



RE: ***Stories from the Tenth-Floor Clinic: A Nurse Practitioner Remembers*** by Marianna Crane

She Writes Press

ISBN 978-1-63152-445-5; 5.5 x 8.5; Trade paperback; \$16.95 U.S.; 212 pages; E-book ISBN 978-1-63152-446-2, \$9.95

Part of the proceeds of the sales of this book will go to [Erie Family Health Centers](#)

EXCERPT FROM

Stories from the Tenth-Floor Clinic: A Nurse Practitioner Remembers

The slap of bare feet on linoleum caught my attention before a tall, wild-haired man in boxer shorts and sleeveless undershirt appeared in the doorway.

Dropping my pen on the desk, I shoved the chair back, ready to bolt from the room—except that he blocked the way, breathing heavily, and leaning against the door jam. He wasn't angry. He wasn't carrying a weapon. He looked so unsteady that I probably could have pushed him over with one hand. My surging adrenalin began to subside. After all, this was a clinic.

"What can I do for you?"

...

"In this thoughtful and compelling memoir, Crane's keen eye for detail brings her stories, by turns heartbreaking and humorous, to life on the page. . . . Crane's passion for helping others is obvious even as she struggles to figure out the best way to do that. An honest, compassionate look at what it takes to care for some of America's most vulnerable citizens."—*Kirkus Reviews*

"Marianna Crane writes with compassion and insight about what it's like to serve on the front lines of the medical profession—treating the most vulnerable among us. Her vivid account is **moving and enlightening, a valuable contribution to the literature of social justice."—Philip Gerard, Professor, Department of Creative Writing, University of North Carolina, and author of *The Art of Creative Research***

Stories from the Tenth-Floor Clinic: A Nurse Practitioner Remembers By Marianna Crane

Marianna Crane loved her job working in one of the country's first programs in gerontology. She felt a connection to her patients and valued her role in their care. But when she herself was not valued for her work, Crane decided to make a change and accepted a position coordinating a clinic that cared for poor, underserved elderly and which was located on the tenth floor of a Chicago Housing high-rise.

Crane knew how to be a nurse, but what she didn't know, and what her memoir so movingly recounts, is how much beyond her role as a nurse practitioner was required to

assist older patients. She found herself planning a funeral, exposing relatives preying on the vulnerable, and hauling a mattress up the elevator. Also, she learned to offer medical care in people's apartments even when people would not seek it —because care was needed. Most importantly, she learned how significant teamwork is in working with this population.

In *Stories from the Tenth-Floor Clinic: A Nurse Practitioner Remembers*, Crane offers readers a compassionate and insightful look into the world of nursing but even more so, she offers readers stories about endearing people, stories that remind us all what it means to human.

Long an advocate for the importance for recognizing the invaluable work nurses perform, Crane uses her memoir to give readers a greater understanding of what nurses/nurse practitioners do each day, a perspective that she hopes will increase understanding of the nursing profession.

MARIANNA CRANE became one of the first gerontological nurse practitioners in the early 1980s. A nurse for more than forty years, she has worked in hospitals, clinics, home care, and hospice settings. She writes to educate the public about what nurses really do. Her work has appeared in *The New York Times*, *The Eno River Literary Journal*, *Examined Life Journal*, *Hospital Drive*, *Stories That Need to be Told: A Tulip Tree Anthology*, and *Pulse: Voices from the Heart of Medicine*. She lives with her husband in Raleigh, North Carolina. Find her online at <https://nursingstories.org/>.

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PRAISE for Stories from the Tenth-Floor Clinic:

"...**an important memoir** detailing the complex needs of an aging population..."—***Windy City Reviews***

"The book is a case study on how nursing is so much more than caring for a patient's medical needs. Nurses care for the whole patient including all of their medical, physical, mental, emotional and social needs. **Being a nurse myself, I really enjoyed reading this book and getting to know glimpses of the patients she saw in the clinic. This was a quick and easy read and really reminded me that we have such an impact on our patients' lives long after we stop caring for them. I would recommend this book** to any nurse or human-being who enjoys reading about human relationships and the bonds we form with one another."—***Nerdy Book Nurse***

"**Crane truly is an inspiration . . . Readers will see her compassion, heartache and ability to admit her mistakes in her emotional writing . . .** I highly recommend *Stories*

from the Tenth Floor Clinic by Marianna Crane to all families, caretakers and those who work with the elderly.”—**Reader Views**

“Nurse practitioners are well known for their willingness to be primary care providers for the ‘underserved’ . . . Society prefers that such patients remain invisible, because acknowledging their existence is too unsettling. **It is my fervent hope that *Stories from the Tenth-Floor Clinic* will find a wide audience of readers who are willing to meet and care about the people nurse practitioners allow into their lives every day.**”

—**Marie Lindsey, PhD, FNP, health care consultant and founding member and first president of the Illinois Society for Advanced Practice Nurse**

“ . . . poignant and compelling . . . **With empathy, compassion and wit Crane makes an important contribution to the literature of a frail population.** We, who research these folks, are indebted to the author for her insights and unvarnished truth.” —**Peter J. Stein, Ph.D. former Associate Director, Aging Workforce Initiatives, University of North Carolina Institute on Aging**

SPEAKING WITH MARIANNA CRANE

1. Why did you write this memoir?

I began to journal in the 1980s after I became a nurse practitioner and started to work in gerontology. The increased responsibility and the complex needs of my elderly patients challenged me. Writing down my nursing stories eased my anxiety.

When I retired, I began to write in earnest. While I sorted through the stories I collected, I realized that one of my jobs, coordinator of the senior clinic in a Chicago housing high rise, offered the greatest concentration of colorful characters, unique situations, and challenging scenarios. By the time I sifted through my memories, contacted some of my co-workers, and reread my journals, the senior clinic stories became a book.

2. What do you hope readers take away after reading your book?

My book describes a nurse practitioner's broad scope of practice in a non-traditional health care setting and the effects that a diverse health care team can have on patient outcomes. It also touches on the restraints to nursing practice by the medical establishment during the time period of the story and, I hope, sensitizes the reader to similar barriers that exist today.

Issues facing the elderly thirty years ago still continue. Poverty, multiple chronic illnesses, social isolation, and mental health disorders require more than medications, lab tests, and fifteen-minute clinic appointments to correct. Nurse practitioners are capable and effective in addressing the multiple needs of this population. My book shows that traditional medical care is not always the answer to some problems.

3. You are donating proceeds from the book. Please tell us more about the recipient organization.

When I started at Erie Family Health Centers back in the early '80s, the senior clinic was its first satellite clinic—it had just opened in a Chicago Housing high rise—unique and unconventional. I learned from both my patients, and the staff that were dedicated to service and sensitive to the needs of older patients. My experience there provided the freedom to practice and grow in knowledge and skill, albeit sometimes unwittingly. It made me realize how much a team approach to geriatric care improved the outcome.

It was only after I started to write about my experiences at EFHC that I saw what an invaluable experience it was—and how unique my patients and those with whom I worked were. I am indebted to my patients and staff of the senior clinic for providing such a wealth of material for my nursing stories.

EFHC still serves the community: the underserved and at-risk populations. In 2017, EFHC celebrated its 60th anniversary. It remains a model of community care.

4. What do you think, as one of the pioneering nurse practitioners (NP) in geriatric care, that the medical field needs to know about caring for older patients? What about the general public?

Most of the issues facing the elderly that are mentioned in my book, unfortunately, are still a problem today. There is a lack of interest by physicians to train as gerontologists. Insufficient financial rewards and the negative stereotype of the aging population add to this shortage. Many of the health problems of this cohort can be well handled by advanced practice nurses but unfortunately, the medical establishment in some states still restricts NP practice.

The general public needs to recognize that NPs are in a unique position to care for the older population and support legislation that can correct the obstacles. In some states, physicians are not interested in setting up a practice in rural or inner-city areas where the elderly are underserved, and at the same time resist supporting NPs who would step into this role.

5. You care very much about how nurses are viewed and treated. What are your concerns? How do you envision your book contributing to the conversation about the public perception of nurses?

I have very real concerns about how the nursing profession and the contributions of nurses, including advanced practice nurses, are not well understood or appreciated. Nurses are not always involved in making health care policy, which is a sad omission since nurses are the professionals who spend the most time with patients and can speak for the patient and family, ensuring that what is needed for successful outcomes is provided. I keep a blog where I chime in on these issues and continue to encourage nurses to tell their stories. I wrote this book with hopes that the general public will enjoy my stories and that they will see the broad scope of services nurses/NPs provide.

6. When did you start writing? Is all your writing nonfiction?

I began writing as a young girl. I wrote poetry and prose sporadically all my life. I have saved some of my old efforts—handwritten on yellowing lined paper. I have written a few uncompleted fiction pieces that I plan to get back to in the future.

7. Are you still a nurse?

Once a nurse always a nurse. However, I have let my nursing license lapse.

8. Is your book for nurses or the general readers, or both?

Both. Nurses, students and faculty will recognize the challenges and the obstacles to practice that are keeping advanced practice nurses from reaching their full potential. The general public gains insight into the day-to-day responsibilities of an NP caring for a caseload of ambulatory elderly and the barriers that have historically impeded expansion of nursing practice that still exist today.

ABOUT MARIANNA CRANE



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