

From silence to voice: book review

From silence to voice: resenha de livro

From silence to voice: reseña de un libro

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The book⁽¹⁾ is a translation of the original titled *From silence to voice*⁽²⁾, published by Cornell Paperbacks in 2006. Bernice Burech and Susanne Gordon are journalists and took the nursing profession as the object of study. The authors have diagnosed silence in the profession, which motivated writing a work valuing the use of all types of media to help give visibility to the nursing profession.

The work is interesting for the areas of nursing, communication, public relations and journalism. It can also contribute with other health, human and social areas that are interested in applying communication principles in their fields. Thus, it has an interdisciplinary character.

In the preface to the English edition, Ana Albuquerque Queiroz points out that much of the work is devoted to communication skills, and nurses have to assume their role of 'agency' in the profession with grit and determination, changing the records of virtue (dominant and hegemonic) for a record of knowledge (emerging).

The book is organized in two parts and has thirteen chapters in total. Part I is called 'Silent No More' and contains five chapters. Part II is entitled 'Communicating with the Media and the Public', and contains eight chapters. In Portugal, the term 'Media' means any and all forms of social communication. In Brazil the corresponding term is *mídias*.

In the introduction, the authors state that their research on the profession began in 1989. The project was funded and administered by a board of representatives of nursing organizations of the USA. In research, they obtained material from the USA, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, United Kingdom, other European countries and Japan. Based on a documentary and field study with journalists and nurses, the authors highlight that the

dominant narrative was of 'problems', which were not counterbalanced in the communication media by a narrative of the 'practice' to help the public understand what nurses do.

In Part I of the book, the authors' message is to 'end the silence', highlighting the need for the profession seeking the three Rs: respect, recognition and reward. The media will be alert if they are convinced that something newsworthy happens in nursing. If we stay silent, nursing will not be news. The authors discuss not only aspects of public communication, but also point suggestions, activities and exercises in order that professionals 'tell the world what they do'.

In the last chapter of the first part, there are examples of how to build episodes and arguments in order to create interest in agencies about what is done in nursing. There are five steps to follow: build an image; avoid jargon; include facts and statistics; put yourself in the image; build the whole scenario. One of the emphases should be given to the clinical judgment done by professionals during the care because it has to give 'the content' of the news about the profession, precisely to 'focus' on the knowledge rather than the virtues. They state that "[...] nurses seem to find it difficult to recognize the self in us, whereas physicians find it hard to find us in the self"⁽¹⁾ (p.93). They also warn: "when nurses are no longer silent, the audience hears".

Part II of the book has the message 'Communicating is the way'. In chapters 6, 7 and 8, is given emphasis to the operation of news services and how we can produce news about nursing skills in the care and health care for the population. The authors affirm incisively: "think of which images could show your work and help people understand what is it about, because journalists need nurses who want to talk to them"⁽¹⁾ (p.118). They point out that scientific events have been an

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opportunity for professionals 'being news', but the daily events of caring-care need to be more communicated. They describe how to do press releases, highlight the importance of inviting journalists and have 'a good story' for them.

The chapters 9, 10 and 11 emphasize the campaigns, letters to the editor, opinion articles, blogs and presence on TV and radio. In general, the authors show how to use these media in favor of building a positive image of nursing.

Chapter 12 highlights the nursing research that needs to get to the media since the approval of projects, as these may predict the expenses with publicity, which will facilitate the use of different media. What draws attention is the authors' warning with regard to language, because nursing has to be able to talk about research in a language for the laity so the public can understand it. They state the abstracts of studies are written in 'language of research' but need to be translated into common language for the general public. Finally, in Chapter 13 they conclude the book saying that the visibility of the profession should not be an option but a must.

Overall, the book is a guide for those interested in decreasing the silence of the profession in the media. The reading is pleasant, exciting and instructive. Educational institutions that have courses of nursing/health, communication/journalism, and or public relations can apply many of the book highlights

in projects integrated with students of these courses, thereby innovating the training of these professionals. We encourage the book publicity and reading for graduate students, professionals and those interested in understanding and applying the media in favor of nursing and other professions.

In the era of diversity of social and virtual spaces, nursing must assume the protagonist role of nursing care information as the main strategy to respond to the needs of society, contribute to the care system and especially, decrease the (in) visibility and or marginality of the power structure in health.

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