

**“Battles Hard Fought”:
A Video Story of Pioneering Advanced Practice Nurses
Context of Making the Video**

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Within the United States, each state and territory has the legal authority to restrict or enable nursing practice, including advanced nursing practice. Pioneer nursing leaders from the state of New Jersey were videotaped to create a compelling narrative of the development and passage of the first state Nurse Practitioner/Clinical Nurse Specialist bill which granted these providers legal titling and prescriptive authority in the state. These leaders were all associated with the New Jersey State Nurses Association between 1974-1994, the time period during which this story takes place. New Jersey was chosen as an exemplar state because one of the authors had extensive original documents in her personal files related to this history, access to the NJSNA archives at Rutgers University, and continuing personal and professional connections to the original participants.

On the national level, written histories exist of the early Nurse Practitioner (NP) educational and national organization history, but stories from the states where the battles for scope of practice laws were originally won are rarer. It was the intention of this New Jersey video project to professionally record early nursing policy leaders who made practice legally possible for NPs at the state level. The authors recognized the need to create the video while access to early leaders was still possible and to provide them with recognition for their accomplishments.

While many nurses contributed to the earliest advanced practice policy initiatives in New Jersey, nine participants were selected based on their distinctive key roles in this story, and six participated. In advance of the interview, each interviewee was given an historical timeline and a list of guided questions to be addressed as a memory stimulus. The answers were intended to be spontaneous, not memorized. A professional audiographer and a cinematographer worked together to complete the interviews. The two authors shared interviewing responsibilities. The video was edited to incorporate more than 7 hours of interviews, with relevant historical documents, photos, and newspaper clippings into a twenty-minute documentary story.

The individual accounts that emerged from each of the interviewees were candid, often surprising and always compelling. Together, through voices heard for the first time in a unique format, they tell how advanced practice nursing was made legally possible in the state of New Jersey.