



# Dona Yvonne Lara and the rhythm between art and science<sup>a</sup>

*Dona Yvonne Lara e o compasso entre a arte e a ciência*

*Dona Yvonne Lara y la cadencia entre el arte y la ciencia*

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## ABSTRACT

**Objective:** To rescue and reflect on nurse Yvonne da Silva Lara's professional history, nationally known by her stage name: *Dona Ivone Lara*. **Method:** Public documentary sources available online such as books, theses, dissertations, scientific articles, reports and documentaries with the character and with psychiatrist Nise da Silveira were used. **Results:** The presentation of her life history detailed her choice and training as a Nurse, and later as a Social Worker, narrating her professional performance and work developed. It portrays the meaning and struggle of a poor black-skinned woman investing in education and professional training, highlighting her primacy for the opportunity to study, making the most of the opportunities presented to her, to study and work until retiring. **Conclusion and implications for the practice:** Acting professionally in the areas of care, she maintained her musicality in her life, even collaborating with its use as a therapeutic activity in Psychiatry. This unprecedented text about Yvonne Lara's story expands the visibility of her professional construction in two careers and mobilizes the readers to understand her importance for Nursing.

**Keywords:** Social construction of gender; Nursing; History of Nursing; Music; Social work.

## RESUMO

**Objetivo:** Resgatar e refletir sobre a história profissional da enfermeira Yvonne da Silva Lara, conhecida nacionalmente por seu nome artístico *Dona Ivone Lara*. **Método:** Reflexão teórica realizada a partir de fontes documentais públicas disponíveis online como livros, Teses, Dissertações, artigos científicos, reportagens e documentários acerca da personagem e da psiquiatra Nise da Silveira. **Resultados:** Pela apresentação de sua história de vida detalhou-se a escolha e formação como Enfermeira, e depois como Assistente Social, narrando sua atuação profissional e apontando sua importância nas profissões. Retrata o significado e a luta de uma mulher negra e pobre investindo em educação e formação profissional, destacando-se sua primazia pela oportunidade de estudos, aproveitando ao máximo as oportunidades a ela apresentadas, para estudar e trabalhar até se aposentar. **Conclusão e implicações para a prática:** Atuando profissionalmente em áreas do cuidado de enfermagem e posteriormente, do serviço social, manteve a musicalidade em sua vida, colaborando, inclusive, com seu uso como atividade terapêutica em psiquiatria. Este texto inédito acerca da história de Yvonne Lara, amplia a visibilidade sobre sua construção profissional em duas carreiras, e mobiliza os leitores para compreender a sua importância para a enfermagem.

**Palavras-chave:** Construção social do gênero; Enfermagem; História da enfermagem; Música; Serviço social.

## RESUMEN

**Objetivo:** Rescatar y reflexionar sobre la trayectoria profesional de la enfermera Yvonne da Silva Lara, conocida a nivel nacional por su nombre artístico *Dona Ivone Lara*. **Metodología:** Se utilizaron fuentes documentales públicas disponibles *online* como libros, tesis, disertaciones, artículos científicos, reportajes y documentales con el personaje y la psiquiatra Nise da Silveira. **Resultados:** La presentación de su historia de vida detalla su elección y formación como Enfermera, y luego como Asistente Social y narra su desempeño profesional y el trabajo desarrollado. Retrata el significado y la lucha de una mujer negra pobre que invierte en educación y formación profesional y destaca su primacía por la oportunidad de estudiar, al aprovechar las oportunidades que se le presentan, para estudiar y trabajar hasta jubilarse. **Conclusiones e implicaciones para la práctica:** Con actuación profesional en áreas asistenciales, mantuvo la musicalidad en su vida, colaborando, incluso, con su uso como actividad terapéutica en psiquiatria. Este texto inédito sobre la historia de Yvonne Lara amplía la visibilidad de su construcción profesional en dos carreras y moviliza a los lectores a comprender su importancia para la enfermería.

**Palabras clave:** Construcción social de género; Enfermería; Historia de la enfermería; Música; Servicio social.

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## INTRODUCTION

Productions in the history of Nursing and Health have been developing studies that deal with the aspects which permeate the history of the profession and its characters that have somehow made a difference in the professional historical construction.

Nurses' biographies have been used in Nursing education for several purposes: to emphasize the development of a specific professional area; to guide the creation of Nursing institutions; to create Nursing theories; and to investigate the social and political advances of the profession.<sup>1,2,4,3</sup> The focus and the option for nurses' biographies are centered on those who held prominent positions in Nursing at some point in their career.<sup>2-4</sup>

This text will tell the story of a character from Brazilian Nursing, whose success, memory and tributes did not occur in the Nursing area, but in the field of music. An untold story that needs to be rescued. A woman who left her mark on the history of Brazilian women, who rebelled against the customs of her time and pursued the dream of being someone who, by the expression of her abilities, could somehow transform society. A woman Nurse who dedicated herself to common good, to the recovery of the mental health of hospitalized and medicalized people, many abandoned by family members to their own luck.<sup>5</sup>

Nursing and social work appear as a background in the texts about the life of Yvonne Lara/Dona Ivone Lara (04/13/1921-04/16/2018), although these were the first scenarios of struggle for freedom in her life. We will use her birth name, Yvonne da Silva Lara, because that is how she became known professionally as a Nurse and Social Worker. Construction of this narrative is added to other sources that deal with the life story of this woman, most about her wonderful career as a samba singer and songwriter, with less prominence of her training in two important educational institutions in the health field: the current Alfredo Pinto Nursing School of *Universidade Federal do Estado do Rio de Janeiro* (UNIRIO), where she graduated as a Nurse, and the Anna Nery Nursing School of *Universidade Federal do Rio de Janeiro* (UFRJ), where she graduated in Social Work.

In the research on Yvonne Lara's performance in the careers that preceded her recognition as an artist, we found texts reporting and revering her work as one of the pioneering Social Workers in Brazil, none of which were written by a Nurse. In such productions, the focus on her work in health is mainly revealed by her work with psychiatrist Nise da Silveira,<sup>6</sup> a reformer in the mental health area, and an important reference for the work she developed with psychiatric patients, in which she defended art as a liberating instrument and, therefore, therapeutic.<sup>7</sup> This manuscript aims at reflecting and rescuing the professional history of Dona Yvonne Lara, with a special focus on her training and career as a Nurse.

## METHOD

This reflection was guided by a thorough analysis of public documentary sources and available online, in collections such as the Digital Hemerotheque of the National Library, in addition to Theses, Dissertations, scientific articles, reports and documentaries

available on the YouTube platform, and the film "*Nise – The heart of madness*", in which Yvonne Lara was interpreted by actress Roberta Rodrigues<sup>8</sup>. Some *verbatim* statements were also selected as illustrations for this reflection, contained in interviews granted by Yvonne Lara for the elaboration of the research studies by Burns<sup>9</sup> and Santos.<sup>10</sup> In addition, laws and decrees of the Nursing courses from the School of Nurses for the Assistance to the Mentally-Ill were also used, as well as from the Alfredo Pinto Nursing School, and the Social Work Course of the Anna Nery Nursing School, the first to be created in Rio de Janeiro, in addition to other documents that were necessary to contextualize the discussion. To ensure reliability of the sources of this reflection, internal and external validation was carried out.<sup>11</sup> All the ethical precautions were taken in reading and using the documents, which followed the principles set forth in Resolution No. 510/2016, of the National Health Council, regarding Ethics in Research in Human and Social Sciences. Thus, human dignity and protection were respected, preventing any and all harms to the people, populations and institutions under study.

### A glimpse at the life story of Yvonne da Silva Lara

Born and registered as Yvonne da Silva Lara, on April 13<sup>th</sup>, 1921, she lived her first childhood years in Rua Voluntários da Pátria, Botafogo, in the South Zone of Rio de Janeiro, *Distrito Federal* at the time. Her date of birth is cited as 1921 in many sources; however, after her death, her son informed a journalist that Dona Yvonne had her birth certificate changed from 1922 to 1921 to be admitted to boarding school.<sup>12</sup> We have chosen to use the date stamped in her identity card, whose image was reproduced on a book cover released in 2007.<sup>12</sup>

Dona Yvonne Lara was the first daughter of Emerentina Bento da Silva, a seamstress, and João da Silva Lara, a bicycle mechanic. Both of them had a predominant musical vein: João was a seven-string guitarist who paraded in the *Bloco dos Africanos*; and Emerinta was a singer of the traditional Rio de Janeiro carnival ranches.<sup>9,13</sup> As she came from a family with many musicians, it is not surprising that our character composed her first samba at the age of 12.

*I was too young, I didn't have a doll, I didn't have any of that. I had my cousin Fuleiro, whom I loved. He was a brother I had at the time. And he hunted a lot of birds. One time he went out, and when he came back, he brought a tanager bird. He put it in a cage and said: 'Oh, cousin! Vona!' That's what he called me. "Look at your doll..." Oh, I was in such joy, just from seeing. From there I began to make little verses for the bird.*<sup>9,33,14c</sup>

Yvonne suddenly lost her father when she was 3 years old and her mother died due to Acute Myocardial Infarction at the age of 33, when Yvonne was 12. Before that, however, Emerentina had a second marriage, with Venino José da Silva, manager of the musical instrument store called "*Violão Carioca*" in Madureira, with whom she had another two sons.<sup>15</sup>

With four children, the family's social condition was difficult, and they all moved to *Bairro da Tijuca*, where the *Orsina da Fonseca* Municipal School was located,<sup>d-16</sup> a public boarding school maintained by the city with a great reputation in terms of teaching quality and rigor in the students' general education. With this, although public, the school was sought after by wealthier families in the city. It was a place devoted to the education of girls from less privileged social classes, aiming to turn them into "ideal women", that is, with a good education and prepared for marriage, but also for work outside the house. Yvonne's family understood that this would be the proper place for their eldest daughter. To enter, it was necessary to enroll and wait to be called. That is what happened to the character of our biography: she was admitted when she was ten years old, staying there until the age of 17.

At the age of 12, our orphan black-skinned girl went with her three brothers to live with her aunt Maria, Emerentina's sister, on the Serrinha hill in Madureira. She spent the weekdays at the boarding school, living with girls from all social classes, and spent the weekends at Aunt Maria's house every fortnight. According to her own words, *I was emancipated on my own account. My mother had died, and no one took care of me. At the age of 12, I was the one who solved everything, I guided myself. It was really good, because it made me the way I am today. Everything I did from then on was my own decision.*<sup>9:40,14</sup>

On the weekends with the family, she lived with her relatives, having even learned *cavaquinho* (small Brazilian guitar) with her uncle Dionísio Bento da Silva, known as a *chorinho* musician, and developed her talent for composing sambas. However, in school she also excelled in singing classes and garnered many merits with that. She participated in the choir and had one of the most in tune voices. The girls with beautiful voices made presentations in their own school, but also outside it, in events in the city. It was a way of recognition, as well as a possibility of "reasserting her condition, her status" and her value as a black-skinned woman.<sup>9,10</sup>

In the first decades of the twentieth century, learning in the boarding school was directed to the education of women aiming to train gifted girls, developing skills focused on the domestic arts; and for work, providing the basics to know their duties as women. The school submitted its inmates to the rules of a hierarchical and closed society acting as an ideology reproduction apparatus. This type of educational system allowed total control over the production of new citizens, in this case, new female citizens, girls from "good families", becoming a space for the production and dissemination not only of knowledge, but of social rules, behavior standards and ideological positions.<sup>17</sup>

At this juncture, learning at the boarding school for a black-skinned, poor and orphaned girl, was essential for her development as a person, with dense values, which would influence many of her future decisions. As she acknowledges: *"And I gradually followed the boarding school regimes, which were very rigid. And it was great for me. Because if I had been raised out here I wouldn't have studied so much"*.<sup>10:166</sup> In 1939, at the age of 17, Yvonne had to leave the boarding school and went to live with

her Uncle Dionysus who worked as an ambulance driver for the public health network.

*Thank God, we've always had a musical environment. Uncle Dionísio Bento da Silva was a good friend of Pixinguinha, Jacob do Bandolim... He played the trombone. He was a "chorão". When we arrived on rehearsal days, we watched people sing, play. Once in a while we were part of it, too. We learned to sing. Especially when he was composing, he made sure that we learned so he wouldn't forget.*<sup>9:51,13:06,14</sup>

The natural path expected in terms of future expectations for a young woman full of life, with a solid schooling at the age of 17, although with few financial resources, in addition to being black-skinned and from a family of musicians, was to become a housewife, a maid, a seamstress like her mother, or she even had the option of working in a factory.

The condition of black-skinned women in Brazil is influenced by the degrading slavery regime, when they were attributed meanings of sexual objects, reproducers of slave labor and wet nurses, among others.<sup>18</sup> In the 1930s, Yvonne Lara knew that she had a double disadvantage from the social point of view, which would not be minimized by her talent as a songwriter. In the first decades of the twentieth century, women musicians were respected, especially those dedicated to the piano; however, female songwriters had to conceal this talent or dismiss it to continue in their role as wives and devoted mothers. One of the few exceptions was Chiquinha Gonzaga (1847-1935). After the death of this songwriter, there was a void of women in music composition, only broken by Maysa in the 1950s.<sup>19</sup> Thus, the jobs reserved for women in the 1930s offered them almost no differentiated options. However, from our perspective, Yvonne da Silva Lara was not an ordinary woman that accepted her fate; she believed in studying and in her right to make choices.<sup>5</sup>

Then, as it could not be otherwise, her uncle Dionysus called teenager Yvonne to reality, proposing to "get her a job at the *Nova America* Fabric Factory in Vila Isabel, where one of her cousins was already working".<sup>13:06</sup> Once again, the course of Yvonne's life would be outlined against her aspirations. She had bigger plans that she was not even aware of; however, she knew that she did not want to work at the Factory, and the next day she read in *Jornal do Brasil* the announcement of a contest for the Professional School of Nurses for the Assistance to the Mentally-Ill. The course was free and the students would receive, in addition to a room, food, uniforms and a monthly bonus as a form of payment for the services provided at the hospital for the mentally-ill during the course.<sup>20</sup>

*"The Nursing course was the only one that was free, so I chose it, I didn't have much choice"(...). "My uncle repeated that if I didn't pass, I would do any other thing." Yvonne passed in third place – a position that also gave her the right to an allowance of 90,000 réis ("A lot of money!")*.

*"I gave everything I earned to my aunt, who bought my shoes, and covered the house expenses".<sup>9:48,14</sup>*

It is inferred that *Dona Yvonne Lara* had already experienced the boarding system in high school. Therefore, it would not be difficult to adapt to the rules, in an environment that would guarantee her the professional training of a Nurse to work in the labor market, with slightly more distinction both in social and in financial status (she would be paid as a professional). In addition, it is noteworthy that *Dona Yvonne* ensured her self-sufficiency with the study scholarship she won.

From 1931 on, Brazil started to recognize graduated Nurse as respectable professionals, as the federal government established criteria for the operation of Nursing schools that should only accept women and operate with a boarding regime. Thus, studying Nursing became an option for girls from good families who wanted to enter the job market.<sup>20,21</sup>

### Personal construction and Nursing as a contingency

The decision to study Nursing was based on another important factor. In an interview, Yvonne Lara reported that several people in her family were also nurses:

*A lot of people went to Nursing school. I myself worked with a lot of people from the world of samba in hospitals. The people who lived in the North zone, who didn't have much money, saw in this the chance to change their lives. I worked with Paulinho da Viola's mother, and with the wife of Paulo Faria, who was already recognized as a musician. But she kept her job stable. It was important and safer to have someone on a fixed salary.<sup>9:49,10:65</sup>*

The Alfredo Pinto Nursing School (*Escola de Enfermagem Alfredo Pinto*, EEAP) was the first Nursing school in Brazil, founded in 1890 in Rio de Janeiro. At the time called Professional School of Nurses, it was created by Decree No. 791 of 09/27/1890, together with the Medical-Legal Assistance for the Mentally-III. The content of the course, directed by physicians, was aimed at the care of mentally-ill patients. In 1921, the old requirements established since creation of the school remained the same in the sphere of Assistance to Psychopaths of *Distrito Federal*, created in 1927, so that the psychiatrists stayed in the positions of administrative and pedagogical power in the School space.<sup>22</sup> This condition only changed in 1942, when the School was renamed as Alfredo Pinto School of Nurses (*Escola de Enfermeiros Alfredo Pinto*, EEAP), by Decree-Law No. 4,725/1942 and more precisely in 1943, when a nurse called Maria de Castro Pamphiro (1943-1956 administration) initiated a curricular reform, aiming to meet<sup>23</sup> the precepts in force since 1931, by Decree No. 20,109, which defined that, from that moment on, all schools should be adapted to the Anna Nery standard.<sup>24</sup>

One of the requirements for schools to conform to the Anna Nery standard was that the School principal should be a

graduated Nurse, with an improvement course and teaching and administration experience in similar institutions. This condition only changed in 1949, with the enactment of Law No. 775/1949, which regulates Nursing education in Brazil.<sup>25</sup>

The training at the Professional School of Nurses for the Assistance to the Mentally-III was focused on psychiatric assistance. The basic conditions for enrollment, by Decree No. 17,805, of May 23<sup>rd</sup>1927, which guided the School attended by Yvonne, were as follows: being over 19 years old; having at least elementary education; being vaccinated; not having any contagious disease and having regular health; and submitting a certificate of good morals. As already mentioned, the character of our biography was 17 years old when she started the course, two years old younger than as required by the decree. However, the single paragraph<sup>9</sup> related to enrollments must have been taken into account at the time of her enrollment, considering that she came from the *Orsina da Fonseca* School, recognized by a high standard in terms of teaching quality. This was the reason why she was accepted in the Nursing school, despite not meeting the age conditions indicated in the decree. For a person like Yvonne Lara, whose characteristics as a black-skinned and poor woman weighed unfavorably on society, attending Nursing school meant much more than "the only option for being a free course". It was a real possibility of economic and social growth, of conquering a secure, stable and more profitable job than that of most of their family and social circle, which survived with many financial difficulties.<sup>9</sup> Another aspect to be emphasized is that gratuity of the course and the benefits offered to the students were probably due to the candidates' little interest to work in psychiatric hospitals, and acceptance of these conditions should be mostly given by people in the same situation as Yvonne. The Nursing course was taught in two years and, at the end of this period, the students attended another year of training as Social Visitors. The academic subjects that made up the curriculum of the theoretical-practical course were much more practical than theoretical. The practical classes were taught in two Sections of the National Asylum (*Hospício Nacional de Alienados*, HNA), one of them for both genders, located at the Headquarters in *Praia Vermelha*, and another for the female gender, in the Gustavo Riedel Colony, *Engenho de Dentro* neighborhood. The academic subjects were as follows:

*First year: 1) General notions of Physical and Natural Sciences. 2) General notions of Anatomy and Physiology. 3) General notions of Hygiene and Pathology; Elementary Nursing. 4) Sanitary Administration and Organization, Nursing-related Ethics. Second year: 5) Practical notions of Clinical Propaedeutics and Pharmacy. 6) General and specialized therapeutic technique, Dietetics, Medical Nursing. 7) Practical notions of Minor Surgery, Gynecology and Obstetrics, Surgical Nursing. 8) Notions of Social Medicine, Medical-Social Assistance services.<sup>20</sup>*

The course was taught by the psychiatrists of the asylum, or by another professor appointed by the school principal. After the two years, the students received the Nurse Diploma and started the Social Visitor course, with another year of duration. The Social Visitor course consisted of the following academic subjects, considered “indispensable” for the nurses’ medical-social education: “9) Social Hygiene. 10) Childcare. 11) Organization of social life: Social legislation and assistance laws. 12) Diagnosis, prophylaxis and therapeutics of social diseases. 13) General notions of Psychology”.<sup>20</sup> It is important to emphasize that the Social Visitor course was not for all students, but for those nurses chosen among the best in the class, in terms of instruction, education, and emotional, moral and social balance. The course was also held in the section of the HNA for both genders or in the section of the Gustavo Riedel Colony for females. It was considered as a specialization in Nurses’ training.

Thus, it is clear that the Yvonne Lara’s inclusion in the Nursing course had had special emphasis, and that she was duly prepared for the Social Visitor course and, therefore, to work in Psychiatric Nursing. Her training in the Boarding School showed the quality of her education, which was more comprehensive than other candidates’. During the course, she already worked as an on-call nurse in the emergency service of the Gustavo Riedel Colony, which, in 1940, would change its name to *Centro Psiquiátrico Nacional* (National Psychiatric Center). In her own words,

*“When I graduated [nurse], I also too lucky to be well placed and then I was admitted to the National Service of Mental Diseases. I mean, my option was that [Nursing] because of this [financial issues]. I didn’t have the money to keep doing other things out here, or choose what I wanted.”*<sup>10:161,14</sup>

It is understood that a nurse’ job in the asylum at that time was limited to complying with prescriptions, keeping the patients fed and clean, and not interfering or contesting the medical decisions. In other words, a restricted and limited job that did not allow providing comprehensive care to the hospitalized patients, nor a more effective action related to the family members.<sup>26,27</sup>

Unlike this, the social visiting nurse should extend her care beyond the hospital environment, serving the patients and their family members in the hospital, at the homes and in the community. Creation of the Social Visiting Nurse Course at the School of Nurses for the Assistance to the Mentally-III was due to the structure in which it was since its inception in 1890. Under the command of psychiatrists, it was considered an instrument for consolidating medical power in Brazilian society, in the psychiatric hospital, a space for the construction of knowledge and power. They hoped that the Social Visitor specialization course would strengthen and expand the nurse’s work from the point of view of public health care, considering that the Social Work course was nonexistent at the time.<sup>26,27</sup>

Gustavo Riedel, a psychiatrist and creator of the Rivadávia Corrêa outpatient clinic and the Brazilian League of Mental

Hygiene, defined that in the services of the Psychiatric Outpatient Clinic of the Colony, the visitors should be called Mental Hygiene Supervisors. They were part of the social service, also as an occupation, and not regarded as a profession, simultaneously based on the medical and philanthropic activity, having the practice of home visits as central activity, aiming at approaching the patient’s social, economic and moral environment.<sup>17:323</sup>

Mental hygiene preached the prevention of mental illness performed outside psychiatric hospitalization, by a qualified multiprofessional team, which led nurses to a more focused work for educational-preventive care in outpatient clinics and homes.<sup>28</sup> During the breaks and vacations from work, which she considered essential for her survival, Yvonne dedicated herself to her greatest passions: singing, composition and samba schools. When commenting on the difference in the work of a graduated Nurse and that of a Social Visitor, she states the following:

*(...) the social visitor is not a supervisor, she no longer works directly with the doctor. She does work for the patients’ benefit, meeting their needs, and those of the patients’ families. Now, and then, with Social Work, it expanded more, we did more things, that’s where I had to get the graduate degree so that I could have other pieces of knowledge and live up to my Social Worker degree. When I finished the course, my principal called me and asked, “How are you Dona Yvonne, do you want to continue as a Nurse, or do you want to be transferred to the Social Worker career?”. I was already all influenced up as a Social Worker, so I wanted to be a Social Worker. I was no longer on duty, and all those things, and as a nurse I did a lot of duty. I only worked at night.”*<sup>10:162</sup>

As can be seen in Yvonne Lara’s professional construction, her performance as a nurse and later, as a social visitor, expanded her space of independence from the physicians in the everyday routine of her practice, which referred to the professional longings of nurses of the time for autonomy. And, in a way, work as a social visitor was already much closer than what would be configured as a social worker’s practice. In addition to that, a nurse graduated from the Professional School of Nurses for the Assistance to the Mentally-III, during the period when this School was directed and instructed by psychiatrists, was competing in the labor market with nurses trained in Anna Nery standard, which was spread throughout Brazil occupying the best jobs in most cases.

In the condition of a young, black-skinned and poor woman, without autonomy for decisions in the hospital space, Yvonne Lara saw the possibility to change professions, considering conditions that would give her more status, more freedom, more workload flexibility and perhaps a better placement in the market, which would earn her a better wage. As it is known, the Nursing profession has long working hours as one of its characteristics, which include day shifts, night shifts and, at the time, 24-hours shifts, even on holidays and weekends, and Yvonne Lara already

had the experience of being a Nurse working the night shift, which certainly influenced her decision to study Social Work.

### Social Work as a choice

The life pace led Yvonne Lara to another professional phase, which was the Social Worker profession. The Social Work course did not yet exist in Brazil, in the strict sense of the word. She used to say: *“now, after eight years, Social Work has come up, which was once known as Social Visitor. It was mandatory. Whoever did Nursing soon afterwards became a Social Visitor. I was doing Social Visitor when Social Assistance came about.”*<sup>10:162,14</sup>

The first social service course in Brazil was created in the city of Rio de Janeiro in 1937, linked to the Nursing course of the Anna Nery School (*Escola Anna Nery*, EAN), on the occasion of its incorporation into the University of Brazil (UB), under the condition of a complementary educational institution.<sup>29</sup> Institutionalized as a “female profession”, it had its genesis in the bulge of the feminist movement led by women from privileged social classes, such as Bertha Lutz and Congresswoman Carlota Pereira de Queiroz, author of amendment number 1 of Law Bill 595/1936 for restructuring the UB, which defined the Anna Nery School, intended for the teaching of Nursing and Social Work.<sup>30</sup> The course aimed at “preparing social agents to teach efficiently and individually the art of living physically, morally and economically”. For such purpose, in addition to the specific contents, it focused on the study of the moral causes suffered by individuals, in order to lead them to return to society, for an adequate and independent life; contributing to the improvement in the material and moral conditions; in addition to working together with charities and other assistance institutions for those in need.<sup>27,31-34</sup>

The Anna Nery School<sup>f</sup> was the standard for Nursing teaching in the country, and its infrastructure, whose Classroom Pavilion and Boarding premises were able to receive students from both courses.<sup>29</sup> The Social Work students lived side by side with the Nursing students and professors. Probably, some professors of the Social Work course were nurses, even because, as explained by the director at the time, *Dona Laís Netto dos Reys*, the curricula had the Mental Hygiene and Psychiatry academic subjects in common.<sup>35</sup>

Yvonne Lara knew that she needed to improve her training in order to be able to offer comprehensive care to her patients. Thus, she attended the Graduate course in Social Work at the Anna Nery School, from 1945 to 1947. From then on, she was admitted to the National Mental Health Service, being allocated to the D. Pedro II National Psychiatric Center, in *Engenho de Dentro* (former site of the Gustavo Riedel Colony), where she first worked as a Social Visiting Nurse and then as a Social Worker, until retiring in 1977.<sup>32,34</sup> From then on, she began to devote herself entirely to her great passion, music, more specifically to samba. Her work as a Nurse expanded with the graduate course in Social Work, as convergent professions for people’s well-being.

Among the authors who study Yvonne Lara’s artistic and professional trajectory, the opinion is unanimous: she had an important participation in the Psychiatric Reform proposed by

Dr. Nise da Silveira, where occupational therapy assumes a prominent position in caring and treating psychiatric patients. When she started working with Nise da Silveira at the National Psychiatric Center, she followed-up the implementation of creative and innovative activities for the patients’ artistic expression, such as painting, drawing, ceramics and other types of activities that would enable them to perceive themselves as individuals, Human Beings, and expressing themselves as such, in a therapeutic process. As it could not fail to be for a woman with the artistic vein surfaced, Yvonne Lara introduced music as part of this treatment; she created a music workshop and did presentations at the parties, as well as all kinds of social celebrations with the patients, their family members and the institution’s employees. *“On these special days, we organized some interns who wanted to perform, dance, sing, and these activities were more stimulating due to Dr. Nise’s method, which was beginning to be put into practice”*.<sup>9:87,14</sup>

Thus, Yvonne Lara’s musical talent started serving the care she provided. It is worth commenting that in film *“Nise – The heart of madness”*, this seminal side of Yvonne Lara’s personality was completely left aside, showing only a “nurse” or a “social worker” (the quotes indicate lack of clarity of how the character is presented to the audience), fulfilling Nise da Silveira’s medical orders, nothing creative or proactive, how the woman’s personality was depicted here, and how this demanded the professions she had. Despite the interest of the director of the film in highlighting Nise da Silveira’s strong personality, this exclusion of the role of *Dona Ivone Lara* (stage name) in the use of music as another artistic expression in the list of occupational therapies implemented by the service coordinated by Nise da Silveira is not justified. Also regarding her experience with the psychiatrist Nise da Silveira or as she called her, Dr. Nise, Yvonne Lara experienced the power of music as a curative process in everyday life.

*“Working with Dr. Nise I had the opportunity to discover many musicians who were mentally-ill, catatonics, schizophrenics... People who had no contact with the world, but who, when seeing an instrument, back and forth told a story related to music: I belonged to this or that band, I played in an orchestra... Every anniversary of the hospital had a party and the musicians were all of us: nurses and patients.” “There was Ribamar, who was catatonic. He lived there, forgotten by his family, almost not talking. One day, we were listening to another woman playing the piano and I started singing. He paid attention and was awed... He even told me he was a musician. Then I came to know that he had been a clarinetist for the Tabajara Orchestra. And he started playing at the hospital parties. Ha improved overnight. I went to his house to talk to his family members, who came to visit him. And then he got cured. In a while, he got out of there nice!”*<sup>10:58,14</sup>

Nise da Silveira, with whom Yvonne shared the ideas of mental health care, believed that the role of Psychiatry was

even more important with the hospital's graduates, who needed a reception and rehabilitation place that favored their mental health, with healthy, playful, interactive and creative activities that would take them out of their incarcerated minds.<sup>36</sup> It is also worth noting that Yvonne Lara places herself as a Nurse in her speech, which shows the professional identity introjected into her personality, even after becoming a Social Worker.

Before finishing, we understand that it is important to comment on the stage name she assumed when she was almost 50 years old, "*Dona Ivone Lara*". The story is also told by Burns<sup>8</sup> and we proceed to report it, although the focus of the text is not her artistic career. In 1970, when she was still working as a Social Worker and divided her time between the hospital and music, she made important partnerships in the career of a samba dancer and singer. She went on to perform with Clementina de Jesus and Roberto Ribeiro at Oswaldo Sargentelli's concert hall, called "Sambão 70", where the shows were increasingly sought. Sargentelli and producer Adelson Alves decided to make along play (LP) record gathering these great names of samba and, while composing the album, both of them called her and said: "from now on, your name will be *Dona Ivone Lara*". Stage name, strong!

It is worth noting that in the Anna Nery School routine, from the 1920s to 1960, all students and professors were called by the term *Dona*. It was a respectful term and imposed professional distance between the groups. Any dictionary in the Portuguese language mentions *Dona* as a treatment given to married ladies or women of a certain social status, which can be seen in the second name of the school where *Dona Yvonne Lara* studied Social Work: *Escola de Enfermeiras Dona Anna Nery*. Therefore, we understand that the first name *Dona* already existed in Yvonne Lara's training and work period as a Nurse and Social Worker, as mentioned by herself when remembering when she was consulted by the director of the hospital regarding her decision of which of these professions she would continue to work in after becoming a Social Worker: "How are you *Dona Yvonne* [...]".<sup>9:162</sup> The main statement we can make on the topic is that *Dona Yvonne Lara* is the name of a great black-skinned woman, with which she made herself seen and known in her struggles for equality and freedom.

## FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

The trajectory of Yvonne Lara/*Dona Ivone Lara* surprises us every day, and she would have many stories to tell about her life as a Nurse, Social Worker, Songwriter and Singer, all this in a single black-skinned woman who overcame the prejudices of the time in relation to girls who wanted to study and that repressed her greatest gift, as respectable women were not songwriters. She did not give in to social impositions and, from the age of 12, began to build her magnificent musical repertoire, even without being able to sign her own compositions. She circumvented situations such as poverty and the early death of her parents and conquered important professions in her time, for which strong and pioneering women fought in order to offer other women a career and financial independence.

With regard to her education and professional training, her primacy for the opportunity to study stands out, making the most of the opportunities presented to her, including changing careers. *Dona Yvonne Lara* embraced the profession of Nurse and then that of Social Worker, maintaining musicality in her life, even collaborating with the use of music as a therapeutic activity in Psychiatry. Her dream of being an artist begins to come true when she records her first solo album, after retiring, at the age of 56. However, her fight continued for respect and space in the work environment, reigning until she was 97 years old, beautiful, wonderful, funny, smiling, with her resounding voice enchanting everyone until the last days of her life, with verses that bring us so much emotion and poetry: in her song "[...] doing the dance of flowers in my mind brings up the purity of samba, meaning, marked by the sorrows of love, samba that moves people's bodies, the stray wind cradling the flower, my dream"<sup>14</sup>.

As limitations of this study, we understand that the use of secondary sources resulting from Theses, Dissertations and other files may interfere in the interpretation of information. In addition to that, the fact that we were not able to carry out the interview with *Dona Yvonne Lara* personally jeopardized the totality of the information about her experience as a Nurse.

## AUTHOR'S CONTRIBUTIONS

Study design. Maria Itayra Padilha. Maria Angélica de Almeida Peres. Pacita Geovana Gama de Sousa Aperibense.

Data collection or production. Maria Itayra Padilha. Maria Angélica de Almeida Peres. Pacita Geovana Gama de Sousa Aperibense.

Data analysis. Maria Itayra Padilha. Maria Angélica de Almeida Peres. Pacita Geovana Gama de Sousa Aperibense.

Interpretation of the results. Maria Itayra Padilha. Maria Angélica de Almeida Peres. Pacita Geovana Gama de Sousa Aperibense.

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Approval of the final version of the article. Maria Itayra Padilha. Maria Angélica de Almeida Peres. Pacita Geovana Gama de Sousa Aperibense.

Responsibility for all aspects of the content and integrity of the published article. Maria Itayra Padilha. Maria Angélica de Almeida Peres. Pacita Geovana Gama de Sousa Aperibense.

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<sup>a</sup>The article derives from the authors' background in the themes of the history of Nursing and everything that refers to it. In this particular case, it intends to present the aspects related to the history of a Brazilian singer and songwriter, *Dona Yvonne Lara*, in her career as a Nurse. This is an almost unprecedented narrative in Nursing, considering that it is the first manuscript to present this aspect of this character's life, with such deepening.

<sup>b</sup> NISE – The heart of madness.<sup>8</sup>

<sup>c</sup> Some *verbatim* statements related to the interviews granted by Yvonne Lara<sup>9,10</sup> were also found in the *Digital Repository of cultural, educational, artistic and scientific contents*.<sup>14</sup>

<sup>d</sup> The school had been inaugurated in 1877, built with public and private resources. From 1901, it became the home of the Women's Professional Institute. In 1912, it changed its name for *Orsina da Fonseca* School, in tribute for the spouse of President Hermes da Fonseca, for the support provided to the Institute. In 1933, under the Anísio Teixeira administration, it was renamed to *Orsina da Fonseca* Technical High School. It is currently called *Orsina da Fonseca* Municipal School.<sup>16</sup>

<sup>e</sup> Single paragraph. In the absence of special or other suitable documents (school or collegiate), referring to the candidates' qualification, which should more or less correspond to that acquired in the full courses from Public Schools, it should be carried out in the sufficiency exam.<sup>20</sup>

<sup>f</sup> Regarding the origin of the name, see Peres et al.<sup>29</sup>