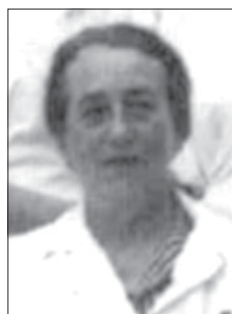


Sestre milosrdnice



University Hospital

HISTORICAL REVIEW



Few women used to enroll medical studies towards the end of the 19th century and at the beginning of the 20th century in the world, let alone in Croatia, where hardly a dozen of female physicians could be counted by the end of World War I¹. One of them was Head Doctor Jelka Spevec née Gutschy, MD, born

in 1896 in the respectable physicians' family Gutschy. She also enrolled in medical studies in Graz in 1916, to move to Prague in 1919, and to Medical School in Vienna in 1920, from which she graduated in 1922. Having returned from Vienna, in 1923, she started serving her residency at Department of Ophthalmology in our Hospital, at the time headed by Assist. Professor Kurt Hühn², where she worked until retirement in 1959.

Eighty years ago, in 1927, she became the first Croatian woman ophthalmologist. Ten years later, she acquired the title of Head Doctor and attended a course in ophthalmologic surgery with Professor Terrein at Hôtel-Dieu Hospital in Paris.

As witnessed by her peer colleagues³, Dr. Jelka Spevec-Gutschy's special interest was the operative segment of the profession. In collaboration with Professor

Ante Šerčer, she was the first to introduce the method of dacryocystorhinostomy⁴. Dr. Mira Čoti, her longstanding coworker, describes Dr. Spevec as a person of marked individuality and dignified manner of pronounced professional responsibility and seriousness.

Dr. Spevec suffered illness for a long time and died thirty years ago, in 1977. She was coping with her illness with dignity and calmly, even with some humor, showing to the very end that only a woman of such a strong personality could have entered the history of Croatian medicine and Croatian ophthalmology in particular. She was one of those brave women whose example would be followed by many others in the 20th century, demonstrating that medicine is one of the fields where they can display all their professional, scientific and human potentials.

References

1. ŽUŠKIN E, PIASEK M, PIASEK G, ŠARIĆ M, MUSTAJ-BEGOVIĆ J, SUŠEC T. Žene i medicinsko umijeće – povijesni ogled. *Lijec Vjesn* 2006;128:114-21.
2. Historical review. *Acta Clin Croat* 2004;43:249.
3. ČOTI M. Prim. dr. Jelka Spevec rođ. Gutschy (1896.-1977.). *Lijec Vjesn* 1977;99:582.
4. SPEVEC-GUTSCHY J. Kirurgija suzne vrećice o osobitim obzirom na vanjsku dakriocistorinostomiju. *Lijec Vjesn* 1950; 72:25-9.

INTERNET GUIDANCE

The US Center of Disease Control and Prevention has a number of useful and interesting sites on disease prevention and control, intended for both medical professionals and nonprofessionals. The health care of health-care professionals is elaborated in separate, presenting possible infections and diseases, and providing guidelines for prevention of diseases and infections acquired at work place.

<http://www.cdal.gov/niosh/topics/healthcare>

The British Dermatological Society also offers a number of interesting news on its sites for dermatologists as well as for patients. On the site dedicated to skin carcinoma, they have organized a forum to discuss the prevention, therapy and latest advances in the field. At the site intended for nonprofessionals, special reference is given to sun exposure and skin carcinoma.

<http://bad.org.uk>

REMEMBER, OUR WEB ADDRESS IS:

<http://www.acta-clinica.kbsm.hr>

HAVE YOU VISITED OUR WEB PAGE?
IF NOT YET, PLEASE, DO IT TODAY.

HAVING ANY COMMENTS ABOUT THE JOURNAL?

SEND YOUR COMMENTS TO OUR E-MAIL ADDRESS:

acta@kbsm.hr