

TO BE THE EDITOR OF REBEn: a special place

By Joel Rolim Mancia*

With this issue I close a six-year journey during which I participated in organizing the most-respected periodical of Brazilian Nursing. I consider being a scientific editor as a fascinating, challenging, and responsibility-requiring task. To be the editor of the Brazilian Nursing Magazine (REBEn) is a privilege involving all the fascination of being in a place that makes it possible to interact with the knowledge produced in the area and to contribute towards its publication. That is how I have lived the editorship of REBEn: as a place that publishes a certain kind of knowledge and a place that, while involved with this publication, also influences what can be the object of knowledge and how it can (or must) be communicated. Precisely for understanding this work in this way, it has also demanded tremendous learning from me.

I started my activity as an editor in November 1998, timidly participating in the editing of the last installment of volume 51 of REBEn, an issue that closed the work of the previous editorship. One of our first decisions, as soon as we took office, was to exempt REBEn from the commitment to publish the scientific production presented in the Brazilian Congress of Nursing, because every year there was an accumulation of texts that would compete against the spontaneous demand of researchers, which would make their evaluation and publication unfeasible. This measure, which at first caused much dissatisfaction among ABEn's partners and congress members, was, at last, accepted, because one understood that we were in other times, in times of evaluation and that the previous format would put us in an unfavorable position in the general ranking of periodicals.

At the same time, the large number of received originals, the high articles rejection rate by evaluators, and the limitations in publishing all the qualified demand in a short period of time without causing the themes/objects of discussion to get out-of-date led us to propose the reduction in the magazine periodicity from a quarterly to a bimonthly basis, thereby increasing publication from 4 to 6 issues a year. That made possible an increase in space and a higher speed to publish the scientific production of the area.

Another work front we gave priority to was the increase in the number of subscribers to the magazine. When we took over the organization of REBEn we had less than 200 subscribers, largely because, just like almost all periodicals of our area, one has to be a subscriber in order to publish in REBEn. Today, when we transfer the magazine to the new Board of Directors of ABEn, we transfer it with 800 subscribers, still without changing that policy, and that is a rather significant number if we consider that

the average of subscribers to academic magazines is about 450. We know, however, that this front also includes several challenges to be faced, starting from the discussion of a question raised in a debate in the last Brazilian Congress of Nursing, that is, that a publication should invest in an editing policy focused, mainly, on the formation of a public made up of subscribers/readers rather than a public of subscribers/authors, which the current relationship between possibility of publication and subscription ends up prioritizing and maintaining; a discussion we cannot separate from another one involving, precisely, the matter of the funding methods of our publications.

Also, over these years we have been able to share with the community of Nursing editors and researchers the organization of the National Meeting of Editors of Nursing Periodicals, a strategy ABEn has developed to promote the qualification of the magazines specializing in the area. This Meeting, which is at its 7th edition already, has consolidated itself as a space for discussion for Nursing editors, giving rise to the National Forum of Editors of Nursing Periodicals, which currently brings together all the magazines of Brazil.

Many other indications of the changes we have made in order to better serve our readers and to qualify our communication vehicle could also be pointed out, as they have strengthened both the magazine and ABEn. As examples, we can cite funding from several government agencies such as CNPq, FINEp, Health Ministry, PAHO, and UNESCO; at international level we have enlarged our indexing bases (Cinahl, Cuiden, Ulrich's, UAM Newspaper and Magazine Section); we have included consultants from other countries in the Editorial Council; we have come closer to Spanish-speaking countries by participating in the Spain-based *Consejo Iberoamericano de Editores - CIBERE*; and we have a proposal to hold the 2nd *Conferencia Iberoamericana de Revistas de Enfermería* of member countries in Brazil in 2005 or 2007. This set of measures has placed us as an international circulation periodical at the CAPES ranking.

In addition, the policy of publishing thematic issues was very well received by researchers and has functioned as a way to announce areas that, so far, had had little expression in the periodicals. With the aim of making them visible, as of 2000 we have organized one thematic issue a year, the first of which was on Family Health, with a 20,000-copy edition – a landmark in the history of magazines – with national and free distribution. In 2001, in celebration of ABEn's 75th anniversary, we prepared an issue about the association's history, containing 25 texts and

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constituting a remarkable document due to the contributions made by authors of this area. In 2002 we celebrated the magazine's 70th anniversary with a thematic issue addressing its history over that period. We believe that in providing space for the publication of texts on the History of Nursing, both in these two thematic issues and in the **'History of Nursing'** section of REBEn, we have contributed so that this line of research could increase its visibility in Brazil. In 2003, with a 5,000-copy and 30-article edition, we addressed the 'Education applied to Nursing' theme, from the viewpoint of the Curriculum Guidelines that were being implemented nationwide. Nursing Administration was the theme chosen to announce the 2004 thematic issue. That issue was organized in order to present the most recent information in this area, containing both commissioned texts and spontaneous demand. With 26 articles written by 68 authors, it has certainly contributed towards including the best of nursing administration in a single document.

Finally, on my leave-taking I want to thank the many people who have helped me write this history:

- the researchers who contributed with their production and placed it at the disposal of the periodical
- the consultants who complied with all of our requests, not only by analyzing texts, but also by opining on the magazine organization and producing in a made-to-order way
- those who worked with the editor in the most permanent and closest way in Rio Grande do Sul, for their contribution and our learning, especially professors Clélia Soares Burlamaque, Maria Henriqueta Luce Kruse, Anna Maria Hecker Luz, Flávia Regina Souza Ramos, Dagmar Estermann Meyer, Valéria Lunardi, Jane Lynn Garrison Dytz, Jussara Gue Martini e Denise Pires;
- the presidents of ABEn, Eucléa Gomes Vale and Francisca Valda da Silva, for the trust that allowed me to hold office for all this time and develop the collective work we proposed and developed over these years.

Thank you very much!