Defining 'authority' in nursing education textbooks, c.1930s: An examination of core texts from a hospital-based registered nurse program

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DEFINING “AUTHORITY” IN NURSING EDUCATION TEXTBOOKS, c. 1930s: AN EXAMINATION OF CORE TEXTS FROM A HOSPITAL-BASED REGISTERED NURSE PROGRAM

Elizabeth Bucciarelli, Eastern Michigan University
Michigan Academy of Science, Arts, and Letters Annual Conference
Saginaw Valley State University, March 4, 2016
Dedication

To my mother, M.D.S., who instilled in me the wonders of the human body and the skills to heal it.
The Importance of Textbooks in Nursing Education

“Internet sources and technologies have created opportunities for faculty to explore and deliver health information as never before in our history, but the standard approach of a textbook (online or hard copy) remains an efficient way to present content areas, especially in courses. (Cassata, 2009, p. 301)
What is Evidence-Based Health Care?

Good Authority=Good Evidence

Evidence-Based Medicine

“The conscientious, explicit, and judicious use of current best evidence in making decisions about the individual patient. It means integrating individual clinical expertise with the best available external clinical evidence from systematic research” (Sackett, D, BMJ, 1996)

Evidence-Based Nursing

“The society defines EBN as an integration of the best evidence available, nursing expertise, and the values and preferences of the individuals, families, and communities who are served...” (Sigma Theta Tau, 2005)
## Types of Authority Cited in 1930s Core Nursing Textbooks

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Book Title Abbreviation</th>
<th>Chapter Bibliography</th>
<th>Professional Credentials of Authors</th>
<th>Author Notes, Intro, Preface</th>
<th>Notable Med/Ed Publishers</th>
<th>Nursing Journals</th>
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Criteria for Inclusion in This Study

- Part of the textbook collection used in the hospital-based registered nurse program at Canonsburg General Hospital, 1935-1938

- Excluded were:
  - pocket guide, *Human Anatomy* (1930)
  - a large pamphlet, *The Control of Communicable Diseases* (1935)
  - Pocket guide, *Dosage and Solutions, a Textbook for Nurses and a Reference Book for Physicians and Nurses* (1932)
What Constitutes Evidence Authority in the Nursing Field in 2016?

- Use of:
  - Classic works
  - Articles from peer-reviewed journals
  - Government-generated statistics and reports
  - Position statements from professional organizations
  - Identification of an area for systematic inquiry
  - Use of multiple sources to verify significant information (Cassata, 2009)
Current Evidence Authority in Nursing Textbooks

Title Page

Contributors

Technical Writers Page
Current Evidence Authority in Nursing Textbooks

Chapter References

References

EBucciarelli
Criteria for Defining Evidence Authority for this Project

- Bibliographies – book or chapter
- Professional credentials of the authors
- Author notes, introduction, acknowledgements, preface, foreword
- Notable medical or education publishers
- Nursing journals cited
- Medical journals cited
- Professional or organizational documents
- Multiple editions or reprints
- Other documents, e.g., footnotes, government publications, nursing manuals
Key to the Textbooks Examined in This Study

- **TPPN** = *Text-Book of the Principles and Practice of Nursing* (1934) - Bertha Harmer, R.N., B.S., A.M.
- **MMPT** = *Materia Medica Pharmacology and Therapeutics* (1933) – Maude B. Muse, R.N., A.M.
- **TMDNINC** = *A Textbook of Medical Diseases for Nurses Including Nursing Care* (1934) – Arthur A. Stevens, A.M., M.D. and Florence Anna Ambler, B.S., R.N.
- **NHDN** = *Nutrition in Health and Disease for Nurses* (1935) – Lenna F. Cooper, B.S., M.A., M.H.E., Edith M. Barber, B.S., M.S., Helen S. Mitchell, B.A., PhD.
- **NHO** = *Nurses Handbook of Obstetrics* (1934) – Louise Zabriskie, R.N.

*Dates are copyright dates not reprint dates*
# Types of Authority Cited in 1930s Core Nursing Textbooks

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Examples of Authority

Chapter Bibliography/References Page

*Materia Medica Pharmacology & Therapeutics*

BIBLIOGRAPHY

T. F. 40. Camphorated oil for hypodermic use should be kept in a bottle with a glass stopper and kept safe for use by frequent sterilization in a water bath.

BIBLIOGRAPHY


New and Nonofficial Remedies, (1933).


Stevens, A. A. A Textbook of Therapeutics (7th Ed.) W. B. Saunders Company, pp. 141–146, 225–228.

United States Pharmacopoeia, X.

Useful Drugs, American Medical Association, (1930) p. 48, and p. 143.

Examples of Authority

Professional Credentials of Author(s)

Author Notes, Intro., Preface, Foreword
Examples of Authority

Author Notes, Intro., Preface, Foreword

Author Notes, Intro., Preface, Foreword
Examples of Authority

Notable Medical Publisher

Notable Medical Publisher

Notable Education Publisher
Examples of Authority

Nursing Journals

Medical Journals
Examples of Authority

Professional Documents

Organization Documents
Examples of Authority

- Page Footnote w/o Chapter or Book Bibliography

...with even greater stress on the hygiene of the individual—on its relation to the environment, the prevention of disease, the health of the individual, the family, and the whole community.

4. Research which gradually extends the bounds of knowledge as to the causes and the means of prevention, and the keeping of accurate and uniform records and statistics.

5. The early recognition of symptoms and both concurrent and terminal disinfection to prevent the spread of the disease are among the most important preventive measures common to all communicable diseases.

Specific Preventive Measures: Active and Passive Immunization.—The second great chapter in the control of communicable diseases, the chapter which is still far from being completed, is concerned more with the individual: with protecting him, by the use of vaccines and sera from infections which have...
Discoveries

- ‘Bibliography’ referred to items the author recommended for further reading NOT to items used or cited in the creation of the work.

- Further reading lists were printed in the beginning pages, chapter ends, and appendices of the books, sometimes with no indication as to what the lists pertained.

- The reprint date was often called the book’s copyright date.

- The title on the book’s spine did not always match the title on the actual title page of the book.
Discoveries

- Signs that public health nursing was on the rise
  - Acknowledgement of the food preferences of different ethnicities
  - Acknowledgement of the limited income families can spend on healthy foods
  - Role of the nurse in disease prevention & health promotion
  - Impact of poor diet on health & disease

- Creativity with newspaper, e.g., wrap a washboard to create a tray, line beds
- Emphasis on hygiene, both personal and in the home & hospital
- Florence Nightingale’s works were still generously quoted
- Emphasis on the art and the science of nursing
Discoveries

Notes in the preface:

- teaching instruction, i.e., “[anatomy and physiology] can best be taught in connection with a laboratory work...to teach by any but the laboratory method seems inexcusable”. (Kimber, Gray, Stackpole, 1934)

- “It is doubtful whether the students for whom this book is intended are sufficiently prepared to profit by the study of scientific journals, and to list chapter or page references in advanced textbooks does not commend itself.” (Kimber, Gray, Stackpole, 1934)
Conclusion – Authority Defined, in Order of Priority

- Author credentials cited on the book title pages
  - Teaching positions, position titles & locations
  - Degrees
  - Administration, directorship, and supervisory positions

- Cited references in:
  - Footnotes
  - Prefaces, forewords, acknowledgements, introductions, author notes
  - Chapter bibliographies/references
Conclusion – Authority Defined in Order of Priority

- Types of documents cited:
  - *Books – pages, sections, chapters*
  - *Professional organization documents, e.g. Chemical Foundation, AMA*
  - *U.S. government publications*
  - *Privately published documents, e.g., teaching outlines, hospital procedure manual*
  - *Pictures and diagrams*

- Notable medical and education publishers

- Outside authors credited for specific sections and chapters of books, either in the preface or acknowledgements, or at the beginning of the actual section

- New editions and reprints
Textbooks Examined in This Study


