Copyright is owned by the Author of the thesis. Permission is given for a copy to be downloaded by an individual for the purpose of research and private study only. The thesis may not be reproduced elsewhere without the permission of the Author.
"STEPPING BEYOND THE KNOWN"
THE LIVED EXPERIENCE OF RETURNING REGISTERED NURSE STUDENTS: AN INTERPRETIVE DESCRIPTIVE STUDY

A thesis presented in fulfilment of the requirements for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy
Massey University, College of Education
Palmerston North New Zealand

Margaret Idour
M.A. (Hons), (Massey), B.A. (Massey), Dip.R.Ed. (Cambridge), I.D.C. (Canterbury, U.K.), R.N., R.M.,
Cert. Neurosurgical Nursing (Dunedin), Cert. Plunket N.

November 19, 1997
"STEPping BEyond THE KNOwn"

THE LIVED EXPERIENCE OF RETURNING REGISTERED NURSE STUDENTS: AN INTERPRETIVE DESCRIPTIVE STUDY

The thesis employed a Heideggerian Hermeneutical Analysis (HHA) approach for a study of returning registered nurse students (RRNS) from a nursing/health management context. In essence, a descriptive interpretive study the intent has been to unveil the common meanings embedded in the lived experience of RRNS return to formal (advanced) studies. The phenomenon or issue of interest was pursued in the form of a question: What is meaningful and significant for participant RRNS in their everyday world on re-engaging in formal (advanced) studies?

There is a marked scarcity of research from the RRNS viewpoint, so the focus of the study was to understand what RRNS themselves found to be the highlights of the experience. The study participants included RRNS coming from a management background and, therefore, very much at the cutting edge of rapid and continuing change in health care provision. In addition to personal and professional reasons for returning to study, what the narratives disclosed was the compelling need experienced by the RRNS to increase their understanding of changing requirements in the workplace. They looked for new possibilities to transform management of nursing/health services and for learning experiences favourable to that purpose. A key aspect of their concern related to the interactive nature of their lived experience as a RRNS with the entire context of their everyday world, that is, with the connections and relations between the study-work-homespace.

Fourteen RRNS from an established university nursing programme offering graduate courses of study in nursing participated in extended non-structured interviews lasting 60 to 90 minutes. The interviews were held during 1993 in many different places, as chosen by participants, some in the home but mostly in the work setting. This had an unanticipated benefit because participants, acting as the researcher's host/hostess being at 'home' and comfortable in telling their 'stories' took 'charge' of the occasion. The interviews, with the consent of the participants, were audiotaped and then transcribed.

The texts (transcriptions) were analysed hermeneutically using Heideggerian phenomenology as the philosophical background. HHA is centred on a particular tradition of philosophy whose concern is the meaning of Being. The concern is to make visible participants' experience of their 'world'. In this instance, it was the everyday 'world' of the participant RRNS and the lived meanings of what they experienced on return to formal (advanced) studies. Hence everyday lived experience is the focus of attention in Heideggerian phenomenology. In this research approach what is sought is understanding not explanation. It is a premise of phenomenology that, in general, an understanding of the meaning and significance of the lived experience can be acquired.
from the 'things' (the phenomena under study) themselves. Approaching a participant as an expert by virtue of directly experiencing the phenomenon, is basic to phenomenology. Hermeneutic analysis of the texts of the participant RRNS affirmed the authenticity of those assumptions.

In the present study several common or major themes, two relational themes and one constitutive pattern were identified through the process of textual interpretation. The constitutive pattern, expressing the full complexity of the relations and connections between the themes, was found to be present in all fourteen texts; the nature of a constitutive pattern being 'that it's always there'. The constitutive pattern 'Nursing is Dwelling in Thoughtful Concern as Context Calls Forth', emerged as the major finding of the study. This pattern witnesses to the pragmatism that is inherent in nursing and commonly found in nurses' responses to the challenges presented by continuing and rapid change. For the participant RRNS nursing had become a way of engaging their energies in the workplace as appropriate to a given place, time and culture. The two relational themes accent particular aspects of the constitutive pattern. 'Nursing is a whole pile of things'; and 'Curriculum: Reflective Openness' reveal the inherent meanings of the constitutive pattern. Firstly, that nursing is diverse in practice and has many dimensions; and, secondly, that a curriculum befitting the diversity of nursing requires us to constantly challenge and test the learning experiences we provide for RRNS.

The fourteen RRNS participating in the study traversed diverse pathways to acquire the understanding and skills required for altered health care structures. Adopting new relationships and 'leaping-ahead' (Heidegger, 1962), to be able to see the whole picture of what was being experienced in nursing/health care, reveals the RRNS becoming-as interpreters for both colleagues and clients. Leaping-ahead is reflective of thoughtful concern as the pattern of responding to presenting need. This way of living a life as a nurse transforms work. The participant RRNS disclose that, dwelling in such a way in nursing/health work opens up a future of possibilities which brings all the presenting needs into focus. Sharing the story of their lifeworld as RRNS, the participants have exemplified the 'reflective openness' (Senge, 1990, 277 - 281) advocates, as being a prerequisite for 'learning organisations'. Contemporary organisations require us to challenge our own thinking as well as being free to speak our minds (participant openness). Appreciating that, however much we value our daily life practices and understandings, they need to be 'always subject to test and improvement'. In effect, what the participants have bestowed on us is that, within the framework of a curriculum for RRNS and the content learning of a given course, we must generate a process of learning amenable to both individual and group requirements.
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Freedom is essential ground for being human but we learn our 'humanness' only in association with other humans. Similarly, freedom is essential for the thinking that we engage in as we live our daily lives and in whatever way we may apply it to some special project. But in the necessity to challenge and to test our own thinking and its genuineness (Senge's 'reflective openness'), we need the constant challenge that can only come from those who sojourn along the way with us. Whatever clarity of thought and depth of understanding we acquire as we pursue a research study, arises from a long, arduous period of work with its own highlights and challenges. But it is enriched as well as challenged by the many people who share that time with us. There are those who have been directly involved in thinking through and giving direction to the present study. Others, from times before as well as during the present study, have been indirectly involved. I am indebted to you all.

Special thanks go to those who have been directly associated with the study as supervisors: Dr. Wayne Edwards (chief supervisor), Dr. Nancy Diekelmann, Dr. Nancy Kinross, and Dr. Lillian Simms who helped me a great deal at an early stage of the study. Each from their specialist skills and knowledge have been generous in sharing their understandings and scholarship and encouraged me throughout. To Nancy Diekelmann who introduced me to Heideggerian Hermeneutic analysis and shared her thinking and insights on the application of HHA to nursing education, research and practice I am particularly indebted. It has been a privilege to participate in the Nursing Institutes for Heideggerian Hermeneutical Study run under the direction of Dr. Diekelmann. And, being able to experience with other participants the sharing and analysis of our research, was an irreplaceable opportunity to advance my thinking and work.

To family and friends, in New Zealand and elsewhere, thank you for your support and encouragement and your patience in receiving so many 'not yet's' on asking 'Have you finished the "book"?' Well, as van Manen (1991) describes it, the work of the researcher is 'writing' and 'rewriting' so describing the research project as the "book" is very apt.

To those with whom I have enjoyed the cut and thrust of dialogue, both as learner-teacher and fellow student, thank you. It was invaluable for advancing my thinking, stimulating and encouraging. There are too many of you to acknowledge here but you will know who you are! Then, in a similar way there are those I have been associated with as a member of NZNO, particularly those involved with the NZNO National Nursing Research Section. We have shared a lot of work and dreams together and it is all meshed in with the thinking of this study. And thanks also to Richard Simms for his help with the artwork.

Finally, I am immensely grateful to the participants. Your conversations I find to be the 'crown' of what the study has to offer. Hermeneutic analysis of the stories you shared in your interviews have revealed rich lived meanings that will benefit us all. Thank you!
TABLE OF CONTENTS

Abstract iii
Acknowledgments v
Table of Contents vii
Figures vi
Glossary xi

Chapter 1: Introduction 1
The Phenomenon of Interest 1
Background to the Phenomenon of Interest 3
The Context-of-Change: The Study-Work-Homespace 6
   Context of Change in the Studyspace 7
   Context of Change in the Workspace 9
   Context of Change in the Homespace 10
Heideggerian Hermeneutics Analysis: An Introduction 11
Significance of the Study 12
Organisation of the Thesis 13
Summary 14

Chapter 2: Reviewing the Situated Context: Reflections & Themes 15
Introduction 15
Phase One:
The Situated Context of Research: Reflections 17
   The Beginning Research Journey 17
   Turning Points 19
Phase Two:
The Question of Research: Themes 20
The Nature of Social Change 21
   The Context of Change 23
   The Paradox of Change: Constant and Volatile 24
Theme One:
Changing Communities: From a Nursing/Health Perspective 26
The Nature of Community 26
   The Context of Community 28
   WHO Proposals for Enhancing Health in Communities 30
Chapter 3: Heideggerian Phenomenology

Introduction
What is Called Thinking
Modern Science and Technology
The Nature of Being Human
   Embodied Intelligence
   Background Meaning: Context - Culture
      Context - Culture
      Concern - Solicitude
      Situation
The "Will to Power" and Nihilism
Heideggerian Phenomenology: Its Applicability to Nursing Research
Summary

Chapter 4: Research Approach: Heideggerian Hermeneutics

Introduction
Section One
Hermeneutic Inquiry - A Dialogical Encounter
   'Happenings' in a Dialogical Encounter: Authenticity by Openness
Summary Restatement of the Phenomenon of Interest
Heideggerian Phenomenology: Summary Recapitulation
Narratives as Keys: Understanding Change
Deconstructing Texts: 'Bestowing' Meaning
Section Two
Heideggerian Hermeneutic Analysis
  Uncovering Meanings
  A Journey of Discovery: Collaborative Inquiry
  'Roundabout' Way: A Fusion of Hearing, Narratives and Listening
HHA: As Described by Heidegger, Benner, Diekelmann, Allen & Tanner
  Strategies used by Heidegger
  Strategies used by Benner
  Strategies used by Diekelmann, Allen and Tanner
Seeking Validation: Moving in a Hermeneutic Circle With The Team

Section Three
The Context of Work for RRNS (Management)
  Introduction
  'The Empty Raincoat': Gathering, Building and Dwelling
  In a Hermeneutic Inquiry

Section Four
HHA Research Approach: A Seven-Step-Strategy
  Introduction
    Coming to the Point of Initiation
    Affirming the Point of the 'Exercise'
    Gathering the Participants
    An Ethical Stance
    Profiling the Participants
    The Researcher
    The Research Team
    The Reader
    Applying the Seven-Step HHA Strategy
    Stage One  Stage Two
    Stage Three  Stage Four
    Stage Five  Stage Six  Stage Seven
  Interpretive 'To-ing and Froing': A 'Roundabout' Journey
  Summary: Restoring the Narrative to Our Daily Lifeworld

**Chapter 5:**
**The Findings: A Story Waiting To Be Told (A)**
  Introduction
  Outline of Themes, Relational Themes & Constitutional Pattern
  A Story Waiting to be Told
    Unveiling the 'Covered-Up-Ness'
Thematic Analysis 97
Description of the Common Themes 98
Analysis of the Common Themes 100
Theme One: Leaping-Ahead: Letting the Context Reveal Itself 101
  Sub Theme: Remapping One's Place: Opening-up-to-the-Future 105
  Sub Theme: Cooperating Practices: Transforming-the-Boundaries 108
Theme Two: Change: Challenge and Opportunity 110
  Sub Theme: The 'Juggler': Balancing in the Study-Work-Homespace 112
  Sub Theme: Dwelling Reflectively: Second-Time-Round-The-River-Has-Changed 115
Theme Three: Bridging: Seeking Pathways-of-Connected-Knowing 121
  Sub Theme: Learning: 'Lifting-Us-Over-The-Gaps' 128
  Sub Theme: Curriculum That Make A Difference: Generating Community 136
Summary 145

Chapter 6: The Findings: A Story Waiting To Be Told (B) 146
Introduction 146
Description of Relational Themes 146
  The Workspace: Challenges and Opportunities 147
  The Study Space: Expectations and Opportunities 149
  The Homespace: A New Take on Partnership 149
Analysis of Relational Themes 150
Relational Theme One
  Nursing is a Whole Pile of Things 150
Relational Theme Two
  Curriculum: Reflective Openness 159
Summary 164
Description of the Constitutive Pattern 165
Analysis of the Constitutive Pattern 167
Summary 181

Chapter 7: Discussion and Conclusion 181
Introduction 181
Summary of the Study 182
  Reviewing the Research Approach 183
Andragogy: The science and study of adult learning/teaching. Differentiated from pedagogy which is described as the activity of teaching, parenting, educating, or generally living with children and requiring constant practical acting in concrete situations and relations.

Dasein: The entity that expresses ways of Being as ongoing and practical coping of everyday life. A way of being that only humans can experience. Being is an issue or has meaning for Dasein.

Human Science: This term covers a variety of approaches and orientation to research and comes from Dilthey's notion of 'Geisteswissenschaften'. Dilthey (1987) argued that human phenomena (mental, social, Historical) differ from natural (physical, chemical, behavioral) phenomena in that human phenomena require interpretation and understanding whereas natural science involves for the most part external observation and explanation.

Lived Experience: Refers to the totality and infinitude of human existence.


Intentionality: This term indicates the inseparable connectedness of the human being to the world. Brentano, and later Husserl, argued that the fundamental structure of consciousness is intentional (Spiegelberg, 1982). And every conscious experience is bi-polar: there is an object that presents itself to a subject or ego. This means that all thinking is always thinking about something. The same is true for actions: grasping is grasping for something. All human activity is always oriented activity, directed by that which orients it.
Intersubjectivity
This is the verbal and nonverbal interplay between the organized subjective worlds of two people (Paterson & Zderad, 1976, 1990) in which one person's subjectivity intersects with another's subjectivity. The subjective world of any individual represents the organization of feeling, thoughts, ideas, principles, theories, illusions, distortions, and whatever else helps or hinders that person.

Primary Health Care (PHC)
This term refers to an approach or philosophy that has been adopted by most national health care systems and has been sponsored by WHO. The key objective of PHC is to achieve access to the means of health for all citizens. For this purpose emphasis is given to the development of basic health care workers who can provide essential knowledge and coping skills for individuals at the point of need.

RCompN
Registered comprehensive nurse in New Zealand who has completed a 3 year course of study at a Polytechnic.

Relationality or 'Lived other'
This term refers to the lived relation we maintain with others in the interpersonal space that we share with them.

Thrownness
Dasein exists in a world not of its own choice or making. It refers to the past and how Dasein arrives at the situation where it finds itself. How we arrive at our facticity.

Understanding
A component of the disclosure process in which Dasein is free to incorporate the object of understanding within its own potentiality-for-Being. This existential way of Being takes place within a state-of-mind or mood; articulated through discourse. As a result understanding, meaning is projected.

Worldhood
The ontological concept which makes the "wherein" a factual Dasein as such can be said to live.

Note: Word descriptions from van Manen (1990), Diekelmann, 1993, Idour (1990)