



The Sociology of Health and Illness

Sarah Nettleton

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Thoroughly revised and fully updated, the second edition of Sarah Nettleton's book will prove invaluable to anyone looking for a clear and accessible introduction to key contemporary debates within the sociology of health and illness. The book builds on the first edition's success, integrating the core tenets of traditional medical sociology with some fresh insights from the current literature. New material is found throughout, including discussions of the new genetics, food and eating, e-health, the MMR debate, embryo stem cell research, recent approaches to health inequalities, and the health implications of the information age. Carefully annotated suggested further readings have been added to each chapter, to help extend students' learning and thinking. The book aims to provide students with a thorough grounding in the area of the sociology of health and illness. As such it covers a diversity of topics and draws on a wide range of analytic approaches. The text spans issues such as the social construction of medical knowledge, the analysis of lay health knowledge and beliefs, concepts of lifestyles and risk, the experience of illness and the sociology of the body. It also explores matters which are central to health policy, such as professional-patient relationships, health inequalities and the changing nature of health care work. A central theme which runs throughout the book is that we are moving towards a new paradigm of health and health care, one in which people are no longer passive recipients of treatment when they are ill, but are active participants in the maintenance of their own health. This is reflected in contemporary health policy which emphasizes health promotion, community health care and consumerism. The book is written primarily for students of the social sciences who opt to study the field of health and illness in greater depth, but will also appeal to students taking vocational degrees requiring a sociological grounding in the area.

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