



Mortal Dilemmas: The Troubled Landscape of Death in America

Donald Joralemon

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Anthropologist Donald Joralemon asks whether America is really, as many scholars claim, a death-denying culture that prefers to quarantine the sick in hospitals and the elderly in nursing homes. His answer is a reasoned “no.” In his view, Americans are merely struggling to find cultural scripts for the exceptional conditions of dying that our social world and medical technologies have thrust upon us. The book:

- is written in the first-person for a broad audience by a senior anthropologist, making it an authoritative yet accessible textbook for courses on death and dying and American culture;
- includes contemporary debates about highly visible cases, the definition of death, the status of human remains, aging, and the medicalization of grief;
- demonstrates persuasively that arguments over death and dying are in fact arguments about what it means to be human in modern America.



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