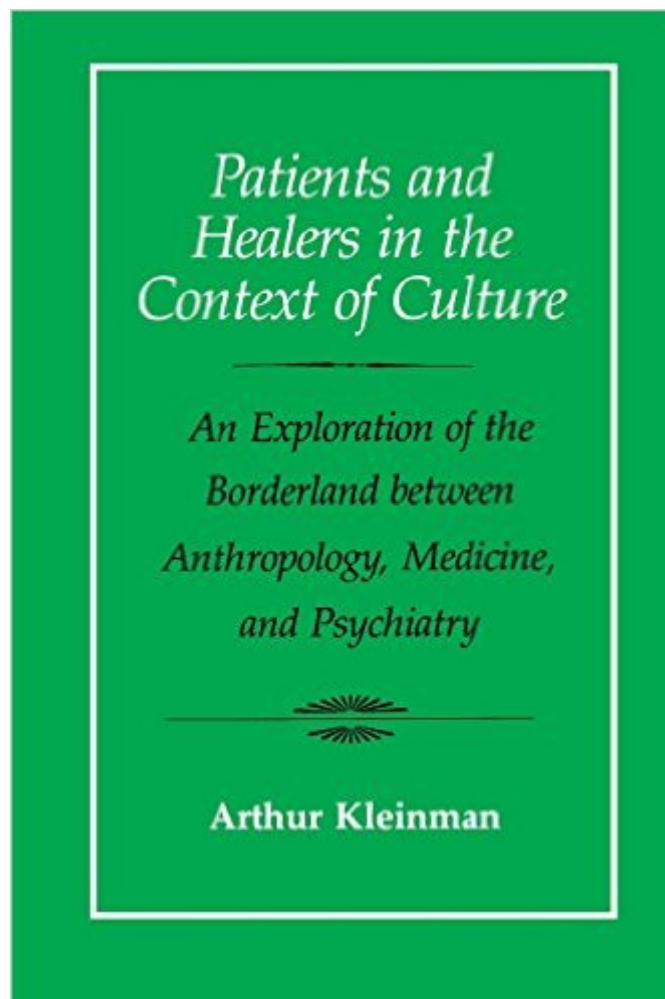


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Patients And Healers In The Context Of Culture: An Exploration Of The Borderland Between Anthropology, Medicine, And Psychiatry



Synopsis

From the Preface, by Arthur Kleinman: *Patients and Healers in the Context of Culture* presents a theoretical framework for studying the relationship between medicine, psychiatry, and culture. That framework is principally illustrated by materials gathered in field research in Taiwan and, to a lesser extent, from materials gathered in similar research in Boston. The reader will find this book contains a dialectical tension between two reciprocally related orientations: it is both a cross-cultural (largely anthropological) perspective on the essential components of clinical care and a clinical perspective on anthropological studies of medicine and psychiatry. That dialectic is embodied in my own academic training and professional life, so that this book is a personal statement. I am a psychiatrist trained in anthropology. I have worked in library, field, and clinic on problems concerning medicine and psychiatry in Chinese culture. I teach cross-cultural psychiatry and medical anthropology, but I also practice and teach consultation psychiatry and take a clinical approach to my major cross-cultural teaching and research involvements. The theoretical framework elaborated in this book has been applied to all of those areas; in turn, they are used to illustrate the theory. Both the theory and its application embody the same dialectic. The purpose of this book is to advance both poles of that dialectic: to demonstrate the critical role of social science (especially anthropology and cross-cultural studies) in clinical medicine and psychiatry and to encourage study of clinical problems by anthropologists and other investigators involved in cross-cultural research.

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important and foundational work in medical anthropology.

Describes observations of clinical interviews between various medical practitioners, namely folk healers, temple medicine men, and Chinese style and Western style physicians, and their patients. Stresses the importance of adopting proper cultural perspectives, making one's interpretations within that framework, and relying on direct observation. Urges an integration of social and cultural methods into the routine training of doctors, so as to enable a more humane and appropriate clinical practice.

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