



THE THIRD ISSUE OF OUR NEWSJOURNAL (Sept. 1983) is now available for members only. It contains full reports of our June gathering. We also publish a monthly action network for members, and have many projects underway. If you are interested, let us hear from you!

radical feminist nurses newsletter

Vol. I No. 1 November, 1982

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CASSANDRA: A
REPORT OF BEGINNINGS
by Gretchen LaGodna,
Hagographer

There are times at which events, circumstances and people come together in unique and unexpected ways and something significant and exciting emerges. Such was the case leading to the creation of Cassandra: Radical Feminist Nurses Network. The 1982 A.N.A. convention in Washington, D.C., drawing nurses from all parts of the country, was the scene for much more than formal approved programs and meetings. During the convention concerns about the attenuated impact of feminist issues on nursing and the health care system were constantly being shared and discussed by small informal groups of nurses. The need to extend and nurture this network beyond individual communication resulted in a called informal gathering on June 30, 1982.

June 30th was the date on which time ran out for the ratification of the E.R.A. It seemed an especially appropriate date to mark the creation of a new vehicle for the preservation and

growth of feminist ideals. Of the twenty-five people with strong commitment and interest in forming such a group, twelve were able to gather together on that date. Six states were represented from the East to the West Coast.

The immediate concerns of those present included how to create and develop a group that would truly provide an open forum for feminist nurses from all walks of life and how to avoid the usual male-oriented hierarchy and rigidity of most national organizations. Descriptive language and its influence could not be ignored. We discovered quickly how entrenched power-oriented and militaristic terms are in our own vocabularies and professional culture - terms such as "officer," "board," "organization." In Cassandra, we will make a concentrated effort to re-name and thus re-define the nature of what we do and how we do it from a feminist perspective.

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"Cautious, careful people always casting about to preserve their reputation or social standards never can bring about reform. Those who are really in earnest are willing to be anything or nothing in the world's estimation, and publicly and privately, in season and out, avow their sympathies with despised ideas and their advocates, and bear the consequences."

-Susan B. Anthony (1873)

Beginnings . . cont.

In the course of this initial gathering, consensus was reached on a number of long-range goals. The first of these was the establishment of a national network for women in nursing who embrace a feminist philosophy. The need for an identified network providing information, connections, communication and support is especially critical in a system which works to keep us separated and out of touch.

Another goal was the development of a strong voice through which feminist nurses can take public stands - and be heard - on issues of importance to nursing practice, education and research and health care in general. We simply cannot afford to allow our ideas and opinions on issues to continue to be distorted, compromised or buried as they have been systematically in the past.

The sharing and passing on of skills was also identified as important. Unique skills are recognized in individuals in the development of any group, and Cassandra is no exception. Means to teach and pass on skills must be developed to insure continued growth and strength. A related goal was that of preserving and passing on written materials on women and health. Many significant works have never been published or have been relegated to an "out-of-print" status, thus rendering them invisible and useless. Without access to our herstory, our vision is limited.

The support of nursing research employing a feminist approach and exploring new dimensions of women's health was identified as a strong need. (The rationale for this goal is eloquently explained in the letter from Ann Voda included in this newsletter).

The last major goal was that of education without usual social censorship and bias. Education regarding women and health is desperately needed by nurses, the public, educational institutions and service agencies. We hope to develop means to influence this process.

At the June 30th gathering many ideas were shared in terms of the best ways to begin to implement these goals. This newsletter represents the first step. We hope the newsletter will be a primary vehicle for sharing ideas, soliciting feedback, encouraging the development of

local gatherings, locating and reviewing little known literature, identifying relevant issues, and sharing information.

Other future steps, resources permitting, could include national or regional conferences, the development of a speakers bureau, the development of educational material (including course outlines, bibliographies), the publishing of unpublished works, and the establishment of a feminist nursing journal.

The very first action taken by the Washington gathering was to collect money with which to place a bid in the name of Cassandra on Florence Nightingale's Notes on Nursing at the N-CAP auction. The book brought far more at auction than our available funds, so the group agreed to divert our monies to support this initial newsletter. To reach our journey's goals, strong financial support will of course be critical.

Those of us fortunate enough to come together in Washington have been energized and revitalized by our efforts in the creation of this group. We hope to share this excitement and energy with as many nurses as possible, so our small beginnings can evolve into a major impact.

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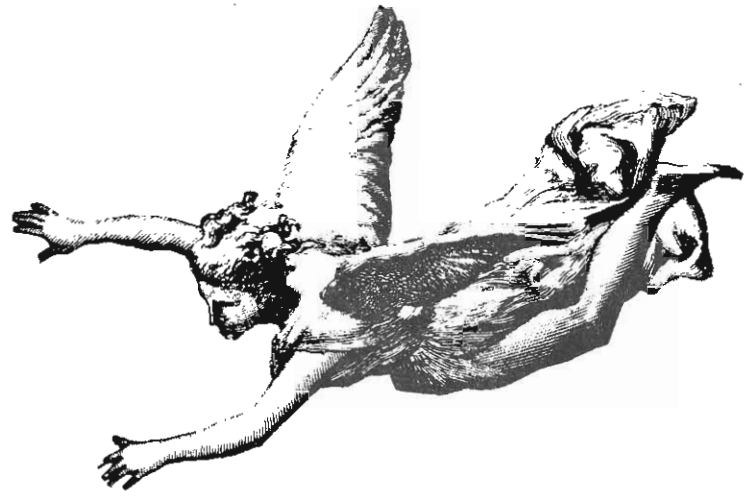
WHAT'S IN OUR NAME???

by Peggy Chinn

The name CASSANDRA came to be selected initially after a group of us had been discussing Florence Nightingale's life and her essay that is titled Cassandra. When we initially thought of naming our group after this essay, in part to commemorate Florence Nightingale, we began to have some reservations about the name because of its symbolic meaning in Greek mythology. We would like to share with you various meanings of this name from the perspective of what is contained in Nightingale's essay and the circumstances under which she wrote the essay, as well as from the perspective of the myths surrounding the name.

Nightingale wrote the essay Cassandra during the brief period of time between her training at Kaiserworth and her service in the Crimean war. She had finally achieved her goal of going to a training school that would prepare her to practice nursing, but then experienced a tremendous despair over not being able to actually put her training into practice in the way that she would have liked. The essay is sub-titled by the Feminist Press (who has recently published the essay), "An angry outcry against the forced idleness of Victorian women." The essay begins with an oblique reference to the mythologic Cassandra, where Nightingale speaks of one who comes to wander alone in the bitterness of life, being aware of the suffering of life, and having awakened to evil that others cannot and will not see, but yet with no power to discover the remedy for it, and denied the companionship of others. She then states the major theme of her essay: "Why have women passion, intellect, moral activity - these three - and a place in society where no one of the three can be exercised?" Her essay builds from here to examine in some detail her view of women's passion, intellect, and moral activity, and the state of affairs that prevents these capacities from being expressed in any meaningful way.

Reading the essay is a difficult undertaking. The language is sometimes foreign and the writing style is no



longer familiar to us today. But the greatest difficulty is in realizing that the words that Nightingale has written are brilliant in their insight, and no less applicable to women today than they were when they were written. Her choice of the title Cassandra reflects not only her knowledge of Greek mythology, but also the symbolic meaning of her despair in not being able to be heard, and in not knowing a remedy for the situation.

The Greek myths that involve the mortal goddess Cassandra are varied in their details, but all carry the same theme - a woman who possessed the gift of prophesy. The most well known (and recent) version of the myth is that Cassandra was courted by the god Apollo, and in his attempt to win her affection he gave her the gift of prophesy. When she would not sleep with him, he cursed her with never being heard or believed. Another version with earlier origins relates that Cassandra was left overnight at the shrine of Delphi as a very young child, and when her mother returned in the morning, she found the child surrounded by sacred serpents who were licking the child's ears, which is how she gained the gift of prophesy. In this version of the myth, there is no mention of Cassandra being cursed with dis-belief.

Our reservations about the mythological symbolism of the name CASSANDRA came from our greater familiarity with the Apollo version of the myth. We are all too acutely aware of the fact that nursing's voice is not heard, and more basically that women's

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Name . . . cont.

voices are not heard in this world. But we know that although myths are very powerful, we do re-create myths. We have retained the name thus far with a firm commitment to be aware of the myths and to re-create the myths by what we do through this gathering of women who are feminist nurses.

The other part of our name, RADICAL FEMINIST NURSES NETWORK, is meant to better define who we are. The term "Radical" has generated almost as much discussion and controversy as the name Cassandra. We have retained this term because of its basic or primary meaning - getting to the root. We are committed to discover and re-search the underlying root of our circumstances in nursing, based on feminist theory and thought. The meaning of the term is beautifully explained by Mary Daly in her book Gyn/Ecology: The Metaethics of Radical Feminism, where she also speaks of re-making myths - of dis-covering our own be-ing "whose science/wisdom is of womankind."

Some women have felt that the term "radical" would "turn off" many women in nursing who consider themselves feminists but do not like the connotation of the term "radical." But others feel that being woman-identified and feminist is indeed radical, and thus even though it is in a sense redundant to say "radical feminist" the clarity that comes with both terms is still needed. Also, there is the very important consideration that many nurses have felt totally alienated from the traditions and ways of nursing as we know them today, and nursing is so tragically alien to feminist sensibilities. Many creative radical feminist nurses have simply left nursing. Many many nurses who are feminists at the core of their being have no sense of community within nursing, and we hope that Cassandra will help us find one another. Radical women, rather than being turned off by the term radical, will find the term the key to dis-covering that there are outside-the-mainstream nurses who share a firm commitment to feminist thinking and being.

The term "radical feminist" also has some specific meanings to various women who have claimed the term as their own. Some women tend to equate "radical feminist" with "lesbian;" others feel that radical implies a left or socialist point

of view. I know of one woman who prefers to think of herself as a feminist radical - conveying yet another sense of meaning. In any event, we know that these terms will evoke a wide range of meanings for those who hear them. Kathleen MacPherson has summarized four major points of view that have evolved in feminist theory in an article titled "Feminist Methods: A New Paradigm for Nursing Research" that will be published in the January, 1983 issue of *Advances in Nursing Science*. One of these points of view is that of "radical feminist," and Kathleen's description of this point of view is very consistent with our intent in using the term "radical feminist" in our name. She says that this view assumes "no preconceived solutions and is perpetually in process and in self-analysis of this process." What distinguishes this view from others is an insistence that the oppression of women is fundamental and that women's oppression exists in all types of economic systems. Our early discussions reflected our conviction that the oppression of women is at the root of our situation in nursing, and it is this meaning that we intend to convey in the phrase "radical feminist." At the same time we are committed to active work in related areas of oppression - racism, classism, heterosexism, and countless other "isms" that oppress all of us, regardless of whether we find ourselves the oppressor or the oppressed.

We decided to use the term "network" partly because it seemed to place a finishing touch on the name, and partly because the term conveys an image of what we envision ourselves to be all about. Denise found a perfect description of the symbolic meaning of the term: "Network is symbolic of a complex relationship beyond a mere time-space sequence, unlimited relationship; a structure formed of the visible and invisible; it is also unity. . ." (An Illustrated Encyclopedia of Traditional Symbols by J.C. Cooper). Since we are attempting to use language that clearly reflects our full intent we feel that this term might not only have a very positive meaning for us, but also help us to avoid hierarchical and bureaucratic terms such as "organization."

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Name . . . cont.

Consistent with radical feminism, we see ourselves at this point having no pre-conceived solutions and as being in the process of analyzing and defining who we are. We urge all of you who are interested in joining this process to respond to these ideas and share your thoughts with us. There is a place for that on the membership form - so please use it!

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THE RADICAL ROOTS OF NURSING
by Denise Connors

Awake, ye women, all ye that sleep,
awake!

-Florence

Nightingale

In answer to Nightingale's call it is crucial that we awaken and re-member the significance of our own history. As with all of women's history, the real story of nursing has been largely lost to us either by erasure, distortion, the enforced silencing of our foresisters, or by the process of reducing our experience to a series of lifeless, boring "facts." The legacy that has been passed on to us is often a misrepresentation - a one-sided depiction of nursing as extremely conservative.

The history of our more radical and prophetic foresisters has often been distorted when not entirely erased. For example, Florence Nightingale (1820-1910), a woman of incredible vision, genius and action has been maligned, misunderstood and misrepresented in mainstream as well as feminist

writing. The remarkable scope of her lifetime achievements has been forgotten while a mere caricature of her has been kept alive.

Although Florence Nightingale's thinking was complex and not always consistent, she was indeed a radical in many ways. Her life was "marked by a considerable departure from the usual or traditional." (Merriam-Webster). She vehemently rejected the traditional role of the upperclass Victorian woman as a passive, dependent, frivolous object. She was radical also in the sense that she was "disposed to make extreme changes in existing views, habits, conditions [and] institutions." (Merriam-Webster). In fact, Nightingale's revolutionary vision had a transformative impact on health, sanitation, nursing, hospital construction and administration and social and political reform. Radical means "going to the root or origin." Nightingale traced the etiology of female oppression to the fact that society prevented women from exercising their passion, intellect and moral activity. She insightfully analyzed the timeshed involved in the endless interruptions of women's lives making it "impossible to pursue the current of one's thought." She also deeply understood the spiritshed of women's lives which she described as "consumed by ennui as by a cancer."

Although Nightingale's diagnosis was to a large extent radical and accurate she considered herself incapable of effecting a cure. In Cassandra (written in 1852) we find that she experienced herself as prematurely awake to the plight of women and therefore forced to "wander out in silence and solitude" with "no power to discover the remedy for it." Since she believed that she was powerless to change women's situation she failed to identify politically with her own sex. Instead she escaped from women's sphere into the world of the male ruling class, becoming divided, a woman severed from her Self and other women. Not recognizing the potential power and energy inherent in bonding with women, she choose instead to work with and through men. In her attempt to fit herself into the male world, she consciously struggled to purge herself of personal feeling during much of her life, to become a "detached, almost disembodied force" (Stone). As she understood the conditions of her time,

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Roots . . . cont.

this was the price she had to pay for gaining access to the world of male power and action.

Nightingale faced essentially the same dilemma that still haunts many women today. Women have been deluded into believing that they are forced to choose between the passive and stifling male defined "feminine" role and the seemingly more powerful and interesting "masculine" role. What is obscured by these two poles of the patriarchal paradigm is that both "choices" arise from a male worldview and neither affirms the richness and diversity of women's lived experience. Either choice involves women's becoming alienated from their true Selves. Florence Nightingale clearly understood the impossibility of accepting the "feminine" role only to become trapped in the "masculine" role. She came to see the world through a distorted lens - one that only reflected male experience and man-made reality - a lens that was opaque to her experience as a woman.

Ignorant of a tradition of knowledge rooted in women's experience, Nightingale was unable to think back through her foresters. Claiming to be "brutally indifferent to the wrongs or the rights of my sex" she was alienated from the thinking women of her own time. As Mary Daly noted in Beyond God the Father "only women hearing each other can create a counterworld to the prevailing sense of reality." Although Nightingale made radical changes within the system, she seemed destined to resign herself to the basic ideology and structure of patriarchy. She had been warned against becoming "too radical, skeptical and querical." Had she lived in a slightly later era perhaps she would have been able to disregard those warning and heartily concord with the advice given by Lavinia Lloyd Dock to Alive Paul: "Pay no attention to criticism. Go right ahead with your splendid and daring resourcefulness..." We can only regret that Nightingale did not dare to go further. Had she become a feminist she could have advanced the cause of women and nursing by light years.

In 1903, seven years before Nightingale's death, Lavinia Lloyd Dock (1858-1956), one of our prominent foresters, urged nurses to confront their predicament. As M. Adelaide Nutting

pointed out, Dock was the "most noble, . . . most largely helpful of women, a student, a scholar, in many ways the greatest spirit that has ever moved in our midst." Dock, not satisfied with superficial solutions, advocated a feminist approach. The process she suggested involved transcending women's socialized passivity, powerlessness, and dependence on male approval. She called for nurses to begin to take creative action, to develop their own power bases, to bond together and form supportive networks with the feminist movement and the movement for women's suffrage. Most significantly, she urged nurses to confront and overcome their subservience to male domination. Unfortunately Dock was another prophetic voice crying in the wilderness - her words and example went largely unheeded.

This is not to say that nursing has not had a rich history of courageous and daring women. Those in the Nursing Hall of Fame such as Nutting, Wald, Thoms, Breckinridge and Sanger as well as countless unnamed nurses, each in her own way, creatively carved out her own existence and in the process alleviated many of the oppressive conditions of women's lives. They were women who refused to resign themselves to the status quo.

While acknowledging the legacy of our more daring and visionary foresters we must also confront the deep stream of conservatism running throughout nursing. This is evident in the fact that we have often given our loyalties and allegiances to those whose vested interests were/are in direct conflict with our goal to become more autonomous, independent and self-directed.

Recognizing that unreal loyalties have been lethal and that false allegiances have drained our energies we must begin to envision viable solutions. As Peggy wrote "For the remainder of this century the most worthy goal that nurses can select is that of arousing their passion for a kind of political activism that will make a difference in their own lives and in the life of our society." (Advances in Nursing Science). By reclaiming and re-memorizing our own history, by creating and affirming our own reality, by truly hearing one another, we will be empowered to radically transform the past, present and

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Roots . . . cont.

future of nursing. This is the radical feminist challenge as well as its hope.

Sources:

Jo Ann Ashley. Hospitals, Paternalism, and the Role of the Nurse (New York: Teachers College Press) 1976.

Mary Daly. Beyond God the Father (Boston: Beacon Press) 1973.

Cecil Woodham-Smith. Florence Nightingale 1820-1910 (New York: McGraw-Hill) 1951.

Elaine Showalter. "Florence Nightingale's Feminist Complaint: Women, Religion, and Suggestions for Thought." Signs 1981, Vol. 6, No. 3.

Laurie Stone. "Florence Nightingale's Immaculage Conceptions." Voice Literary Supplement. April 1982.



LETTER

The following is a letter written by Ann Voda to Peggy Chinn. It expressed so well the thoughts that we had been sharing about the need for a feminist perspective in nursing, that we asked Ann if we could include it in this newsletter. In future newsletters, we will include your letters if you write indicating that you would like to have your letter printed.

Dear Peggy:

Yes, I am interested in a feminist nursing organization. Actually, I have been talking about forming such an organization for a long time but never seemed to be among a critical mass of genuine feminists in order to pull it off. Which means I learned long ago that

there are many nurses who think they are feminists but when questioned or in discussion of feminism and feminist perspectives one quickly finds out they are steeped in the patriarchal system. It is these same women who profess to be "feminist" who propagate and perpetuate sexism in philosophies of nursing care and conceptual frameworks for nursing by stating quite explicitly nursing's mission is to "care for man as a biopsychosocial being" or using some other unfeminist language. In many ways I feel a keen sense of loss in nursing in that as women, nurse scientists could contribute so much to the development of nursing science if they were to use a woman-centered or feminist approach. Let me explain, although I am sure what I have to say you know and I am sure the same ideas were discussed at the ANA when "Cassandra" was formed.

First, let me present what I call an "unquestioning attitude", one which permeates nursing from the bedside to the scientist and how she makes or does science. There is little doubt in my mind that the bedside nurse does not practice nursing. She practices medicine, psychology or psychiatry, or she functions as a teacher. Nursing has borrowed heavily from these and other disciplines in order to be "respectable" and achieve some semblance of having a legitimate body of knowledge. But as was pointed out so well by Donaldson and Crowley, we do not have a body of knowledge called nursing simply because we have not developed a body of knowledge using a "nursing perspective". And, along the lines of the latter, to truly use a "nursing perspective" is to use a "woman-centered" perspective. To do so, however, that is to be a woman and a nurse and to use a different perspective (and we do have one), places one at risk whether at the bedside or scientist's lab bench since such perspectives raise questions and ideas that are inconsistent with the way in which our universe has been defined through patriarchal eyes. So, rather than question, nurses as women and women scientists generally work terribly hard to apply male generated theories and to make science as male scientists do. In so doing they assume that all the basic

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descriptive work on a concept has been done, or that all of the important concepts have been defined, or that the concepts already defined are in fact valid. An example of the latter is the area I am working in related to women's health in which phenomena related to women and their menstrual cycles are conceptualized out of a negative framework. A woman-centered perspective allows one to make an assumption that if such phenomena, i.e. morning sickness of pregnancy, hot flash of menopause, premenstrual tension, are universal accompaniments of woman's reproductive life, one needs to question the survival value of those events and reconceptualize them as having positive, not negative value for survival of the species. I hope I live long enough to have some clout to help reconceptualize such phenomena for women so that a phenomenon like the hot flash will be viewed as a normal concomitant of the menopausal transition.

Secondly, if as feminist nurse scientists we do not "do" our science like the well established disciplines do with their worship of "methodology" we pay the price not only in procuring funds for research but in the publication of our findings. We pay the price in terms of refusal of an article because we have not used the correct patriarchal framework. Or we pay the price in terms of refusal if we dare interpret our findings from a woman-centered perspective which contradicts the patriarchal view of the world.

We need Cassandra to open the eyes of nurses that our work world is a world circumscribed by patriarchy which functions to invalidate our ideas and ourselves. A feminist approach is a wholistic way of viewing the problems confronting the profession but until we can support nurses to believe that there might be a different way of thinking and being, we will be voices in the wilderness in the form of "Cassandra". Further, I don't know whether we will do ourselves much good by labeling ourselves as "radical" feminists. A label of this sort may scare off some women who might be ready for change. I say this because of the responses I have had from nurses as I do workshops on menopause. I can turn-on as a feminist, but if I am radical it frightens the hell out of some women.

I would hope that "Cassandra" would be an official organization. Nurses have let women and the women's movement down. I would also hope that once the birth and delivery are completed that we would become official so that we become as visible as possible. It is only through visibility that we will make a difference. My hope is that we will have a feminist nursing journal, one that is a vehicle for sharing research in nursing as conceptualized and interpreted using a feminist perspective.

I am so glad you wrote. Please feel free to share my letter with the other members (founders) of "Cassandra".

Sincerely, Ann M. Voda



REPORT From the coordinating cronos of Cassandra of our gathering in Lexington, Kentucky at Unicorn Hill on Sept. 24-26, 1982. Denise Connors, Gretchen LaGodna, Jo Hendrix and Peggy Chinn

This is a brief summary of the items of discussion that we included in our non-meeting! We actually did accomplish a great deal, and managed to connect with several of our founding group over the course of the time we spent together to check out ideas and confirm plans. We made no decisions that are firm, but did come to some consensus on things to help us move along and not

Report . . . cont.

evaporate into space somewhere.

We discussed at some length the problem of defining our processes and our responsibilities (otherwise known as structure!). We remained resolved not to create a hierarchical structure, but we had a really hard time figuring out what we did want and how to prevent the tyranny of structurelessness. We need to have responsibilities clearly defined, and be able to keep our processes moving with some degree of accountability. Rather than try to figure all of this out now, we felt that we could propose a temporary assignment of responsibilities that could be shared by more than one person. We are proposing that we hold to these responsibilities (or some version of them) for a period of three years while we try to figure out how we want to do things. We have listed the responsibilities that we projected needing to be done, and the individuals who will be primarily responsible for them. We thought of these individuals as the primary contact people - many more women will certainly get involved in actually doing the tasks. We feel that we are all theorists, mythologists and spinners of ideas, as well as diligent journeywomen getting our ideas into action. But we need some way to identify who is actually doing what!

We decided to assign ourselves the coordinating crones - we will assume major responsibility for knowing what is happening as we move along this early part of the journey, and for picking up the gaps when they occur (which also means making sure that gaps do not occur when we can avoid them).

Denise Connors, Emily Chandler and Linda White are assuming responsibility for the budget and for legal matters. All three are in the Boston area, and our bank account is already established there. Emily is starting to work with a woman lawyer to get our non-profit incorporation under way. We will probably have to call ourselves official titles for this purpose, but we will deal with that when the time comes!

Linda White is still, as we concurred in Washington, our Herstorian.

The first newsletter prepared (copy gathered, prepared for lay-out, layout) by Peggy Chinn. This is a responsibility that we will rotate for each newsletter, and the coordinating crones

will coordinate this! For the first issue, Maxine Loomis and Jean Wood have arranged for the Nursing folks at the University of Illinois to handle the printing and distribution.

Peggy Chinn will be responsible for membership. We have made arrangements to use her post office box as our official address, and her new word processor will efficiently handle the mailing list.

Bev Hall will be responsible for our first national gathering, which as we speculated in Washington could be in San Francisco sometime in June next year. We hope to feature women's art and music, and use women's space somewhere, but any ideas that any of us have on this should travel to Bev!

Gretchen LaGodna, who took notations of our first gathering in Washington, will be our hagographer. She will keep current records and then pass them on the Linda as they become herstory. We took some wild pictures of our gathering at Unicorn Hill (Jo and Gretchen's old Kentucky home) that we are very eager to share with you all! That may be the extent of "minutes" that Cassandra will feature!!

We also discussed with great excitement the possibility of beginning a feminist journal - taking up where we left off in Washington. For more news about the journal see "A Feminist Nursing Journal" in this newsletter!

We talked about future features for the newsletter, such as herstory, research, myth, re-views (of books or other creative work), notes/networking (messages, requests, ideas), re-source listings. We designed a press release announcing the founding of our network, which we hope to have published in several different existing publications over the next few months - including AJN, Nursing '82, ANS, NOW Newsletter, Women's Health Network Newsletter, Off Our Backs, New Women's Times, American Nurse -etc. If you have any suggestions on this, please contact one of the crones.

We outlined a tentative list of expenses for the first draft of a budget, which has been developed further and is in this newsletter. We estimated that we can meet this budget as proposed with membership contributions if we have about 100 members (Our math leaves something to be desired perhaps.

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Report . . . cont.

but we will see how things work out!). Our main concern is to de-mystify the entire process of how money that is gathered is then scattered.

This gathering was truly fun, exciting, and energizing. We hope to hear from everybody who joins this venture.

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LOOK FOR THESE FEATURES IN FUTURE NEWSLETTERS!

We are planning to produce at least three newsletters each year. We will include as many items as we can in each issue, and encourage everyone to make contributions. Send your ideas, letters, notices, etc. to CASSANDRA, P.O. Box 341, Williamsville, N.Y. 14221.

The regular features that we plan to include in each newsletter include:

-Herstory. Here we hope to have someone provide information that expands and enlightens our background. Denise Connor's article in this issue is an example.

-Re-search. We need to provide information on how we can search and re-search our realities, sharing information about research that we are doing or have done, or ideas about developing feminist research methods. You don't need to be a "researcher" to contribute - all searchers are welcome!

-Myth. This feature can include a wide range of topics -from explorations of myths that we need to destroy or re-create (like the Cassandra myth) to myths that we are creating or dis-covering!

-Re-views. We want to make information available about books that are of particular significance in the feminist and nursing literature. If you find a book that you would like to review, or if you find one that you would like to have someone else re-view, please let us know.

-Notes/Networking. This will be a section in which we will include any notes, messages, calls for connection, or brief items of interest that you want to share. These notes can include things like a request for information on a particular issue or topic, notices about events that you think other women would be interested in, requests for assistance with an issue, problem, study or idea that you are working with - any brief message!

-Re-sources. We will gather together information about books, articles, individuals, groups - any type of resource that might be helpful for us to all know about. If you know of something along this line - particularly things that don't ordinarily get publicized in the nursing journals please let us know, and we will include it in this section.

Can you think of anything else you would like to see included? Let us know!!

BUDGET REPORT

At the first gathering of the Coordinating Crones, we projected a tentative budget. Since that gathering we have refined our projections, and this budget reflects what we hope to work with for the first year. Because we want to de-mystify our financial matters, we will provide information on what has been actually gathered in the way of money, and how we have used the funds to date.

Newsletter (3 issues/year)	\$1,500
Cost of Cassandra for all Cassandrans	150
Publicity	100
Incorporation	500
Logo design	100
Printing and communication	250
Bank and accounting fees	250
	<u>\$2,850</u>

EMILY ERWIN CULPEPPER

The CASSANDRA logo was prepared by Emily Culpepper from Cambridge, Massachusetts, where she is a doctoral candidate at Harvard. Emily is a rebellious white woman, originally from Georgia. She is immersed in her work on her dissertation on Revolt of the Symbols: Philosophia in a Feminist Key. She has published numerous articles in academic and feminist journals. Her most recent publications are: a chapter entitled "The Spiritual Dimensions of Radical Feminist Consciousness" (in Understanding the New Religions); and a chapter entitled "Exploring Menstrual Attitudes," (in Women Look at Biology Looking at Women).

Emily's longstanding fascination with menstruation has led her to collect a variety of women's stories, myths, anecdotes, artwork, health information and customs. She has made a film about menstruation, Period Piece. She is founder of Artemis Productions, a lesbian group that produces feminist music. Before entering the otherworld of academia, she was a Massachusetts Adoption Social Worker for three years. She urges all women to explore our witch-healer wisdom and to bond together past the bondages of patriarchy. She sees women currently reaching new power through breaking silences and inactions around race, ethnic and class realities. She feels blessed to have supportive women friends and is passionately committed to the cause of female freedom.

Emily's illustrations have appeared in the following publications:

-two illustrations in Beyond God the Father: Toward a Philosophy of Women's Liberation, by Mary Daly. Beacon Press, 1973.

-Cover drawing and one illustration in The Church and the Second Sex: With a New Feminist Postchristian Introduction by the Author, by Mary Daly, Harper Colophon, 1975.

-Cover Drawing for Falling Off the Roof, by Karen Lindsey, Alice James Press, 1975.

-Frontispiece for Gyn/Ecology: The Metaethics of Radical Feminism, by Mary Daly, Beacon Press, 1978.

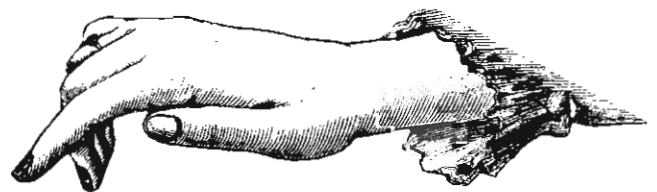


A FEMINIST NURSING JOURNAL?!

One of our visions is making a feminist nursing journal a reality. We discussed this possibility at the gathering of the coordinating cronies in Lexington, and decided that we would prefer to make this a reality as an independent publication - as opposed to working with or through an existing publisher. We know that we would be unduly constrained by male-owned and operated publishers, and the women's publishing houses are not equipped, as far as we know, to financially or practically handle a journal such as this one would be. So we talked about the options - and are proposing that we begin to establish a fund that could be used to underwrite such a venture. We don't know yet how much we would need in the fund to begin, but project several thousand dollars. (As a note, we decided not to use a sliding or step-wise scale for membership contributions to Cassandra, but to identify special projects such as the journal that individuals and groups can contribute to in the interest of giving extra support to identified projects and goals within Cassandra)

We have not progressed to the point of defining exactly what type of journal it would be, except that we are clear that publishing feminist material anywhere is very difficult, and this would be one way to get feminist ideas, approaches, thinking, action into print. Our newsletter is a start, but we will not be able to publish lengthy articles and still have the kinds of features that promote networking.

One of the indications as to whether a feminist journal would be possible will be the response that we have to membership in Cassandra. We anticipate that most Cassandrans would be likely subscribers, and there would probably be other subscribers as well - individuals, institutions, and groups. If you have any ideas about how we can go about planning for a journal, and would like to work on this project, please write to us!



FEMINISM IS DEAD

It's 1982, and the ERA is dead.
Well, not dead, says the National Organization for Women.
The ERA has just suffered a small setback, that's all.
Oh, okay, if that's all it is.

It's 1982 and the San Francisco Chronicle said,
Feminism is out among younger women surveyed.
I have never been discriminated against.
Feminists are such unhappy people.
We do not need feminists.

It's 1982 and long skirts are in.
High heeled shoes, too.
Feminism is out.
Do you understand that, woman?

It's 1982 and Nightingale is dead.
Has been for 72 years.
We hardly remember her anymore.
Wasn't she the one who never got married?
Died an invalid.

It's 1982 and feminism is dead.
But, listen, we don't have to be nice about it.
Malvina Reynolds said,
The ones that bleed you like to see you nice.
So, you and I, let's don't be nice, okay?

-Beverly A. Hall



WHEN YOU JOIN CASSANDRA, YOU WILL RECEIVE NIGHTINGALE'S CASSANDRA

That's right! We feel that everyone who joins this journey needs to be able to read and absorb this important essay. It was published in 1979 by the Feminist Press (Box 334, Old Westbury, NY 11568). The booklet includes an Introduction by Myra Stark, which provides a sketch of Nightingale's life, some observations and analysis of her work in light of modern feminist thinking, and some information about the social and political context of the time when she wrote the essay. The essay is followed by an Epilogue by Cynthia Macdonald, which is a poetic tribute to Nightingale's life and work. We know that you will find this booklet a valuable and inspiring addition to your library.

APPRECIATION TO WOMEN WHO WORKED ON THIS ISSUE. . .

Maxine, Jean, and the women at the University of Illinois for printing and mailing this first issue of the Newsletter.
Penny and Laura for preparing mailing labels.
Charlene for layout.
Gretchen, Jo, Denise, Bev, Emily, Ann, Peggy, and Susan B. Anthony for material, ideas, and planning.
Peggy (with the help of the technological wonder Frigid) for word processing and preparation of text.
Florence Nightingale for inspiration.



The illustrations appearing in this issue are from Women: A Pictorial Archive from Nineteenth-Century Sources, New York, Dover Publications, 1978.

MEMBERSHIP FORM
CASSANDRA

YES - I want to join Cassandra and receive my copy of Nightingale's Cassandra.

Name _____

Address _____

City, State, Zip _____

Enclosed is my first annual contribution of \$25.00, which covers the cost of Nightingale's Cassandra. *

*Women will not be denied membership based on inability to contribute. If necessary, service can be exchanged for membership.

I am interested in a national gathering of Cassandra in June 1983 in San Francisco, and would like to attend if I can.

IDEAS, RESPONSES AND COMMENTS:

(Please use the back or attach additional pages if needed. In addition to just sharing your ideas, let us know if you would like to be involved in any of the work, such as writing for the newsletter, planning for gatherings, planning for the journal, or anything else you think of!)

Return to:
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To: