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#1033533 in Books imusti 1997-12-30 1997-12-30 Original language: English PDF # 1 8.90 x 1.09 x 5.90l, 1.31 #File Name: 0520209958425 pages University of California Press | File size: 37.Mb

From imusti : Social Suffering before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Social Suffering:

1 of 2 people found the following review helpful. A Complex Book By Christine Robinson It's OK if you are studying in-depth social issues. But, much too complex for the average reader. Not an easy read. 36 of 36 people found the following review helpful. People who listen. By Edward J. Santella There are still people in this world who listen: anthropologists. After reading less than humble authors who are certain they have most if not all the answers, I found

this volume to be a delight. The fifteen articles in this book, each concerning individuals and groups in a particular cultural/historical setting, address the phenomenon of "social suffering". While the dominant American cultural construct holds that virtually every experience is individual, these authors establish that life is, after all, social and individual, and much suffering (another unpopular topic) is created, experienced and coped with socially. The first chapter, by Arthur Kleinman and Joan Kleinman, is alone worth the price of the book. After discussing how we Americans present to ourselves and react to news of dire suffering, usually discreetly presented without context and with no way to respond, the authors write, "The American cultural rhetoric ... is changing from the language of caring to the language of efficiency and cost" Other essays address Mao's China, modern India, Nazi medicine, terror in Sri Lanka and torture. Paul Farmer's essay regarding the lives of two of Haiti's destitute is particularly unnerving. Some of the essays require close reading, but they are well worth the effort. This is a book that will leave you with a broader and deeper perspective.

"Social suffering" takes in the human consequences of war, famine, depression, disease, torture the whole assemblage of human problems that result from what political, economic, and institutional power does to people and also human responses to social problems as they are influenced by those forms of power. In the same way that the notion of social suffering breaks down boundaries between specific scholarly disciplines, this cross-disciplinary investigation allows us to see the twentieth century in a new frame, with new emphases. Anthropologists, historians, literary theorists, social medicine experts, and scholars engaged in the study of religion join together to investigate the cultural representations, collective experiences, and professional and popular appropriations of human suffering in the world today. These authors contest traditional research and policy approaches. Recognizing that neither the cultural resources of tradition nor those of modernity's various programs seem adequate to cope with social suffering in our times, they base their distinctive vision on the understanding that moral, political, and medical issues cannot be kept separate.