ANALYTIC ESSAY 3

“THE MEGA-MARKETING OF DEPRESSION IN JAPAN”

- A chapter of the book “Crazy Like Us” by Ethan Watters
- A book about the spread of the American conceptualization of mental illness around the world

ETHAN WATTERS

- Journalist
- Has written books on issues related to the role of mental health within contemporary society
- New York Times Magazine, Discover, Men's Journal, Wired



BOOKS

- Making Monsters: False Memories, Psychotherapy, and Sexual

Hysteria (1996)

- Therapy's Delusions: The Myth of the Unconscious and the Exploitation of Today's Walking Worried (1999)
- Urban Tribes: A Generation Redefines Friendship, Family, and Commitment (2003)
- Crazy Like Us: The Globalization of the American Psyche (2009)

MENTAL LIFE AS A CULTURAL AND SOCIETAL CONSTRUCT

- Examples from personal experience
- Procrastination
- Teen self injury

“CRAZY LIKE US: THE GLOBALIZATION OF THE AMERICAN PSYCHE”

- Anorexia in Hong Kong
- PTSD in Sri Lanka
- Schizophrenia in Zanzibar
- Depression in Japan

“THE MEGA-MARKETING OF DEPRESSION IN JAPAN”

- Marketing of the drug Paxil by GlaxoSmithKline

Psychopharmacology BULLETIN

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Paroxetine—The Antidepressant from Hell? Probably Not, But Caution Required

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Kirmayer had observed that cultures often differ in what he called
“explanatory models” for depression-like states. These cultural beliefs and stories have the effect of directing the attention of individuals to certain feelings and symptoms and away from others. In one culture someone feeling an inchoate distress might be prompted to search for feelings of unease in his gut or in muscle pain; in another place or time, a different type of symptom would be accepted as legitimate. This interplay between the expectations of the culture and the experience of the individual leads to a cycle of symptom amplification. In short, beliefs about the cause, symptomatology, and course of an illness such as depression tended to be self-fulfilling. Explanatory models created the culturally expected experience of the disease in the mind of the sufferer. Such differences, Kirmayer warned the group, tended to be overlooked when clinicians or researchers employed the symptom checklists relating to the DSM diagnosis of depression.