

From the Bush: The Front Line of Health Care in a Caribbean Village (Case Studies in Cultural Anthropology)

Marsha B. Quinlan



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This case study will be the first to deal with a topic in medical anthropology. It explores the world of folk medicine in the Caribbean (Dominica) - local beliefs and practices concerning how the body functions and malfunctions and the home remedies Dominicans use to cure common illnesses. The case study goes beyond discussing the exotic medical system of a developing country (which includes sorcery and folk-illnesses) to discuss how folk medicine flourishes in industrialized countries in a way that is little different than that practiced in Dominica. The theme is that cultural ideas about the body and uses of medicinal plants are deeply intertwined. Ideas about illness direct the consequent medical response. The book's topic is important because knowledge of local ethnomedical practice is essential for development of public health interventions in non-Western settings. This realist ethnography is aimed at any member of the generally educated population.

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