

History of Nursing
Cedars-Sinai Program in the History of Medicine
Winter 2023

Course Instructor: Rena Selya, PhD MLIS Rena.Selya@cshs.org

Course Description:

From the battlefield to the birthing room, from the classroom to the clinic, nurses play a critical role in providing health care in diverse settings around the world. Since the 19th century, nursing training, authority, professional identity, and cultural status has changed dramatically, and in turn, nurses have had a profound impact on medicine, public health, and the societies in which they practice. This course will examine the history of nursing, focusing on the locations where nurses have provided care, education, and expertise in the modern era. With examples from the Cedars-Sinai Historical Conservancy collection, we will explore the ways that nursing has developed as a profession with influence and authority in the hospital setting and beyond.

Learning Objectives:

1. Understand how nursing has developed as a profession within the context of Western biomedicine.
2. Understand the diverse roles that nurses play in the delivery of healthcare as well as their influence on social and cultural ideas about medicine.
3. Discover how nursing at Cedars-Sinai has reflected and shaped larger trends in the history of American nursing.

Course Calendar (readings subject to change)

Week 1 (January 12): Introduction: Why study the history of nursing?

P. D'Agostino, "History for a Practice Profession"; Selections from M. Sandelowski, *Devices and Desires: Gender, Technology, and American Nursing*

Week 2 (January 19): Who is a Nurse?

C. Ceniza Choy, selections from *Empire of Care: Nursing and Migration in Filipino American History*; "Nurses Across Borders: Foregrounding International Migration in Nursing History"; C. J. Threat, "'The Hands That Might Save Them': Gender, Race and the Politics of Nursing in the United States during the Second World War"

Week 3 (January 26): Nursing in the Hospital (Special lecture by Margo B. Minissian, PhD, ACNP, FAHA)

S. Reverby, "A Legitimate Relationship: Nursing, Hospitals, and Science in the Twentieth Century"; B. Lusk, "Prelude to specialization: US cancer nursing, 1920-1950"

Week 4 (February 2): Nursing in the Community (Special Lecture by Ravenne Aponte, Barbara Bates Center for the History of Nursing, University of Pennsylvania)

B. Houlahan, "Origins of School Nursing"; N. M. Pool and L. S. Sauber, "Tangled pasts, healthier futures: Nursing strategies to improve American Indian/Alaska Native health equity"

Week 5 (February 9) Nursing in Colonies and Missions

S. Grypma, "Withdrawal from Weihui: China missions and the silencing of missionary nursing, 1888-1947"; J. Lu, et al, "Historically-informed nursing: A transnational case study in China"; A. McKillop, N. Sheridan, and D. Rowe, "New light through old windows: nurses, colonists and indigenous survival"

Week 6 (February 16) Nursing at Cedars-Sinai: Legacies and Opportunities

Selections from the Cedars-Sinai Historical Conservancy Collection, supplemented with material from [Nurses You Should Know](#)