
From the Editor

RESEARCH METHODS AND NURSING

The issue topic "Advances in Research Methods" drew a strong response from authors, resulting in the extension of this topic for 2 issues. The articles in this, and the previous, issue of *ANS* demonstrate the significant work that nurse scholars have accomplished in developing methods that are well suited to our discipline. Unlike the early debates over the merits of borrowing from other disciplines versus developing our own theories and methods, nurse scholarship today reflects a maturity that acknowledges the worth of a wide array of approaches to develop knowledge needed for excellent, evidence-based nursing practice.

The quest for new and improved methods is not simply a search for something to replace that which is traditionally accepted practice. Nursing scholarship and nursing practice are built upon an epistemologic stance that seeks knowing of the whole, not just the parts. Similar to the epistemology that gives rise to feminist scholarship,¹ this well-recognized epistemologic commitment to wholism gives rise to nursing scholarship. Some of the methods that have served many disciplines well also serve nursing well, but many methods that are well accepted in other disciplines have been found to be wanting when nurse scholars apply them to nursing problems. Some of the methods can be used in combination with other methods to move closer to a comprehensive understanding of the whole. Some scholars seek new and innovative

methods that serve the purposes of their work more fully.

Grasping the whole is not a simple matter, and even grasping what this means challenges the best thinkers in nursing. The newer and more creative methods require long and dedicated testing to determine their worth in terms of scientific merit. Some will fall by the wayside, while others will become a solid part of nursing's accepted methodologic approaches. Many of the authors who have contributed to these 2 issues of *ANS* have taken considerable risk in developing and publishing their ideas and conceptualizations. Their work now stands before all of us to respectfully consider and debate. Their contributions are significant and contribute a forum from which the next generation of nursing scholarship can emerge.

Send your ideas and responses to their work in the form of a letter to the editor. We will share your responses in future issues of the journal, and continue the discussions that are vital to the ongoing development of our discipline.

—**Peggy L. Chinn, PhD, RN, FAAN**
Editor

REFERENCE

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1. Harding S. The method question. In: Omery A, Kasper CE, Page GG, eds. *In Search of Nursing Science*. Thousand Oaks, Calif: Sage; 1995:106-126.