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Reinventing Nursing for Future Generations

Connie A. Luedtke
Augsburg College

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REINVENTING NURSING FOR FUTURE GENERATIONS

Reinventing Nursing for Future Generations

Connie A. Luedtke, MA, RN

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Master of Arts in Nursing

AUGSBURG COLLEGE

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Certificate of Approval Page

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Abstract

By 2020 the USA will experience a tremendous nursing shortage. Unfortunately the public does not know what nurses do nor the rewards associated with the profession of nursing. Nursing has had difficulty competing with other professions offering more pay, better schedules and promises of exciting careers.

The purpose of this graduate integrative project is to describe a children's book written with the intention of educating and recruiting future generations for the profession of nursing. Background information will be provided to illustrate the need for such a book, including general information on the current nursing shortage, the disparity of men and minorities in the profession of nursing, the process of writing for children between the ages of ten and 12 and targeting youth for the profession of nursing. Rosemarie Rizzo Parse's theory of human becoming is the theoretical foundation for this project, due to contributions she has made in nursing.

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Chapter I

Imagine once again being 12 years old, with your entire life of choices ahead of you. One of the most important choices we make is that of our career. Today's youth have a greater freedom of career opportunities than previous generations. However, lack of knowledge about all career options can hinder individuals from making the best choice for their profession. It is estimated that by 2020 the United States of America (USA) will be experiencing a tremendous nursing shortage. Unfortunately the general public does not know much about what nurses do nor the rewards associated with the profession of nursing. The nursing profession has had difficulty competing with other professions that offer more pay, better scheduling options and promises of an exciting future career path.

This author is writing a book targeting middle readers age 10-12. My purpose is not only to entertain the readers, but also to provide the public with a greater understanding of the role of nurses in health care, and hopefully, to recruit future nurses. Kit and his twin sister Callie are protagonists who have been thrust into the middle of the health care scene as a result of Kit's injuries. Kit experiences first hand what it is like to have surgery and spend time in the hospital. Callie spends a fair amount of time in the hospital with her brother, so she also becomes aware of the pivotal role of nursing. This incident inspires them to learn more about nursing.

"Bone Menders: The First of Many Adventures of Kit and Callie" is the working title for a ten chapter book with an approximate total of 90-100 pages. Throughout the rest of this paper the title will be referred to as "Bone Menders." This is an introductory book with a series of books to follow, each book highlighting a different adventure and various general/specialty areas of nursing. Future books will also highlight various

cultural settings within the United States (US). The books will be marketed in children's bookstores and other specialized venues as well as at various professional nursing conferences held throughout the country. With the current estimate of 2.5 million nurses in the United States it is reasonable to expect to sell to one quarter of nurses who may wish to have a book about their profession for their children to read. Mainly I hope to target one million school-aged children.

The purpose of this graduate integrative thesis is to describe a children's book written with the intention of educating and recruiting future generations for the profession of nursing. Background information will be provided to illustrate the need for such a book, including general information on the current nursing shortage, the disparity of men in the profession of nursing, the process of writing for children between the ages of ten and 12 and targeting youth for the profession of nursing. Rosemarie Rizzo Parse's theory of human becoming is the theoretical foundation for this project because of the contributions she has made in nursing, focusing on the "human-universe-health process" (Fawcett, 2000, p. 596).

Parse was chosen as a theorist because of the focus she places on "betterment" of all people through the distinctive work within the field of nursing. She describes nurses as being in an exceptional position to continue the work of searching for knowledge and processes to help the people with whom they work to take an active role in all aspects of their own health and that of the community or world at large (Fawcett, 2000). This theoretical viewpoint fits well with this project in two ways: First, in the overall goal of this project to recruit future generations of nurses; secondly, this will be articulated in

miniature within the book as the protagonist confronts both internal and external conflicts to “co-author” his own future.

Nursing presence without judging or pushing personal views can be instrumental in allowing individuals the freedom to experience the meaning of their own health and to determine choices and consequences. This freedom is valued by every individual, and therefore connected to valuing and also to health from Parse’s perspective (1995). She goes on to describe that valuing is “choosing from imaged options and owning the choices” (1995, p. 37). Parse’s idea of seeing all people as “creative authors of their personal worlds” and health as being linked with individuals’ values and choices is suitable for a project that is focusing on career choices, specifically the profession of nursing (1995, p. 37). The theory of human becoming fits hand-in-glove with the vision of increasing the number of people interested in nursing, which should further help facilitate the process of human-becoming.

Relevance to Nursing

The United States is experiencing a severe nursing shortage. By 2020 the USA will require approximately 2.8 million nurses to cover the workforce demand, which is up from previous estimates of 760,000 (Evans, 2007). Registered nurses (RNs) make up the largest percentage of health care workers; the current and upcoming shortage will present the largest opportunity for employment for any occupation (Bureau of Labor Statistics, Significant points section, para. 1). Questions that come to mind are: What is the public perception of nursing? Is there a lack of understanding of the interesting, important and rewarding work that nurses do? And why are the youth of today less interested in becoming nurses?

The general public seems to be unaware of what nurses do. It is difficult to recruit people to a career in which so little of the work is understood. Historically nurses have emphasized the caring aspects of nursing finding it difficult to articulate the scientific aspects, the knowledge required to conduct assessments, establish appropriate plans of care, complete a multitude of interventions and follow up with evaluation of the effectiveness of care. Nurses know this process by heart as they complete these steps many times with each of their patients. However, nurses tend to speak publicly about the relational aspects of nursing, while minimizing the critical thinking and technical skills utilized on the job (Nelson & Gordon, 2006). That being said, building a therapeutic rapport with patients is essential. Completing assessments on patients requires spending time with them. Typically nurses are conducting assessments without the patients or family members even realizing what is taking place (Gordon, 2005). From the author's experience, when asked to describe what they were doing, it seems nurses are more likely to make comments such as "I was just checking in on my patient" rather than describing in detail such as "I've been concerned about excessive sedation from the opioids this patient is taking postoperatively" while simultaneously assessing respiratory rate, pupil constriction, tissue perfusion and level of alertness. "Checking in" and "getting to know" patients have different meanings for nurses than for the general public.

Nelson and Gordon (2006) identified their process of de-coding what nurses described as getting to know their patients:

Getting to know patients was an integral part of nurses' daily activities. However, this 'knowing' did not involve some superficial friendliness or attempt to develop personal intimacy. Knowing patients meant knowing about a patient's medical

needs and progress, not their personal stories and dreams. Knowing the patient involved learning about the physical and emotional dimensions of a patient's illness, finding out how the patient responded to treatment and managed complex medication regimens, and discerning what resources the patient would need to cope with their illness and treatment regimens once they left the hospital.

Knowing the patient required familiarity with their medical record, with the care plans of other care providers, with the patient's current physical and emotional state, and with the patient's home situation. Knowing the patient was a professional, not a personal, activity. (pp. 35-36)

Public perceptions of nursing as a career demonstrate the willingness to view nursing as a virtuous profession rather than one dominated by knowledge and skill. Nurses have been ranked as the number one profession most likely to be "trustworthy, honest, and ethical" (Gallop poll, 2006, para. 2). However, similar surveys have found that while the general public may find nurses trustworthy, nurses would not be asked questions about major health issues like sexually transmitted diseases, abortion, birth control, substance abuse, menopause or osteoporosis (Dickenson-Hazard, 2000).

Perhaps partially due to public perception, youth are less likely to consider nursing as a career than they once were. In a research study involving telephone interviews of high school students grade seven through eleven (Erickson, Holm, Chelminiak & Ditomassi, 2006), those not interested in pursuing nursing as a career identified "interest in another career" (p. 48) as the primary reason, followed by "unappealing responsibilities/performing menial/cleanup tasks" (p. 48) and "emotional strain of working with sick and dying patients" (p. 48). Other factors expressed as

reasons not to become a nurse included “long hours/overworked/understaffed” and the time requirement for completing nursing education (Erickson et al., p. 48). College students in another study identified the profession of nursing as likely to be associated with “job pressure and significant risk of injury” and furthermore described the “limitations of independent work or job autonomy” in nursing (Seago, 2006, p. 103).

An interesting study was published in 2006 (Lynn, Redman & Zomorodi). Questionnaires were mailed to current staff nurses from eight states requesting responses to reasons why someone should and should not be a nurse. They received responses from almost 700 nurses. The top three reasons identified for not becoming a nurse included poor schedules (long hours, shift work, disturbances to family life), emotional stress related to the job and thirdly, pay and benefits. The top three reasons given to become a nurse included rewards and satisfaction seeing patients make improvements, career and/or job security and opportunities or advancement within the profession of nursing (Lynn et al., 2006).

Combining the shortage of nurses with the lack of interest in nursing as a career, we are soon to hit a crisis. We must explore ways to increase the number of people choosing nursing as a profession. One approach to increase the number of nurses in the profession is to provide knowledge of what nurses do along with details of the nursing career that would appeal to the younger generations.

Generally it is assumed that students are beginning to make preliminary choices about career options as early as middle school in order to take the required track of courses to prepare them for college (Hoke, 2006). Providing middle school children with interesting and accurate information about nursing might be helpful in directing some

down the path of science and math course work in preparation of a career in health care, specifically in nursing.

An overview has been provided of the nursing shortage currently confronting the United States with the expectation of a crisis to hit by 2020. Questions were raised as to whether or not public perception of nursing, or a general lack of understanding of the interesting and rewarding work that nurses do, potentially both play a role in the nursing shortage. Helping nurses articulate the work we do could empower us to share the value that nurses bring to health care. Most people are truly unaware of what it is that nurses do. Attracting future generations to the ranks of nursing as an exceptional career depends on our ability to identify and speak to the work that nurses do, the critical thinking skills, competence and intelligence nurses bring to the bedside, not just the caring, thoughtful connectedness of interpersonal relationships.

Chapter II Relevant Literature

Several studies highlight ways to promote nursing as a career. As we look at recruitment into nursing as a profession, it is important to also consider potential ways to recruit men to the field of nursing. Furthermore, what might happen if we could influence young children into considering nursing as a profession? Exploring the marketability and focus of a children's book might provide one answer to the issue of recruitment. Promoting nursing as an interesting, rewarding career is of vital importance in drawing both young men and women to the profession. Establishing a solid theoretical framework is essential to begin this work. Rosemarie Rizzo Parse's theory of human becoming offers insight into human becoming and provides a theoretical foundation for this project.

Promoting Nursing as a Career Option

In early times women had few choices of professions: teaching, cosmetology, secretarial work or nursing. The past several decades have opened up innumerable career choices for women, thus nursing may be overlooked as a viable option. How does a profession go about replenishing those who have retired or as it has happened too frequently in the profession of nursing, replacing those who have left to find a different career?

Several articles have directed their focus on the issue of recruitment and retention of nursing staff. Hoke (2006) identifies that "by the time students enter middle and high school they already have rejected most jobs on the basis of perceptions" (p. 94). She goes on to say "[t]he majority of students don't reject nursing, they simply do not give nursing any consideration" (Hoke, 2006, p. 94). Hoke describes middle school as the

best time to offer career information to students. If the profession of nursing is presented in a manner that is appealing to students, their interests may be piqued enough to learn some of the many benefits that nursing has to offer, prior to deciding on other career pathways. The creativity and critical thinking skills that this upcoming generation has already developed, needs to be tapped as a potential strength for future nurses. “Showing the younger generation that nurses are empowered to address global problems through modern technology, research, and informatics will be one way to let them see nursing is a career worthy of their consideration” (Hoke, 2006, p. 95).

Focusing on middle school students as potential future nurses, a Nursing Academy was set up for middle school students and their parents in 2003 in East Texas. This academy involved learning modules and hands-on skill labs where the attendees learned about hand washing techniques with assistance of a black light, intravenous (IV) bags, taking blood pressures and conducting assessments on mannequins. Discussions highlighted various areas where nurses work and specialty populations that were served. Various learning stations offered further hands-on opportunities including “mock operating room station, blood drawing, physiologic monitoring and a crash cart for a mock code” (Reese, 2005, p. 19). This program has been repeated several times, each time becoming more successful in drawing larger number of attendees and in providing knowledge to school counselors, parents and students about nursing as a viable career opportunity for many students who would not have considered this as an option prior to attending this summer academy (Reese, 2005).

In the *Journal of Nursing Management*, editor M. Jasper (2007) dedicated her first editorial column of the year to the modernizing of nursing careers. She described how

the role of registered nurses (RNs) has evolved from a less descriptive position of providing care to a more inclusive role of “development and leadership of that care across the spectrum” (2007, p. 1). As Jasper describes the contents of the journal for January, she highlights the concept of modernizing careers, the “recurring issue of the challenges of retaining a skilled workforce, with its attendant aspects of recruitment, job satisfaction and stress” (2007, p. 1).

Erickson, Holm, Chelminiak and Ditomassi (2005) described what high school students and adult career switchers thought about the option of nursing as a career choice. They reported the single most important reason for career choice for high school students looking forward to a career as “being happy at work/liking your job” as the top factors (p. 46). For adults interested in considering nursing as a career, a “good salary” was the top ranked choice, followed by flexibility in schedule options. Most people did not think any flexibility in scheduling was even an option in nursing. Another important factor identified by both groups as important in choosing a career was the ability to make a difference in the lives of people with whom they worked (Erickson et al., 2005).

One group of nurse researchers established a four-day residential nursing camp as an intervention to positively impact attitudes of adolescents toward selecting nursing as a career. A host university paired some of the nursing faculty with administrators and nurses at a host hospital to develop this program, focusing on nursing. Those attending the residential camp spent their nights in the university and were bused to the hospital, where they spent the morning shadowing a nurse. After lunch they attended presentations by guest lecturers, who were nurses working in a variety of roles throughout the hospital network, describing details of their specialty work along with the

professional challenges and rewards of nursing. The evening hours were spent with the university faculty learning hands-on nursing skills (such as basic life support) at the skills laboratory and in team building games or activities (Yeager & Cheever, 2007, p. 453). Pre-camp surveys given to the adolescents demonstrated that their perceptions of nursing careers were vastly different than those of their ideal careers. “Specifically, adolescents wanted more education, money, leadership, power, and respect than they believed they could attain as nurses and less involvement in caring for people, hard work, and technology-oriented work than they believed characterized nursing career (Yeager & Cheever, 2007, pp. 452-453). The post-camp survey results demonstrated “improvement in their specific attitudes that nurses are smart and well educated, can always find jobs, have exciting jobs, work with a lot of high-technology, have flexible job hours, and are highly respected by others” (Yeager & Cheever, 2007, p. 455). The brief intervention of a four-day residential camp had a significant positive impact on the attitudes of adolescents toward the profession of nursing.

In a survey of 3000 college students taking math and science courses, the students’ perceptions of nursing as a career were compared with careers as physical therapists, high school teachers and physicians. Results indicated an overall favorable impression of nursing with “two-thirds agreeing that nursing has good income potential, job security, and interesting work” (Seago, 2006, p. 96). Nursing, however, is perceived as women’s work and lagged behind the other career choices in the area of independence on the job. Seago postulates that unless the image of nursing as women’s work with little independence is transformed, nursing will not be considered seriously as a career choice for the next generation.

Recruiting Men into the Profession of Nursing

The image of the profession of nursing may also play a role in the scarcity of men who enter the profession. The most recent statistics available from *Health Resources & Services Administration* report that less than six percent of nurses practicing in the United States are men (2004, table 1). Fenkl (2006) describes the reasons for few men in nursing as being “varied and complicated. In addition to the societal stereotyping of nursing as a profession exclusively for women, there are also gender issues within the profession related to power and advancement, which may deter men from the field” (Fenkl, 2006, p. 38). Nursing educators have an opportunity to increase the recruitment of men into the profession as well as adjusting the curriculum to best meet the learning needs of men and women both, including “principles of caring and human interaction” (Fenkl, 2006, p. 40). Careful use of pronouns, such as using both “he” and “she” when referring to a nurse could be one simple step toward balancing the number of men and women in the profession of nursing.

One tactic for recruiting more males to nursing is employing a summer camp geared for young men, set up with male nurses to shadow in various nursing specialty areas and opportunities to network with men who currently work as a nurse. Summer camps have been successfully used to draw youth to the field of nursing, but one hospital in Southeast Missouri decided to host a camp specifically for high school males. The theme presented in advertising fliers was “Are you Man Enough to be a Nurse?” (Stilson, 2007, p. 54) Social ice breakers and team building games were conducted on the first evening. The first full day of camp included shadowing a male nurse who volunteered to be a mentor for the camp experience. Shadowing took place in many specialty areas

including the operating room, emergency department, surgical units, recovery room, and cardiac-catheterization labs. After a full day of shadowing the campers swapped stories and attended a presentation on nursing, including some “gross” pictures from the operating room. The evening activities were again geared for males. A description of a typical game approach used includes a unique nursing version of *The Amazing Race*:

Teams, led by men in nursing, raced to various sites around town, completing challenges at each stop. Participants devoured ham salad from an emesis basin, drank lemonade from a urinal...and learned to gown and glove at record speed. (Stilson, 2007, pp. 54-55)

The result of this camp was extraordinary. Every evaluation had positive comments from the students attending the camp, including recommending the camp to others. The administrators from the host hospital make the observation that other hospitals could increase their recruitment of men by offering similar programs (Stilson, 2007).

Efforts to recruit people to the profession of nursing need to be more creative and persistent than ever before. Men are not the only underrepresented group in nursing. According to the National Sample Survey of Registered Nurses, (as cited by Schoichet, 2002, para. 5) “nonwhite nurses made up only 13.4 percent” of the RNs in the United States. Schools of nursing are trying to combat the status quo, change the image they portray of nurses and become more aggressive in their advertising and recruitment of male and minority students. Some have even begun programs that include personal telephone calls following a visit, and scheduled visits from college representatives to include elementary schools (Schoichet, 2000).

Some colleges have sought out state legislation to assist with funding to expand their recruitment programs, to offer more scholarships and to hire more qualified faculty to decrease the bottle-neck of students waiting for entry to nursing schools. Other measures include advertising and internet sites that dispel stereotypes of nursing. Georgetown University's School of Nursing and Health Studies has a slogan hailing this is "Not your grandmother's nursing" and featuring a section of frequently asked questions under a title of "Nurses Are Not Just Women in White Caps" (Schoichet, 2000, para. 11). Focused, creative recruitment efforts have been successful, with some schools citing an "unheard of" increased number of male and minority students applying to nursing programs than prior to the campaign. Johnson & Johnson directed another successful campaign aimed at a national audience. They featured commercials about nursing and a wide distribution of recruitment brochures in Spanish as well as English, encouraging students to "dare to care" and to "be a nurse." The campaign spent over 20 million dollars on two years worth of advertising, and in addition, offered scholarships for nurses (Schoichet, 2000, para. 15).

Principles described by Bae and Clark (2005) to facilitate greater diversity awareness in the educational classroom can also applied to schools of nursing. Some of the techniques that are offered by Bae and Clark have been adapted here to focus on techniques that nursing schools might apply in order to make it more socially comfortable for minority students to attend nursing school and to eventually be successful in nursing. Sharing diversity experiences with one another is a way to begin exploring the unique attributes that everyone brings to nursing. Providing language and cultural support circles can be instrumental in drawing minorities into the education (or nursing)

environment. Schools may use technological devices to assist in learning if needed, although a solid understanding of and ability to use the English language is a necessity to ensure the ability to complete nursing school as well as achieving success on the job. Schools may also invest in programs or activities that promote awareness of the wide-ranging impact of diversity on our culture, including food items, music, art, slang and recreational activities. Promotion of an overall awareness of cultural achievements, as well as specific achievements could also be celebrated within the nursing classroom. Many minority students face multiple challenges in order to maintain participation in higher education. Offering a supportive environment, an open mind and encouraging frequent attitude assessments and adjustments as needed is a standard all nursing schools should employ (Bae & Clark, 2005).

The goal of this project is to describe a children's book written to entertain and educate the public and recruit future generations to the profession of nursing. This next section provides general information about the process of writing children's books by reviewing pertinent literature.

Background About the "Target Market"

Children's literature circles identify children from the age group of about ten to twelve as "middle readers" as they are no longer reading simple children's books, but they have yet to progress to full fledged chapter books (Turner, 2008, para. 1-4). Some define the early age limit for this category as beginning at age eight, while other definitions have the range extending up to age 14. Books written for this age group are also called tween books. These books have short chapters and introduce new vocabulary words. Because of the span of years within the middle readership, some differences

exist. For instance, the entry level books for middle readers still have illustrations and have less than 100 pages, while the higher level books likely have no illustrations and may have up to 130 pages. Often middle reader books are set up as a series in order to entice the reader to keep reading. Some middle reader series that have been popular include May Pope Osborne's *Magic Tree House* series, or Lemony Snicket's *A Series of Unfortunate Event* books (Turner, 2008, para. 1-4). A popular series that inspired this author includes the books *Hatchet*, *Brian's Return*, *Brian's Winter* and *Brian's Hunt*, by Gary Paulsen, a three-time Newbery Award winner.

The book "Bone Menders" will be written for middle readers, with the leading characters being twelve years old, in the seventh grade. Typically most authors of middle reader books place the protagonist character(s) within a short age-span from the reader (Turner, 2008, para. 1-2). The Flesch-Kincaid Readability tool will be used to keep the book within the middle reader skill set. Readability is generally assessed by measuring the length of sentences, the number of syllables in words and the total number of words, placed in a formula that produces a number equating at what grade level this material will be understood (University of Memphis).

Kuhn and Pease (2006) write about "declarative learning about the world" that can occur from an early age, as children "construct theories as a way of understanding the world around them, and they revise these theories as they encounter new information" (p. 280). The change in understanding is what is considered learning. Brain development in the pre-frontal cortex is associated with the executive functioning for more complex tasks. The development of this executive functioning is strengthened if a person experiences a subjective learning, on one level, followed by a reflection of learning at a

higher level. For example if a person learns about the civil war in history books, and later participates in a reenactment of a certain battle, the level of learning or understanding will be more extensive when both aspects of learning occur. It appears that even as early as middle school, children can experience learning at this higher level (Kuhn & Pease, 2006).

In an attempt to positively impact the opinions of middle readers about the profession of nursing, specific detailed examples will be given in the book to demonstrate nurses' abilities to assess complex health problems, to implement nursing interventions to provide healing and comfort and to plan for appropriate care through out the patient's continuum of health care needs.

A search was conducted at the Rochester Minnesota Public Library on books that were available for children and young adults containing words related to nursing in their title or subject category. A total of 46 titles were found in the juvenile section under the word "nurse" or "nurses." These books mainly focused on basics tasks of nurses, often seemingly to prepare young children for a trip to the doctor's office, or visiting a family member in the hospital, or in preparing for their own surgery or hospitalization. Many of these books were picture books with one sentence per page. These storybooks highlighted the work that nurses do. Unfortunately, several of the books highlight the work that nurses do to assist physicians, such as gathering up charts or handing instruments, rather than focusing on the professional activities that nurses do independently. One book that does an excellent job of highlighting professional work of nurses in a manner that young children can understand is entitled *Nurses* by Cecilia Minden and Linda Armantrout (2006).

Fewer books were found under the young adult section, with seven titles including the word “nursing,” three including “nurses” and two including “nurse.” One of the three books in the young adult section was “One Flew Over the Cuckoo’s Nest” written by Ken Kesey in 1962 about a psychiatric ward. The nurse in this book, “Nurse Ratchet” has been used as the stereotype of evil, battleaxe nurses ever since the publication of this book and the subsequent movie that was produced. A second book in this age group is about a girl who wants to be a nurse. As she is shadowing a nurse, she realizes that she has a supernatural sense when someone is going to die. Although this book is more of a suspense thriller, at least it has a small role for nurses in the story line.

Conducting a search on Cherry Ames, the nurse heroine from the 1940-1950’s era, one title was found. *Cherry Ames, Cruise Nurse* written in 1948 but was categorized under the mystery and detective genre. Also of interest while searching available literature for juvenile children, middle readers and young adults, it was noted that searches for women or female heroes/heroines in the title of subject category resulted in only four titles total, all in the juvenile section.

Reading has always had a powerful impact on people. Illiteracy rates play a strong role in the types and ranges of job opportunities available. Nearly 44 million adults in the United States are unable to read at all and 50% of all adults are unable to read at the eighth grade level, making it difficult to perform tasks such as balancing a checkbook or reading the label on a medication bottle. Twenty percent of Americans are unable to read well enough to earn a wage, and up to 51% of adults live below the poverty level directly related to their inability to read (Education Portal, 2007).

Illiteracy directly impacts our society. Children drop out of school due to the inability to read, costing “our nation \$240 billion in social service expenditures and lost tax revenues (Education Portal, 2007, para. 6).

A study of 30,000 people was conducted in England utilizing “Quick Read” books within 2,500 literacy groups. The goal of the project was to get people reading again, encouraging those who had not read since school to pick up a book and read again. The Quick Reads initiative provided “short, fast paced books specifically as an aid to learning for adults who struggle with reading and for avid readers wanting a short, fast read” (National Institute of Adult Continuing Education, March 2008). The United Kingdom’s national Audit Office reports that there are 12 million adults struggling with illiteracy, therefore it has established a priority to increase reading ability to help combat the poverty level that over 1 million people are living in. Nearly 60% of those who participated in the Quick Reads study reported that they had not read a book since school, 90 % reported that they now enjoyed reading, 57% reported increased job prospects with nearly 40 % feeling more confident at work and 15 % reporting they went on to get a better job (National Institute of Adult Continuing Education, March 2008). Although this study was done with adults in England, its principals can apply here as well. Increased reading ability can improve overall quality of life. Those who read for pleasure comment on the joys of being transported to another time and place when reading a well-written book.

Promoting nursing as an interesting, rewarding career that has the capacity to make a significant impact upon individuals, communities and beyond is pivotal to

drawing both young men and women to the profession. Establishing a solid theoretical framework is essential to begin this work.

Nursing Theoretical Foundation

Rosemarie Rizzo Parse's Theory of Human Becoming was used as the theoretical foundation for this project. Parse published her first book in 1981 introducing her theory of Man-Living-Health, which later evolved to the Theory of Human Becoming. The central theme in this theory is that humans interact with the universe, choosing ways of "becoming" and moving "beyond each moment with hopes and dreams" (Parse, as cited in Fawcett, 2000, p. 574). She sees this phenomenon as being key for the discipline of nursing.

The three main principles of the theory of Human Becoming are as follows:

Principle 1: Structuring meaning multidimensionality is cocreating reality through the languaging of valuing and imaging.

Principle 2: Cocreating rhythmical patterns of relating is living the paradoxical unity of revealing-concealing and enabling-limiting while connecting-separating.

Principle 3: Cotranscending with the possibles is powering unique ways of originating in the process of transforming. (Fawcett, 2000, p. 574)

Parse has also developed her own method of basic nursing research utilizing hermeneutic methodology as well as a specialized practice methodology. The practice methodology includes the components of Illuminating Meaning, Synchronizing Rhythms and Mobilizing Transcendence (Fawcett, 2000).

Expounding on the third principle that Parse has identified as the process of transformation or co-transcendence with possibilities, there is an opportunity to look

forward. For this project there is a dual focus of a 12-year-old boy and his twin sister, representing a nation full of youth looking forward to the possibilities in their lives. There always seem to be opposing choices that face individuals through their lives: good or evil, right or wrong, success or failure. Parse describes many of these supposedly conflicting themes that individuals confront, choose, experience and then re-evaluate, perhaps making a different choice next time. In fact she describes the experiences with which people live as important factors in human-becoming, or in transforming and growing as individuals (Parse, 2003).

Research conducted via Parse's Human Becoming hermeneutic methodology provides a general understanding about lived experiences, specifically community experiences. A review of themes found from more than 30 Parse studies revealed the following:

Four major themes that can be synthesized with the human becoming community change concepts: (a) persistent struggling is persevering with urgent intensity; (b) anguishing solemnity is a quiet-disquiet abiding with the reverent; (c) anticipating possibles is visioning the not-yet; and (d) uplifting calmness is a buoyant serenity. (Parse, 2003, p. 97)

Parse's view of the community is that of "oneness of human-universe connectedness" making values and beliefs a part of their lived experience. Interpretations of these experiences can be understood by Parse's human becoming community change concepts. There are three change concepts identified within the overall theme of "anticipating possibles is visioning the not-yet" (Parse, 2003, p. 100). These concepts include moving-initiating, anchoring-shifting, and pondering-shaping (p. 100).

Interpreting the theme that seems most appropriate for a foundation of promoting nursing as a career that has the capacity to make a significant impact upon individuals, communities and even beyond to the global community, is that of anticipation of what is possible while envisioning what might be.

As young people, looking forward to one of the most important decisions of their lives, the next generation has the opportunity to gain a better understanding of values, images, hopes and dreams and to participate in the rhythmic pattern of discerning the themes in their lives, transforming to a different place, a new experience. Learning and expanding horizons is part of creating change within a community. Hopefully the next generation can expand the boundaries currently confining the profession of nursing, promoting a transformation and co-creation of a new reality, including more men in the field of nursing and more people in general working together to have a positive impact on the universe via nursing.

Chapter III Project Description

Process Involved

This project explains the rationale and process of the creation of a children's book designed to influence middle age children to begin to consider nursing as an interesting, worthwhile and rewarding career. Entertaining readers will be important, not only to provide the public with a greater understanding of the role nurses' perform in health care, but hopefully to recruit future nurses as well.

The overall plot of the book features Kit and his twin sister Callie as seventh graders who have been thrust into the middle of the health care scene as a result of Kit's injuries. Kit experiences first hand what it is like to break his tibia, have surgery and endure complications of Compartments' Syndrome. He requires a fasciotomy and spends considerable time recovering in the hospital. He experiences care in the Emergency Department (ED), the Operating Room (OR) and on a Pediatric Hospital Unit. Kit develops a strong connection with several of the nurses as they conduct regular assessments, complete his frequent dressing changes, and provide many other components integral to nursing care. Being twins who have a good relationship, Callie spends a fair amount of time in the hospital with her brother, so she also becomes aware of the pivotal role of nursing. This experience inspires both of them to learn more about nursing.

"Bone Menders" will be approximately 10 chapters with a total of 90-100 pages. This will be an introductory book with a series of books to follow, each book highlighting a different adventure and various general/specialty areas of nursing. For example, one book might feature an aunt who has to deal with a pre-mature birth, requiring a hospital

stay for herself as well as a lengthy stay in the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (NICU) for her baby. This book could focus on nursing care delivered in various settings, including a clinic, labor and delivery, the nursery, a medical unit and the NICU. Another book might feature a grandparent's diagnosis, treatment course and remission of cancer, including nursing care received along the way. Yet another book might feature treatment of depression and attention deficit disorder in a young cousin of Kit and Callie. Including some portion of psychiatric nursing will be very important at some time, to help decrease the stigma that is often associated with these illnesses. The opportunities for other areas of nursing to be highlighted in this series are as vast as the professional career opportunities for nurses to choose from. Future books will also highlight various cultural settings within the United States. Learning about various native cultures and health care preferences will be a fun learning experience for the young readers and will allow minority readers a better connection with the characters in the book.

Field research for this manuscript has been completed over the past four years. Interviews were conducted with volunteer staff from an ambulance service, nurses in several different specialty areas, including the Emergency Department, the Operating Room and orthopedics and with a Child-Life Specialist from a children's hospital. Several interviews are yet to be obtained. Tours were provided with staff highlighting environmental, process and staffing details of each area of expertise.

A deliberate attempt has been made to include various components within the book to serve different purposes. Gory details describing broken bones, wounds and surgical procedures are included as a way of capturing the interest of young boys. The series of books by Paulsen about Brian Robeson's challenges of remaining alive and safe,

alone in the north woods offer middle reader's considerable blood and gore. Paulsen's exceptional writing style appeals to his readership of millions, indicating that gory descriptions don't hinder the sale of books (Paulsen, 2003).

Technology, including some yet to be utilized in current nursing practice, will also be included in the text with the deliberate attempt to appeal to the technologically savvy children who will be reading the book(s). Awareness of potential use of informatics, technology and global connectedness in health care may be a motivator for youth to pursue nursing as a career (Hoke, 2006, p. 95).

To help the reader understand the book, a summary of each book chapter is presented to give an overall idea of the flow and content of the book entitled "Bone Menders."

A Day in the Life of Kit and Callie

Summary of Each Chapter

Chapter one: The accident. Kit, a 12-year-old boy falls while climbing and is stuck in a hole unable to move, with rocks covering his legs. He has seriously injured his right leg. His twin sister, Callie who had been out at the Quarry with him, hunts for Kit when he doesn't show up at their meeting spot. She finds him injured but is unable to move him.

Chapter two: The rescue. Callie has called their parents with a cell phone and they meet her at the Quarry. When Callie describes Kit's injuries, their Mom, Sandy, decides to call for an ambulance. Dad waits for the ambulance as Mom and Callie run to the remote area where Kit lay injured. Sandy's training as a registered nurse is very helpful for Kit, who is still immobile and is experiencing a lot of pain. While comforting

her son, Sandy is simultaneously assessing Kit's status. She notices a significant amount of blood loss and assesses a compound fracture as Kit begins to go into shock. Sandy and Callie are able to move Kit and put on a temporary splint before the ambulance arrives.

Chapter three: The ambulance ride. Callie stands back and observes the ambulance crew as they bring out all of their equipment and begin their assessment, checking Kit's blood pressure and neurological status. They stabilize him on the scene and then prepare him for transport to the hospital. Sandy accompanies Kit in the ambulance and the readers learn more of the inner-workings of an ambulance transport.

Chapter four: The emergency department. Kit is evaluated in the emergency room and promptly treated for shock. The nurses and physicians work closely together to further assess Kit and to try to make him more comfortable. It is determined that he indeed does have a compound fracture and will need to have his leg surgically repaired.

Chapter five: Surgery. As Kit is going to surgery, he notices all of the people around him all working on different tasks to prepare for his surgery. He is very interested, and a little nervous about having surgery. When he wakes up he is in a hospital bed, with another set of busy people working to keep him comfortable while he regains his strength after surgery.

Chapter six: Staying at the hospital. While Kit's recovery period started out smoothly, it was only a matter of a few days before he began having complications. He developed compartments syndrome and ends up having to undergo a fasciotomy. This requires a longer hospital stay. Kit has the opportunity to see many different types of nurses and other health care workers while in the hospital. He is surprised about all of the different types of work that they do. Callie is impressed by the variety of work that

the nurses do and the professionalism that she sees. She and Kit talk about what fun nurses seem to have at work.

Chapter seven: Homework escapades. Due to his lengthy hospital stay, Kit is required to do considerable make-up work. He begins to do a term paper on the PDA's the nurses use to communicate with other members of the treatment team. The more he interviews the nursing staff, however, the more interested he becomes in other aspects of nursing. He changes the focus of his term paper and together he and Callie research nursing as a career, both via library research and internet searches along with personal interviews set up with the staff in the hospital. The RNs are more than happy to talk about a profession they love with the twins of whom they have grown quite fond.

Chapter eight: Going home and back to school. After fighting to regain his health and strength and long hospital stay, Kit returns home to some rehabilitation and then back to school. He is confronted by a teacher who doesn't want to accept his homework as his own, stating that the work is above his previous ability, suggesting that Kit cheated. Kit and Callie work together to face this additional challenge. They go back to the hospital and seek documentation from the nursing staff regarding the work Kit completed, including the detailed interviews and research. Will the teacher find proof of plagiarism and give Kit a failing grade?

Chapter nine: The adventure continues, Callie's turn. Kit is so excited to be able to join his group of friends on a snow tubing expedition during the winter holidays...that is until Callie has a nasty accident. Too many kids had piled onto a huge snow tube. Callie fall off and was jammed into a tree. Did she break her leg this time? Maybe she

hit her head and has a concussion. Kit doesn't know. He just sees her lying there at the bottom of the hill, lying there and not getting up after everyone else has moved away.

Chapter ten: What can be next? The book concludes with a taste of the next adventure that awaits Kit and Callie.

Chapter IV Discussion

Work Yet to Complete

The outcomes of this project are still in progress. Writing a book takes time and thoughtful preparation. To help achieve the goal of completion, a timetable is established to keep the author on task. A synopsis of the components yet to be completed will be provided.

Table 1

Time Table for Completion

Edit book outline and chapter summaries	June 2008
Complete final chapters of book	July 2008
Focus group of readers, age 10-13 and RNs from specialty areas	July 2008
Final edits of book incorporating changes from focus readers	August 2008
Identify list of publishing options	September 2008
Complete query letters to publishers	September 2008
Complete book proposal	September 30 th , 2008
Submit for publication	October 1 st , 2008

Focus Group of Readers

A group of middle age readers will be identified to read the completed chapters prior to submitting anything for publication. Some readers known to the author will be asked to read the completed chapters and provide feedback about the ease of readability, level of interest in the plot and character development as well as their thoughts on nursing. Other general comments will be encouraged as well. Once feedback has been

obtained, gift certificates will be provided as a token appreciation for their assistance. In addition to seeking out feedback from known sources, the author will request assistance from a librarian or teacher to identify other potential age-appropriate candidates who might be willing to read the completed manuscript. The author will speak with the parents or guardians and offer a small token of appreciation, such as a gift certificate to a book store, as compensation should they agree to allow their child to read the manuscript and provide feedback. Arrangements will be made to obtain the feedback and provide the gift certificates. Finally, a group of nurses from the specialty areas written about in this book will be asked to review the manuscript and provide feedback regarding specialty nursing assessment and tasks along with general readability and level of interest. Gift certificates will again be offered as a token of appreciation. Feedback garnered from all of the focus groups will be reviewed and included into the content of the book as indicated.

Identifying Potential List of Publishers

Publishing a book involves more than just completing a manuscript. There are considerable business negotiations that need to take place prior to publishing. Authors generally complete a number of additional supporting documents to submit along with their manuscript. These might include some or all of the following: a query letter, a book proposal, table of contents of all that is being submitted, an introduction, markets for the book, spin-off possibilities, promotion plan, resources needed to complete the book, a biographical (bio) summary of the author, outline of the book chapters and a sample chapter (Larsen, 2003).

Identifying a publisher for a book is one of the final steps in this process. Lists of publishers can be found online. Many books about publishing also include a list of publishers. One such book *Writer's Market* (2007) boasts a list of 4,000 consumer magazines and trade journals, agents and book publishers. The world of publishing is in a constant state of flux. Even if the author owns the most recent version of a publisher's book, or has checked the publisher's website that morning, it is recommended that the author call the publisher and verify the name of the editor to whom a query letter is addressed right before mailing the submission (Brewer & Masterson, 2007).

Query Letters

Most publishers prefer to have the first contact with a potential author via a query letter. The editor can then evaluate basic writing style and ability without having to read through an entire manuscript. In turn, the author can find out whether or not an editor may be interested in this type of material for that specific publication prior to completing the entire manuscript. If the editor is not interested in the submission, he/she may make a recommendation for other publishers whom they know to be interested in that particular genre or specific topic. Typically query letters are only one page in length and are a description of what has been written, or what is intended to be written along with a summary of the writer's qualifications (DuBoff & Krages II, 2005).

Due to the fact that this author considers the publication of this book as a mission for nursing recruitment and hopes for an opportunity to proceed with a series of books, a book proposal will be submitted rather than just a query letter.

Book Proposal

The goal of a book proposal is to excite potential editors about the prospect of publishing your book. Emphasis can be placed on many areas surrounding the book to entice editors. Some of the components that may intrigue editors include the title of the book, a new idea, the timing, the author's credentials, the market for this book, the author's ability to promote the book and the book's potential as the beginning of a series of books (Larsen, 2003). A book proposal is generally submitted for works of non-fiction but can also be used for fiction. Although the intent of a book proposal is similar to a query letter, a proposal offers greater level of detail. Most book proposals are between 30 and 50 pages in length and have three sections: an overview, resources needed to complete the book and information about the author (Larsen, 2003).

Overview

The book proposal overview for "Bone Menders" will include a subject hook, a book hook, special features and back matter, and some optional components. The subject hook will be a description of the nursing shortage and the crisis that will hit the USA by 2020. The book hook will be the title "Bone Menders: The First of Many Adventures of Kit and Callie" and will help sell the importance of the book to the publishers. Using a "selling handle" or a way to promote this book will also be helpful for publishers to see. An example of a selling handle might be to label this as "the first book of its kind..." to help the public understand the importance of the work that nurses do, while providing children with entertainment (Larsen, 2003).

Identifying the dual target markets of middle school children and Registered Nurses will be a key component for promotion of this book. The larger the target market

is the more likely a book will be published (Larsen, 2003). Accentuating the author's twenty three years of experience as an RN along with passion for the profession of nursing will also assist in promotion of this book.

Other elements of the proposal overview will include a description of the estimated length of the book, page count or total of chapters as a way for publishers to see that the author has a detailed plan. "Back matter," any type of information that might be included in the back section of the book, might include a glossary of medical terms and a listing of future nursing-themed books (Larsen, 2003).

Optional components in the proposal overview might include special features of the book. In this case there might be several special features. One is the potential for a series of books to follow; therefore a summary of each future book's main focus will be included. Another special feature for this book might be the lay out, break-up of the copy and use of color for print. A recent article by Kirschenbaum (2006) dramatized the effectiveness of visually engaging readers. She described what ancient civilizations seemed to know and what modern-day scientists are confirming - that "colorful visuals are a powerful stimulus to learning" (p. 48). Studies have confirmed that reading black print on white pages causes many regions of the brain to be shut down, while adding color, pictures or designs to the written word activates emotions and promotes learning in different areas of the brain (Kirschenbaum, 2006). Since this book is being written for middle readers for the purpose of entertainment and recruitment to nursing, it is hopeful that learning and motivating will take place. Therefore one special feature might be colorful layout and text presentation of pictures to offer increased visual appeal. An additional special feature might include promotional toys resembling Personal Digital

Assistants (PDA's) or palmtop computers such as those RNs use to communicate to the charge nurse and physicians on their medical rounds in this book, or other toy nursing tools, such as a stethoscope.

A mission statement is sometimes included in a book proposal when an author is passionate about the purpose of her/his book. If this is something the author decides to include, it will consist of one paragraph written in first-person describing the purpose and mission for this book, according to guidelines identified by Larsen (2003).

Resources Needed to Complete Book

A list of personal expenses should be outlined, beginning with an estimation of the largest sum. These expenses might include monies for the book foreword, any permission that needs to be obtained, illustrations and travel expense for research purposes as well as book promotions. Even if the sum of money is not known, a list should be made to inform the editors of potential expenses to complete the book as well as for contract negotiations (Larsen, 2003).

This author plans to contact Suzanne Gordon to write a foreword for this book. Gordon is an award winning journalist and Assistant Adjunct Professor at the University of California, San Francisco School of Nursing. She has made a career out of championing the work of Registered Nurses in the USA and would be a tremendous person to have as the author of the book's foreword. She advocates for nurses to improve the articulation of our professional work, and to change our image from that limited to caring assistants, to include professional aspects of competence, intelligence, change agents and leaders to name a few (Buresh & Gordon, 2006). Estimation of cost for a foreword from a professional is any where from \$500 to \$1000 (Larsen, 2003).

Information about the Author

The final piece required for a book proposal is a short biographical summary of the author. This includes a comprehensive list of publications completed. Although this author has only professional publications, a list of these will be included as they establish professional credibility within the field of nursing and will give some credence to writing ability. In addition to publications, pertinent information about the author should also be included. In this case a synopsis of the author's nursing career, participation in professional organizations and discussion about my passion for nursing will be included.

Marketing the Book

After the book is accepted for publication, a marketing plan needs to be confirmed. The target market for the book would include children's book stores, general bookstores, on-line bookstores, and possibly schools via their library and book fairs. The author would also consider some non-traditional places to market the book, including every general and specialty annual nursing conferences and gift shops of teaching hospitals. The author would also need to establish a web site, where direct sales could also occur.

Publishers generally assist with promotion of their books, although they appreciate an outlined plan detailed by the author, including professionals within the field that could be contacted for a quote regarding the book. This promotional plan may include a media campaign of newspaper, magazine, radio and possibly television interviews. Book signings and seminars are also a part of promoting the book (Larsen, 2003).

Criteria to Evaluate Success of Book

The first sign of success in this project is whether or not the book becomes published. Volume of book sales will be another indicator of success, along with publication of any additional books from the series. The biggest indicator of success in terms of the mission of this author is whether or not middle readers pursue an interest in nursing as a career. Hopefully ten years following publication of these books, the field of nursing will start to show an increase of both male and female nurses in the profession. An additional positive outcome of publication and sale of the book (series) would be an increased public awareness of the pivotal role that nurses play within health care.

Chapter V Conclusion

The process of completing this project has been an incredible journey. Researching details on the current nursing shortage and public view of the nursing profession was illuminating to me, in spite of having a general understanding of these concepts prior to this project. It was heartening to read of the many creative measures that have been employed to recruit more people to the nursing profession, particularly focusing on high school students, men and minorities. Greater diversification will only strengthen the profession and perhaps garner greater respect from the public for the work that nurses do.

It is this author's hope that the creativity employed in writing a children's book will be well received by the public and be another venue by which more people will be recruited into the wonderful profession of nursing. Easing the crisis of the shortage of nurses is an important goal for which to strive. However, I realize as I am completing this project that my purpose has evolved to a different level.

Through the review of literature and frequent discussions held in preparation for this project, I have been reminded of the incredible honor I have each and every time I interact with another person on a professional level, as a nurse. Some interactions are with patients in the hospital or clients in an outpatient setting. Many times the customers are family members or referring physicians. As a nursing supervisor, my interactions with staff nurses would fit into this category as well. There is no other profession of which I am aware that allows one individual to make such a significant impact upon another's life. Nurses have the honor of working with patients during the most vulnerable, fragile times of their lives. And nurses take that all in stride: Building

rapport with patients, assessing, intervening, revising, reassessing and providing education frequently all occur during one single interaction. I see that even after being a nurse for 23 years, I continue to struggle with the ability to clearly articulate what it is that I “do” and how it is that I can make a significant impact upon the lives of others. Perhaps other nurses will find a voice to share the personal stories of the role of nurses in this profession.

The words can sound superficial or superfluous, often they are inadequate to explain how important it is to “make a difference” in the career that you have chosen. I am privileged to be a nurse and to have the capacity to “make a difference” every day I come to work. Perhaps a book series can make a small impact and pique the interest of some children to explore the exceptional world of nursing. I hope to be able to pass this wonderful gift on to upcoming generations, to the nurses of the future.

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