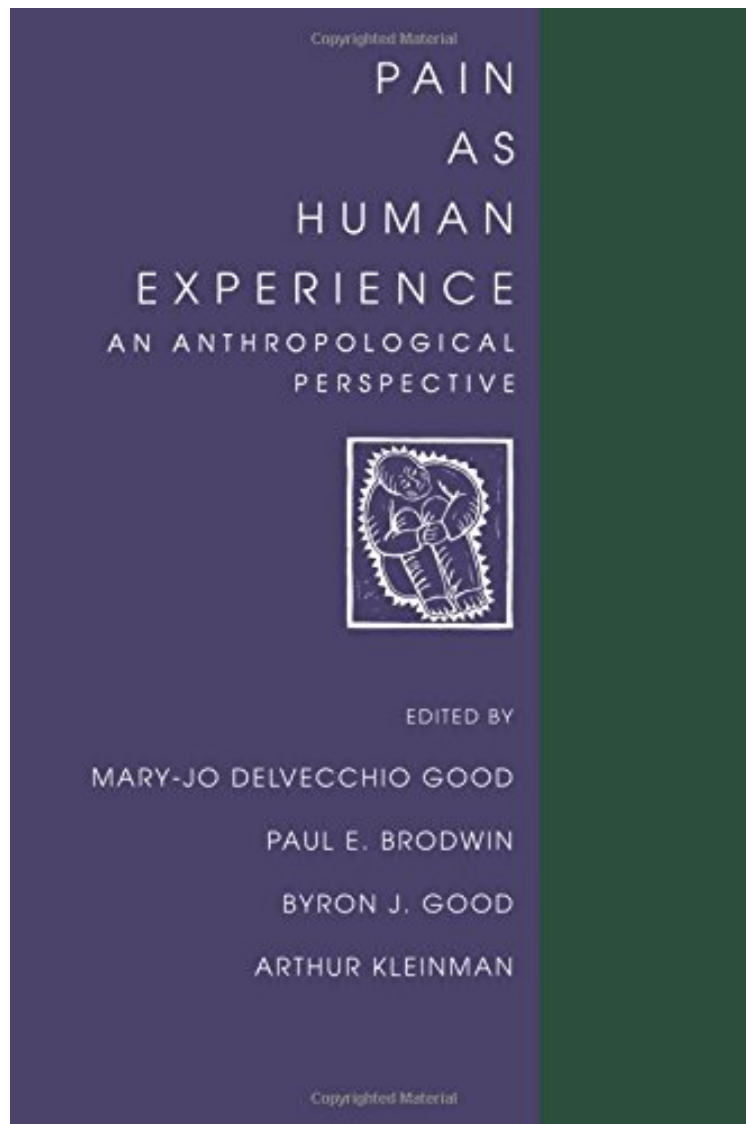


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Pain as Human Experience: An Anthropological Perspective (Comparative Studies of Health Systems and Medical Care)

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This book is an excellent look into the ways and reasons that biomedicine fails to account for pain. Although it was written in 1992, I still find it to be a very relevant resource for analysis today (nothing has really changed).
2 of 5 people found the following review helpful. painful read
By G. Hartley
Horribly written. Not useful at all. I was told to read it for a research paper I'm working on and this book ended up in the garbage.

Chronic pain challenges the central tenet of biomedicine: that objective knowledge of the human body and mind is possible apart from subjective experience and social context. Sufferers, finding that chronic pain alters every aspect of life, often become frustrated and distrust a profession seemingly unable to explain or effectively treat their illness. The authors of this innovative volume offer an entirely different, ethnographic approach, searching out more effective ways to describe and analyze the human context of pain. How can we analyze a mode of experience that appears to the pain sufferer as an unmediated fact of the body and is yet so resistant to language? With case studies drawn from anthropological investigations of chronic pain sufferers and pain clinics in the northeastern United States, the authors explore the great divide between the culturally shaped language of suffering and the traditional language of medical and psychological theorizing. They argue that the representation of experience in local social worlds is a central challenge to the human sciences and to ethnographic writing, and that meeting that challenge is also crucial to the refiguring of pain in medical discourse and health policy debates. Anthropologists, scholars from the medical social sciences and humanities, and many general readers will be interested in *Pain as Human Experience*. In addition, behavioral medicine and pain specialists, psychiatrists, and primary care practitioners will find much that is relevant to their work in this book.