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Grand Street Settlement

During the pre-conference of clinical I spent some time (along with my partner Reem) discussing what we observed during our community walk. We consciously made our way down Pitt Street in the Lower East Side and were able to identify numerous problematic characteristics, such as noise and air pollution, construction, and safety issues. It was mind-boggling to me how there can be so many health concerns in such as small radius. Furthermore, it made me think about how as resident’s of New York City we have a tendency to overlook or ignore the many negative aspects of living in such a big, busy city. Rents continue to escalate and different neighborhoods continue to be effected by gentrification, which is indicative of just how tolerant we are as a community of people.

I have been notorious for criticizing the need for a bachelor degree to practice nursing, and I still feel that it may not be entirely necessary to practice in a clinical setting; I strongly believe that the knowledge needed to provide quality patient care can be obtained in an Associate’s degree program compounded with sufficient clinical experience and practice. However, I am beginning to understand the need for the knowledge gained while acquiring a BSN. The current health care industry calls for the ability to work in many different setting, not just in acute care settings. That being said, there is a strong need to be able to identify different types of health problems, concerns, and diseases – not just those that a patient presents with. A prime example is the “diagnosis” that Reem and I were able to make on the condition of Pitt Street after completing our Community Walk.

I am often the first person to complain about the focus of most of the coursework involved in attaining a bachelor’s degree. There is barely any hands-on, clinical skill reinforcement or practice, and information is often repetitive and concentrated on culture, community, and health concerns affected by economics. Nonetheless, I have found myself able to identify concerns in community settings (my beloved New York City, for one) that I would have never acknowledged before, and they are proving to be serious concerns. Therefore, I would have to say that the bachelor degree curriculum, although tedious, isn’t as “useless” as I previously thought it to be.