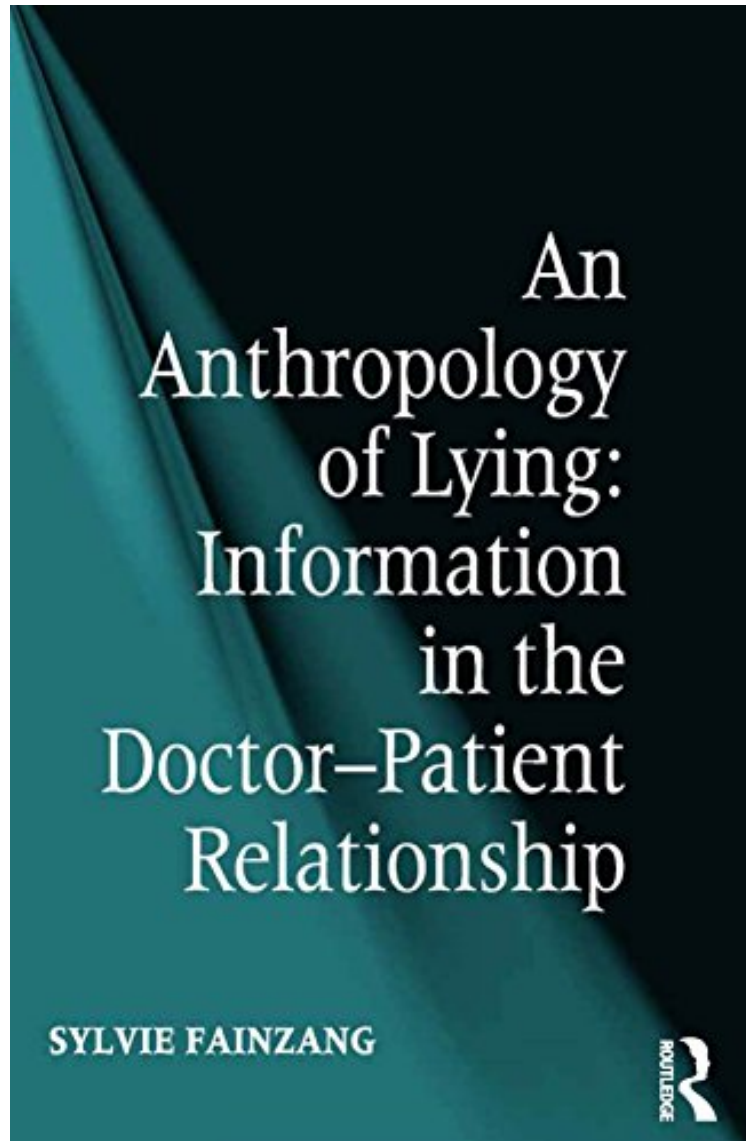


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An Anthropology of Lying: Information in the Doctor-Patient Relationship

Sylvie Fainzang

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Sylvie Fainzang : An Anthropology of Lying: Information in the Doctor-Patient Relationship before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised An Anthropology of Lying: Information in the Doctor-Patient Relationship:

In the era of health democracy, where a patient's right to be informed is not only widely advocated but also guaranteed by law, what is the real situation regarding patient information? Do patients receive the information that they request with regard to their diagnosis, prognosis or treatments? And what information do patients themselves give to their doctors? Drawing on observational research in hospitals and covering the exchanges between doctors and patients on the subject of cancer treatment and that of other pathologies, this book reveals that the practice of telling lies is widespread amongst parties on both sides of the medical relationship. With attention to the manner in which information of various types is withheld and the truth concealed on either side of the doctor-patient relationship, the author explores the boundaries between what is said and what is left unsaid, and between those who are given information and those who are lied to. Considering the misunderstandings that occur in the course of medical exchanges and the differences between the lies told by doctors and patients, *An Anthropology of Lying: Information in the Doctor-Patient Relationship* analyses the role of mendacity in the exercise of, and resistance to power. A fascinating study of the mechanisms at work and social conditions surrounding the accomplishment of lying in medical settings, this book casts fresh light on a subject that has so far been overlooked. As such, it will appeal not only to sociologists and anthropologists of health and medicine, but also to medical professionals.

In contemporary western societies, patients are considered as the legitimate decision-makers, providing they are given proper information. Sylvie Fainzang shows how this assessment of social reality is poor. Her book enlightens us on how lies are justified on behalf of the fear of lawsuits, non-maleficence, therapeutic strategy, uncertainty of knowledge, or unwillingness to visualize the disease's consequences. It unambiguously demonstrates the impact of social inequalities in access to information and how, in medical settings, 'misunderstandings' arise because of cognitive and experiential discrepancies. --Marie Gaille, CNRS-Université Paris Diderot, France
In medical care, informed consent is at the heart of practice. Through a nuanced exploration of information exchange between patients and doctors in France, Sylvie Fainzang draws our attention to the practice of concealment within healthcare. By facing this issue head on, the book does not judge or condemn, but seeks to understand and explain processes of communication that may be described as 'lying'. Readers interested in understanding informed consent and doctor-patient relationships will find this book's rich material to be honest, engaging and thought-provoking. --Rachael Goberman-Hill, University of Bristol, UK
About the Author Sylvie Fainzang is Director of Research at the National Institute of Health and Medical Research (INSERM), France and author of *Of Malady and Misery; Medicaments et Sociétés*; *Le patient, le médecin et l'ordonnance*; and *L'autodétermination ou les mirages de l'autonomie*.