

Hospital Staff Performing Surgery (c. 1910)

Abstract

This photograph of hospital staff performing surgery speaks to the professionalization of knowledge in the modern period. The classification of knowledge allowed for the clustering of related disciplines (e.g. anatomy, nursing) into specific knowledge procedures, such as the delivery of medical or surgical care. These procedures mobilized various individuals with expert knowledge or practical expertise (both of which presupposed either intellectual or hands-on training). These individuals, in this case doctors and nurses, then engaged in a functional series of coordinated tasks, whose proper execution required the observance of common rules and acknowledged standards of behavior. Professional success endowed the relevant practitioners with social respectability, which they then displayed through distinctive dress, coded professional speech, and the sartorial emblems of scientific healthcare, for example, oral thermometers in the coat pocket and, later, stethoscopes around the neck.

Source



Source: Hospital staff performing an operation at the Reserve Military Hospital [*Reservelazarett*] in Beelitz, Germany, c. 1910. Division of Prints and Photographs, Library of Congress, Washington, DC. Available online at: <https://www.loc.gov/pictures/item/2007681031/>

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