

From the Editor

THREE DECADES OF EXCELLENCE IN NURSING SCHOLARSHIP

This issue begins the 30th volume of *Advances in Nursing Science (ANS)*. When I founded the journal I would not have even dared to predict its future. As I reflect back to the early days of the journal, I am reminded of my own childhood when I would eagerly entreat my parents to tell me about “the olden days!”

It was a risky enterprise—not only because *ANS* was to be a journal whose audience would be limited but also because of the kind of journal that we intended it to become. At the time that *ANS* started, nursing research was in relatively early stages of development. There were only a handful of doctoral programs scattered throughout the United States. In fact, the master’s degree was generally still considered “the terminal degree” in nursing. No schools of nursing had faculties of nursing consisting of all doctorally prepared nurses; few deans were doctorally prepared. There were no personal computers; mammoth mainframe computers in universities were fed letter-size cards punched with rectangular holes containing research study data for a limited range of analysis. Several days later, the results were fed out on large sheets of fan-folded paper that the researcher poured over for days to extract the meaning of the printouts.

Journals that published research results were few and far between, and almost none were eager to review or publish other kinds of scholarly works. Their hesitancy at the time was understandable. Nurses were still attempting to establish themselves and their discipline as a solid and respectable academic discipline, and the academy demanded that nurse scholars demonstrate excellent research skills. Few other disciplines pursued research methods outside the mainstream of traditional quantitative approaches, and other approaches to inquiry were either not yet developed, generally viewed as perhaps interesting but less-than-rigorous, or were relegated to academic departments that were considered humanities or arts—not science. Theory, and the development of theory, had begun to arrive in a formal way in the nursing literature only a few short years prior to the time that *ANS* was conceived.

So what was the future to hold for a journal that was founded with the intention of publishing a broad range of approaches to research, a wide spectrum of forms of scholarship, and most frightening of all, material that challenged the status quo and prompted readers to consider ideas that might not be in the mainstream? Personally, I thought at the time that if we managed to provide a few years-worth of literature that achieved these intentions, the enterprise would be well worth the effort because this was precisely what I believed was needed in nursing. I certainly did not take issue with the pathway that generally was accepted as that which was required to establish nursing as a worthy academic discipline. But I also held the view that nursing required much more than that offered by traditional research methods alone, and I also believed that in order to flourish, nurses would need to think outside the boxes that had restricted the discipline for far too many years.

As fate would have it, just at the time that I was contacting nurse scholars as possible contributors to the first issue, I met Barbara Carper. Her work and her insights fit perfectly with the early intentions around which the journal was being founded. Her work provided for many others and me affirmation that indeed, nurses require approaches beyond that of traditional science and that our disciplinary focus requires a broad range of thought. Shortly after the founding of the journal, I met Jo Ann Ashley. Jo Ann helped to shape and inspire the early commitment for *ANS* to publish works that challenged the status quo; in the 2 short years that she lived after the founding of the journal, she regularly challenged me to take bold editorial stances and to remain faithful to my vision of cutting-edge scholarship of excellent quality.

None of us involved in the early development of the journal envisioned reaching Volume 30! I know that those who are no longer living would be gratified to see their hopes and dreams for the journal survive to this point. The ongoing success of the journal can be attributed only to a host of people who have supported and affirmed what we have become—the scholars who have tirelessly volunteered their expertise, time, and energy to review works submitted for publication;

the authors who have looked to *ANS* as a possible avenue for publishing their work; the publishers who have provided material support and expertise that makes the journal's existence possible; and our many readers all over the world, in far greater numbers than reflected by the numbers of individual subscribers. It is with deep appreciation to each and everyone who has made this possible that I offer you a continuing

commitment to excellence in all forms of scholarship, creative approaches to the challenges of the discipline, and articles that I hope will stimulate your thinking and prompt lively discussions around the complex issues that nursing faces today.

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