

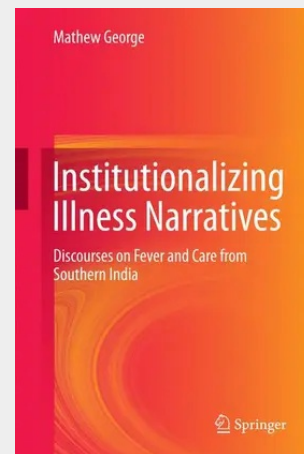
George

Institutionalizing Illness Narratives

Discourses on Fever and Care from Southern India

This book is an ethnographic work that uses a critical medical anthropology approach to examine the concept of fever care in the context of southern India. Through a study of fevers, the study provides a critical overview to medical practice itself, as it is said that the history of fevers is also the history of medicine. This association between fevers and medicine is as relevant today, as this in-depth study of fever care reveals. Acknowledging the central role of health institutions in creating and propagating notions about illness in society, the author examines fever care through a study of hospitals. The study examines various discourses on fevers prevalent in the southern state of Kerala, which influence policy and programmatic dimensions of the state health services system. Fever care implies those aspects related to provisioning and cost involved among public and private sector hospitals. A second and more important dimension of this book is a critique of the culture of biomedical practice, informed by the social constructivist framework and approaches in the field of science studies. Overall, the book studies the processes by which physical symptoms like fever are treated as epidemics to be controlled, and are therefore brought within a biomedical system, thereby opening up options for commercialization of care.

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