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EDITORIAL

Women's and Children's Health: Polysemic Looks

Concerns with women's and children's health – which today take their place in the epicenter of health care knowledge and deeds – have not always been present in academic scenes, caregiving, governmental policies, and in the hierarchy of scientific production developed in different disciplinary arenas. Such concerns have bent themselves, in degrees, in plural methods of producing knowledge and creating varying impacts in what plucks the consumption of such production, according to present interests and objectives in the diverse historical moments and socio-cultural contexts.

This theme has inspired the most diverse positions and arguments, in a yet permanent tension between the reiterated meaning focused on the women/maternity and child/ *project of* sources of power and the resulting conceptions of the socially ubiquitous look which in both appear contextualized and included in the realities of health care scenarios, where infancy and woman's health are valued, entangled in the conceptions of feminist studies, of reproductive rights and of the relationships of the species. The object of women's and children's health is worked through distinct lenses, spanning different disciplinary fields and bringing knowledge and practice closer together.

The present edition of the *Texto & Contexto Nursing Journal* in different sections lays out various current positions about this theme, involving national and international publications that focus upon a specific horizon of nursing with the health of the woman and the child, but also upon looks that find each other in interdisciplinary and multi-professional exercise, the example of the necessary convergences with anthropology, orthodontics, psychology, and philosophy. However, the intentions are the same, that is, they have as their principal objective to attend to the needs of women and children, in various levels of assistance, and in different phases and specialty areas, hoping to contribute, above all, to the health and the exercise of citizenship.

In the following synthesis, one can observe that the most part of the contributions of this publication are related to reproductive health when one considers women's and children's health. They pose questions that involved birth and the birthing process, excluding two articles that among them explore other themes that are also relevant within this issue. For example, they deal with women who have migrated and women who need to submit themselves to mastectomies. As for the contributions for children's health, the majority of the articles focus their attention upon attention to newborns, in various approaches, excepting research which involves risk factors for malnutrition in children and perceptions of the professional in pediatrics. The publication also counts on the important theoretical reflection that encompasses the attention to maternal-infant health and environmental factors.

The Research section begins with an analysis of the impact of migration upon the health of Brazilian women in Australia, pointing out the multiple difficulties that they live with, principally in

what touches upon the lack of social support, as well as the political, cultural, economic, and social obstacles that are placed upon them when they attempt to access the health care services of the country. The following article contemplates research developed by Columbian nursing authors who investigate the cultural practices of adolescents in what refers to living through the post-partum period (in the *emic* sense of the “diet”), where they reveal the contradictions and incongruities that exist among the popular/familiar system of health care and the professional system. The results point out the need for promotion of cultural acceptance of these practices, sensitizing the health care professionals and particularly, nurses to actions that are culturally acceptable. The next article focuses upon social representations of pregnant women concerning maternal-infant bocal health. Beginning with the necessity for rethinking orthodontic care for pregnant women, in connection with other health care professionals, the authors discuss the pertinence of understanding such representations, promoting the offer of instruments for the health care team in what are the educational practices within pre-natal care. The study concerning contraceptive options for women with AIDS describes that the sample considered makes use of “adequate” and “inadequate” methods of birth-control. Concerning the latter group, they justify just behavior with the concept that they can decide matters of their own bodies, mistrust for available methods, as well as the difficulty in agreeing upon methods with their partners.

Still in the Research section of this publication, the two following articles discuss the performance of obstetretic nurses in the delivery room and the perception of pregnant women about a technology created by a nurse called the “‘Born-Already’ Obstetretics Chair for Pelvic Stimulation”. In both articles, recommendations and contributions are made for health care professionals who work with the pre-natal and birthing process. The text about violence, power, and domination approaches symbolic aspects of the treatment offered by health care professionals who work with pregnant women, women who give birth, and mothers of newborns, bringing to the light the “invisibility” of some violent practices that exist in some Brazilian realities. The article which deals with the existential perspective of women who have had mastectomies, under the approach of the Socionomic Theory, focuses upon group discussions about life before the disease, their reactions to their diagnoses, the surgeries, and the post-operation changes that occurred. The results indicate a significant contribution for health care professionals in this area. The next text contemplates the vision and treatment given by the midwives who delivered during the previous century, offering data that help to reflect about birthing and delivery medical procedures. In the successive article, another approach to women with AIDS is given, this time focusing on feelings expressed about their impossibility to breast-feed.

The last articles of the Research section contemplate other texts which contribute to the question at hand. The transversal study about risk factors in children with iron deficiency uses the Field of Health Model and offers contributions for the assistance and educational agenda for health care. The research about pediatric conjugal rooms identifies the team perceptions about hospital care, considering the presence and insertion of the family. The study which focuses upon maternal perceptions for neonates under phototherapy completes a qualitative reading under the watch of a nursing theory based upon phenomenologics. The investigation that takes place in an Intensive Care Unit in the Southern Region of Brazil approaches equally the experiences lived by the families whose newborns are interned there. On the other hand, the article that deals with mediating instruments of families who care for regressive children in a neonatal ICU adopts the position that care, and not family surrounding are needed for correct treatment. The section also offers a historical study outlining the advent of incubators and their impact in nursing assistance for premature neonates.

The Reflection section includes a contribution whose objective is to cast a more profound and fertile look upon the subsequent implications of the environmental/ maternal-infant health association, particularly concerning the participation of nurses in this realm. The publication also contains Previous Notes and Summaries that point out current topics that are under debate and presently researched in the diverse spaces which promote knowledge and practices related to women’s and children’s health.

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- Editors -