
Letter to the Editor

Letters to the editor should be addressed to Editor, ANS, 341-1 East Center Street, 141 Manchester, CT 06040-4445. Unless otherwise stated, we will assume that letters addressed to the editor are intended for publication with your name and affiliation. As many letters as possible will be published. When space is limited and we cannot publish all letters received, we will select letters reflecting the range of opinions and ideas received. The editor reserves the right to edit letters. If a letter merits a response from an ANS author, we will obtain a reply and publish both letters.

To the editor:

It is always exciting for an author when she finds that someone actually reads and appreciates her work. When I found in the last issue (ANS 25:1) that Jane Georges had not only read and appreciated *Toward a praxis theory of suffering* (ANS 24:1), but had considered and taken the time to further write about it, I was surprised and pleased. My article, as Georges noted, is based on 10 years of inquiry (which has resulted in 52 other refereed publications), was in ANS summarized, and by necessity and form, abstracted. I am somewhat puzzled, given the nature of her critique and her interest in my work, that she did not read the background referenced articles to acquire a broader knowledge of the theory. My theory of suffering is derived from the words and actions of more than 200 men and women from various cultures and is, within the traditions of qualitative methodology, theoretically grounded in that data. Georges' critique neither adds to nor alters my results.

Georges' argument centers on the meaning of the word "praxis." While the everyday usage of *praxis* is "the practice of a technical subject or art, arising out of the theory of it" (Oxford English Dictionary),

Georges chose a narrow definition and a particular usage and theoretical perspective to (re)view my theory. While one may possibly critique a theory from a different theoretical perspective, one cannot nullify the results without data, without further investigation. I look forward to Georges embarking on her research program to verify her notions. I invite her to present her findings at the *Qualitative Health Research* in Banff in April 2004, and will be delighted to engage in substantive discussion in press.

—**Janice M. Morse**

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Author response:

Since the publication of my article in September, I have received numerous e-mails from nurse scholars around the world, including Europe, Japan, the United Kingdom, and Canada. All of these scholars have commented on the need for more critiques of nursing scholarship using a critical-feminist approach, and the special resonance each one felt with my analysis. I am especially humbled and gratified that Dr Morse would take the time to prepare this commentary. As I emphasized in my article, I approached this critique with an enormous respect for Dr Morse's invaluable contributions to nursing science. The critique/replication issue of ANS is an opportunity for nurse scholars to take the stance, as Dr Chinn¹ suggests, "of wondering, of questioning, and of exploring possibilities." It was in this spirit that I undertook my critique. Those of us who are more recent graduates of doctoral programs

in nursing have had the enriching experience of being encouraged to utilize a multiperspective approach that incorporates critical and postmodernist perspectives in “exploring the possibilities” of nursing science. We honor the enormous body of work done by nurse scholars informed by the empirical and interpretive traditions, while continuing to wonder about, question, and explore the ways in which the critical-postmodernist tradition might also advance our scholarship. In an upcoming issue of *ANS* focused on *Critical and Postmodernist Perspectives* (26:1, March 2003), I will explore further the ways in which there is room for all of us—both accomplished researchers and newer critical-feminist scholars—to create a culture of epistemic diversity in nursing scholarship. Like the “beloved community” envisioned by the late Dr M.L. King, this new community of nurse scholars would have as its core values connectedness and trust. In place of the

standard academic model of adversarial discourse, we would wonder about, question, and explore each others’ work in a spirit of mutual support and profound respect, regardless of our status or philosophical perspective. In fact, this community is already a reality, unconstrained by either time or place, and there is no longer any need to wait for a specific conference in a geographic location to participate in it. It is located in our hearts, and we can connect with others in the community at anytime, whether at nursemanifest.com, jgeorges@sandiego.edu, or the growing number of spaces where nurse scholars cherish each other and our epistemic diversity.

—*Jane Georges*

REFERENCE

1. Chinn. *Adv Nurs Sci*. 1995;18(1).