Ideal Persons of CPU Freshmen*

by

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Psychologists of adolescence maintain that adolescence is the period when the ego-ideal forms most fully and when it exerts the greatest influence. Lawrence and Mary Frank summarize the various statements of psychologists on Identification and *ego-ideal* thus, "A person takes over and incorporates in his own conduct the patterns of the person whom he wishes to be like."[1]

The CPU freshmen were asked to complete the statement: "Of all the persons I have known, have heard or read about (living or not living, real or fiction,) the person I consider "ideal" or the person I would most want to be like (If the person is not widely known, tell who he or she is (was) or how he/she is related to you.) The use of this completion-type item was based on the belief that when one thinks of what one would like to be or of what one ought to be, there is probably a pattern of impulses, even though faint and fleeting, toward action in the direction of realizing that ideal in one's own personality.[2] The survey of "ideal persons" was intended to discover what kinds of model CPU freshmen tended to pattern their behavior after.

The following categories of ideal persons were established after an analysis of a portion of the papers.

1. **Acquaintance Ideals** are persons in the respondent's immediate everyday environment who are either closely known to the res-

[1] K. Lawrence and M. H. Frank, "One Way to Personality," **Childhood Education,** 25:389, 1948.

[2] E. S. Conklin, **Principles of Adolescent Psychology** (New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1936), p. 117.

pondent or at least seen and heard by him as they go about their daily life and work. Acquaintance ideals are either relations or non-relations.

A. **Relations** are either members of the respondent's immedaite (nuclear) family or members of his enlarged family which includes "cousins." No matter how distant the relationship may be, "cousin" or "relative" is tallied under relations.

B. **Non-Relations** include all other acquaintance ideals not identified by the respondent as being related to him. Under non-relations are classified the government officials and leaders of the town and province whose activities are closely seen and heard about by the community. National figures and officials and leaders of remote towns and provinces are not included under non-relations; they are tallied under a category of *Remote Ideals.*

II. **Remote Ideals** are persons outside of the narrower world of the home and community who are known to the respondents only through the radio, television, books, movies, hearsay and occasional visits. Remote ideals are either *eminent, glamorous figures* or - *religious figures.*

A. **Eminent** people are historical or contemporary people in various areas of endeavor who have claim to fame, like heroes, government leaders and notable men and women in various fields of work. Eminent people are further classified as national or international figures.

1. National figures
   a. Government officials
   b. Heroes
   c. Leading Professionals

2. International figures
   a. Leaders
   b. Heroes of Countries
   c. Leading Figures in Professions

B. **Glamorous** figures include sports people, actors and actresses, beauty queens, popular singers, dancers and TV personalities.

C. **Deity and religious figures** are treated in a separate category under remote ideals. References to Jesus Christ, priests, nuns and ministers are tallied under this category. When ideal persons are named but not adequately identified, and these are not known to or by the content analysts, they are entered under *Others.*

The item on the "ideal" person specifically asked for one person, the person the respondent would most want to be like. Despite this, a number of respondents named more than one person. Hence, it was also decided to score each category of "ideal" person by giving a weight of 2 to the first choice and 1 to the addititional choices, up to the third choice only.

FINDINGS:

Boys differed with the girls more widely in their choice of ideal persons than in their reasons for choosing their course, in their life goals, in the requirements of ideal jobs, and in their reasons for going to college.

Acquaintance ideals versus remote ideals. Table 2 shows that the scores of acquaintance ideals were nearly twice the scores obtained by the "remote ideals" in the whole group as well as in the sub-groups of girls. In the whole group as well as in the sub-groups of boys, (See Table 1) there were slight differences between scores of "acquaintance ideals" and of "remote ideals." In fact, the small differences (between five to eight score points for the sub-groups and 13 points for the whole group) were in favor of "remote ideals;" a trend that was opposite to that observed among the girls. It should be noted that there were four major classes of people under remote ideals; under each of the first three categories were three sub-categories.

Relations versus non-relations. Among both boys and girls, members of the nuclear family and of the enlarged family (grandparents, uncles, aunts and cousins) were more frequently chosen as ideal person, than non-relations. In the various sub-groups of boys, "rela-tions" obtained scores at least one and a half times the scores obtained by the "non-relations." In the sub-groups of girls, the scores of "relations" were from two and a half to three times those of the scores of "non-relations."

National figures versus international figures. Except among the high SES sub-group of girls who scored national figures only slightly higher than international figures, national figures scored at least twice as high as international figures, among the various sub-groups of boys and girls. In fact, international figures scored zero among the older girls; national figures scored 42. Of the national figures, and even of all categories of remote ideals, "heroes" scored the highest, among the various sub-groups of boys and girls. Among the boys, "heroes" scored 77 compared to 44, the score obtained by "Filipino government officials," one of the two other sub-categories under national figures. International figures also got a score of 44 among the boys. Among the girls, heroes got a score of 206, compared to 124, the score obtained for international figures, and compared to 48, the score obtained for government officials. Apparently, the schools are doing a good job of putting up national heroes like Rizal as models for young people to emulate.

However, when the scores obtained by "heroes" are compared with those of "relations," it is clear that relations were found to be more attractive as ideal persons than heroes. The scores for heroes were fairly comparable with those obtained for non-relations. The boys who scored "heroes" 77, scored "relations" 154, and "non-relations," 74. The girls who scored "heroes" 206, scored "relations" 621, and "non-relations" 192.

Eminent personages versus glamorous figures. Tables 1 and 2 shows that among various sub-groups of boys and girls, the scores obtained by "eminent personages" were very much higher than those obtained by "glamorous figures." In fact, the scores of "glamorous figures" are slightly lower than the scores obtained by "Deity and religious figures," a category which was not very popular, either.

Forty-four or 13% of the boys and 106 or 12.6% of the girls left unanswered the question about ideal persons. Twenty-three or 7% of the boys wrote traits of people they considered ideal but did not refer to a particular person. Forty-four or 5% of the girsl did the same.

A SUMMARY AND A COMMENTARY

There was a definitely strong preference on the part of the girls for "acquaintance" ideals over "remote ideals." On the other hand, the boys showed a very slight preference for "remote ideals." The first finding corroborates earlier findings of a study conducted by the researcher in 1961;[3] the second seems to indicate change of preference on the part of the boys.

In the 1961 study, the majority of the 1,152 Filipino high school seniors from five selected provinces chose "acquaintance ideals," people in their immediate, everyday environment. The only group that did not show this pronounced preference was the Rizal group wchih consisted of boys and girls studying in a public high school in a Manila suburb. In that group only 57% of the younger girls and 46% of the older girls chose acquaintance ideals while 32% of the younger boys and 26% of the older boys did the same. These percentages which are relatively lower than the percentages (ranging between 77% and 82%) of the other provincial groups which chose acquaintance ideals, are still higher

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[3] Elma S. Herradura, "The ideals and Values of Filipino Adolescents." In the 1961 study, the instructions given to the respondents in regard to their choice of "ideal" persons were slightly different, but similar categories of "ideal" persons were used in classifying the responses in both studies.

than the percentages of American adolescents choosing this category.

For example, in five studies[4] conducted on American teenagers, between the 1940's and the 1950's, categories of ideal persons which are equivalent to acquaintance ideals were not popular choices of the majority of the American subjects.

Although in the present study the boys differed with the girls, in the choice of "acquaintance ideals," both groups showed similar trends in selecting specific categories under "acquaintance ideals." There was clear preference for relations over non-relations; this was stronger on the part of the girls than on the part of the boys.

In the 1961 study a slightly greater percentage of the respondents mentioned relations than non-relations. This preference was greater on the part of the younger adolescents, and on the part of the girls.

It was abundantly clear that the boys and girls preferred "eminent people" to the "glamorous figures." So, it seems that although adolescents rave and swoon over sports heroes, beauty queens, and screen and stage personages, they do not look up to them as "ideal persons."

This was also brought out in the 1961 study, but the preference for "historical and contemporary figures"[5] was not so pronounced. At that time less than 8% of the younger boys, 6% of the older boys, 9% of the younger girls and 6% of the older girls mentioned "glamorous figures," showing that this choice became less popular as the adolescents grow older.

In the five American studies cited, between 5% and 14% of the groups of subjects chose glamorous figures. Only among the middle Negro boys and girls, in a lower-middle class suburb of Chicago were "glamorous" figures the most popular "ideal" persons. Havighurst and his associates generalized that anyone older than fifteen who reports a glamorous person as his ego-ideal is probably immature.

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[4] In this section "recent studies" refer to R. Havighurst and Hilda Taba, **Adolescent Character and Personality**; R. Carroll, "Relation of Social Environment to the Moral Ideology and the Personal Aspirations of Negro Boys and Girls;" R. Havighurst, M. Z. Robinson, and M. Dorr, "The Development of the Ideal Self in Childhood and Adolescence;" L. A. Averill, "Impact of a Changing Culture Upon Pubescent Ideals;" H. C. Lodge, "Influence of the Study of Biography on the Moral Ideology of the Adolescents at the Eight Grade Level."

[5] "Historical and contemporary figures," a category under "remote ideals" in the 1961 study, included persons who had substantial claim to fame. This is equivalent to "eminent persons" in the present study.

Just as low as, or just a bit higher than, the low scores of "glamorous figures" were the scores of "Deity and Religious figures." Jesus Christ, saints, and members of the religious communities like priests, nuns, and ministers obtained frequency; 30 among the boys and 55 among the girls. In both groups, the category scored higher among the younger and low SES groups. In fact, this category got zero among the older girls.

The 1961 study also revealed very frequent mention of religious figures, so infrequent that it was decided to include religious figures in the category "others."

The American studies also revealed a paucity of "religious ideal." In Averill's study, for instance, only 12 out of 1,536 pubescents, or 3/4 of 1%, mentioned religious personages as figures worthy of admiration and emulation.

In a Catholic country, like the Philippines, among a people often described as religious people, where priests and nuns seem to be given special treatment, if not special regard, and where these figures are conspicuous figures in the community, these scores of "Deity and religious figures" seem unusually low. This seems to show that young people do not find religious figures attractive as models, despite the fact that "religious principles"

rank relatively high as a life goal among the boys (Rank 4) and among the girls (Rank 2). One probable reason for this is that the young people find religious figures too far beyond their grasp as ideal persons or they feel that it would be too presumptuous to aspire to be like Deity and the saints.

Respondents who named qualities rather than mentioned names, may have begun to abstract admirable qualities from people, real or imaginary, whom they looked up to. However, since the instructions clearly asked for names, it is not safe to assume that those mentioned qualities were those who had achieved a more generalized and abstract characterization of their ideal selves. There might have been some more of them among those who named particular persons in compliance with the instructions.

If expansion from the narrower world of the home and community to the wider world and the shift from acquaintance ideals to remote ideals, and from relations to non-relations and the preference for eminent people over glamorous figures are accepted as signs of greater maturity, the following generalizations may be made:

1. The boys showed greater maturity than the girls.

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2. Greater maturity was not associated with a particular age or SES sub-group.
3. The American teenagers showed greater maturity than their Filipino counterparts. However, it should be remembered that the data on the American adolescents were gathered between 1940 and 1950; the picture might have changed.

The preference for relations over non-relations seems to bear out the close relationships within the Filipino nuclear and extended family.

TABLE 1
SCORES OF CATEGORIES OF IDEAL PERSONS
BOY'S CHOICES

Ideal Persons	SCORES				
	Older	Younger	High Group	Low	Whole Group
I. Acquaintance Ideals	54	174	60	168	228
A. Relations	32	122	46	108	154
B. Non-relations	22	52	14	60	74
II. Remote Ideals	62	179	66	175	241
C. Eminent people	47	126	43	130	173
1. National figures	31	98	33	96	129
a. Gov't. officials	10	34	12	32	44
b. Heroes	19	58	19	58	77
c. Leading professionals	2	6	2	6	8
2. International figures	16	28	10	34	44
D. Glamorous figures	2	20	16	6	22
E. Diety and religious figures	6	24	4	26	30
F. Others	7	9	3	13	16
G. Non-response	14	30	11	33	44
H. Qualities admired	2	21	6	17	23

TABLE 2
SCORES OF CATEGORIES OF IDEAL PERSONS
Girls' Choices

			SCORES		
Ideal Persons	Older	Younger	High	Low	Whole Group
I. Acquaintance Ideals	97	716	213	600	813
A. Relations -	70	551	165	456	621
B. Non-relations	27	165	48	144	192
II. Remote Ideals	49	456	143	362	505
C. Eminent people	42	338	100	280	380
1. Nat. figures	42	214	52	204	256
a. Gov't. officials	10	38	18	30	48
b. Heroes	32	174	34	172	206
c. Leading professionals	0	2	0	2	2
2. Int. figures	0	124	48	76	124
D. Glamorous figures	0	0	0	0	0
E. Deity & Religious figures	0	55	23	32	55
F. Others	7	25	2	30	32
G. Non-response	18	88	27	79	106
H. Qualities admired	8	36	6	38	44