

WORLD NURSING FORUM
&
13th International Conference on
RHEUMATOLOGY & TRAUMA CARE

September 02-03, 2019 | Vienna, Austria

What do we stand for? Nursing historiography as a research priority

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Historiography is conceived as the critical study of writings on History, its sources and authors and as a logical and methodological exercise. It allows evaluating the consistency and coherence of events of the past and its influence on memory processes and disciplinary identity (Alattore Winter, 2010; Jaksic, 2012). Thus, professions are embedded in a socio-historical process of conformation and transformation that cannot be ignored.

In the field of Nursing, historical analysis provides a path of knowing the larger context of health care and medical advancement, and how it may have influenced health care policy. Issues related to gender, race and ethnicity intersect with the economics and politics of care (Lewenson & Mc Allister, 2015: 4). These inquiries also provide a path to understand ruptures, continuities and tensions of present developments. The dynamic vision of this perspective enriches the discipline, shows the social representations about the profession, and the impregnation of public health models in training. It also aims to rethink gender roles and stereotypes and stimulates the epistemological reflection on the nature and scope of constructs such as “care”, “vocation”, “service” and “cure”.

From the methodological point of view the adoption of a qualitative approach and the availability of varied techniques for the study of primary and secondary sources helps researchers to link different sources of data and to reveal a deeper meaning of categories that operate transversally in the instruction of human resources in health (Mc Donald & Tipton, 2001).

Conclusion & Significance: Historiographical perspective allows to consider men and women as actors in connection to the elements of the context (Imízcoz Beúnza, 2013), crossing past, present and future. Historical analysis lead to the abandonment of hagiographic aspects (Toman & Thifault, 2012) in pursuit of a methodology that investigates historical contexts in a broad and flexible way.

Biography

Ursula Serdarevich is a teacher and independent researcher in Buenos Aires, Argentina. Her primary line of inquiry is Nursing Historiography and the relations between power, identity and memory. In the educational field, she works with pre - graduate and postgraduate students. She is also involved in animal welfare and protection serving as a volunteer at an animal sanctuary.

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