Volume 18 issue number 2 of *Saúde e Sociedade* presents a group of papers that provides the view and voice of protagonists of health questions and/or health actions in the scope of public policies, based on different methodological conceptions, and which offer stimulating theoretical contributions. The paper by Brandt & Minayo-Gomez, which resulted from an investigation in a public company from the services sector, with open interviews conducted with workers, managers and health professionals, analyzed in light of dialectical hermeneutics, found that some of the conceptions of suffering in the specialized literature relegate the worker to the position of ill person or victim, neglecting his capacity for resistance, which creates minimum conditions for permanence in the job, but does not avoid situations that favor suffering.

The paper written by Deeke and collaborators analyzes the dynamics of domestic violence based on the discourse of the injured woman and of the partner who committed the aggression. This descriptive and exploratory research study with a qualitative approach reveals the aggressions’ characteristics perceived by the members of the couple and the forms in which they understand the factors that have repercussions on the domestic violence dynamics.

Life histories, characteristic of the “transforming encounter” process between two homeless people and a teacher as a “supporting point” in their lives, were the bases for the paper written by Alvarez, Alvarenga & Rina. The recovery of the meaning of the involved individuals’ lives, promoting resilience, was registered based on these accounts.

The paper by Patrício, Hoshino & Ribeiro analyzes environmental aspects involved in longevity using a qualitative technique called grounded theory on data provided by long-lived ex-railway workers. Their representations converge on a generic hypervaluing of things from the past and on the recent observation that their existences were part of the epic adventures that promoted the economic and social development of the interior of the state of São Paulo and enabled an existential resignification of the past, suggesting that it is a potent defense mechanism that culminates in longevity.

The paper by Schnaider, Silva & Pereira was based on a qualitative exploratory research study which interviewed twenty-one family care providers, aiming to identify and learn the meaning of being a family care provider of neurologically affected patients.

Finally, the paper by Araújo & Günther identifies social interpretations about the concept of risk situation in contaminated areas, with a qualitative methodology supported by social theory and varied data collection instruments.

Differently from the group of papers mentioned above, in which the protagonist’s voice directly subsidizes the authors’ writing, the paper “*Para além da atenção básica: reorganização do SUS por meio da interseção do setor político com o econômico*” (Beyond primary care: reorganization of SUS through the intersection of the political and economic sectors) is opportune in view of its contribution to the necessary debate on the potentialities of primary health care as the promoter of a re-orientation in the access to the health services. It provides a critical analysis referring to economic and political dimensions that influence the logic of the organization and access to the health services, which condition the possibilities of primary health care.