History of Women and Alternative Medicine

Megan Eineke

Minnesota State University - Mankato

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Women in Alternative Medicine

Presented by: Megan Eineke
Advisor: Dr. Amy Sullivan
Minnesota State University, Mankato
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Massage therapy, Midwifery, Naturopathic Doctor
Introduction

• Interests
  o Gender and Women Studies related
  o Massage therapist
  o Accepted into Naturopathic field
Materials and Methods

- Journals
- Biographies
- Articles
- Gathered and read information, organized into demographics
History of Massage Therapy

• Traditional Chinese Medicine has used it for over 5,000 years
• In the United States, it became popular in the 1970s
• Now used widely in medical and athletic programs for pain reduction and relaxation. Several modalities: Swedish, acupressure, craniosacral, myofascial, and reflexology
Massage Therapy

- 85% of massage therapists are women
- Average age is mid-40s.
- Average income per year is $21,000
- There are 350 accredited Massage therapy schools and programs in the United States
- Training program requires 500-1000 hours
What is Midwifery?

- A midwife is someone who takes care of women during and after pregnancy
- For centuries, women attended & delivered babies, handing their knowledge down to each other.
- Today, there are 3 types:
  - Certified Nurse-Midwives (CNM)
  - Certified (lay) Midwife (CM)
  - Certified Professional Midwife (CPM)
“The Farm”

- In 1971, Ina May Gaskin started The Farm, the first out-of-hospital-birthing center in the U.S.
- The Farm has contributed to research about home births by comparing home births to hospital births.
  - Home births have a high success rate
  - Mom and baby a lot more comfortable: easier delivery
Midwifery

- Today, 7.9% of births in the U. S. are home births
- 98% of midwives are women
- Full time midwives make $79,000-$89,000 a year
- Home births cost between $2,000-$4,000
History of Naturopathy

- Naturopathy uses .... and has been used for centuries.
- Women were the ones who collected herbs and treated people within their villages.
- Modern Naturopathic medicine was developed in the late 1890s.
- Naturopathy is a holistic approach to preventive medicine because it is less-invasive and uses surgery and allopathic medication as last resort.
Naturopathic Doctors

- 3 Categories
  - Naturopathic physicians
  - Traditional naturopaths
  - Others who offer naturopathic services
- Over 75% are female practitioners
  - Mostly all white females
- 7 accredited schools in North America
- 3,000-4,200 educational program hours
- 4 years undergraduate, 4-5 years graduate school
I found less research on this subject than I anticipated.

More studies of women in alternative medicine need to be done that explores their long history in this field.

That said, I learned a great deal more about my chosen profession as a result of this project.


“Canadian College of Naturopathic Medicine” www/ccnm.edu/

“Naturopathic Medicine Degree Program/Bastyr University” www.bastyr.edu


"National University of Health Science" www.nuhs.edu
