

## LETTERS *to the editor*

The "Write On" column is intended as a forum for students to respond to articles in *Imprint* as well as issues in nursing today. Please send your letters to: *Imprint* Editor, c/o NSNA, 45 Main Street, Suite 606, Brooklyn, N.Y. 11201, or e-mail to [nsna@nsna.org](mailto:nsna@nsna.org), att. WRITE ON.

I am responding to the article, "A Guide to Scholarly Writing in Nursing" in the September/October 2006 issue of *Imprint*. As a community college librarian who frequently works with students in our 2-year Associate of Science in Nursing program, I was interested to see what topics would be covered. In an otherwise wonderful primer on how and why to write a scholarly paper, I was dismayed to find that the only means recommended to the students for actually *finding* resources for the literature review was "an internet search."

I am in complete agreement with the authors that the open internet does have many valuable resources. However, it is critically important also to inform student researchers that a far more efficient and effective way to search for academic literature is to make use of databases that organize and provide access to this literature. It is highly likely that the institutions the students attend for their nursing courses have invested thousands of dollars (at minimum) in providing access to the professional/academic nursing and medical literature that resides in proprietary online databases (for example, Cinahl® and the like), that cannot be viewed on the open web. Even though an internet browser is used to access these databases, the fact that they are not part of the open (or free) web is an important distinction to make. At most colleges and universities, these online resources can be used on campus by anyone, and off campus after entering a validating ID and password.

Additionally, most of the current nursing and medical journals that students should be locating for their literature

reviews cannot be viewed without paying a fee. Even PubMed, a free service of the U.S. National Library of Medicine (on the web at [www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/entrez/](http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/entrez/)) and an excellent means for searching the biomedical literature, does not include copies of the journal articles (though an increasing number are now provided free by publishers, or may be accessed through an institutional subscription).

Beginning academic researchers (actually *all* researchers) now face an increasingly daunting challenge of sorting through literally millions of potential sources of information. The use of specialized academic databases is often not easy for someone beginning in a professional field, but fortunately, most college and university librarians are more than willing to help students get started!

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### *Author's response:*

I agree with what the author is stating and don't know how this was overlooked. It took two years to get this published and I guess we lost track of this part of the article.

**Harriet R. Feldman, PhD, RN, FAAN**

*Correction: In November/December's issue of Imprint in "Beverly Malone: An Image of Leadership," renowned nursing theorist Hildegard Peplau was incorrectly identified as Hildegard Peplum.*