



***Nursing: Using films and books to explore the ethical and cultural issues raised for childbearing women and their families***

A course on caring for childbearing women and their families by Dr. Sally Phillips, University of Colorado Science Center School of Nursing (1997)

**Course Design:**

In this technological age, Dr. Phillips argues that the university's role is no longer that of the exclusive source of information. Students have access to more resources than ever before; therefore, doctoral nursing programs, such as the University of Colorado's, needs to provide the framework with which students can discover, integrate, and apply information. Dr. Phillips' course on caring for childbearing women and their families does not rely exclusively on the skills required for accurate clinical judgments. On the contrary, the course also addresses the ethical dilemmas and cultural aspects associated with childbearing.

Dr. Phillips expands upon her technical instruction of the physiological aspects of pregnancy by encouraging her students to integrate the physical with the socio-cultural aspects of nursing. The instructor selects, or has the learners select, several modern films and books written by women that address issues related to pregnancy and family dynamics. The class uses these materials along with prepared questions to stimulate small group discussion and debate. This method enables students to evaluate patient perceptions of nursing, as well as examine their own personal views and how the interaction of these sets of views will impact student's professional and personal lives.

**Higher Level Learning:**

The class is designed to integrate knowledge of the physiological aspects of childbearing (**Phenomena**) with new insight into patient experiences (**Connecting**). Reflecting upon the sociological aspects of nursing enables students to better empathize with their future patients (**Caring**); it also changes their perception and analysis of the issues raised by childbearing and of their roles as nurses in the process of providing medical care for others (**Thinking, Self, Others**).

**Active Learning:**

The films and books on childbearing fuel class discussions and debates (**Dialogue with Others**), and they enable students to look to the experiences of the patients in order to deepen their personal and professional insights (simulated **Observing**.) The differing views of patients and classmates, provoke students to reassess the knowledge and values they hope to gain from their professional degree program (**Dialogue with Others**.)

Phillips, S. (1997). Opportunities and Responsibilities: Competence, Creativity, Collaboration, and Caring. In J. K. Roth (Ed.), Inspiring Teaching (pp. 78-89). Bolton, MA: Anker Publishing Company, Inc.