

From the Editor-in-Chief

A Loonie for Your Thoughts?

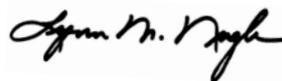
The Royal Canadian Mint recently ceased production and distribution of the Canadian penny, hence gradually retiring its play in currency interchange in this country forevermore. This decision leaves us with coin boxes, coat pockets, jars, dresser tops and other sundry recesses bereft of an item that has been part of Canadian life since 1858. It also leaves us with numerous quips and adages that will hold no meaning for future generations. Remember *a penny saved is a penny earned* or *a penny for your thoughts*? Nickels, dimes and quarters may soon follow. So much for an offering of sage advice to not take any wooden nickels. But seriously, will the disappearance of currency denominations have any reverberating effects on the social order? Not likely. Since time began, societies have repeatedly adapted to much more important and impactful changes.

The extent of personal experience with societal change is largely correlated with longevity, but it can also be chronicled in conjunction with technological advances. Lives of at least a half century have experienced the introduction of television and the Internet, and transitions from land lines to smart phones, records to iTunes, typewriters to tablets, and for nurses, from Mrs. Chase to SimMan. Anyone with a nursing history dating back to circa 1960 or earlier can likely provide a litany of many more technological transitions they have experienced or witnessed over the last 50 years. Some of the more pervasive technologies have not only altered traditional modes of human interaction, but also the nature and quality of those interactions. For a profession that is quintessentially rooted in interpersonal competency, the implications may be profound. Additionally, the ubiquity of computerization has led to the decline of enduring literacy skills, including basic numeracy and in the not too distant future, perhaps the art of cursive writing. Is reading next? So much for the publishers of this world, not to mention editors.

Suffice it to say that technology is evolving in society and healthcare at unparalleled rates. In some respects, healthcare still has a way to go in relinquishing antiquated paper-bound processes in favour of more efficient, and likely safer, approaches supported by technology. Yet although today's student nurse is connected, networked and impatient with our traditional modes of teaching, in some clinical settings the technologically savvy are still being thwarted in their desire to use such devices as smartphones to support clinical practice decisions. As described in previous editorials (Pringle and Nagle 2009; Nagle 2012), dated policies and misconceptions about the use of these tools in practice still need to be addressed by nurse leaders. Co-existing with the emerging professionals are the many seasoned expert nurses who are making every effort to learn and adapt to the changing technologies of care, but still are not being provided with sufficient support to ensure successful integration of technology into their practice.

In this issue, Acorn and Osborne offer perspectives on Boyer's model of nursing scholarship, and Velji proffers an additional commentary on its relevance to practice scholarship. While the issue of technological change is not an emphasis in either paper, the emergence of new capabilities to advance nursing and practice scholarship are implicit. In view of changes in society and healthcare, how will we adapt our means of discovery, integration, application and teaching to ensure that our scholarship evolves effectively and meaningfully? The elements of scholarship as we know it today will likely be replaced by new concepts, modalities and ontologies. During this time of technological transformation, nurse leaders must be cognizant and attend to the needs of both the emergent and veteran nurse professional. But perhaps most importantly, a concerted effort must be made to preserve and, in some situations, recapture the essence of what it means to co-exist, work with and care for other human beings – the fundamental reason that most of us chose nursing in the first place.

Resorting to other coins instead of the penny, rounding up, rounding down, you lose some and win some. In the face of technology, what do we have to gain or lose as a practice discipline? Let's hope that not all the basics dissipate into the stratosphere; in my view, a live face-to-face interaction still trumps the virtual option. A loonie for your thoughts...



Lynn M. Nagle, RN, PhD
Editor-in-Chief

References

- Nagle, L.M. 2012. "Lead Us Not into Temptation to Text." *Canadian Journal of Nursing Leadership* 25(1): 1–3.
- Pringle, D. and L.M. Nagle. 2009. "Leadership for the Information Age: The Time for Action Is Now." *Canadian Journal of Nursing Leadership* 22(1): 1–6.

“doable, affordable,
and ensure the
sustainability of
the public
healthcare system.”

more on page 23