

Sep 16, 2008

RE: NRES-D-08-00140, titled "A masculine character in a predominantly feminine profession: Religion and Gender in a Men's Hospital and School of Nursing, 1866-1969"

Dear Dr. Wall,

Recently you sent your manuscript for consideration by Nursing Research. The review of your manuscript is complete and the comments of the reviewers are listed below along with a checklist for style. You may revise your manuscript based on the reviews and resubmit the manuscript to Nursing Research for further consideration.

I will verify that this has been done upon receipt of the revised manuscript.

The reviewer's idea that photographs would improve the presentation is a good one. We can include photographs in the print journal and if you like, additional ones could be posted on the Nursing Research Editor's Website.

Please include with your revised submission an itemized, point-by-point response to the comments of the reviewers. The revisions should be completed by Dec 15, 2008 to avoid being considered as a new submission.

To submit a revision, go to <http://nres.edmgr.com/> and log in as an Author. You will see a menu item called "Submission Needing Revision." Please click on this item to obtain your submission record and begin the revision process.

With Kind Regards,

Molly C. Dougherty, PhD, RN, FAAN
Editor
Nursing Research

Reviewer Comments:

Reviewer #1: The subject of this paper is of great interest to nursing. The Alexian Brothers have been a part of nursing history, and a subject of curiosity. This paper is a beginning to understanding the why and how of their contributions to nursing.

I reviewed the paper as a historical research project and will comment on it as such.

Abstract:

Background - to say "a study of the Alexian Brothers challenges the dominance of the "female " in most gender analyses" is a bit sweeping and does not take into account the other male dominated schools. Over its history the Alexian Brothers had only 779 graduates.

Methods- "historicizing" is not a legitimate term.

The author speaks to using the same sources, "photographs and written literature" . There are no photographs; 2-3 would add to this paper. There are archives listed in the references. They should also be mentioned here.

Results- line 3 "established truths"- not appropriate here unless he can tell us what

those truths are.

Line 7 "masculine spaces" needs to be defined. I don't understand what this refers to.

Paper:

Overall the paper is well written. However it reads like the literature review or a theoretical paper. The problem is that the Author needs to add primary source examples to document his statements. There needs to be more emphasis on the research with the conclusions and comparisons to previously published sources. The following areas need evidence of historical research.

Page 2 lines 4-7 say more about what you mean, or come back to that statement at the end of the paper and show through the paper what you mean.

Page 3 line one instead of saying "the paper shows" say. "Conclusions based on the research..."

Page 5, line 10 need to explain how the hospital became known for industrial accident care. What did you see in the archives/research?

Page 6 line 13 "quoted in.." It is best to check the original source.

Page 8, line 20-22 Insert a photograph from the archives.

Page 9, line 1 this is your conclusion. You need to site some primary evidence to support it.

Page 9, line 11-16. Provide primary evidence examples to support these statements.

Page 10, line 2. Insert the source for the statement (Before "During..")

Page 10, Lines 3-7 . How did this scenario play out? Cite primary evidence to support this statement.

Lines 8-10 Add primary evidence examples.

Page 11, line 12 Insert your source after "...organizations."

Page 11, Move your source form line 22 up to line 19 after "transferred".

Page 12 line 5-6 . What was the significance of having 11 brothers and 61 secular students? How did the atmosphere change? Did the older brothers who were teachers express their feelings about this?

Page 12, line 18-19. Can you provide a ca. date by analyzing where it was located and how it fit into the file/folders?

Page 13 , line 1 Author id missing from the citation.

Page 13, line 6-9. Needs examples from the evidence.

Page 14, line 2. Add your source after "...nurses"

Line 9 Add your source after ""...country?""

Line 16 Add your source after "...proven it.?"

Page 14 line 13 - 16. The statements here imply the men had a "better than thou" attitude. Did you see evidence of this attitude in other situations?

Page 16. line 13-14 Needs examples from the evidence.

Page 16, line 19-21 . Add your source after "...nursing."

Page 17, line 11. the "established truths" should be defined so everyone knows what the author is thinking.

Page 17, line 19 . Define "masculine spaces". Does the author think the Brothers were successful in "debunking stereotypes of ..."?

References:

Sources not listed in references- page 1, line 9, Burke 2005,
page 5, line 12 Wood 1994.

Ferguson, page 19, is out of order.

Reviewer #2: The manuscript represents a timely and thoughtful exploration and analysis of the role of gender and religion in the development of professional nursing. Using the Catholic Alexian Brothers Hospital and School of Nursing as a site where male nursing students, both religious and lay, were trained and worked as nurses, the author documents the introduction of males into American nursing. In 1866 when the German Alexian Brothers religious order opened and staffed a Chicago hospital to serve the medical needs of poor men and boys, the profession and public's view of nursing and nurses was expanded to include males as caretakers.

Opening a nursing training school in 1898 to educate Alexian Brothers and lay men to become nurses with a catholic outlook, the author captures many of the tensions that were experienced by the older members of the community as the numbers of religious nurses decreased and the lay nurses gained prominence. The challenge for the Alexian Brothers was to keep abreast of the advances in medical care and technology and keep their hospital and school professionally competitive with other hospitals, yet retain its Catholic ministry and heritage.

State legal nursing requirements forced the school's curriculum to become more professional and to lessen its emphasis on preparing men to become religious brothers. In addition, the expansion of the hospital and patient census forced them to adopt more male oriented activities to recruit lay men into their nursing program.

Using information gathered from the Alexian Brothers' archives and from pertinent secondary sources, the author provides the reader with an understanding of how this unique all male hospital and school managed to keep pace with the societal, medical and nursing changes that took place from 1866 to 1969. In doing so, the author offers a persuasive argument that, despite the current literature that claims that nursing is predominately female because women naturally possess the

characteristics that nurses need to care and nurture patients, the Alexian male nurses did provide compassionate, competent and professional nursing care to their patients. The men walked a difficult line between claiming that nursing should not be restricted by gender while at the same time advocating that men, because they were male, had certain talents that women nurses did not possess. It was a claim however, that was not challenged as long as the institution remained an all male province

Interestingly, the story told by the author is still unfolding today as more men enter the ranks of the nursing profession and the public benefits from having both females and males as nursing providers.

Suggestions and comments for the author include: 1) Add more information about the restrictions that society and the profession place on male nurses during World War II. This would strengthen current nurses' understanding of the discrimination that male nurses endured before they were easily accepted in the workforce. 2) Compare the nursing careers men seek today versus what they sought in the past. I believe men are still drawn to positions that afford more independence and autonomy than that found in doing bed side patient care. 3) Catholic brothers are not considered "lay men". They are part of the religious community of priests, friars, brothers, monks and sisters. In addition, the major headquarters for the Alexian Brothers order is not referred to as the "motherhouse". Only women religious refer to their official residence as the mother house. I believe the official Alexian Brothers residence is known as the Generalate. 4) For a nursing school to achieve state accreditation all areas of nursing must be taught. Where did the Alexian students get their obstetrics and pediatric experiences? There were some children patients but this service was too restrictive to qualify as adequate. 5) The author's stated question that was to be addressed was "How does the entry of men into nursing affect their perception of differences between man and women?" (page 1). It was not addressed in the manuscript. I'm not sure I understand the question or that it can be answered when Alexian students only worked in a male only institution.

CHECKLIST FOR STYLE -----

TITLE PAGE -- Shorten title to 12 words or less (no abbreviations), if possible.

Supply running head of less than 50 characters (no abbreviations).

ABSTRACT --

Provide an abstract with the manuscript document.

Supply 2-3 keywords; use MeSH guidelines if possible.

REFERENCES --

Please use an ampersand (not "and") between the last two authors in the ref. list and the in-text citations, if applicable.

Update IN-TEXT CITATIONS using APA 5th Ed. Format (The Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association, 5th Edition, pp. 208-209). In particular:

On first citation of a reference, list all authors if there are less than 6. For following citations, use first author followed by et al. (e.g., Gijswijt...).

Update "Author 2005" references.

Add in-text citation of the following reference to the reference list: Wood 1994.

Complete _____ 1995 reference. It is not included in the text.

Alphabetize Ferguson reference in the ref. list.

OTHER -- Check publication date for "Memorable Events" in Diaconian. 1952 or 1955?