
From the Editor

THE ROLE OF SCHOLARSHIP IN SHAPING THE FUTURE OF NURSING

By now *ANS* readers have become quite familiar with the October 2010 report *The Future of Nursing: Leading Change, Advancing Health*.¹ Educational programs, health care agencies, state and federal government agencies, and professional organizations are all involved in initiatives to make changes needed to advance the recommendations of the report.

One aspect of professional infrastructure that is essential to actualizing the report's recommendations is the role of scholarship as an underpinning, a foundation for the future of nursing and health care. Professional journals are a major avenue of publication of the scholarship of the discipline—the outcomes of research projects, syntheses of collective research findings, philosophic analysis, and theoretical constructs. On a foundational level, scholarship provides a collective body of knowledge that shapes the direction toward which needed changes are made. The scholarship of the discipline provides a perspective, a lens, from which nursing's contributions to health care are shaped and built. Scholarship is the fundamental element, both as a process and as a product that makes learning and professional practice possible.

As an Editor of a journal that publishes a wide range of scholarship, I believe that the content of this and other journals play a key role in advancing the report's recommendations. However, readers are also key players in making scholarship come alive in the form of substantial change. It is readers who carefully consider what is published, discuss what is published with the intent of mining the ideas for better and more informed discourses, apply the ideas in actual practice, and then, in turn, pursue the next stages of

scholarship to report what is learned and what is created.

In the last issue of *ANS*, I included letters to the editor addressing an important and also controversial issue that prompt diverse points of view, and noted the importance of this kind of discourse as necessary to see beneath what is obvious, and that fosters well-conceived change toward social justice and equity. Because of the importance of these perspectives and the opportunity these letters opened for substantive discourse in the discipline, members of the *ANS* Advisory Board invited external reviewers to examine the issues involved, particularly with respect to the editorial standards of the journal. The sections that follow contain our reviewer's commentaries as an example of the importance of discourse that moves beyond the surface, prompting all stakeholders to carefully examine what we do and the actions we take as "evidence" in creating the future of nursing. This issue also contains a commentary by David Keepnews that addresses issues raised in the article by Eliason, Dibble and DeJoseph that appeared in *ANS* 33:3.

To promote ongoing dialogue, we are launching the *ANS* blog, where you can participate freely! The blog is located at <http://advancesinnursingscienceblog.wordpress.com/>; visit it now and start participating!

—Peggy L. Chinn, PhD, RN, FAAN
Editor

REFERENCE

1. Institute of Medicine/Robert Wood Johnson Foundation. *The Future of Nursing: Leading Change, Advancing Health*. Washington, DC: National Science Academies; 2010.