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Redefining the concept of Humanisation in pregnancy and Childbirth – a concept for all women

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Background: Humanisation in pregnancy and childbirth has historically been considered in contrast to the biomedical model and has therefore in the sphere of low risk and non-medicalised birth. Regardless of medical need, all women are entitled to safe, evidence based and humanised care.

Aim: To clarify the concept of humanised care during pregnancy and childbirth **Methods:** Concept analysis using Walker and Avant's eight steps.

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Results: Humanised care encompasses the attitudes and behaviours of healthcare professionals in clinical practice. This model of care can be broad in scope to include all women regardless of their medical or psychological need and/or their risk status. Pregnant women, midwives and obstetricians consider humanised care to be in concordance with the biomedical model.

Conclusion: The physical outcome of pregnancy should not be considered in isolation or above the holistic care of the woman. Both pregnant women and healthcare professionals need to be up informed on the rights of women in pregnancy and childbirth. Women need the support and facilitation of relevant midwifery and obstetric health care professionals to work in partnership with them to ensure a safe and positive birth experience.

Biography

Mary Ellen Curtin has a Ph.D. from Duke University and is a historian of modern African American and women's social and political history. Her first book *Black Prisoners and Their World* documented the experiences of black convict laborers in the South after emancipation. Her next book on the life of Barbara Jordan, the first black woman from the South elected to Congress, will be published with the University of Pennsylvania Press. Her review article on recent books in prison history will appear in the upcoming edition of the journal *Labor* and she also has an article in a new anthology entitled *The Problem of Punishment*. She worked as a consultant, and was interviewed for, the upcoming (Spring 2012) PBS documentary *Slavery by Another Name*, a history of African Americans and forced labor in the South.

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