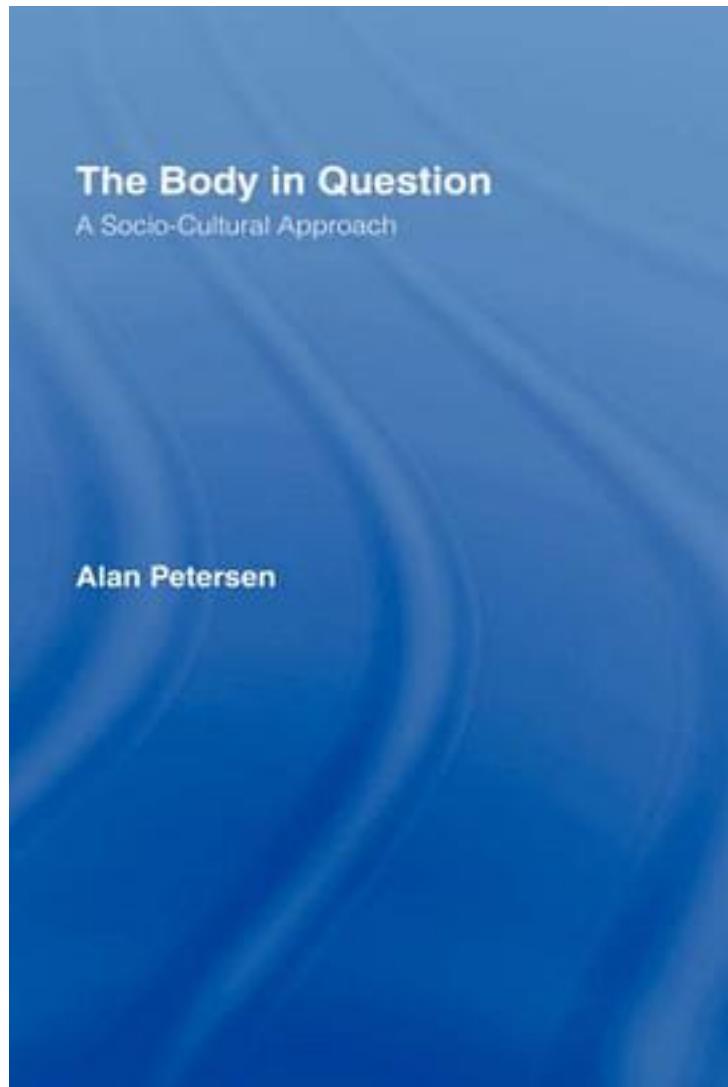


The Body in Question



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出版者:Routledge

出版时间:2006-12-21

装帧:Hardcover

isbn:9780415321617

Why is there currently such strong academic and popular interest in 'the body' in contemporary societies? What factors shape our conceptions of the body, its naturalness, health and normality? What is the mind-body dualism and why should it matter? This book examines these and other body questions from a critical socio-cultural perspective. In particular, it shows how conceptions of the body are affected by processes of individualisation, medicalization, and commodification. Chapters discuss the impact of new biomedical technologies on the notion of the natural body, efforts to reshape and perfect the body, the role of the media in 'framing' body issues, processes of body classification, the impact of consumerism on concepts of health, healing and self-care, and the implications of theoretical and practical efforts to 'integrate' mind and body. The book will be an invaluable source for those seeking to understand the social, cultural and political significance of 'the body' in contemporary society.

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