

The book, which is divided into six chapters, covers democracy issues, forms of domination before 1990, the colonial economy of central Kenya and finally, Kenya's political communities in a state of rapid flux in the early 1990s, formed around the shifting local, ethnic, regional and religious identities that are sometimes manipulated from above.

It is interesting to note that author identifies the post-1990 forces which called for a better democratic culture and respect for human rights and notes that the left-wing voice was missing. Given the unfolding processes and brutality of the regime, one would have been interested to know whether this voice would have changed anything. In my view, this analysis would have been very important given the fact that she acknowledges in the final chapter that the struggle for the control of the state in Kenya was not a battle over any proposed fundamental restructuring of the economy.

The strength of the book lies in its use of theatrical metaphors to illustrate why politics of spectacle, fantasy and image-making dominate this "post-modern" era. In this respect, the book becomes compelling reading. As correctly noted in this book, the daily dramas of state politics in Kenya invite artistic satire. The state as a political theatre conveys more tragic outcomes as well: lives lost, rights denied, poverty perpetrated.

Reviewed by Thomas Deve, Assistant Editor, Sapes Trust, Harare, Zimbabwe.

Children, Medicines and Culture, Patricia Bush, et al, Pharaceutical Products Press, an imprint of The Haworth Press, Inc. (1996), New York, ISBN: 1-56024-937-4, 420pp inc index, Price: US\$39,95 (h/b).

Children, Medicines, and Culture provides a multicultural, multidisciplinary look at how children in nine European countries and the United States are socialised into medicine use. The team of authors, comprised of social and medical scientists, takes a sociocultural approach to understanding why the use of medicines varies among countries. Their premise is that beliefs, expectations, and behaviours about medicines are learned in childhood and are influenced by families and the wider culture. Authors interviewed children and their families and discuss children's knowledge of medicines, their autonomy in medicine use, the attitudes of children and their parents about medicines, how children act as decision-makers, medicines kept at home, treatment of childhood fever, and alternative therapies.

Chapters in the book represent individual country reports and cross-national comparisons as the authors seek to understand how children are socialised into medicine use in Denmark, England, Finland, Germany, Greece, Italy, The Netherlands, Spain, the former Yugoslavia, and the United States. It would be useful for

scholars in anthropology, social pharmacy, social sciences, community health educators, paediatricians, and medical staff, providing a unique exploration of children and medications supplies; cross-national comparisons of household medicines; comparisons of the treatment of childhood fever from the child's and parent's perspective; comparisons of children's views of the role and benefits of medicines in health and illness; children's knowledge of medicines relative to source, efficacy, mechanism of action, and characteristics; and the respective advantages and disadvantages to qualitative and quantitative methods and triangulation in cross-cultural research

The book provides health policymakers, educators and professionals with information on which to base and plan health information for children and families. It also provides an entertaining look at how children and families deal with childhood illnesses in different countries, what kind of medicines families in different countries keep at home, and how children and their parents in different countries view the benefit of medicines and doctors in general.

What is interesting about this book is its multicultural base. Different sections of the book explore contextual and structural factors that account for differences in medicine use; details of the local studies; children's perceptions of illness and medicines; and concepts of illness, childhood, medication, and family life in different cultural settings. Authors note that underlying cultural differences shape the way that parents and children perceive and define illness and its treatment. *Children, Medicines, and Culture* is an unusual book that provides a revealing insight into how medical anthropology can provide surprising and revealing insights into the overly 'rational' medical world. It is also a considerable tribute to the work of the scientists who took part and a valuable contribution to cross-cultural work in this field.

Reviewed by Nigel Hall, Editor, Journal of Social Development in Africa