



Medicine and Culture

Lynn Payer

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This book argues that notions of health and disease are often determined more by culture than by science. Thus Americans, favouring action over reflection, are more likely to perform mastectomies and by-pass operations than the British. The Germans, harbouring a lingering romanticism, are preoccupied with their hearts, the French are guided by their Cartesian traditions and the British adopt an empirical approach, taking treatment only when its efficacy is clearly proven. The author pinpoints many other differences in clinical and psychiatric medicine and encourages individual responsibility for health.



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