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**Women, work, study and health:
the experience of nurses
engaged in paid
work and further education**

A thesis presented in fulfilment of the requirements
for the degree of
Master of Philosophy in Nursing

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Abstract

Most women undertake many roles in their lives; homemaker, partner, mother and paid worker. Nurses who may not have achieved to their potential during their earlier education, or who recognise the value of further education may be studying at a tertiary level. They may be working to increase their qualifications in addition to their other existing roles. While there have been positive effect noted from working outside the home and from being involved in study, there are some women who suffer feelings of guilt and stress from trying to combine these roles. Gendered expectations from themselves, their partner and the community have been found to influence women's lives and experiences.

This thesis examines the lives of eight women nurses who are engaged in study as well as part or full time paid work. A feminist analysis is made of the pressures and expectations that they experience from themselves, their families, their colleagues and their communities.

Currently, changes in the role of the advanced nursing practitioner are being discussed and New Zealand is experiencing the international trend towards difficulties with recruitment and retention of nurses. Recommendations are made which may assist to create a culture where nurses who advance their education, mainly at their own expense, can be utilised and valued to the advantage of New Zealand as a whole.

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