects Cartesian duality of mind and body where causality and objectification of knowledge are axiomatic (Watson, 1985).

Nursing culture reflects a belief in the importance of a person's health and responses to disease. Nursing has historically valued holism as a construct (Nightingale, 1860) and has valued both mind and body responses.

The separation of nursing science from medical science remains one of the biggest values reflected in nursing culture. Nursing is seen as being concerned with function; medicine with structure (Lynaugh & Bates, 1973; Mishler, 1986). The structure versus function discourse becomes clearer in the translation of nursing or medicine into practice. Johnson (1993) describes the voice of medicine as stripping illness experiences of subjective, biographical information, thus rendering the experience "context free" (p. 145). Nursing's value of holism is reflected in a greater emphasis on open ended, non-reductionistic concerns with functioning and personal experiences.

Nurses are, by design and practice, good story tellers. The art of story construction and telling is part of every day nursing practice. From "narrative" charting, to shift reporting, nurses practice storytelling as a form of professional identity.

Stories of nursing situations hold enormous power and are representational of the body of knowledge that constitutes nursing science. As much as storytelling and construction is common practice, it is only beginning to be explored as a common pathway to knowing, and consequently as a teaching methodology.

Nursing education reflects and transmits dominant cultural values. Nursing is a
practice discipline. As such, the desired outcome of learned knowledge is praxis (Benoliel, 1987). Letting go of the logical, deductive paradigm has been a slow process in nursing education. Nursing continues to apply a priori theory to experience in linear, sequential approaches in the education of new members. Historically nursing pedagogy has relied on empirical knowledge from medicine, psychology, or sociology, de-emphysising the scientific value of lived experiences. As the stories of nursing praxis have gone unexpressed, a distinct body of nursing knowledge has been difficult to derive and articulate (Benner, 1984; Sandelowski, 1991).

The Culture of Higher Education

The culture of higher education is a complex one. In many ways it reflects the concerns of balancing responsibilities of research, teaching, and publication with the diversity of learners needs. Effective teaching in higher education is defined by more variables, having less to do with direct engagement with learners, than perhaps any other form of teaching. Common correlates of effective teaching such as student feedback, and student performance and participation, are less generally used (Hester, 1994), with research and publication often acceptable replacements.

The culture of higher education is often a culture of unrest superimposed on a culture of stagnant status quo (Bennett, 1991; D'Souza, 1992). This apparent dichotomous culture results in many ways from the effects of cultural layering. Emphasis on organizational culture is axiomatic to the functioning of institutions of higher education. The ability of students to develop an identity as a student of a particular school is an
essential tool of recruitment. But personal cultural factors heavily influence higher education. While representational of the dominant meta-culture, higher education institutions function as a gathering point of convergence of marginalized and minority voices.

The Function of Culture

Culture, both racioethnic and organizational, functions to control the level of discomfort felt by group members (Banks & Banks, 1993; Fuqua & Kurpius, 1993; Schein, 1985). How people interact, communicate, and conform is organized around what will minimize discomfort. Knowledge of what activities are considered "appropriate", conformity to prescribed values, and an awareness of how communication flows afford structure in the form of "ground rules" to minimizing discomfort.

The function of culture takes on epistemologic concerns. Culture, both racioethnic and organizational, represent the framework through which the personal, interpretive process of knowledge construction occurs. The implications of culture on education are consequently enormous.

Education, Learning, and Culture

Two problems exist with current application of organizational theory to education. The first problem is that it tends to ignore the more individualized racioethnic phenotype of culture and its impact on building and defining group culture. The second problem in the application of organizational theory to education is that the theorems have been only applied to educational administration on a broad level, and school culture as a whole.
Little work has been done regarding the individual teacher's classroom as a unique cultural environment, having a unique identity as a community of learners. What then is a good teacher? What behaviors make a teacher good or effective?

Greene (1993) tells us that there have always been strangers in our classrooms. People whose voices were unheard, whose faces went unnoticed. People for whom personal meaning lead to divergent knowledge construction. Did they have effective teaching? Is that conclusion altered by the presence of learners whose construction of the presented knowledge was less divergent? Can the same teacher be both good and bad, effective and ineffective at precisely the same instant in time?

**The Good Teacher**

Determination of effective teaching depends, of course, on what one defines as outcome, and what one expected to find as outcome. Divergent beliefs can exist within the same classroom regarding the effectiveness of the leadership and teaching. Research exists supporting that what one person perceives as a comfortable and caring learning environment, other perceive as threatening and uncomfortable (Goodenough, 1981; Lipka, 1990; Malin, 1994; Nunggumajbarr, 1991; Tucker, 1992).

Cultural differences do affect perceptions of good teaching, thus impacting knowledge construction. But if there is no universality for good pedagogy, how is it that teachers should teach? The answer lies in leadership for learning.
Educational Leadership

Leadership is a highly contextual phenomenon whose ontologic source of understanding lies in one's racioethnic background & culture (Cox, 1994; DuPree, 1989). The environmental context in which leaders function is a cultural context. While a great deal of attention has been paid to the organizational culture in which leadership happens, little attention has been paid to the leaders or followers cultural context, and the interface of the two phenotypes of culture in the learning environment has been largely ignored.

Much has been written attempting to describe leadership in practical, behavioral, and theoretical terms. Almost as many definitions of leadership exist as do writers on the topic. As a concept, leadership has been seen both as the salvation and the curse of our democratic society (Giroux, 1991), and its importance as a concept can be verified by the time and energy devoted to attempts to define, categorize, label, and transmit leadership in functional behavioral terms.

These conceptualized studies on leadership have generated enormous quantities of definitions, concepts, models, and traits, but to date have failed to produce an understanding of leadership that can be directly taught, is transferable to other settings, or to all individuals.

Modernistic Positivistic Models of Leadership

Classical attempts to understand leadership evolved through definable stages that mirror other areas of Cartesian empirical thinking. Research into leadership started with attempts to identify the personality profile of leadership. These attempts were then
followed by the period of behavioral research attempting to identify behaviors consistent with leadership.

Starting with the "great man" approach, trait theory was the first, and perhaps most reductionistic, approach to understanding leadership. Trait, followed by situational approaches, can be characterized by narrow attempts to define particular aspects of leadership (Tierney, 1991).

While there is significant overlap of periods and theories, classical approaches to leadership can be conceptualized as falling into one of six primary models including trait theory, power and influence theory, behavioral theories, contingency theories, cultural theories, and cognitive theories (Bensimon & Neumann; 1992).

Significant overlap exists among these theoretical approaches, but common embedded assumptions yielding defining characteristic are evident. Many limit contextual discussion (Foster, 1986; Tierney, 1994). What is left is often a reductionistic shopping list that scratches the surface of the meaning of leadership. Leadership understanding that is reduced to mere lists of traits and characteristics’ fails to truly explain the phenomena, the lived experience, and thus fails to contribute in meaningful ways to the advancement of the science of leadership.

Post-Modernistic Models of Leadership

Post-modernistic models of transformational, moral leadership have been the latest attempts to categorize and classify leadership. These approaches to leadership are concerned with social engagement between leader and follower (Burns, 1978) and have
been characterized by process concerns applied to changing content.

Recent approaches have begun to emphasize culture as a critical factor to leadership. Early work in transformational leadership began to hint at the role of culture in leadership (Bennis & Nanus, 1985; Peters & Waterman, 1982). Focus has been on the organization as an entity and the culture inherent in its structure. Definitions of leadership by interpretation and manipulation of cultural symbols has increasingly appeared in educational literature, but little to no work exists looking at racioethnic aspects of culture as factors of leadership.

**So What is Leadership?**

Whether or not leadership can be taught or learned has been raised in the literature by many (Heilbrunn, 1994). The challenge for those interested in leadership studies appears to remain an issue of defining the phenomena of interest. Endless paragraphs could be written containing the historic listing of definitions for leadership. Lipham (1964) defined leadership as new structures or procedures for goal attainment. Burns (1978) defines leadership as individual behaviors that can induce others; arouse hope and action in others. Halpin (1966) described leaders as outstanding individuals with unique traits. Sergiovanni (1990) defines leadership as effecting the introduction of something new that helps improve conditions.

Leadership is often defined more easily in hindsight; you know it when you see it, but to define it conceptually is much more difficult. Many argue that one of the most difficult barriers to the development of leadership science is the lack of a consensus over
a common definition (Burns, 1978; Davson-Galle, 1994; Giroux, 1992; Rost, 1994).

Definitional issues are often, at heart, issues of assumptions (Kuhn, 1970). Assumptions that are not clearly stated in definitional terms may lead to faulty paradigmatic behaviors. Leadership studies are replete with assumptions that are not always explicitly stated and definitions that lack consensus and precision.

Leadership Theory: Embedded Assumptions

Conventional thought regarding leadership reflects many of the embedded assumptions that continue to haunt leadership theory. While not implicitly identifying them as embedded assumptions, English (1992), Rost (1991, 1994), Gardner (1995), and Senge (1990) in their work on leadership, have helped identify some of the embedded assumptions that prevail regarding leadership. These assumptions help give rise to and frame a discussion of what is leadership. Understanding educational leadership and how it is practiced and manifested requires comprehension of embedded assumptions communally held regarding leadership (Bowers, 1984; Sergiovanni, 1992).

Embedded assumptions are important to delineate as they help explain behavior and expectation. If one assumes something to be true, one tends to behave as if it were true. If one assumes something to be the nature of reality, one tends to accept actions that reflect such a reality. What then are the embedded assumptions of leadership (Rost, 1994)?

Leadership as Coterminous with Oversight. Steeped in antiquity, with biblical roots to the beginning of man, leadership generally is assumed to have something to do
with management, administration, and governance (Rost, 1994). Leadership is viewed in positivistic, mechanistic terms and as something that is done, not something that is shared.

**Leadership as Larger than Life.** Assumptions of what constitutes leadership haunts the development of leadership theories. Often leadership is seen to be coterminous with doing great things. This leads to the assumption that leaders are great individuals, in possession of unique traits and capabilities that make them extraordinary in comparison to followers.

**Leadership as Expert Knowledge.** Few would argue that leadership, at least as ideally conceived, places the leader in the role of expert, with followers in roles of novice. Leadership is often conceived of as involving subordinate behavior by followers to the expertise of the leader.

**Leadership as Male Oriented Behavior.** Since the dawn of time leaders have been first overtly, and perhaps today more covertly, assumed to be males. Followership has been assumed to be a female trait. While increased attention has been paid to female leadership, and some changes have occurred in this deeply embedded assumption, few would argue that leadership and male traits remain coterminous (hooks, 1994).

**Leadership for Product.** Bureaucracies have been built on the assumption that leadership is about the attainment of goals. It is commonly assumed that the function of leadership is some tangible product. If something did not require doing, leaders would not
be required. This assumption is defined in terms of result and goal oriented behaviors.

**Leadership as Action.** It is to the leader that one often looks for direction, guidance, and problem solving. It is assumed that leadership is about the process of choosing directions, of steering the ship. Leaders must always be active and be in charge of things.

**Leadership and Effective Followers.** It is assumed that one cannot lead if one does not have followers who will do as the leader wishes. Leaders convey direction; followers accept direction. It is tacitly assumed that a few shall lead the many. This assumption assumes leadership is a unidirectional relationship. In this assumption, leadership is residual in one person within a group and ignores the possibility of group leadership. Kelley's (1992) work on followership was one of the first works addressing this tacit assumption.

**Leadership as Power.** Leadership commonly assumes a disproportionate balance of power. It is assumed that the leader has power and the followers will respond to it. Part of the lure of leadership surrounds this assumption. As an embedded notion, many people believe that by virtue of being a leader one will be powerful.

**Leadership as Constancy.** It is commonly assumed that a leader is always leading. Everyday, in every way, a leader is expected to do the nebulous behaviors of leadership. Little consideration has been given to leadership as an episodic event.
Leadership as Control. It is assumed by many, including many leaders, that the role of leadership is to plan for all contingencies, to be in control of all eventualities. In post-modernistic terms, such assumptions seem unrealistic and fraught with disaster.

Criticism and Embedded Assumptions

Critical scholarship is concerned with the assumptions that underpin prevailing beliefs of leadership. Such concern has lead to critical examination of the accuracy and appropriateness of assumptions embedded in common theories of leadership and has produced new approaches to leadership that reflect dialogue and identity as paramount assumptions.

Gardner (1995) in his new work defines leaders as "individuals who significantly influence the thoughts, behaviors, and/or feelings of others" (p. 6). This definition seems, on the surface, a simple statement. Its complexity becomes clearer as one looks at the individuals denoted by Gardner as leaders; figures as diverse as Einstein, Hutchins, Alfred Sloan, and Margaret Mead.

Leaders, according to Gardner, achieve effectiveness through the stories they relate, and in turn are leaders because they embody those stories. According to Gardner, the preeminent tool of the leader is their story of identity. Leadership becomes discourse as the leader conveys and helps shape a new version of a group’s story. Such a concept of leadership is antithetical to almost all embedded assumptions of leadership.
Interpretive Discourse: Leadership for Learning

Humans acquire identity from and through discourse (Cox, 1994; Gardner, 1995; Schon, 1987; Tochon, 1992). Various forms of life writing have been used for decades in curricula in America (English, 1994), and life writing had been an accepted part of education. Its authenticity as a legitimate tool for advancement of education was attacked by the early brushes of the scientification of educational administration (English, 1994; Gibb, 1954), and the use of life writing has subsequently declined. English (1994) argues that the study of the leader was dropped in favor of study of the executive.

The pendulum has swung and renewed interest in life writing is occurring once again in the field of leadership studies. This shift is related to many factors including a documented failure to develop theories of leadership that work and can be taught in practical or theoretical terms (English, 1992; Giroux, 1992; Rost, 1991), increased concern with moral and ethical leadership (Hodgkinson, 1991; Sergiovanni, 1992), and increased interest in reflective practice (Schon, 1987). Additional interest in life writing has been spurred by concerns over marginalized voices in education and, especially in educational leadership, of women and minorities (Capper, 1993; English, 1994; Shakeshaft, 1987). To do life writing is to tell a story, and the story is the narrative of the lived experiences.

A story is a response of awareness. There is presence beyond the story, beyond the narrative as ideas precede the language of the narrative. They lead to a conclusion that a higher order of knowledge, and more complex knowledge construction, encompasses
identity or wholeness. Gardner's (1995) construct of leadership as stories of identity provides a basis for understanding the lived experience of leadership.

The process of storytelling allows the teller to give an unrestricted view of a community of people and invite others to join in the story (Livo & Rietz, 1986).

**Dialectic Thinking, and the Community of Learners**

Leadership found in discourse, found in the life writing process of narrative, is related to the mutuality of joint story building by leader and follower, leader and learner. Leadership that impacts learning results from the mutual and collaborative telling and retelling of storied experiences. Such leadership in education could contribute to shared understanding, consensuses of knowledge construction, and identity.

**Bringing Convergent Models Into Focus**

Research is the birthplace of new knowledge. Education is where the communication of that knowledge occurs. In today's complex world there will always appear to be too much knowledge, too much information to present in cogent ways in the classroom. This apparent paradox allows reductionism to flourish. If the complex amount of information is not broken down into digestible form, so the argument goes, how will neophytes ever digest it all. Experts, teachers, will be the determinants of what information is deemed essential in such an approach. But reductionistic practices perpetuate disengagement with knowledge and limit critical thinking. Engagement with knowledge cannot be based in reductionistic practices.
Synthetic Patterns of Coming to Know

Educational leadership is struggling to develop a theory of practice without really listening to the experiences of learning and by learners as told by their voices. We continue to rely on conventional scripts and theoretical models of management and psychology. Most of our stories of leadership have been relegated to underground coffee pot talk. Rarely do the stories become openly solicited, allowing for a communal dialectic discourse. Stories of leadership are critical. Such stories are the relational, contextual, and reflective measures of leadership in practice. Wholeness and engagement through dialectic discourse represent an alternative pathway to knowledge construction and paradigm for leadership and one that shapes this study.

Interpretive Communities. It was Dewey (1938) who first wrote of envisioning a community of learners. Formal learning occurs in lived experiences of engagement between learner and learned. Learning promotes a process of being and becoming that can be promoted through caring communities. Learning that leaves out voices, which is non-reflective of the community in which it occurs, diminishes all learning, leaves a space of common ground vacant, and leaves an aspect of reality unexplored (Greene, 1993).

Learning best occurs through multifaceted engagement with knowledge. Learning through engagement is expressed in stories shared by a community of learners. Current theory has not gone far enough in listening to the voices and gaining understanding of the impact of stories within the dialectic learning communities.
Stories are about culture. Narratives reflecting experiences are the stories of life, and the cultural factors that shape it. The creation, reconfiguration, and refining of stories in a supported group process can produce communities of thought. Identity can be acquired through discourse (Connelly & Clandinin, 1990; Eisner, 1991; Gardner, 1995; Gudmundsdottir, 1990) and engagement yields knowledge construction.

Leadership and Learning

Many voices have begun to argue for a narrative pedagogy (Clandinin, 1991; Hopkins, 1994; Nehls, 1995; Noddings, 1992). Such an approach emphasizes the centrality of lived experiences as the basis for educational practice. Such a narrative pedagogy encourages communities of learners, engaged in dialogues, and in the caring practice of knowledge construction (Diekelmann, 1993). Leadership in learning presupposes reciprocity, presupposes that leaders are learners and learners are leaders, who all will be storymakers. Culture is an essential factor of such an approach to leadership and is essential to the story. How the leader best manipulates the cultural social learning environment is not well understood.

Where From Here

Breaking the whole into constituent parts that can be logically arranged in linear fashion, viewing our world as a world of "things", complexity as multiple parts of one system; these are the legacies of modernistic scientific inquiry, legacies of a time when things were managed, and understanding was seen as a finite possibility (Banathy, 1995; Wheatley, 1992). The new world is a world of information, not of things, a world of
interactions where complexity rather than people are managed. Leadership for learning is one possible paradigm for the next century and becomes the starting point for this study.
Leadership and learning are human activities occurring within an interpersonal, social context. The concern of this study is to render the lived experiences of others as intelligible, for it is in these experiences that understanding resides.

Understanding leadership and learning requires understanding human experiences. Understanding lived experiences however presents numerous methodologic challenges. Traditional scientific research paradigms assume the existence of objective and certain truths (Schumacher & Gortner, 1992; Wheatley, 1992). Establishment of causality, a central core concept of positivistic research, is often seen as the end goal of the scientific research process. Causality implies that identified factors exert their influence in uniform, static, and stable ways. But the human interpersonal experience of leading and learning is rarely static.

The actions and meanings of leadership and learning, as they are lived and experienced within a contextual-cultural framework, is at the heart of this study. Comprehension of the human experience as it is lived is the goal of the research.

Ontology, Epistemology, and Methodologic Linkages

Selection of a research paradigm is often a contentious process, with methodology consideration often generating passionate and dichotomous viewpoints. Educational literature is not unique in containing strong arguments touting the virtues of either
qualitative or quantitative methodologies as the correct pathway to knowing (Howe & Eisenhart, 1990; Shulman, 1981). Such discussions usually reflect a common viewpoint of the two paradigms as mutually exclusive (Miles & Huberman, 1994; Wasser & Bresler, 1996). This study assumes that pathways to knowing do not always run straight, are not always clearly identified, and are multiple in nature.

Methodologic choices are not simply about different processes of data collection and analysis. They are about fundamentally different concepts of reality, different views of the nature of human interaction, and the nature of living systems. The choice of research methodologies is not simply an issue of using the "correct" method for the research question. A researcher's previous experiences, values, and perspectives impact methodologic choices, often in subtle and unspoken ways.

Epistemology guides methodology, although not always in explicitly stated ways. Because of the inter-connection of the researcher to the chosen methods of inquiry, the ontologic world view of the researcher defines what is believed to be "knowable" and how it can be known. Ontologic beliefs of the researcher are foundational to their epistemology and become the assumptions directly reflected in chosen research methodologies.

The Methodologic Linkages of This Study: Pathways to Knowing

Being a leader is often self interpreting and cultural identity is often self categorized. Therefore, the individual person is one valuable source of information to answer the research questions posed in Chapter 1 of this study. Previous research related
to leadership and learning, as discussed in Chapter 2, has largely taken a positivistic perspective. Relying heavily on scales and other instrumentation to measure such factors as reactions, perceptions, and attitudes, leadership theory has been predominantly reductionistic. While these deductive, empirical studies have produced valuable information for educational practice, the lifeworld of participants has been left largely unexplored.

**Being-In-The-World.** The lifeworld of individuals is often overlooked or taken for granted by positivistic paradigm researchers because it does not lend itself easily to quantification. Miles and Huberman (1994, p.6) discuss the "banal" situations of life experiences as the lifeworld, the essence of human experience that can be explored.

The lifeworld is simply that: the lived experience of an individual as it is contextually perceived by the person. Heidegger seminal work *Being and Time* (1962) discussed the lifeworld as Dasein, or being-in-the-world. Heidegger's phenomenology strives for understanding of the every day lived experiences of people, as this is the residence of meaning.

But the every day is often taken for granted, often overlooked and overshadowed (Dreyfus, 1991), and meaning is lost. That which is "everyday", that which is most meaningful, is often taken for granted and lost outside of conscious awareness. While often hidden, the every day being-in-the-world experience remains one of the most direct links to human phenomena (Dreyfus, 1991; Miles & Huberman, 1994; Packer, 1985; Van Manen, 1990).
Phenomenology and Being-In-The-World. Phenomenology is both a philosophy and a research methodology (Gadamer, 1975; Howard, 1982). Stewart and Mickunas (1990) discuss phenomenology as more of a movement than as a clear, homogeneous philosophical school.

As a research method, phenomenology is a qualitative approach concerned with hearing stories in one's own voice, understanding contextual meaning, describing patterns and processes of connectedness, and in revealing the personal nature of phenomena (Bernstein, 1985; Gadamer, 1975; Hathaway, 1995; Magee, 1987; Packer, 1985; Van Manen, 1990; Walter, 1995).

Discussions of phenomenology as a research paradigm assumes that, like all paradigms, the philosophy provides an ontologic, cognitive road map (Kuhn, 1962) that directs the research process. The word phenomenology has its roots in phainomenon, or appearance, and logos, or reason (Merriam-Webster, 1994). While not new, phenomenology has been increasingly seen as a post-modernistic research paradigm.

The categorization of phenomenology as a new paradigm for research lies in its central focus on the researcher-participant relationship (Denzin & Lincoln, 1994; Heron, 1981; Miles & Huberman, 1994; Reason & Rowan, 1981). Phenomenology as a new paradigm research method represents attempts at critical scholarship, emphasizing negotiation, reciprocity, and empowerment. How much the researcher participates in the process of research and in what fashion he/she participate's is dependant on the specific phenomenologic philosopher the researcher is following.
Phenomenology as a new paradigm research represents what Lather (1986) refers to as research-as-praxis. This study is research as praxis and is predicated on both the philosophical and methodologic work of Martin Heidegger’s (1962) hermeneutic phenomenology.

Hermeneutic phenomenology posits that the uniqueness of human beings lies in interpretation and understanding (Heidegger, 1962). Heidegger rejected the Cartesian notion that truth is equated with objective knowledge gained through scientific methodology. Believing that such a notion provided only one form of truth, Heidegger looked toward another form of truth found in the interpretation of lived experiences. Key to Heideggarian phenomenology is the belief that one cannot understand the person unless one understands the person’s world (Heidegger, 1962). Heidegger’s application of hyphens to his concept of being-in-the-world symbolizes his belief in the interconnection of these constructs. Heideggarian phenomenology assumes one cannot study the individual without study of the context of the person’s lived experience.

Heideggarian phenomenology uses hermeneutic interpretation for analysis of being-in-the-world. Hermeneutics attempts to systematically study descriptions and interpretations of the lifeworld of individuals as expressed orally or in text (Dreyfus, 1991). Such and approach presupposes humans create meaning of their experiences by self-interpretation (Heidegger, 1962). Heideggarian phenomenology presumes that the fundamental dimension of humanness lies in this process of interpretation. Understanding of the world and making meaning of the world are accomplished through interpretation of lifeworld experiences.
The process of self-interpretation is the process of storymaking and storytelling (Clandinin, 1991; Hopkins, 1994; Polkinghorne, 1988; Taylor, 1992). Heideggerian hermeneutics assumes that meaning is often concealed within the language and the culture of the individual. For that reason stories are often the most powerful tool for discovering the being-in-the-world experience of individuals (Batali, 1992; Nye, 1990; Van Manen, 1990).

This study is concerned with being-in-the-world experiences of learning and teaching in an everyday higher education classroom. The study attempts to provide understanding of the ontologic experience of leaders and learners in the classroom environment.

**Narratology as an Organizing Axiom**

The world is different to each learner. In order to understand the individuality of being-in-the-world, individuals must be able to give voice to their unique story (Carter, 1993). While teachers may not inhabit the same world as learner they can come to understand other being-in-the-world experiences.

Every person has a story. Stories have the power to touch people, move people, and change an individual's life perspective (Batali, 1992; Sandelowski, 1991; Sarbin, 1986; Tochon, 1992). Stories are oral or verbal models of lived experiences and as such can form the basis of understanding the Heideggerian concept of being-in-the-world. As stories are authored, rewritten, and retold, knowledge is both taught and realized (Mitchell, 1981). Connelly and Clandinin (1990) discuss humans as "storytelling
organisms who, individually and socially, lead storied lives" (p. 2). To study stories is to study people's experience; to study people's being-in-the-world.

Narratology can also be seen as a form of reason (Benner, 1984; Ricoeur, McLaughlin, & Pellauer, 1984). Information in the form of experiences is constructed into a story with an organized theme. Heidegger (1962) saw narratology as both product and process. For Heidegger all humans exist hermeneutically and construct knowledge, significance, and meaning from interpretation of their experiences. Heideggarian hermeneutic interpretations form the philosophical bases of current work on narratology as pedagogy.

Stories are one mode of building and transferring knowledge. The recognition of one's own story in the telling of others stories shapes and alters knowledge. Narrative inquiry then becomes a collaborative process of mutual storytelling. Understanding and learning are the unfolding of unique stories within the context of daily lives. Individuals think, imagine, and perceive based on narrative structures (Sarbin, 1986). The story is a mode of knowing that best captures the richness and nuances of being human and aides understanding of human behavior (Ricoeur, 1992). From this perspective, narratology is a central organizing cognitive process that impacts learning.

Methodologically, stories as structures represent the phenomena of interest and the narrative, or telling of the story, represents the method of inquiry (Connelly & Clandinin, 1990; Mitchell, 1981; Polkinghorne, 1988). Connelly and Clandinin point out that phenomenology, as a post-positivistic research paradigm, emphasizes the importance of all stories. Not only are research participants' stories critical to understanding and
meaning, but the stories of the researcher must also be told.

Participants and researchers are both story tellers and characters in the stories of others (Carter, 1993). While starting with individual stories, hermeneutic phenomenologic research culminating in shared stories that have the potential to be generalized. Meaning is not constructed from single cases but rather meaningful interpretation is constructed across cases (Miles & Huberman, 1994; Moss, 1996). It is this mutually collaborative praxis that defines phenomenologic research in post-positivistic terms.

This study gives voice to the very personal, very corporeal expressions of both leadership and learning that occur in American education every day. The research approach is based on phenomenology as an ontologic belief. This study is committed to the researcher establishing an authentic relationship of participation with the research subjects. The research is collaborative and oriented toward praxis.

Study Design

Conceptual Framework for Study: Extradiscursive Hermeneutic

Human beings think in the narrative. The essence of human conduct is based on narrative structure (Connelly & Clandinin, 1990; Polkinghorne, 1988; Sarbin, 1986), and interpretation of personal narratives gives rise to understanding behavior (Berstein, 1985; Gadamer, 1981; Habermas, 1979). Hermeneutics implies interpretation and assumes an acausal approach to understanding phenomena. Heidegarrian hermeneutic methods of inquiry will be used in this study to facilitate understanding of the phenomenon of interest. Understanding will occur through interpretation of being-in-the-world
experiences fixed in narrative texts of participants.

Participants

No attempts were made to establish representativeness, and selection of participant population was based on Glaser and Strauss's (1967) theoretical sampling strategies identified in Table 1.

TABLE 1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>THEORETICAL SAMPLING BOUNDARIES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Theoretical Parameter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phenomena</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Knowledge Construction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Method of Inquiry</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Perceptions</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Purposive, non-random sampling strategies (Kuzel, 1992; Miles & Huberman, 1994; Morse, 1989) were used. Table 2 identifies the sampling boundaries used to define case characteristics.
TABLE 2

SAMPLING BOUNDARIES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sampling Parameter</th>
<th>Sampling Choice</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Location</td>
<td>Regional university classroom</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participants</td>
<td>Baccalaureate nursing students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Event Context</td>
<td>Formal higher education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Event Process</td>
<td>Classroom learning environment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Narratologic pedagogy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Dialectic community of journaling</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Fifty-four adults engaged in learning and teaching in a regional university setting participated in this study. Fifty-two of the participants were baccalaureate nursing students enrolled in a required senior level course on psychiatric nursing. Two of participants were nursing faculty who co-taught the course. One of the nursing faculty is the writer of this study.

Method and Data Collection

To write is to think, and it is the process rather than the product that often yields the greatest expansion of knowledge (Chinn, 1994; Nehls, 1995). Qualitative research methodologies have increasingly been seen as valuable methods of inquiry, and the method of thoughtful, reflective writing has gained ground as a legitimate methodology.
One reason by challenging and altering premises while thinking through a problem.

Study participants were asked to give voice to their being-in-the-world experiences through reflective journal writings. All students registered for a senior level nursing course were able to choose to participate in an optional assignment designed to enhance self-learning. Students choosing this optional learning assignment kept a journal reflecting their personal learning as the course progressed. Journals were kept for a 12 week period as the classroom culture was developing, and contained individual narratives of personal experiences regarding learning during this course.

Each student was asked to make at least one entry per week and was required to submit journal entries at six preset intervals during the research period. The length of the journal entry and the contents were up to each student. A protocol was given to all participants to guide the journaling process.

This study's author was researcher and participant, storyteller and story listener. Both teachers engaged in the journaling following a similar broad protocol.

Students interested in this research study were invited to have their narrative data entered into the study. All but two registered students choose to participate in the research. All narratives, whether involved in the study or not, were anonymous. No names appeared on submitted journals.

Participants self-selected unique identification numbers to individualize submitted journals. A master list containing students self-selected identification number linked to names was maintained, but at no time was an attempt made to connect student to submitted materials. Records were kept of which students handed in journals so that
points for the optional assignment could be calculated. At no time were names attached to
the actual journal narratives, and there was no penalty for choosing not to participate in
this study.

All students who handed in a journal, whether participating in the study or not,
received 10 points for the optional assignment of self-learning. The 10 points was
included in the overall course grade calculation. No additional grade points were given
for inclusion of data into the research project.

Data Collection Methodologies

All student learners registered for the psychiatric nursing course were invited to
participate in this study. Because self-awareness and self-learning are widely
acknowledged constructs of psychiatric nursing, the process of journaling was consistent
with the course's focus and incorporated into the course as an optional assignment.

Journaling for the full time period culminated in 10 points being earned toward
student participants final grades. Participants who choose to engaged in journaling
handed in their writings at six discrete times during the twelve-week interval, on a
scheduled basis consciously linked with course pedagogy. The writings were anonymous.
but a composite list of students turning in their journal writings was kept for the purposes
of point assignment.

Reliability of Narratology

Narrative inquiry has no formal reliability measures of proof (Chinn, 1994;
Polkinghorne, 1983). The trustworthiness of the personal sharing that is the heart of the
narrative determines the reliability measure. Several steps were taken during this study to enhance trustworthiness and thus increase reliability. These steps included:

1. Voluntary selection for inclusion of subjects.

2. Ongoing contact with subjects, designed to enhance openness and trustworthiness of narrative.

3. The use of protocol designed to clarify and to give structure and focus to the narratives.

4. The use of a pilot test of the clarity and user-friendliness of protocol format.

5. Anonymity of journal offerings to promote frank reflective writing and minimize power issues that might impact honest expression.

Issues of the rigor of the study are further explored in Chapter 4, along with formal research findings.

Data Analysis

Data analysis occurred through constant comparative methodologies. Narratologic data analysis was facilitated by use of a qualitative software program, QSR NUD.IST 3.0, or the Non Numerical Unstructured Data Indexing Searching and Theory-building Multi-Functional software program. This program allowed for analysis of unstructured textual material that was the data of this study.

All textual journal data collected during the 12 weeks was imputed into the software program. NUD.IST software analysis consisted of construction of a tree-structured index systems that allowing for coding and categorization of similar data sub-
sets. Taxonomic organization of textual data occurred as commonalities and complex
grouping became apparent. Comparison, relationships, and contrasts among the collected
textual data occurred through Boolean and non-Boolean co-occurrences of nodes in the
text.

Boolean algebraic logic, developed in the mid-nineteenth century by George
Boole, gives power to qualitative comparative analysis (Ragin, 1987). Boolean principles
represent logic consistent with everyday experiences and assisted with data comparison in
this study. Boolean principles such as use of binary data, truth tables, Boolean algebraic
addition and multiplication, prime implicants, and combinatorial logic (Ragin, 1987;
Scolari's user's guide for QSR NUD.IST, 1996) all factor heavily into QSR NUD.IST
software. Non-Boolean co-occurrence of nodes presented flexibility to the researcher to
combine and compare data sets not algebraically logically related, but none the less
considered significant to the study findings.

Conceptual context relations, tree-structured relationships of nodes, and
construction of n-dimensional Miles and Huberman (1994) qualitative matrices were
aspects of the software assisting data analysis.

Interpretation of textual materials is not a new process, and application of
contemporary software analysis supplies another tool to make clear, to bring
understanding, of textual language (Eberhart & Pieper, 1994; Palmer, 1969; Taylor,
1992). The analysis process assumed individual personal experienced is fixed in time in
the narrative. The narrative then represents the human phenomena of interest as
experienced by the subject.
Data analysis was in many ways personal, and a non-reductionistic pathway of inquiry. The use of computer software gave some structure to analysis, but data analysis in qualitative studies remains a somewhat subjective analytic process. Analysis was grounded in a reality of the highly personal context of the data, and textual content was examined and reexamined until it was perceived to reflect the experiences as lived by the participants.

Journal Protocol

A journaling protocol was developed and pilot tested using a 10 member pilot group of nursing students. Protocols were modified based on pilot test findings. Each study participant was given a copy of the protocols to guide the journaling process. The protocol included a) discussion of the optional learning journaling process and b) guidelines for the journaling entries. The journal protocol given to participants is presented as an appendix.
Findings of this study were based on analysis of collected data from journal writings of study participants. The rich amount of data was systematically analyzed in a fashion consistent with qualitative research processes. Analysis processes were drawn from a number of texts (Denzin & Lincoln, 1994; LeCompte & Preissle, 1993; Munhall & Boyd, 1993; Van Maanen, 1983), most notably from the methodologic processes of data reduction, display, and conclusion identified by Miles and Huberman (1994).

Ethical considerations for data collection were met and included human subject review approval from the East Tennessee State University Institutional Review Board. Informed consent was obtained from all participants and each participant was aware of the possible use of quoted materials as part of the analysis process. Confidentiality of participants was maintained during the data collection period through use of numerical coding to identify journal entries of particular participants, and at no time did participant names appear on data.

Sample

Fifty-two students participated in the study, as well as the two co-teachers of the course, one of whom is the author of this study, making for a total of 54 participants. Sampling selection was purposive and non-random and contained a naturally bonded group of students and faculty that comprised a senior level nursing course. Criterion
sampling was accomplished through adherence to boundaries defining case characteristic as identified in Chapter 3.

**Sample participants consisted of six male students, 46 female students, and two female course faculty.** Student participants ranged in age from 22 to 57 years and course faculty were ages 42 and 63. All student participants were full-time senior level students enrolled in a program leading to a baccalaureate degree in nursing. Two student participants had masters degrees, one in education and one in social work, four students had bachelor degrees in other fields, and several students had associate degrees in health related fields. Faculty participants were experienced teachers and had been teaching nursing for 11 and 25 years respectively.

**Research Context and Background**

Issues of context are fundamental to most aspects of data analysis in qualitative researcher (Denzin & Lincoln, 1994; Huberman & Miles, 1994; Munhall & Boyd, 1993; Van Maanen, 1983). Context cannot be held constant and personal behavior is usually best understood in context specific terms (Mishler, 1978; Mishler, 1990).

The teachers and student in this study were participants in an undergraduate nursing program. Much of the collected data represented participant perceptions of nursing school in general, and the current semester of required work in particular, as a contextual frame of reference.

Data provided by participants often touched on aspects of learning and knowledge construction from concurrent course work. Contextual perceptions appeared to cut across
the spectrum of participants' experiences and did not rest exclusively with the course in which data collection occurred. For this reason a context chart was developed as an aide for data analysis. Table 3 identifies the context chart of concurrent course work for study participants.

TABLE 3
CONTEXT CHART OF PARTICIPANT'S COURSE OF STUDY

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Concurrent Course Taken by Student Participants</th>
<th>Credit Hour of Concurrent Courses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>During Data Collection</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ALNU 4150 Care of Adults w/ Acute Complex Crises</td>
<td>2 credit hours</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ALNU 4151 Acute Complex Practicum</td>
<td>4 credit hours</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ALNU 4160 Care of Adults w/ Post Crisis Chronic</td>
<td>2 credit hours</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Problems</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ALNU 4161 Post Crises Chronic Practicum</td>
<td>4 credit hours</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PMNU 4170 Care of Clients w/ Psychosocial Crises</td>
<td>2 credit hours</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>(Data Collected In This Course)</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PMNU 4171 Psychosocial Crises Practicum</td>
<td>4 credit hours</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PMNU 4050 Nursing Research</td>
<td>3 credit hours</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Data Preparation

Data collection occurred at six discrete time intervals during the study, yielding approximately 870 pages of textual data. The majority of textual data was submitted on computer disk with participants using a variety of common word processing programs.
Data were submitted in a typed paper format in a few cases where study participants did not have access to a word process.

Raw data submitted by participants on computer disk was first reformatted for consistency, then converted to ASCII format. Data in paper form were entered as ASCII data using a computer scanner, and then reformatted for consistency. In a few cases paper data could not be scanned, either because type fonts were too light or of an odd configuration. In these cases the textual data were retyped into a word processing format then converted to ASCII form. In all of the cases where data required retyping, an individual uninvolved with the study was employed to read transcribed data to assure consistency with the original text.

Data were then combined into six individual documents, headed with the date of collection, and sub-headed at the start of each participant's data. Documents containing participants' data were made for each of the six collection periods, making a total of six documents for study analysis, each containing the journal entries of all 54 participants for that data collection period. The six documents were then entered as on-line documents into QSR NUD.IST computer software program to allow for further analysis.

Early Data Analysis

Initial analysis of data began with establishment of units and categories for the collected data using a modified constant comparative approach (Glaser & Strauss, 1967; LeCompte & Preissle, 1993). Each participant's journal entry within each document constituted the basic unit of study. Each line of text within each unit was identified by a
numbering system. An index system was created within the QSR NUD.IST program allowing for provisional category coding. The use of categories allowed for differentiation and combinations of text units that seemed to be related to distinctly similar content.

Initial categorization was based on descriptive coding (Miles & Huberman, 1994) coming from the original research questions of this study. This interim list contained four opening categories: individual knowledge construction, social knowledge construction, perceptions of classroom leadership, and cultural factors. Very broad category descriptors were initially employed to begin analysis of data.

As initial data review and comparison occurred, propositional assertions were made to further characterize the properties of each category. These properties allowed for more complex interpretive and patterned coding (Miles & Huberman, 1994), and gave rise to rules for inclusion of data units. A hierarchal index system of coding was developed as patterns emerged. Clear operational definitions were then established for the emerging codes in order to provide each category set with internal consistency (Miles & Huberman, 1994).

Data Analysis

Operational definitions for established coding provided a guide for inclusion of textual data into or out of defined categories. Once a working index tree system was established and all data coded, a review of the entire set of categories was done. Some coded categories were renamed or redefined, and some discarded as redundant or
irrelevant during the evolution of data analysis. New operational definitions were
determined at each instance of revision or alteration of category coding. All data were
then reexamined and each text unit re-coded to match the evolution of the tree indexing
system.

Data reexamination consisted first of within-case analysis of the six discrete data
sets. The six within-case documents represented each of the six discrete episodes of data
collection. Cross case analysis of all collected data across the six collection periods was
done once within-case data had been analyzed. Cross case ordering and explaining (Miles
& Huberman, 1994) yielded the basis of the theoretical models discussed in Chapter 5.

Particularly rich or exceptionally representational and meaningful data were
identified during the establishment of the index tree system. These data unit sub-sets were
identified and specially coding through use of the QSR NUD.IST memoing feature, and
based on Glaser and Strauss's (1967) guidelines for conceptual intent memoing and
Miles and Huberman's (1994) notion of marginal remarks.

Review and reexamination of both data and coding system was halted based on
accepted criteria of saturation and regularity (Glaser & Strauss, 1967; Miles &
Huberman, 1994; Lincoln & Guba, 1985) and when all incidents of data could be readily
classified.

Figure 3 illustrates the approach used in this study of within-case analysis, leading
to cross-case analysis, leading to theory. The final index coding system guided this
process.
With-In Case Analysis

Collect With-in Case Data

Study & Explore Data

Develop Ideas

Form Categories Reflecting Ideas About Data

Index/Code Data Into Categories

Change Categories As Understanding Grows

Search Index Tree For Pattern Matches In Other Cross-Cases

Cross Case Analysis

Link To Other Data Nodes

Test Theory

THEORY DEVELOPMENT

Link To Other Data Nodes

Test Theory

Figure 3. The relationship of with-in case analysis to cross-case analysis.
Rigor of the Study

Quantitative research has a long history of well-established procedures to ensure the rigor of study results. Interpretive research is similarly concerned, but recognizes different concepts and terminology in addressing rigor (Denzin & Lincoln, 1994; Firestone, 1987; Leininger, 1992; Maxwell, 1992; Moss, 1996; Sandelowski, 1991). While both the language and the concepts of interpretive research change, rigor remains an issue of importance for qualitative studies. Rigor, as applied to this study, is addressed below.

Reliability and Validity: Revisiting Rigor. Rigor of this study was based on identified qualitative concepts and terms. Credibility, transferability, consistency, and confirmability (Denzin & Lincoln, 1994; Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Maxwell, 1992; Miles & Huberman, 1994) were used as measures of rigor in this study as alternatives to conventional criteria of validity and reliability that are associated with naturalistic research.

Credibility: Truth Value. Credibility, analogous in interpretive research to internal validity, was used to ensure valid findings. Methods of prolonged engagement and member checking (Denzin & Lincoln, 1994) were employed. These rigor checks, first implemented by Lincoln and Guba (1985) assist determination of credibility by taking the data and interpretations to the source from which they were drawn and asking if the results are plausible. Prolonged engagement was attempted during this study by having
data collection span a 12 week period and by having researcher and participant interfacing occur at least weekly. Member checks were done on three separate occasions toward the end of the fourteen-week semester to ascertain credibility of interpretations. All three checks met with subject acceptance of interpretations.

**Transferability: Applicability of Results.** The issue of transferability, analogous in interpretive research to external validity, was used to ensure valid findings. Denzin and Lincoln (1994) discuss transferability as an issue of fit. Study findings that fit context outside the current research situation have transferability. Fit was checked during data analysis by the researcher discussing study findings with six currently practicing nurses, and four current nursing students, all of whom are going or went to schools other than the research location. All six nurses and four student nurses agreed with identified themes and were readily able to relate personal experiences compatible with study findings. Transferability was further assessed by including a large number of cases, 54 participants, and by intentional examination of data looking for dissimilarity or extremes of representation.

**Consistency: Dependability of Measure.** Consistency, analogous in interpretive research to reliability (Miles & Huberman, 1994), was used to ensure reliable findings. Consistency measures attempt to ensure clarity and accuracy of findings (Miles & Huberman, 1994), and are checked by the degree to which readers can follow the logical progression of conclusions drawn from the data. Consistency was meet primarily through the use of the qualitative computer software, QSR NUD.IST, to facilitate and provide a
hierarchical graphic of the process of conclusions reached during data analysis.

**Confirmability: Objectivity in Results.** Confirmability, analogous in interpretive research to objectivity, was used to assist, as much as is possible in interpretive research, in ensuring externally reliable findings (Denzin & Lincoln, 1994). Confirmability in this study was achieved through the inquiry audit process (Miles & Huberman, 1994) of clear description of each research stage, use of QSR NUD.IST software, and explanations of how findings were reached during data analysis.

**Findings**

Analysis of study data resulted in findings representing the lived lives of both students and teachers in one higher education classroom. Textual categories, as described previously, gave rise to concepts, and concepts were grouped into themes. This process of researcher in constant interaction with the data gave rise to two types of themes representing the lived experiences of learners and teachers and are the findings of this study.

Two types of themes are identified; content themes and process themes. Content themes represent concepts explicitly expressed by sample participants, and were derived primarily from within-case data analysis. Process themes, representing conceptually implicit data, embody patterns indicating deeper meaning to the data. Process themes were derived primarily from cross case data analysis.

The findings, reported as themes derived from the data, are categorized for presentation in relationship to the initial research questions. Findings will be presented
individually for each of the four research questions of the study. A thematic conceptual matrix table for each research question will be presented, followed by an in-depth discussion of the findings for each question. Interpretation of the findings will be presented in Chapter 5.

Results: Research Question 1

The first question that this study attempted to address was how individual knowledge construction occurs in a higher education setting. Seven themes were identified from the data, four content and three process, that addressed how individual knowledge construction occurs. These themes are outlined, along with sub-themes, in Table 4.

Content Themes Regarding Individual Knowledge Construction

Sample participants’ perceptions of themselves as learners yielded much data about individual knowledge construction. A discussion of each theme and relevant excerpt of participants follow as descriptors of the lived experience of individual knowledge construction.
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<th>Content Themes</th>
<th>Sub-Themes</th>
<th>Definitional Characteristics</th>
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<td>Written</td>
<td>Identified behaviors described by participants as useful in the process of knowledge construction.</td>
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<td>Auditory</td>
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<tr>
<td>Environment</td>
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<td>Identified characteristics of the learning environment that were perceived as either helping or as hindering the process of knowledge construction.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Non-Classroom</td>
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<tr>
<td>Content</td>
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<td>Identified factors that related to subject content and were perceived by participants as important for impulsion in the process of knowledge construction.</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Interest</td>
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<td>Context</td>
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<td>Identification of two frequently expressed contexts of learning for which participants expressed perceived preference.</td>
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(Table Continues)
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<tr>
<th>Process Themes</th>
<th>Sub-Themes</th>
<th>Definitional Characteristics</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mistakes</td>
<td>Price</td>
<td>Perceptions regarding the acceptability and the usefulness of mistakes in the process of knowledge construction.</td>
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<td>Power</td>
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<td>Perceptions of the balance of power and the effect of power in the learning process as a factor affecting knowledge construction.</td>
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<td>Projective</td>
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<td>Perceptions of identification with the leader as a major factor effecting individual knowledge construction.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Identification</td>
<td>Competency</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Behaviors

Behaviors as a theme was expressed by student participants as self-identified psychomotor actions taken by learners in their process of knowledge construction. No discussion of behaviors was expressed by teacher participants. Expressed behaviors fell into one of three sub-themes; auditory, written, or ritual and indicated the nature of the behavior.

Auditory. Student participants commented on the need to hear, in live time, the didactic presentation of the teacher.

I learn best by sound. Hearing something explained to me by someone else is probably how I learn best. I can listen to tapes later, but it isn't the same as being present in class for first hand hearing.

Comments on auditory behaviors were identified by more than 40% of the student participants.

Written. Student participants discussed written learning behaviors that they believed supported or hindered individual knowledge construction. Data categorized under this theme included common psychomotor activities such as recopying notes, transcribing tape-recording lectures, or outlining text book materials. Also, included was self-identified behaviors of reading and re-reading written materials.

Ritual. Student participants identified ritual learning and study habits that represented repetitive patterns of behaviors routinely undertaken during knowledge
construction. Data were classified into this category if participants described a degree of stress or anxiety, or anticipated reduced learning, if unable to perform the ritual activity.

Rituals were identified as important both in the classroom as well as outside the classroom setting. Typical classroom rituals consisted of identified need to sit in a certain location, for example a certain distance from the door, or a certain number of rows from front or back of the classroom. Outside of class rituals pertained mainly to study habits that were highly personal in nature. One student, perhaps best reflecting this theme by describing one such study ritual.

... I'm sitting in the same big bright room, in the same chair, with a cold glass of Mt. Dew, it must be Mt. Dew, and a new carton -- it has to be new -- of cigarettes. Its all lost if I don't follow this.

**Environment**

All participants commented on perceived importance of environmental factors in the process of knowledge construction. This content theme could be further divided into two sub-theme, classroom environment and outside classroom environment.

**Classroom Environment.** Almost all participants commented on classroom environmental factors as affecting learning. Teachers commented on structural needs that affected teaching such as blackboard and room size. Classroom elements identified by students as strongly impacting learning included factors such as the temperature of the classroom and the comfort of the classroom chairs. Participants who identified the impact of environment on their learning, reflected an almost universal perception that they could
do little about it.

The classroom only influences my learning if the room is too cold, too hot, or too crowded. This makes me agitated, and I cannot do anything but complain which does me no good at all and changes nothing.

**Outside Classroom Environment.** Most student participants identified environmental factors within their home or study environment as affecting knowledge construction. The most commonly identified factor related to sound level. Students either identified a strong need for absolute silence or a strong need for background noise while studying. Common statements such as "Complete silence drives me up the wall" coexisted with statements such as "It has to be so quite I can hear a pin drop for me to learn".

Participants identified preference for noise level showed an overlap of sub-thematic clusters. Participants who self-identified as auditory learners frequently identified themselves as learners with more rigid environmental needs, and complete silence as a learning need. Students who self-identified as written learners, with strong needs to rewrite notes, and reread text, required the presence of some degree of background noise for studying. The comments of the below student help to express this overlap of theme clusters.

It also helps a lot to take good notes while hearing an explanation. I jot down any points of information I did not know and I also make notes of any further questions I may have. After this process is over, I find I absorb
the information the best if I simply read and reread my notes. I occasionally will refer to an additional text or reading on a subject with which I am really struggling. I usually sit in my bedroom with the television and radio turned for background noise. Complete silence drives me up a wall.

Content

The theme of content was expressed in discussions of the impact of the content to be learned to the process of learning. Student participants identified four sub-themes relevant to content as factors affecting individual knowledge construction: experience, interest, usefulness, and comparison. Expression of content as a theme was closely aligned to impulsion, or the motivation for learning.

Experience. Experience with the content matter was discussed as being highly related with perceived ability to learn the material. Students saw having experience related to the content to be learned as beneficial in knowledge construction. Only three participants identified a lack of experience with content as actually helping knowledge construction. Experience was expressed by participants identifying at least one experience perceived as related to learning in at least one of their courses this semester. Participants strongly linked experience to impulsion for learning.

Having a personal involvement with some of the topics we are going to discuss, makes me even more curious about the topics and wanting to know more. If me or my family has had it or knows someone with that
problem then I want to know lots about it.

Three outlier data sets existed regarding experience. These three students felt that no experience with the content was helpful to the process of knowledge construction.

For my nursing data base this is an entirely new set of information [psychiatric nursing]. One good thing about knowing nothing about the subject is that I have no preconceived ideas about it. It is like starting a new adventure and I am real excited. I am going to visit places that I have never been to before as I start out in this psych course.

Interest. Participants described a link between interest in the material to be learned and ability to learn content.

The content means a great deal to me. If it's something I'm interested in it's much easier learned. If I find it boring or off-the-wall it becomes more difficult to learn.

When students perceived no interest in the material, impulsion to learn was decreased.

I usually try to do well in all my courses, but if it is one that I am really interested in I give it 200%. Most people learn what they are interested in. Let's face it, some people like psych, others like med-surg. Which means that the content will be more interesting to some and not so interesting to others. I learn because I want to learn and I learn what I want to learn.

Participants identifying experience with content as affecting impulsion for learning showed an overlap of sub-thematic clusters with interest, although not in all cases.
Experience with material in many cases was identified as leading to interest, which in turn was seen as enhancing learning. Students shared an array of personal experiences that had effected interest in learning.

I think that what is happening in my life determines how I engage in the material for class. As I said before, a lot of things that are said in class [psychiatric nursing] affect a "normal" person's life.

I have been going through a lot during this year. As a matter of fact, my father has been dealing with depression for most of his life. In December of 1995, my dad decided he was too stressed in his job and decided to take off for Florida. Needless to say, my family's Christmas was ruined because he decided he was not coming back. My parents had decided to get a divorce and had the papers drawn up. A few weeks before the divorce was to be final, they decided to work it out.

I don't know why I decided to put that part of my life in this journal. I guess it was to show that I will probably pay special attention to the lectures on depression. I have a lot of questions that I would like answered. Eagerness to learn various information is always increased when it is dealing with someone you love. Maybe I can make a difference...

Usefulness. Many students identified a relationship between how useful they perceived the content to be with how much energy they would invest in learning. The
usefulness of content was determined in one of two highly subjective ways; did it fit the learners' perception of an essential nursing skill, and/or did the teacher identify an acceptable degree of usefulness for the content prior to introducing the content. Without exception, participants who described usefulness as a theme discussed a decreased learning for content deemed non-useful.

I am a learner, a consumer of knowledge. What I can use I can consume.
What I can't I discard and don't consume.

Comparison. A small number of participants, 9%, discussed knowledge construction in terms of comparison learning. Students who identified comparison as a theme identified that learning was enhanced when current content could be correlated or compared to prior learning.

I think a lot of nurses and nursing students have never gone beyond knowing facts to being able to take what they have learned and incorporate it into other situations. When I can compare this thing to that thing, then I commit to long term not short term memory. Then I KNOW it.

Context

The context in which formal learning occurs was identified in comments by 16% of student participants as affecting knowledge construction, but was not addressed by teachers. Comments fell into two categories, as either an expressed perception that "hands-on" experiential learning was more effective than a didactic format, or a perception that didactic format was most effective for learning.
No amount of text learning can compare to the actual hands on experience I receive. I only wish that we as nursing students had more hands on time.

**Process Themes Regarding Individual Knowledge Construction**

Three process themes were identified that pertain to individual knowledge construction. They include mistakes, power, and projective identification. A discussion of each theme, sub-themes, and relevant excerpt of participants follow as descriptors of the lived experience of knowledge construction.

**Mistakes**

The theme of mistakes was expressed through discussions that juxtaposed student participant perceptions of learners and leaders. Within the theme of mistakes were two sub-themes; price and profit.

**Mistakes: The Price.** More than 50% of student participant expressed a belief that in the profession of nursing mistakes could cost lives, and that belief weighs heavily on students.

I worry constantly over how I might harm someone - maybe kill someone.

A lot of what we need to learn is so we can help but the flip side is that we can kill just as easy.

Participants expressed a belief that making mistakes carried enormous risks and were to be avoided at all costs. Teachers expressed that mistakes, within reason, were useful teaching examples when shared with students. Teachers, according to learners, had an
intolerance of mistakes, and that to make one, especially in the clinical setting, was
costly, not only on an academic basis, but on an interpersonal basis as well.

She had a terrible temper, talked badly to students, and would not hesitate
to ravage someone in front of clients, students, or visitors in the hospital if
a mistake was made or she though you were going to make one. It had a
major impact on my ability to learn under her supervision. I was raised in
this area and my husband and I know many, many, people here. I had tried
to avoid her because I knew people who had family members on the floor
where I was doing my clinical and I had worked in that facility also and I
did not want to be embarrassed in front of them. She did however manage
to embarrass me to the fullest extent of her ability in front of clients and
family on one occasion. I lost any possibility of learning that semester. I
spent all of my time avoiding her and avoiding mistakes instead of
learning.

This lead to an expressed concern by learners that they were expected to know how to do
things perfectly before they had an opportunity for skill mastery.

I don't like having to learn by mistakes, even though I feel I learn best
from other people's mistakes, and of course my own. I try hard not to
make mistakes but sometimes the pressure and stress to not make one
alone causes them. We have only one chance to get it right and we got to
do things even before we know how to do things and no way out if we
mess up. I wish there were a way to teach that didn't expect perfection all
the time.

This concern was expressed for classroom as well as for the clinical setting. This other course [stated concurrent course] it's a joke. There is no learning taking place, just mere survival. The faculty, many of who are unprepared themselves, have no understanding when we just do it wrong and often respond with "Why haven't you finished your assignment, or Why do you need more time". Being wrong doesn't mean I didn't do it, it means I done it wrong. Our grade depends on everything being perfect to the letter on the typed page but when [sic] my time to learn it?

**Mistakes: The Profits.** Just as participants were able to express the cost of mistakes, they eloquently expressed the profit of mistakes to individual knowledge construction. Multiple examples were expressed of learning arising out of mistakes, sometimes egregious ones. One participant described how a mistake of not trusting her judgement placed a patient at risk, but as she later wrote, the mistake became the biggest learning opportunity of her semester.

...Upon arriving back [to the setting], I asked about the patient's condition. I was told she had tried to kill herself while we were at lunch. She had tried to hang herself in the bathroom. Fortunately, her attempt was not successful but my learning was. This situation taught me two things. The first, that we should trust our gut feelings, no matter who else may question that judgement. No harm can come from asking, but a lot could
result from not asking. Second, I learned, that we need to listen to our
patients and take what they say seriously. I'm so glad I learned so much
from such bad.

Another participant commented on a mistake in patient care that had significantly
affected learning. These comments occurred after their depiction of somewhat less then
ideal communication interchange with a psychotic patient.

...So you asked how I learned what it is to be a psych nurse. Well that
situation that I messed up was it. Well, I would hope that a psych nurse
could handle this situation a little better than I did. But you know what; I
have now had sometime to think about it; all the scratching, mumbling,
and pacing that went on in that room. Learning happened too 'cause I see
my mistakes.

**Power**

A myriad of thoughts was expressed by participants that gave rise to the
development of the process theme of power. Participants shared many ideas about power
as a concept in the construction of knowledge. Most notable were expressions discussing
power as a factor between learner and leader. Two power sub-themes were identified. The
first, empowerment, arose from expressions of times when power seemed shared between
learner and leader. Vulnerability, the second sub-theme, was noted in expressions of
instances when students felt powerless over their own learning.

Participants commonly expressed that teachers had great power, although seldom
was the word power directly used. Almost without exception, student participants identified the teacher as one of, and often the most essential, factors effecting individual knowledge construction.

I feel the teacher is the biggest thing that assist the student in learning and can be the biggest [thing] that hurts a student. A teacher that does not care about the class or the information can make learning a big chore. A teacher who is caring and is happy to be in the classroom and loves their work can make learning fun and students learn.

Multiple student participants expressed similar perceptions.

I believe that teachers play a large role in their student's learning. Teachers have the power to either make learning more difficult for us or to help us be successful learners.

Many student participants identified personal characteristics that they liked or disliked in the teacher.

I like to see a professor who is confident and knowledgeable in their field but does not act as if they are the top dog in the field. Good ones make learning, bad ones stop it.

In a few instances' power was directly referred to in an open manner.

I consider school as my job, my instructors as my bosses and my report card as my pay check..... hell of a life don't-cha think? My degree and [nursing] licensee is power, freedom, strength and independence. But it ain't mine just yet. I can't have the power till I play the game and let others
have power over me for a while. Then I will have power to be an equal rather than a student. Oh happy day.

Expressions of teachers as powerful, influential individuals were repeatedly encountered, as were concerns over teachers' use of perceived power.

Knowledge is power. So teachers are very powerful individuals. Anyone can have knowledge; but knowing how to use that knowledge is wisdom.

So not all teachers are wise with their power.

Student participants whose expression of power were most emotive frequently gave examples of situations in which power was perceived to have been used in a negative manner by the teacher. These participants identified the result of the perceived misuse of power as decreased learning.

I have spent more time playing games in [concurrent course]. I spent eight hours critiquing an article with only the book to help me 'cause the teacher said "I should know this" only to find out that for the most part I totally missed the boat. It really ticks me off too! But what can I do, I am only the person who graciously pays the tuition! I am a student, someone who can be treated badly by the person who hands out the grades and determines whether or not I will pay for the class again.

Expressions of the perceived link between teacher and the process of knowledge construction was repeatedly encountered. Without exception, those expressions linked perceiving the instructor in a positive light with learning, and perceiving the instructor negatively as decreasing possible learning.
The instructors is a major factor which can improve learning. Burned out instructors should be removed from the classroom to administrative levels only. When instructors are dictatorial, pissed, sick, depressed, watching the clock for golf times, or distracted then the class is distracted and tunes out the instructor.

Passivity in learning appeared linked to power as a theme. Repeated review of the wealth of expressions on this topic gave rise to the concept that power was at the heart of the teacher-learning link. In almost every case, student participants described passive involvement in their own learning, expressing a belief that the teacher would make or break the experience as a learning opportunity. Expressions were repeatedly encountered indicating that disengagement with learning, and a passive reliance on the teacher to make learning occur, were in reality issues of vulnerability and powerlessness.

One of my instructors this semester, [name], doesn't explain the material in a way that we can understand it. It seems as though she thinks we can comprehend the material on the same level as she does. I think all instructors need to take a step back sometimes and remember that we are STUDENTS and not experts! We are here to learn, not to be degraded or failed because we don't have the knowledge or experience of our professors. As I said before, learning is only as good as it's instructor.

Another student reflected a similar belief.

I think that what influences me the most is the instructor. Sometimes I feel inadequate about my learning abilities, like I am not reaching my full
potential. I can only reach my potential if I have a good teacher who can make me learn. I hope you will share your knowledge and make me an effective learner.

The above expression was typical of many and paradoxically reflects disengagement as coinciding with clearly articulated desires to learn. One teacher participant expressed frustration at perceived passivity of students and no awareness of the stated desire to learn.

While passivity was the commonly stated experience, it appeared that the desire for active learning was still present, as was respect for the power of "good" teaching.

Anyone can get up and read to us from a book like we were all in kindergarten, and any lazy person can give us all a workbook that accompanies our textbook and say "Here's your workbook to go home & do it. I don't care if you come to class or not. Just learn the material and come back in four weeks to take your test". Since this is an anonymous paper, does a PhD make you a teacher? Well does it Dr. [named teacher]? I'm sorry, that was uncalled for, or was it? That is the point. Anyone can be a teacher, but it takes a special called person, if you will, to be a TEACHer. So, TEACHer, teach me.

**Projective Identification**

Closely aligned to the theme of power is the theme of projective identification.

Student participants frequently discussed engagement with learning to be, in large
measure, really an issue of engagement with the teacher. When students felt a connection with the instructor, they expressed that their interest level in content increased, implosion for learning increased, and active learning occurred.

Two sub-themes were identified under the theme of projective identification. These were caring and competency. When student participants believed these two characteristics were present in the instructor, they then felt an engagement with, and identification with, the instructor. Student participants repeatedly expressed that it was the identification with the instructor that made the learning experience become either good or bad learning. Projective identification was seen as a powerful force, often affecting a student’s career path decision.

You can pick up on if the professor is there for the students or if they are there simply to get a paycheck once a month. I can understand the paycheck thing. However, like nurses, it takes a special person to be a teacher. Someone who is empathetic, but knows how to say NO when its wrong in a caring manner. I can honestly say that if not for some of my clinical professors, I would not have the confidence that I have been known to portray in the clinical setting. A professor can either make or break your decision to go into Nursing or other career path.

For example, I was thinking of pursuing a nursing job in pediatrics. My instructor ruined my experience in my pediatric clinicals. As a matter of fact, I had such a bad experience with her I do not want to pursue this interest I once had and will never go near peds again.
A relationship was noted among these themes. The two sub-themes of caring and competency referred to as desired characteristics of a "good" teacher, were two of the primary sub-themes noted by participants as significant aspects of nursing culture. It appears that what is valued in the profession of nursing is valued in its teachers and emulated in active learning of nursing content. Because of the overlap of thematic clusters, sub-themes of caring and competency will be further addressed under findings of Research Question 4.

Results: Research Question 2

The second question that this study attempted to address was what factors influence the social process of knowledge construction. Two content themes were identified from the data. These themes are outlined, along with sub-themes, in Table 5.

Content Themes Regarding Social Knowledge Construction

Two content themes were identified as pertaining to social knowledge construction. One theme, chums, represented discussions of individual perceptions of fellow students as affecting social knowledge construction. The second content theme was expectations. Expectations represented discussions of cognitive perceptions of interpersonal expectations of significant others in students lives as affecting social knowledge construction.
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<tr>
<th>Content Themes</th>
<th>Sub-Themes</th>
<th>Definitional Characteristics</th>
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<tbody>
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<td>Saviors</td>
<td>Identified perceptions of participants reflecting effects of fellow students on the process of knowledge construction.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Goats</td>
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<tr>
<td>Expectations</td>
<td>Family</td>
<td>Identified perceived expectations of self and significant others that were perceived as either helping or as hindering the process of knowledge construction.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Self</td>
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Chums

The theme of chums was expressed through discussion of the role fellow students played in the process of learning. The structure of the nursing curriculum is designed so that student groups progress, for the most part, as cohort groups. Study participants had been together as a group for four semesters prior to this course.

Student participants expressed two polar views of the effect of chums on their learning. Participants reflected either on relationships with fellow students as significantly helping or as significantly hindering learning. This lead to identification of two sub-themes of chums, saviors and goats. One teacher participant expressed the value of fellow teachers to her work.

Saviors. The sub-theme of saviors represented data expressing the merit of close interpersonal relationships with fellow students. Enhancement of content understanding as well as a social support function were the usual expressed value of fellow students to learning.

My fellow students are a blessing to me, because they help fill in the gaps the teacher failed to get across to me. We offer each other support and insight that keeps me progressing through the program. My fellow students, my friends, provide me with a shoulder to cry on and when I'm down an applause for success.

While some participants reflected an individual one-to-one level of relationship with fellow students as helpful, some reflected on a broader group relationships.
My fellow students influence my learning by helping me out in groups in reviewing material. I have a group of students that meet before exams, and we quiz one another on material we need to know. I find this very helpful in learning last minute material before an exam.

**Goats.** An equal number of expressions occurred regarding the negative impact of fellow students on learning.

What gets in the way of my learning is smart or stupid people trying to make the teacher think they are smart by asking stupid questions. Example: the teacher says the sky is blue, then the student says "So what your trying to tell me is the sky is blue, do I have it?". It makes me sick, it wastes my time and my learning capabilities because for the next five minutes of lecture I am not listening to the teacher I'm sitting there thinking of how badly I'd like to beat the shit out of that student. We have about three of them in our class, so I lose approximately 15 minutes at least all the time in lecture.

Goat expressions often took the form of concern over classroom behavior of fellow students.

I think our class has a lot to learn about classroom etiquette. Most of the students in our class could care less that an instructor is speaking and other students want to hear what she has to say. There are those few who still play little school girl and whisper and pass little notes to one another. So
no one learns.

The goat theme was also expressed by participants as a dislike of enforced group activities.

I consider many of my fellow students to be very rude in that they talk while the teacher is lecturing with no consideration for those of us who really need to learn. This has been a constant problem with our class. Its even worse when we do group stuff. I HATE group projects! I do not think my fellow students contribute to my learning, or think group projects contribute to the class as a whole in the learning process. Each group has a tendency to learn more about their topic, some members learn and contribute more than others; but it is hard to learn material presented by other groups. Many times the material presented is inaccurate which I believe to be negative to the overall learning experience.

Findings indicated an interrelationship between chum and the behavior theme. Those participants who expressed auditory learning behavior preferences and a need for quite learning environments also expressed chum savior statements. Those participants who expressed written learning behavior preferences and a need for noise in learning environment expressed chum goat statements.

**Expectations**

The expectations theme was expressed in participant descriptions of cognitive perceptions that were social in origin. Sub-themes identified were family, which included
perceived expectations of family members, and self, which included participants perceived expectations for themselves that usually reflected believes regarding significant others.

**Family.** Participants expressed their family as having an affect on their social construction of knowledge.

I love my family very much. God has blessed me with two wonderful parents, a close relationship with my sister, and a good relationship with my brother. I was also blessed with a terrific aunt. All of them impact my learning. I get calls from my parents, Aunt, and sister every week. They always say, "You are going to be the best nurse ever." My mom always teases me and says, "You're going to have to be the one to take care of me when I am older." Yes, I guess I will. I guess I better graduate.

Not every student felt the expectations of family to be a positive force.

I must graduate, I can not fail. To fail is unacceptable to my parents. To not be the best is unacceptable to my parents. To be me is unacceptable so I will be the great nurse they want instead.

**Self.** This sub-theme was expressed as cognitive perceptions and self induced factors relating expectations to learning. Expressions of expectations of self were perceived often as helpful to knowledge construction by increasing desired learning outcomes.

My family influences my learning because I want them to be proud of me.
I want to do better than anyone in my family ever has. I want to make more money, I want a bigger house, I want to drive a nice car, I want to take vacations, I don't want to break my body trying to make a living. I don't want to have to be married to someone I don't love just because I can't make it on my own. I will be the only child to be able to help support my parents when they need it. I want to be able to meet that demand and not have to strip me of all my freedom and earnings. So you can see why I have to learn.

Participants' expectations often reflected a need to do well academically in order to provide examples for their children.

I am a mother, and feel that it is important for me to set a good example for my children who are in school. They may not follow my example, but they will know how I feel about school and hard work, and hopefully they will apply this to their future in college and the work force.

This concept was repeatedly encountered and expressed as both a barrier and a motivator of learning.

Education is important to me and I want to show my daughter that knowledge gives a person power to become whatever they want. This puts a lot of pressure on me to do well and I wish sometimes I could just pack it all in, but I can't 'cause of her.

Many female participants also expressed a need to reduce perceived stereotypes of mothering and female roles.
I am female and I come from an upper middle class divorced family. I had a daughter while I was in high school and that is the biggest reason I strive so hard in college. I feel that I must set an example not only academically, but in the way that I present myself in order to show people that not all teenage mothers are on welfare, illiterate and incapable of giving their child a conducive environment to live in.

Expectations were also identified as barriers to learning, especially when the expectations of family roles conflicted with school roles. This perception was expressed by male as well as female participants.

I don't mean this in a negative way but the biggest barrier to my learning is my own family. With a wife and two toddlers, time is a very difficult thing to find. Most of the time I can't play Daddy so then I have to study with screaming kids running wild.

Participants who were not married also expressed that self induced expectations often affected knowledge construction.

During class I have a hard time learning and it's my fault. I'm setting [sic] there thinking I got to go to the bathroom, but if I get up I might miss something, and if I miss something, I'm going to do bad on the test, and if I do bad on the test, I'm going to fail, and if I fail, my mom and dad will kill me, and by the time all of that runs through my head I've missed the whole sentence and I miss the next sentence trying to get the one I missed first. So how does it feel to set beside me in class, EXHAUSTING.
Results: Research Question 3

The third question this study attempted to address was how individual perceptions of knowledge construction were affected by a teacher's classroom leadership. Two content and two process themes were identified from the data. These themes are outlined, along with sub-themes, in Table 6.

Content Themes Regarding Perceptions of Teacher Leadership

Expressions of perceptions of classroom leadership produced two content themes, apprentice and pilot. Both themes expressed the concept of leadership from different positions. Perceptions of students as recipients of teacher leadership are expressed in the apprentice theme. Students' perceptions of teachers' responsibility as leader of the classroom is reflected in the pilot theme.

Apprentice

Student participants had a great deal to say about their role within the context of the leadership process. This theme shows great overlap with prior discussions of power as a theme. Two sub-themes of apprentice, dependent and inept, were identified.

Dependent. Student participants once again expressed their role with the leader in passive dependent terms, often seeing themselves as at the mercy of the leader. Teacher participants commented on the passivity but not the powerlessness noted by students. Students expressed dependency in many ways, often around issues of grades.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Content Themes</th>
<th>Sub-Themes</th>
<th>Definitional Characteristics</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Apprentice</td>
<td>Dependent</td>
<td>Identified characteristics of perceived role behaviors of students as recipients of teacher leadership and how this effects knowledge construction.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Inept</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pilot</td>
<td>Pacing</td>
<td>Identified characteristics of the role behaviors of leader or teacher in the process of knowledge construction.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Volume</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Milieu</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Process Themes</td>
<td>Sub-Themes</td>
<td>Definitional Characteristics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Authority</td>
<td>Professional</td>
<td>Perceptions regarding the characteristics of good and bad leadership as it impacts the individual process of knowledge construction.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Expertise</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tension</td>
<td>Us - Them</td>
<td>Perceptions regarding tension as a perceived aspect of leadership within the classroom setting and as a factor effecting knowledge construction.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Us - Us</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The rest of my life hangs right now by a slip of paper called my grades. I hope the teachers this semester are good so that slip of paper is good.

Student participants expressed their interactions with leaders, commonly expressing that relating to the leader was very important. No expressed experiences of non-passive relationships with leaders were noted, although they were expressed as the ideal.

Overall, I am a better learner when their [sic] is less pressure surrounding me. I can learn more effectively when a teacher doesn't try to intimidate me and I can relate to them. Basically, my learning is enhanced by a teacher you can relate with and one that you aren't scared to ask questions.

A teacher is supposed to help me and not let me fail.

Expressions indicated that students, even in ideal terms, perceive themselves as apprentices to the expert leader, and that unequal balances of power were expected and are the norm. The following comments of a participant came after a discussion of perceived abuse of leadership power and serves to illustrate this point.

So I am saying to anyone who will listen, it is important for teachers to be stern with students. I don't expect to be "buddies" with instructors, but I do expect to be able to get every bit of knowledge out of them as the experts. They are in charge and I'll do what I'm told to do but please tell me clearly and tell me often what you want [me] to do; I also expect I will give as much respect as is given to me.

Inept. The sub-theme of inept was expressed as the consequence of negative
leadership. Participants commonly expressed this sub-theme with examples of situations in which teacher leadership had decreased knowledge construction by leaving them feeling inept.

At times instructors (not psych), will make me feel like I am the "dumbest" kid on the block and I feel that I can't do anything right to please her. This in turn makes me feel even more terrible about myself. I don't think she should speak to me like that, I think she should encourage instead of discourage. I guess another thing I'm learning is that I can not learn from those who should not teach. I try to focus on doing my work and keep telling myself I WILL make a great nurse and I know this is what I'm called to do. On bad days remembering this is ALL that keeps me going.

**Pilot**

Perceptions of what a good leader should be like is expressed in the second theme, pilot. Student participants gave three broad categories of behaviors deemed necessary in good teacher leadership. These three categories are represented by the sub-themes of pacing, volume, and milieu. Concurrence with sub-themes was expressed by teacher participants, but with teachers seeing students as having shared responsibility for these functions; a sentiment not expressed by learners.

**Pacing.** Almost every student participant commented on pacing as an essential behavior for good classroom leadership. Pacing is expressed in students description of the
A good professor understands that we can not write 200000000 words a minute. I like instructors that make sure you are caught up and understand the current topic before progressing to the next one.

Problems with pacing often fueled perceptions reflective of the inept sub-theme. Pacing was also expressed as the time allocated for student perusal of visual material such as overhead transparencies. The excerpt below reflects both pacing and ineptitude as expressed concerns.

Another thing I think the teacher needs to do is use overheads right. Like in [concurrent course] only people in the front row can usually read it and the teacher doesn't give you enough time to make notes from it. She seems to forget that it took her longer than 2 minutes to write all that stuff down, and tells us not to worry if we didn't get it all. It leaves me feeling frustrated and like I missed something or goofed up somehow. Its scary to think that the one line you didn't get written down may be the test question that keeps me from passing the test.

**Volume.** Participants expressed concerns with the amount of content presented to them, and such expressions are reflected in the volume sub-theme. Almost all participants expressed concern over volume control as a behavioral responsibility of the teacher.

This is only the second week (of classes) and I feel so overwhelmed.

Every semester we are expected to learn more and more in just 15 weeks.
It's too much to take in and retain all at once. It's just like that they try to cram so much information into our heads in 15 weeks that I think I'll EXPLODE.

Almost all participants expressed concern over the enormity of carrying such a large credit load for this semester. Expressions that teachers' behavior should include identification of essential concepts amongst the perceived content overload were frequently encountered.

For the majority of the time I feel that nursing classes try to cram too much information into one semester classes. This gets in my way of learning because there is just too much information given, and there is no possible way that I could ever remember or learn all the material given to the nursing students to learn. I like a teacher who sorts me through it so I know what to focus on.

Milieu. Milieu control was expressed as an essential role for the classroom leader. Most learner expressions of milieu control saw the leader as fully responsible for milieu with the learner as passive observer. This finding shows theme overlapping, and is consistent with earlier discussions of disengagement and passivity of learners. Participants identified noise control as one of the biggest aspects of milieu control.

The environment in the classroom I find distracting at times related to the noise of students talking. I find it hard to concentrate when I cannot hear. This is not a new problem to our class. They are very rude and
inconsiderate of those around them. I personally believe that it is the obligation of the instructor to make sure that the environment is congruent with learning.

Milieu control has, in part, a large overlap with concepts of organizational culture and as such will be addressed further in the finding of research question 4.

**Process Theme Regarding Perceptions of Teacher Leadership**

Two process themes were identified consistent with classroom leadership and its effect on individual knowledge construction. The two themes are authority and tension.

**Authority**

Authority was seen in participant expressions that the teacher is both leader of the classroom and expert on the content. As discussed earlier, student participants expressed a belief that identification with the teacher enhanced individual knowledge construction. This theme expresses how identification occurs, and why it does or does not occur. Two sub-themes were expressed; professional and expertise.

**Professional.** The sub-theme of professional contains expressions by student participants of ego ideal characteristic that reflect good leadership. Without exception, all student participants in the study expressed caring as the single most important characteristic demonstrated by teacher. Individual learning was perceived as enhanced when caring was perceived to be present in the teacher, and the teacher was perceived as professional if she/he was deemed caring. Learning was decreased or perceived as absent
when caring was not associated with the teacher, and professionalism was deemed absent.

I feel if the teacher doesn't care about the students then they see teaching
as a chore, they act unprofessional, and it makes learning to me harder.

When a teacher cares then they want the students to learn, it makes
learning much easier and more enjoyable.

It was significant to note that student participants did not universally equate liking the
teacher as necessary for perceiving the teacher as caring. Some expressions occurred
indicating the essential aspect affecting learning was perceiving the teacher as a caring
individual in his/her capacity as teacher or as nurse. Learning was enhanced in these cases
even though interpersonally the student may still dislike the teacher.

It doesn't matter for me to have to like the teacher but they need to be
caring if I will get anything from that class. I had a clinical teacher who
was a jerk to me; but great with the patients. From her I could learn, she
taught me to care for my patients.

Expertise. Expressions of expertise were equated by student participants with
effective leadership. Students equated their perceptions of the teacher’s content expertise
with how effectively they lead.

I am assisted in my learning by having the chance to have someone
demonstrate or explain to me what I am trying to learn. I can not learn by
simply only reading a book. I can never learn difficult material in this way.

This is why I feel one need an instructor who is an expert. I need an
instructor who is willing to explain and cover ALL their expertise to help me become the expert. That's the instructor I'll listen too.

Interrelationship of themes was again noted. Authority sub-themes of professional and expertise mirror expressions encountered earlier. Sub-themes of caring and competency, referred to as desired characteristics of a "good" teacher, appear under this theme as identified characteristic of effective leadership. As discussed earlier, caring and competency were two of the primary sub-themes noted by participants as significant aspects of nursing culture. Because of the overlap of thematic clusters, further discussion of caring and competency will be addressed under findings of Research Question 4.

**Tension**

Participants expressed the process theme of tension in a myriad of ways. Tension was expressed as a normally anticipated part of the leader-learner process within the learning environment, and closely paralleled the power theme discussed earlier. Expressions of participants indicated that tension was a natural consequence of power balances, and could either increase or decrease knowledge construction.

The link of tension to knowledge construction was expressed primarily in terms of risk-taking ability. As tension decreased, students risk taking ability such as asking a perceived dumb question, increased and perception of learning increased. When tension was high, risk-taking diminished, participation through engaged dialogue diminished, and perception of learning decreased.

I feel our instructors are our mentors but also guides who show us the way to
become better nurses. But there is always a certain strain between "Us" and "Them", some classes more than others. One of the best things a teacher can give a student is a comfortable environment in which a student can feel free to let down his or her guard and ask maybe a "dumb" question; after all that's what we're here for to learn and perhaps that bit of information just hadn't sunk in yet. It's a wonderful feeling when the strain goes down enough for the light to turn on for someone.

Two sub-themes of tension were identified: Us-Them and Us-Us. These sub-themes reflected polar extremes of leader inclusion.

Us-Them Tension. The us-them sub-theme reflects perceptions of tension occurring between learners and leader that subverts dialogue and engagement. While such a process was expressed as commonly drawing learners together, united in common feelings against leadership, it was perceived as decreasing knowledge construction. Sub-theme expressions of us-them occurred as students discussed interpersonal experiences occurring between teachers and students within the classroom.

The classroom that I am in does not impact the learning unless the room is too tense. I can remember taking [stated course], boy was that a terrible learning experience!!! I hated that class because the teacher did not like any of us and we all knew it. Each time I went to class I was a stressball, and I can honestly say that I didn't learn a thing. I felt that I'd be in trouble if I ask anything, and in trouble if I did not, so I tried to set down and read
the ol' [stated text] but it was useless, all we could do is be quite and tell each other we were in this leaky boat together and she couldn't fail us all.

Us-Us Tension. The us-us sub-theme reflects perceptions of a relaxation of tension normally anticipated between learners and leader. The us-us sub-theme reflects perceptions of tension reduction as stimulating learning by increasing risk taking behaviors.

Classrooms can get real uptight sometimes. I believe the lecturer controls the anxiousness of the students and the amount of uptight feelings we get. For me, it is very comforting to know that I can walk into this classroom and not feel that anxiousness and have the confidence that I will not lose the lecture during the lecture and be left worried and scared. Not being uptight means I can learn better what I need to know by being part of it not scared of it. I can even ask a question if I want to with out me feeling stupid and dumb.

Student expressions of reduced tension were frequently linked to experiences with teachers who used humor and informality as a reduction technique.

After only two [stated course] classes, I must say that I rather enjoy the classes. I believe the reason I enjoy the class so much is that the instructors make the class enjoyable. The instructors make learning fun. They seem to know how to make the students feel relaxed and at ease. Most instructors don't make the class seem as enjoyable as [named teachers]. This is an
asset for these two instructors because I believe students learn better if they aren't forced to feel so stressed during lecture class. I actually (SHOCK!!) look forward to [stated class]. I look forward to the laughter and the relaxed atmosphere that is created from the instructors.

Humor was not the only identified expression of leadership skills that reduce tension. Attention to other aspects of good leadership as identified in themes in Table 6 such as pacing and volume also helped reduce perceptions of tension.

I like to be able to understand and keep up with what is going on. In many of our classes we are not given enough time to keep up with the material being presented so within ten minutes we are lost. Within the next ten minutes we are lost and frustrated. By the end of the class we are completely pissed off and have no idea what we just covered in the class. This [stated class] and the instructors give us the opportunity to ask questions, so I can keep up and be part of discussions and not just writing all the time being pissed off. This is greatly appreciated.

Thematic overlap was noted between expressions here regarding tension, the theme of power, and the theme of mistakes described earlier. Overlap was also noted with discussion of findings for research question 4.

**Results: Research Question 4**

The fourth question this study attempted to address was the interface of racioethnic and organizational culture in the process of knowledge construction. Two
content themes were identified pertaining to organizational and racioethnic culture. One process theme was identified that addresses this research question. These themes are outlined, along with sub-themes, in Table 7.

**Content Themes Regarding the Interface of Culture**

The interface of culture to knowledge construction was expressed in a variety of ways by participants. Expressions by participants lead to the identification of the content themes of organizational, or nursing culture, and racioethnic culture.

**Organizational Culture**

Perceptions of organizational culture were identified primarily as a nursing culture theme. This was done because participants continually referred to the current learning culture as one that embodied their perceptions of what nursing was all about. Perceptions of teaching leadership were often framed as perceptions of what professional nursing was, or should be. Three sub-themes were expressed including responsibility, caring, and competency.

**Responsibility.** Responsibility was a theme that weighed heavily on student participants. Responsibility was expressed by all participants and took a variety of forms. The most common form of expression of responsibility entailed description of students wishing to do no harm to patients. This shared value became the focal point of identification with the learning environment, and thus with the profession of nursing. Student participants expressed this as a fundamental value ingrained within the learning environment.
### TABLE 7
THEMATIC CONCEPTUAL MATRIX - RESEARCH QUESTION 4. INTERFACE OF CULTURE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Content Themes</th>
<th>Sub-Themes</th>
<th>Definitional Characteristics</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Organizational</td>
<td>Responsibility</td>
<td>Identified characteristics of the organizational culture of the learning environment, as interpreted and emulated by teachers, and as reflecting the profession of nursing.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nursing</td>
<td>Caring</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Competency</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Racioethnic</td>
<td>Gender</td>
<td>Self identified characteristics of racioethnic culture expressed effecting the process of knowledge construction.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Appalachian</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Process Themes</th>
<th>Sub-Themes</th>
<th>Definitional Characteristics</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Narratology</td>
<td>Stories</td>
<td>Perceptions regarding narratologic expressions as effecting learning, culture, and climate and thus as effecting knowledge construction.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Empowerment</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Responsibility showed thematic overlap with the previous discussion of mistakes. The expressed normative and shared value of do no harm often created a climate of unrealistic expectations with students seeing perfection as the behavior norm. Students expressed the unrealistic nature of the perfection behavioral norm, but attributed failure to attain it to personal failure as opposed to unrealistic norming. Stress became the expression of this conflict. The stress was often attributed to conflict between attempts to be perfect and carrying 21 credit hours for the semester.

There is so much to do. I usually am able to turn everything in on time but you know what I ask myself every time I do turn something in? I wonder how good this assignment would be if I had really spent quality time on it. Would my grade have been better? I don't know if I will ever find out the answer to that one because I don't have any more time anywhere.

Do you know what I'm scared of? If this is the kind of student I am, what kind of a nurse am I going to be?? Will I be careless when giving medications or doing my assessments? What about my charting? I want to be recognized as a good and conscientious nurse. I want patients to say, "I am glad she was my nurse. She took very good care of me. I couldn't have asked for anyone better." I want my employer to say, "What a good decision it was to hire her. She will make a good name for this hospital." I do love the profession of nursing, but can I cut it? Maybe my view of myself is clouded because I feel so discouraged. This semester is such a
heavy load to carry.

One outlier case identified the extent that stress manifests failure to achieve an unobtainable perfection.

I feel like I should be perfect, and because I can't I feel deficient. Maybe I am not cut out to be a part of this profession. I don't know that if I had it to do again, nursing would be my last choice for a course of study. This experience has been the most stressful and horrifying experience of my life. It's almost worse than rape because my life has been taken away in a sense. I have lost and given up so much since I started this program that I doubt my own sanity. I can't live up to the expectations anymore. It is killing my soul little by little.

Some participants even perceived that the learning culture was intentionally established with such stress as a preparatory activity to assist students to meet the expected stress of professional nursing.

Caring. The second sub-theme expressed was caring. Caring, as discussed in previous themes runs constantly through the culture of the lived lives of participants. Caring represented the most universally expressed shared value of both teacher and learner and was expressed by all participants. The universally perceived importance of caring is demonstrated by examination of the frequency of occurrence of the word within the textual data. Variations of the root word care was found in 11,611 text lines of data.

Examination of the expressions of caring highlights an interesting finding. While
caring was a universally shared value among participants, students perceived caring as frequently absent in the learning culture. Expressions of this have been demonstrated in earlier participant excerpts and is embodied in the following participant comment.

    Sometimes I wonder if anybody here cares. We are told good nurses care about the patients. We get spanked in clinical if we aren't caring enough, what ever that is supposed to be! What about me? I think it is very important for the teacher to care about her subject and about my learning. I feel a teacher that does not care about the class or the information can make learning a big chore. A teacher who is happy to be in the classroom and who cares about us as students can make learning fun and students want to learn. How come not many of my instructors care about me?

**Competency.** The sub-theme of competency was closely aligned with caring. Competency was seen by participants as a shared value and as an idealized norm of the culture. It was also seen as an aspect of the culture of learning.

    Knowing that I am a nursing student seriously affects my learning. I am going to school to learn how to take care of people when they are sick and dependent on competent and complete care by a trained professional. I am going to have people's [sic] lives in my hands. That is something all nursing students should take seriously. We aren't just in our classes to pass or to graduate. We are learning critical information that will be used in our profession when we become RN's. That is sometimes scary to think about.
Competency was often express in relationship to perceived classroom caring levels.

I mainly just listen in class because I don't like to involve myself in conversations in which I really don't know what I am talking about and end up looking stupid.

Competency was seen as closely linked with caring as seen in the following excerpt.

I hope this class will be a comfortable environment for my asking my questions. If I don't get my questions answered now I am missing my chance to learn stuff. Because next year I may have a patient with a disease and I would hate to say I never really understood that in school, sorry. Now is my chance to get my questions answered so I hope I can ask them.

Racioethnic Theme

Racioethnic culture was expressed as a theme by participants. Two sub-themes were identified, gender and Appalachian, and reflect participants reflections on the effects of culture on learning.

Gender. The majority of participants were female, reflecting the majority of the nursing profession. The majority of participant females expressed perceptions that being female had little impact on learning. "Being female has no impact on my learning" is an example of the common perception of female participants. All male participants, in contrast, saw gender as a strong influence on their learning.

Being male in our society influences my learning by placing some burdens
on learning in a predominantly female profession due to gender bias. This is sometimes very hard to overcome and sometimes can't be overcome.

The student is required to either adapt to the gender bias or change his major of study. Some older female instructors are the source of the gender bias by ignoring the need of male students, which is primarily the need to be accepted.

Six female participants expressed some concern that females in society faced barriers in the both the learning and the work environment related to gender.

The view of myself as a female also influences my learning. Sometimes as a women, I need to work harder and longer to prove myself. I think women have a rough time in society. Many men even today look down on women or take advantage of them.

Participant expressions of the theme of gender support an interesting point. Members of the dominant culture did not think gender influenced learning. Those participants not of the dominant gender group felt that it was a strong influence on learning.

Me being a male in a female dominant field, keeps me more determined in my learning. I feel that I'm not accepted as much as my female counterparts, and I have to try much harder to get by or be heard. I feel the program is centered around a womans' point of view and interests, and views me as an outsider. I shouldn't be a threat to anyone, but merely an equal counterpart, who can make a contribution to class and can ultimately make it in the workforce.
Appalachian Theme. Participants expressed strong identification with Appalachian culture. Over 80% of participants identified with either a "Mountain" or an "Appalachian" cultural identity. Appalachian or mountain culture was expressed by participants as highly influential on learning in two ways; one perceived positively and one negatively perceived.

Participant expressions commonly commented on the powerful family bonds, pride, and strong work ethic inherent in perceptions of Appalachian culture, as well as cognition of stereotypes about the cultural identification.

I view myself, proudly, as a white, southern Appalachian female. Now that in itself contains all kinds of stigma. Aren't southern women really timid, shy, and a little backward? Their southern drawl intended to drop men where they stand? Get real. I am proud of my heritage, and the work hard notions. I do think that we as southerners, and as women, are viewed with stigmatisms that are just not so. Certainly, I want to prove them all wrong with my becoming well educated, intelligent and mannered. This makes me want to "rise above" - learn more and educate the less intelligent southern female "bashers".

Participants also expressed perceptions that Appalachian culture de-emphasized the importance of formal education. Many participants expressed that they would be the first in their family to graduate from college, and that family or friends had a hard time understanding the need for college.
Culture plays an important part in my learning process because of how we were raised and what our mountain parents/family views education. My mother and father did not have over a 7th grade education and I was brought up using very poor english. It is hard for me to write and it has been a struggle for me to use the correct language. Language barriers make it difficult for to some people and always show people I am from the mountains. But I know I will go and be a first college graduate from my family.

Participant expressions of culture reflected similarities to the gender sub-theme. Participants not of the dominant gender group felt more disconnected from the social process of learning then members of the dominant group.

The biggest problem I have with learning is to try and do like the people I associate with most in my class. I am not from around here and they see me as different, and I know I am different from them. Even worse, I'm from up north. When I am able to separate out the differences I can accomplish more than when I try to be like them. This is not an easy task always though because everyone expects everyone to be like everyone else here.

Process Themes Regarding the Interface of Culture

One process theme was identified as related to the discussion of culture. Expressions of journaling as a classroom norm, as well as a teaching leadership strategies
supplied material for identification of a narratologic theme. Narratology as a theme represented two main participant perceptions discussed below.

Narratology

Narratology as a theme was identified through participant expressions of both journaling and stories. Rich support for narratology as a theme came from perceptions of the journaling process that was at the heart of this study. The narratology theme produced two sub-theme; stories and empowerment.

Stories. Almost all participants expressed stories as a useful and valued teaching strategy that impacted knowledge construction. Stories told by teachers that illustrated a learning point were particularly valued.

It's easier to learn anything when the teacher gives anecdotal examples of the information. It seems that it is easy to remember a story that goes with a concept, especially a humorous one.

Almost all participants expressed a belief that they had powerful and pertinent learning stories of their own but expressed frustration that they routinely had no valued outlet for these expressions. Thematic overlap was noted between stories, mistakes, and caring. Participants expressed having stories from their own learning but reluctance to share these stories in most learning environments for fear of looking either less competent or getting in trouble. The classroom norm of not sharing was frequently expressed by student participants.

There are many things that influence if I participate in class content.
Usually, I sit and take notes and absorb what is being said, and I generally do not take part. I usually feel I have a story or situation that illustrates just what the teacher is saying, but I do not always share these stories because what if the teacher does not like it, and does she really want me to share it anyway? NO!!

Narratology was commonly used by the author of this study in the class where data collection occurred. Exposure to this teaching leadership produced expressions of the impact of stories on learning.

What is very interesting and helpful to me as a learner is by starting lecture with a story dealing with mental illness, and presented signs and symptoms usually set in the ER setting. It's kind of like a collection of choose your own adventure novels in which you are faced with a critical situation. You are given the story but with the option to solve it. You have to decide your own fate. These stories help us coordinate what the patient really needs. We become the mediator, arbitrator, and coordinator All in one.

**Empowerment.** The empowerment sub-theme showed similarities to the stories sub-theme. All but five participants expressed the journaling process as an empowering experience that gave voice and value to their personal stories. The empowering nature of narratologic journaling related to three factors; anonymity, increased self learning, and formal sanctioning of stories.

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Participants expressed that anonymity allowed for truthful expressions of concerns and, in part, increased perceptions of individual power over learning. Participants expressed that the new norm of sharing personal stories was very helpful to learning by making students feel included in knowledge construction.

Examples were given of past incidents where participants had been asked to share their stories, in the form of reaction or reflection papers, only to find their perceptions are invalidated or punished.

It was nice to know what I wrote down was not going to be used against me. No one is going to know who wrote what. Lots of teachers want to know what you think and then ask you to write your name at the top. In effect these teachers are saying "write down what I want to hear".

In [stated concurrent class] we wrote what we truly thought about a project in the "what do you think the benefit of this project was?" blank. Then the teacher proceeded to lecture for one hour that we were unprofessional because of what we wrote. Simply because we disagreed with her made us wrong.

Self learning was stated by all but four participants. In many cases participants expressed surprise at the self learning that had occurred.

I thought when I first signed up for this project that it was going to be a big waste of time but I knew I would need the extra points come December. I started the first entry and found that all this stuff came pouring out of my head and on to the paper. Then I was looking forward to
writing the next one. I would sit down and write my entry. Then when I
reread it I would say "I didn't know I thought that". For so many years
we've been taught to think in a certain way, and then when you write down
what you feel it seems foreign. This project really helped me to get back in
content with my feelings about learning.

Participants expressed that the process of receiving points for journaling sanctioned their
stories as valuable and worthwhile thereby decreasing perceptions of passivity in
learning. Participants expressed that narratologic strategies enhanced learning through
changing risk taking behaviors, increasing active participation in learning, and altering
classroom climate by making learners more responsible for their learning.

I never realized this experience of journal writing would be this helpful. I
figured it would just be busy work. These writings have been a positive
experience. These writings have brought many things out in the open and
to light. For example, these writings have helped me determine what I like
best about teachers methods. This helps me focus and is already helping
my grades. These writings have made me more aware of my surroundings.
It has also made me more aware of my strengths and weaknesses like not
participating in class. These writings have caused me to think about some
of the most important aspects in my life. I am more responsible for my
learning. I am more in charge of what I am learning and how I am learning
and so I need to be in class not just sitting there vegging out.

Three outliers were found. These participants acknowledge empowerment as decreasing
passivity of the learning process, but expressed discomfort with increased responsibility for their learning.

I just want to tell you that I do not like the way we are allowed input into our grades. I need a dictator to decide for me. This decide for myself thing is totally new. I have always been told by the professor how I am to learn, write a paper, read a book, that's how it is. Now I have some say in all this. What if I decide wrong? That means I am to blame. This means taking responsibility for my own actions now. THANK YOU! (This is meant sarcastic.)

Expressions of plans to continuing journaling were encountered, with 10 students planning to continue active journaling of learning, and six students planning more personal forms of continued journaling. Eight students encouraged continuation of journaling as an learning option in this course after the research project was completed.

Participants commonly expressed a belief that the empowerment felt through journaling did not necessarily come from equalization of power balances. Empowerment occurred through enhanced perceptions of competency and identification with leadership through shared values.

Journal writing has affected my self awareness tremendously. Throughout this program I have felt incompetent as a Nurse, and that I will never make it through without having to drop out. Throughout the process of journal writing I have become more confident in my abilities as a student nurse. Because you wanted to hear what I had to say, and you gave points to me
for what I had to say I sort of felt like a peer, sort of like a Nurse. Journal writing gave me a way of venting my frustrations as well as a way of keeping tabs on my learning. It actually for the first time showed me that I was finally learning something. It made me feel important as an individual student not a lost one in a sea of students.
CHAPTER 5

INTERPRETATION OF FINDINGS

This phenomenological study was undertaken to explore the everyday lived lives of students and teachers in one higher education nursing classroom. Their collective expressions revealed many things. The lived lives of participants are about power, tension, mistakes, expectations, and most significantly about caring.

Participants shared openly and freely, giving great insight into their world of learning. Journal entries increased in length as data collection proceeded, and sharing was often highly personal and brutally frank about what it is to be a nursing student and teacher. These expressions embraced perceived values of the profession of nursing, rejected frequently encountered learning experiences, and spoke vibrantly of hopes for competency and connection.

**Overview of Study**

Qualitative data analysis was employed to explore the rich textual data provided by participants. Themes representing meaningful expressions of the lived lives of participants were identified. Theme identification allowed for categorization of expressions reflecting lived experiences of participants as accurately as possible.

Sixteen major themes and 36 sub-themes were identified. While themes were presented in Chapter 4 in the context of the formal research questions, significant overlap occurred between expressions of those themes. Each theme, while artificially categorized
under a particular research question, represents the whole phenomenon of leading and learning that occurred within the study classroom.

Inter-relationship of each part of the whole is fundamental to understanding of the phenomena of interest. Each theme is best understood in relationship to each other theme, and viewing one theme in isolation diminishes understanding of the phenomena. Many individuals participated in this study. As individuals they expressed unique perspectives and varying intensities related to identified themes. They interacted, usually on a daily basis, during the study. Lives intertwined and stories were constructed and exchanged. For these reasons, any discussion of the finding of this study must be a discussion of the inter-relationship between themes.

**Major Research Findings**

Exploration of the inter-relationship of themes allows for the best understanding of the phenomenon of interest. Three themes were seen as anchors in the inter-relationship of thematic concepts. Power, tension, and narratology are identified as anchoring themes as they showed inter-relationship with at least two other themes. Figure 4 shows the inter-relationship of all identified themes to these three anchor themes.
Figure 4. Intervariable inter-relationships of thematic clusters around identified anchor themes as identified by participants.
The major findings of this study represent the major points of inter-relationship among thematic clusters. Three primary inter-relationship clusters were found and relate to identified anchor themes. These three inter-relationships are discussed here as three conceptual models reflecting what it is to be a learner and leader in the classroom of study. These models are (a) the positive power of leadership, (b) tension and learning, and (c) leadership for learning.

The Positive Power of Leadership. Two opposing approaches to leadership power were expressed in participants' lived experiences. Participants clearly identified teachers as fulfilling Gardner’s (1995) definition of leaders as "individuals who significantly influence the thoughts, behaviors, and/or feelings of others" (p. 6).

The study found that leadership was inescapably about power. Chapter 2 discussed power as an embedded assumption of leadership. Power has long been assumed as part of leadership (Covey, 1994; Gardner, 1995), and power is often seen in a negative light when applied to leadership behavior. Whether it be transactional or transformational, new approaches to leadership argued for a decrease in leader power and equalization of power imbalances (Rost, 1994; Wheatley, 1992). Study participants expressed leadership and power as impacting knowledge construction, sometimes for the better, and all too often for the worse. Incidents of abuse of leadership power were rampant in the lives of participants, yet amidst the abuse of power ran an undercurrent for the possibility of positive power.

Learners saw teachers as influential and were drawn to leaders who exhibited
caring and competency. Leaders who were perceived as possessing caring and competence had enormous power of influence through projective identification.

Projective identification created the positive power of leadership. Learners wished to emulate caring and competency, wanting to be like the leader who embodies cherished values. Projective identification with caring and competency produced a strong power base unrelated to the leader's formal teacher position.

Positive power was the power to influence, motivate, and engage learners. Caring teachers could lead students in their learning, often taking them to places the learner never expected. Participants' experiences with positive power were noted as highly meaningful episodes of excitement for learning. The power of leadership was not charismatic, was not trait related, but was related to positive projective identification. Teachers with positive power were seen as great teachers.

Differentiation of a leader's power over and power with learners is key to understanding the positive power of projective identification. Positive power was seen as power with, not power over, learners. Positive power empowered learners to take risks, to stretch and grow. The power base of the leader was not diminished by this process, but rather grew as projective identification grew. Positive power, not connected to position, became power with the learner and was viewed as productive, not restrictive. Positive power as productive was expressed as the basis of the development of learning communities engaged in dialectic interactions. Positive power of leadership, while highly effective in promoting learning, was expressed as an awesome responsibility. Projective identification could engage the learner with the leader, but was a two-edge sword. The
same projective identification that created the leader's power would wound the learner if used in uncaring ways. Figure 5 presents the model positive power for leadership as expressed by study participants.

**Tension and Learning.** Learning in formal classroom settings is, by its very nature, an interpersonal affair. Students come to the learning environment full of expectations, full of experiences, and with a history of social success and failure. Learning is personal, but it is also interpersonal.

The interpersonal context of learning created tension that study participants perceived as inescapable. Some students liked each other. Some disliked each other. Some had history together that was positive. Some barely knew one another. Tension was heightened by perceived content overload in a profession with exploding technologic advances.

Differences of experience, interest, and racioethnic culture linked to differences in perceived levels of tension. Tension was heightened in learners whose racioethnic self-identification was perceived as different from the dominant group. Some participants expressed the tension as stress, some as anger, and some as disengagement with learning, but in all cases' learners looked to leadership to address tension in the learning process. Effective classroom leadership was equated, in part, with the leader's ability to actively control tension within the learning environment.

Tension control reflected repetitive themes of caring and competency. Participants expressed that the inevitable outcome of tension was interpersonal cohesion. Tension was
Figure 5. A diagram showing positive power and its development through projective identification with caring teacher leadership. The link of positive power to inclusion of leadership in the community of learners is highlighted.
seen as a glue that would bind like-minded individuals together. Cohesion could either include or exclude the leader, and could either facilitate or limit learning.

Leadership that was perceived as caring, coupled with positive power reduced the discomfort of tension, and promoted communal expressions of cohesion. This was manifested as an "Us-Us" theme where the leader was seen as part of the community of learners rather than removed from the community of learners.

Communal cohesion was characterized by high risk taking, freedom to be wrong, and having voice to participate in dialectic expressions. Negative cohesion excluded the leader and promoted secretive dialogue between learners, low risk taking, and feelings of being excluded from their own learning process. Figure 6 presents the conceptual model of the inter-relationship of tension to learning as expressed by study participants.

**Leadership for Learning.** Themes of power, caring, and competency were repeatedly expressed by participants. Effective leadership was perceived as addressing all three themes. Learning happened when caring and competency were perceived as being present in the leader, and positive power, power with the learners, was used. Learning was restricted by the leaders' use of power over learners. Learning in these cases was perceived as occurring despite the teacher rather than because of the teacher.

Leadership for learning was expressed as caring in praxis. Caring was conceptualized as an extension of competency by study participants. Caring was the behavioral manifestation of competency as modeled by the leader. Caring was the path to, and final goal of, competency. Caring to do one's best, caring to do no harm, caring
Figure 6. A diagram showing the relationship between tension and learning, with identification of leadership for learning strategies that help decrease tension in the learning environment.
enough about patients to study hard and learn much, caring enough about a class to participate, caring to develop and share stories; this was competency as expressed by participants.

Leadership for learning was empowering when experienced by participants. Perceptions of caring leadership that manifested professional competency, was perceived as also manifesting caring for the learner. Learners who perceived caring by the leader felt valued and felt leadership wanted to hear their stories, their voice. This perception of acceptance from the leader lead to perceptions of inclusion, inclusion in the learning environment and inclusion in the community of nursing. Feeling valued also translated to feeling important, which translated into feeling competent, which translated into feeling empowered.

Leadership praxis of caring seemed contagious and facilitated learning. Perceptions of self-competency increased risk taking by learners, and caring was perceived as allowing mistakes to translate into learning without penalty. Increased engagement with learning yielded increased interpersonal engagement and a sense of participation in the learning process.

Perceived communal membership with professional identification fostered a sense of common ground between leaders and learners. The common ground helped solidify dialectic engagement that formed organizational cultural norms. Learner and leader had common language, common identity, and common purpose; to become competent professional nurses. Teacher and student, leader and learner came together as a community when leadership for learning was present. The outgrowth of this was a
perception of membership in the community of learning. Figure 7 illustrates the model of leadership for learning and the inter-relationship of power, caring, and competency.

**Discussion of Findings and Implications for Practice**

The extent to which power and caring run as themes through the lived lives of study participants was unanticipated. The degree to which student participants felt disconnected and passive in their learning was disturbing.

For learners in higher education settings, coming to terms with a particular curriculum implies engagement with knowledge as finite. At some finite point the formal process of education ends and the student becomes the professional. As developing members of a profession, coming to terms with the ebb and flow of professional life implies engagement with knowledge is infinite. The professional is expected to have lifelong engagement with professional knowledge.

Study participants highlighted this juxtaposition. Teacher and student participants expressed frustration at how one teaches to the finite in the presence of the infinite. How does a student learn all they needs to know in a rapidly changing field such as nursing? How does the teacher, in the fixed time called formal education, impart enough knowledge for the student’s lifetime? Engaged learning was perceived by study participants as the answer to this conundrum. Engagement with knowledge is at once finite and infinite. Engagement with knowledge teaches how to learn not how to cram rote facts for immediate regurgitation. Engaged learning motivated and promulgated new learning. Engaged learning was lifelong learning. Engaged learning was the finite
Figure 7. A diagram showing the balance of power and caring required for effective knowledge construction using the leadership for learning model.
contained in the infinite.

Engagement with knowledge can occur anywhere but should occur within formal learning environments. Results of this study found that engaged learning was not common in the lived lives of participants. For engagement with knowledge to become routine in the classroom, the characteristics of engagement and knowledge construction in higher education must be further identified.

Study findings support that leadership is inexorably at the heart of engagement with knowledge in at least one higher education learning environment. Effective leadership would seem to involve power and caring and touch all other themes identified in this study. Participants expressed that effective leadership enhanced knowledge construction, ineffective leadership diminished it. This leads to a fundamental question. Can such leadership be taught or is it embedded in personality, not amenable to development?

The findings of this study suggest that the characteristic of engaged learning, and the effective leadership that promotes it, can be taught, communicated, and developed in teachers.

The development of an engaged community of learners may require significant alterations in the way many educators approach teaching and learning in higher education. Engaged learning places great responsibility on the classroom leader and requires alterations in traditional approaches to knowledge construction. Some of the possible alterations suggested by the findings of this study are discussed below.
Moving From Avoiding Power to Embracing Power

Higher education classroom leadership is, at its heart, about power. Leaders should develop and use positive power, rather than attempting to decrease, share, or avoid power. Effective teachers are powerful teachers. Powerful teachers embody shared organizational cultural norms, and professional norms, and articulate those norms in behaviors of teaching. Powerful teachers emulate and model values of a profession, and their power arises through the learners projective identification with shared values of the profession they wish to join. Positive power is the force that becomes leadership for learning.

Positive power, and the intentional manipulation of it by the classroom leader, can be a force in individual knowledge construction by enhancing learners' content interest, experience, and impulsion for learning. Positive power allows learners to "take on faith" certain knowledge constructs valued by the leader as important to learn. Positive power engages, motivates, and opens new horizons in the learner. Positive power allows students to look at issues through the eyes of others, the eyes of projective identification.

Positive power comes with heavy responsibility. When used in caring fashion, it leads to empowerment and learning. Used carelessly, positive power disrespects and diminishes competency of the learner. Positive power must be carefully used, in a just and moral fashion. It must also be consciously used. Teachers as leaders cannot ignore nor forget their impact on learners. Positive power is a teaching and leadership tool that requires constant sharpened and polish.
Moving From A Classroom To A Community

A classroom is a community. It will develop a life of its own, as experienced teachers well know. The classroom community will develop unique norms, behaviors, and collective memories shaped and transmitted in story form. Teachers will either be active participants in development of the community or be left out of the flow of the community. It is a choice, intentional actions either taken or not taken. Engaged learning is difficult when teachers fail to participate in the development of the community.

As a community, the classroom has expectations. Some of these expectations are realistic, some unrealistic. Some of the expectations are clear and shared, some are personal and not openly addressed. Students expect to find the community helpful, teachers expect to find the community cooperative. Students expect to get assistance with learning, expect the leader to be teacher, coach, and boss. Teachers expect students to learn. Expectations shape the community of learners. When teachers are uninvolved in the community they are unaware of expectations unique to the community and unaware of how expectations impact learning as a product of the community.

The community can function to hinder or enhance learning. Norms, behaviors and values can either assist or limit engagement with knowledge. Noddings (1996) discusses the “dark side” of a community of learners (p. 245). Uncontrolled, educational communities can have an ugliness and exclusionary nature not conducive to knowledge construction. Leadership can, in large part, influence the outcomes of the community through intentional use of positive power and attention to culture and climate of the
setting. But the leader is not the only factor effecting learning within the community. Other individual community members have a great, and often overlooked, capacity to influence learning. Shared meaning will be developed and learners will influence each others behavior. Whether that process produces enhanced or hindered learning depends on the openness of dialectics and teacher involved cohesion.

**Moving Beyond Teaching To Engaging**

Teaching is easy, engaged learning is difficult. Teachers have often viewed their role with a narrow lens (Nodding, 1992). Teaching is not simply about transmitting certain arbitrary information to students. Engagement connects learner to knowledge in a personal and lasting manner.

Learners and teachers constantly engage in the humanness of searching for meaning and understanding (Sandelowski, 1991; Sarbin, 1986). That search within the confines of the classroom environment can be joint or separate, random or orderly, selective or unselective. Engaged teaching fosters joint, orderly, and selective processing of knowledge, working toward common goals (Rafael, 1996). Engagement glues together a learning community, occurs best in a safe and caring environment, and is participatory at all levels.

Engaged teaching invites learners to participate and sanctions participation as valuable. This is a key point. Inviting participation is not enough. It must be sanctioned in meaningful ways and encouraged in a caring, risk-free manner. The same projective identification that connects learner to leader may make the learner fear looking stupid in
front of a valued teacher. Caring must allow for risk taking for it to be most effective.

Shared participation of learners in decision making that affects the community of learners is seldom incorporated into the daily lived lives of students. Teachers still arbitrarily decide grading systems, evaluation methods, and other power-based issues without reflection of participants expectations or needs. Engagement, implying participation and connection with learning, requires broader and more meaningful participation by learners in their own learning. Caring leadership allows for this fuller participation by the learner.

Engagement flows from caring and from an understanding of others. Caring can be viewed as a sensitive responsiveness to others and is based on attentiveness and openness to the other's experiences (Power & Makogon, 1996). Care must be taken seriously as an educational concept (Noddings, 1995). Caring is not just an esoteric concept, nice to consider, and nice to be. Caring is a fundamental stream coursing through the lived lives of learners and is fundamental to teaching. It can give teachers their influence as educators and their power as leaders.

Caring is the basis of effective critical thinking (Thayer-Bacon, 1993). Caring assures all ideas have been fairly considered, all possible solutions fairly regarded. Engaged learning is critical thinking and is praxis caring. Caring is a basis for learning and caring implies a continuous search for competency (Noddings, 1995) that is the heart of engagement with knowledge.
Moving From Speaking Knowledge To Creating Knowledge.

Common pedagogy in higher education is often about the expert teacher speaking knowledge to learners who passively accept the correctness and appropriateness of that knowledge. While such pedagogy produces fairly uniform and predictable results that allow for knowledge reproduction, it is at its most fundamental level non-participatory, and non-communal, and discourages knowledge production.

Communities of learners are communities of thinkers. One cannot disconnect the knower from the known; they are interconnected and interrelated (Thayer-Bacon, 1993; Wasser & Bresler, 1996). Knowledge is personal, understood and digested in personal terms. Didactic speaking of knowledge diminishes engagement and therefore diminishes knowledge construction.

Dialogue is engagement. Dialectic learning is the process of two or more individuals caring to understand each other (Gadamer, 1975). Non-participatory pedagogy disconnects leader from learner by being non-dialectic. Dialogues only occur when mutual caring and respect exist, and when one is free to risk and test opinion (Bernstein, 1985). Without caring and respect one has lecture, one has static knowledge that does not grow or engage.

Learners are experts and need to be viewed as such. While topics of their personal expertise vary, they remain the sole experts of themselves as knowers. Experts exercise judgement and reason and shape and construct knowledge that is validated or rejected by a larger community of experts (Porter, 1995). Community validation can occur within the
community of learners, within the classroom, but only if learners and leaders are engaged in dialogue.

Narratologic pedagogy is one method to facilitate dialectic expression between learners and leaders. Narratology allows for linkage between the knower and the known. Narratology allows for contextual, experience-centered knowledge of learners to coexist with expert knowledge. Narratologic pedagogy links both knowledge set through the leadership of the teacher, and creates shared knowledge through community validation.

**Summary**

This study has been about coming to know. It has been about expressions of coming to know found in the stories representing lived lives of participants. I will leave this study as I began it, with an interest in the story and what I could learn from it. This is the story of what I learned.

This dissertation has been a journey. It has been a process of discovery and invention. It has not been a direct journey. Its path has been crooked, at times wide and clear, and at times narrow and confusing. It has been a journey with personal meaning. I have come to discover at the end of my journey a truth that I believe I knew at the start of my journey. Teachers matter. Teachers are necessary and vital and have enormous impact in the lived lives of learners.

I also discovered truths that were unexpected or long forgotten. Teachers' yield tremendous power, and that power can facilitate learning or make learning disconnected and unpleasant for students. I discovered that caring and competency were relentlessly
linked in the process of coming to know. I have come to know caring in different terms, and with different connotations. Caring, I mistakenly believed, was something I most commonly did as the nurse, not as the teacher. I did not conceptualize good and effective teaching as caring praxis. I did not conceptualize caring as the manifestation of my competency.

I discovered the power of dialogue as a human process. Links between giving voice to learners, engagement in learning and empowerment have become clear to me as a teacher. Students will inescapably have stories that connect them as learners to what it is they know. Stories become a powerful bridge between leader and learner and function to express the community of learners that form every time my class meets. I have come to know that I have as much to learn from my students’ stories as I thought they could learn from mine.

I am a different teacher at the end of my journey because of my journey. I am much clearer on the power I wield over learners, whether I wish to or not. The power of projective identification, I believe, is vital and alive within my classroom. I no longer pretend that power can be evenly shared. I now believe that my power, power with the learner, is what gives strength and force to my capabilities as a teacher. I am a powerful teacher, but I need to always be a just and moral teacher with that power. It is my power that supports and nourishes my students, that feeds me while developing them as capable and caring professionals. I know with increased clarity that I am a teacher.
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W. H. Freeman.


Optional Learning Assignment

Psychiatric nursing is, in large part, about self awareness. Understanding what motivates people, what behaviors accomplish for people, and how people learn new things are essential aspects of psychiatric nursing. That process starts with you understanding yourself.

In order to help your self awareness, you can choose this optional learning assignment. The assignment involves keeping a journal about you as a learner in this course. The journal assignment option requires you keep a journal. You would write in your journal weekly, following the enclosed guidelines. Each journal entry should be one or two pages in length at a minimum. The journal, being a personal process, would be handed in without your name attached. The reason for making the journals anonymous is to insure an environment that allows you to make honest, open entries in your journal. Ideally the journals should be on computer disk, using any word processing program. If computer disk is not possible, please talk with a course faculty to make arrangements for other possible submission formats.

Journal entries will be collected six times during the semester. All students who turn in a total of six journal entries on time will be given 10 points towards their final grade. Because this is an optional assignment, those points may be considered "bonus points" and you may choose how to apply them towards your final course grade. For example, you could use all 10 points towards your final exam, or half to exam one and
half to the final. REMEMBER - there are NO PARTIAL journal points. You must keep the journal and submit entries six times in order to get the points for the optional assignment. A record will be kept of who turns in a journal so that points may be given, but journals will be anonymous.

In addition to the self learning that can occur with journaling, you are invited to have your journal become part of a research study that is interested in learning in higher education classrooms. Your interest in the research study has no impact on your choosing the optional learning assignment. The following pages outline possible areas for you to journal as well as more on the research study. PLEASE FEEL FREE TO ASK QUESTIONS!

I wish to choose the optional learning assignment of journal writing. I understand that I will need to keep a journal and hand in six entries in order to get assignment points:

STUDENT NAME (print) _____________________________________________
STUDENT SIGNATURE ____________________________________________
DATE ____________________________________________

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**What To Write About**

The process of journal writing is expected to help you increase self awareness. Knowing yourself is an important piece of knowledge regarding psychiatric nursing. Journal writing is one way to increase self awareness.

You should add to your journal at least weekly, and will be asked to journal for at least a six-week period of time. Your journal should cover your thoughts, feelings, and perceptions about your learning as this course proceeds. There are no right or wrong entries, it is your journal. The journals will be handed in and read by course faculty, but they will always be anonymous. The journals are kept anonymous in the hope that this will assist you to be open, honest, and genuine in your personal writing.

The following protocol guidelines are given to you to help focus your thoughts and give structure to your writing. But it is your journal. Have fun and enjoy your self learning.

**Week One Writing.** Consider who you are as a learner. How do you learn? What assists your learning? What gets in the way of your learning? How does being a nursing student impact you as a learner? How does the classroom, the teacher, the content influence your learning? Does how you view yourself (female, male, Irish-American, Afro-American, etc.) influence how you learn?

**Week Two Writing.** How do you as a learner react to the content of this course?

**Week Three Writing.** What are you learning? How are you learning? What are
you learning about yourself as a learner?

**Week Four Writing** How has the teaching and classroom environment effected your learning? How have your fellow students effected your learning?

**Week Five Writing.** Describe a recent situation that taught you what it was to be a psychiatric nurse. What made this situation a learning experience?

**Week Six Writing.** How has the process of journal writing been for you? Has journal writing affected your self awareness? Has journal writing affected your learning?
VITA
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