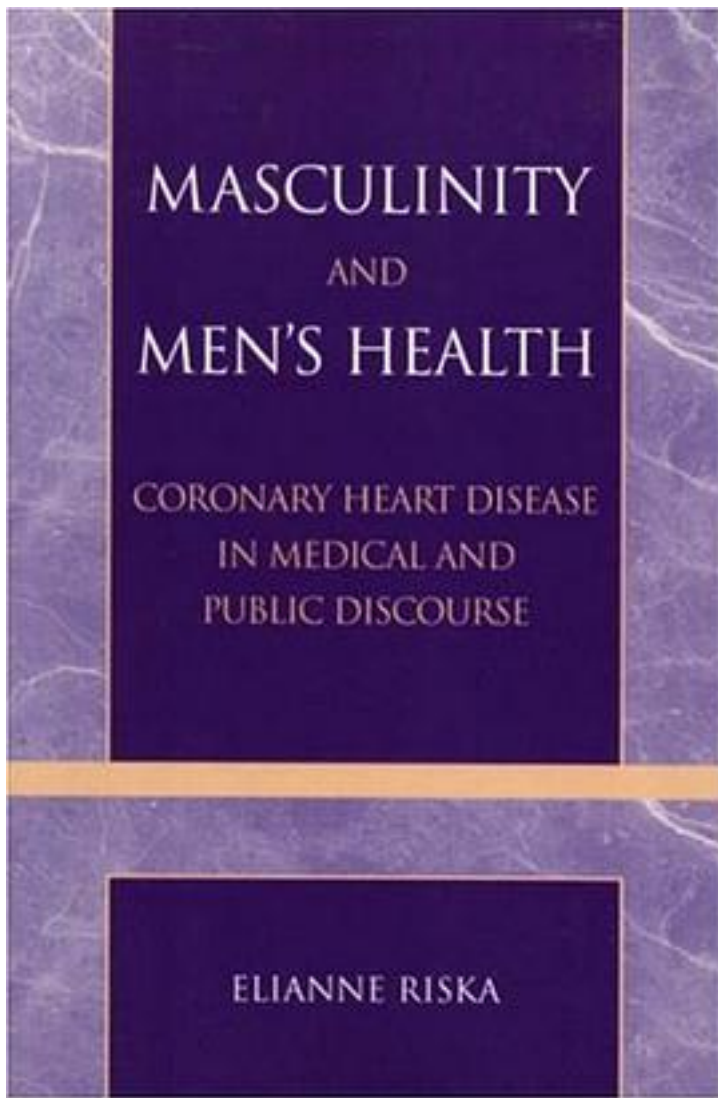


Masculinity and Men's Health



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Are men truly marked by their personality to fall victim to coronary heart disease (CHD)? Far from being immutable, medical categorizations of men prone to heart attacks rely heavily on cultural stereotypes of masculinity. So argues this book, which explores the social construction of one of men's major health problems in modern American medicine. Elianne Riska traces the course of sociological and gender theory on men and masculinities and argues that we must look beyond the middle-class male paradigm to consider the nuances of race, class, and sexual orientation. Applying a sociology-of-knowledge framework to the scientific literature on high CHD rates among men, the author examines various personality theories that have been deployed over time. Her genealogical approach traces the scientific discovery of and the measurement techniques for mapping at-risk personality types: Type A, the 'hardy man,' and the John Henry or 'race man.' The book analyzes the three psychological categories and argues that they each describe a category of men who occupy specific social positions. Using data on men's high death rates from CHD, the author illuminates contemporary thinking on how changes in the economic and social order influence men's health.

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目录:

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