



GOLDEN APPLE
HEALING & ARTS
PUBLICATIONS



PERSPECTIVES ON CULTURAL DIPLOMACY

Editorial – *Perspectives on Cultural Diplomacy* Vol. 1 Nursing
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Enlightenment in the Circle of Culture

A teacher is one who brings together different ideas, paradigms, and perspectives for consideration. Culture is that teacher. Diplomacy seeks to bring people together in the spirit of peacemaking. The round table represents the place prepared for dialog, discussion, and the airing of controversy through debate and the pursuit of synergistic solutions. This new E-Publication series, *Perspectives on Cultural Diplomacy*, brings together the teacher (culture) with people prepared to learn in the spirit of peacemaking (diplomacy). In so doing, we believe that there is great potential for learning and enlightenment.

Enlightenment in earlier times has, according to some historians, been linked to reason and science as it is separated from experience and sensitivity. Some scholars have argued that those with authority and power who exercised their reason did so to “increase their power and enhance their authority” (Porter, 2001). The enlightenment sought by the work of publishing this new series is different. This publication series seeks to bring reason, science, experience, and sensitivity together in all of their forms. The basic “three-legged stool” that supports cultural diplomacy, and therefore this series, is built from Art, Science, and Spirituality.

According to Hermetic tradition, enlightenment or a new consciousness is the result of the conjunction of seemingly opposing forces. One example is the nature-technology interface (Libster, 2008). The circle of culture welcomes all interfaces and opposing forces in the pursuit of unity while preserving the dignity in diversity. The series provides a forum for the discussion and expression of the process to enlightenment.

The series begins with this volume on *Nursing and Cultural Diplomacy*. It was nursing scholars and clinicians, who started the Bamboo Bridge where our action research about cultural diplomacy and nursing began. We continue to hold a vision for cultural diplomacy in nursing and health care that expands as the need for enlightened health care grows. Nursing is a human science and a spiritual practice in care and comfort that historically has been referred to as a “blessed art” (as cited in Libster & McNeil, 2009, p. 48). Therefore, it seemed fitting to start with this topic for volume one. In the spirit of nursing, all are welcome to the circle of culture where we commit to raising an E-Publication where all may exercise reason for the purpose of peacemaking and explore the possibilities of enlightenment that can come from spirited dialog.

Libster, M. (2008). Elements of Care. *Holistic Nursing Practice*, 22(3): 160 – 170.

Libster, M. & McNeil, B.A. (2009). *Enlightened charity*. Naperville, IL: Golden Apple Publications.

Porter, R. (2001). *The Enlightenment*. 2nd ed. London: Palgrave.