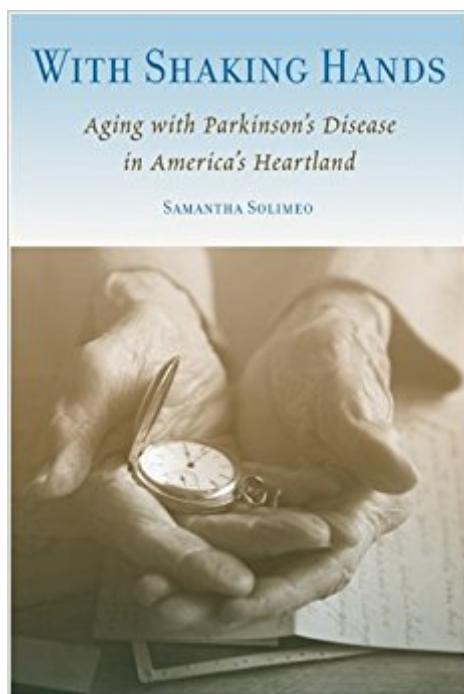


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# With Shaking Hands: Aging With Parkinson's Disease In America's Heartland (Studies In Medical Anthropology)



## **Synopsis**

Far from celebrity media spotlight, ordinary individuals, many older and less advantaged, suffer the disabling pain of Parkinson's disease (PD), an illness whose progressive symptoms often mimic old age and cause mobility impairment, communication barriers, and social isolation. At the heart of *With Shaking Hands* is the account of elder Americans in rural Iowa who have been diagnosed with PD. With a focus on the impact of chronic illness on an aging population, Samantha Solimeo combines clear and accessible prose with qualitative and quantitative research to demonstrate how PD accelerates, mediates, and obscures patterns of aging. She explores how ideas of what to expect in older age influence and direct interpretations of one's body. This sensitive and groundbreaking work unites theories of disease with modern conceptions of the body in biological and social terms. PD, like other chronic disorders, presents a special case of embodiment which challenge our thinking about how such diseases should be researched and how they are experienced.

## **Book Information**

Paperback: 232 pages

Publisher: Rutgers University Press; 1 edition (April 15, 2009)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0813545447

ISBN-13: 978-0813545448

Product Dimensions: 6 x 0.5 x 9 inches

Shipping Weight: 8.8 ounces (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 5.0 out of 5 stars 1 customer review

Best Sellers Rank: #146,419 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #9 in Books > Health, Fitness & Dieting > Diseases & Physical Ailments > Parkinson's Disease #11 in Books > Textbooks > Medicine & Health Sciences > Allied Health Services > Caregiving #49 in Books > Textbooks > Medicine & Health Sciences > Medicine > Clinical > Geriatrics

## **Customer Reviews**

"This book is at once a scholarly discourse on an ethnographic study of a cohort of Iowans with Parkinson's disease, and a primer on medical anthropology, Parkinson's disease, and ethnographic research methodology. Recommended." (Choice 2009-11-01)"A welcome addition to the literature, focusing on the experience of older adults who are living with this unpredictable, disabling and stigmatizing condition. The author writes crisply, and yet with compassion and sensitivity, as she offers her readers access into the world of ordinary people who often display extraordinary strength

and dignity under traumatic life circumstances." (Contemporary Sociology 2010-09-01)"The book has at its heart an ethnographic account of the experiences of eight adults in rural Iowa living with PD and their families, and also includes a primer on medical anthropology and one on PD itself. Solimeo writes well, and with affecting sympathy, about life with PD." (Journal of Health Care for the Poor and Underserved 2011-11-01)"The future for medical anthropology must include the ethnography of the neurodegenerative conditions of aging. With Shaking Hands brings that future into the present with a strong description of the lived experience of elderly people with Parkinson's Disease in America." (Arthur Kleinman Harvard University 2008-12-05)"An important and excellent book that describes the experience of Parkinson's disease from the inside: how patients and their family members view it. Thus, it forms a singular contribution to the scientific literature on individual experience and disease." (Robert L. Rubinstein author of Singular Paths: Single Men Living Alone 2009-01-28)"A richly detailed and touching ethnographic portrayal of the experiences of elderly people with Parkinson's disease. It is pertinent reading for researchers and clinicians as well as students, especially but not exclusively those in medical anthropology." (Judith C. Barker University of California, San Francisco 2008-08-26)

At the heart of With Shaking Hands is the account of elder Americans in rural Iowa who have been diagnosed with Parkinson's disease. With a focus on the impact of chronic illness on an aging population, Samantha Solimeo combines clear and accessible prose with qualitative and quantitative research to demonstrate how PD accelerates, mediates, and obscures patterns of aging. She explores how ideas of what to expect in older age influence and direct interpretations of one's body.

This is a book very well written. I suggest it to people interested in Parkinson's Disease in general. By reading it we can learn a lot about the experience of this illness, and of the experience of chronic illness in general.

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