

CASSANDRA

radical feminist nurses newsjournal

VOLUME 7:2

MAY 1989

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Those of us who are educated, who hold advanced degrees, need to examine why we devalue intellectual activity. Women of color and all women from non-privileged backgrounds who are well educated, who understand the value of intellectual development, the extent to which it strengthens any oppressed person who is seeking self-discovery and radical political change, must share their awareness with all women. We must actively struggle to rid feminist movement of its anti-intellectual bias. We must continue to criticize meaningless intellectual work and promote the kind of study and scholarship that is itself a feminist praxis.

- bell hooks

**CASSANDRA: RADICAL FEMINIST
NURSES NEWSJOURNAL**

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Feminist Nurses Network
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- * newsjournal contributions

BACKGROUND

The name CASSANDRA is a tribute to Florence Nightingale who wrote an essay titled Cassandra two years before her service in the Crimean War. In it she states; "Why have women passion, intellect, moral activity - these three - and a place in society where no one of the three can be exercised?" Like the mythical Cassandra, Nightingale possessed the gift of prophesy and despaired at not being heard. CASSANDRA: RADICAL FEMINIST NURSES NEWSJOURNAL is dedicated to re-creating the Cassandra myth by providing a place where the passion, intellect and moral activity of women who are nurses can be voiced and heard. The Newsjournal is a means for actively preserving and passing on written materials coming from a woman-defined perspective. Our hearing one another is critical to establishing a network among feminist nurses who need to be heard in nursing practice, education, research, administration and health care.

NEWSJOURNAL PHILOSOPHY

The Newsjournal is produced by Websters in Buffalo, New York. We are committed to a feminist approach to media, which includes sharing and nurturing of skills, non-hierarchical relationships, and valuing of diversity. There are no editors or review board members; the material for each issue is reviewed, selected and prepared by local Websters whose names appear in the "Thanks" section of each Newsjournal.

We publish original work developed from a feminist perspective. We encourage exploration of issues that radically effect nurses and women. While opinions expressed are those of the author and not necessarily those of CASSANDRA as a whole, we do accept responsibility for what we print. We will not intentionally print material that is harmful to women because of color, sexuality, religious or cultural background, physical ability or economic situation. We reserve the right to edit with the intent of remaining true to the author's own message. Insofar as possible, edited material is available to the author before publication.

MAILING LIST

CASSANDRA's mailing list is confidential and will not be sold or given to any other group. Names and addresses of women who join CASSANDRA are provided to contact women in their geographic area; only the names and addresses of Contact Women and Coordinating Nurses (women responsible for specific tasks) are published in the Newsjournal. The Newsjournal is distributed to members and friends of CASSANDRA, and to institutions or groups that subscribe to the Newsjournal.

ADVERTISING

Display ads will be published for businesses offering products that are consistent with CASSANDRA's philosophy and purposes. Write to CASSANDRA for rates. Judgments about the suitability of ads for the Newsjournal will be made by the Web responsible for producing the Newsjournal.

CONTRIBUTION GUIDELINES

We welcome the contribution of articles, information, and letters that are of interest to women who are feminist nurses. Our regular features include nursing history, feminist research, myths influencing women's lives, reviews of books and journal articles, resources and notes that promote networking.

Articles should be original work that have not been previously published; preference is given to writings by women who are members of CASSANDRA. The suggested length of articles and reviews is 2-4 pages, typed double-spaced. Manuscripts of articles and book reviews are reviewed and selected by members of the Web that produces the Newsjournal. Manuscripts are reviewed in relation to consistency with CASSANDRA's purposes; and the conciseness, readability, and strength of presentation.

We welcome letters, notes and research information from anyone interested in sharing information with members of CASSANDRA. Letters should be no longer than one page in length, typed double spaced. Notes and resource information need to be very brief, approximately 12 double-spaced typed lines.

All material must be accompanied by the author's name and address in order to be published. We prefer to publish names and addresses, but we will withhold your name and/or address, if requested.

Please mail your contribution so that it reaches us by the following lifeline dates:

January issue: November 15

May issue: March 15

September issue: July 15

OUR PURPOSES . . .

CASSANDRA: RADICAL FEMINIST NURSES NETWORK is a gathering of women at nursing practice, education, research, and administration. Our primary commitment is to end the oppression of women in all aspects of nursing and health care. We believe that oppression of women is fundamental to all oppressions and affects all women.

Our primary purposes are to:

- * Develop and communicate radical feminist, woman-centered analyses of issue in nursing and health care.
- * Nurture local, regional, and national networks of women in nursing who are committed to radical-feminist perspectives.
- * Provide an environment for communication, support and safety among nurses regardless of race, class, sexual ability or sexual preference.
- * Share and pass on skills of leadership, analysis and communication.
- * Take strong public actions on nursing and health care issues.
- * Preserve and publish past and present significant works of nurses.
- * Publish writings on women's health that are rooted in feminist analysis.
- * Support nursing research using a feminist approach.
- * Develop feminist educational material for nursing programs.
- * Establish a feminist nursing journal.



A List of Feminist Nursing References

By Sheila Bunting and Jacquelyn C. Campbell

"For centuries, women scholars have recorded women's wisdom into written form, but much of that writing has not survived. Women in the feminist tradition have been working to re-member the wisdom of Doing what we know, and of knowing what we Do, moving toward woman-centered realities" (Wheeler & Chinn, 1984, p.vii).

Even though, as Charlene and Peggy have pointed out, "Women today do not always manage to Do what we Know" (p.vii), we two Cassandrans managed to create a space for mutual Knowing and Doing of feminist scholarship. We did this by contracting for a directed study within the system where we both "Know" and "Do", one of us as an associate professor of nursing and the other as a student. It was a delightful experience - one that we would wish for all students - nurturing of the mind and spirit. We created our own atmosphere and our own rhythm and chose our own domains: feminism and nursing. We shared the questions and answers that had evolved from our own experiences, using our discussions to help one another re-learn the buried wisdom described in *Peace and Power* (Wheeler & Chinn, 1984).

Wheeler and Chinn (1984) believe that the reason "that the oral tradition has survived, and is still practiced among women, is that telling is indeed a simultaneous act of Knowing and Doing, springing from women's ancient wisdom"

(p.vii), and this happened for us in our directed study. We shared with each other our reference lists and the lists of feminist citations given to us by our friends. In our readings we spent time with some of the most powerful and inspiring women - nurses and others - who have ever lived and written. Many other nurses and feminists, hearing that we had compiled such a list, requested and were given copies. A bibliography is an index to the wisdom of many and we would like to share the wisdom of the many sisters and few brothers who are included in this list. We had especially appreciated the listing of feminist nursing articles from ANS provided by Peggy Chinn (1986). We did not include them here because they have been previously published in the *NewsJournal*, but they are among the best examples of feminist nursing articles.

Clearly, this is a small and arbitrary selection of articles. It is our hope that, seeing the list, many Cassandrans will contribute their own favorites from their own areas of Knowing and Doing so that a pool of wisdom can be accumulated and shared.

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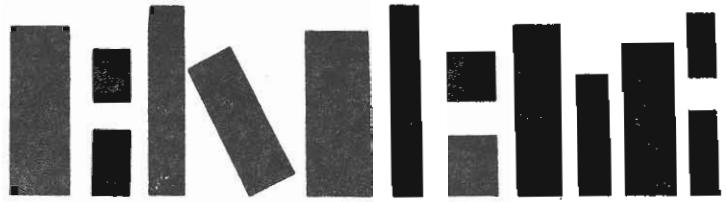
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In support of Sheila's and Jackie's work, and in consideration of those Websters who did not receive the September 1986 NewsJournal that Jackie and Sheila refer to, Peggy's article on Feminist Nursing Literature is re-published here.

FEMINIST NURSING LITERATURE ???

By Peggy L. Chinn

Have you heard, or said, things like this:

"There just isn't any feminist nursing literature . . ."

"It is very difficult to find nurses who are interested in feminist thinking . . ."

"If you are a feminist, you will never be able to get published . . ."

"Being associated with Cassandra is a professional dead-end . . ."

I have heard these and many other related comments, much to my own private chagrin. The statements are simply not true in an absolute sense. However, I do recognize certain consistencies between these comments and my own experience. For example, one article that I co-authored with Charlene Eldridge Wheeler in Nursing Outlook created a degree of stir with some of the journal folks and required substan-

tial editing in order to be published.

I am also acutely aware that "standard" indexing traditions are male-oriented and illness oriented, and so finding material on women or on health is very difficult -- sometimes impossible -- even though it exists.

As editor of Advances in Nursing Science, I recently completed an author and subject index. The subject index includes many woman-identified and health-identified key words that do not appear in any other index. However, only seven articles appear under the heading "feminism". This is primarily because I had to limit what could be listed in each subject category, and listed only articles with each subject that contain a key word in the title or the abstract, with a minimum of interpretation as to the focus of the article.

I knew there were many articles that have appeared in ANS with a clear feminist orientation, but I had never really identified them all in one spot. Many of these articles are indexed with key words that are clearly related to feminism, such as "oppression," but unfortunately to a naive searcher this relationship may not be so clear.

I decided to do a bit of an extension of the index to share with women in CASSANDRA. To my delight I found 29 articles in the first 8 volumes (roughly 15% of all articles published in these volumes) that have a clearly identifiable feminist orientation.

The list does not include "From the editor" pieces in each issue that I wrote, most of which express an explicit or implicit feminist perspective. Within the past few years I have been able to title these pieces so they will be easier to identify. A few of my favorites are "Science and the Politics of Sexism" (7:3), "Quality of Life: A Values Transformation (8:1), and "Violence and the Health Care 'Family'" (8:4).

Many, but not all, of the authors of the articles listed below have been involved with CASSANDRA. Some of the authors listed here may not want to be known as "feminist," but the content of their article is consistent with a feminist point of view and draws on feminist thinking. There are still other excellent articles not listed here that are clearly consistent with a feminist point of view, but I have not included them here because the content is not necessarily central in terms of feminist thought (for example I authored such an article on the topic of lowering infant mortality in Vol. 1:3).

I also want to share that while I myself am delighted with each "feminist" article that arrives, I use very strict rules that guide the review and selection process to assure that I do not abuse the "gatekeeping" role that is so often associated with journal editorship. For example, each article is

reviewed anonymously by three members of the review board -- 1) a reviewer who has content expertise (i.e. knowledge of feminist theory) 2) a reviewer who has methodological expertise (i.e. a reviewer who is experienced in the method used to obtain the content of the article) and 3) a reviewer who represents an interested reader (like a student) who does not already know a lot about either the content, the method or both. I do not deliberately send an article to be reviewed by a "hostile" reviewer, but I do try to have each article reviewed by someone who is not already "convinced".

If you haven't already had the opportunity to read some of the articles listed here, I hope you will find them and read them! We (meaning myself, the Aspen staff who edits articles, and the members of the review board) have worked to produce articles that are interesting, and accessible for all readers (including people not necessarily in "academia"). I personally find many of the articles listed here among the best we have published, and I hope you enjoy reading them. I would be delighted to hear from you with any thoughts or impressions!

If you want more information about the journal (back issues can be purchased if your library does not carry them) write Aspen Publishers, 1600 Research Blvd., Rockville, MD 20850).

All articles listed appear in
ADVANCES IN NURSING SCIENCE
 Key - Author: Article title.
 Year;Vol#(Issue#):pages.

Anderson, Joan M.: Perspectives on the health of immigrant women: a feminist analysis. 1985;8(1):61-76.

Ashley, Jo Ann: Foundations for scholarship: historical research in nursing. 1978;1(1):25-36.

Ashley, Jo Ann: Power in structured misogyny: implications for the politics of care. 1980;2(3):3-22.

Campbell, Jacquelyn: Misogyny and homicide of women. 1981;3(2):67-85.

Campbell, Jacquelyn: A survivor group for battered women. 1986;8(2):13-20.

Campbell, Jacquelyn C.: Nursing assessment for risk of homicide with battered women. 1986;8(4):36-51.

Charleston Faculty Practice Conference Group: Nursing faculty collaboration viewed through feminist process. 1986;8(2):29-38.

Connors, Denise Donnell: Sickness unto death: medicine as mythic, necrophilic and iatrogenic. 1980;2(3):39-51.

Connors, Denise Donnell: Women's "sickness": a case of secondary gains or primary losses. 1985;7(3):1-17.

Crowley, Margaret A. and Denise Donnell Connors: Critique of "The Use of Animals in Nursing Research." 1985;7(4):23-31.

Dunbar, Sandra B., Ellen Patterson, Clara Burton, and Grace Stuckert: Women's health and nursing research. 1981;3(2):1-16.

Greenleaf, Nancy P.: Sex-segregated occupations: relevance for nursing. 1980;2(3):23-37.

Hughes, Linda: The public image of the nurse. 1980;2(3):55-72.

LaGodna, Gretchen E.: The single rural woman: invisible struggles. 1981;3(2):17-23.

Limandri, Barbara J.: Research and practice with abused women: use of the Roy adaptation model as an explanatory framework. 1986;8(4):52-61.

Lovell, Mariann C. and Dorothy L. Fiorino: Combating myth: a conceptual framework for analyzing the stress of motherhood. 1979;1(4):75-84.

Lovell, Mariann C.: The politics of

medical deception: challenging the trajectory of history. 1980;2(3):73-86.

Lovell, Mariann C.: Silent but perfect "partners": medicine's use and abuse of women. 1981;3(2):25-40.

MacPherson, Kathleen I.: Menopause as disease: the social construction of a metaphor. 1981;3(2):95-113.

MacPherson, Kathleen I.: Feminist methods: a new paradigm for nursing research. 1983;5(2):17-25.

MacPherson, Kathleen I.: Osteoporosis and menopause: a feminist analysis of the social construction of a syndrome. 1985;7(4):11-22.

Munhall, Patricia L.: Methodologic fallacies: a critical self-appraisal. 1983;5(4):41-49.

Munhall, Patricia L.: Methodological issues in nursing research: beyond a wax apple. 1986;8(3):1-5.

Patterson, Ellen Tate and Elwynn S. Hale: Making sure: integrating menstrual care practices into activities of daily living. 1985;7(3):18-31.

Roberts, Susan Jo: Oppressed group behavior: implications for nursing. 1983;5(4):21-30.

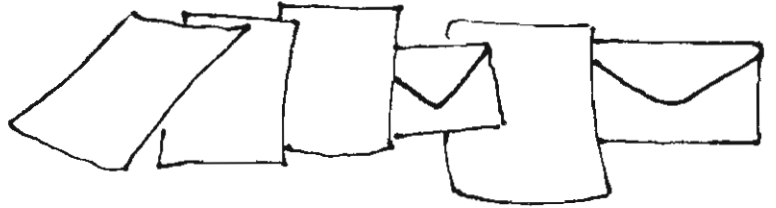
Silverstein, Norma G.: Lillian Wald at Henry Street, 1893-1895. 1985;7(2):1-12.

Torres, Gertrude: The nursing education administrator: accountable, vulnerable, and oppressed. 1981;3(3):1-16.

Wheeler, Charlene Eldridge: Viewpoint: Essay in response to republication of a biography. 1984;6(4):74-79.

Wheeler, Charlene Eldridge: The American Journal of Nursing and the socialization of a profession, 1900-1920. 1985;7(2):20-34.





LETTERS FOR CONNECTION

Dear Websters,

I have applied for Cassandra to have workshops/gatherings at the Michigan Womyn's Music Festival this year. I don't know yet if the proposals will be accepted, but I really don't see why they wouldn't be. Women should check their programs when they get there or call me closer to the festival time for more info.

Kirste Carlson
216/932-7762

Sisters:

I am writing in response to a letter written by one of your members, Kim Danner, which appeared in *WomanNews*... This was the first time I had heard of Cassandra and I'm very intrigued. I have to say I am writing to you for some help and advice. I am 27 and have a BA in politics. I've spent a lot of time in working with/for women, but not in a health care capacity. However, after several years, I've come to realize that my heart lies in helping women in gaining access to proper health care, and perhaps to provide it myself. So I am considering going back to school to study nursing, but I am somewhat confused.

I'm hoping you can help me make sense of the different degrees offered (Baccalaureate, Associate, Practical Nursing, Nurse Midwifery) and how these

correspond to job titles and general job duties. Right now I see myself working in a women's health clinic in some capacity, particularly assisting/counseling for abortions. What sort of qualifications will I need?? I really don't know. Also, do you know of any nursing programs which are particularly progressive politically or which have a high regard among feminist nurses? Please help!!

I am in the New York City/Northern New Jersey area. I really hope to hear from you soon. I admire your ideas and energies and look forward to someday being a member of Cassandra.

Thank you very much.

Antoinette Polito
808 Park Avenue
Hoboken, NJ 07030

Cassandra!

The January *NewsJournal* read so well. Thanks to all the unique and intelligent and brilliant colleagues out there. You are an inspiration - compelling me to get more involved. (Columbus Web?)

Merry Hearts,

Betty Bernat
120 Brookside Drive
Yellow Springs, OH 45387

Dear Editor(s):

I read about your "Radical Feminist Nurses NewsJournal" in Aunt Edna's Reading List here in Honolulu. I am a nurse-midwife, currently teaching maternity nursing as adjunct faculty for Hawaii Loa College. I do not practice midwifery as there is no medical support on the island of Oahu. Politics, of course. I am enjoying my retirement, but dislike the fact that it is enforced by local circumstances dictated by the medical establishment.

I try to slip a little consciousness raising into my teaching. What can I say to my students? They are going to have to practice in the real world. I'm not sure I would be doing them a favor to make them as angry as I am. Being angry has not made my life better as a nurse or as a midwife. It has made my life as a woman better in that it has brought me in contact with other women whose companionship I treasure.

Please send me information about subscribing to your publication.

Mickey Selwyn
1020 Green St, #305
Honolulu, HI 96822

Hello There,

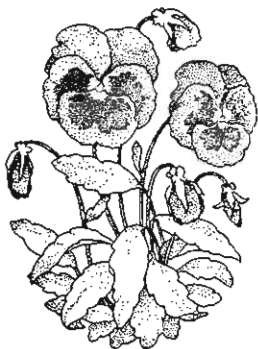
I am interested in becoming a nurse for many reasons. Autonomy, independence, a skill I can work around the world with, help people, be part of a team of caregivers. I see an RN degree as a step on a ladder of improvement to nurse midwife, nurse practitioner, to increasing competence, confidence, and ability to effect positive change in this very confusing and pain filled world.

So, nurses are so often portrayed as docile, well behaved, cowering, less than intelligent pawns of the medical profession. They work in an atmosphere of high stress and selfless dedication and are rewarded with complaints from all sides and an administration that turns a deaf ear to their problems and suggestions.

So, what is it you do and can you send me info that will help me to gain the courage to join the nursing profession and not feel alone?

Thanks,

Shawn Blaisdell
500 Maylin Street
Pasadena, CA 91105



MEMO FROM ANA

MEMO from Carol A. Grimaldi
Public Relations Officer
Communications Unit
American Nurses Association

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Nurses Of America Respond to
"Nightingales" Demise

RE: R.I.P. "Nightingales"

Last week, the NBC television network quietly cancelled the series "Nightingales." The network decided the controversy around the show was too great a risk to contend with to renew it for a second season.

Attached is a release commenting on the "Nightingales" cancellation as circulated by the Nurses of America project of the Tri-Council for Nursing. ANA has worked closely with this project to plan and implement strategies around the "Nightingales." ... organized nursing will continue to work towards the improvement of the public image of nurses, and welcomes opportunities to work with producers of entertainment programming in order to provide reliable information about the profession.

New York, NY, May 18, 1989

Nurses today expressed regret that original offers from nursing leaders across the country to provide guidance and counsel to Aaron Spelling Productions were routinely and arbitrarily rejected. According to Kay J. Wight, Executive Director, NURSES OF AMERICA, "It is indeed regrettable that at a time when there is a publicly acknowledged crises in health care and a nursing shortage, that the American public will be denied a contemporary and accurate portrayal of nursing education and the various and complex services that nurses provide in today's health care system."

NURSES OF AMERICA, an education program sponsored by the Nursing Tri-Council, believes that if the nursing profession had been consulted in the early development of Nightingales, there would not have been the universal condemnation of the series by nurses, advertisers and the viewing public. NURSES OF AMERICA notes that the inaccurate and unfortunate stereotypes depicted on Nightingales resulted in public outrage and the subsequent realization by advertisers that further association with the program would be antithetical to their interests.

The Nursing Tri-Council is an organization representing over two million nurses, and is comprised of the American Association of Colleges of Nursing, The American Nurses Association, The American Organization of Nurse Executives and the National League for Nursing.



Were You There ???

Dear Cassandra -

Missed you at pro-choice march but saw banner on video - PLEASE call if cassandrans are in DC as I would love to meet.

- Nancy Pfaff

(202) 543-2755

This space reserved for your thoughts and memories of the pro-choice march; or your:

- photographs
- poetry
- essays
- experiences
- music
- graffiti
- slogans
- miscellaneous random ravings



CONTACT WOMEN

Names and addresses of all Cassandrans are provided to their nearest Contact Woman, otherwise our mailing list is not distributed. This list is arranged by state alphabetically, so find the location nearest you to connect with the nearest Contact Woman. There are many cities and states not represented by a Contact Woman, so if you would like to be a Contact Woman and encourage networking in your area, please let us know. If you are a Contact Woman and you are not listed, or if the information given here is incorrect, please notify us.

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THRUMS (any loose end, fringe, or tuft of thread; the fringe of warp threads left on a loom after the cloth has been cut off.)

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Dover publications: Women: A Pictorial Archive From Nineteenth Century Sources (1978), Treasury of Flower Designs by Susan Gaber (1981), Banners, Ribbons and Scrolls ed. by Carol Belanger Grafton (1983), Treasury of Art Nouveau Design and Ornament by Carol Belanger Grafton (1980), and Art Nouveau by E.V. Gillon (1969).

Quote:

The quote on the front cover of this issue is from Bell Hooks in Feminist Theory: from margin to center. Boston, MA: South End Press, 1984. p. 114.

Appreciation:

To all the Websters and Friends who contributed material, thoughts, energy, and guidance toward the ongoing efforts to keep the Network and Newsjournal breathing.



RESOURCES

The Battered Women's Directory is the original, most comprehensive, thumbed through resource and reference directory of shelters, services, and educational resources for battered women in the U.S.

Work has been completed on a Supplement to the Battered Women's Directory (9th Edition). This Supplement consists of a newly updated and comprehensive list of over 2,000 battered women's shelters, safehomes and services in the United States.

The Directory plus the 1989 Supplement is available for \$12.00. The 1989 Supplement can also be ordered separately for \$8.00. We ask that \$1 be added to each order to help defray postage costs. All orders or inquiries should be directed to: Directory - Terry Mehlman, 5173 Turner Rd., Richmond, IN 47374

The Federation of Feminist Women's Health Centers has a new video "No Going Back", which introduces the concept and the technique of menstrual extraction. The video is not a "how-to" guide to menstrual extraction. Out of the 28 minute tape, there are 3 minutes of graphic and explicit footage of a historic menstrual extraction and a clinic abortion. The purpose of the video is to explain the Webster vs Reproductive Health Services case, to show self-examination in a self-help setting, to introduce the revolutionary procedure of menstrual extraction and to educate women about what we must do to preserve our rights to choice.

The video is available for immediate distribution for \$25.00 each. Send orders to "No Going Back", 1043 University Ave, #169, San Diego, CA 92103 (Phone 619/298-0967)

Wow!
Another Radical Feminist Nurse!
Hope she notices the red circle
on this mailing label.



Contribution Information

WEBSTER - women in nursing who participate in CASSANDRA's decision making and receive all publications: \$35-\$50. (Nursing students, retired, unemployed, or differently-abled nurses: \$15.)

FRIEND - women who are not nurses and men who support CASSANDRA and receive the Newsjournal: \$25.

INSTITUTION SUBSCRIPTION - groups who receive the newsjournal: \$35.

IF YOUR MAILING LABEL HAS THE RENEWAL DATE
CIRCLED IN RED, THEN YOUR RENEWAL IS DUE
BEFORE THE MAILING OF THE NEXT NEWSJOURNAL