The Review

Book review

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GLOBAL PERSPECTIVE ON WAR, GENDER AND HEALTH; THE SOCIOLOGY AND ANTHROPOLOGY OF SUFFERING

HANNAH BRADBY AND
GILLIAN LEWANDO HUNDT

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War and suffering go together akin to a horse and cart. As with love, aggression is an animal instinct and human nature. Wars are usually between two unequal parties and sometimes between equals, usually for monetary gains. World Wars I and II are the only vivid examples of confrontation between two equals. Rarely two lions may fight each other but often a lion attacks a lamb. I remember an Indian story; a thirsty lion drank water from a canal. He felt hungry. He saw a lamb drinking water a few yards down stream. The lion was very civilised. He went to the lamb and said, 'You have polluted my water and I will eat you'. The lamb said, 'Sir, I was on the lower level of the canal and I did not pollute your water'. The lion told the lamb, 'You are arguing with me, how dare you, so I shall eat you', and he meant it.

Suffering is an inevitable result of wars, that affect not only soldiers but also women, children, older, disabled, and weak people in the whole country. Suffering is a dehumanising experience with pain and sorrow. To suffer is to lose sight of one's personhood and a sense of connection with anything beyond oneself. Recovery is regaining one's sense of human, embodied self and its connection with the world. In addition, the prejudices based on sex, age, ethnic, and sexual identity can also cause suffering. This thought-provoking, well-written book focuses on war, sex, health,

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suffering, and global connections.

The meaning of suffering and its place in human life have previously been important issues for religious and metaphysical thinkers. With the emergence of modernity and its rational, scientific approach to problems, the role of God, gods, and fate in suffering has retreated. The pursuit of economic wealth through expanding commodity markets has been a central strategy for avoiding and dealing with the suffering of poverty and sickness. Modern science has improved health and prolonged life, where possible. In its eight chapters, 14 authors have skilfully described the sad reflection of the widespread nature of suffering with war and conflicts globally, especially in Uganda, Morocco, India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, and Northern Ireland. The authors accept that wars are inevitable but describe how there is a vision of peaceable life, survival, health, and happiness. Sociologists, anthropologists, politicians, public health professionals, GPs, and academics would find this book an interesting, readable, concise, and authentic research collection from across the globe.

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