

AAHN BULLETIN

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President's message



Plans are well under way for the 41st Annual Nursing and Healthcare History conference, to be held September 19th—21st in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. While the call for abstracts has closed, you can look forward to detailed information on registration coming up soon. The keynote speaker this year will be Cynthia Connolly, PhD, RN, Professor of Nursing and Rosemarie B. Greco Endowed Term Chair in Advocacy at the University of Pennsylvania School of Nursing. This year's meeting will be held at the Milwaukee Marriott Hotel. For more information please go to our AAHN website.

The AAHN Board of Directors has been busy conducting our periodic review of the organizations, policies, procedures, and guidelines. We'll discuss these at the April board meeting. All officers are assisting in this review to ensure that any updates for our dynamic organization are consistent with our bylaws. Officers are also preparing their annual board reports for each committee. Our goal as always is to be an organization that provides substantial benefits to our members, and to attract new and ongoing membership from anyone with an interest in nursing history.

Sincerely,

Annemarie McAllister

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Charlotte Swint, Director: Bylaws & Policies	

MEMBER INTERVIEW:
DR. OTEKA JACKSON-
CENALES



What is your current nursing role?

I am an Assistant Professor of Professional Practice at Texas Christian University in Fort Worth, Texas. I also work as a nurse in Day Surgery and Pre-Admit Testing at Baylor Scott & White Health All Saints Medical Center in Fort Worth, Texas.

What motivated you to join AAHN?

I have always been interested in nursing history. As a student, I learned about Florence Nightingale, which was great, but I wanted to gain more knowledge about others and the history of nursing. Being a member of a professional organization with nursing history as its focus fascinates me. I knew by joining AAHN, I would gain insight on many nursing trailblazers or what I like to call “Hidden Figures.”

What kind of work have you done relative to the history of nursing?

I am the Co-Chair of the Diversity in Nursing Education (DINE) Taskforce in Harris College of Nursing & Health Sciences. Being a part of this taskforce has allowed me to explore different historical nursing trailblazers. Each semester our taskforce highlights a trailblazer or “Hidden Figure” in nursing that people don’t really know about. I had the opportunity to interview Dr. Hector Gonzalez, one of our “Hidden Figures.” He was the first male Spanish-American to earn a doctorate in 1974. This interview led to a colleague, Dr. Glenda Daniels, and I presenting a poster at the 39th AAHN Conference. We are planning to publish a manuscript titled “Interviewing a Living Legend in Nursing” in honor of him.

Which nurses are most memorable to you?

Florence Nightingale is the first memorable historical nurse that I learned about. Since then, I have learned about Mary Keys Gibson, Hector Gonzalez, Susie Walking Bear Yellowtail, Alice Noguchi Kanagaki, and Mary Seacole to name a few.

MEMBER INTERVIEW (CONT'D)

Do you have any plans to conduct research related to the history of nursing?

I plan to continue to conduct research to find “Hidden Figures” in nursing and disseminate the information to others.

If there was one thing you would like your students to know about the history of nursing, what would it be?

One thing I would like my students to know about the history of nursing is that history is pivotal to understanding how nursing started and how nursing has progressed. Knowing the paths and contributions of the nursing trailblazers will give them a better understanding and appreciation for the nursing profession.

Is there anything else you'd like the AAHN members to know about you?

I am a huge fan of nursing mentorship. I would love to conduct research on nursing mentorship and how it has progressed throughout the years.

RESEARCH CONNECTIONS

BY LIZ ROGAN EDD, MSN-ED, MA, RN, CNE

So, there I was, wondering what to write about history of nursing research connections for this issue of the BULLETIN. I ended up doing what many of you might have done—and most of my students would do: I Googled “nursing history research topics.”

The first entry on the results page? From Indeed.com. (Say what?)

And here’s the thing. The page/information did not pertain to nursing history but to Interesting Nursing Research Topics to Choose. Not exactly what I was looking for, Google, but let’s see what you have to offer.

While the information was more generic (i.e., nursing research in general) than specific to our beloved history of nursing, I believe it worthy of consideration. I may end up sharing this information with my MSN-level students in the research course I coordinate!

For example, there are insights about choosing a nursing research topic (for the sake of this article, we’ll take “nursing history research” as read).

The topics we pursue in our researches should be:

Interesting	Relevant	Explorative
Specific	Original	Meaningful

Let’s take these in order:

Interesting. To whom should it be interesting? Well, us, of course because if we weren’t interested in it, we wouldn’t bother exploring it, yes? Many of us are passionate about certain eras and areas of nursing history. Alas, as so often happens amongst historians, we tend to silo ourselves within those eras or areas. And there are many from which to choose! Long story short, if it’s interesting to you, consider how to make it interesting to the rest of us who may be entirely unfamiliar with the era or area. Personal example: I’m kind of a history snob. If it’s less than 100 years old, I’m not really interested. Give me moldy ruins any day! How might you make a topic about something that happened in the mid-20th century interesting to someone like me?

Relevant. Now there are those who may perceive that there is little relevance of the early history of nursing relative to our current days and times. However, one has to merely look at the wider world to see that today’s world experiences problems that have occurred throughout history (the whole cyclical nature of history thing), which means that things happening in nursing today may echo days gone by. Can we look to the past to identify solutions for some of today’s problems? (Granted, the need for the nurse to bring her own coal scuttle and lantern is out of date, but there are many things we can learn from studying our past and making it relevant to today.)

Explorative. (Part of me wants to write simply, “Well, duh!” here, but I will refrain from doing so.) As we explore the topics within the history of nursing, we are little nurse detectives, finding a bit here, a bit there, and so forth to develop a full picture of the topic. Deep within us, we are all Lara Croft and Indiana Jones, searching and exploring to further our understanding of eras, times, and issues. So put on that fedora and get to it! (Bull whip optional.)

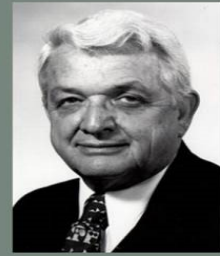
Specific. How many of you are prone to falling down the rabbit hole in your researches? Or getting too deep in the weeds? (Yep, me too!) Just as we are often called upon to determine SMART goals for ourselves, professionally and perhaps even personally, our research goals and topics should be specific. Sure, we can cast a wide net to see what type of fish we can catch, but when it comes down to it, drifting too far from the original intention of our research can hinder rather than help. In a personal example, every so often, I get the notion to earn my PhD in history, rounding out that set of degrees as I’ve done in nursing/education. If I had to pick a dissertation topic right this moment, it would dovetail off my MA thesis and address the nursing performed in the city of Vera Cruz, Mexico, in the early 1800s. (Vera Cruz was not a healthy place for non-Vera Cruzans (?), for they frequently and quickly fell ill with yellow fever and malaria. What can you expect when the primary vehicle of sanitation was the vulture?! And there were hospitals. Surely, there were nurses!) But I digress...

Original. Unlike other types of nursing research, where replicating a study lends credibility to the original study’s findings and may apply the original findings to a different setting or population, historical research is (as stated above) about exploring the dark forests and twisty-turny paths of an era, area, setting, and so forth. Therefore, the topic is unique and ideally never-before-covered. Even within specific areas (e.g., frontier nursing, urban nursing, population-based nursing, etc.), we can define a unique approach thereby NOT treading ground that has already established a path. I could go all “road less traveled” on you at this point but I will say only, “Be creative!” Find a unique approach and follow that path to a heretofore unknown destination.

Meaningful. Here we have another subjective word and as I asked earlier, to paraphrase, “To whom should the research be meaningful?” Well, certainly it should be meaningful to us, for if not, why are we bothering? The topic should have meaning beyond that, perhaps meaning for the profession: How can we use the information in today’s nursing profession? In the conclusion of our report, should we be obliged to explain the way(s) we believe the information is meaningful, perhaps its use in today’s healthcare landscape? Can we make recommendations for nursing practice? Recommendations for future research? For my own part, meaningful reminds me of the reflective journaling I used with my BSN ICU students: The whole What?, So what?, Now what? reflection. If I can answer those questions relative to my research, having truly contemplated how my work can be used by today’s nurse, perhaps I’ve determined the meaningfulness of the topic.

Well, that’s enough, yes? Be passionate about what you do but think also how what you do relates to other aspects of nursing history and today’s nursing profession. And get out of those silos! Share your work with a wide audience, including those who think they aren’t interested in the topic. I know you can find a way to intrigue them!

Featured Nurse Hero: Luther Christman 1915-2011



Christman attended the Pennsylvania Hospital School of Nursing for Men. Additional degrees were earned from Temple University, Philadelphia Psychoanalytic Institute, and Michigan State University.



As a result of his time as Director of Nursing at Yankton State Hospital in SD, he became a supporter of the teacher-practitioner role and the use of administrative assistants for non-nursing tasks.

Part of his role in the Michigan Department of Health was to support state hospital nursing programs and schools for individuals with mental challenges.



After serving as Dean of the Vanderbilt School of Nursing, he became the first Dean of the Rush University College of Nursing, where he implemented what is now referred to as the Rush Model of Nursing.

He was instrumental in creating the National Male Nurse Association, now the American Assembly for Men in Nursing. The American Nurses Association inducted him into their Hall of Fame in 2004.



For further reading:

<https://nursing.umich.edu/about/news-portal/201106/1704>

<https://www.nurse.com/blog/pioneering-nurse-luther-christman-dies-at-96/>

<https://www.nursingworld.org/ana/about-ana/history/hall-of-fame/inductees-listed-alphabetically/>

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