

SELF-CONSCIOUSNESS IN ACUTE AND CHRONIC  
SCHIZOPHRENICS<sup>1</sup>

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*Summary.*—When the Self-consciousness Scale was individually administered to 30 acute and 30 chronic schizophrenics no differences between groups were observed although these scores exceeded those reported for college students.

According to current diagnostic procedures (1) and theory (4), schizophrenia is viewed as a thinking disorder. Of particular interest to us has been how schizophrenics view themselves and others. Puente and Morrissey (3) administered the Self-consciousness Scale to 19 long-term and 19 short-term schizophrenics with no differences being reported between groups. This study was designed to replicate these findings using a larger sample from a different state hospital.

From an inpatient population at a state hospital in North Carolina, 60 schizophrenic inpatients volunteered after reading, comprehending, and signing an informed consent form. Individuals were diagnosed as schizophrenic independently by a board-eligible psychiatrist and a licensed psychologist. Subjects were divided into two groups: 30 acute subjects with less than one month hospitalization and 30 chronic subjects hospitalized more than one year. As no significant differences were noted between the groups on the demographic variables, both groups were combined for these variables. The means were: age = 33.5 yr., education = 9.8 yr., and age of onset = 22 yr. However, as expected, significant differences between groups were found for length of hospitalization as measured in days (acute  $M = 28.2$ , chronic  $M = 2146.2$ ). The Self-consciousness Scale (2) was individually administered to subjects in a room adjacent to the ward by a technician blind to history and diagnosis.

As can be seen in the table, Self-consciousness scores were relatively similar and, therefore, no significant differences between the two groups were noted on each of the subscales as well as the total scores. These findings support those reported earlier (3) in that acute and chronic subjects provided similar scores. Interestingly, present scores were slightly lower than prior ones (3). Whether this discrepancy can be accounted for by differences in size of samples, demo-

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TABLE 1  
 SELF-CONSCIOUSNESS SCALE: MEANS AND STANDARD DEVIATIONS FOR  
 SUBSCALES AND TOTAL SCALE

Measure	Schizophrenia			
	Acute		Chronic	
	M	SD	M	SD
Private Self-consciousness	25.5	7.0	22.8	7.5
Public Self-consciousness	20.3	7.4	17.3	7.3
Social Anxiety	11.9	5.5	12.9	4.9
Total Score	56.8	16.1	54.3	14.6

graphic characteristics, location of hospitals, ages, or ages of onset is not clear; however, the scores exceed those observed for college students (2).

Although chronicity does not seem to be critical in the evaluation of self-consciousness in schizophrenia, organicity may play a significant role. In a pilot study with 15 participants, nonbrain-damaged schizophrenics exhibited significantly less anxiety and public self-consciousness than did the brain-damaged group. Another critical factor could be the grouping of schizophrenics according to diagnostic categories, e.g., paranoid.

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