We’ve Come a Long Way, Haven’t We?

Just 4 years ago, I wrote the “welcome” editorial for the inaugural issue of *Research in Gerontological Nursing* (RGN), and now that I am retiring as Editor, it is time for me to say goodbye and thank you and to welcome the outstanding new Editor—a friend, colleague, prominent scientist, extraordinary reviewer, and member of RGN’s editorial board—Christine R. Kovach, PhD, RN, FAAN. I will forever be grateful to the staff at SLACK Incorporated for taking the risk to establish this journal at a time when personal and institutional investments in new journals were increasingly challenged by economic constraints and for the extraordinary help, guidance, encouragement, and support they have provided since RGN’s inception. The journal would not be possible without the contributions of many others: I am indebted to editorial coordinator Kay Geguzis and a dedicated panel of assistant editors, astute and thoughtful editorial board members and reviewers, and a growing cadre of gerontological nurse scientists and international and interdisciplinary contributors. Together, they have built and sustained a standard of excellence for RGN that I am confident will only increase under Dr. Kovach’s leadership.

During the past decade, much has happened in gerontological nursing to enable RGN to flourish and to reinforce my conviction that the time was right for a journal devoted to gerontological nursing scholarship. Indeed, by 2008, the year of RGN’s launch, the field of gerontological nursing research had matured to the point where there was an abundance of high-quality findings to disseminate. But, this was not always the case. Strumpf (2000) noted “the paucity of programs of research or concentrated scholarly activity” (p. 38) because of “a modest science” and “limited dissemination and diffusion of information” (p. 40) and suggested the need to “disseminate findings broadly” (p. 40). Others commented that “geriatric scholarship is underrepresented in academic nursing and in nursing practice” (Mezey, Fulmer, & Fairchild, 2000, p. 29). Unfortunately, at that time (2000), these eminent geriatric nursing leaders were right on target! Early research in gerontological nursing was largely atheoretical and plagued by small samples and lack of rigorous designs and analyses. Happily, in recent years, the state of the science has changed considerably, and the scholarly base and intellectual leadership has expanded so greatly that by 2008, the field was poised to embrace a journal such as RGN that would more broadly disseminate findings from gerontological nursing research.

It has been a pleasure and privilege to be part of this evolution of gerontological nursing science and to have served as the first editor of RGN. To all who have supported, guided, and challenged me along the way, many thanks.

**REFERENCES**


*Kathleen C. Buckwalter, PhD, RN, FAAN
Editor Emerita*

*The author has disclosed no potential conflicts of interest, financial or otherwise.*

doi:10.3928/00989134-20111207-01