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# Researching Nursing History in Australia: Using Autoethnography as Method!

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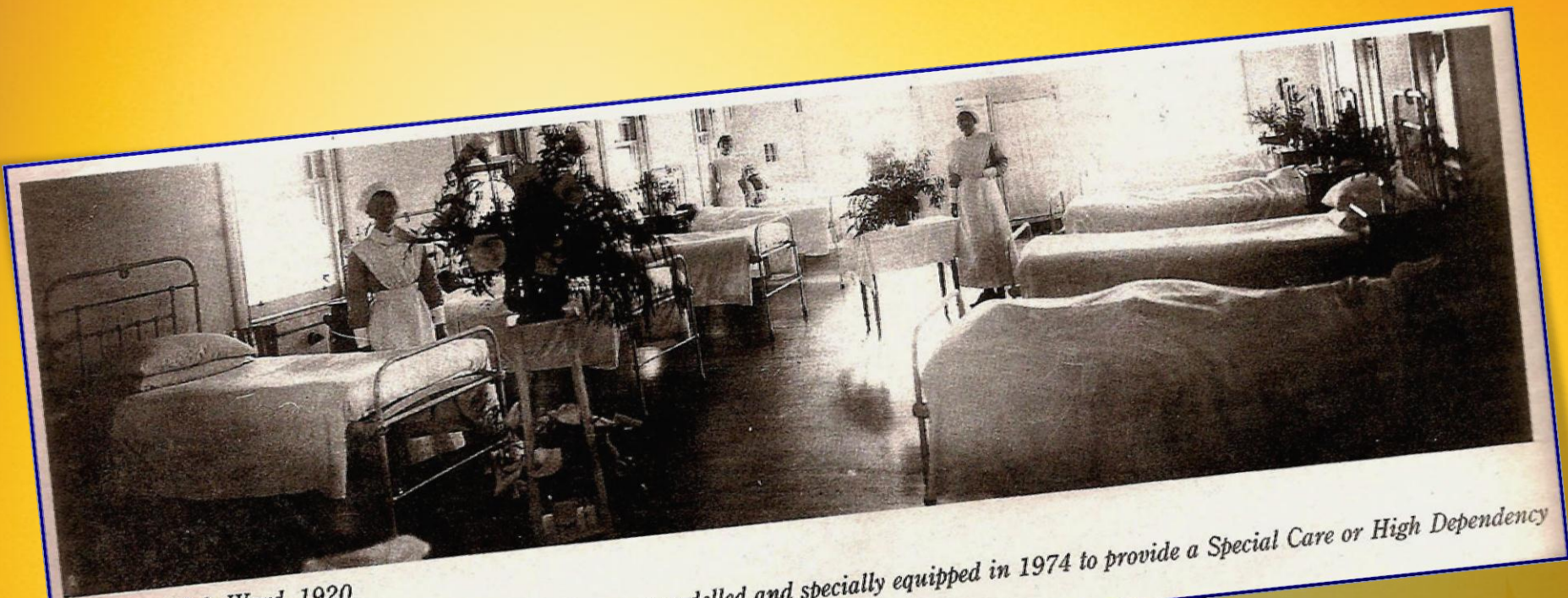
Assoc Professor Heather Smigiel, BEd, MEd, PhD  
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33 *The Male Ward, 1920.*

*The Ward of 13 beds was first opened in 1911. It was remodelled and specially equipped in 1974 to provide a Special Care or High Dependency Unit of five beds.*



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**1911 – 1974 “same ward for 63 years!”  
I worked here as a student from 1964-  
1967**

## Autoethnography :

In autoethnography the subject is self (*auto*) and *ethnos* the study of culture.

Autoethnography as a method enables the researcher to use an ethnographic description and analysis of personal experience using narrative and stories to describe events.

Autoethnography *uses highly personalised accounts where they draw on their own experiences to extend understanding of a particular discipline of culture* ( Holt, 2003:2).



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**As the subject I share the story of my journey through nursing taking into account those events that have occurred throughout that time that have had an influence not only on my story but that of nursing as a whole in Australia.**



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***Researcher as Subject***  
***Through the portal of self***  
***observation***



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Autoethnography as a method enables the researcher to use an ethnographic description and analysis of personal experience using narrative and stories to describe events.

**Data analysis** includes critical analysis which is an important distinction in autoethnography in comparison to biography, autobiography or history research.

Chang (2008) explains that cultural data analysis transforms *bits of autobiographical data into culturally meaningful and sensible text (p126)*.

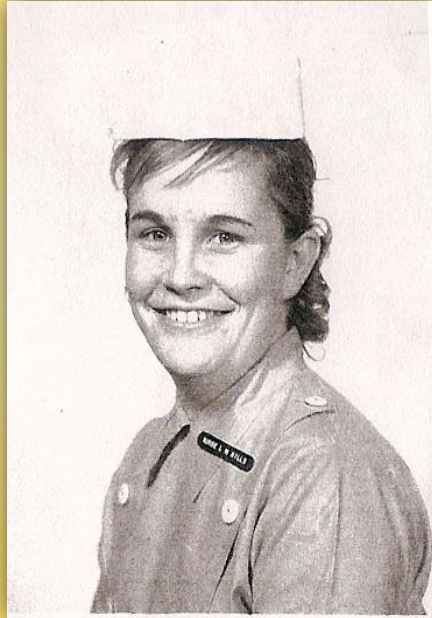


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# The story





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# The story





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# 1967 Sister Hills

## Autoethnography : What is it – What distinguishes it??

*Instead of merely describing what happened in your life, you try to explain how fragments of memories may be strung together to explain your cultural tenets and relationship with others in society.*

*In this sense autoethnography data analysis and interpretation distinguish their final product from other self-narrative, autobiographical writings that concentrate on story telling.*

Chang (2008:126)



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Those  
Wheels!!



## References.

Chang, H 2008 *Autoethnography as Method*. Left Coast Press, Inc., Walnut Creek, CA.

Holt, NL 2003 Representation, Legitimation, and Autoethnography: An Autoethnographic Writing Story. *International Journal of Qualitative Methods* 2(1). Article retrieved January 2011) from [http://www.alberta.ca/~iiqm/backissues/s\\_1final/htm/holt.html](http://www.alberta.ca/~iiqm/backissues/s_1final/htm/holt.html)



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# Thank You



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