

Nurses on press pages in the Federal District (1920-1940)

Enfermeiros nas páginas da imprensa escrita no Distrito Federal (1920-1940) Enfermeros en las páginas de prensa escrita en el Distrito Federal (1920-1940)

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ABSTRACT

Objective: to identify the participation of nurses in care and socio-political spaces of health care in the Federal District, through journalistic materials, from 1920 to 1940. **Method:** historical study with emphasis on the serial documentation of the phenomenon investigated, having as historical source the journalistic materials located in the Digital Library of the National Library from the period 1920 to 1940. **Results:** 13 news items were identified, organized into four themes: Civil entity, military entity, Civil health institution and Military health institutions. **Conclusion:** the diverse trajectories of male nurses, graduated by the Professional School of Nurses and Nurses, demonstrated the participation of men as nurses in the formation of the professional identity of nursing and care as a field of activity for men and women.

Descriptors: History of nursing; nurses; schools nursing; press.

RESUMO

Objetivo: identificar a participação dos enfermeiros nos espaços assistenciais e sociopolíticos do cuidado no campo da saúde, no Distrito Federal, por meio das matérias jornalísticas, de 1920 a 1940. Método: estudo histórico com ênfase na serialidade da documentação do fenômeno investigado, tendo por fonte histórica as matérias jornalísticas localizadas na Hemeroteca Digital da Biblioteca Nacional do período de 1920 a 1940. **Resultados**: foram identificadas 13 notícias, organizadas em quatro temáticas: Entidade de classe civil, Entidade da classe militar, Instituição de Saúde Civil e Instituições de saúde militar. **Conclusão:** as diversas trajetórias percorridas pelos enfermeiros do sexo masculino, titulados pela Escola Profissional de Enfermeiras, demonstraram a participação do homem, como enfermeiro, na formação da identidade profissional da enfermagem e do cuidado como campo de atividade de homens e mulheres.

Descritores: História da enfermagem; enfermeiros; escolas de enfermagem; imprensa.

RESUMEN

Objetivo: identificar la participación de los enfermeros en los espacios asistenciales y sociopolíticos del cuidado en el campo de la salud en el Distrito Federal, por medio de las materias periodísticas, de 1920 a 1940. **Método:** estudio histórico con énfasis en la serie de la documentación del fenómeno investigado, teniendo por fuente histórica las materias periodísticas localizadas en la Hemeroteca Digital de la Biblioteca Nacional del período de 1920 a 1940. **Resultados:** se identificaron 13 noticias, organizadas en 4 temáticas: Entidad de clase civil, Entidad de la clase militar, Institución de Salud Civil e Instituciones de salud militar. **Conclusión:** las diversas trayectorias recorridas por los enfermeros del sexo masculino, titulados por la Escuela Profesional de Enfermeros y Enfermeras, demostraron la participación del hombre, en cuanto enfermero, en la formación de la identidad profesional de la enfermería y del cuidado como campo de actividad de hombres y mujeres.

Descriptores: Historia de la enfermería; enfermeros; facultades de enfermeira; prensa.

INTRODUCTION

In 1926, nurses of the National Department of Health Public created the National Association of Brazilian Graduate Women, currently Brazilian Nursing Association, exclusively for those coming from the educational institution, that with the passage of time have learned to accept egresses coming from other school sisters and co-sisters in Brazil, in the 1940s.

In the period from 1921 to 1942, the men lacked good eyes by the society for the exercise of Nursing, for be considered as ambitious, especially into the medical category since the 1910s¹. Then, with the formation of nurses by the Professional School of Nurses, each was responsible for searching and conquering their care, sociocultural and political space in the health field.

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During this period, in the Professional School of Nurses, current Nursing School Alfredo Pinto, were enrolled 702 students, being 18% of male of the mixed section, located at the dependences of the National Hospice of Alienated Persons².

Thinking about this problematic leads to the assumption of that the male nurse was not well looked in the field of the health care, except in the hospices and military hospitals, but no in the socio political space of exclusive actuation of the nurses. In this perspective, emerges the guiding question: In which care and sociopolitical spaces of the health field the male nurses actuated?

For this purpose, our objective was to identify the participation of the nurses in the care and socio-political spaces of the health field in the Federal District, through the journalistic materials, in the 1920s and 1940s.

The research is justified in view of the male nurse be a minority in the socio-political space of the nursing, compared to the female nurse. This implies the possibility that they may have contributed to the formation of the professional identity, although they remain anonymous.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

This study was developed in light of Pierre Bourdieu's concepts of field and habitus³.

The field is considered the place of confrontation among agents that search for maintaining or reaching higher positions³, which was represented by the social space of the nursing and health permeated by the symbolic struggle, in which each institutional agent or field seeks, by means of its interrelationships, to establish control.

The *habitus* concept can be understood as an ability of a certain social structure be incorporated into the agents by means of readiness to feel, think and act³. Reflecting on such concept enables the understanding of strategies created for the naturalization of certain behaviors and attitudes regarded as natural, but that reflect the mechanisms conceived socially for stratifying agents in the field, determining and ensuring privileges groups for the detriment of others.

METHODOLOGY

Historical study with emphasis on the seriality of the investigated phenomenon, having as historical source the journalistic materials located in the Magazine Archive of the National Library. As search criteria, the name of nurses graduated from the Professional School of Nurses in the period between 1920 and 1940 was used, located in the nominal listing on study about the 100 years of the institution⁴, articulated to the dossiers found in the Written Documents from the file of the nurse Maria de Castro Pamphiro, of the School of Nursing Alfredo Pinto.

The Data Collection took place by tool with items to be fulfilled – nurse's name, newspaper's name, date of publication and title of the journalistic material. Once this step has passed, the found records were organized in chronological order of publication and classified in themes under demands stemming from the publication contents.

The results were organized according to chronological date of publication, increased by the year of academic qualification of the nurses for further discussion.

RESULTS

In the search for journalistic materials, 13 news were identified, ran in the period from 1928 to 1939, organized in four themes: Civil class entity, Military class entity, Civil health institution and Military health institution, as shown in Figure 1. These were care and sociopolitical spaces of the nurses' actuation outside the context of the National Association of Brazilian Graduate Nurses.

The 13 journalistic materials were published in three journals, namely: The newspapers "Diário de Notícias", "Diário Carioca" and "Jornal do Brasil" distributed in a quantitative manner 1, 3 and 9, respectively.

The "Diário Carioca", founded by José Eduardo de Macedo Soares, in 1928 and with the closing activities in 1965, was a newspaper that brought the maximum information in the minimum space. His political positioning, sometimes considered as heroic, was of radical opposition to totalitarisms, with lively spirit in support of press freedom, the reason for being jammed in 1932⁵.



| | Nurses | Qualified | Title, periodical and publication | Theme of |
|----------|---|-----------|---|-----------------------------------|
| <u> </u> | position/function | in | | news |
| 1 | Américo Paulo da Cunha 1st secretary of the Beneficent Association of Employees of the Municipal Department of Public Assistance | 1928 | B.A. of Employees of the Municipal Department of Public Assistance Diário Carioca 11/18/1928 | Civil Class Entity |
| 2 | Americo Paulo da Cunha President of the Beneficent Association of Municipal Assistance | 1928 | B.Association of Employees and the ownership of its new directory Jornal do Brasil 06/17/1931 | Civil Class Entity |
| 3 | Américo Paulo da Cunha Member of the General Directory of Assistance | 1928 | They have been named in the General Directory of Assistance Jornal do Brasil 06/13/1933 | Civil Health Institution |
| 4 | Américo Paulo da Cunha President of the Earthly Nurses' Union makes public compliment | 1928 | Praised for the "Earthly Nurses' Union" Mr Irineu Malagueta Jornal do Brasil 10/21/1936 | Civil Class Entity |
| 5 | Américo Paulo da Cunha Head of Nursing | 1928 | In the General Secretary of Health and Assistance Promoted to Jornal do Brasil 06/25/1937 | Civil Health Institution |
| 6 | Américo Paulo da Cunha Attorney of the Earthly Nurses Trade Union | 1928 | Earthly Nurses' Union Jornal do Brasil 03/28/1939 | Civil Class Entities |
| 7 | Américo Paulo da Cunha Beneficent Association of Employees of the Municipal Department of Public Assistance in commemoration | 1928 | The Association of the Employees of the Municipal Assistance inaugurated its new pavilion-the construction of the new pavilion of the association Diário Carioca 12/26/1935 | Civil Class Entity |
| 8 | Vicente Ferreira Pacheco Hiring as a nurse of the Gaffrée Guinle Hospital | 1929 | Hired Nurses Jornal do Brasil 09/08/1932 | Civil Health Institution |
| 9 | Vicente Ferreira Pacheco Approval for public tender of army nurse | 1929 | They have been approved in the habilitation exam for military nurses Diário de Notícias 08/27/1932 | Military Health Institution |
| 10 | Mario Menezes Vieira Hiring as a nurse of the General Secretary of Health and Assistance | 1930 | In the General Secretary of Health and Assistance Jornal do Brasil 07/01/1937 | Civil Health Institution |
| 11 | Mario Menezes Vieira Associated to the Union of the Sanitary Nurses of Merchant Navy | 1930 | Union of the Sanitary Nurses of Merchant Navy Diário Carioca 12/19/1935 | Military Class Entity |
| 12 | Renato Silva Santos Nomination as a nurse of the General Secretary of Health and Assistance | 1937 | In the General Secretary of Health and Assistance Jornal do Brasil 06/04/1938 | Civil Health Institution |
| 13 | Benedito Joaquim Monteiro Nomination as a nurse of the Hospital Miguel Couto | 1939 | Department of Hospital Assistance Jornal do Brasil 08/19/1939 | Civil Health Institution |

FIGURE 1: News published in the written press relative to professional activities of male nurses graduated in the Professional School of Nurses (1928-1939).

The newspaper "Diário de Notícias" ciculated daily and in the morning, founded in 12 June 1930, by Orlando Ribeiro Dantas, and with its closing activities in 1974. Since its creation, its position was well defined, having as proposal the fight against the oligarchic structure of the "República Velha" (Old Republic). Over the years, he became the target of government repression for publishing materials, submitted on several occasion to the censor. It demarcated a space



on opposition to Vargas and raised the flag of the re - constitutionalisation, in support to the Constitutionalist Revolution of 1932, being heavily censored by the authorities, which contributed even more to strengthen the opposition to the government⁶.

The case of the newspaper "Jornal do Brasil" was different from the others. This was founded in 1891, by the journalist Rodolfo Epifânio de Sousa Dantas, and keeps up to the present days.

In the 1920s, the advent of the radio and the cinema was registered, ramifications that ceased the *coffee and milk* politics were followed-up, which culminated in the Revolution of 1930.

The facility of the interim government broke out the persecution to the means of communication, including the "Jornal do Brasil", leaving it out of circulation for four months.

In the 1930s, the newspaper "Jornal" dealt with the censor and economic problems, which culminated, in 1934, with restructuring that made the "Jornal do Brasil" less focus on content and more focus on ads, especially those regarding domestic services, leading it to a dramatic quality fall.

In1937, followed the initiation of the "Estado Novo" (New State), in order to not be subject to censor, the "Jornal do Brasil" started to support the new system, and maintaining cordial relations with the "Departamento de Imprensa e Propaganda" (Press and Propaganda Department), with incentive to the labor and economic reforms in the country.

The nurses graduated by the Professional School of Nurses were active in class entities and in civil and military class entities, when were reported by the newspapers, as is shown in Figure 1, being the newspapers "Diário de Notícias" and the "Diário Carioca" of opposition to the government. The "Jornal do Brasil", in a manner distinct from the other two, for its survival, established an alliance with the governance of Brazil.

DISCUSSION

The 1930s highlighted with the highest amount of new reports. To think from this perspective is to direct the thinking what has occurred from the Decree no. 20.109 of 1931, when the School of the National Department of Public Health became the Standard School of Nursing in the country, as well as it began to be called School of Nurses Donna Anna Nery⁸. This implies the concern regarding the institution with the formation, exclusively female, and that for its creation, in 1922⁹, the report of Ethel Parsons required the register of the nursing education institutions in the Federal District.

The North-American nurse arrived in Brazil in 1921 and, remained here until 1931, subsidized by the Rockefeller Foundation, through the Technical Cooperation Agreement for the Development of the Nursing in the country, with the aim of carrying out the health situational diagnosis in Brazil and of verifying the conditions for the realization of a nursing school, which culminated with the creation of the School of Nurses of the National Department of Public Health in 1923¹⁰.

The argument used at the time for the creation of a school, and, later the publication of the legal provision of 1931, tends to highlight the maintenance of the power and the prestige in the field of nursing. The Decree no. 20.109/1931 occurred during the period of the state governability by Getúlio Vargas.

It is worthwhile stressing the interventionist profile of Vargas government, with public policies of universalizing the schooling, considering the school as a tool of social transformation and progress, with incentive to the professional training women-oriented with the aim of preparing them for the public spaces organized in accordance with a *market economy* and according to work, the consumption and the competition for acquisition of consumer goods¹¹.

Although the activities developed in professional schools for women very much resembled those exerted in the domestic field, the professionalization of domestic work implied the reinventing activities named as feminine, making possible the creation of work spaces and professional activities for the public before unlimited to the domestic space and unremunerated¹².

Laís Neto dos Reis — director of the School of Nurses Donna Anna Nery — was close to the president of the country, at time, and leadership in nursing. Then, this implied the publication of Decree, considering the symbolic alliance with the ruler, predicting the risk of the male inclusion in the public spaces of the nursing field, which meant threat to the progress of the professionalization exclusive female.

Even in face of the concern of Laís Neto do Reis, we identify the nurse's active participation in the care and sociopolitical space through journalistic materials, even if by likelihood.

In the care space we evidenced six occurrences in civil health institutions, one in military health institutions, five occurrences related to the nurses' actuation in civil class entities and one in military class entities, as indicated in



Figure 1, which justifies the concern of the director of the School of Nurses Donna Anna Nery and of the physicians regarding the formation of male nurses.

So, it is a matter of news that represent the nurses' actuation in the social space of the health field, some typical of male, but aside from the female in the sociocultural construction of that time.

As we can identify in press reports, the nurse Américo Paulo da Cunha was highlighted by the positions and functions published in the written press. He assumed the position of 1st Secretary of the Beneficent Association of Employees of the Municipal Assistance, in 1928 and, in 1931, the president in the same association.

The Beneficent Association of Employees of the Municipal Assistance had the objective of representing the employees of the institution in the exercising of their functions of providing health care and its place in front of the society, in order in a to be recognized in a fair manner in the work that carried out.

Another record concerns the public compliment conferred, in the year of 1936, on the nurse Américo Paulo da Cunha, as president of the Earthly Nurse's Union. This is the first nurses' union in the country, founded in 1933 under the form of the Vargas government trade union structure, subordinated to the Ministry of Labor, Industry and Commerce, being legally the representative instance of the representative instance of the category of registered nurses and practitioners.

We emphasize that, with the creation of the Consolidation of Labor Laws, 1943, the Trade Union has made the representative entity of all workers of health establishments, being named Union of Nurses and Employees in Hospitals and Health Houses (SEEHCS)¹³, where the nursing professionals are no longer considered as self-employed professionals.

That said, the Earthly Nurse's Union and the nurse's associations envisaged as social field, understood as a microcosms that influences their agents — through standards and rules— and is influenced by them. Based on this understanding, the field is a space of fights for the achieving of superior positions and of protection of the involved person's interests, which is related to capital that each agent has of the field interest ¹⁴. Soon, this data is pointed out as one of the effects of the nurse's formation by the Professional School of Nurses.

The effect of the formation could also be understood as the practical sense of the public life, having as principle the classification and organization of actions as an operator of the practice directed towards the male domination in the society¹⁵. It can be inferred the possibility of the nurse Américo Paulo da Cunha, in the case of the function of 1st Secretary of the Beneficent Association of Employees of the Municipal Public Assistance, in the same year of his graduation, 1928, having already exercised previously any functional position in that institution and that, as recently graduated nurse, he positioned himself in the field of the associative life, becoming president in 1931, as shown in Figure 1.

This fact helps to understand of the physicians' concern, in saying that the man was ambitious for the exercising of the nursing profession^{1, 16}, which represented an additional competition in the field over that derived from the ideals drawn for the professionalization by the female figure. This fear reflects the existing power relations between the nursing and the medicine – they coined the valorization of the medical knowledge, considered as intellectual, to the detriment of the nursing knowledge, considered as predominantly manual¹⁷, ranking spaces and determining the men and women's actuation place.

One of the central objectives of the associations was to promote the profession image to the society. For this purpose, he needed demonstrating his value and importance in the professional exercise, as well as the integration of the group and standardization of the performance, in order to construct his cultural unit. That way the professional associations are detached as corporations that, by means of their organization and activity, aimed at developing the profession, strengthening their field of actuation and knowledge. Soon, there is the creation of subsidies for the group organization, since they play social function by defending their interests in the sociopolitical dynamics of the collectivity involved ¹⁸.

This becomes even clearer when other male nurse enters the associative life: Mario Menezes Vieira, graduated in 1930, who was associated to the Union of the Sanitary Nurses of Merchant Navy, in 1935, as shown in Figure 1.

Of the 13 news, seven were related to the nurses' participation in the civil health institutions and military health institutions. Among the institutions where the nurses were employees, it is worth highlighted the "Serviço de Assistência Municipal" (Service of Municipal Assistance), which was subordinated to the "Departamento Nacional de Saúde Pública" (National Department of Public Health), created by the Decree no. 3.987 of 1920¹⁹, in replacement of the "Diretoria Geral de Saúde Pública" (General Directory of Public Health), that had as objectives to be the lead Federal government agency responsible for the health field and to expand the capacity of actuation beside the Federal District.

In addition, the regulation to the functioning of the "Departamento Nacional de Saúde Pública" (National Department of Health Public), through the Decree n. 14.354 on 15 August 1920²⁰, established some activities, among



them the regulatory ones to the health public, as well as reinforced the powers of the sanitation services. This led directly, to the professional exercise in the health field, in the provision of public assistance.

In the1930s, by the Decree no. 19.444 on 1st December 1930, the National Department of Health Public was incorporated into the newly founded Ministry of Education and Public Health in the interim government of Getúlio Vargas²¹. The instability of the first years of the Vargas government led to the extinction of the National Department of Public Health, with their functions incorporated into the National Directory of Health and Medical-Social Assistance²². Under the circumstances once more, attention is drawn to Decree no. 20.109 of 1931, as well as the intention of the School of Nurses Dona Anna Nery to guarantee the interests in the exclusive formation of female nurses.

On the other hand, it is worth stressing the male nurses: Américo Paulo da Cunha, graduated in 1928 and appointed as head nurse, in 1937, in the General Directory of Assistance; Vicente Ferreira Pacheco, graduated in 1929, contracted in 1932 as nurse of the Gaffrée Guinle Hospital and, in the same year, approved by public tender to work as nurse in the army; Mario Menezes Vieira, graduated in 1930 and contracted, in 1937, as nurse of the General Secretary of Health and Assistance; Renato Silva Santos, graduated in 1937 and named, in 1938, nurse of the General Secretary of Health and Assistance; Benedito Joaquim Monteiro, graduated in 1939 and named, in 1939, nurse of the Miguel Couto Hospital, as shown in Figure 1.

Soon, these five nurses, contradicting the common sense, were present in a field dominated by the presence of women and safeguarded by the hegemonic nursing discourse best performed by the female sex.

The assertive of contradicting the common sense is due to visibility of the female nurses in the press pages, as, for example, in advertisements of medicines^{23, 24}, in records of graduations of the nursing schools²⁵ and in the provision of care²⁶. Therefore, the nurses stayed in the sight of those interested and, consequently, the construction of the public image of the nurse ratified the preference for the female.

The "Escola Profissional de Enfermeiros e Enfermeiras" (Professional School of Nurses) produced its effect on the holder of male graduates reported by the written press in full activity in the field of the nursing, proving the success of the formation and insertion of the nurse into society. The institution, as the first school of nursing in Brazil to allow the enrollment of men, had as effect, the maintenance of the rupture of a female nursing, allowing the entrance of the masculine in the care and sociopolitical spaces.

The male presence, recorded by the newspapers of circulation, was made as an effect of the formative act of the "Escola Profissional de Enfermeiros e Enfermeiras" (Professional School of Nurses) that allowed the man actuation in the health field as graduated nurse. The different functions assumed by these five nurses, as well as the several fields occupied, contributed to the man positioning in the historical construction of the nursing, said preferably as female.

In this manner, it can not be denied the social relevance caused by the formation of male nurses by the Professional School of Nurses. This refers back to the officialization act — named officialization effect— understood as the homologation, which the person is able¹⁴. Moreover, the publications ratify the operating of the effect because implies the phenomenon dissemination, which also articulates to the formalization effect.

CONCLUSION

During the period from 1921 to 1942, a total of 127 men were graduated by the "Escola Profissional de Enfermeiros e Enfermeiras" (Professional School of Nurses), of whom five nurses were located through records in the press of Rio de Janeiro city, at the time, Federal District of the country. The records made it possible to transpire the intense activity shared by these men of possession of the title of nurse, allocated to different establishments, both as assistance, as representative of class, in the civil and military spheres, heading up, some of them, leadership positions.

The nurses graduated by the "Escola Profissional de Enfermeiros e Enfermeiras" (Professional School of Nurses), recorded by the journalistic materials, had an own effect the overcome of the social constructions that shaped the nursing to the image of the feminine, to the detriment of the masculine. The diversity of positions and institutions that were marked by the presence of the male nurse presented effect of rupture in the idea of the innate qualities, showing that abilities and competences are constructed and not given in a fixed way.

The different trajectories run by the male nurses, identified on the pages of the periodicals consulted, showed the man participation as nurse, in the formation of the professional identity and collaborate for the translation and constitution of the professional field that, although advocated as feminine, counted on the presence of the man nurse in the different possible spaces for the nursing, contradicting the discourse of the male unfitness for the profession.



It is necessary to scrutinize the underground of the history of the profession, since new versions and interpretations can and should modify the social conception of the profession, as well as the ways of seeing and believing in data that seem consolidated.

The limitations of the study are related mainly to the deficiency of a standard information organization consulted in the located documents, as well as the non-location of certain documents, that infers they have been lost over time. Such difficulties serve as incentive for new research strategies are traced in search of knowledge and discoveries, and that illuminate the history of nursing.

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