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IDENTITY: A STUDY OF EXISTENTIAL VS.  
SOCIAL ANCHORAGE

by

Paul J. Seymour

A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment  
of the requirements for the degree

of

MASTER OF SCIENCE

in

Psychology

UTAH STATE UNIVERSITY  
Logan, Utah

1973

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Paul J. Seymour

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## ABSTRACT

Identity: A Study of Existential vs.  
Social Anchorage

by

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Utah State University, 1973

Major Professor: Dr. John Priollaud  
Department: Psychology

The purpose of this study was to assess the identity anchorage of persons in different societal positions.

Four experimental groups were chosen to represent different societal positions, namely, students, musicians, management personnel, and nonmanagement personnel. There were 93 subjects involved in these four groups. Each subject was presented with an adapted version of the Twenty Statements Test and a questionnaire to obtain biographical data. The statements made on the Twenty Statements Test were then placed into one of the following categories: physical characteristics; social roles and institutions; characteristic ways of acting, feeling or responding in social interaction; and, broad nondifferentiating statements or denial of identity. These four modes were designated as representing the identity anchorages of a person.

The salient modes of identity anchorage for each of the four experimental groups was that of characteristic ways of acting, feeling, or responding in social interaction.

Two significant differences were obtained. One was that the musician sample had a significantly higher mean score of responses identifying with social roles and institutions than did the other experimental groups, and the other significant difference indicated females to identify with social roles and institutions more than males. Both of these differences were interpreted with caution as sampling error was present.

(64 pages)

## INTRODUCTION

The constructs of identity and self-concept have generated a large amount of systematic research in the fields of personality, social psychology, child development, and counseling and psychotherapy. The research that has been published, however, is mostly concerned with evaluating the presence or absence of identity, and the factors involved with good or bad self-concepts.

Identity and self-concept, although closely related, are separately defined constructs. Identity refers to who a person feels he is, e.g., I am a student, whereas self-concept refers to how a person feels about himself, e.g., I am satisfied with myself. Self-concept has an evaluative connotation, such as having a good or bad self-concept, whereas identity has no such evaluative aspect other than its absence or presence.

McPartland and Cumming (1958) list four components of identity: First, a reference to the physical person; second, to the person in terms of his social roles; third, a reference to the person's characteristic ways of acting, feeling, or responding in social interactions; and the fourth implies no context or attitude indicating identification with physical, social, or interpersonal networks, but, implies references so vague or comprehensive that they do not differentiate the person from others. The fourth category also includes a lack of identity. McPartland and Cumming have suggested that a person exhibits a clear preference for identity conceptualization in one or another of the above modes. To exhibit a clear

preference, (one that could be agreed upon by two or more independent judges) is to be anchored to that mode.

George Herbert Mead (1934) in formulating symbolic interaction theory suggested that a person's identity is derived from the social positions that person occupies in society, and furthermore, behavior is a function of this identity. Kuhn and McPartland (1954) empirically investigated this theory, and found supporting evidence as most of their subjects were anchored to the second mode of identity indicating identification with social roles and institutions, e.g., I am a student; I am a biology major. They called this a social anchorage of identity, and concluded it to be the most salient component of identity structure.

In contrast, Zurcher (1972) found an apparent shift in identity anchorage to indicate that persons were no longer identifying with their social roles and institutions but with the third mode of identity indicating identification with their characteristic ways of acting, feeling, or responding in social interactions, e.g., I am happy; I am a good listener. I term an identification with the third mode an existential anchorage of identity, as the existential writers have been discussing a need for this shift in their writings. Their views on identity will be discussed in the review of literature section of this paper.

It is not clear if the results of the above studies were perhaps just artifacts of the experimental situations, as Kuhn and McPartland did their study utilizing college students at the State University of Iowa and Zurcher did his study with a non-random group of college students at the University of Texas, or if as Zurcher suggested, were due to the time samples present.

The problem, then, is a conflict of findings and the lack of current research concerning identity anchorage.



## REVIEW OF LITERATURE

This review is divided into three sections. The first deals with the theory and research of social anchorage, the second with the theory and research of existential anchorage, and lastly, a review of the instrument that was used in this study.

### Social Anchorage

The social anchorage theory of identity has its roots in a very large and long standing area of social psychology and sociology known as symbolic interaction theory. Its basic tenet is that a person forms his identity from his conceptualization of how others perceive him.

Symbolic interactionism has had a long development reaching into the 1800's. Kuhn (1964) credits such notables as James, Baldwin, Cooley, Thomas, Faris, Dewey, Blumer, Young, and Tardean as all having contributed to its development.

George Herbert Mead's publications of Mind, Self, and Society; Movements of Thought in the Nineteenth Century, and The Philosophy of the Act are generally regarded as the formal beginning of symbolic interactionism. "The significance of the publication of Mead's books is that it ended what must be termed the long era of 'oral tradition,' the era in which most of the germinating ideas had been passed about by word of mouth." (Kuhn, 1964, p. 62)

Mead (1934) felt that a person must internalize the attitudes of the groups to which he belongs in order to develop a complete self. He felt that self was an object that could only emerge through communication processes that allowed the self to internalize and exhibit the attitudes of another or organized others. He suggested that a person's behavior results from the conception that person has of his identity and, furthermore, that one's identity is derived from the social position he has in society.

A sub-theory of symbolic interactionism that was developed in the Meadian tradition is self theory (not to be confused with that of Carl Rogers, 1951). Self theory as developed by Manford H. Kuhn and Thomas S. McPartland (1954) asserts that the self is composed of attitudes that a person has about himself. They concluded that to view the self as a set of self-attitudes was to follow the tradition of Mead and also to make the concept empirically researchable. They devised the Twenty Statements Test (TST) which simply asks the subject to respond to the question "Who Am I" giving twenty different responses. They found, in a population of undergraduate students at the State University of Iowa, the socially anchored response to be the more salient (indicating a majority of responses to imply identification with social roles and institutions), although persons varied over a rather wide range in the relative volume of socially and existentially anchored responses.

This study prompted a number of unpublished doctoral dissertations at the State University of Iowa (Waisanen, 1954; Stewart, 1955; Waisanen, 1957; Maranel, 1959; Wynona, 1961). Kuhn (1964, p. 72) in reference to these works stated,

"The validation and extension of symbolic interaction ideas represented in these researches is for the most part preliminary and one must assess it as modest."

In studying symbolic interactionist theory of identity, Miyamoto and Dornbusch (1956) concluded that the identities of most of their subjects (college students) were determined by internalization of perceived attitudes which were formed from others' behavior towards them. They concluded support for the social anchorage view of identity.

Quarantelli and Cooper (1966) in studying enlisted men, also concluded support for the Meadian view of identity. They found that these subjects took their identity from the groups to which they belonged and the perceived view of others' behavior towards them.

Kuhn (1960) again found the more salient response to the TST to be the socially anchored response in studying college students at the State University of Iowa.

Thus, we can see that the Meadian view of identity has found considerable support in the research it has generated.

Another sub-theory of symbolic interactionism is that of role theory.

Sarbin and Allen (1968, p. 550) in their chapter entitled "Effects of Role Enactment on Social Identity" stated:

Placement in the social ecology may be thought of as answering the questions: Who is he? Who are you? Who am I? An answer to any of these questions constrains answers to the others. In the simplest case, the answer to these questions is in the form of a name or substantive that denotes a status, such as "student," "dentist," "salesman," or "mother." The answers to the questions are empty if they are not supported by conduct that satisfies role expectations and role demands.

Sarbin and Farberow (1952) were able to establish a positive connection between role taking ability and the ability to conceptualize an identity. The role enactments (societal positions) one partakes in are thought to heavily influence one's identity formation.

Another equally important development in symbolic interaction theory has been the reference group. Hyman (1942) coined the term and stated that one form of social power is referent power which stems from P's identification with O and a desire to maintain similarity with O. He postulated that one takes his identity from psychological identification with, and not necessarily formal membership in, groups.

A theory of social anchorage that does not have its roots in symbolic interactionism but rather with Freud is that of Erik Erikson (1956, 1959, 1963). Erikson (1963, p. 261) defined identity as "the accrued confidence that the inner sameness and continuity prepared in the past are matched by the sameness and continuity of one's meaning for others, as evidenced in the tangible promise of a 'career'." This conceptualization of identity prompted a large amount of empirical research (Block, 1961; Bronson, 1959; Gruen, 1960; Hunter, 1962; Marcia, 1966) which looked at role diffusion, self-acceptance, and anxiety with regards to having or not having an identity, but none of these studies have been concerned with the nature of the subject's identity as defined by McPartland and Cumming (1958).

Although there is theoretical and empirical support to substantiate the social anchorage theory of identity, there is some difficulty with its interpretation. All of Mead's works were published after his death, with the exception of a few papers that appeared in journals. As a result, there are different interpretations of his

writings. Different authors emphasize different aspects as being the core of his theory. If one accepts the basic tenet that a person forms his identity from his conceptualization of how others perceive him, then there is no reason to rule out the possibility of an existential anchorage of identity. If one incorporates a later idea that a person internalizes the attitudes of groups to form a complete self, then the social anchorage of identity would be predicted. Most of the researchers thus far have elected the later.

Another problem with the research cited is that all but a few of the studies employed college students as subjects. It is difficult to generalize beyond students as they are known not to be representative of other populations in many respects.

Even with these limitations, it seems that the social anchorage theory of identity has support in both theory and research (Kuhn, 1964).

### Existential Anchorage

Existential anchorage is defined in this study as an identification with a person's characteristic ways of acting, feeling, or responding in social interactions. This is the third mode in the identity conceptualization of McPartland and Cumming (1958).

The reason that the investigator chose to call this mode of response an "existential" anchorage was due to the fact that the existential writers in psychology have been discussing a need for a shift from the social anchorage (which they feel to be the norm) to an anchorage which reflects the personality characteristics, feelings, and emotions of an individual. An identity that reflects an anchorage to the subjective self of an individual. Richard Johnson (1971, p. 12) sees

an existential anchorage as, "The capacity to stand alone . . . . It is the capacity to stand alone that enables me to enter an interpersonal communion as an end in itself rather than as a means to gain support for an interdependent sociological self."

Jourard (1971, p. 31) states that most of us identify with the roles we play to an extent that we do not even know our real self. "Everywhere we see people who have sold their souls (or real selves) for roles: psychologist, businessman, nurse, physician, this or that." He feels that this strong tendency towards social anchorage is at the root of the neurosis of our time. May (1969) suggests that because we are so heavily socially anchored, we have developed into a schizoid world in which there is a dearth of humanness. Laing (1967, p. 19-21) stated that "social phenomenology is the science of my own and others' experience. It is concerned with . . . interexperience. . . . my psyche is my experience, my experience is my psyche."

Reich (1970) also speaks of social and existential anchorage. He feels that there is a "Consciousness II" which accepts society, the public interest, and its institutions as the primary reality and then a "Consciousness III" which sees the individual self as the only true reality. He states that "Consciousness III" is found through reflective introspection.

Thus, we can see a theoretical position that allows for an anchorage to the third mode of McPartland and Cumming's (1958) identity conceptualization.

Zurcher (1972) has been the most prolific researcher into the area of existential anchorage. He cited a study in 1957 that showed most students to have



self-conceptions that reflected an identification with the social structure. In 1970, he did a preliminary study that showed students to have shifted to reflect existentially anchored identities. Zurcher reported that he did two other preliminary studies involving dissident priests and convicted felons, and found that they also had existentially anchored identities.

These fragments of research, plus the observations of my colleague Louis Schneider and others, lead me to suggest that the "C" mode [existential anchorage] of self-conception is concomitant with individual adaptation to accelerated social change, and reflects the adaptive self within contemporary industrial societies. The "B" mode [social anchorage] of self conception representing a self drawn from and dependent upon identification with relatively stable and acceptable social structure is not functional when that structure is unacceptable or unstable. (Zurcher, 1972, p. 182)

Zurcher called the kind of identity that is existentially anchored the mutable self. One based not on the establishment but on one's own phenomenological experiences.

Zurcher (1972) makes the point that the poor and the "hip" are the ones most likely to have an existential anchorage as their ties with the social structure are minimal. Rozak (1969) suggested that since the counter culture do not identify with the establishment, they form their identities through sober introspection.

The problem within the existential anchorage theory of identity lies mostly with the vagueness of the existential writings. Many of their concepts are poorly defined and one must infer what is meant. The existential concepts advanced by these persons are very new to the field of psychology and there is little agreement at this point with regards to precise definitions.

To summarize, there is a theoretical body of literature that allows for an existential anchorage but a dearth of research as Zurcher (1972) is the only

investigator to have found a significant number of subjects so anchored, and he used non-random groups of subjects.

### The Instrument

Kuhn and McPartland (1954) developed the Twenty Statements Test for the purpose of empirically investigating self theory as established by Mead. The instrument consisted of a single sheet of paper headed by the instructions:

There are twenty numbered blanks on the page below. Please write twenty answers to the simple question "Who Am I?" in the blanks. Just give twenty different answers to this question. Answer as if you were giving the answers to yourself, not to somebody else. Write the answers in the order that they occur to you. Don't worry about logic or "importance." Go along fairly fast, for time is limited. (Kuhn, 1954, p. 69)

The subjects were then given twelve minutes to complete the instrument. The researchers formulated a scoring protocol which categorized the responses dichotomously into consensual references (those that apply to group membership), and subconsensual reference (all responses not referring to group membership). A blank space was listed as a subconsensual reference.

In their first study of 222 undergraduate students at the State University of Iowa they found some interesting characteristics.

First, from the ordering of responses on the page it was evident that respondents tended to exhaust all of the consensual references they would make before they made (if at all any) subconsensual ones. . . . Second, the number of consensual references made by the respondents varied from twenty to none. Similarly the number of subconsensual references made by the respondents varied from twenty to none. (Kuhn, 1954, p. 70)



Festinger (1955, p. 187) in reference to these characteristics stated, "The finding that the responses order themselves as they do is provocative and worth noting."

Kuhn and McPartland argue for the validity of the test stating that it is a Guttman Scale. They feel that the question "Who am I" might logically be expected to elicit statements about one's identity, and having twenty items stems from the recognition of the complex and multivariuous nature of an individual's statuses. They also expressed a position that an open ended question type test gives the respondent a chance to express his identity in a manner most important to the subject and in a manner that a test of another variety might never expose. They reported a test-retest reliability coefficient of .85.

McPartland and Cumming (1958) developed a new scoring protocol for the test. They scored the responses into four categories instead of two. Zurcher (1972, p. 181) concisely listed the four categories as follows:

- A statements are the most concrete statements, and refer to the self as a physical entity. "I am five feet ten inches tall. I weigh 150 pounds. I have blue eyes."
- B statements identify the self clearly and specifically with institutionalized statuses or roles. "I am a professor," "I am a U.S. citizen." "I am a housewife."
- C statements present characteristic ways of acting, feeling or responding in social interactions: "I am a happy person." "I worry too much." "I am very religious." These statements indicate that the self is not closely identified with an institutional context of norms and roles, but is relatively situation free.
- D statements imply no particular context, act or attitude indicating identification with social structure or interpersonal networks. They indicate that the self is removed from interactive

commitment, and are very vague and not differentiating.  
"I am a being." "I am one with the universe."

McPartland and Cumming also list a denial of identity as being in the D mode, e.g. people are trustworthy.

They assert the reliability of this categorization by stating that 97 percent of the responses of 25 hospitalized patients were placed in the same category by three independent judges.

McPartland and Cumming used verbal instructions in their research, and gave the subjects a sheet of paper with the numbers 1 to 20 on the left hand side and asked them to make twenty different replies to the question: "Who am I."

In 1960, Kuhn changed the instructions and scoring protocol of the TST. He deleted much of his earlier instruction and simply asked the subjects to make twenty different replies to the question "Who am I" on a sheet of paper. The responses were placed into one of the following five categories:

- (1) social groups and classifications (such as age, sex, educational level, occupation, marital status, kin relations, socially defined physical characteristics, race, national origin, religious membership, political affiliation, formal and informal group memberships);
- (2) ideological beliefs (including statements of a religious, philosophical, or moral nature);
- (3) interests (including statements relating objects to the self, with either positive or negative affect);
- (4) ambitions (an all anticipated success themata);
- (5) self-evaluations (such as evaluations of mental and physical and other abilities, physique and appearance, relatedness to others, aspirations, persistence, industriousness, emotional balance,

material resources, past achievements, habits of neatness, orderliness, and the like, and more comprehensive self-typing in clinical or quasi-clinical terms). (Kuhn, 1960, pp. 40-41)

Zurcher (1972) in his research, again changed the format of the TST:

Instead of asking the subjects to answer the question "Who am I" he gave the subjects a sheet of paper with the sentence "I am" written twenty times down the left hand side and asked the subjects to complete the sentence giving a different response each time. He scored the responses according to the protocol developed by McPartland and Cumming (1958).

In assessing the validity of the TST, the consistency of responses was studied by Claus (1964). Using national guard and army reserve units he administered the test to each subject under three separate ecological and social conditions. The first administration was at the military meeting, the second at home, and the third at the subject's workplace. Claus found the ecological and social condition not to significantly affect the responses for these subjects.

Kohout (1971) also did a validity study of the TST. He concluded that the findings were generally supportive of the validity of the TST.

All of the above studies mentioned in this review have been concerned with measuring the identity anchorage of the subjects. There have been a few studies attempting to find pragmatic uses for the TST. Ruff and Levy (1959) used the TST to evaluate astronautical candidates. Grossack (1960) presented the TST as a useful tool for diagnosing and assessing change in clinical situations. Gustav (1962) attempted to differentiate students with respect to grade achievement using the TST but found no significant differences between different achievement groupings.

To summarize this section, no apparent standardization of the TST has occurred in the literature. There have been numerous instructions employed and numerous scoring protocols used to assess identity anchorage. How these changes have affected the results of the research is not clear as none of the researchers have addressed themselves to the question.

## PURPOSE AND OBJECTIVES

The purpose of this study is to assess the identity anchorage of persons in different societal positions.

The preceding review of literature has demonstrated that there exists a prominent theory of identity anchorage (symbolic interactionism) which predicts social anchorage and has empirical data to support the hypothesis. It was also shown that in 1970 a sudden shift to an existential anchorage occurred among college students (Zurcher, 1972).

Based on findings from research and theory discussed in the review of literature, the objective of this study is: To replicate Zurcher's (1972) study in another part of the United States, and to broaden the spectrum of subjects with regards to societal position in assessing identity anchorage.

Hypotheses formulated on the basis of the preceding objectives are:

- (1) What is the salient identity anchorage for each of the four experimental groups?
- (2) Is there a significant relationship between age and identity anchorage?
- (3) Is there a significant relationship between the number of occupational changes of a subject and identity anchorage?
- (4) Is there a significant difference between the mean A mode response of males and females?

- (5) Is there a significant difference between the mean A mode response of the four experimental groups?
- (6) Is there a significant interaction effect between sex and occupation for the mean A mode response?
- (7) Is there a significant difference between the mean B mode response of males and females?
- (8) Is there a significant difference between the mean B mode response of males and females?
- (9) Is there a significant interaction effect between sex and occupation for the mean B mode response?
- (10) Is there a significant difference between the mean C mode response of males and females?
- (11) Is there a significant difference between the mean C mode response of the four experimental groups?
- (12) Is there a significant interaction effect between sex and occupation for the mean C mode response?
- (13) Is there a significant difference between the mean D mode response of males and females?
- (14) Is there a significant difference between the mean D mode response of the four experimental groups?
- (15) Is there a significant interaction effect between sex and occupation for the mean D mode response?



## PROCEDURES

### Population and Sample

There were four experimental groups used in this study: college students, musicians, management personnel, and nonmanagement personnel.

#### Student sample

Forty-three college students from three universities were the subjects in this sample. Sixteen were from the University of California at Los Angeles. Fifteen were from California State University at Los Angeles, and twelve were from Whittier College, Whittier, California. Of the forty-three subjects, the data from seven were not used as these subjects refused to complete the entire questionnaire. All seven subjects were attending California State University at Los Angeles. Thus, 36 subjects were used to arrive at the results presented in this paper.

University of California at Los Angeles is a large university with students from most parts of the United States. It has high admissions requirements and is considered to be a very prestigious school.

California State University at Los Angeles is a large university that generally serves commuting students from the surrounding areas. Many of its students are transfers from community colleges.

Whittier College is a small non-sectarian private college in Whittier, California, a suburb of Los Angeles. Although it is presently a non-sectarian college, Whittier College was originally founded by Quakers and still retains a somewhat conservative nature. Students from many parts of the United States attend the college.

These three campuses were chosen in an attempt to sample a broad spectrum of students that did not reflect any specific university bias other than their location.

Of the 36 subjects, twenty were male and sixteen were female. Their ages ranged from 18 to 35 years of age; the mean age being 21.6. Eight were freshman, four were sophomores, nine were juniors, ten were seniors, and five were graduate students. The subjects listed twenty-four different majors.

#### Musician sample

Eighteen musicians served as subjects in this sample. Four were music instructors, one was a vocalist, three were entertainers, and ten were members of three different rock bands. All of the musicians were from the Logan and Salt Lake areas of Utah.

Of the eighteen subjects, sixteen were male and two were female. Their ages ranged from 17 to 75 years of age; the mean age being 26.2. Nine of the subjects stated that they did not plan to change their occupation; eight were unsure as to whether or not they would change their occupation; and one stated a definite plan to change occupation. The mean number of years being a musician was 6.5. Twelve of the subjects had other sustaining jobs.



The investigator attempted to obtain the musician sample from the Los Angeles, California area but this was found not to be possible. The investigator approached four subjects individually at a small guitar shop known to be a place musicians frequent to talk and exchange music and such. At first each appeared interested but after seeing the instrument they refused to attempt it. It was thought that the investigator may have appeared threatening for some reason, so it was arranged to have the owner of the shop approach the subjects over the next few weeks as he was generally acquainted with them. The owner reported that he was able to get only two questionnaires completed. He stated that ten refused to attempt it, and four stopped after the first few items. He reported that the instrument seemed threatening to them and in some cases, seemingly beyond the subjects' capabilities. In discussing some of the possible reasons for this, he suggested the possibility that it may have been a case of not being literate enough to easily complete the instrument. He also stated that most musicians do not work regularly and often meet with failure in their attempts to secure employment. He felt that this generally effects a poor self-concept and that it was possible that self-introspection is a very painful process for them.

#### Management sample

Twenty-four persons employed in management positions were used as subjects. The subjects listed their positions as follows: personnel supervisor, various assignments, business office supervisor, second level manager, certified public accountant, employment interviewer, employment interviewer, line and staff manager, bookkeeper, elementary school principal, sales manager, manager

for public utility, line manager, regional sales manager, employment interviewer, statistical analyst, registered nurse-supervisor, department store manager, purchasing agent, controller, corporate director, personnel manager, credit manager, and telephone management. Thirteen companies are represented in the sample.

Of the twenty-four subjects, fourteen were male and ten were female. Their ages ranged from 24 to 51 years of age; the mean age being 34.2. Seventeen of the subjects stated that they did not plan to change occupations; five were unsure as to whether or not they would change their occupation; and two stated a definite plan to change occupations. All subjects were employed in the Los Angeles Area.

Thirty-four questionnaires were originally sent to subjects and twenty-four were returned with two follow-up contacts. This represents a 70 percent response.

#### Nonmanagement sample

Fifteen persons employed in nonmanagement positions were used as subjects. The subjects listed their occupations as follows: assistant bookkeeper, bookkeeper, not listed, surveyor, secretary, assistant bookkeeper, drapery installer, warehouseman, credit investigator, automobile claims secretary, office worker, carpenter, construction worker, secretary, programmer.

Of the fifteen subjects, seven were male and eight were female. Their ages ranged from 19 to 44 years of age; the mean age being 24.0. Five of the subjects stated that they did not plan to change occupations; seven stated that they were unsure as to whether or not they would change their occupation; and two

stated that they were definitely going to change occupations. All subjects were employed in the Los Angeles area.

Twenty-seven questionnaires were originally given to subjects and fifteen were returned after two follow-up checks. It is of interest to note, that after the second followup check, all subjects had reported sending the data to the investigator but as noted above only 15 actually did. This represents a 55 percent response.

### Materials

Two letters of transmittal (see Appendix A) were employed in this study. One was used for the management personnel, and the other for the remaining three groups of subjects. The only difference in the two letters was that the management personnel were addressed as "successful businessmen" whereas there was no specific mention of any particular group in the other letter.

The Twenty Statements Test (see Appendix B) used in this study was adapted from Kuhn (1954) and Zurcher (1972). The instructions to the test were as follows:

There are twenty numbered blanks below. Please complete the sentence I am twenty times, giving a different answer each time. Answer as if you were giving the answers to yourself, not somebody else. Write the sentences in the order that they occur to you. Don't worry about logic or importance. Thank you for your participation.

On the left hand side of the paper were the numbers 1 to 20 written in a column with the phrase "I am" written after each number.

There were several reasons that this format was adopted for use in this study. The first and foremost reason was that the investigator felt this format to be an easier instrument to complete and would thus insure a better return of the

instrument by those having to return it by mail. Secondly, only those subjects that completed all twenty items were to be included in the sample and this format appeared to make the instrument an easier one to complete. A third reason was that completion of the sentence "I am" was felt to make the instrument less biased as the question "Who am I" enters into the theological and philosophical realm. Fourth, completion of the sentence "I am" is more likely to elicit denial statements (e.g. I am hungry) than "Who am I" and a denial of identity is a very important aspect of the construct. The investigator also felt that this format did not contradict the assumptions of the instrument as discussed by Kuhn (1954). Kuhn stated that the three most important aspects relating to the validity of the instrument were: (1) its relatively unstructured open-ended questions, (2) the fact that it had twenty items, and (3) the fact that the question asked might logically be expected to elicit questions about one's identity. These three criteria are met in the adapted version of the instrument used in this study. Lastly, there had been no previous standardization of the instrument.

An argument may be made that Zurcher's (1972) finding of a shift in identity anchorage occurred as a result of his changing the instrument from a "Who am I" question to an "I am" statement but the investigator can find no logical basis for this argument other than that it is an unknown factor. The fact that it is unknown, though, is felt to be the largest limitation of this study.

As shown in the review of literature, there have been numerous formats of the TST and numerous scoring protocols. Because of the variable instrumentation of all the previous studies, a direct comparison of data is not possible.

There have been numerous ways that previous researchers have concluded identity anchorage, none seemingly to have an obvious advantage over the others. Usage of the "I am" format instead of the "Who am I" format was necessary as one of the objectives of this project was replication of Zurcher's (1972) research.

There were three different questionnaires to obtain biographical data used in this study (see Appendix C). One form was used for the student sample; one for the musician sample; and one for the management and nonmanagement samples. The questionnaires asked the subject's age, sex, occupation (major for the student sample), how many times the subject had changed occupations (major), a statement regarding the subject's commitment to his present occupation (major), and the number of years the subject had been employed in his present occupation (year in school for the student sample). The musician sample was asked an additional question as to whether or not the subject had an additional occupation.

These questions were asked as it seemed that they might logically be expected to have some influence on identity anchorage.

### Method

As it was not possible to present the instrument to all of the experimental groups in exactly the same manner, the method of presentation will be discussed for each of the groups.

#### Student sample

The students in this study were approached at their respective campuses and asked to fill out the instrument. They were told that the data was for the

investigator's master's thesis. In an effort to achieve randomization, each campus was divided into three areas: the student union building, the library, and a grassy area where students tended to congregate. Three experimenters were used to approach the subjects, each taking one of the three areas, and then a different area at the next campus. The students were told that it would take about fifteen minutes to complete the instrument and that the experimenter would return to pick it up. This procedure worked very well as all of the subjects were still present when the experimenter returned.

#### Musician sample

All of the musicians were approached during a break at their workplace and asked to complete the instrument. They were told that the data was for a master's thesis and that they would be doing the investigator a great favor by completing it. Three more subjects than are included in this sample were approached but they refused to participate stating that they did not have enough time. It was suggested that the investigator return but they still refused. These three subjects were all members of the same musical group.

#### Management sample

It was not possible to obtain a random sample of management personnel so a statistical analyst of a large corporation was consulted to obtain the sample. He was very familiar with sampling procedures as part of his job with the corporation was concerned with survey research. The sample was drawn by him and the investigator with an effort to obtain a representative sample so far as was possible.



Some of the factors that were considered were size of company, nature of company (i. e. private or public, service or product), number of years the subject was employed by the company, amount of advancement within the company, educational background of the subject, and age of the subject. Unfortunately, there is no way to assess to what degree representativeness was achieved. A telephone contact was made with each of the subjects prior to sending them the instrument. The subjects were told that the data was to be used for the investigator's master's thesis and that they would be doing the investigator a great favor by completing it. Two follow-up checks were made by telephone to each subject. The subjects were given a self-addressed stamped envelope and asked to return the data directly to the investigator.

#### Nonmanagement sample

Twenty-two instruments were distributed on two floors of a large office building in the downtown area of Los Angeles, California. Each nonmanagement person on these two floors was given a copy of the instrument. Included with the instrument was a self-addressed stamped envelope in which the data were to be returned to the investigator. Each person was told that the data was to be used for a master's thesis and that they would be doing the investigator a great favor by completing it. Five instruments were distributed in an apartment complex within short commuting distance to Los Angeles. All of these subjects were male and they were chosen as the majority of subjects in the office building were female. These subjects were instructed in the same manner as were the subjects in the office building. Two follow-up checks were made to each of these subjects. On

the second follow-up check, all subjects reported that they had returned the questionnaire to the investigator, but as noted, only 55 percent actually did.

The biases seen in this sample are three: (1) most of the subjects were employed by small firms and the sample does not reflect any influence of large corporation employees; (2) it is possible that the subjects in the apartment complex all chose to live there for some unknown reason, although, each worked in a different area of Los Angeles; (3) the large percentage of nonrespondents. Cope (1968), Thistlewaite and Wheeler (1966), and Bennett and Hill (1964) have done research into the personality differences between respondents and nonrespondents and found no significant differences other than that "nonrespondents tend to have achieved less academic success than respondents." (Borg and Gall, 1971, p. 210)

#### Statistical Analysis

To test for the significance of the difference between the mean scores involved in the hypotheses in this study, two-way analysis of variance and covariance were used (Ferguson, 1966, pp. 226, 288). To test the relationship between the variables involved in the hypotheses in this study, the Pearson product-moment correlation coefficient was used (Ferguson, 1966, p. 97).

#### Scoring of the Instrument

The protocols were all scored by the investigator. An independent rater randomly drew five protocols from each of the four experimental groups and independently scored them. This represents a total of 400 statements that were rated by the two judges. Of the 400 ratings, the judges disagreed on the ratings of



9 statements. It was not possible to compute an inter-rater reliability coefficient for this data but with 97 percent agreement between the two judges, it was felt that the ratings were reliable.

## RESULTS

Figures 1-4 summarize the mean response to each of the four identity modes for each experimental group. Each figure refers to statements A, B, C and D, which are explained as follows: A, statements refer to the physical person; B, statements refer to the person in terms of his social roles; C, statements refer to the person's characteristic ways of acting, feeling, or responding in social interactions; D, statements imply no context or attitude indicating identification with physical, social, or interpersonal networks, but imply references so vague or comprehensive that they do not differentiate the person from others. D statements also include a denial of identity.

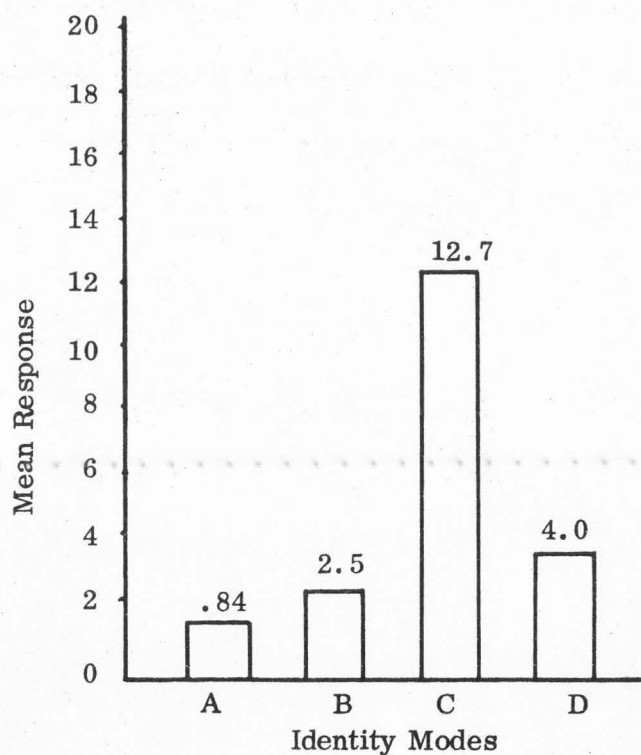


Figure 1. Mean score response to each identity mode for student sample.

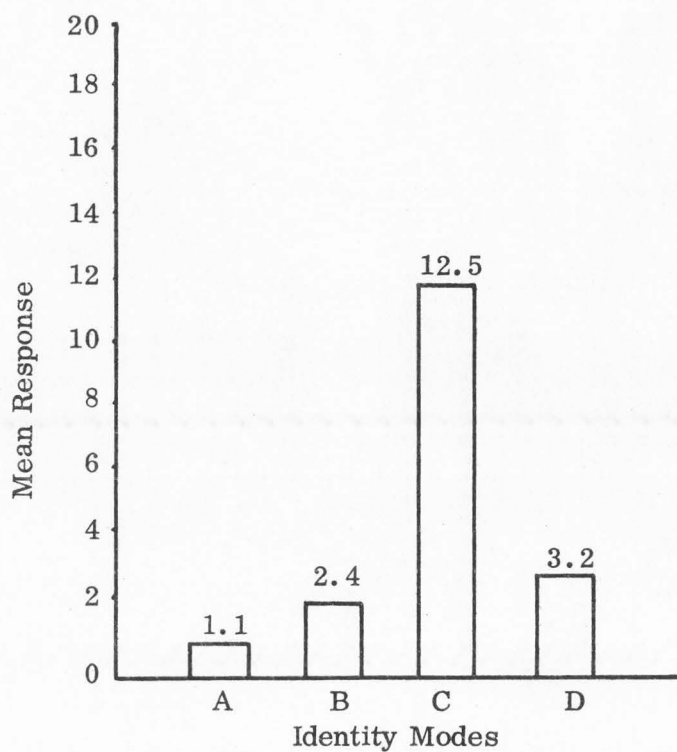


Figure 2. Mean score response to each identity mode for musician sample.

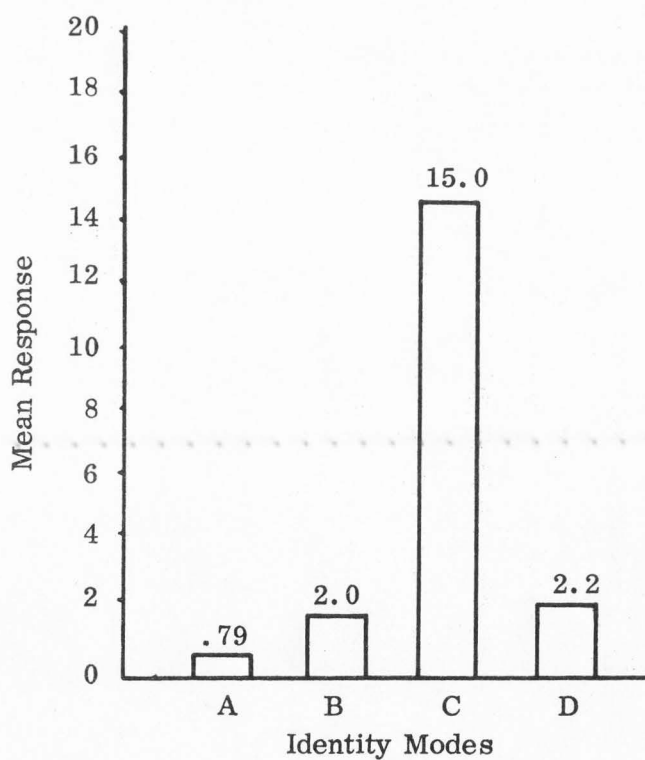


Figure 3. Mean score response to each identity mode for management sample.

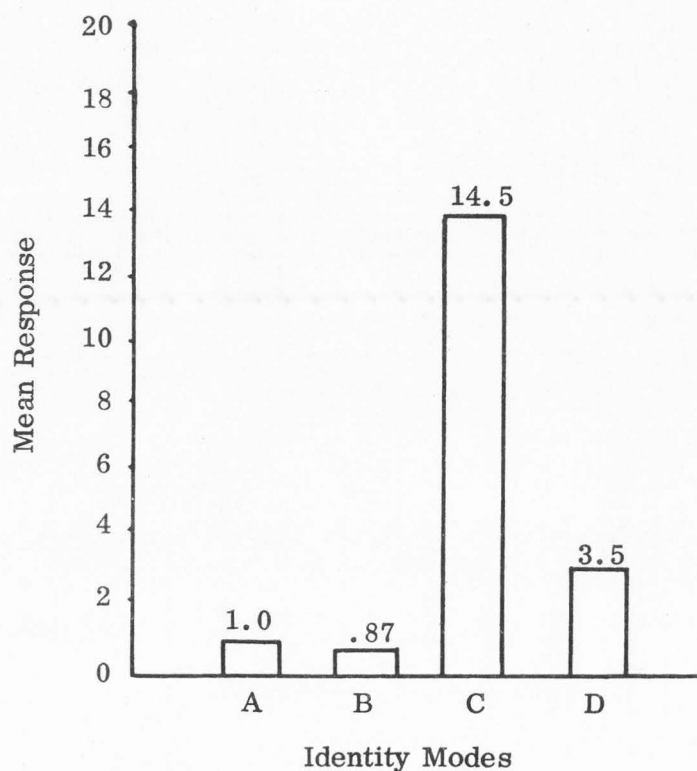


Figure 4. Mean score response to each identity mode for nonmanagement sample.

Considering the above results with regards to hypothesis 1 (What is the salient identity anchorage for each of the four experimental groups?), it can be seen that for each of the four experimental groups the C mode of response was the most salient. This indicates that all four of the experimental groups were existentially anchored.

To test hypotheses 2 (Is there a significant relationship between age and identity anchorage?), and 3 (Is there a significant relationship between the number of occupational changes of a subject and identity anchorage?), the Pearson product-moment correlation coefficient was computed between age and each of the four modes of response, and the number of occupational changes of the subjects and each of the four modes of response. These results are shown in Table 1.

Table 1. Pearson product-moment correlation between age and the four modes of response

	Modes of Response			
	A	B	C	D
Age	-.07	.30	-.01	-.18

Degrees of Freedom = 91  $\underline{r}$  at .05 = .205  $\underline{r}$  at .01 = .254

The results of the above table indicate that only one value was significant. The obtained  $\underline{r}$  value of .30 between age and B mode response was significant at the .01 level. Thus, there is a significant relationship to suggest that as age increases so does the number of B mode responses.

The results of Table 2 indicate that none of the obtained  $\underline{r}$  values were significant and that no relationship exists between the number of occupational changes of the subjects and their modes of response to the TST.

Table 2. Pearson product-moment correlation between number of occupational changes and the four modes of response

	Modes of Response			
	A	B	C	D
No. of Occupational Changes	-.08	-.11	-.09	.16

Degrees of Freedom = 91  $\underline{r}$  at .05 = .205  $\underline{r}$  at .01 = .254

To test hypotheses 4 (Is there a significant difference between the mean A mode response of males and females?), 5 (Is there a significant difference between the mean A mode response of the four experimental groups?), and 6 (Is there a significant interaction effect between sex and occupation for the mean A mode response?) two-way analysis of variance was used. Tables 3 and 4 summarize the results of this analysis.

Table 3. Two-way analysis of variance with sex and occupation as the independent variables and A mode response as the dependent variable

Source	df	m. s.	F
Total	92	1.28	
Sex	1	.83	.63
Occupation	3	.44	.33
Sex x Occupation	3	1.94	1.49
Error	85	1.31	

Degrees of Freedom = 1/85 F at .05 = 3.96 F at .01 = 6.96

3/85 F at .05 = 2.72 F at .01 = 4.04



Table 4. Adjusted mean scores for Table 3 two-way analysis of variance

	Students	Musicians	Management	Nonmanagement	
Male	.69	1.11	.63	1.66	1.02
Female	.99	.49	.99	.65	.78
	.84	.80	.81	1.16	

There were no significant differences found in this data.

With regard to hypothesis 4, there is no significant difference between the mean A mode response of males and females. There were no significant differences between the mean A mode responses of the four occupational groups (hypothesis 5) and there was no interaction effect between sex and occupation (hypothesis 6).

To test hypotheses 7 (Is there a significant difference between the mean B mode response of males and females?), 8 (Is there a significant difference between the mean B mode response of the four experimental groups?), and 9 (Is there a significant interaction effect between sex and occupation for the mean B mode response?), two-way analysis of variance was used. Tables 5 and 6 summarize the results of this analysis.

Table 5. Two-way analysis of variance with sex and occupation as the independent variables and B mode of response as the dependent variable

Source	df	m. s.	F
Total	92	6.40	
Sex	1	33.70	6.06
Occupation	3	28.74	5.16
Sex x Occupation	3	27.28	4.90
Error	85	5.56	

Degrees of Freedom = 1/85 F at .05 = 3.96 F at .01 = 6.96  
 = 3/85 F at .05 = 2.72 F at .01 = 4.04

Table 6. Adjusted mean scores for Table 5 two-way analysis of variance

	Students	Musicians	Management	Nonmanagement	
Male	2.11	1.15	1.32	.63	1.30
Female	1.71	7.96	1.57	.13	2.84
	1.91	4.55	1.44	.38	

Significance was obtained at the .05 level for hypothesis 7. Females in this study made significantly more B mode responses than males. Significance was obtained at the .01 level for hypothesis 8. There was a significant difference between the mean B mode responses of the four experimental groups. A Scheffe Test was calculated for all combinations of the four occupational groups and a significant difference was found between the musicians and the other three occupational groups. There were no other significant differences found between



Table 8. Adjusted mean scores for Table 7 two-way analysis of variance

	Students	Musicians	Management	Nonmanagement	
Male	12.82	13.74	15.03	13.17	13.69
Female	12.86	10.67	15.47	15.72	13.68
	12.84	12.21	15.25	14.45	

There was no significant differences found in this data.

With regards to hypothesis 10, there was no significant difference between the mean C mode response of males and females. There were no significant differences between the mean C mode response of the four occupational groups (hypothesis 11), and there was no interaction effect between sex and occupation (hypothesis 12).

To test hypotheses 13 (Is there a significant difference between the mean D mode response of males and females?), 14 (Is there a significant difference between the mean D mode response of the four experimental groups?), and 15 (Is there a significant interaction effect between sex and occupation for the mean D mode response?), two-way analysis of variance was used. Tables 9 and 10 summarize the results of this analysis.

Table 9. Two-way analysis of variance with sex and occupation as the independent variables and D mode response as the dependent variable

Source	df	m. s.	F
Total	92	12.79	
Sex	1	24.27	1.89
Occupation	3	21.03	1.62
Sex x Occupation	3	5.76	.44
Error	85	12.94	
Degrees of Freedom = 1/85 F at .05 = 3.96 F at .01 = 6.96			
3/85 F at .05 = 2.72 F at .01 = 4.04			

Table 10. Adjusted mean scores for Table 9 two-way analysis of variance

	Students	Musicians	Management	Nonmanagement	
Male	4.37	4.06	3.02	4.54	4.00
Female	4.44	.87	1.97	3.48	2.69
	4.40	2.47	2.49	4.01	

There was no significant differences found in this data.

With regards to hypothesis 13, there was no significant difference between the mean D mode response of males and females. There were no significant differences between the mean D mode response of the four occupational (hypothesis 14), and there was no significant interaction effect between sex and occupation (hypothesis 15).

Because a significant relationship between age and B mode response was found an analysis of covariance was computed using age and number of occupational changes as the covariates. Table 11 summarizes the results of this analysis.

Table 11. Analysis of covariance with sex and occupation as the independent variables, B mode response as the dependent variable and age and number of occupational changes as covariates.

Source	df	m. s.	F
Total	92	6.40	
Sex	1	11.68	2.19
Occupation	3	23.11	4.34
Sex x Occupation	3	7.94	1.49
Error	83	5.32	
Degrees of Freedom = 1/83 F at .05 = 3.96 F at .01 = 6.96			
3/83 F at .05 = 2.72 F at .01 = 4.04			

The analysis of covariance eliminated both the significant sex difference, and the significant interaction effect. The significant difference between occupational categories was still significant at the .01 level.



## DISCUSSION

### Evaluation of Findings

The results of this study support the existential anchorage theory of identity. The four experimental groups were all anchored to the existential or C mode of identity conceptualization. This indicates that the salient mode of response was with characteristic ways of acting, feeling, or responding in social interactions. The other three modes of identity conceptualization were of less magnitude to the extent that a clear salience of C mode response was evident for each of the four experimental groups.

The first objective of this study was to replicate Zurcher's (1972) study as he used a nonrandom group of college students. The results obtained in this study support Zurcher's findings and a shift in the identity anchorage of college students appears to have support.

The second objective of this study was to assess the identity anchorage of a broad spectrum of subjects with regard to occupation. Four occupational groups were sampled and the results showed only one significant difference of identity anchorage, that of musicians being more socially anchored than the student, management or nonmanagement groups. Intuitively, one would not expect this result to occur. It is felt that this significant difference should be looked upon with caution because of the sample involved. There were only two females in this sample. One was a 75 year old piano teacher who had twelve

statements in the B mode category . This was the largest number of B mode responses made by any subject in this study. The mean B mode response of the males in this sample was about equal to the mean scores of the other three experimental groups. It is evident that this one subject's extreme score was responsible for the significant differences found between males and females, and occupational category as Figures 1-4 represent true mean scores of the groups as a whole as opposed to the adjusted mean scores used in the analysis of variance. It is obvious that no significant difference exists between true mean scores. It is unknown what the mean score of a larger sample of female musicians might be, and thus it is difficult to interpret the results obtained.

The only causal theory of existential anchorage advanced thus far was to Zurcher (1972). He felt that rapid socio-cultural change would effect an existentially anchored identity. This study casts some doubt on this theory as one would expect a significant relationship to exist between occupational change and identity anchorage. No such relationship was found.

The most important implication arising from the results of this study was not that a shift in identity anchorage occurred as comparability to previous research is limited, but that all of the experimental groups were most saliently to the C mode of identity conceptualization with no significant differences between groups. This would indicate that these subjects all based their identity largely on self-introspection. The "generation gap" theory that advances adults and youth not to be able to relate to each other because of differences in conceptualizations of their "worlds" seems to be cast in some doubt if identity is seen as a framework on which behavior and interpersonal relationships are based. The

exception to this would be if each group was forming the same modes of identity conceptualization from different variables. Further research is needed to test this possibility.

### Observations on Methods and Procedures

#### The instrument

The present research was limited by use of a modified version of the Twenty Statements Test. While this version was felt to be a valid instrument, no data are available. The advantages, limitations, and rationale for its use were discussed in the Procedures section of this paper.

#### The letter of transmittal

The letter of transmittal may have effected a bias in this research. The letter indicated that it was the purpose of this research to understand "persons who have developed an identity which fits in our society" and this may have biased the subjects towards the making of B mode statements.

#### Selection of subjects

This research was also limited by the procedures used to select the subjects for this study. The only experimental group that approached a random sample was the student sample. The other three samples were not random and were selected with a view towards representativeness. The extent to which this was achieved is unknown. The results of this study would have much wider application had it been possible to select random samples for each of the experimental groups. This was not possible though as a lack of time, finances, and

availability of defined populations prevailed. Even with this limitation, the study seemed warranted because of the preponderance of data concerning only college students which are known to be not representative of the general population in many areas.

Another limitation with respect to the samples was the rate of return of the instrument for the management and nonmanagement samples. What the results of this study would have been had all subjects responded is not known. Contacting the nonrespondents to assess any differences was not possible as this was an anonymous survey.

Lastly, there is the limitation of comparability in that the student, management, and nonmanagement samples were drawn from the Los Angeles, California area and the musician sample from the Logan and Salt Lake City areas of Utah.

#### Recommendations for Further Research

1. In light of these findings, it is recommended that a validity study of the adapted version of the Twenty Statements Test used in this study be undertaken. In doing so, it would establish the validity of the results of this study and Zurcher's (1972) study.

2. It is recommended that the original version of the TST (Kuhn and McPartland, 1954) be compared to the adapted version of the TST used in this study. This would show whether the shift in identity anchorage from a B mode to a C mode was effected by the change in the instrument or some other contributing factors.

3. If the results of this study are shown to be valid, it is recommended that a study into the contributing factors resulting in this shift be undertaken.

4. It is recommended that a study of musicians with respect to identity be undertaken with a view towards discovering why they did not wish to complete the instrument used in this study.

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APPENDIXES

Appendix A

Letters of Transmittal

UTAH STATE UNIVERSITY · LOGAN, UTAH 84322

COLLEGE OF EDUCATION

DEPARTMENT OF  
PSYCHOLOGY  
UMC 28

April 20, 1973

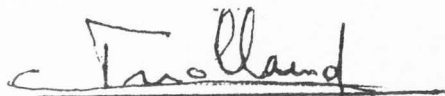
Gentlemen:

We are presently doing research to examine the concept of identity. This term is frequently used but little understood. It is important in our fast moving industrialized society to understand the makeup of successful businessmen. If we can understand persons who have developed an identity which fits in our society, then we will be able to tap the resources of those who have not successfully negotiated this process.

This study is completely anonymous, and there is no possible way to identify the participants.

I would appreciate your giving about fifteen minutes to aid in this search.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "John Priollaund", written over a horizontal line.

John Priollaund, Ph.D.

DEPARTMENT OF  
PSYCHOLOGY  
UMC 28


April 20, 1973

We are presently doing research to examine the concept of identity. This term is frequently used but little understood. It is important in our fast moving industrialized society to understand the makeup of those persons who have developed an identity which fits successfully in our society. This will enable us to understand how to tap resources of those who have not successfully negotiated this process.

This study is completely anonymous and there is no possible way to identify the participants.

I would appreciate your giving about fifteen minutes to aid in this search.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "John Priollaund", written over a horizontal line.

John Priollaund, Ph. D.



Appendix BTwenty Statements Test

There are twenty numbered blanks below. Please complete the sentence I am twenty times, giving a different answer each time. Answer as if you were giving the answers to yourself, not somebody else. Write the sentences in the order that they occur to you. Don't worry about logic or importance. Thank you for your participation.

1. I am
2. I am
3. I am
4. I am
5. I am
6. I am
7. I am
8. I am
9. I am
10. I am
11. I am
12. I am
13. I am
14. I am
15. I am
16. I am
17. I am
18. I am
19. I am
20. I am

Appendix CBiographical Data Questionnaire:  
Management and Nonmanagement Samples

1. Age: \_\_\_\_\_
2. Sex: male/female.
3. Occupation (please be specific): \_\_\_\_\_
4. How many times have you changed occupations since you began working: \_\_\_\_\_
5. Circle the statement that best describes your feelings about your present occupation:
  - A. My occupation is definite. I do not plan to change it.
  - B. I am unsure as to whether or not I will change my occupation.
  - C. I am definitely going to change my occupation.
6. Number of years in present occupation: \_\_\_\_\_

Biographical Data Questionnaire:  
Student Sample

1. Age: \_\_\_\_\_
2. Sex: male/female
3. Major: \_\_\_\_\_
4. Have you changed majors since you started college: yes/no. If so, how many times: \_\_\_\_\_
5. Circle the statement that best describes your feelings about your present major:
  - A. My major is definite. I do not plan to change it.
  - B. I am unsure as to whether or not I will change it.
  - C. I am definitely going to change my major.
6. Are you a full time student: yes/no
7. Year in college: Frosh./Soph./Junior/Senior

Biographical Data Questionnaire:  
Musician Sample

1. Age: \_\_\_\_\_
2. Sex: Male/female
3. Occupation (please be specific): \_\_\_\_\_
4. How many times have you changed occupations since you began working: \_\_\_\_\_
5. Circle the statement that best describes your feelings about your present occupation.
  - A. My occupation is definite. I do not plan to change it.
  - B. I am unsure as to whether or not I will change my occupation.
  - C. I am definitely going to change my occupation.
6. Number of years in present occupation: \_\_\_\_\_
7. Do you have an occupation other than the one listed above: yes/no  
If so, what is it: \_\_\_\_\_

## VITA

Paul J. Seymour

Candidate for the Degree of

Master of Science

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Major Field: Counseling Psychology

Biographical Information:

Personal Data: Born in Los Angeles, California, July 21, 1949,  
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Education: Graduated from LaSalle High School, Pasadena,  
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