1. How did you get started on this project?
The project came about as the result of a course assignment. We were studying Carper’s theory of nursing knowledge and were asked to create a presentation exploring a particular element in more detail. ‘Aesthetic Knowing’ resonated with us most.

2. How would you explain the significance of your research project to an educated layperson?
Our aim was to present aesthetics (in this case, photography) as an entry-point to reflection on nursing practice. We chose James Nachtwey’s series of photos depicting nurses in a Siberian prison experiencing a tuberculosis outbreak in 2008 as a point of entry for the reader/viewer to reflect on the complexity of building therapeutic relationships in highly controlled institutional settings, as well as the visibility of caring in one’s own practice. The nurses in the photos are presented in ways that run counter to Canadian notions of the ‘caring nurse’ and many viewers had strong reactions to the images.

3. What was the most enjoyable part of your research? And what was the most challenging part?
The most enjoyable part of the research was working as a team. Being able to bounce ideas off each other was great and we were able to fine-tune our analysis through discussion. The most challenging part was limiting our analysis to the specifications of the assignment. We were excited about our topic and came to a point where we wished we had more flexibility in the way we could approach it.

4. What was it like presenting at the graduate student symposium and other related conferences?
Attending the graduate student symposium was very inspiring. It is exciting to see the work of other nursing students and faculty. We really enjoy participating in this aspect of the nursing profession.

5. Any advice for beginning researchers?
Get curious and ask questions! Attend conferences and start building a network of colleagues and potential mentors who inspire and motivate you.