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From the Editor

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Editor

No artist is ahead of his time. He is his time; it is just that others are behind the times. - **Martha Graham** (1893-1991), US dancer and choreographer, *The Observer magazine*, July 8, 1979

How true it is that many of the world's great innovations are not recognized or fully accepted until long after their creation. Certainly in nursing we experience long delays before creative ideas are embraced and actually put into practice, if they ever are. Aside from the catch-up factor (the lag while others catch up), I believe that in nursing we do not fully appreciate the amazing creativity and resourcefulness that come with the territory of nursing. On a daily basis, nurses recognize situations that are not as they should be, and they bring to bear on the situation not only problem-solving skills but creative resources that make something different of the situation. This, to me, is the epitome of innovation.

There are probably many reasons why nurses often do not recognize our innovative potential and capacity. To me, a major factor is the "everyday-ness" of many of the innovations that we create, or the extent to which our work is embedded in that which is of the everyday world. We find a better way to do some task, happen upon a way to solve a problem, or help someone with a particular challenge. The thing is done, and we move on to the work of the next day. Even in our scholarly and research work, the essential everyday-ness of many of the phenomena with which we work obscures the amazing creativity that goes into the creation of an innovative approach.

A closely related factor that I believe interferes with our ability to recognize innovation in nursing has to do with the response of others. Often no one other than the benefactor of our care bears witness to what we have done. If other professional colleagues do see or hear about what we have done, they may not recognize the creation as innovative, in part because of the time disjuncture that Graham's quote addresses, but also in part because of the everyday-ness of what they have seen or heard. It was relatively easy to recognize the innovation we know as the World Wide Web early in its introduction, although relatively few people in the general population embraced it, used it, or realized its potential. It is quite another matter to recognize as innovative a nursing approach or method that interrupts sexism, racism, classism, or ageism.

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The articles that appear in this issue of *Advances in Nursing Science* (ANS 23:4) present innovations of the kind that address phenomena that are embedded in everyday experience. Many of the phenomena are so commonplace that people typically give them no notice or are not sensitized to the dynamics that are occurring. The innovative approaches that these authors present can be thought of not only as innovations, but also as methods for raising our awareness of that which is embedded in everyday life. It is this quality of helping others see through a different lens that indeed characterizes many of nursing's most important innovations. I anticipate that the ideas these authors present will provide ground for discussion and debate and will stimulate yet further innovation and creativity.

Peggy L. Chinn, RN, PhD, FAAN

Editor

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