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An experiment to test the effectiveness of the incident process in teaching communication skills to students in nursing

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Boston University
AN EXPERIMENT TO TEST THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE INCIDENT PROCESS IN TEACHING COMMUNICATION SKILLS TO STUDENTS IN NURSING

By
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CHAPTER I
INTRODUCTION

"And as ye would that men should do unto you, do ye also to them likewise."

A philosophy of life founded on the Golden Rule should provide a sound basis for establishing human relationships, but to live by this rule, demands more than desire. It demands practice in the art of communication; for motives are expressed in terms of behavior and behavior is interpreted in the light of words, gestures, actions and mannerisms as they are communicated to others. Thus, "The important element in communication is not what we say but rather what others think we have said."

In the words of John Dewey, "Communication is a process of sharing experience until it becomes a common possession." Sharing implies knowledge of the impact of words and mannerisms upon others, and of the "feeling states" they may evoke. These "feeling states" not only direct and control individual behavior but ultimately and profoundly influence human relationships.

1St. Luke, Chapter 6 Verse 31.
3Dewey, John, Democracy in Education, p. 11.
Since nursing involves human relationships, communication is a vital tool and a dynamic force in the practice of nursing. If the primary aim of nursing education is to prepare young women for effective nursing practice, then practice in communication skills cannot logically be excluded from any nursing school curriculum.

Statement of the Problem

The need to assist students in nursing in the art and skill of communication is unquestionable; the question is how can it be done? If communication is a skill, then any method used to teach it must be based on sound principles of teaching which apply to any skill. The problem, therefore, is to find or develop adequate methods. The purpose of this study is to determine whether or not the Incident Process is a method of value in teaching communication skills to students in nursing.

Justification of the Problem

This study stems from an interest in methods of teaching Human Relations to students in the first year of the curriculum.

Communication, like any other skill, requires practice for its development. One obvious and logical area of practice is

4Pigors, Paul, The Incident Process.
through interaction with patients. However, beginning students find it difficult to understand their own behavior, and even more difficult to understand the patient's behavior and feelings. Conferences, panel discussions, and role-playing provide some classroom experience for the student to express herself, work with others, and experiment with her reasoning and judgment. Nursing educators constantly seek supplementary or better ways of teaching. The Incident Process which is described in Chapter II, impressed the writer of this study, not only for its merits in training for leadership and management, but as a possible means of providing practice conducive to the development of communication skills needed in nursing.

**Preview of Methodology**

The study sample consisted of twenty-four student nurses in a diploma school of nursing. Twelve were assigned to the experimental group and were taught by the Incident Process, and twelve were assigned to the control group and were taught by panel discussions and role playing. After an orientation period and four practice sessions, an evaluation session was held for each group. This was conducted by case method and the same case was presented to each group in order to evaluate their achievement in terms of the objectives of the communication unit in the Human Relations Course. During each session the participation, verbal and non-verbal was recorded by an observer-reporter. These reports were supplemented by tape
recordings and analysed by the investigator.

Scope and Limitations

The twenty-four students who took part in this study had been in the diploma school of nursing for approximately five months. The study area was the communication unit, the last unit in the Human Relations Course. Since the study involved only one group of students in only one school of nursing, the findings cannot be applied generally.

A senior student nurse having senior elective experience in the teaching unit assumed the role of observer-reporter for some of the class sessions. Because of the little time for training her in this role, the data on non-verbal communication is limited.

Since the investigator was not a trained social-psychologist, the analysis of human behavior and group interaction was confined to the investigator's stated objectives for the unit in communication skills. Another reason for using the unit objectives as criteria for evaluation was because no norms or evaluative devices applicable to the study could be found.

One student in the control group resigned from the school before the study was completed.

Sequence of Presentation

Chapter II will present the basis for the hypothesis, the statement of hypothesis and the background information relevant
to the study. Chapter III describes the setting of the study and the methods used. Chapter IV is concerned with the findings, the analysis and the interpretations. Chapter V includes a summary of the study, conclusions, and recommendations.
CHAPTER II
THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK OF THE STUDY

Review of Literature Relevant to the Hypothesis

The Incident Process has been used at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology since 1950. Professor Pigors, whose field is social relations, is interested in communication and human relations in business and industry. Mrs. Pigors is an editorial consultant. Together they have prepared a manual on the Incident Process which has been published by the Bureau of National Affairs. A brief description of the method as it appears in the manual, is included here:

The Incident Process in Action

In brief, here is the sequence of mental steps that we take in order to learn from a case.

Phase 1. Studying the Incident

At the beginning of a session, the discussion group starts from scratch on a new case. The leader gives everyone a short written account (fifty to one hundred words) of something that actually happened to at least two people. This incident calls for a decision. And a specific assignment, appended to the Incident, starts the group off in the process of making this decision.

Phase 2. Getting Facts

As already mentioned, this part of the assignment is a reconstruction job. By interviewing the "man with the facts", group members try to reconstruct the scene

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of action, sketched in the Incident, and to see how this Incident fits into the larger setting in which it occurred. For example, what was the organizational background, and what events led up to the Incident?

Phase 3. Stating the Immediate Issue

On the basis of established facts, the group moves nearer to the immediate decision, but without jumping over the decisive question: what is the issue? In an arbitration case this is relatively easy to see clearly and to state precisely. But if the Incident calls for an executive decision, or for a recommendation by a staff man, the issue is necessarily broader. In preparing to make such a decision, a member needs to get a comprehensive view of what is at stake, but without blurring his focus on the difficulty that has to be tackled "right now" -- at the time of the Incident.

Phase 4. Deciding the Immediate Issue

At this stage, group members can practice a whole range of skills. First, each member makes his independent decision. He puts it in writing and jots down his reasons. This almost always shows that the group as a whole sees more than one side of the case. In other words, the whole group sub-divides into at least two groups. Our next procedure, therefore, is to have these "committees" of like-minded members get together. Each sub-committee elects a spokesman and, in briefing him, consolidates the reasoning in support of their position. Coming back to the conference table, each spokesman outlines the position of his "constituents" while the others listen. But the differences of opinions are not fought out in a lengthy debate. As soon as the differences have been clearly brought out, we test the strength of these positions by comparing them with the actual decision--the one made in the situation itself. The leader now supplies this information, adding--if he knows--facts about how the actual decision worked out.

But we don't stop there. The group is now ready to take the most practical step in case study.

Phase 5. Trying to Learn From the Case as a Whole

Up to this point the assignment has been impractical in one important respect. If you work on a case that is over and done with, your decision about what should be done can't make any actual difference to the people involved in the case. The practical question for any group
that works on a case is this: What can we learn from this case, that we might apply in order to make our own behavior more effective in the future?

In essence, the Incident Process seems to be a "cross" between case method teaching and problem solving methods. The five phases can be identified with Dewey's steps in problem solving. One element basic to Dewey's philosophy of problem solving was his insistence that the problem for study must be selected in accordance with the student's "felt needs". This criteria presents a dilemma for those who favor the "Activity Curriculum", because the student's "felt needs" invariably conflict with the selected content of a given discipline. If the problem is not considered important by the students, motivation cannot be sustained, and the problem solving experience has lost its value. Pigor's method appears to this writer to have a way of handling this dilemma concerning content versus motivation. All of the cases that are used in the Incident Process are taken from real life experiences, and the assignments attached to the Incident account always urge the student to assume the role of someone deeply involved in the case--thus initiating a "felt need" to do something about the problem inferred in the tantalizing Incident. As the Pigors put it, "The issues involved are all live issues. This helps group members to think about them, and talk about them, with a sense of immediacy and involvement."2

2 Ibid. p. 108.
The way in which the Incident Process was adapted for use in this study will be described in Chapter III.

No reports of the use of the Incident Process in nursing could be found. However, there is one parallel study being made which is comparing an adaptation of the Incident Process with the lecture method in teaching a selected unit in Medical and Surgical nursing.3

**Basis of Hypothesis**

The nature and structure of the Incident Process promotes a democratic atmosphere conducive to practice in communication and problem solving or "decision making" as it is referred to in this study. The investigator's objectives for the unit in communication are stated thus:

1. To develop skill in self-expression: The ability to say what you think and feel, so that it is understood by others.

2. To develop skill in team work: To be a participating member of a group—the ability to work with others seeking a common goal.

3. To develop skill in decision-making: The ability to analyse a problem situation and indicate good judgment based on facts and the recognition of human nature.

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3MacDonald, Ruth, *A Comparison of Two Methods of Teaching a Selected Unit in the Medical-Surgical Area*, Unpublished thesis, Boston University, Boston, 1967.
The student's ability to express herself can be improved in many ways. If she has difficulty with wording, the exciting search for "the facts" compels her to phrase and rephrase her questions until she has clarified to the satisfaction of the leader. Furthermore, she can gauge how well she is "getting through" by the degree of follow-up questions asked by her classmates. If a student is inclined to ramble, the leader can guide her in restating her ideas. Experience in summarizing the facts will also help her in developing ability to be concise. If a student has difficulty in "getting in" on the conversation, it may help her to assume the role of spokesman for one of the small groups during the decision phase. If a student is timid and reticent she may be invited to "add to" the summary or to assist in formulating the issues in the case.

The ability to work with others is encouraged throughout the Incident Process. In the fact finding phase, team work is fostered as the group works together to "build the case". Each member has equal opportunity to participate and help gather the facts. The student who fails to listen to what others have to say, soon becomes "lost". In stating the immediate issues in the case, there must be consensus concerning "What is to be decided"? Likewise, in deciding what stand to take, a student is seldom alone. She automatically identifies with classmates who hold views similar to hers. The decision phase requires group cooperation and pooling and willingness to at least see
"the other fellow's point of view".

Skill in decision-making takes time; it is an evolutionary process concurrent with maturing. However, it is essential to guide this process. In the Incident Process the leader, in the dual role of director, can do much to guide individual students in their approach to the problem and differentiation of fact from opinion or emotional interpretations. Assistance can be given in organization of facts during the summary of phase two. When the group tries to formulate the issues the leader can give support. Students may evaluate their own decisions in terms of the decision made in the real case or by comparison with the majority of the group. Occasionally the group may fail to seek out a key fact during the fact finding stage; when this happens it is a valuable experience which points to the folly of and danger of making a decision based on inconclusive evidence.

Because the Incident Process is a method which will create a classroom environment for students to practice self expression, team work, and decision-making, it is logical to believe that it would be helpful in the development of communication skills needed in nursing. Therefore, the hypothesis underlying this study is that the Incident Process is an effective method to teach communication skills to students in nursing.
Review of Literature Relevant to Analysis of Data

Two valuable sources were found: Interaction Process Analysis\(^4\) and The Critical Incident Technique.\(^5\)

The latter should not be confused with the Incident Process, for the only significant commonality is the word "Incident". As used by Flanagan, the word incident may be conceived as a kind of objective, descriptive anecdote of behavior which would be typical or significant of an individual's performance. Like the Incident Process, it has proved useful in the field of industry, but as a tool for rating job performance. In Flanagan's words, "By an incident is meant any observable human activity which is sufficiently complete in itself to permit inferences and predictions to be made about the person performing the act. To be critical, an incident must occur in a situation where the purpose or intent of the act seems fairly clear to the observer and its consequences are sufficiently definite so that there is little doubt concerning effects."\(^6\)

This technique was described briefly in Nursing Research by Clara Hardin,\(^7\) and a study was reported concerning the use

\(^4\)Bales, Robert, Interactive Process Analysis.

\(^5\)Flanagan, John, The Critical Incident Technique.

\(^6\)Ibid. p. 2.

\(^7\)Hardin, Clara, "The Critical Incident Technique", Nursing Research, February 1955.
of the procedure in evaluating professional nursing.\(^8\)

The writer of this study adapted the principles of the Critical Incident Technique of evaluation to design a form\(^9\) for measuring the student's achievement of the objectives of the unit in communication skills. The words "Effective" and "Ineffective" were borrowed to describe participation during each class session.

The Interaction Process Analysis is a method for first-hand observation of social interaction in small face to face groups. It is especially adaptable for recording and categorizing the problem solving process in small groups. Readers of this study are referred to Bales' report for a clear understanding of the technic, but briefly put, for the purpose of background in the evaluation of this study, Bales designed a set of twelve categories for recording group interaction:\(^{10}\)

1. Shows solidarity, raises other's status, gives help, reward:

2. Shows tension release, jokes, laughs, shows satisfaction:

3. Agrees, shows passive acceptance, understands, concurs, complies:

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\(^9\)See Appendix A.

\(^{10}\)Bailes, *op. cit.*, p. 59.
4. Gives suggestion, direction, implying autonomy for other:
5. Gives opinion, evaluation, analysis, expresses feeling, wish:
6. Gives orientation, information, repeats, clarifies, confirms:
7. Asks for orientation, information, repetition, and confirmation:
8. Asks for opinion, evaluation, analysis, expression of feeling:
9. Asks for suggestion, direction, possible ways of action:
10. Disagrees, shows passive rejection, formality, withholds resources:
11. Shows tension, asks for help, withdraws out of field:
12. Shows antagonism, deflates other's status, defends or asserts self:

The above categories can be conceived in pairs, that is:

a. (6 and 7) Problems of communication.
b. (5 and 8) Problems of evaluation.
c. (4 and 9) Problems of control.
d. (3 and 10) Problems of decision.
e. (2 and 11) Problems of tension.
f. (1 and 12) Problems of reintegration.

The above conception has implication for the analysis of
communication skills. Adaptations were made from these categories and used to describe the behavioral aspects of the unit objectives.
CHAPTER III
METHODS OF COLLECTING DATA

The study sample consisted of twenty four freshmen students who had been enrolled in a diploma school of nursing for five months. They had similar backgrounds in formal educational experiences in nursing, but varied aptitudes for nursing as indicated by the pre-entrance examination of the National League for Nursing. For this reason, the class was divided into the experimental and control groups as follows:

1. Twelve students with the highest percentile rank on the N.L.N. test were designated "Group A."

2. The remaining twelve were designated "Group B."

3. Students were then selected by random sampling, six from "Group A." and six from "Group B." These twelve became "Division I", the experimental group, and were taught by the Incident Process.

4. The remaining twelve students became "Division II", the control group, and were taught by panel discussion, and role-playing methods.

The eight hour unit on communication skills selected for the study was the last unit of the fifty hour Human Relations Course. The unit was increased to ten hours to meet the needs of the experimental situation. The criteria for selec-
ting topics for the classes was based on students' interests
and problem areas of adjustment rather than any curriculum
content requirements.

An orientation period followed by a series of four class
sessions spaced a week apart were held for each group con-
currently. A fifth session was provided to evaluate the
achievement of each group. The sessions for each group
varied from one hour to one hour and twenty-five minutes.
There was an observer-reporter and a leader for each session
and a tape recorder was used to supplement the observer-
reporter's reports.

Before the class was divided, the students were informed
that small groups working together would facilitate teaching
the unit and would provide more opportunity for practice in
verbal communication. A brief orientation was given concern-
ing the function of the observer-reporter and the use of the
recording machine. Students were also informed that differ-
ent methods would be used for each group to determine their
values in teaching communication skills. The groups were not
identified as "experimental" or "control" to the students;
they were referred to as "Division I" and "Division II."

A senior student, having senior elective experience in
the teaching unit, assisted with the study. She had had con-
siderable experience in small group teaching in the clinical

\(^1\) See Appendix D.
area, and with guidance, she assumed the role of leader for the control group in most of the sessions. Since she had had no experience in the role of observer-reporter, and it was necessary for her to assume this role for the sessions with the experimental group, an orientation was provided which included:

1. A review of the manual on "The Incident Process" with special attention to the section on the role of the observer-reporter.

2. A review of a case as it had been presented in a class which the investigator had attended at a university. This case was complete with observer-reporter's notes and the leader's discussion plans.

3. A practice session with the experimental group.

4. Discussion and evaluation of her report following the practice session.

5. Guidance and instruction concerning objective recording of non-verbal communications.

The senior student was not expected to interpret but simply to record and to describe non-verbal communication objectively. All interpretations were made by the investigator. The investigator's background experience and knowledge of the Incident Process was gained by first hand experience in the roles of "Leader", "Observer-reporter", and "Group member"
during a series of classes on the Incident Process presented in a recent course in Personnel Problems in Administration.

The Experimental Group

During each session, the members were seated in a semi-circle and the assigned numbers (one through twelve) were written clearly on cards placed in front of each student. These cards enabled the observer-reporter to record the participation more quickly, identifying by the number rather than by name. Students retained the same numbers for all sessions.

A mimeographed copy of "The Incident" was given to each student at the beginning of each session. Students were instructed to study this copy and were encouraged to jot down any points for their line of questioning. As a point of clarification for readers of this study, a copy of the Incident used in the first class is included here: 2

"The Narcotic Check"

THE INCIDENT:

At one-thirty P.M. on December 10, Miss Warren was adjusting the head traction on Mr. Irving, a patient in a four bed unit on Ward G. At that time, Miss Kendall approached her and in a loud voice said, "You had no right to say I gave you permission to give Mrs. Ward that narcotic! -- As students

2 See Appendix B for copies of Incidents used in each session.
from this school you know as well as I that you were taught to check the patient's chart before giving any narcotic! -- And I told Miss Jones so!"

Assignment to the Group:

You are to assume the role of Miss Jones, a young graduate who is in charge of Ward G as the Head Nurse is on a week's vacation. What action will you take?

Allowing the students five to ten minutes to ponder this tantalizing bit of information, the session was declared open by the leader and the students proceeded to "dig" for the facts and build the complete case, then make a decision in the role of Miss Jones.

The five phases of the Incident Process as described by the Pigors were carried through in each session. In view of the level of maturity of the students involved in this study, certain adaptations were made. In brief these adjustments included the following:

1. More time was allowed for studying the Incident as students were encouraged to jot down their thoughts and try to organize them as a basis for formulating a consistent line of questioning.

2. The leader played a dual role of "the man with the facts" and "teacher" rendering all possible cues and assistance to individual members to foster growth in self expression. The investigator felt
such guidance was necessary for the students in this age group.

3. Students did not assume the role of "leader" or "observer-reporter".

4. The leader allowed the students to "debate" the issue in Phase IV and Phase V a little, on the premise that it is normal and natural for "teen-agers" to do so.

The sequence of class sessions for the experimental group and the topics discussed are presented here:

Orientation Session:

Leader--the investigator
Observer-reporter--senior student assistant
Topic--Orientation to Incident Process
Case Presented-- "The Coffee Case" adapted from the manual on the Incident Process. The historical decision was presented in a briefer form and the Arbitrator's Report was deleted.

Session 1:

Leader--senior assistant
Observer-reporter--the investigator
Topic--Interpersonal Relations in the Ward Situation
Case Presented-- "The Narcotic Check"

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3 See Appendix C for a sample case used.

4 Adaptation on this case and reproduction was made with permission through correspondence from Paul Pigors.
Session 2:
Leader--the investigator
Observer-reporter--senior assistant
Topic--Student Council Function
Case Presented--"The Pocketbook Case"

Session 3:
Leader--the investigator
Observer-reporter--senior assistant
Topic--Problems of Residence
Case Presented--"The Suspect"

Session 4:
Leader--the investigator
Observer-reporter--senior assistant
Topic--Alcohol vs. Social Drinking
Case Presented--"The Wine Case"

Session 5: In the Evaluation Session regular case method was used.
Leader--the investigator
Observer-reporter--senior assistant
Topic--Marriage in a School of Nursing--Problems and Policies
Case Presented--"The Dangerous Secret"
The Control Group

The seating arrangement for this group was the same as for the experimental group except for the addition of a table for the panel members placed in the center of the semicircle. The numbers for the members of this group were from thirteen through twenty-four. Each student was required to participate in one panel group but was allowed a choice in this assignment. In each session there was an initial discussion by the assigned panel members followed by a general discussion period. All members were given an opportunity to participate in the discussion as it was structured by the investigator to bring out general attitudes and the broader issues concerned in each topic.

The topics discussed were the same as those used in the experimental group each week, only the methods were varied. Although the Senior Student was the leader in most of the sessions for the control group, the investigator took an active part in guiding the general discussions to stimulate maximum group participation. The sequence of class sessions, topics discussed, and methods used were as follows:

Orientation Session:

Leader--the investigator
Observer-reporter (Not needed for this session)
Topic--Orientation to group method. The various types of panels were discussed and a brief description of role-playing was given. Students were assigned to panels of their choice.
Session 1:
Leader--senior student assistant
Observer-reporter--the investigator
Topic--Interpersonal Relations in the Ward Situation
Method--Seminar and discussion of actual experiences students had on the wards

Session 2:
Leader--senior student assistant
Observer-reporter--the investigator
Topic--Student Council Function
Method--Role-playing--Freshmen students make a request for extra privileges.

Session 3:
Leader--senior student assistant
Observer-reporter--the investigator
Topic--Problems of Residence
Method--Informal panel discussion and audience participation

Session 4:
Leader--the investigator
Observer-reporter--senior student assistant
Topic--Alcoholism vs. Social Drinking
Method--Symposium--presenting three sides of the issue
Session 5: In the evaluation session the same case was presented as for the experimental group.

Leader--the investigator
Observer-reporter--senior student assistant
Topic--Marriage in Schools of Nursing
Case Presented--"The Dangerous Secret"
Method--Case Method Discussion

Evaluation of the Participation

The observer-reporter's reports for both groups were supplemented and checked after each session by the investigator. The recording machine proved invaluable for this purpose. The participation for each group member was tabulated and categorized in terms of the unit objectives. To facilitate this process, a form was devised by the investigator based on principles and ideas adapted from Bales' and Flanagan's methods of describing behavior as explained in Chapter II.

A trial run for the first draft of this form was made during a class in Field Studies at the university prior to the beginning of this study. The form was revised and further tests were made to check its reliability. This check was made by three students in the university. They were asked to use the form independently and to categorize the participation for a section of the observer-reporter's reports for the control

---

5 See Appendix A.
group as well as for the experimental group. The results of this check is included in Table 1.

TABLE 1
Comparison of Ratings Made by Three University Students and the Investigator on a Section of the Observer-reporter's report

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Per cent of Effective Participation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Experimental Group</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student I</td>
<td>63%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student II</td>
<td>60%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student III</td>
<td>60%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Investigator</td>
<td>61%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The students' achievement was evaluated further in the fifth sessions. The same case was presented to each group and they were given the same instructions. Results were evaluated in terms of the unit objectives and also the ability demonstrated in seeking out the important and relevant issues in the case.

Students were asked to evaluate the unit in terms of the sessions liked best and liked least and to comment on whether or not they felt they had made progress regarding the unit objectives.
CHAPTER IV
PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION OF DATA

In this chapter, the data is discussed and presented with respect to group performance, progress of individual members, results of the evaluation session, and students' evaluations of methods used and of their own progress.

**Group Performance**

The findings concerned with each group's performance are reported in three areas; the per cent of effective participation for each session, the per cent of participation for each session in relation to the three unit objectives, and the amount of participation by the leader in each session.

In Figure I, the per cent of participation that was scored effective for each group in each session is shown. There is evidence of steady progress for the experimental group. Although a higher level of effectiveness was reached by the control group in the third session than the highest level of any one session of the experimental group, the average for all sessions for the control group was 69 per cent as opposed to the 73 per cent average for all sessions for the experimental group.

The groups' effectiveness in relation to participation categorized for each of the three unit objectives is illustrated in Figure II. Here again, can be noted steady
FIGURE I. Per Cent of Effective Participation for Each Group
Objective I  
(Self-Expression)

Objective II  
(Team-Work)

Objective III  
(Decision-Making)

Per Cent

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sessions</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5*</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Experimental Group

Control Group

*The Evaluation Session

FIGURE II. Per Cent of Effective Participation Relevant to Each Objective
progress for the experimental group; the greatest degree of progress being in the area of self expression. It is interesting to note that neither group showed progress in the evaluation session in relation to decision-making, the third objective. One assumption regarding this fact, might be that the class, as a whole, reached a plateau. On the other hand, it is possible that the case method which was used for both groups in the evaluation session, was unfamiliar and an adjustment period was needed.

The amount of participation by the leader was tabulated in each session to explore whether or not there would be any correlation between it and the group's effectiveness in team work, the second objective of the unit. In Figure III, there is evidence that a relationship does exist. For the experimental group, the leader's participation decreased as the group's effectiveness in team work increased. For the control group, the greatest distance between leader participation and the effectiveness in team work occurred in the third session which was the most active session, for the control group, in all respects.

**Progress of Individual Members**

An analysis of the findings illustrated in Figure IV, shows that the per cent of effective participation increased steadily for at least nine members of the experimental group. The effective performance of the members of the control group
FIGURE III. Per Cent of Participation for the Leader in Comparison With the Groups' Effectiveness in Team Relationships
FIGURE IV Per Cent of Each Member's Participation That Was Effective
was more sporadic. The leader was challenged by members four and five in the experimental group because they were so vocal and enthusiastic but so ineffective in the beginning sessions. Slow but steady improvement in their performance can be noted and is best illustrated in Table 2, which shows the relationship between the per cent of group participation and the per cent of effective group participation for each member.

In the control group, there was a similar challenge involving members fifteen, nineteen and twenty one. Member twenty one made considerable progress. For both groups, the members did their best when their participation fell below ten per cent.
TABLE 2

A Comparison of Each Member's Per Cent of the Group's Effective Participation With Her Per Cent of the Group's Total Participation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Members**</th>
<th>Session 1 Participation</th>
<th>Session 2 Participation</th>
<th>Session 3 Participation</th>
<th>Session 4 Participation</th>
<th>Session 5 Participation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>Effective</td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>Effective</td>
<td>Total</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23*</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Member 23 resigned before completion of the study

**Numbers 1-12 = Experimental Group
Numbers 13-24 = Control Group
Results of the Evaluation Session

The case presented in the evaluation session was viewed from two angles; effective group participation and effectiveness in seeking out important or relevant issues in the case. The effectiveness of participation has already been indicated in Figures I and II. The issues in the case considered important and relevant by the investigator were:

1. Separation of rumor from fact.
2. Concern for "What lies beneath the surface behavior?"
3. Influence of the school's policy regarding marriage.
4. Attitudes and influence of others in directing behavior.
5. Concern for immediate needs (medical care).
6. Implications for counseling.

The investigator attempted to score each group in relation to the above issues but found the procedure to be most difficult and subjective. For this reason, a sample of the observer-reporter's report for each group has been attached to the evaluation case in Appendix D. In the opinion of the investigator, the control group participated more actively and enthusiastically; they appeared to cover the issue more completely than the experimental group. The experimental group, however, were superior in their ability to separate
rumor from fact and consistently reminded one another by referring to the mimeographed copy of the case for actual facts as opposed to rumor. The investigator had to remind members in the control group to check the mimeographed copy for the facts.

The effect of the leader's participation is of special interest. For the experimental group, there were approximately eighteen times that the leader entered the discussion and six of these were in response to questions asked by group members. For the control group, however, the leader entered the discussion approximately thirty three times but was questioned only twice. The questions asked by both groups were considered by the investigator to be relevant and important.

The Students' Evaluations

Students were asked to write a brief evaluation indicating the class session they liked best and the one they liked least. They were also asked to comment on whether or not they felt they had made any progress in relation to the three unit objectives. Results of this evaluation appear in Table 3 and Table 4.
### TABLE 3

Students' Evaluation of Class Sessions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sessions</th>
<th>Experimental Group</th>
<th>Control Group</th>
<th>Totals</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Liked Best</td>
<td>Liked Least</td>
<td>Liked Best</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Orientation</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Interpersonal Relations on the Ward</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Problems for Student Council</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Problems of Residence Adjustment</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Alcohol vs. Social Situations</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Marriage Policies</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Totals*</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*One student in each group gave no choice.

### TABLE 4

Students' Evaluation of Their Progress Relative to Each Objective

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Self-Expression</th>
<th></th>
<th>Team Work</th>
<th></th>
<th>Decision-Making</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Progress Inferred</td>
<td>No Progress</td>
<td>Progress Inferred</td>
<td>No Progress</td>
<td>Progress Inferred</td>
<td>No Progress</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Experimental Group</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Control Group</td>
<td>11</td>
<td></td>
<td>11</td>
<td></td>
<td>11</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Totals</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The investigator was most surprised concerning the results of the sessions liked and disliked. It would seem that young women in the age group of the participants of this study would be vitally interested in a case about a student nurse "who is or is not married" and "who is or is not pregnant."

Yet, two students in the experimental group listed the evaluation case as the one they liked least. It was interesting to note the reasons these two students gave for their dislike—"It had to do with opinions. No facts could be dug out," and "Probably because it was not conducted as the others were with questions and answers." These students' comments clearly indicate their preference for the Incident Process Method over the Case Method and in the investigator's opinion are most creditable to the Incident Process. However, the investigator does not intend to minimize the merits of the Case Method. Its value in teaching communication skills must be acknowledged here for the session selected as the one liked best by the majority of the members in the control group, was the evaluation session. The reasons given by the students were based, in part, on the interest of the topic of the session but the major strengths of support were found in such comments as, "Never realized how many facts have to be considered," "---talking together we figured it out." "It was interesting to see how people react to a problem," and "Very interesting and there are many angles that could be discussed on it." These comments in the investigator's opinion are most creditable to the Case Method.
CHAPTER V

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This study was an experiment to test the effectiveness of the Incident Process in teaching a unit of communication skills in a Human Relations Course. Twenty-four students in a diploma school of nursing took part in the study; twelve were assigned to the experimental group and were taught by the Incident Process, and twelve in the control group were taught by panel, discussion and role-playing methods. An orientation class followed by four practice sessions and an evaluation session was held for each group concurrently. During each session, an observer-reporter recorded verbal and non-verbal communication and these reports were supplemented by tape recordings. Following each session, the investigator analysed the communication in terms of the objectives of the communication unit to determine the degree of progress for each group. The case method was used in the evaluation sessions. The same case was presented to each group and the results were viewed from two angles; the effectiveness of participation and the ability to seek out important and relevant issues in the case presented.

The analysis of the data revealed evidence of steady progress for the experimental group in development of communication skill in terms of the investigator's stated unit objectives. The control group appeared to cover a broader
area in their discussions than the experimental group did, but their progress in relation to the unit objectives was sporadic.

The students' evaluation of class sessions they liked best and those they liked least in the series, pointed to a preference for the Incident process over the case method for the experimental group and preference for the case method over panels, discussions and role-playing by the control group. The members of the control group all felt that they had made progress toward the unit objectives, but in the experimental group, three members inferred no progress in self expression, two members felt they made no progress in team relationships and one member indicated no progress in decision-making. However, the investigator's analysis of participation in these three areas clearly indicated steady progress for the majority of members in the experimental group and inconsistency in the performance of members of the control group.

An unexpected dividend of the study was found in the exploration of the effect of the leader's participation in class sessions. The experimental group required less leadership as they developed skill in participation, but the leader's participation for the control group remained at about the same level for each session though the groups' performance fluctuated.

In conclusion, the Incident Process is an effective method of teaching communication skills to students in nursing,
but to claim it superior to panels, discussions, role-playing, debates, case method and problem-solving methods, would be a statement of antithesis. In the opinion of the investigator, the Incident Process, through its various phases, utilizes and integrates all of the above methods. It is this unique characteristic that sets it apart as a valuable tool in human relations and provides the basis for this writer's recommendations which follow:

1. That this study be given impetus by those interested in repeating it to improve the design and further test the findings.

2. That the Incident Process be further modified to adapt it for a study in the area of clinical teaching in nursing.

3. That a study of this nature be done by trained social psychologists.

4. That the implications for management and leadership and the results of this study in communication be combined and experimented within the area of inservice education on the staff and supervisory levels.
BIBLIOGRAPHY


Flanagan, John C., The Critical Incident Technique, American Institute for Research, University of Pittsburgh, October, 1953.


MacDonald, Ruth, "A Comparison of Two Methods of Teaching A Selected Unit in the Medical-Surgical Area," Unpublished Master's Thesis, Boston University, Boston, 1957.


APPENDIX A

Form for Evaluation of Participation

This form was designed as a guide for the investigator to use on categorizing students' comments and questions for each session. The following will clarify how this form was used:

If a student rambled on and on, not making her point clear to the group, her comment was scored ( - I ) meaning that it was ineffective in terms of Objective I, self expression.

If a student remarked, "I agree with that too," in reference to what another member had just said, the remark was scored ( + II ) because it was effective behavior in the achievement of Objective II, team relationships.

A student's total participation for a session was determined by counting the number of times she entered the conversation. If she had a total of twelve comments or questions or non-verbal gestures, and eight were scored ( + ) effective, then her effectiveness in that session was 67 per cent.

Most of the verbal communication could be categorized in accordance with the description of the behavioral aspects under each objective, but the non-verbal communication was not scored unless it was really outstanding or "critical" as defined by Flanagan. For the most part, the non-verbal was used as a supplementary factor in classifying the verbal in context.
FORM FOR EVALUATION OF PARTICIPATION

Objective I: To develop skill in self expression: (The ability to say what you think and feel, so that it is understood by others.)

DESCRIPTION OF BEHAVIORAL ASPECTS:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>EFFECTIVE</th>
<th>INEFFECTIVE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Comments and questions are clear and concise - voice tones are firm.</td>
<td>Comments or questions are foggy, rambly and incoherent or repetitious.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exhibits freedom to declare confusion - ex. &quot;I don't understand.&quot; or &quot;What was that again?&quot;</td>
<td>Voice tones are soft, and non-assertive. Others are asked timidly for their opinions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gives evidence of self-appraisal by open admission of error or misunderstanding. Shows positive reactions to compliments by smiling or saying &quot;Thank you&quot;.</td>
<td>Withdrawal signs - ends the conversation before the point is made. Mumbles to neighbor or turns to dodging.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expresses opinions and feelings but does not project as fact or try to force them upon others.</td>
<td>Status seeking - such as clowning, grimacing, exhibiting boisterous manner and loud voice.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expresses enthusiasm and interest by waiting patiently for recognition of hand signals. Exciting voice tones-engrossed expression while reading materials or listening to others.</td>
<td>Makes critical remarks in an off-hand manner - states opinion as fact.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Positive tension release as shown by friendly kidding, and courage to continue even when voice shakes or face flushes.</td>
<td>Tension and anxiety - confusion, hesitancy, and twisting about while talking. Rapid meaningless chatter, finger tapping, etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indicates sense of humor, laughs with group - jokes at own expense.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Objective II: To develop skill in team work: (To be a participating member of a group - the ability to work with others seeking a common goal.)

DESCRIPTION OF BEHAVIORAL ASPECTS:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>EFFECTIVE</th>
<th>INEFFECTIVE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Raises status of others - gives support, ex. &quot;That's right.&quot; or &quot;You have a good point there.&quot; Employs friendly gestures, use of first names, etc.</td>
<td>Open expression of hostility emphatic remarks such as: &quot;That's awful!&quot; or &quot;I certainly don't agree to that!&quot; Prolonged argument, sullen or beligerant manner.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seeks opinions and feelings of others - ex. &quot;How do you think it was?&quot;, &quot;How do you feel?&quot;</td>
<td>Autocratic control - issuing commands, speaking with directive tone, implying that there is only one approach to the problem.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Active voluntary participation in the discussion.</td>
<td>Status deflating - teasing, calling attention to errors of others, being sarcastic, making fun of others.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Concedes point to another.</td>
<td>Repeating what others have said because of failure to listen. Buzzing to neighbor when member is trying to make a point or leader is clarifying.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Identification with the group, indicates &quot;we&quot; or &quot;ours&quot;.</td>
<td>Boredom and disinterest, closing eyes, watching the clock, slouching, mumbling or giggling.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Returns the group to the issue when discussion is argumentive or irrelevant.</td>
<td>Defensive - &quot;that others are picking on me.&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contributes to fund of information by following the group's line of questioning or thinking.</td>
<td>Lone Wolf cues - expresses &quot;I&quot; feeling, pursues own line of questions or comment.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consideration for those with minority opinions - ex. &quot;You are out-voted, but I think you may have a point just the same.&quot;</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Objective III: To develop skill in decision-making: (The ability to analyze a problem situation and indicate good judgment based on facts and understanding of human behavior.)

DESCRIPTION OF BEHAVIORAL ASPECTS:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>EFFECTIVE</th>
<th>INEFFICIENT</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Seeks all available facts - tracks down key data before formulating a solution to the problem.</td>
<td>Critical evaluation without sufficient evidence - does not suspend judgment.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organizes data, uses tools such as underlining key passages - reading materials cautiously, quotes portions.</td>
<td>General disinterest in solving the problem as indicated by refusing to assume the assigned role. Passive expression, &quot;So what can we do about it?&quot;, &quot;It's none of our business.&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Willingness to assume role - to put oneself in the other fellow's place before determining action. Accepts assignment and works enthusiastically on the problem or discussion.</td>
<td>Comments and questions are irrelevant.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Offers suggestions for possible courses of action, compromise, etc.</td>
<td>Hedges in the decision-making - asks for the opinions of others when she should be making a decision.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Backs up decision with logical reasoning, bases on human needs as well as cold facts.</td>
<td>Failure to consider the human element, sticks to the rules and policies determinedly.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Courageously defends own convictions but leaves open for further challenge.</td>
<td>Goes with the majority - with passive acceptance and &quot;don't care manner&quot;.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assumes leadership or cooperative role in summarizing or formulating issues.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
APPENDIX B
"The Narcotic Case"

THE INCIDENT:

At one-thirty P.M. on December 10th, Miss Warren was adjusting the head traction on Mr. Irving, a patient in a four-bed ward unit on Ward G. At that time Miss Kindell approached her and in a loud voice, said, "You had no right to say I gave you permission to give Mrs. Ward that narcotic! As students from this school you know as well as I that you were taught to check the patient's chart before giving any narcotic! And I told Miss Jones so!"

ASSIGNMENT TO THE GROUP:

You are to assume the role of Miss Jones, a young graduate nurse who is Assistant Head Nurse on Ward G. She is in charge as the Head Nurse is on a weeks vacation. How would you handle this situation?

"The Pocketbook Incident"

THE INCIDENT:

The following conversation takes place between Miss White, the Director of Memorial School of Nursing and members of the faculty:

Miss White: "I have a problem concerning a student and I would like to have your opinion as to how this could best be handled. I received a letter from Miss Bethany at Cannon School of Nursing. She reported that Miss Smythe got into difficulty on the last night of her affiliation there!"

Miss Childs: "What did she do, now?"

Miss White: "Essentially it was a dormitory rule violation."

Miss Green: "Oh, No! Not another one. Well, another problem for the Honor Board to take up. Maybe she'll get two less late leaves per month this time."

Miss White: "It may not be as simple as that. I have already seen Miss Smythe and she does admit she has violated a dormitory rule."
ASSIGNMENT TO THE GROUP:

After considerable discussion this situation was referred to the Honor Board (Student Council). As a member of this Honor Board, how would you deal with Miss Smythe?

"The Suspect"

THE INCIDENT:

One Saturday afternoon as Dottie walked by Joan's room on the front floor of the student nurses residence, she happened to glance through the open door and observed Linda "poking" around in Joan's top dresser drawer. She hustled along her way not thinking too much about it.

Later that evening Joan was extremely upset and asked everyone on the first floor if they had seen anyone in her room because her new ruby ring had been stolen--she had hidden it in her top dresser drawer under some hankies, what's more it wasn't the only thing she had been missing. Dottie told her about seeing Linda but first extracted a solemn promise from her not to say who had seen her.

Joan was shocked, as Linda had been her best friend during the three months they had been in training.

ASSIGNMENT TO THE GROUP:

Assume that you are Joan, what would you do about this situation?
"The Wine Case"

THE INCIDENT:

On Tuesday, Miss Grace, the Director of Nurses called six members of the faculty together to discuss a student problem. She described the problem as follows:

It seems that a farewell party was held last Thursday evening (in the nurses residence) for the practical student nurses whose affiliation in our Obstetrical Department was completed on Saturday. Wine was served at the gathering and a great deal of noise was made. People were disturbed after 10:30 P.M.--in fact up until 11:30 P.M. Susan Frank was the "hostess"; when she spoke to me on Friday, she said it was all her idea. Ruth Levy was present at the party also, and I feel she is equally responsible. You all know that Miss Frank and Miss Levy are seniors and have been outstanding students and leaders in the school. Twelve other younger students were also at the party.

I feel that the fact that wine was brought into the residence and served by these two girls is a matter for grave consideration and strict disciplinary action.

After further investigation and a lengthy discussion the six faculty members recommended that the Student Council be allowed to handle the incident and to make recommendation for disciplinary action.

ASSIGNMENT TO THE GROUP:

Assume that you are a member of Student Council. How will you handle this situation?
"The Wine Case"

Discussion Plan

Phase I: The Incident (see attachment)
Allow students 5-10 minutes to study incident and jot notes.

Phase II:

Personnel Involved:
1. (Attachment A) for those present at the meeting.
2. Students involved:
   Miss Frank--senior student in very good standing--considered to be a leader in her group. Has never been involved in any disciplinary problems until this incident.
   (Age 20)
   Miss Levy--(Jewish) senior student, also in very good standing, leader of group, no previous record of disciplinary problems.
   (Age 20)

The Scene and Sequence:

The Party

Date: Thursday evening (preceding Tuesday meeting of Faculty).

Reason: Miss Frank's reason--she thought it a good idea to give a farewell party to the practical nurses who would be finishing their course on the next Saturday.

Where Held: In one of the practical nurses' rooms in the nurses' residence.

Those Present: Miss Frank and Miss Levy--seniors.
12 other student nurses (2nd year)
Miss Orleans was one of them--she is the student member of a special committee of the Honor Board.
2 practical nurses
(all of the above were invited, but many other students "dropped in")
Refreshments: Wine was served as the beverage. Miss Levy bought the wine, but Miss Frank did not disclose this as it was her idea—Miss Frank kept insisting that she alone was responsible for the wine. Only one half of one bottle of wine was used at the party—reason given by Miss Frank was "it didn't taste good"—she didn't know what kind to get.

Party Broke up: at 11:30 P.M.—students own idea to break up then.

Reported to Miss Grace: on Friday A.M. (informer was not disclosed)

Action taken to Date: Miss Grace called Miss Frank to her office and discussed the seriousness of the situation—she told her expulsion from the school would have to be considered as she had violated her trust in her as a leader and that she knew alcoholic beverages were not allowed in the residence. Miss Grace called several members of the faculty together. (Tuesday—following the party)

Faculty Members at Meeting: See Attachment A.

Discussion at meeting: On Tuesday—the Faculty members requested Miss Frank and Miss Levy's presence so they could talk to them directly. They were called in.

Further developments—Conversation at meeting: See Attachment B.

Summary of Facts: 1) A party was held in the nurses residence.

a) Thursday evening (ended at 11:30 P.M., lights out and time of retiring was 10:30 P.M.)

b) Miss Frank, a senior student nurse, declared herself hostess. Miss Levy, her friend, was the only other senior involved.

c) The party was given to honor two practical nurses who were to leave the following Saturday (12 other young students were invited)
Phase III:

Immediate Issues:

1) Council only
2) Disciplinary action
3) Both counsel and disciplinary action
Counsel regarding wine
Discipline regarding noise and late hour

Phase IV:

Decision of group.

Historical Decision:

1) Miss Frank and Miss Levy were suspended for one week but were to remain in the residence and to attend classes—they would not be on duty.
2) The other 12 students involved were camped for one week.

Phase V:

The Broader Issues Involved:

1) Need for understanding regarding social and religious connotations regarding alcoholic beverages as opposed to use of alcohol at a party.
2) Function of the student council in handling problems of this nature. (Need for judgment in recommendations)
"The Wine Case"

THE INCIDENT:

On Tuesday, Miss Grace, the Director of Nurses called six members of the faculty together to discuss a student problem. She described the problem as follows:

It seems that a farewell party was held last Thursday evening (in the nurses residence) for the practical student nurses whose affiliation in our Obstetrical Department was completed on Saturday. Wine was served at the gathering and a great deal of noise was made. People were disturbed after 10:30 P.M. -- in fact, up until 11:30 P.M. Susan Frank was the "hostess"; when she spoke to me on Friday, she said it was her idea. Ruth Levy was present at the party, also, and I feel she is equally responsible. You all know that Miss Frank and Miss Levy are Seniors and have been outstanding students and leaders in the school. Twelve other younger students were also at the party.

After further investigation and a lengthy discussion the six faculty members recommended that the Student Council be allowed to handle the incident and to make recommendation for disciplinary action.

ASSIGNMENT TO THE GROUP:

Assume that you are a member of the Student Council. How will you handle the situation?

ATTACHMENT A  "The Wine Case"

Faculty Members at the Meeting:

1) Miss Allen, R.N., B.S., Ass't Director--15 yrs.; had a responsibility for student rotation. Is kind, fair, strict, but known to be flexible and "on the side of the student".

2) Miss Carey, R.N., M.S., Ass't Director of Nursing Service, 1 yr.; acted as resource person and carried on research. Pleasant person, logical mind, strict, firm, occasionally appeared to be rigid.

3) Miss LaBeau, R.N., B.S., M.S., Educational Director--2 months. Liked to be a part of all that was "going on". Worked very closely with Grace, although she appeared to like to handle problems herself. Appeared too rigid.
4) Miss Nathan, R.N., Supervisor of Private Service,--10 yrs.; Health Supervisor--5 yrs. Very kind, sweet, friendly, outgoing personality. Liked by the students; disliked making decisions.

5) Miss Mackey, R.N., B.S., Science Instructor--3 yrs.; also acting Educational Director, for 9 months before Miss LaBeau was employed. Well liked by the students, "student-minded", fair, participated in school activities to large extent. Faculty Advisor to Student Faculty Association for 2 yrs.

6) Miss Sage, R.N., B.S., Supervisor Surgical Service,--3 yrs. Class Advisor to Class of 1955 (Misses Frank and Levy's class), and has been Advisor to Class of 1953 also. Well liked by students, "student-minded", fair, participated and arranged many school activities. Faculty Advisor to the Recreation Committee of Student Faculty Association, 2 yrs.

ATTACHMENT B

"The Wine Case"

Conversation after the two seniors were called to the meeting:

Miss Sage: Miss Frank, did you buy the wine?
How Many bottles were there?
How many were at the party?

Miss Frank: I bought it--the party started off small--we had one bottle.

Miss Sage: Was it a quart bottle or a pint?

Miss Frank: A quart.

Miss Carey: Miss Frank--Why did you do it!

Miss Frank: I thought it would be nice--to just have a little party for the girls--they were leaving and all--I didn't see anything wrong.

Miss Carey: Surely, you knew it was against the rules.

Miss Levy: I didn't think that there were any rules.

Miss Grace: Miss Frank--You did know!

Miss Levy: We've had it before--in the hospital, they have it at circumcisions!
Miss Grace: Yes, but right in the circumcision room!
Miss Frank: Then we all have a little--didn't have any
more at the party.
Miss Levy: We've had it at my home too!
Miss Carey: You mean to say that neither of you knew that
there were rules about this?
Miss Frank: No one ever said anything about the others.
Miss Carey: What others?
Miss Carey: What other groups were there?
Miss Frank: Well, I don't know, but a while back I know
there was some who had wine in the residence.
Miss MacKay: Do you think you were noisy because of the wine?
Miss Frank: I think it was because there were so many
people. We didn't plan to have so many.
Miss LeBeau: You say there were 14 people in all--and one
bottle of wine--and there was one-half left?
Miss Frank: It didn't taste good, I didn't know what kind
to buy!
Miss LeBeau: What finally broke the party up?
Miss Frank: Someone complained about the noise, but we had
decided to break it up anyway!
Miss MacKay: Miss Frank, how do you feel about this now?
Miss Frank: Well I'm to blame--no one else is, but if it
didn't get noisy it would have been okay. More
came than expected, I didn't mean to make a
big thing of it.
Miss MacKay: Have you ever had any parties in your room
before?
Miss Frank: It wasn't in my room--it's too small.
Miss Grace: But you were the hostess.
Miss Frank: Well, technically.
Miss Carey: What do you mean—"technically?" Who's room was it in?

Miss Frank: One of the practical nurses.

Miss MacKay: Did you buy just the wine for a social affair— not to have a bang up party? Do you think Miss Grace is upset over precedent?

Miss Grace: She knows why I'm upset.

Miss Frank: I really don't know—I don't think wine had anything to do with it. If your mind is made up to punish us because we got caught—no one else is to blame, the others had nothing to do with it!

Miss Nathan: Why do you think you were reported and who reported you?

Miss Levy: There were only two that were noisy really—and they'd be silly on just plain water.

Miss Carey: If you knew this why did you invite them?

Miss Levy: They just dropped in.

Miss Frank: That's why we decided to break up.

Miss Allen: How did Miss Grace know about the wine?

Miss Frank: She told us we had wine.

Miss Carey: What did you do with the last half bottle?

Miss Frank: It's in the closet.

Miss Grace: I'm sure the practical nurses were surprised when you served them wine.

Miss Frank: No—we would have offered it to anyone.

Miss Carey: Miss Frank, Are you saying seriously—that you would have offered wine to Miss Grace if she had walked in?

Miss Frank: Well, if she were in the circumcision room, she would have been offered some.
Miss Nathan: I wonder if you have thought seriously about this? This is a different situation—a party, and a ritual! Surely you understand the circumcision ritual? It isn't a social event!

Miss Levy: Yes, I understand that.

Miss Frank: Yes.

Miss Levy: I don't think we thought too much about it at the time.

Miss Frank: Not until the student came in about the noise.

Miss Allan: Did you offer her some wine?

Miss Frank: Yes, and she had some.

Miss Frank: (addressing Miss Grace) If you are going to punish anyone, it should not be Miss Levy.

Miss Grace: She is equally responsible with you.
Sample of Participation

Method: Incident Process
Topic: Alcohol vs. Social Situation
Case: "The Wine Case"

Seating Arrangement

INTRODUCTION: (Leader gave following explanation to the group) This is the last session of this type—so let's see how well you can do with it. I'm going to stay out of it as much as I can—the discussion phase—that is. Next week we will have class, but it will be different. I'm going to present a case for you to discuss and analyze, but the facts will all be there; you won't have to "dig" for them.

PHASE I: 9:02 A.M. Incident handed out

Group Activity: As a whole group seriously reading.

Members:

5 and 11 laughing
1 and 7 talking together seriously
12 still studying incident—others finished—group all laughing say "I think this is ridiculous".
8, 9 and 3 note taking and underlining.

PHASE II: 9:15 A.M. Session declared open by leader

Members:

6 Still underlining in her copy of incident
11 What did these two girls have to say when confronted?

Leader Answers
1 and 7  Still conferring with each other—giggling.

4  It says here (refers to incident and underlines) "I feel she is equally responsible"—What did she have to do with it?

Leader  Explains.

7  Were the 12 other students Freshmen? Were they all Freshmen?

5  Was the party held in one of the senior's rooms?

Leader  Answers member 7's question and says No to member 5's.

12  Where was it held?

Leader  In one of the practical nurse's rooms.

4  When are lights supposed to be out in this residence?

Leader  At 10:30 P.M.

5  Who complained about it (does not specify what or whom)

Leader  Asks member 5 to state question in a clearer fashion than answers.

1  Has Susan or Ruth done anything like this before?

Leader  No

12  Did the housemother go up to the party to see what went on? Do they have any actual proof?

Leader  Answers.

12  Was it reported that night? (Is she checking time element in relation to punishment)

Leader  No—then explains time was Friday A.M.

Members 4 and 6 waving hands—trying to ask question.

7  (Cuts in on 6) Did practical nurses have anything to say?
Leader: No--they left on Saturday A.M.--no one had a chance to check with them.
5
Leader: Do we know anymore about what was said at the meeting?
5
Leader: Do you mean beyond what is on the incident?
5
Leader: Yes, is there any further conversation?
Leader: Yes. (Passes out attachment B)
Members 3 and 10 reading intently--under-scoring points.
4
Leader: Asks question about Miss Levy--leader delayed answer so group could finish reading attachment. Group quiet and intent.
1
Leader: (Pointing to attachment) It says Miss Grace is upset by what? Why is she upset?
4
Leader: What year of training was the girl in who reported the party?
Leader: We don't know exactly who reported the party--Miss Grace said she could not disclose this information.
4
Leader: Oh, well the student who complained of the noise--was she on the same floor where the party was?
Leader: We don't know that, but she was in the same residence.
4
Leader: Do you think she was the one who told Miss Grace? (winks at leader mischievously)
Leader: Laughed
11
Leader: Are there any rules regarding liquor in the residence?
Leader: No written rules.
6
Leader: Miss Levy stated she had it at her home, did she mean nurses home?
Leader: No--family residence.
There were 14 girls at the party it says, who were the other two (admits confusion)?

Leader There were 16 in all with the two practical nurses and the two seniors.

Have there been any other incidents involving alcoholic drinks in the home?

Leader doesn't answer--member 10 cuts in.

What kind of girls were the practical nurses? (voice shaking)
EVALUATION CASE

"The Dangerous Secret"

Miss Brown: Director of Nurses
Miss Robbins: Instructor in Nursing
Joyce: Senior Student
Dick: Joyce's boy friend

In January Dick told Joyce that he expected to be sent over to Korea. Nothing was definite, but he said he had a feeling his number would be coming up soon. He had been in the Army for sixteen months now, and most of those who had fourteen and eighteen months had already been sent over seas that were in his outfit. He asked Joyce if they could be married before his time to go. This presented a problem to Joyce as she was a senior student in Memorial Hospital School of Nursing and would not complete her course until September. She tried to make Dick understand that a student in her school was not supposed to get married until the last three months in training. Dick said he felt that was unreasonable and he probably wouldn't be around at that time. Joyce promised to think it over for a few days.

After thinking it over they decided to try a "secret elopement". Since both were twenty one, there would be no difficulty making arrangements. They planned to wait, however, until Joyce completed the affiliation which she was then on. This would be the first week of February.

In the month of May, Joyce showed a wedding ring to several of her classmates but asked them to keep it a secret. She told them she had been married for some months and was pregnant. She had continued to go by her maiden name of Miss Stone.

In the early part of June, Joyce approached Miss Brown in the dining room and said, "Miss Brown, I'm starting my vacation tomorrow, and would like your permission to be married." Miss Brown told her that she was very happy for her but the dining room was not the place to discuss this. She asked her to come over to her office to talk it over before she left. She commented that Joyce looked rather pale and probably needed to get some rest on her vacation. Joyce did not attempt to see Miss Brown before she left.

While Joyce was away, Mrs. Robbins, a member of the Faculty, heard rumors to the effect that Joyce was pregnant. At first, she ignored the rumors, but when Miss Brown related
her conversation with Joyce which had taken place in the
dining room, she felt she should inform her of the stories.
Miss Brown decided she should speak to Miss Stone when she
returned from vacation and clear up the rumors.

When Joyce returned, she still continued to go by her
maiden name and said nothing about whether or not she had been
married on her vacation. Miss Brown decided to wait a few
weeks before calling Miss Stone to her office, as all of the
seniors were to have final physical examinations within a few
weeks. When Joyce had her physical, the doctor told the
Health Director that he thought she was pregnant but he would
like a urine test done, the test turned out negative.

Rumors continued throughout the faculty and student body
to such an extent that Miss Brown decided to call Miss Stone
to her office and ask her point blank if she were married and
if she were pregnant. Joyce told her she was married on
June 10th during her vacation and that she was not pregnant.
She agreed that she should go by her married name from now
on.

During the first part of August, two of Joyce's class-
mates had a confidential talk with Mrs. Robbins. They said
they were concerned about Joyce's health. They were certain
she was pregnant and she would not go for Medical care and
she needed it. She had not been eating properly. Joyce
refused to talk to anyone about herself. Mrs. Robbins sug-
gested that the girls continue to try to get Joyce to go back
to Miss Brown and explained to them that she didn't see how
anyone on the faculty could possibly feel that Joyce shouldn't
be allowed to graduate. Mrs. Robbins said she thought perhaps
Joyce might not be allowed to be on the stage for the gradua-
tion exercises, but that was probably the worst that would
happen. The students relayed this message to Joyce and tried
to get her to talk to Mrs. Robbins or Miss Brown. She still
refused. Mrs. Robbins then told Miss Brown that she believed
that Joyce was frightened and was not receiving proper medical
care. Miss Brown agreed that the faculty had a responsibility
for her health and so made another attempt to talk with Joyce.
During the conversation she assured her that she would be
allowed to graduate and should have medical care. Joyce
still denied being pregnant and declared her health to be
"just fine".

ASSIGNMENT TO THE GROUP:

Assume that you are a freshman student in Joyce's school
of nursing, and have heard the above case. What are your
feelings?
Sample Participation

Experimental Group
February 15, 1957 (9-11 A.M.)
5th Session

Method: Case Method, Analysis and Discussion
Topic: Marriage, Problems and Policies
Case: "The Dangerous Secret"

Seating Arrangement

INTRODUCTION: Leader gave the following explanation and instructions:

This is a case all worked up for you--now as freshmen students you are asked to discuss it--to give your feelings and reactions--then we'll try to figure out the broader issues as we did in the other cases.

Time: 9:15 A.M. (Leader passed out copies of the case)

Member Activity:

9 Intent on reading case--smiling every so often.
12 Reading--frowning.
5 Finished first--looked around then started re-reading.
8 and 4 Talking together softly--now laughing.
5 Stretches--then starts whispering to neighbor (member 7)

9:22 A.M. (Leader opens session for discussion)

Member Conversation

6 Can we ask about it first?

Leader I'm afraid I can't answer too many of your questions, because as I explained last week, this is a "case" all worked up for you--the facts are all here--all that are known--so,
I don't know any more than what is written. If there are any questions concerning anything that isn't clear, perhaps I could help though. Just what did you have in mind, Miss Nourse?

Well, it's just that it says here on the first page that she planned to get married in February, but she told Miss Brown--over on this page--that she got married in June--but she told her friends she got married--I don't know!

Leader Yes, it is confusing isn't it? You have to read carefully and try to think of all the possibilities don't you?

(Repeats what member 6 said) more or less summarizing it--she quotes passage from the copy. She ends saying, "I don't think she's pregnant!" She'd be (counts on fingers) almost seven months!

(Debates this point with member 6) Do you think he went to Korea?

It doesn't say so (referring back to copy)--only that he "expected to be sent".

(Interrupts) I think Joyce is being very foolish--if she is pregnant--she needs medical care and they told her she could graduate.

Leader Yes, Miss Little, as you say--the health angle is one to be concerned with isn't it? If she is pregnant, and even if she isn't?

And she should think of the baby--what about the nutrition? She just isn't being fair.

Leader And when people act unfairly or illogically what feelings do we have?

Why? We should try to find out "Why"!

Leader Exactly, we may never find out, but at least we ought to feel that they do have some reasons which to them seem logical.

Maybe she was afraid the school would find out and then if they knew she was married in February--if she was--then they wouldn't let her graduate.
4 But they told her she could graduate--and anyway (refers to copy) it says here that the test they did was negative--so what's she worried about?

1 (To member 4--uses first name) She's got lots to worry about if she is.

4 But, Hatchie--figure it out--this is August and she's still saying she isn't--the test is negative--so how do they know. (Counts on fingers again.) She couldn't be pregnant!

5 I think she could be--how do you know for sure! She told her friends she was.

4 Marilyn! she might have thought so then and--Oh, she's not pregnant, she couldn't be!

5 (To Leader) Can the test be negative and she still be pregnant?

Leader Oh yes, that sometimes happens.

(Considerable controversy continues over whether she is or isn't).

1,5,4,6 Are taking part in discussion

3 (Comes into discussion as clarifier) Calls their attention to "no facts to prove it either way"--"all we know as freshmen is the rumors we've heard."
Sample Participation

Control Group
February 15, 1957 (1-3 P.M.)
5th Session

Method: Case Method, Analysis and Discussion
Topic: Marriage, Problem and Policies
Case: "The Dangerous Secret"

INTRODUCTION: The Leader gave the following explanation and directions:

Today we are going to discuss a "case". It is the account of something that happened in a school of nursing in the Boston area. All the facts that are known are included in this copy that I will give you. Read it carefully and then we'll talk over our feelings. You need not talk directly to me, but can feel free to address each other directly.

Time: 1:06 P.M. (Leader passes out copies of the "case").

Member Activity:
17 Making notes on back of copy.
15 Making notes on back of copy.
20 Frowning, appears puzzled--keeps turning the pages.
18 Finishes reading--looks around a bit at others--re-reads.
19 Making notes on back of copy.
13 Still busy reading first page (others all seem finished)

Time: 1:12 P.M. (Leader declares session open) --group silent for a moment.
Members:

Leader: How do you feel about all this?

21: I don't know how I'd feel, but I know I think she would be--well no one believes she'd been married before--so she wouldn't want to admit she's pregnant?

Leader: You feel she is married, and pregnant?

21: Nods--yes

Leader: and that the problem is that no one will believe her?

17: (Interrupts 2 1) But if she was married, she wouldn't worry what others thought--she'd worry more about the baby!

13: She isn't showing any concern over the baby getting the proper care--she's only interested about her self graduating.

Leader: (Writes these two issues on the board)

15: She's not too concerned about herself--she's not getting any pre-natal care.

19: I think she's afraid if she admits she was married--she won't be allowed to graduate.

13: I think her concern is with her conscience.

19: Yes, because they planned to keep it secret--then when it came out--she was afraid.

(Members 15, 17, 16, and 20--all have hands waving)

Leader calls on number 15.

15: She's been told she can graduate--but she still refused to admit anything. I think she's really selfish!

Leader: Then you feel the faculty has been fair and understanding?

15: Yes, I think they were very understanding; they told her she'd be allowed to graduate.
In May she told her girl friends she was married--the test was sometime later on--and she wasn't pregnant then so maybe something happened. First she was, then, or maybe she just thought she was.

You feel the test proves she was not pregnant?

Nods--yes.

Well, you see, the test is not always definite proof.

It wasn't fair of her boy friend to make such demands on her.

Yes, and he wasn't even sure he was going overseas--he just thought he was.

I don't think she was too afraid of anyone knowing because she showed her ring to her friends and that was proof she was married.

Yes, but the faculty didn't know--only her classmates.

And she told her friends she was pregnant too.

I don't think she should have told them--it was bound to leak back to the faculty.

Do you mean she more or less started these rumors herself?

(Hand waving--leader does not see her)

No--not intentionally, but it was bound to get out.

But lots of times girls confide in one or two close friends--and they don't tell anyone else them.

Do you feel these girls that went to Mrs. Robbins well--how do you feel about them--were they friends or enemies?

I think they were trying to help Joyce--they were concerned over her health.
I think they were right in going to Mrs. Robbins.

(Calls on number 22 for her opinion--she appears to be day-dreaming)

I don't know--I just think as freshmen students, it's none of our business.