

EDITORIAL

The repercussions of the twentieth century: Nursing challenges of the new era

Isabel Cristina dos Santos Oliveira

At the brink of a new millennium, the historical, socio-cultural, and economical questions, among many others, spur a time of critical reflection about the repercussions of one of the most important centuries of mankind's history: the twentieth century.

Regarding the questions related to Nursing, this new time demands from the professionals, more and more, the establishment of the profession as a social practice, and the construction of a knowledge of technical and scientific basis, aiming at strengthening its space in the scientific community.

It is necessary a bigger awareness of the way of life and participation in this moment of deep and extensive changes in the making and thinking of the Nursing, bearing in mind that "we are building the history of an era".

The articles of this volume permit us a "small trip" in the Nursing practice tendencies in different edges, in the 20th century, that are strongly influencing the dawning of the 21st century.

The 30's and the outbreak of the World War II marked a relevant period of health history in our country, that was characterized by implementation of healing actions rather than preventive actions. Three articles of this journal contribute to a better understanding of the historical-social context of the time and about Brazilian Nursing history.

The technological advance in the world context had a big impulse, mainly after World War II, getting significant dimensions in Brazil. The post war increase of industrialization resulted in advances in

certain areas of health, with the importation and large scale utilization of equipment and the creation of Intensive Care Unit (ICU) between the end of the 60's and beginning of the 70's, having the university hospital's surgical recovering centers as the origin. The occupational risks in the intensive care context, the patients' experiences lived after Intensive Care Unit discharge, and the actions of the Nursing team in the specialized surgical unit take the reader to a judicious reflection of the use of technology as a privileged instrument for the practice transformation in the health care sector, particularly in Nursing.

The article "Creative practice in psychiatric Nursing: intervening factors for its development," that focuses on the practice in a specific area in different health services in Rio de Janeiro State, reveals the transformations of a differentiated care, arising from the Psychiatric Reform instituted in the 20th century, which values the singularity of each patient, strongly criticizing the nosocomial model.

In this horizon that distinguishes the new millennium, new areas of Nursing action consolidate. Among them, the professional qualification of the students to deal with children with mental disabilities, aiming at understanding the social discrimination and segregation of this group and the necessity of a specific intervention, and the integration in the society. A text that is included in this number opens new possibilities for Nursing in the area of mental disability.

The great expansion of society in social and economical matters reflects directly upon the tertiary sector, challenging different fields of work, among them the administration of Nursing services. Another text focuses on different aspects of the administrative model adopted by the hospital sector, while another article highlights a new managing model for health projects, especially in the area of sexually transmitted diseases, particularly for acquired immunodeficiency syndrome.

At the end of the 20th century, a subject brought anxiety to Nursing: the fast aging of the population resulting from the better standard of living (food, shelter, sanitation, education, among others). In Brazil, demographic aging started in the 60's, with the reduction of birth rates associated with increases in life expectancy and decreases in mortality rates. The causes for elderly insertion in asylum institutions is the focus of a research presented in this issue of the magazine, which shows the relevance of studies in the area of gerontology and geriatrics in this beginning of the 21st century, aiming at forming human resources in the area of Nursing to attend this clientele.

In order to advance in the questioning and reformulations that involve the practice of Nursing

in this millennium, it is pressing to take on the great challenge of consolidating scientific research, aiming at legitimating the profession. One text urges the responsibility of Nursing, pinpointing the fundamental milestones of research and its establishment through publications authored by important professionals, as well as the creation of "stricto sensu" graduate courses and events pertaining to the theme. Another text constitutes a landmark in today's history, for focusing on research lines and priorities in Nursing, which were discussed in the Graduate Workshop in 1999, during the 51st Brazilian Nursing Congress and the 10th Congresso Panamericano de Enfermeria in Florianópolis, Santa Catarina State.

In this scenario of crises, challenges and perspectives of the century that just begins, the elected director Federal University of Rio de Janeiro's (UFRJ) Anna Nery School of Nursing (EEAN) draws attention to the 79 years of Nursing history represented by EEAN, and reaffirms the challenges of this era facing the crisis that strikes the Brazilian universities, particularly UFRJ, which comprises EEAN.

At this moment, I present you with the words of writer Guimarães Rosa: "The rivers do not want to arrive anywhere, they just want to grow larger and deeper."

About the author

Isabel Cristina dos Santos Oliveira

Ph.D. in Nursing. Graduate Teaching and Student Body Coordinator EEAN/UFRJ.

Adjunct Professor of the Medical-Surgical Department. Member of the 1st Collective Directorship of the Hospital Nursing Research Group. Researcher/ CNPq.