

Performances of Illness in the Age of Victorian Medicine: Routledge Advances in Theatre & Performance Studies

The Victorian era was a time of great change in the medical world. New technologies and treatments were being developed, and the medical profession was becoming increasingly professionalized. These changes had a profound impact on the way that illness was experienced, understood, and treated. This article explores the performances of illness in the age of Victorian medicine. It examines how illness was experienced, understood, and treated in the Victorian era, and how these experiences were reflected in the literature and culture of the time. The article also discusses the role of the medical profession in shaping the way that illness was perceived and performed, and the ways in which patients and their families responded to these changing medical practices.



Playing Sick: Performances of Illness in the Age of Victorian Medicine (Routledge Advances in Theatre & Performance Studies) by Mark Bly

★★★★★ 5 out of 5

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The Experience of Illness in the Victorian Era

In the Victorian era, illness was often seen as a moral failing. People who were sick were often blamed for their own illness, and they were often treated with contempt and disgust. This was especially true for the poor, who were often seen as being responsible for their own poverty and ill health. The medical profession did little to help these people, and they often died from preventable diseases.

The rich were not immune to illness, but they were more likely to receive medical care. However, the medical treatments available in the Victorian era were often ineffective and even dangerous. Bloodletting, for example, was a common treatment for a variety of illnesses, but it often made patients worse. Surgery was also risky, and it was often performed without anesthesia. As a result, many people died from medical treatments.

The Medical Profession in the Victorian Era

The medical profession was undergoing a period of great change in the Victorian era. New technologies and treatments were being developed, and the medical profession was becoming increasingly professionalized. These changes had a profound impact on the way that illness was perceived and treated. The medical profession began to play a more active role in shaping the way that illness was understood and treated. Doctors began to write books and articles about illness, and they began to give lectures to the public about how to prevent and treat disease. This helped to spread the idea that illness was a medical problem, rather than a moral failing.

The medical profession also began to develop new treatments for illness. These treatments were often based on the latest scientific research, and they were more effective than the traditional treatments that had been used

in the past. As a result, the death rate from illness began to decline in the Victorian era. This was due in part to the new medical treatments, but it was also due to improved sanitation and hygiene.

The Role of Patients and Families in the Victorian Era

Patients and their families played an important role in the way that illness was experienced and treated in the Victorian era. Patients often had to make difficult decisions about their treatment, and they often had to rely on the support of their families to help them through their illness. Families also played a role in shaping the way that illness was perceived and treated. Families often had their own beliefs about illness, and these beliefs could influence the way that they treated their sick family members.

The performances of illness in the age of Victorian medicine were complex and varied. Illness was often seen as a moral failing, and it was often treated with contempt and disgust. However, the medical profession was undergoing a period of great change in the Victorian era. New technologies and treatments were being developed, and the medical profession was becoming increasingly professionalized. These changes had a profound impact on the way that illness was perceived and treated. The medical profession began to play a more active role in shaping the way that illness was understood and treated, and patients and their families also played an important role.

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