ABSTRACT

Objective: analyzing the influence of hygienism and eugenics as scientific trends in the formation of Social Visitor Nurses, from 1927 to 1942. Methods: a socio-historical study of document analysis type, having as source the Annaes of the Cologne of Psychopathas, and with analysis of articles about hygienism and eugenics. Results: it was perceived high incidence of themes related to the currents of hygienism and eugenics in the subjects of the course of social health visitors, both theoretical and practical. Conclusion: the students of the course of social visitors were influenced by such tendencies; the course was a strategy of psychiatrists for nurses to broaden the scope of action of psychiatry out from traditional psychiatric institutions, based on the principles of hygienism and eugenics. Descriptors: Eugenics; History of Nursing; Psychiatric Nursing.

RESUMO

Objetivo: analisar a influência do higienismo e da eugenia como correntes científicas na formação das Enfermeiras Visitadoras Sociais, entre 1927 a 1942. Método: estudo histórico-social do tipo análise documental, tendo como fonte os Annaes da Colonia de Psychopathas, e com análise de artigos sobre higienismo e eugenia. Resultados: percebeu-se grande incidência de temas ligados às correntes do higienismo e da eugenia nas cadeiras do curso de visitadoras sociais, tanto teóricas quanto práticas. Conclusão: as alunas do curso de visitadoras sociais foram influenciadas por tais correntes, o curso foi uma estratégia dos médicos psiquiatras para que as enfermeiras ampliassem o raio de ação da psiquiatria para fora das instituições psiquiátricas tradicionais, com base nos princípios do higienismo e eugenia. Descriptors: Eugenia; História Da Enfermagem; Enfermagem Psiquiátrica.

RESUMEN

Objetivo: analizar la influencia del higienismo y de la eugenesia como las tendencias científicas en la formación de Enfermeras Visitadoras Sociales, a partir de 1927 a 1942. Métodos: es un estudio histórico-social del tipo de análisis de documentos, en la fuente de la Annaes Colonia de Psychopathas, y con el análisis de los artículos acerca del higienismo y la eugenesia. Resultados: se percibe unas altas incidencias de temas relacionados con las corrientes higienismo y la eugenesia en las cátedras actuales de la salud de visitantes sociales, tanto teóricas como prácticas. Conclusión: los sociales los estudiantes del curso de visita fueron influenciados por estas corrientes, el curso fue una estrategia de psiquiatras para las enfermeras para ampliar el ámbito de acción de la psiquiatría de las instituciones psiquiátricas tradicionales, basado en el higienismo y la eugenesia. Descriptores: Eugenia; Historia de la Enfermería; Enfermería Psiquiátrica.

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INTRODUCTION

The object of this study is the influence of Hygienism and Eugenia in the formation of Nurses Social Visitors through the Specialization Course offered at the School Nurse Practitioner and Nurse, currently Alfredo Pinto Nursing School, between 1927, demarcated the creation of the course by Decree No. 17.805 and 1942, when there was the end of the course according to the Book of the School Diplomas Emission Register, the set of the course formed dossiers, and the implementation of school reform approved by Decree No. 4.725 and Decree No. 10.472, both of September 22nd, 1942, which ended the school board by psychiatrists and ended the course that over its 15 years graduated 102 specialists.1,3

Through Decree No. 17.805 of 1927 which regulated the implementation of the Assistance to Psychopathas services in the Federal District, with regard to nursing, this decree kept the training of nurses in two years and created the third year in order to providing professional training in Social Visitors. This course was designed exclusively for women who had conquered the nurse's degree in any public school in the country, "chosen among the best educational conditions, education, psychic character, moral and social" as described in Annaes of Colonia of Psychopathas, of 1928.1,4

The course of Social Visitors consisted of theoretical and practical activities with the following subjects: social hygiene; childcare; organization of social life; social legislation and support laws; diagnosis, and therapeutics prophylaxia of social diseases; general notions of psychology, taught by doctors of the Colony of Engenho de Dentro Psychopathas.5

The study focuses on the influence of Hygienism and Eugenia as scientific trends in the formation of Nurses Social Visitors. Hygienism idealized initially get the social agents a rational front conduct the disease, was the "simple practice of health education [...]", i.e, a means to combat prejudice and ignorance of the public." His strategy was to regulating, framing, controlling all the gestures, attitudes, behaviors, habits and speeches of the lower classes, it was called the problems of hygiene and health in social hygiene.6

Hygienist also opened the field for the proliferation of political technologies that investigated the body, health, ways of eating and living, living conditions, the full space of the existence of the lower classes. In Brazil, in the nineteenth century, the health of morality guidelines was introduced together with the beginning of political and economic transformation processes. Hygiene elected in the country, the main targets of the control environment of the colonial city and health education of the elites, for later in the twentieth century, enter the working classes. How hygienism assignments were you consider the creation of healthy habits, the fight against "social perversions" and the implementation of major health aspirations of the state that were the strength of the individual and the grounds of race.6

The rulers were concerned about the city's image and wanted to apply a modernizing project in the Federal Capital, the purpose was to promoting a civilized country image and therefore encouraging European immigration. The child, the immigrant and the "inferior races" were the main targets of hygienism, because the child would be educated about healthy habits both physical and moral, immigrants would be encouraged to reproduce, as they were important for the hygiene of the race and were part the idea of developing the molds in Europe, whereas the "lower races" approach was to prevent the reproduction of degenerative characteristics; and chose as an instrument hygiene of the race and the main speech eugenics.7

Until the mid-nineteenth century, the various intersections between living beings made and observed throughout history allowed form the perception that the descendants reproduced characteristics of their parents. The mixing elements of both parents, more actions as training, education and experience acquired throughout life were the explanation for the existence of individual characteristics. With this idea more the purpose of applying the theory of natural selection to human, the British scientist Francis Galton (1822-1911), a cousin of Charles Darwin, coined the term "eugenics" in order to applying the assumptions of the theory of natural selection to humans, appearing then the eugenic ideology a genuine science on human heredity.8

In 1883, Galton coined the term "eugenics" by bringing together two Greek words "I: good; genus: generation ", which is synonymous " well born ". Since then, eugenics began to indicating the claims to develop a genuine science on human heredity that could identify the best members, holders of the best features, and to promote their reproduction, and find those representing degenerative characteristics and similarly, avoiding to reproduce, as quoted by Stepan (1991 apud Cont, 2008, p.202). In this way scientific
practice eugenics aims to prevent the transmission of abnormal propensities, not only from physical as well as moral ground and in the formation of character; and prevent the transmission of physical and moral defects.\textsuperscript{8,9}

According to Renato Kehl, a Brazilian eugenicist doctor and follower of the theories of Galton, eugenics is aimed at the progressive improvement of the species, the promotion of good generation, the healthy female procreation, consisting, in short, the physical ennoblement, psychic and mental man. The same is also reported that eugenics constitutes science and art; science for this study of media, and art for its applications. As science has to investigate the biological heritage, and how art has the goal of achieving a good generation.\textsuperscript{10}

Brazil experienced the eugenics and mental hygiene discourse in the 20, 30 and 40 of the twentieth century, one of the main channels of expression, in Rio de Janeiro, was the Brazilian League of Mental Hygiene (LBHM). The LBHM, founded in Rio de Janeiro in 1923 by Dr. Gustavo Riedel, had its administrative location in Cologne Psychopaths in Engenho de Dentro. His initial goal was to improving care for the mentally ill through the renewal of professional staff and psychiatric institutions; it was one of the most significant creations of the hygienic professional body around the eugenic ideology. Mental Hygiene added the notion of a social origin of madness to the existing idea that there would be a hereditary basis for mental illness.\textsuperscript{6,11,12}

The League was a civil entity, recognized publicly by federal subsidies, and composed of the most important Brazilian psychiatrists. For its headquarters in colony be, many psychiatrists own the colony was a part of LBHM. From 1923 to 1925, the League followed the line of Riedel. From 1926, influenced by the political context and by contact with German, French and American ideas, the directors of the League changed their orientation, so that a clear attempt to “normalize” the population became the main object for physicians in their efforts to inhibit the mentally handicapped. The principles of eugenics and mental hygiene encouraged psychiatrists who wanted to contribute to the creation of a prosperous, modern and a healthier nation.\textsuperscript{12}

In the middle of the twentieth century, the role of health education was based on the concept that health is taught and form healthy habits, and principles hygienism and eugenics thus preserves is a sound and healthy female race. The mental hygiene aimed, above all, prevent the appearance of any physical, psychological or mental disorder considered making inferior the people of a nation that longed to be among the great recently globalized world.\textsuperscript{13,14}

**OBJECTIVE**

- Analyzing the influence of the hygienist and eugenic ideology in the Specialization Course of Social Visitors; and therefore, the formation of Nurses Social Visitors in the 1927-1942 period.

**METHOD**

Analytical socio-historical study in which the historiographical dimension to social history, and the history of the masses and social groups as defined by Barros, “is a kind of transcendent category that has just passing by or including all other specialities of history”. Thus, it is important to note that the social historian has interest in understanding how the cyclical change and which ones cause interference across social groups.\textsuperscript{15}

The research technique was the documentary analysis, which is that performed from documents, contemporary or retrospective considered scientifically authentic. Following the model of Silva Junior, Document Search, that says “textual documents still represent the majority of the sources used in historical research, it is giving to the history of nursing”. Thus, to obtaining the material, a bibliographic study was carried out through the search for articles on eugenics, hygienism and LBHM published and available in SciELO - Scientific Electronic Library Online.\textsuperscript{16}

In order to selecting the articles concerning the subject of the study, the following descriptors were defined: Eugenia, nursing history and psychiatric nursing through the source. Descriptors Health Sciences - Virtual Health Library were also carried out a search of information in documents such as the Annaes of Colonia of Psychopaths, collections of members of the National Academy of Medicine and the Oswaldo Cruz Foundation. The supporting literature consisted of books and articles on the subject in print and electronic versions. Important report that was kept the original spelling of the documents in the literal quotations made throughout the text. The analysis sought to build a possible answer for the purpose of the study. Being a desk study it was not required submission to the Research Ethics Committee.

**RESULTS**

In the analysis of the Specialization Course subjects Nurses Social Visitors, there is the
influence of two parts, hygienism and eugenics. Each chair has several subtopics within these topics were analyzed, seeking to identify the presence of currents studied. In Table 1 there is the presentation of the amounts of subtopics, each chair, which are influenced by both sides. They are:

1. Social Hygiene with twelve subtopics, noting hygienists and eugenic features in the following subtopics: concept of social hygiene; social hygiene reproduction; social hygiene of childhood, the adolescence and youth; school hygiene; social hygiene of maturity, old age and disability; social hygiene of work and sport; prophylaxia of mental and nerve diseases; prevention and repression of delinquency; means of advertising in social hygiene.5

2. Childcare with eight subtopics in 1930 and fifteen in 1936 (subtopics added throughout the course). With detected influence are "modern conception of childcare and eugenics, generations notions"; “intrauterine childcare: pregnancy hygiene”; “intra-partum childcare: modern obstetric practice”; “PST-natal child care: hygiene of the newborn”; “fundamental principles of eugenics”; “school hygiene” and “premarital examination - wedding regulation”.5,17

3. Organization of social life: social legislation and of assistance with forty subtopics identified with the influence: general notions of moral and civic education; moral, sanitation and education; social selection in Brazil; hygiene and prophylaxia on streets and at home; immigration; rights and duties; delinquents.3

4. Diagnosis, prophylaxia and therapeutics of social diseases with twenty-two subtopics in the total discipline. Identified influence on: mental hygiene of social diseases; social aspect of worms; social aspect of mental disorders; social aspect of egressed from nosocomial, social aspect of epilepsy; pauperism and its social aspect.5

5. General notions of psychology with twenty subtopics. With influence there are analyzed with the name: methodological consequences of new scientific basis; the use of the method psychogenetic in the study of child and adolescent psychology, and in the study of psychopathology; study of the human factor at work.5

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of the Subject</th>
<th>Amount of Subtopics Influenced</th>
<th>Influence</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Social Hygiene</td>
<td>Eleven</td>
<td>Eugenic and hygienist</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Child Care</td>
<td>Seven</td>
<td>Eugenic and hygienist</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Organization of social life: social legislation and assistance</td>
<td>Five</td>
<td>Eugenic and hygienist</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Diagnosis, prophylaxia and therapeutics of social illnesses</td>
<td>Six</td>
<td>Eugenic and hygienist</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. General notions of psychology</td>
<td>Three</td>
<td>Eugenic and hygienist</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Annaes da Colonia de Psychopathas,1936; Annaes da Colonia de Psychopathas, 1930.5,17

With intent to corroborate in the pursuit of influence of eugenics and hygienism vertents in the course, there were analyzed the relationships of teachers of each subject and course organizers with LBHM, summarized in the table below.
Knowledge about Hygienism and Eugenics
was not restricted to courses; training of social visitors was also influenced through conferences regarding this scientific panorama. In October 1938, a group of course Social Visitors conducted a tour of the studies in São Paulo, headed by the then director of the Cologne Gustavo Riedel, Dr. Ernani Lopes. The students visited the Juqueri Hospital Pinel Sanatorium, Psychiatric Clinic, Sanatorium St. Therese, Public Health, Faculty of Medicine, Institute Butantan, Horto Florestal, Foodstuffs Inspection Service, Tuberculosis Hospital, Normal School, teaching establishments and playgrounds. 19

During the visits, the students attended conferences, and was the Society of Medicine and Surgery of São Paulo, Dr. Ernani Lopes gave a lecture on “Eugenics and Mental Hygiene,” which reported to the students the history of the eugenics movement in Brazil and its relation to the mental Hygiene, and cites eugenic measures which he believed essential to the development of the country, such as sterilization of the mentally disabled and the “withdrawal of” would not offer patients discharge. And in December 1939, led by Dr. Hector Peres, a new class visited the mining cities of Belo Horizonte and Barbacena. In Barbacena, met the Judicial Asylum, Cologne Hospital and the Silk Factory.

Already in Belo Horizonte, visited the Nursing School Carlos Chagas, Pestalozzi Institute, Permanent Fair samples, Penitentiary Neves, of Neurology and Psychiatry Society and several nursing homes and sanatories. 19 In the Neurology and Psychiatry Society, the students participated in the conferences, and the Dr. Cunha Lopes on “Guidelines mental hygiene among us” related to the studied scientific trends. In Proceedings of Cologne Gustavo Riedel confirmed the desire to continue these visits, “Given the knowledge that similar initiatives provided to our students of the Nurses course, such tours are manifestly worthy of support and thus outside desirable to repeat the same states or other states.” 19

From these facts we can then add the excursions as a factor of influence hygienism eugenics and the Visiting from 1938. The study tour promoted to students a distinct means of acquiring knowledge, especially for its time, was a pedagogical advancement.

### DISCUSSION

The influence of scientific trends, eugenics and hygienism, in the course is first confirmed when analyzing each subject and its subtopics.

The first subject, Social Hygiene, refers most of its subtopics to eugenics and hygiene, sometimes the current itself is the central theme. The concept of social hygiene transmitted to the students, the criterion used was the plurality of hygienists. Already confirming the power hygienism the course, which was explicitly importance in the dispensary (outpatient) of Cologne, because argued that the practical application of mental prophylaxis required the collaboration of the general hygiene in the fight against all the causes already identified disorders or diseases the nerve centers.

In the second subtopic, “social hygiene reproduction”, found the association of eugenic ideas with hygienism because the matter was of “Eugenia applied: restrictive and constructive” and discussed “What has been done in our country in the fields of eugenics. And need for eugenic selection of immigrants, “which coincided with the speech Renato Kehl, a member of LBHM, that to improve the people was necessary to making the population aware of the eugenic reproduction, i.e responsibility procreation, only persons able to give birth to gifted beings can have children, basic concept of mental hygiene. 15 In addition, it contains the practices of pre-nuptial medical examination,
marital hygiene and sterilization indications measures advocated by hygienists. The subtopic “Social Hygiene of childhood, the adolescence and youth,” observed hygienist trend in the subject “hygiene data applicable to each of these vital stages” and “notions about hygienic” that would be passed by the social visited young people; and eugenic trend in inciting the formation of healthy habits and eradication of bad habits, items highlighted in the description of matter. In this, “School Hygiene”, one of the issues discussed was the physical and mental hygiene of healthy school, social visitor should conduct examinations of sensorial acuity, observe the normal posture during class, hygienic trend.

Already, “Prevention and repression of delinquency”, eugenics was intertwined with hygienism, taught the students the offense factors and delinquents classification, described as penalties and their succedaneos, the most affordable cases to the medical and social intervention, the delinquents practices: begging, prostitution, faith healing, alcohol-drinking and gambling fans, the belief in “low mysticism”. It was the search eradication of bad habits. It would also be responsible for providing assistance to the children of convicts. It was discussed in “social assistance to the family”, particularly the poorest, “the hygienic and economic problem of housing and food in urban and rural areas”, hygienic trend.

In “Social Hygiene maturity, old age and disability” featured the theme “social hygiene of adult collectivities” hygienic trend. While in “Hygiene social work”, the theme was the hygiene in the workplace, orientation and selection of professionals and the hygiene of the muscular effort and intellectual activity, hygienic and eugenic tendency, and there is the notion selection. Another would be, “Technique of the social service of individual cases”, the actual social hygiene, the specialists should assist themes immigration and emigration, and the association of social hygiene and health problems, it appears hygienist and eugenic tendency, since the immigration of Europeans was seen by eugenics positively because it would “whitening” the population and bring good genes, then the country would develop.

Discussed in “Prophylaxis nerve diseases and mental” eugenic drawbacks of early discharge of heredo-psychopath. The specialists are designated as caregivers of mental hygiene in psychiatric dispensaries and helped the psychiatrist in social service and some research, such as predisposition as a cause of madness. In this subtopic had also genealogical research sections in asylums, children’s clinical behavior and notions of educability and improvement of mental functions in normal people, eugenic influence, all with the participation of the students. A dramatic standoff, it was in the alienist was when a heredo-psychopath (hereditary mental patient) of his asylum service was in a position to be high. Dr. Ernani Lopes cited in 1938, in the Conference on “Eugenia and Mental Hygiene,” for course students of health visitors, that there was a conflict of interest among psychiatrists, because they believed that even after curing the “ex-alienated” would procreate other unfortunate beings, helpless victims of the terrible pathological inheritance. Doctors of LBHM defended the enactment in Brazil of heredo-sanitation law enacted in Germany, that there legalized sterilization of this type of patient, so the alienist could give high without remorse.

As there was no law in Brazil, the specialists became propagating agents of sterilization ideal, since they were responsible for propagating the ideals of eugenics, one of them being not play people with degenerative features. What binds the last subtopic, analyzed with influence, involved the “propaganda media in social hygiene”; the specialists would be responsible for dissemination and education of the two currents, eugenics and hygienism, within the population.

In the second chain, child care, the influences are evident in the subtopics: “Modern Design Childcare and eugenics” taught to the students general notions of both issues; we can see the weight of eugenics when it is identified as a central theme in another subtopic. No, “premarital examinations - Wedding regulation”, the analyzed eugenic influence is related to the need of prenuptial examination, a means of selecting those who could bear children. Besides being a wedding hygiene, hygienist trend. There were two similar subtopics were: “intrauterine Childcare: hygiene of pregnancy”, “post-natal child care: hygiene of the newborn”, everyone involved with the hygienic notion.

“Intra-partum Childcare: modern obstetric practice”, were taught its relations with the mental hygiene. “Fundamental principles of eugenics: their relationship to mental hygiene”, great example of eugenic influence on the course of health visitors, mainly because of links to mental hygiene. Have the last subtopic subject: childcare, “Hygiene School” was simply hygienic.

The third subject, organization of social life: social legislation and assistance, the subjects were separated by letters A, B, C and
D. Within each separation were ten subtopics, in which only the above maintained relations with eugenics and hygienist. The Organization A - letter of social life, with the subtopics "Understanding education generations, moral and civic", which were related to eugenics, because of the notion of morality. "Moral, sanitation and education; Social selection in Brazil "the moral ideas and social selection transmit eugenic influence. The second division, B- social legislation in Brazil, had "Hygiene and prophylaxis the streets and houses" that in dealing with hygiene in the streets and houses, relates to hygienism in order to preventing diseases associated with lack of sanity.

By the third subject, "Immigration; Rights and duties" was linked to eugenic idea of cleaning the race" with the introduction of European, white and developed immigrants. The letter C assistance Laws in Brazil included "delinquents", based on the idea of segregation and social prevention and as individual protection, a eugenic feature. Already D - criminal repression was not identified any influence of currents studied in its subtopics.

The fourth subject was Diagnosis, prophylaxis and therapeutics of social diseases in their twenty-two subtopics, and the twenty-second the practical course, we identified six with eugenic and hygienist trends. They are: "Mental Hygiene of Social Diseases", discussed on the Brazilian League of Mental Hygiene, its origin, leading pioneers, purpose, made the League's own mental hygiene and prophylaxis of social diseases, and the main: the collaboration of health visitors in the LBHM program. From subtopic, looks great influence both of eugenics as hygienism, and the association of both through mental hygiene. "Social aspect of worms", noted the influence hygienism through the notion of sanity in homes infested regions taught to health visitors.

In addition to the subtopics, "Social aspect of mental disorders," in which one perceives the influence of currents studied by the visitor guidance for this case, the mental hygiene. "Social aspect of graduates of nosocomial", the specialists were responsible for seeking information about the hygiene conditions in extra-nosocomial patient's life; this research demonstrates the importance given to the hygienist, as they try to identify a relationship with him the cause of the disease, and being the specialists responsible for the research is expected of them large domain such science. "Social aspect of epilepsy", wide range of topics, but only the "Mental Hygiene of epileptic" maintaining relationship of influence with eugenics and hygienist.

The last, "pauperism and its social aspect" was discussed mental illness as pauperism factor: low professional level, characterized as eugenic idea, since associates a degenerative characteristic, mental illness, the cause of the individual's poverty status.

The fifth subject, psychology generations of Understanding subtopics contained twenty three of which have attributes of eugenics and hygienist. "Methodological new scientific bases of methodological" means that within these new scientific bases were studied current eugenics and hygienism, identified again as the central theme of the subtopic, showing great importance and influence of these sciences in the course of health visitors. And "studying human factor at work", eugenic influences and hygienists from the mental hygiene identifying the subtopic.

The influence of the slopes, eugenics and hygienism are also ratified when we look at the names of the teachers responsible for each chair of the course. As already evidenced, in the results through the Table 2, the teacher ratio and course organizers of social Visiting with LBHM. There was a link between teachers and the LBHM. The relationship is natural, since teachers were psychiatrists in their own colony, which was run by one of the precursors of mental hygiene and founder of LBHM, Dr. Gustavo Riedel. Identifies also the fact that the course be in Cologne Within ingenuity of Psychopaths same campus LBHM which reinforces the idea of influence of the currents. In addition to the tour as a factor influencing the health visitors, from 1938.

**CONCLUSION**

The study showed the incidence of topics related to current hygienism and eugenics in the subjects of the Social Visitors Course, which indeed implies the conclusion that the social Visiting course students were influenced by such currents as well as many sectors and thought fields in the early twentieth century. Visiting the course chairs addressed to issues related to hygienism and eugenics, both in lectures and in the practices. In addition, the students were also prepared to take this knowledge to the population. The subtopic "propaganda media in social hygiene" is an example, ie, the nurses at the end of the course, should be well attuned to the hygienists and eugenic grounds for carrying out their work of social visitation.

Also visible is the influence from the LBHM members’ teachers, and the environment of...
practical classes, later often the desktop, be the colony of Engenho de Dentro headquarters LBHM. It reinforced with tours of the course students who participated in talks with eugenics and hygienist stamp from 1938. The course was one of the psychiatrists strategy for nurses to broaden the scope of action of psychiatry out of traditional psychiatric institutions, with based on the principles hygienism and eugenics.

Although treated as true scientific and social bases, eugenics and even hygienism were highly contested by its racist and discriminatory principles; however, while prestige enjoyed were applied to knowledge and desired practices to nurses as important social agents for the redemption of Brazilian society for the correction, as far as possible, of the evils of miscegenation and the remodeling of the conduct of the public against the vices and mental degeneration. The critical and insightful look into the past can reveal the care and responsibility to be taken in the production and reproduction of knowledge and its consequences in the social world.

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