

Health Counseling in the Republic of Estonia through Magazines (1930 - 1940): Striving for a European Lifestyle

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Abstract : Background data. This is a study in the field of health humanities. The 1930s were years of rapid cultural and economic development in Europe and in Estonia. The urban way of life the glamorous lifestyle gained popularity, although the society of Estonia in the 1930s had traditionally been agrarian. People's free time increased, which needed to be filled with activities either at home or outside the home. Therefore, the number of popular magazines aimed at housewives increased. More than 200 magazines and bulletins were published in the Republic of Estonia before the Second World War (in 1934, the population of Estonia was 1,126,000). In the 1930s, the Republic of Estonia faced several challenges in healthcare. Infectious diseases, alcoholism, prostitution and child mortality had to be dealt with. Healers without medical education operated in the villages. For the average person, medical care was quite expensive, and despite efforts, by 1940, only 20% of the population was covered by health insurance. Advice published in popular family magazines provided help in solving, understanding and preventing health problems. Aim. The aim of the study is to analyze the health counseling through magazines during the Republic of Estonia (1930-1940) in historical and cultural context. Method. In total, 420 magazine issues were processed. An extensive textual analysis, as well as an analysis of photographs and illustrations from the aspect of health advice was carried out to achieve the research objective. Results. Health counseling was written by well-known doctors of the time, leaders of the abstinence movement and others. There was advice in various areas: prevention of infectious and non-infectious diseases and their treatment with simple methods, first aid, combating sexually transmitted diseases, women's and children's health, mental health, folk medicine techniques, abstinence, healthy eating, skin care, hygiene, introducing pharmacy products. Advice was offered in both written and visual form. Photos and illustrations helped to empower the health advice. Folk heritage and health knowledge of the time were relied upon, and a scientific point of view was popularized. Aspirations towards a European lifestyle were reflected in articles and illustrations. Contribution. The article has an ethnological attitude, and its impact comes down to understanding the history of health care in its socio-cultural context. The health counseling topics of the 1930s are also applicable in today's health education and research. Health counseling builds on the legacy of the past, and it helps to understand that the past is in the future and the main principles of health counseling arise from our history and background.

Keywords : estonian republic, health counseling, lifestyle, magazines, media

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