

# Martha e rogers

Health & Medicine, Nursing



A casual occurrence, she shared her birthday with Florence Nightingale born 94 years before and had passed away four years before. They will share more than a birthdate as we will see later namely the role of the nursing as distinct from medicine. One is helping nature while nursing puts the patient in the best environment for nature to act. 3 Martha was born in a family which valued education and from an early age she was an avid reader challenging herself to read up to five books a week.

She was an avid learner as well with no hesitation for the harder classes such as math and algebra. She ran in the first gender issue then as she was the only woman in that class. She wanted to put her learning skills and knowledge towards contribution to social welfare hesitating between law and medicine and eventually opting for the later. She started in pre-med at the University of Tennessee (1931) but withdrew in 1933 under the pressure this was not a career deemed suitable for a woman. This was even told her by her parents.

She eventually received a diploma from the Knoxville General Hospital School of Nursing in 1936. Despite her being valedictorian of her class, her parents were not happy she did not have a degree and enrolled the George Peabody College in Nashville where she earned a Bachelor of Science in Public Health Nursing in 1937. After graduation, she worked for the Children's Fund of Michigan as public health nurse. Her work involved home visits, case finding giving vaccinations, planning and giving health teaching programs.

She then decided to further her education by entering into a Master program at Columbia's Teacher's College in New York in 1939. She would graduate in

1945 having worked at the Visiting Nurse Association in Hartford CT culminating her involvement there as acting Director of Education. Upon graduation in 1945, she took the position of executive director of the Phoenix Visiting Nurse Association in Arizona. An intellectual she called for an "educational revolution in nursing" that differentiated university education from vocational training grounded in theoretical knowledge.

This intellectual curiosity led her to another Master in Public Health in 1952 from the John Hopkins University, the premier health program in the US. She went on to earn a Doctor of Science degree (Sad) in 1954, with a circus similar to a PhD, thus becoming one of the very few nurses holding a doctoral program. Her view on what the requirements for nurses should be which had led her to her pursuit of academic achievements was rewarded with the position of professor of Nursing and head of the Division of Nursing at New York University in 1954.

In her mind, nursing was not a vocational school but required the expansion of curriculum with theory based learning and a bachelor of science program. It is during this period that she developed a new theory - the science of unitary human beings, writing three books *Educational Revolution in Nursing* (1961), *Reveille in Nursing* (1964) and *An Introduction to the Theoretical Basis of Nursing* (1970). This last book marked the beginning of a new era in nursing.

She identified the central focus of nursing concerns by understanding the importance of studying human beings and their environments as an irreducible unitary whole and that human beings are more than and different

from the sum of their parts. I do not claim to understand everything it means and I have followed the presentation by a am of students from Northern Arizona University in nursing who presented this as a final project to their class. She proposed an abstract system which is comprised of four key concepts: Energy fields: the fundamental unit of life.

Openness: there are no boundaries to prevent the flow of energy between human and environmental energy fields providing for the continuous movement of matter and energy. Pattern: distinguishing characteristics of the field that reflects the dynamic change of nature and man's innovative wholeness. Pan-dimensionality: non linear domain without spatial or time-based characteristics, the coming together of n infinite number of dimensions. These four concepts are the building blocks that construct the three scientific principles of homeostasis which proposes a way to view the unitaryhuman being.

Integrally: The human energy fields that are mutually and continuously changing: we affect our environment and it affects us - meditation ormusiccan promote a positive human environment. Resonance: from the field of physics. The constant change of the way patterns from higher to lower frequency - the flow of energy between people and everything in the world around them. Can be done through human touch, talking, drawing, storytelling or any active usage of imagination.

Helical: any small change in any environmental field causes ripple effect which creates larger changes in other fields; the continuous evolution of change that results from the interaction of human environment fields. It is

both constant and unpredictable and explains the fact that there are many forces that are interacting. This extremely intellectual approach to nursing which was also the result of her education and her thriving for knowledge derives also from a philosophy with a positive attitude to the human being.

It seeks for the patient to reach self-actualization as described by Abraham Maslow. I would argue that beyond the theoretical construct she wrote and which can be difficult for the layman to understand, Martha Rogers gave a fundamental belief that nurses are more than simple caregivers and through their communication and understanding of the patient, the nurse can provide a fundamental boost and daily encouragement to the patient to reach well-being. This psychological drive is combined with the scientific elements of knowledge of what is a proper environment for the patient to move forward.

This last point is very much in line with the theories put forward by Florence Nightingale in creating a nurturing environment for patients. It is may be a coincidence that both were born on the same day but also remained unmarried dedicated to the cause of nursing at promoting a healthy field and environment for patients to recover. In your opinion, how did the theory of Martha Rogers enhance and improve the nursing care given to the patients? Martha Rogers believed that nursing was both a science and an art.

Her thriving for more scientific knowledge for nurses means that attentions were taken care of by better educated nurses who were more able to understand the medical underpinning of the treatment administered to the patient. At the same time the holistic approach derived from her theoretical research means that patients can expect nurses who are more in tune with

the forces which affect their lives and how the environment in which they are recovering can be affected by the attention and care given to them.

The overall affect they receive is enhanced through the concept of helical - the gentle push given to support the patient's morale by the nurse has a profound effect on the patient's recovery. This is enhanced as the psychological makeup of the patient is affected by the care attention and devotion given by the nurse who has been trained to understand both the technical remedies offered by medicine but also tries to communicate and fosters the energy fields of the patient - his or her resilience in the face of illness and all of themotivationwhich will help the patient fight for full recovery.

Behind the complex words in Martha Rorer's theories, I view the role of the nurse as both understanding the regimen of medical treatment which has been proposed by the doctors but also a close legislation with the patient which means that the patient is not alone in fighting for recovery. It reminds me of the final plea of Patch Adams when he tells his fellow students to listen to the nurses.

They have a finger on the psychological pulse of the patient and can relate to the will for recovery and offer actual support to the patient. By articulating that trained nurses can understand both the technical issues of a treatment as well as the human issues of a patient, Martha Rogers elevates the role of the nurse from a simple caregiver to an individual fully involved in the recovery and well-being of patients.