

Medical Anthropology (3)

Malady as an umbrella term including disease, illness, sickness

cf. sick role and patient role

- * Disease: Biological problem involving abnormality in the body's structure, chemistry, or functions. Usually based on objective observation, and well-defined by the common criteria in scientific context (cf. ICD-10).
- * Illness: Patient's experience of something wrong, a sense of disruption in well-being (maybe resulted from disease or cultural beliefs), essentially subjective perception.
- * Sickness: Consequences of social responses to a person who is sick.
 - Sick role: Social expectations for the behaviors of a person diagnosed as suffering from a malady (eg. being excused from work or school).
 - Patient role: Special kind of sick role, social expectations for the behaviors of a patient diagnosed as suffering from a disease at any medical facility. Changing by not only the social context but also epidemiological situation.
 - Schizophrenia patient usually doesn't recognize oneself as ill, but the society regards the one as sick. Depression patient (especially so-called "new type" depression patient) considers oneself to be ill, but sometimes the society (including the company where the one works) cannot accept the one's excuse of sickness.

(See, Nakazawa M, Moji K (2018) What is needed to realize universal "health" coverage? The meaning of health revisited. *Journal of Global Health Reports*, 2, e2018021. [<https://doi.org/10.29392/joghr.2.e2018021>])

<Debate>

- Due to the explosive spread of COVID-19, the number of newly diagnosed patients may exceed the capacity of medical facilities. To avoid such situation, if the disease symptoms are judged as mild (including not elderly and without complication of other diseases) by the physician, the patients are recommended to stay home or stay at non-medical facilities under the regular observation. Illness or sickness is almost ignored. However, some of the mild patients suddenly got worse and died. Is such Western-medicine based triage right?

Proposition side: Yes. The triage based on physician's judge is necessary to avoid the collapse of medical facilities and to reduce the total number of death by COVID-19.

Opposition side: No. Other factors should be considered.