

**Abstract:** Drug Addiction in Post-war Finland: Some Preliminary Remarks

In 1960s, Finland was facing a new problem, drug abuse. The problem was not entirely new as the Second World War had already introduced drugs to Finnish soldiers. The Finnish authorities, however, claimed that after the war drug abuse had gradually reached the point where something had to be done. In response to the new situation, the Act on the Treatment and Care of Abusers of Intoxicating Substances was enacted in 1962. The act expanded the concept of an intoxicant user. Previously, there had been decrees on the involuntary care and treatment of alcoholics, and the act of 1962 extended the care to cover drug abusers too. The new legislation was put into practice in Järvenpää social hospital, a state hospital that was specialised in the treatment of both alcohol and drug abusers. In contrast to other state institutions emphasising work and discipline, the abusers treated in Järvenpää were seen as patients who needed individual care and treatment. In addition, some patients were treated voluntarily. Drawing from the medical records of Järvenpää social hospital, I present some very early findings from my new research project on the treatment of drug addiction in Finland in 1962–1996.

**Biography:**

Anu Salmela has specialised in the history of medicine, gender studies and gender history. Her doctoral thesis, which was completed at the University of Turku in 2017, explores female suicides in late nineteenth-century Finland. Her current research examines the treatment of drug addiction in late 20th-century Finland.