

Abstract:

Home births in the Czech Republic:

A comparison between home birth mothers and health care professionals

The bachelor thesis focuses on the topic of planned home births in the Czech Republic. It tries to identify the perspectives, opinions and dominant themes on home births among groups of home birth mothers and health care professionals. Home births in the Czech Republic emerges as a rather controversial topic, especially when the two aforementioned groups clash in the debate. At the same time, however, it is true that the topic is not sufficiently reflected in wider society to be able to determine with certainty why and how home births are accessed by the selected groups. It is precisely because of this neglect that the thesis addresses the topic.

The theoretical chapters present the state of the current knowledge. Subsequently, the reader is introduced to the context of home births, including a brief historical overview and the current legal framework in our country. In addition, the concepts of professionalization, medicalization, and gendered birth are introduced in the chapter, accompanied by Michael Foucault's theory of Biopower. The analytical part of the thesis consists of seven semi-structured interviews, four of them with home birth mothers and three with doctors. The analytical method is discursive analysis, which allows for an in-depth examination, interpretation and presentation to the reader of the dominant discourses detected in the statements of both groups. The identified discursive categories are described in detail in the thesis and supplemented with citations of all narrators and narrators in an attempt to reflect the discourses as closely as possible. In the summary chapter, which focuses on comparison, the selected discourses are evaluated and their similarities and differences are reflected upon. Debates over home birth may not dominate the front pages of the media or occupy the longest debates in the House of Representatives, but it is a topic that, on closer examination, contains a range of societal and cultural themes, such as the relationship to the female body, the contrast between tradition and modernity, and questions such as 'what is freedom' and 'what is natural'. The thesis does not seek to answer all questions and find generalizable conclusions about both groups, but rather to provide a probe into an intense debate that for others is just another polarizing social issue, but for others is their lifelong focus. Readers may find the work provides not only new insights, but perhaps a closer understanding of the mindset of selected members of groups they would otherwise hardly encounter in their lives, or learn about their reasons for agreeing or disagreeing with home births. It is clear that any form of generalization of opinions is not possible for both groups, but that is not the goal. The goal is to mimic the conversation between these radically different groups and

to suggest that the radical difference is not nearly as intense as one might think. Or is it? Let the reader find out for himself.