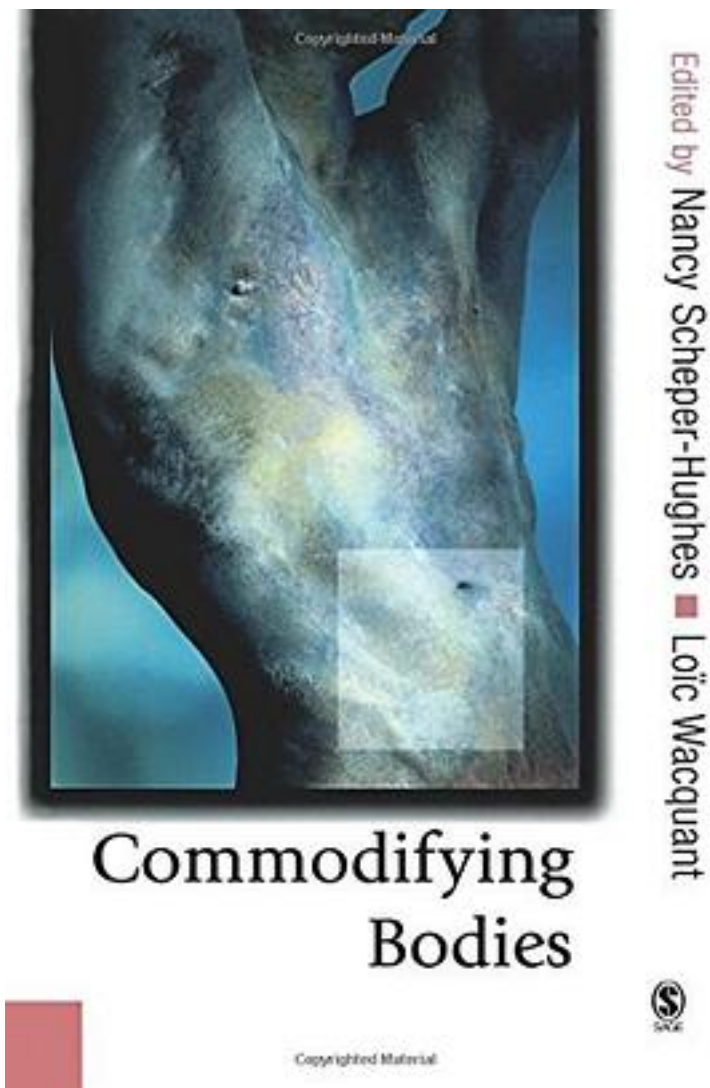


# Commodifying Bodies



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Increasingly the body is a possession that does not belong to us. It is bought and sold, bartered and stolen, marketed wholesale or in parts. The professions - especially reproductive medicine, transplant surgery, and bioethics but also journalism and other cultural specialists - have been pliant partners in this accelerating commodification of live and dead human organisms. Under the guise of healing or research, they have contributed to a new 'ethic of parts' for which the divisible body is severed from the self, torn from the social fabric, and thrust into commercial transactions - as organs, secretions, reproductive capacities, and tissues - responding to the dictates of an incipiently global marketplace. Breaking with established approaches which prioritize the body as 'text', the chapters in this book examine not only images of the body-turned-merchandise but actually existing organisms considered at once as material entities, semi-magical tokens, symbolic vectors and founts of lived experience. The topics covered range from the cultural disposal and media treatment of corpses, the biopolitics of cells, sperm banks and eugenics, to the international trafficking of kidneys, the development of 'transplant tourism', to the idioms of corporeal exploitation among prizefighters as a limiting case of fleshly commodity. This insightful and arresting volume combines perspectives from anthropology, law, medicine, and sociology to offer compelling analyses of the concrete ways in which the body is made into a commodity and how its marketization in turn remakes social relations and cultural meanings.

作者介绍:

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