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# Holistic health and the critique of western medicine

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## Abstract

The holistic view of health has been accurately criticized in the literature for its individualistic, victim-blaming ideology that obscures the social origins of illness. The paper explains how the contrasting view of the body and illness provided by the holistic model can help to show how Western medicine reflects the capitalist system in which it is promoted. It shows how evaluation of holistic therapies is problematic insofar as it is based on the analytical, reductionist criteria of the Western model. It suggests that one reason why holistic practices are not more fully accepted by Western medicine may be the challenge they pose to the Western model, and to the commodification of health needs promoted by this model.



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