

“*Desarreglos propios del sexo*”:

Advertising Menstrual Disorders in *fin-de-siglo* and Early Twentieth-Century Spain”

A voluminous, intriguing body of criticism has looked at hysteria not mainly as a nervous ailment, but rather as a cultural metaphor revealed in 19<sup>th</sup> century Europe, including Spain, by analyzing both medical texts and literary productions. My research focuses on both a new set of interconnected illnesses, as well as a new primary source: pharmaceutical advertisements. Mention of menstrual difficulties (“desarreglos”) like the lack of a period “amenorrhea”, or a late period “demoras”, clutter the advertisement section of women’s magazines of the *fin-de-siglo* period. Similar ads also appear in midwifery journals and medical journals. An incongruity between, on the one hand, the sheer number of advertisements for products aimed to bring on a woman’s period or “regularizar” women’s menstrual patterns, and on the other, the virtual lack of mention of conditions like amenorrhea in the medical literature, physicians’ notes and textbooks, is suddenly glaringly apparent. I will discuss the medical and cultural context for menstrual trouble, as well as clues about the interconnectedness with anemia, anorexia and abortion in late nineteenth-century Spain through the analysis of advertisements for pharmaceuticals in women’s magazines like *El Eco de la Moda*, *Blanco y Negro*, and *Hogar y la Moda*, , as well as the more specialized midwifery magazines and medical journals, complimented with, historical data and esthetic tendencies spanning roughly the *fin-de-siglo* through 1920.

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