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# From the editor

## GETTING OLDER, GETTING WISER?

Nursing as a scholarly discipline is getting older but are nurses getting wiser? Several articles that were submitted for this issue of *ANS* either stated or alluded to nursing's scholarly "maturity," usually pointing to the quality or quantity of scholarly work as an indicator of maturity. Interestingly, several reviewers based their comments about an article's merit or lack thereof on some notion of nursing's maturity or methodological sophistication.

If quantity is an indicator of maturity, as is sometimes assumed in relation to chronological age, then the response to this issue topic attests to a certain degree of maturity. There was a substantial response indicated by a larger than usual number of submissions. However, of greater interest is the larger than usual proportion of articles judged to be eligible for publication in this issue. Comments such as "thought provoking," "stimulating," "controversial and well argued," and "very creative approach" appeared frequently on the review forms. To the extent that "wisdom" can be equated with traits such as these, the articles that appear here and others that were considered for this issue do indicate that the discipline is getting wiser.

Many of the fine articles considered for this issue of *ANS* do not appear here simply because of space limitations. Therefore, in the fall of 1986 we will be publishing a companion book that will contain additional articles considered for publication in this issue. The articles published here, as well as those in the forthcoming book, reflect the state of the art in research and theory methodology in nursing. In addition, we anticipate that both this issue and the book will serve to promote our continuing growth and the development of new, creative, and sound approaches consistent with our discipline's purposes.

What is published in the nursing literature is certainly a valuable indicator of our maturity and collective wisdom and a stimulus to further growth. However, the interactions that happen within our discipline's community to make possible the development of ideas that are shared in the literature are often unacknowledged or unspoken, and usually are not documented in writing. One example of such an interaction is the Nursing Theory Think Tank that was originally conceived and convened by Margaret Newman. What happens in these annual two-day discussions is purposely not recorded, written, or evaluated; rather, the purpose of the group is to discuss, challenge, and think together, exploring all of our diversities and similarities.

In the fall gathering of 1985, Think Tank participants addressed several issues related to our essence and reason for existence as a think tank, and what this interaction contributes to our individual and collective development.\* Implicit in our discussion was a conviction that the interaction itself is intrinsically valuable, where time and energy is set aside from our usually production-oriented professional experience for the primary purpose of letting ideas flow freely. Sometimes the ideas are brilliant; sometimes they are mundane; sometimes they are ignominious. But whatever value they ultimately have, at the time the purpose is to let them emerge and have a hearing. As a group we reaffirmed a conviction that more think tanks are needed, and participants in this think tank are individually willing to assist and encourage others to develop similar types of experiences.

Placing one's own ideas before professional peers who are qualified to judge the worth of the ideas develops both maturity and wisdom, whether in discussion or in writing. I challenge readers of *ANS* to participate in one important forum for exchange of ideas that is all too often neglected—letters to journal editors. Letters in journals provide one important and timely avenue for expression, for con-

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structive exchange, and for the possibility of developing greater insight and wisdom.

—Peggy L. Chinn, PhD, FAAN  
Editor

\*The participants of the Think Tank who were present at this gathering were Peggy Chinn, Jan Atwood, June Brodie, Ellen Egan, Rosemary Ellis, Jacqueline Fawcett, Beverly Hall, Margaret Hardy, Elizabeth See, Ardis Swanson, Lorraine Walker, and Ann Whall.

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## Information for authors

The primary purposes of *Advances in Nursing Science* are to stimulate the development of nursing science and promote application in practice of emerging theories and research findings. *Advances in Nursing Science* welcomes unsolicited manuscripts prepared in accordance with these purposes and with the specific issue topics given below. Detailed instructions for manuscript preparation and submission of articles are contained in the Author's Guide, which can be obtained from the Editor, ANS, Aspen Publishers, Inc., 1600 Research Boulevard, Rockville, MD 20850. All manuscripts must be prepared in accordance with this guide to be considered for publication.

All manuscripts are to be submitted for consideration for publication in a specific issue of ANS. The following descriptions of projected topics for ANS include suggested themes and deadline dates for receipt of articles by the editor. Authors are encouraged to submit articles no more than 4 months in advance of the deadline dates given below but articles should be received *no later than* the deadline date.

**VOL. 9:2—THEORY GENERATING RESEARCH.** Reports are sought of research that is designed to generate theory related to nursing science and practice. The types of research reports for this issue will include qualitative, empirical descriptive, philosophical, ethical, and other approaches based on the purpose of generating or formulating theory. Implications

of the study for further testing, ideas for alternative approaches in method and design, and implications for nursing practice should be included in the report. *Deadline date:* June 2, 1986.

**VOL. 9:3—HEALTH CARE POLICY.** Reports are sought that address theory and research pertinent to the formation of health care policy. Suggested areas of focus include: evidence related to cost, quality, and equity of health care; empirical or theoretical analyses of the impact of policy on quality of health care and nursing; and ethical and philosophical analyses of policy issues. *Deadline date:* September 2, 1986.

**VOL. 9:4—MOTIVATION AND HEALTH.** Articles are sought that provide theory analysis and/or research evidence of relationships between human motivation and health. Articles should include a discussion of the influence of nursing actions in relation to motivation and health, and analysis of future directions for research, theory development, and practice. *Deadline date:* December 1, 1986.

**VOL. 10:1—STATE OF THE ART.** For this 10th anniversary issue, articles are sought that summarize, critique, analyze, and/or synthesize hallmarks of scholarly work in nursing knowledge development. Of particular interest is critical work that derives from nursing's own research and theory literature. *Deadline date:* March 2, 1987.