The Value of Story Theory in Providing Culturally Sensitive Advanced Practice Nursing in Rural Appalachia

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Abstract

This paper is based on the premise that nurses come to terms with the realities of patients by forming an understanding of their cultural viewpoints through embracing the person’s story. The author presents her journey in coming to understand the importance of attending to the patient’s story in the delivery of advanced practice nursing. Highlights of the journey include: a reconstructed story of a women deeply immersed in the cultural and religious traditions of Appalachia; literature on Appalachian culture, religious practices, and beliefs; and story theory as a theoretical approach to guide culturally sensitive nursing practice.

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Attention to diversity, and cultural competence, have become of great importance in recent years as our society has become increasingly diverse. While attention to all forms of diversity is of vital importance, this brief article focuses on ethical practice with clients from diverse cultural, ethnic, and racial backgrounds. Several relevant facts are well-established at present: 1. The U.S. population continues to diversify at a rapid rate. 2. In some regions, people of color now make up the majority population. 3. Immigrants are no longer concentrating in a few urban areas. They are populatin