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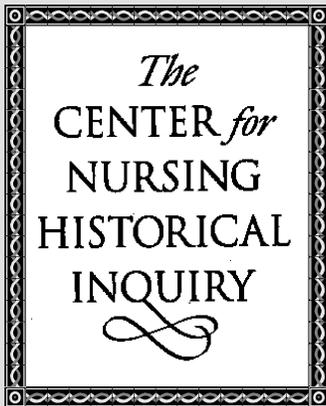
## Message From the Director Perspective on the Present: World War I Diary of Camille Wills, RN

On a recent trip to New York City, I took an early morning cab ride along the Hudson River Parkway. At first, I simply enjoyed the scenery along the river, noting the contrast of a few sprightly yellow daffodils, determined to announce the arrival of spring, to their gray cement containers and the dreary day in general. A few miles along, a massive gray United States Navy aircraft carrier came into view - a grim reminder that the country was at war in Iraq. My mood shifted abruptly as my thoughts turned to the war. I found myself wondering what it was like in New York City during other wars, recalling photos I had seen of large gray battleships with uniformed nurses standing along the rails. Within a few minutes, however, I arrived at Teacher's College where preparations for the Isabel M. Stewart 40th Annual Conference were underway. Reuniting with many of our colleagues in nursing history, I enjoyed a brief respite from thoughts of war as I listened to the historical presentations.

Later in the weekend, during a walk along the harbor, I was reminded again of the military engagement overseas when I observed Blackhawk helicopters circling the skies over the Statue of Liberty. Once again my thoughts returned to nursing history (apparently an obsession!) as I recalled the content of a diary recently donated to the Center. The tiny handwritten journal had been kept during World War I by a young army nurse, Camille Louise Wills. Miss Wills, after graduating from UVa in 1917, had been briefly stationed in New York City prior to her deployment to France. What I remembered from my reading was the contrast between her remarks about New York City in July, 1918 with the subsequent entries she made during her residence at the St. Denis Military Hospital. Her



Leaving for France, 1918



**The Center for Nursing Historical Inquiry (CNHI), established at the University of Virginia in 1991 to support historical scholarship in nursing, is dedicated to the preservation and study of nursing history in the United States. The history of nursing in the South is especially emphasized as a focus of inquiry. The goals of the Center include the collection of materials, the promotion of scholarship, and the dissemination of historical research findings.**

(Continued from page 1)

July entries seemed typical of a young woman enjoying the city for the first time - taking in the sights, attending parties and the theater. The war in Europe seemed distant from her life. Miss Wills mentions the drills and uniform fittings as if they were an interruption to her social life. Note the first two entries below:

Ther . . . MONDAY 8 . . . Wea  
N.Y. City. Clear.  
measured for uniforms.  
Hair shampooed at Simons.  
Good drill. & a saigant.  
Went to Theatre & Canada saw  
Elsie Ferguson in "The Temptation"  
(Picture show).

Ther . . . FRI. JULY 12, 1918 . . . Wea  
N.Y. City. Clear.  
Slept thru breakfast. Lunches +  
I took ferry to Statue of Liberty.  
etc. had candy on way over +  
got rich. - Slept after lunch.  
Better drill than usual went  
+ Smith + Melby. - Went to friends  
+ Wilkie. Didn't have class. We  
came back on Broadway car.

The stark contrast in her tone after arriving at St. Denis hospital and coping with the management of a ward of injured soldiers is reflected in her

September 28, 1918 recording " War had indeed become a reality for Wills as she moved from touring New York City to caring for 160 sick and wounded soldiers

Ther . . . SAT. SEPT 28, 1918 . . . Wea  
Clear. Cold. S. Denis.  
Slept firm. Pearson in my  
room. Took charge of wd. 160  
160 pts. Stillwater + Nicols night  
orderlies. 144 Dakin cases.  
Jack yelled nearly all night.  
Saw G. E. has signed up for  
officers' training school.

half a world away from home. Today, the realities of war in Iraq seem remote, portrayed to us via TV cameras and journalists' newspaper columns. As of this printing, the fighting war is over and Saddam Hussein has been toppled. The fact remains however, there are hundreds of military nurses aboard hospital ships and in field hospitals, working in life-transforming roles. For me, the words from Miss Wills' diary helped put the current war in historical perspective and gave it a human dimension. I wish the nurses serving in the Middle East could read it.

*Allen W. Keeling*

## THE CENTER'S CALENDAR OF EVENTS

**FALL 2003**

**HISTORY FORUMS**  
McLeod Hall Room 5044  
12:00 - 1:00 PM  
*All welcome!*

**September 23, 2003**

Sandra L. Annan, RN, MSN,  
UVa Doctoral Student  
  
*"Making Do with So Little"*  
Emergency Room Nursing 1940-1950

**October 21, 2003**

Barbra Mann Wall, PhD, RN  
Associate Professor, Purdue University  
2002 Center Fellow  
  
*"Bouncing Markets and Missions"*  
Nursing Sisters in the U.S.  
1865-1930

**November 18, 2003**

Brigid Lusk, PhD, RN  
Assistant Professor,  
Northern Illinois University  
2003 Center Fellow  
  
Uncovering Nursing Care in  
Cancer Nursing, 1880 to 1950

## Dr. Lois Monteiro Agnes Dillon Randolph 2003 Awardee

Lois Monteiro, PhD, RN Professor Emeritus of Medical Sciences and Associate Dean of Medicine, Brown University was the tenth recipient of the Agnes Dillon Randolph History Award. Dr. Monteiro, a noted American Nightingale scholar, is the author of studies, articles and presentations on the life of Florence Nightingale. She has focused much of her research on an area of Nightingale's life that little is known about: her circle of women friends, and her views on feminism and the English women's movement. The award ceremony was held March 20, 2003 and was followed by a presentation by Dr. Monteiro. (An abbreviated version of her presentation can be found on pages 6-10 of the newsletter.)

In her introductory remarks, Center Director Arlene Keeling spoke of the fascination that Florence Nightingale had held for generations of women and men. It is a fascination that has spawned thousands of books, published in multiple languages, which have told Nightingale's story, her contributions to humanity, and probed her life for new insights into the mind of this very complex woman.

The Agnes Dillon Randolph Lecture, co-sponsored with Sigma Theta Tau, Beta Kappa Chapter was attended by nurses, students, historians, friends of the Center and the public.



Arlene Keeling and Lois Monteiro

## CENTER ACTIVITIES AND AWARDS

### **Brigid Lusk PhD, RN Awarded 2003 Barbara Brodie Nursing History Fellowship**

Dr. Lusk, Associate Professor of Nursing at Northern Illinois University, was selected to receive the Center's Nursing History Fellowship. Brigid's proposed research is exploring the role of nurses in the prevention and treatment of cancer from 1880 to 1950. The study will document the development of cancer care and illuminate the role of nurses in the medical care of patients. Dr. Lusk is scheduled to present her study in the Center's Fall Research Forum Series on November 18, 2003.

### **Nursing Doctoral Students**

#### **Joy Buck, Receives NRSA Funding**

Ms. Buck received a National Institute of Nursing Research Award to complete her program. Joy's research, for the last two years, has been focused on the development of hospice care in America, and the role of nursing in its creation and implementation from 1965-1986. She traveled to Great Britain in May to interview Dame Cicely Saunder, considered the founder of the modern hospice and the palliative care movement. In addition to visiting the University of Sheffield's Archives to explore Dame Saunder's papers, Joy participated in a multidisciplinary palliative care course at the famous St. Christopher Hospice.

#### **Victoria Menzies Presents at SNRS**

Ms. Menzies, presented a poster at the Southern Nursing Research Conference in Orlando, Florida in February 2003. Her poster, *A History of Pain Management*, was based on her study on the history of pain and the role of nurses in caring for patients in pain. Victoria presented her study at the fall, 2002 American Association for the History of Nursing Conference in Salt Lake City, Utah.



### **Julie Fairman Receives 2004 Randolph Award**

Dr. Julie Fairman, PhD, RN FAAN, Associate Professor and Senior Fellow at the Center for the Study of the History of Nursing, University of Pennsylvania, recently was named the recipient of the 2004 Agnes Dillon Randolph Award. Fairman was selected because of her seminal research on the development of nursing's advanced clinical practice roles. Author of numerous historical articles and the critically acclaimed, *Critical Care Nursing: A History*, Julie has uncovered new insights into the relationship of nursing, technology, and medicine in the clinical practice of today's nurses. Dr. Fairman, currently engaged in the completion of a book on the history of nurse practitioners, will speak on this topic at the Randolph Lecture on March 23, 2004.

### **Arlene Keeling, Center Director Presents Two Papers**

Dr. Keeling was selected as the 10th Billy S. Guyton Lecturer on the History of Medicine at the University of Mississippi School of Medicine. On April 8 she presented *Blurring the Boundaries between Care and Cure: Coronary Care Nursing in the 1960s*. The annual lecture, named to honor Dr. Guyton, Dean of the University of Mississippi School of Medicine from 1936-1943, was initiated in 1989. The lecture is sponsored by the Friends of Rowland Medical Library.

On April 11 Arlene was one of several speakers at the 40th Annual Isabel Maitland Stewart Conference on Research in Nursing at Teachers College, Columbia University in New York City. Ms. Stewart, a pioneer leader in nursing education and research, was the Director of Nursing Education Department at Teachers College from 1925-1947. Dr. Keeling's presentation was entitled *Rose Pinneo: A Portrait of a Leader in Coronary Care Nursing*.

## ***Snippets from the Past***

### ***“The Uniform”***

“From the day a girl contemplates entering training she looks forward to and anticipates the time when she will have successfully passed the long, hard trials and tribulations of a probationer, and has earned the privilege of having the symbol of dignity and professional standing placed upon her head. There is something about the **cap** which gives the young nurse confidence in herself...”

“**Jewelry** has no place as part of the nurse’s attire. The rule against wearing rings has a real sanitary importance. Rings cannot be cleaned and may harbor infections.”

The **bandage scissors** are a very necessary part of the uniform. No nurse may consider her uniform complete if it does not contain scissors. Lives have been lost because the nurse had to spend time to go get scissors.”

“The very nature of the nurse’s work makes good feet essential if she would give freely to the service which is so much a part of the spirit of nursing. Life has little joy for the nurse **whose mind is always on her feet** because of actual pain or discomfort.”

“**Shoes** should receive the same care and attention as that given to other parts of the uniform...they should be cleaned and polished and kept in good repair. To wear shoes that squeak is selfish. There are no circumstances in which a nurse can be excused for wearing shoes that annoy both the sick and the well.”

“Every nurse is conscious of the becomingness of **her uniform**. She is much more attractive in uniform than in ordinary dress. It gives her a distinction that cannot be achieved by the most fashionable designer. There is nothing that reveals the character and personality of the nurse so much as the way she wears her uniform. Wear it with dignity and not as a ditch digger...It gives you an opportunity of confidence that should be held as reverent.

Lena Dixon Diets (1953) **Professional Adjustments -I**  
Philadelphia: F.A. Davis Company, p. 81-86



## **ARCHIVES REPORT**

### **Recent Acquisitions**

The following items and documents were donated to the Center:

- Sara Arneson: books and dolls
- Tamera Coulthorne-Burnette: a doll representing a UVa 1900s nurse
- Virginia Dericks: personal nursing papers, lecture notes and research
- Lucy Peagu: WWI diary of her aunt, Camille Louise Wills, RN photographs of Red Cross Home Nursing training at UVa, circa 1912
- Ken Schlusel: nursing books of his mother, Idareta Feder Schlusel

### **On-Going Projects**

The CNHI staff continue to process and archive incoming collections. Center Volunteer Aurelie Knapik is archiving the extensive Rita Chow EdD, RN, FAAN Collection. Graduate Assistant Sandra Annan is processing the National Organization of Nurse Practitioner Faculties papers, and the Virginia Dericks papers. Center Archivist Betsy Johnson-Whitten, is archiving the papers of the National Certification Board of Pediatric Nurse Practitioners and Associates.

Thanks to the generous donation of Sigma Theta Tau International, Beta Kappa Chapter, the Center received a new digital scanner. The scanner, to be jointly used by Beta Kappa, has enabled the Center to begin digitizing some of its photo collection. This is the first step in a larger CNHI initiative to digitize its image collection and make it available on-line.

Items from the Center’s collections are featured in an exhibit: *The History of Women at the University of Virginia*. The exhibit, running from mid-May to November 14, 2003 is sponsored by the Special Collections Division of the UVa Alderman Library.

## *Florence Nightingale's Views on Women and Women's Issues*

*Lois Monteiro, PhD, RN  
2003 Agnes Dillon Randolph Award Recipient*

Florence Nightingale was a person of a particular time and culture. She was born in 1820 to a British landed gentry family. Her father inherited his wealth, was a scholar and somewhat of a politician. Her mother Fannie, from a large extended family, was very ambitious for her two daughters' futures. Nightingale lived the life of a wealthy young woman in the restrained era of England of the 1800s. What her family expected of her was that she present herself well, and marry within her class. She was not expected to seek an independent life outside her family's confines.

Nightingale was not happy in these circumstances. She was intelligent, well educated by tutors and her father, and had traveled extensively. The story of her struggles to study nursing, to gain personal independence, achieve fame as the heroine of the Crimean War, and founder of modern nursing are well documented. In recent years, however, nursing and women's history scholars have been examining Nightingale's writings and letters to probe deeper into her ideas and behavior towards women. Today I will focus on her ideas on women's roles and restraints, the place of the family in supporting and controlling women, and her thinking on feminism. She neither took an active part in the growing feminist activity in England in the mid- to late 1800s, nor was she active in supporting women's suffrage. These facts may seem at odds with her own personal life and struggles, but her attitudes about women and family do not completely reflect her personal experiences. I will attempt, by exploring selected aspects of Florence's life, to answer an important question currently being asked about her; was she a feminist or a misogynist?

### **Views on Marriage and Family**

Nightingale's views on women's sphere in society were partially shaped by her own life. She rejected society's admonition that women be submissive to the needs of their husbands, and in a note about her

decision not to accept a marriage proposal (she had received a proposal from a prominent political figure) she wrote

*"I have an intellectual nature which requires satisfaction and that [I] would find it in him. ...I could be satisfied to spend a life with him in combining our different powers in some great object. I could not satisfy this nature by spending a life ... in making society and arranging domestic things".*

In the same vein, responding to her sister Parthe's comment that she "*found it more pleasant to please her husband Harry Verney than to do what she wanted*", Florence answered "*if ... I found myself loving gardens or houses or woods more than the wish of my husband in those things: more than pleasing him in these things, I should say to myself, You had better run away at once. It is doing less damage in the long run.*"

Age did not mellow Nightingale on this topic as 20 years later, in an 1869 letter to Benjamin Jowett, she wrote what society expected of a wife.

*"all the world wants in ...[a] wife-good sense (meaning of course to think like him) good manners, good conversation (how enormous is the importance attached to that ...-one would think the world was moved by talk!) good principles (for they don't want their women to run away and get into divorce court)...They don't want any deep feeling, any higher purpose in life, any deeper hold on things"*

Nightingale had written of her views on society in her book, *Suggestions for Thought*. A chapter of the book, *Cassandra*, has received a great deal of attention from contemporary feminist because in it Nightingale focuses on the power a family to control and shape the lives of women.

*"The family uses people, not for what they are, not*

*for what they are intended to be, but what it wants them for-for is own uses. It thinks of them not as what God has made them, but as something to sit in the drawing room, ..., though that member may be destined for science, or for education, or for active superintendence by God, ie by the gifts within. This system dooms some minds to incurable infancy, others to silent misery."*

She also elaborated on the power of the family to absorb an individual's time in ways that robs them of personal time to do the things they might wish to do. She bitterly commented,

*"Robbed and murdered we read in the newspapers. The crime is Horrible. But there are people being robbed and murdered before our eyes, and no man sees it. 'Robbed' of all their time, if robbed means taking away that which you do not wish to part with, slowly 'murdered' by their families. There is scarcely anyone who cannot, in his own experience, remember some instance where some amiable person has been slowly put to death at home, ... an estimable and virtuous home,"*

And finally, she speaks of the tyranny of the family; *"There is no tyranny like that of the family for it extends over the thoughts."* And in another private note she wrote, *"We have seen what mothers do for their children-and what are children, at least daughters, [are] expected to do in return. To be the property of their parents, till they become the property of their husbands. And I was expected to be not only the property of my parents, but the property of my sister."*

### **Lack of Support from Women**

Florence's firm belief in her mission to fulfill God's desire for her to reform the health of the army led her to complain about the lack of support from women. In a December 1861 letter, Nightingale complained to Mary Clarke Mohl that women were not sympathetic to her work;

*"You say that women are more sympathetic than men. Now if I were to write a book out of my experience I would say women have no sympathy...I have never found one woman who has altered her life an iota for me or my opinions."* Nightingale cites the men who were sympathetic and supportive to her causes (reform of various kinds), *"who have altered their work by my*

*opinions."* Nightingale admits that her view of the sympathy of women was based on her own family. The women in her family she saw as demanding to be loved but not capable of giving love.

*"They scream at you for sympathy all the day long, they are incapable of giving any in return, for they cannot even remember your affairs long enough to do so."* Florence also lamented the inability of women to discuss important matters. She ends her letter however, by praising on Queen Victoria, whose husband, Albert, had recently died. *"The Queen has really behaved like a hero. Has buckled to business at once. After all it is a great thing to be a Queen. She is the only woman in these realms, except perhaps myself, who has a must in her life -who must set aside private grief and attend to the 'res public's'."*

In this letter Nightingale reveals her deep commitment to her public work of reforming the British Army's medical care. This was the work she had immediately undertaken after returning from the Crimea. Interestingly, although this letter is written at the time that St. Thomas Hospital School for Nurses was opened, she does not mention it. It was in her activities to improve the lives of British soldiers that she believed her true "work" lay, and in these activities she believed she had no women supporters.

### **Women Friends**

To this point I have emphasized Nightingale's negative views about women and the tyranny of family and friends. I need to point out that, on a personal level, she maintained a warm and supportive close circle of women friends. I have written extensively about this aspect of her life. Her most influential friend was Mary Clarke Mohl, a British woman who lived in Paris and constantly encouraged Florence to do her own thing despite her family's opposition. Mohl also provided Nightingale a home while she explored the hospitals of Paris. Another important friend, Elizabeth Herbert, was the wife of the Minister of War, Sidney Herbert. It was Herbert who commissioned Nightingale to go to the Crimea. Elizabeth aided Nightingale in the 1840s when she obtained Florence's first nursing position at Harley Street. Harriet Martineau, a journalist, was very

influential in getting Nightingale's opinions to the public through her articles in London newspapers. Hilary Bonham Carter, a cousin, served for awhile as Nightingale's secretary and confidant. Selina Bracebridge, a long-time family friend, provided young Florence respite from the pressures of her mother and sister by taking her on extensive trips to Rome and Egypt. Later, she would introduce Florence to the Kaiserworth Hospital, and with her husband, Selina would travel to the Crimea to provide logistic support for the Nightingale's work during the war.

### Need for Social Isolation

As powerful as Nightingale grew to be, she consistently shunned public acclaim and seldom took advantage of her celebrity. *"I believed I should best honor the cause of those brave dead [British soldiers] by abstaining from appearing to court that publicity, which I consider to have been my greatest impediment in the work I was engaged in ..."* She returned to England alone from the Crimea, and proceeded directly her home without any public fanfare. In the years following the war, while working steadily on army reform, she rarely left her house (*"I am a prisoner to my bed"* she often added to her letters). Her social isolation continued for the rest of her life. There has been a great deal of speculation concerning the reason for her isolation, and psychological and physical factors have been suggested as to its cause. Suffice it to state, she didn't wish to be a public figure or court publicity.

In explaining her need for isolation to Mary Clarke Mohl she stated *"I can not live to work unless I give up all that makes life pleasant...of sacrificing everything else in order to work...But I have ceased to try to make anybody understand this. I do hope I am getting wiser in this respect- ... . I never said it was best for me, all I said was it was best for the work-or rather it is the only way in which the work could be done."*

She then discusses the positive and negative aspects of public acclaim on her work, *"... popularity does not signify much one way or the other. It ... hurt me less in the Crimea and vantaged me less at home than I expected. Yet ..., this false popularity, based on ignorance had made all the difference in the feeling of my family towards me."*

Interestingly, although Nightingale was able to break free from restrictions, and in doing so, became a symbol for other women to follow, she never perceived herself as a symbol for the advancement of women. This was a position she never wavered from even when she became famous and could have taken a public stand for women and women's rights. Each time she was presented with an opportunity to use her social position to support the women's movement, she rejected it. To understand why Florence acted in this manner, one must search her writings to find the reasons. I will next examine some of her views on women physicians, women's issues such as suffrage, property rights, and prostitution and the Contagious Disease Acts.

### Nightingale and Women Physicians

In 1858 Dr. Elizabeth Blackwell, America's first female physician graduate, visited England to give a series of lectures on women and medicine, and attempt to establish an English school to train women physicians. She contacted Nightingale and proposed that they collaborate on a school that would first train students for nursing, and then prepare them to be physicians. Nightingale didn't reveal her negative views on women physicians but she did discourage the idea of the school. She wrote to Blackwell that such a school would

*"so set the medical staffs of the great hospitals against you that it may prevent your carrying out that part of the plan that we may (for brevity) call mine, the school for nurses. If you wed this indissolubly to the nursing scheme, she warned, you will find that it will close the doors of the great London hospitals to you."* Nightingale informed Blackwell that they were *"on different roads."* Nightingale's goal was to prepare women to care for the sick while Blackwell's was to educate women to treat and cure illness as physicians. As Nightingale predicted, Blackwell's plan failed.

Nightingale's next encounter with a woman physician was in response to Dr. Elizabeth Garrett's comments about nursing. Garrett believed that hospitals needed to pay women higher wages if they wished better-qualified nurses, and that gentlewomen "ladies" could easily lead hospitals' nursing services. Nightingale was quite upset with these comments, and to her friend, the statistician Dr. Farr, she discussed the

stupidity of Garrett's argument,

*"My principle has always been that we should give the best training we could to any woman of any class, of any sect, paid or unpaid, who had the requisite qualifications, moral, intellectual, and physical for the vocation of a nurse. Unquestionably, the educated will be more likely to rise to the post of superintendent, but not because they are ladies but because they are educated. ... Lady superintendents untrained do more harm than good ... it is a destructive fallacy to put a Lady over nurses, who does not know their work as well as they do themselves."*

It is clear from Nightingale's correspondence that she disagreed with women physicians concerning their views of nursing, and she rejected the idea that women should emulate men and become physicians. She particularly took issue with Garrett's comment, that becoming a physician *"is the best that women can do"*.

### Women's Issues

By the late 1850s, the women's rights movement was beginning in London. Groups of wealthy educated women were attempting to improve conditions for women by gaining for them the right to education, work, and vote. Nightingale referred to these women as the "women's missionaries".

Included in an 1858 letter to Harriet Martineau was a copy of a Nightingale's government report that discussed the need for female nursing in the Army. Florence hoped that Martineau would write a favorable article in the Daily News on the idea of female nursing, but as usual, she wanted her authorship of the report kept confidential. Her concern about using her name was based on her *"horror of ... being made use of, after my death, by women's missionaries and those kinds of people. I am brutally indifferent to the rights or the wrongs of my sex-and I should have been equally so to any controversy as to whether women ought or ought not to have done what I have done for the army, though a woman having the opportunity and not doing it, ought, I think, to be burnt alive."*

Martineau assured Nightingale that she *"shall not bring the Woman's Missionaries' upon you. I have sympathy with them .... it seems right that all*

*people should do what they can do ... I suppose that is the doctrine of the woman's missionaries. But I detest all ... unnecessary divisions of men's and women's work."*

Interestingly, despite Nightingale's disdain for the "missionaries'" opposition to society's restrictions on women's activities, she too complained, unofficially, about her treatment as a woman by the military during the Crimean War. In a letter to Sir John McNeil she wrote *"I almost regret that I did not make you aware..... of my experience of the good and evils of the position of a woman, ... in official life."*

In 1867 John Stuart Mill invited Nightingale to become a member of the *National Society for Women's Suffrage*. He wrote that the society was *"aimed ... at the very root of all the evils you deplore and have passed your life in combating."* Florence responded

*"That women should have the suffrage, I think no one can be more deeply convinced than I. ...but it will be years before you obtain the suffrage ... and in the meantime, are there not evils which press much more hardly on women than not having a vote?"*

She further downplayed the importance of the suffrage for women by informing Mill that *"I have been too busy for the last fourteen years...to wish for a vote- to personally political influence. Indeed I have had, during the 11 years I have been in the Gov't offices, more administrative influence than if I had been a Borough returning to M.P.'s."* Florence declined Mill's invitation to join the organization by stating: *" I have not time to serve...I could not give my name with out my work...I entirely agree that women's 'political power' should be 'direct and open.' But I have thought that I could work better for others, even for other women, off the stage than on it."*

Although Nightingale would not support publicly the suffrage organization she allowed her name be added to the association's committee in 1871. She also donated money to the society. She, however, never agreed to become an active member.

Myrna Stark, in the introduction of a 1979 reprinting of *Cassandra*, suggests that once Nightingale freed herself from the suffocating circumstances of her own family, and successfully fought for the reform of the British Army Medical Corps, she believed that other

women could also break free. Stark also noted that Florence complained that women failed to take advantage of new social opportunities opening to them—such as the field of nursing. Florence lamented that few women were entering the new nursing training programs opened in England.

### **Prostitution/Contagious Diseases Acts**

In 1865, Dr. Elizabeth Blackwell wrote to Nightingale to solicit her views on Parliament's newly enacted Contagious Disease Acts. These acts required the compulsory sanitary inspection of prostitutes in army towns in England and Ireland, and suggested that infected women be incarcerated in "Lock Hospitals." Feminists saw these acts as oppressive laws against women, and the *Ladies National Association (LNA)*, initiated efforts to repeal them.

Nightingale's opposition to the acts was based on her belief that they served to officially sanction vice. From her perspective, if the army examined, and perhaps licensed prostitutes, they would be condoning the activities of the "camp" prostitutes. Florence believed that other measures, more preventive in nature, could and should be taken to discourage the soldiers' use of prostitutes. She argued that the army should allow the soldiers' wives to live on military bases, and they should provide recreational space and other social diversions for men in their barracks.

Nightingale also noted, in an 1857 report, that when army regiments were examined for venereal disease, and then compared to unexamined regiments, there was little differences found between the groups. Nightingale argued the study's statistics had demonstrated that venereal inspections were useless in preventing disease, and she noted that they were "degrading to the men and officers."

In another letter to Blackwell, in 1870, Nightingale revealed her personal distaste for the way LNA voiced its opposition to the Prostitution and Contagious Disease Acts. *"I feel a sort of despair at the workings of the association in which hardly anything but opinion is invoked .. I regret that they do not take it up ... as the most serious work of life to strain every nerve for, as a General does in a campaign, with professional ability and devotion--without which they will do little good."*

Nightingale declined Blackwell's invitation to use her

name and position to support to the LNA's efforts to modify the Contagious Disease Acts. Nightingale believed she was more effective behind the scenes rather than as a part of a public activist group. *"I have felt that I could work better for others, even other women, off the stage than on it."*

### **Conclusion**

The complexity and longevity of Nightingale's life challenges the historian's ability to offer explanations to her behavior. What is clear is that Nightingale was not consistent in her beliefs nor in how she behaved. What she said, and what she did, sometimes seemed to be out of kilter. What is apparent is that she believed she had a mission, in harmony with God's will, to improve the health and welfare of soldiers in the British Army, and to share her expertise with others that requested her advice. Driven by this mission, Nightingale withdrew from society and demanded that her family, friends, and colleagues serve along side of her.

As one of the world's most recognized and accomplished women of her era, she serves as a splendid example of the power of women to lead lives of great productivity outside the artificial restrictions of family and society. Her ability to accomplish this made her a powerful symbol for the fledging women's movement. In spite of her resistance to the feminist movement, she was a feminist working for women's issues. Nightingale, in creating professional nursing, opened one of the first career paths that educated women could select. In addition, Nightingale's efforts to improve the health of mankind, through her reformation of the British Army medical corps and the structure and operation of hospitals, ensures her a place in the history of civilization.

*(This is an abbreviated version of Dr. Monterio's presentation)*



The American Association for the History of Nursing and the Canadian Association for the History of Nursing are collaborating on offering the AAHN's 20th Annual Conference. Hosted by the University of Wisconsin at Milwaukee, the conference will be held in Milwaukee from September 19-21, 2003. Lynn McDonald, editor of the *Collected Works of Florence Nightingale*, will be the keynote speaker. The program includes paper and poster presentations, exhibitors, networking opportunities, and a banquet. Additional information about the conference can be obtained by contacting AAHN at [www.aahn.org](http://www.aahn.org).

## Fellowship in the History of Obstetrics and Gynecology

The American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists and Ortho-McNeil Pharmaceutical Corporation are jointly sponsoring a \$5000.00 fellowship in the History of American Obstetrics and Gynecology. ACOG Junior Fellows and Fellows are encouraged to apply. The recipient of the fellowship spends one month in the Washington D.C. working full-time to complete their research project. Results of this research are to be published or presented at a professional meeting. Applications must be received by October 1, 2003.

For applications and further information contact:  
The American College of Obstetrics and Gynecologists  
Ms. Debra Scarborough, History Librarian/Archivist  
409 Twelfth Street, SW  
Washington, DC 20024-2588  
(202)86302578, or (202) 863-2518  
(202)484-1595  
[dscarborough@acog.org](mailto:dscarborough@acog.org)

## SAHMS Conference

Southern Association for the History of Medicine and Science invites papers for its sixth annual meeting to be held February 27-28, 2004 in Augusta, Georgia.

The SAHMS welcomes submissions of papers on the history of medicine and science, broadly construed to include historical, literary, anthropological, philosophical, and sociological approaches to the history of health care and science. Participants may propose individual papers or symposiums of several papers devoted to a particular topic or theme. PhD students are invited to submit works in progress and should indicate their student status.

Submissions should include a one-page abstract of the subject, including its introduction, purpose, method and findings. Papers must be submitted by September 15, 2003. Prospective participants should not submit papers published, already presented, or scheduled for presentation at another meeting. Electronic submissions are preferred. Details about the program will be announced October 30, 2003. All presenters are responsible for their own travel and registration costs.

Send proposals to:  
Arlene Keeling, PhD, RN  
Chair, 2004 Program Committee, SAHMS  
McLeod Hall, University of Virginia  
School of Nursing,  
Charlottesville, VA 22908  
email: [awk2z@virginia.edu](mailto:awk2z@virginia.edu)

## AAHM Annual Meeting

The American Association for the History of Medicine 77th Annual Meeting will be held on April 29-May 2, 2004 in Madison, Wisconsin. The Association invites abstract submissions on topics related to the history of health and healing; medical ideas, practices, and institutions; and of illness, disease, and public health from all eras and regions of the world. The deadline for submission is to be announced. For more information visit the AAHM web site at: [www.histmed.org](http://www.histmed.org).

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*The Human Touch* by Marjorie Glaser Bindner

## Barbara Brodie Retires



On March 1, 2003 friends, colleagues, students, graduates and family of Barbara Brodie met at Alumni Hall to celebrate her retirement. Dean Jeanette Lancaster opened the post-dinner activities with a warm salute to Barbara for her 32 years of service to the University, her contributions to the school, its students and faculty, and to the profession.

Her remarks were followed by comments from members of the University community, former colleagues, and graduates of academic programs that Barbara had directed. Arlene Keeling shared with the group, that over \$20,000 had been collected for the newly created Barbara Brodie Historical Scholars Award that will be given annually by the Center. A highlight of the evening was a humorous slide show, created by graduate Barbee Bancroft, that captured her memories of what it was like being a student of Barbara's.

At the conclusion of the program, Dean Lancaster presented Barbara with a gift of a framed photograph of the Blue Ridge Mountains at sunrise. Barbara plans to continue to serve as the Associate Director of the Center.

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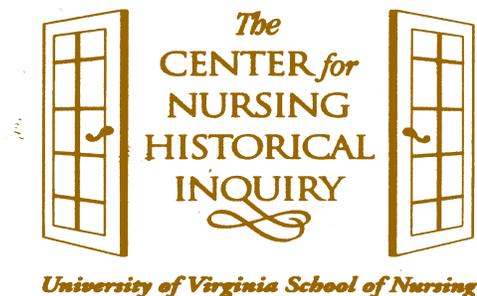
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