

WHO 60th Anniversary Global Health Histories Seminars

LUNCHTIME SEMINAR,
Thursday 18th September 2008
12.30 – 14.00, Library Meeting Room

Professionalism and prestige: a British perspective on international nursing organization in the 20th century

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For many years, British nurses were able to capitalize on the international reputation of Florence Nightingale (1820-1910), the "Lady with the Lamp" heroine of wounded soldiers in the Crimean War, as a model for nurse training. The nursing establishment took an unashamedly imperialist view of the relations between British nurses and those of other countries.

Presenters Anne Crowther and Susan McGann have been researching the history of the Royal College of Nursing, founded in Britain in 1916, and its extensive international connections, including educational courses provided by the College specifically to train an "elite" of foreign nurses in British nursing practice. However, this influence came under growing pressure by the mid- 20th century as more academic approaches to nurse training began to dominate.

This presentation explores the RCN's relations with bodies such as the International Council of Nurses, the United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration, and the World Health Organization, and raises questions on the status of nursing in national and international health services.

Co-organized with The Wellcome Trust Centre for the History of Medicine, University College, London
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