

Book Reviews

MARRINER-TOMEY, A. (1989). *Nursing Theorists and Their Work*, 2nd ed. St. Louis: Mosby.

BY

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George's Perspective

Nursing Theorists and Their Work (2nd ed.) presents an introduction to the analysis of nursing theories and then describes the four categories of nursing theory: art and science of humanistic nursing, interpersonal relationships, systems, and energy fields. This text provides a partial reflection of the status of the development of nursing knowledge. The uncertainties with which those interested in theory development in nursing continue to deal are represented in the preface and throughout the book. Although the title refers to nurse theorists, the preface and chapter discussions indicate that many of the works reviewed were not intended to be theories and that others are labeled as models rather than theories. Such inconsistencies in the development of nursing theory contribute to the difficulties in compiling a text whose purpose is identified as a tribute to nursing theorists. One of the difficulties is exemplified by an initial description of the authors whose works are included as major thinkers in nursing and a later description of them as scholars rather than theorists. Such difficulties have contributed to inconsistencies throughout the book.

To avoid confusion, authors of the works included as theories or models will be referred to as theorists. The focus here will be solely on the status of the works included as theories, the book's introduction to theory, the book's usefulness as a reference source for bibliography and biography, the classification of the theories, the contributors to the text, and the discussion of the theories.

Although the title implies that all of the works that are included are theories, the preface indicates that this is not the case. Those that are not considered theories are not clearly identified, however. But the works that are classically included in discussion of nursing theory are included. New to the second edition are chapters about the works of Patricia Benner and Ramona Mercer. Understanding of nursing science would be enhanced if a clear definition were provided about which of the works included are theories *for* nursing and which are theories *of* nursing. In *Nursing Theorists and Their Work*, theories of both types and of various levels are treated equally. For the initiated, the differentiations can be obtained through a careful reading of the introductory chapters and then each specific theory chapter. The preface, however, indicates that the book is intended to be useful to both undergraduate and graduate students. Greater clarification would be useful for both levels of students but particularly so for the undergraduate student who is a novice in learning about, let alone analyzing, theory. The proposal in the preface that undergraduate students might want to focus on only a portion of each of the theory chapters is probably unrealistic; reading only a portion of a chapter limits the information made available to the reader.

Nursing Theorists and Their Work does provide a useful view of the theories and models that are discussed. Inclusion of the theoretical sources, underlying assumptions, use of the theory in nursing practice, education and research, and plans for further development present material which is helpful in making decisions about the application of the theory. The utility of the text would be enhanced if the reader were advised to seek out information about the content of each of the theories/models before reading the analysis chapters. Those with knowledge of the works of the theorists will find this book to be

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a helpful adjunct to their existing information. Access to the analyses by others contributes useful food for thought.

The first edition of *Nursing Theorists and Their Work* made a major contribution to the development of nursing knowledge by providing an extensive bibliography for each of the nurse theorists presented in the text. This was the first general publication of an excellent source of information about both primary and secondary sources for each of the theorists. The identification of sources as primary and secondary was useful to students at all levels. It is unfortunate that the second edition does not provide an updated bibliography. In several instances only the first edition of a book is cited, even though that book has had one or more editions published since the first edition of *Nursing Theorists and Their Work*.

Another important contribution which was made by the first edition of *Nursing Theorists and Their Work* was the biographical information provided about each of the theorists. This valuable source of data has been retained in the second edition. It is too bad that the amount of information cannot be consistent from theorist to theorist. It must be recognized, however, that the chapter authors are dependent upon the information that the theorist is willing to share. It would be helpful to be able to compare such items as the age at which the theorists entered nursing practice and the era in the development of nursing knowledge during which each began her contribution to nursing theory.

Choosing to classify the theories/models as art and science of humanistic nursing, interpersonal relationships, systems, and energy fields provides one mechanism for viewing the works. Limited rationale is provided for the selection of the categories or the placement of a theorist's work within a category. Use of such categories requires force-fitting of some works because the works of several of the theorists fit more than one of these categories. For example, Imogene King was categorized as an interpersonal relationship theorist in the first edition and is listed as a systems theorist in the second edition. Cogent arguments could be made for either classification because King's conceptual framework is based in general system theory and her theory of goal attainment relies upon establishing an interpersonal relationship. The use of such categories also hampers the formation of a historical perspective on the development of nursing knowledge. This is offset to some extent by the chapter on the evolution of nursing theory development.

The list of contributing authors covers six pages. This list indicates the contributors come from a variety of areas of nursing practice. Included are those who provide direct delivery of nursing care, administrators of nurs-

ing services, and nurse educators. This breadth of practice arenas strengthens the possibility that the theory critiques will consider various aspects of nursing. The educational preparation of the various authors is not included. The authors of the chapters in unit I on analysis of nursing theories all hold faculty positions with a rank of assistant professor or above and may be assumed to hold doctoral degrees. Other contributors hold a wide variety of positions which do not support such inference of educational preparation.

The format of each chapter is the same: biographical information, theoretical sources for the development of the theory, use of empirical evidence, major concepts and definitions, major assumptions, theoretical assertions, logical form, acceptance by the nursing community in practice, education and research, plans for further development, critique of simplicity, generality, and derivable consequences. Having a consistent chapter format enhances the reader's ability to compare various aspects of the works of each of the theorists or compare one theorist with another. However, as the backgrounds of the contributors vary, so does the depth of the analysis among the theory chapters. This is particularly apparent in the critique sections. The length of the other sections of the chapters may vary because the amount of available information varies. For example, some of the theories have had many applications in nursing education; others very few. The same is true for practice and research. The critique, however, is more dependent upon the chapter authors' input and less dependent upon other sources of information. The critiques vary in length from less than one half-page to two pages. It is clear that the amount of support provided for critique statements varies widely. For example, the authors who critiqued the theory of Martha Rogers did so in approximately one half-page. If the critique were supported with discussion, the presentation of simplicity alone would take more than one half-page! An inference that can be made from this wide variation in the depth of discussion, particularly in the critique sections, is that the chapter authors vary in their own scholarly development.

In summary, *Nursing Theorists and Their Work* makes an important contribution to the study of the development of nursing knowledge through its collection of bibliographic resources and biographical information about major contributors to the development of nursing theory. The bibliographies are further strengthened by division into primary and secondary sources. The second edition has not provided as thorough an update for references as the first edition provided. As is true for a number of publications in the area of nursing theory, clarification as to which of the works

are theory would aid the student in using this text. This text is useful as an enhancement of the reader's understanding of nursing science. However, the lack of theory overview hampers its use by undergraduate students, and the wide variations in the quality of analysis and critique hampers its use by graduate students. It is useful as a reference book but not as a primary learning tool.

Goodwin's Perspective

Ann Marriner-Tomey sets the tone of the book in the opening sentence of the preface—"This book is a tribute to nursing theorists." Indeed, segments of some chapters devoted to the credentials and background of theorists are interestingly written and convey an apparent intense appreciation of the theorists by the authors. Marriner-Tomey tells us that many of the scholars identified in the book "... do not consider themselves theorists and never intended to develop theory" (p. xi). She then asks the rhetorical question, "Is it fair to evaluate them as theorists and their work as theory?" She answers her question by saying, "Probably not, but their thoughts are important contributions to the development of nursing theory" (p. xi).

It is perhaps the stated intent "a tribute to nursing theorists" that diminishes the usefulness of the book for many of us. *Tribute* has a dictionary definition of "... acknowledgment of gratitude, respect, or admiration ... restricted to contexts involving things that merit praise" (*American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language*, 1976). The Marriner-Tomey work does succeed as a tribute to the standard bearers of nursing theory development as well as some whose work has had relatively little effect on theory development. Perhaps the recording of this effort will in time prove to be of historic significance. But, it would seem a far wider audience would have been reached had the book been more substantive in its definition of conceptual models, theory, and the process of theory construction, analysis, and evaluation. Having established that foundation, then the presentation and critique of models and theories that follow could be more instructive.

Marriner-Tomey, it would appear, is an expert at logistics. She has managed to coordinate the efforts of 115 contributors to the book presenting 28 theorists. In each chapter devoted to a theorist, reference is made to recent interviews of theorists and correspondence between authors and theorists, giving one the sense that material presented is *au courant*. This currency is somewhat blurred, however, by some lapses in both accuracy and consistency. For example, in the chapter on "Evolution of Nursing Theory Development," state-

ments made in the synopsis of each theory are not always congruent with the chapter devoted to those same theories. Rogers' work is described as "... highly abstract and lacking in testability" (p. 55) in the general chapter. In the chapter devoted to Rogers, examples of studies are given and repeated reference is made to testing of components of Rogers' theory as well as hypotheses generation (p. 410). In the chapter on Leininger's work, we are told in the text that the Sunrise model has been refined since the late 1950s. We are also told that the model is presented in the 1985 publication *Qualitative Research Methods in Nursing* edited by Leininger. However, the figure depicted in Marriner-Tomey is not the Sunrise model presented in several other sources, including Leininger's book (Leininger 1985, p. 45), and the caption under the figure states the model was developed in 1968 (p. 155).

The reader who pursues clarification of other chapters may also find a bit of a maze. The chapter on Joan Riehl-Sisca's work leads us to Riehl and Roy 1980 and to the chapter therein by Riehl. From there we move for clarification to a chapter by Rose (Riehl and Roy 1980). Rose includes what he calls generic assumptions which are identical to the genetic assumptions in Marriner-Tomey (pp. 255-256). The reader is then left wondering what is the most efficient way to learn about Riehl-Sisca's work.

According to the preface, *Nursing Theorists and Their Work* is meant to be useful to students at both the baccalaureate and graduate level of study. That in itself is an admirable goal, but the book leaves us in doubt as to which level of student, if either, is well served. The first chapter, provides an overview of the book. The chapter, which is deemed by Marriner-Tomey as appropriate for the baccalaureate level, begins with a paragraph devoted to reasons for theory. It continues with succinct definitions of major concepts and processes of theory development. Semantic clarity of some of the definitions would be enhanced by elaboration and/or use of associative definitions (Chinn and Jacobs, 1987). For example, *paradigm* is defined as "a conceptual diagram" following Watson (1979). The remainder of the definition adds, "It can be a large structure used to organize theory" (p. 4). Chapter 1 continues with a brief presentation of criteria for evaluation of theory.

Theorists are grouped into four categories: art and science of humanistic nursing, interpersonal relationships, systems, and energy fields. These terms are not defined, nor is it abundantly clear how some theories are placed. For example, Abdallah's 21 problems are presented in the humanistic nursing category. Even when reading the material with the mind set that it is humanistic nursing, it fails to convince the reader. Marriner-Tomey

says in the preface that the categories are “. . . not mutually exclusive” (p. xi). A paragraph on each of the theorists presented in the book follows, and the chapter concludes with what is labeled “Evaluation of Theory Development.” Perhaps this is a typographical error since the content is a synopsis of historical trends, or evolution, in nursing theory development.

Chapter 2 is devoted to terminology of theory development. Science, knowledge, phenomena, philosophy, theory, concepts, relational statements, assumptions, models, and range of theory and paradigm are defined and discussed. *Paradigm* is first mentioned in the penultimate paragraph. Because this is the only reference to *paradigm* other than the previously noted definition, it would seem more distinction could have been given to the notion of *paradigm*. If one considers the logical sequence of theory development, an understanding of *paradigm* as an umbrella covering the source of theory components, earlier mention would seem justified. Keck, the author of chapter 2 states her belief that conceptual models, conceptual frameworks, and *paradigm* are synonymous terms.

Chapters 3, 4, and 5 are on the history and philosophy of science, logical reasoning, and theory development process. That one feels rushed through these chapters is likely directly related to the use of a scant 24.5 pages of text for the three chapters from a 464-page book. Yet some of the content is particularly clear in presentation. Illustrations of logical reasoning were interestingly developed.

The selection of theorists reflects some of the imprecision in focus throughout the book. Conceptual models are interspersed among “theorists” and their work. The distinction between the two is not always highlighted, it is the readers’ loss that Paterson and Zderad were not included at their request (p. xi). The selection of Wiedenbach, for example, is not adequately justified. The statement is made that, “At present there is no specific research supporting Wiedenbach’s work” (p. 241). Acceptance of Weidenbach’s concepts in practice, education, or research is only tangentially addressed. Trends which may be viewed as multifactorial emergents are related implicitly to Wiedenbach’s work by such statements as “. . . although not specifically based on Wiedenbach’s model, numerous nursing research studies have been carried out in those areas [to promote family relationships . . . foster sound health practices] (p. 249). If there is justification for selection of Wiedenbach (as Meleis, among others, apparently believes), (Meleis, 1985, p. 263) then it would have been helpful to have those reasons explicated. In the same vein, a sense of the dynamics of theory development could have been graphically illustrated had the continuation of Hen-

derson’s work by Adam been presented in the chapter on Henderson. Instead, tribute is paid to Adam and her work four chapters later (p. 133).

Criteria used to evaluate what are variously described by the writers as models, theories and philosophies, include *clarity* for only 10 of the 28 “theorists” presented. Chinn and Jacobs (1987, p. 137), Stevens (1984, p. 54), and others consider clarity a key element of internal analysis. In fact, chapter 1 of Marriner-Tomey includes clarity in the criteria for evaluation (p. 6). Yet it does not appear in all of the critiques.

The strength of the book is the readability of most of the chapters. The obvious enthusiasm of the writers is conveyed and should appeal to students. The bibliographies at the end of each chapter are a good point of departure for more extensive study. Because the foundational information on theory development and evaluation is brief and seemingly rushed in some places, it would be difficult to have the book serve as a text. It would be a good source for an introduction to the work of selected theorists for undergraduate students. For graduate students, the book may be a helpful additional source on the theorists under study. Perhaps future editions will reach more of us if the purpose is less a tribute to the past and more a push to the future.

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Guthrie’s Perspective

The second edition of Ann Marriner-Tomey’s book *Nursing Theorists and Their Work* is in some ways very much like the first. The preface and the first six chapters, for example, are unchanged. Some notable differences in later chapters are the reclassification of Imogene M. King’s work into the category “Systems” (Marriner-Tomey does not explain the reclassification); the addition of two new scholars, Benner and Mercer (she likewise does not explain why these two were added); and substantial updating in the chapters on individual scholars and their work.

In her preface Marriner-Tomey states that the aim of the book is to acknowledge some of the major thinkers in nursing and to review

some of their most recent publications. She organizes this content into five units. The first, "Analysis of Nursing Theory," contains six chapters, which cover analysis of nursing theory in general, the history and philosophy of science, the process of logical reasoning, the process of theory development, and the evolutionary process related to theory development in nursing. The remaining four units of the book explicate the ideas of individual nurse-scholars. Unit II, "The Art and Science of Humanistic Nursing," includes the works of Nightingale, Henderson, Abdellah, Hall, Orem, Adam, Leininger, Watson, Parse, and Benner. The ideas of Peplau, Travelbee, Orlando, Weidenbach, Riehl-Sisca, Erickson, Tomlin, Swain, Barnard, and Mercer are discussed in the third unit entitled "Interpersonal Relationships"; and the works of Johnson, Roy, King, and Neuman are described in the next unit, "Systems." The last unit, "Energy Fields," deals with the works of Levine, Rogers, Fitzpatrick, and Newman. Each of these chapters includes a description of the scholar's work and background; an in-depth presentation of the major concepts, definitions, assumptions, and theoretical assertions in the scholar's works; a general critique of the scholar's contribution; and an extensive list of related primary and secondary publications.

From this reviewer's perspective, Marriner-Tomey's effort, although valiant, is somewhat overshadowed by a lack of attention to clarity, integration, and logical flow of ideas. The book's organizational structure limits logical passages among and between chapters and units, thus preventing a harmonious flow of ideas toward a central theme. In Unit I, particularly, the individual chapters are quite independent of each other and fail to provide an explicit frame of reference for clear understanding of the subsequent units. In addition, certain aspects of chapter 1 and chapter 6 are redundant: both of these chapters include descriptions of the individual scholars and their works. These descriptions are superficial, and

many of them are outdated, notably those in chapter 6, which ignore the updates on particular theorists' works that appear in later chapters. Chapter 6 could well be omitted and chapter 1 expanded to include a more detailed rationale for the categorization of certain works. This addition might enhance the integration of the first unit with the others.

The need for more attention to clarity begins with the title of the book, *Nursing Theorists and Their Work*. This title is misleading in that the book encompasses more than the works of those known as nurse theorists. Although Marriner-Tomey does state in her preface that many of the scholars she has included are not considered theorists and never intended to develop a theory, she never expounds upon or identifies for the reader which of the mentioned scholars are considered theorists and why.

Another area that warrants further clarification is Marriner-Tomey's very use of the term theory as exemplified throughout the book. Her labeling of all the scholars' works as theories is very misleading and confusing even to someone well-versed in theory and theory development. Furthermore, in her discussion of the categories used to group scholars, Marriner-Tomey gives only an implicit definition of what theory is and does not describe the unique characteristics of each of her categories, thus leaving the reader without a rationale for her grouping of the scholars. This vagueness limits the ability of the reader to comprehend the discussions of the scholars' works completely and to follow those discussions logically.

Despite these problems with the integration and clarity of *Nursing Theorists and Their Work*, as a whole, Marriner-Tomey's contributing authors are to be commended for their penetrating and inclusive discussions of the individual scholars' works. These substantive descriptions, along with the extensive bibliographies, are impressive and warrant recognition from the nursing community.

Second International Family Nursing Conference

The Second International Family Nursing Conference sponsored by Oregon Health Sciences University School of Nursing, Montana State University College of Nursing, University of California San Francisco, Department of Family Health Care Nursing, and the University of Washington School of Nursing will be held on May 21-24, 1991, at the Lloyd Center Red Lion, Portland, Oregon. For more information contact Linda G. Krentz, RN, MN, at Second International Family Nursing Conference, Department of Family Nursing, EJSN 230, Oregon Health Sciences University, 3181 SW Sam Jackson Park Road, Portland, OR 97201-3098. Phone: (503)279-8382.