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## From the editor

Recently I had the privilege to visit with Barbara Schutt, editor of the *American Journal of Nursing* from 1958 through 1971. This was a particularly important visit for me because it represented a connection with a large network of individuals whom we have each known in different contexts, at different times.

During our visit, Ms. Schutt commented about what it is that brings us together as nurses. Indeed, the two of us have worked in very different times and places and with journals that are quite different in purpose, focus, format, organization, and editorial style. We represent overlapping, but different generations of women in nursing. We probably could find many issues on which we would differ. Yet during our encounter of several hours, we discovered over and over many common experiences, connections, interests, and ideas.

Ms. Schutt observed that it is the fundamental issues surrounding our profession that provide a common ground among all of us, regardless of clinical expertise, work history, or educational background. It is who we are individually and collectively that provides the common ground from which we work together. Ms. Schutt has worked for many years on behalf of the economic and general welfare of nurses, and she expressed in her editorial work strong and independent views concerning a wide variety of professional issues. She encouraged the expression of diversity, but also provided leadership toward strength and unity in the profession.

Our encounter gave me the occasion to reflect on my own work in relation to *ANS* in a number of dimensions. *ANS* has reflected an extreme range of views, ideas, and approaches in relation to our fundamental purpose, which is the development of nursing knowledge. This diversity is seen even in the issue topics that have emerged over the years. However, what is most interesting to notice is a clear thread of continuity and commonality that also exists.

Despite their diversity, the issue topics have usually tapped some common dimension of interest related to developing nursing knowledge. Even when the issue topics suggest a focus that might be interpreted narrowly and seemingly have a limited appeal to only a few readers, the topics have always stimulated submission of articles that reflect a broad concern or value that transcends the boundaries of a single clinical area or a particular school of thought.

The contents of this issue of *ANS* reflect, in a very real way, how the underlying philosophical commitments we share in common are fundamental to not only our theory and research, but to the practice of nursing as well. The theories, research, and nursing practices reflected in the articles published in this issue require a strong commitment to knowing who we are and what we are all about. Each reader may view the articles with differing responses, judging their value or worth differently from another reader. But regardless of how we each judge the merit of the article in relation to our own criteria, these articles tap something deep and meaningful beyond that which we ordinarily expect in a journal of this type. More than any other issue, the articles for this issue frequently elicited reviewer responses such as "I know because I have experienced it." I am pleased to see bridges being built between things that we have learned to try to compartmentalize—our thinking, our doing, our experience, our intellect. As our scholarly work reflects more integration and connection, we will also begin to experience integration and connection on other levels as well. Nursing leaders, notably Barbara Schutt, have urged that we move toward unity. We may be experiencing a part of the realization of that dream.

—Peggy L. Chinn, PhD, FAAN  
Editor