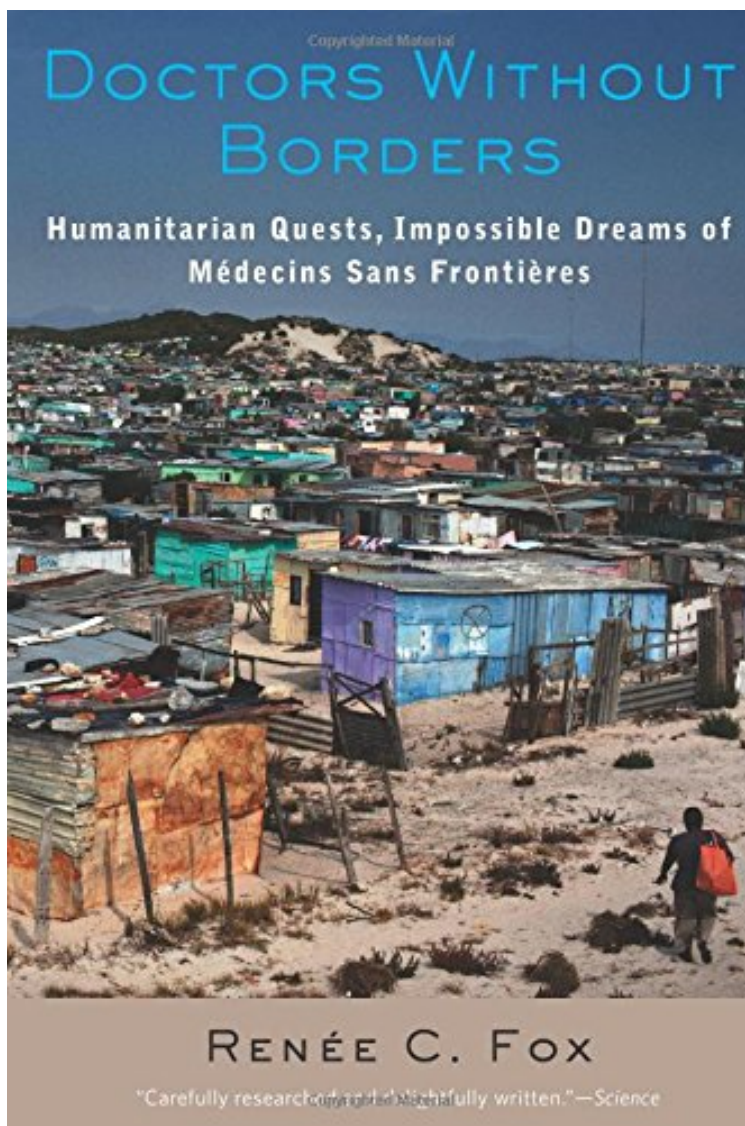


Doctors Without Borders: Humanitarian Quests, Impossible Dreams of Mdecins Sans Frontires

Rene C. Fox

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#338988 in Books Fox Renee C 2015-03-04 2015-03-26Original language:EnglishPDF # 1 9.00 x .78 x 6.00l, 1.05 #File Name: 1421416921328 pagesDoctors Without Borders Humanitarian Quests Impossible Dreams of Medecins Sans Frontieres | File size: 32.Mb

Rene C. Fox : Doctors Without Borders: Humanitarian Quests, Impossible Dreams of Mdecins Sans Frontires before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Doctors Without Borders: Humanitarian Quests, Impossible Dreams of Mdecins Sans Frontires:

0 of 1 people found the following review helpful. A window into another worldBy MattI have become very interested

in pursuing a career as a doctor and joining MSF. This book does a phenomenal job at giving a glimpse of what it's like being a part of that movement, it's beginnings, it's struggles within, and against the forces of a changing world, for anyone even the slightest bit interested in MSF this book is for you. Well written and full of excellent information. 7 of 8 people found the following review helpful. InspiringBy Peter PiotThis is a must read for anybody active in humanitarian work and global health. Very well done and inspiring. Peter Piot, Director, London School of Hygiene Tropical Medicine. 0 of 16 people found the following review helpful. One StarBy Kathleen McKennandidn't get passed the first chapter

This study of *Mdecins Sans Frontiers / Doctors Without Borders (MSF)* casts new light on the organizations founding principles, distinctive culture, and inner struggles to realize more fully its "without borders" transnational vision. Pioneering medical sociologist Rene C. Fox spent nearly twenty years conducting extensive ethnographic research within MSF, a private international medical humanitarian organization that was created in 1971 and awarded the Nobel Prize for Peace in 1999. With unprecedented access, Fox attended MSF meetings and observed doctors and other workers in the field. She interviewed MSF members and participants and analyzed the content of such documents as communications between MSF staff members within the offices of its various headquarters, communications between headquarters and the field, and transcripts of internal group discussions and meetings. Fox weaves these threads of information into a rich tapestry of the MSF experience that reveals the dual perspectives of an insider and an observer. The book begins with moving, detailed accounts from the blogs of women and men working for MSF in the field. From there, Fox chronicles the organizations early history and development, paying special attention to its struggles during the first decades of its existence to clarify and implement its principles. The core of the book is centered on her observations in the field of MSFs efforts to combat a rampant epidemic of HIV/AIDS in postapartheid South Africa and the organizations response to two challenges in postsocialist Russia: an enormous surge in homelessness on the streets of Moscow and a massive epidemic of tuberculosis in the penal colonies of Siberia. Foxs accounts of these crises exemplify MSFs struggles to provide for thousands of people in need when both the populations and the aid workers are in danger. Enriched by vivid photographs of MSF operations and by ironic, self-critical cartoons drawn by a member of the Communications Department of MSF France, *Doctors Without Borders* highlights the bold mission of the renowned international humanitarian organization even as it demonstrates the intrinsic dilemmas of humanitarian action.

"Carefully researched and delightfully written, *Doctors Without Borders* establishes a new bar for those who would cover *Mdecins Sans Frontiers* in the future. This book will take its due place as one of the most comprehensive works on MSF." (Science) "A commendably reflective work of sociology that, more importantly, tells a remarkable history of care." (Publishers Weekly) "Generally interested readers will find Fox's thoughtful and thought-provoking overview ambitious and well worth the effort, while anyone focused on health care and medicine will be deeply fascinated." (Booklist) "A treasured and monumental depiction of MSFs courageous and persistent commitment to millions of people in distress." (South African Medical Journal) "A remarkable story of healing, conflict, and the journey of an organization once dismissed as a bunch of 'medical commandos' [and now] one of the most important health care humanitarian organizations in the world." (Hospitals and Health Networks) "Doctors Without Borders: Humanitarian Quests, Impossible Dreams of *Mdecins Sans Frontiers* provides detailed insights on the Doctors Without Borders medical ideals and culture... The result is a blend of organizational history and development and observations of the group's struggles to combat third world nation diseases, making for an outstanding social and health history." (Midwest Book) "The author tells an exquisite story of the organization's origins and challenges... This book, honoring those who provide such important humanitarian assistance, will enrich a wide audience." (Choice) "The author provides a well written ethnographic account of the often conflictual internal dynamics of inclusion and exclusion among various factions within MSF. This book is original in its scope, taking seriously the opinions and personal history of past and current MSF members, from the more prominent and infamous leaders to veterans of humanitarian aid and newcomers alike." (Sadia Habib *The Sociological Imagination*) "Sociologist Rene C. Fox has written an eloquent, sensitive, and complex ethnographic profile based on extensive fieldwork. Fox conducted numerous interviews, site visits, and attended a number of major meetings and conferences; she ended her fieldwork at a landmark event, the first meeting of a newly created International General Assembly which also marked MSF's 40th anniversary. She describes her role as an "insider-outsider" combining access to internal information, public documents, and a staff blog. These multiple methods allowed her to become a sensitive yet detached and objective observer of the social relationships and culture of MSF." (Susan M. Chambr *Nonprofit and Voluntary Sector Quarterly*) "As one of the worlds most insightful and pathbreaking sociologists, Rene Fox has brilliantly captured the historic and contemporary essence of the MSF movement. A must-read for anyone who wants to understand humanitarian action in the twenty-first century." (James Orbinski, MSF International Council President 1998-2001) "Doctors Without Borders is an insightful and generous ethnographic account of the Nobel laureate organization, not eluding the dilemmas, quandaries, tensions, and contradictions at the heart of the noble but uncertain task of saving

lives and advocating for victims." (Didier Fassin, author of *Humanitarian Reason: A Moral History of the Present*) "Doctors Without Borders is interesting and inspiring. Very well done!" (Peter Piot, Director, London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine) "The last forty years have seen an extraordinary rise in humanitarian assistance to those suffering in conflict and emergencies. Doctors Without Borders (Mdecins Sans Frontires) has been at the centre of this, one of the worlds most admired organisations, yet one constantly seeking to reinvent itself. In this book Rene Fox at once tells the story of MSF, offers a brilliant sociological study of organisational character and change, and analyses the challenges MSF faces working in settings as diverse as Russia and South Africa. This is a book well worth reading." (Craig Calhoun, Director and President, London School of Economics and Political Science) "An extraordinarily insightful study of an extraordinary organization. Rene Fox, one of our country's most distinguished and thoughtful students of medicine, has captured the motives and achievements, as well as the characteristic tensions, of an organization ministering to the sick and dispossessed from Siberia to Cape Town, providing care and bearing witness. Doctors Without Borders contributes significantly to the history and ethnography of social movements as well as to our understanding of the challenges implicit in shaping moral action in a diversely dismaying world. It deserves to be widely read and enthusiastically reviewed." (Charles E. Rosenberg, Professor of the History of Science and the Ernest E. Monrad Professor in the Social Sciences, Harvard University) "The first extensive social scientific description in English of MSF, its origins and action in the field, and its cultural identity. Reaching beyond the history of the organization the schisms and tensions that it has undergone the book aims to explore how these tensions are related to the field of operations and to what happens in the field." (Johanna Simant *European Journal of Sociology*) "How has MSF come to occupy this role as canary in the coalmine, as the embodiment of humanitarian ideals and as a provocative moral force for medical ethics and human rights around the world? This question is answered in Rene Fox's rich sociological and historical text... A must-read for anyone considering a medical mission abroad or studying humanitarian assistance." (Lauren Carruth *Global Public Health*) "Sociologist Rene C. Fox has written an eloquent, sensitive, and complex ethnographic profile based on extensive fieldwork. Fox conducted numerous interviews and site visits, and attended a number of major meetings and conferences; she ended her fieldwork at a landmark event, the first meeting of a newly created International General Assembly which also marked MSF's 40th anniversary. She describes her role as an "insider-outsider" combining access to internal information, public documents, and a staff blog. These multiple methods allowed her to become a sensitive yet detached and objective observer of the social relationships and culture of MSF." (Susan M. Chambre *Nonprofit and Voluntary Sector Quarterly*) "Over half a million people contribute \$10 or \$20 to MSF each month... Doctors Without Borders will enlighten them about how hard yet rewarding this work is." (Springer: *Sociology*) "... a must-read for anyone considering a medical mission abroad or studying humanitarian assistance." (*Global Public Health*) "Whether you like MSF or not, and whether you already know it or not, Doctors Without Borders provides a refreshing and unusual perspective of this larger-than life organization. Without complacency, but with the candor and attention to detail a social scientist can marshal, Fox takes us backstage where MSFers breathe, agonize, exult, or fulminate to defend a complex and imperfect idea of humanitarian action." (*Perspectives in Biology and Medicine*)

About the Author
Rene C. Fox is the Annenberg Professor Emerita of the Social Sciences at the University of Pennsylvania. She is the author of *Experiment Perilous: Physicians and Patients Facing the Unknown*, *In the Belgian Chateau: The Spirit and Culture of a European Society in an Age of Change*, and *In the Field: A Sociologist's Journey* and the coauthor of *The Courage to Fail: A Social View of Organ Transplants and Dialysis* and *Observing Bioethics*