

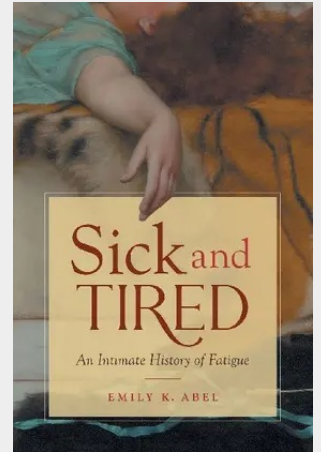
Emily K. Abel is professor emerita of public health and women's studies at the University of California, Los Angeles, and the author of several books, including *Hearts of Wisdom: American Women Caring for Kin, 1850-1940*.

Sick and Tired

An Intimate History of Fatigue

Medicine finally has discovered fatigue. Recent articles about various diseases conclude that fatigue has been underrecognized, underdiagnosed, and undertreated. Scholars in the social sciences and humanities have also ignored the phenomenon. As a result, we know little about what it means to live with this condition, especially given its diverse symptoms and causes. Emily K. Abel offers the first history of fatigue, one that is scrupulously researched but also informed by her own experiences as a cancer survivor. Abel reveals how the limits of medicine and the American cultural emphasis on productivity intersect to stigmatize those with fatigue. Without an agreed-upon approach to confirm the problem through medical diagnosis, it is difficult to convince others that it is real. When fatigue limits our ability to work, our society sees us as burdens or worse. With her engaging and informative style, Abel gives us a synthetic history of fatigue and elucidates how it has been ignored or misunderstood, not only by medical professionals but also by American society as a whole.

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26,10 €

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Lieferfrist: bis zu 10 Tage

Artikelnummer: 9781469663340

Medium: Buch

ISBN: 978-1-4696-6334-0

Verlag: The University of North Carolina Press

Erscheinungstermin: 12.04.2021

Sprache(n): Englisch

Auflage: Erscheinungsjahr 2021

Serie: Studies in Social Medicine

Produktform: Kartoniert

Gewicht: 363 g

Seiten: 208

Format (B x H): 156 x 234 mm

