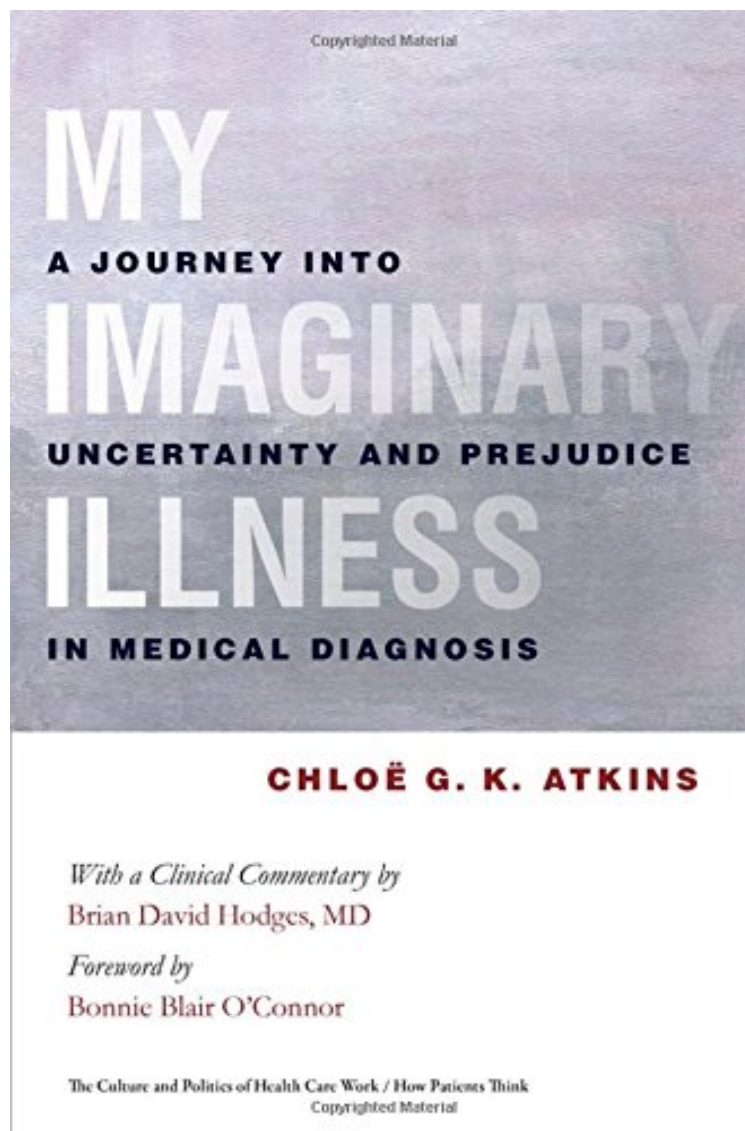


[Mobile pdf] My Imaginary Illness: A Journey into Uncertainty and Prejudice in Medical Diagnosis (The Culture and Politics of Health Care Work)

My Imaginary Illness: A Journey into Uncertainty and Prejudice in Medical Diagnosis (The Culture and Politics of Health Care Work)

Chloe G. K. Atkins

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Chloe G. K. Atkins : My Imaginary Illness: A Journey into Uncertainty and Prejudice in Medical Diagnosis (The Culture and Politics of Health Care Work) before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised My Imaginary Illness: A Journey into Uncertainty and Prejudice in Medical Diagnosis (The Culture and Politics of Health Care Work):

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. A must-read memoir
By AGS
If you've ever had a tough-to-diagnose medical problem (or know someone else who has), this book is a must-read. Chloe is an excellent writer, and her story is a harrowing one. If she could advocate for herself and for an appropriate diagnosis even on the brink of death, all of us can learn to advocate for ourselves, too. One of the best medical memoirs I've read (and I've read quite a few). Highly recommended.
1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Medical professionals please read
By LizI
I read this book with great interest as I also have Myasthenia Gravis and Multiple Sclerosis. However my journey to diagnosis was not quite as traumatic as Chloe's dreadful experience although I too was misdiagnosed as my positive blood test result was lost and I endured many months of incorrect medication which made my condition worse! This book is intelligently written although a little too academic at times it does explore the subject of medical neglect, mistreatment and discrimination within the medical profession in great detail. I emphasize with Chloe as I too endured such treatment by medical professionals I thought I could trust and who almost killed me! There is no mention of a CT scan result and this is always a formality as there is sometimes a Thymoma (tumour) on the thymus gland which needs to be surgically removed. This is a good book to read for medical professionals to help them understand this thoroughly distressing illness, giving insight into the life threatening symptoms this apparently "unknown illness" can present.
15 of 17 people found the following review helpful. Academic occludes an important message
By hakoWow.
I expected to eat this book up. The topic of "uncertainty and prejudice in medical diagnosis" and its corollaries is one I find endlessly fascinating. Unfortunately, I couldn't slog through very far into the book. So, what I have to say is not meant to refute that inspiration, insight, and knowledge could accrue to more patient readers. It's just badly written. The style is academic writing of the very worst kind: obtuse, cold, opaque, unnecessarily dense, and long-winded. A chapter explaining that doctors group symptoms into specific diagnoses so that they can treat the disease goes like this: "...Historically, the medical nosology for diagnostic cataloging finds its origins in botanical and biological systems of classification....Humoral systems of medical knowledge produce different disease categories than do paradigms of germ theory or more technologically based models....As such, the philosopher Ian Hacking argues that disease categories do not solidify unless they fit a specific social context..." And so on. The nurses don't "say"; they "iterate". To discuss the reaction of the medical people to the nonappearance of Atkins's family at her bedside somehow requires a sociological definition of "family" and consequent academic discussion. I suffered greatly from this kind of writing in my own academic forays. I appreciate those of you with more tolerance for it than I can muster; this is an important topic. I await an actually readable book which explores the same issues.

How Patients Think
At age twenty-one, Chloe; Atkins began suffering from a mysterious illness, the symptoms of which rapidly worsened. Paralyzed for months at a time, she frequently required intubation and life support. She eventually became quadriplegic, dependent both on a wheelchair and on health professionals who refused to believe there was anything physically wrong with her. When test after test returned inconclusive results, Atkins's doctors pronounced her symptoms psychosomatic. Atkins was told not only that she was going to die but also that this was her own fault; they concluded she was so emotionally deranged that she was willing her own death.
My Imaginary Illness is the compelling story of Atkins's decades-long battle with a disease deemed imaginary, her frustration with a succession of doctors and diagnoses, her immersion in the world of psychotherapy, and her excruciating physical and emotional journey back to wellness. As both a political theorist and patient, Atkins provides a narrative critique of contemporary medicine and its problematic handling of uncertainty and of symptoms that are not easily diagnosed or known. She convincingly illustrates that medicine's belief in evidence-based practice does not mean that individual doctors are capable of objectivity, nor that the presence of biomedical ethics invokes ethical practices in hospitals and clinics.
A foreword by Bonnie Blair O'Connor, who teaches medical students how to listen to patients, and a clinical commentary by Dr. Brian David Hodges, a professor of psychiatry, enrich the book's narrative with practical guidance for medical practitioners and patients alike.

"I met Chloe; G. K. Atkins about fifteen years ago. What struck me about her at that time was that she was a leader: smart, courageous, and good humored. This book shows the same Chloe; but along with the context of the battle that she had to lead herself through. The word that comes screaming through every page of this story for me is humility and how it is so desperately needed by physicians and other health workers who aspire to care for the sick. Every health care worker would be the better for reading Chloe;'s story."
Peter A. Singer, MD, MPH, FRCPC, FRSC, Professor of Medicine and Sun Life Financial Chair in Bioethics, University of Toronto
In this brave account of her severe experiences of illness, medical neglect, and sometimes outright mistreatment, Chloe; G. K. Atkins tells a story that needs to be heard by all clinicians. Doctors and nurses today are expected to treat all of their patients empathetically, whether they like them or not. Yet over and over again we see patients with difficult-to-diagnose conditions, or other predicaments that frustrate clinicians, treated disdainfully. Just as justice is most necessary not when people agree but when they are subject to conflicts, skillful empathy is most necessary when clinicians have complicated, negative emotional reactions to patients. The aim in such cases is for the clinician to empathize with the patient's dilemma, rather than to wait until she can neatly diagnose the patient in order to show empathy. Atkins shows

how powerfully therapeutic it was for her when caregivers grasped her dilemmas of daily living, from her own perspective."Jodi Halpern, MD, PhD, University of California, Berkeley, author of *From Detached Concern to Empathy: Humanizing Medical Practice*"Chloeuml; G. K. Atkins's gripping book *My Imaginary Illness* shows scholars and laypersons alike how humiliating and degrading it is for persons with disabilities to routinely face the rampant discrimination that plagues the medical community and society at large. Her compelling narrative reveals how she sought and found her dignity and humanity, all while fighting and recovering from an illness that the medical community could not understand given the limits of biomedical science. In this unique book, Atkins convincingly pokes holes in the biomedical community's ethical shortcomings and its empirical limitations by employing her own rigorous political theory lens. Doctors, patients, and students of political theory will all profit greatly from reading Atkins's book."Ruth O'Brien, The Graduate Center, The City University of New York"Chloeuml; G. K. Atkins's book is a must-read for all student and graduate nurses, physicians, medical sociologists, social workers, and all else who work in health care. It dramatically illustrates the dangers of a totalizing medical discourse that denies patients any control over their disease. All health care workers must learn multiple discourses of illness and treatment and respect the embodied experience of patients, eschewing any approach that shames and blames the patient."Patricia Benner, RN, coauthor of *Educating Nurses: A Call for Radical Transformation*About the AuthorChloe Atkins, PhD is an associate professor in the Faculty of Arts at the University of Calgary.nbsp; She teaches in the undergraduate Law and Society program. She supervises and teaches graduate students in political, legal and social theory.nbsp; She conducts research in medical ethics, human rights, human vulnerability (e.g., disability, gender and sexuality studies) and narrative scholarship. She has been educated in both Canada and the United States.