

Cambridge University Press

052183760X - Pharmaceutical Reason: Knowledge and Value in Global Psychiatry

Andrew Lakoff

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

Pharmaceutical Reason

When a French biotechnology company seeks patients in Buenos Aires with bipolar disorder for its gene discovery program, they have unexpected trouble finding enough subjects for the study. In Argentina, the predominant form of mental health expertise – psychoanalysis – does not recognize the legitimacy of bipolar disorder as a diagnostic entity. This problem points to a broader set of political and epistemological debates in global psychiatry. Drawing from an ethnography of psychiatric practice in Buenos Aires, Andrew Lakoff follows the contested extension of novel techniques for understanding and intervening in mental illness. He charts the globalization of the new biomedical psychiatry, and illustrates the clashes, conflicts, alliances, and reformulations that take place when psychoanalytic and biological models of illness and cure meet. Highlighting the social and political implications that new forms of expertise about human behavior and thought bring, Lakoff presents an arresting case study that will appeal to scholars and students alike.

ANDREW LAKOFF is Assistant Professor of Sociology and Science Studies at the University of California, San Diego.

Cambridge University Press

052183760X - Pharmaceutical Reason: Knowledge and Value in Global Psychiatry

Andrew Lakoff

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

CAMBRIDGE STUDIES IN SOCIETY AND THE LIFE SCIENCES

Series Editors

Nikolas Rose, *London School of Economics*

Paul Rabinow, *University of California at Berkeley*

This interdisciplinary series focuses on the social shaping, social meaning and social implications of recent developments in the life sciences, biomedicine and biotechnology. It places original research and innovative theoretical work within a global, multicultural context.

Other titles in series

Adam Hedgecoe, *The Politics of Personalised Medicine: Pharmacogenetics in the Clinic*

Amade M'Charek, *The Human Genome Diversity Project: An Ethnography of Scientific Practice*

Monica Konrad, *Narrating the New Predictive Genetics: Ethics, Ethnography and Science*

Cambridge University Press

052183760X - Pharmaceutical Reason: Knowledge and Value in Global Psychiatry

Andrew Lakoff

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

Pharmaceutical Reason
Knowledge and Value in Global Psychiatry

ANDREW LAKOFF



CAMBRIDGE
UNIVERSITY PRESS

Cambridge University Press
052183760X - Pharmaceutical Reason: Knowledge and Value in Global Psychiatry
Andrew Lakoff
Frontmatter
[More information](#)

CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY PRESS
Cambridge, New York, Melbourne, Madrid, Cape Town, Singapore, São Paulo

CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY PRESS
The Edinburgh Building, Cambridge CB2 2RU, UK

Published in the United States of America by Cambridge University Press, New York

www.cambridge.org
Information on this title: www.cambridge.org/9780521546669

© Andrew Lakoff 2005

This book is in copyright. Subject to statutory exception
and to the provisions of relevant collective licensing agreements,
no reproduction of any part may take place without
the written permission of Cambridge University Press.

First published 2005

Printed in the United Kingdom at the University Press, Cambridge

A catalogue record for this book is available from the British Library

ISBN-13 978-0-521-83760-6 hardback
ISBN-10 0-521-83760-X hardback
ISBN-13 978-0-521-54666-9 paperback
ISBN-10 0-521-54666-4 paperback

Cambridge University Press has no responsibility for
the persistence or accuracy of URLs for external or
third-party internet websites referred to in this book,
and does not guarantee that any content on such
websites is, or will remain, accurate or appropriate.

Cambridge University Press

052183760X - Pharmaceutical Reason: Knowledge and Value in Global Psychiatry

Andrew Lakoff

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

For my parents
George Lakoff
and
Robin Tolmach Lakoff

Cambridge University Press

052183760X - Pharmaceutical Reason: Knowledge and Value in Global Psychiatry

Andrew Lakoff

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

Contents

| | | |
|----------|---------------------------------------|-----------|
| | <i>Acknowledgments</i> | page viii |
| | Introduction: specific effects | 1 |
| 1 | Diagnostic liquidity | 18 |
| 2 | Medicating the symptom | 43 |
| 3 | The Lacan ward | 73 |
| 4 | Living with neuroscience | 103 |
| 5 | The private life of numbers | 134 |
| 6 | The segmented phenotype | 160 |
| | <i>Notes</i> | 178 |
| | <i>References</i> | 189 |
| | <i>Index</i> | 200 |

Cambridge University Press

052183760X - Pharmaceutical Reason: Knowledge and Value in Global Psychiatry

Andrew Lakoff

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

Acknowledgments

Like its subjects, this book is the product of its intellectual milieu. I am indebted to the teachers, friends, and colleagues who have nurtured it along the way. In the Berkeley anthropology department, I was fortunate to encounter an environment that encouraged engaged reflection, and where the stakes of thought were high. My thesis advisor, Paul Rabinow, provided a model of intellectual curiosity and conceptual rigor. Lawrence Cohen, Stephen Greenblatt, Stefania Pandolfo, Nancy Scheper-Hughes, and Thomas Laqueur provided early and ongoing inspiration for this effort. Conversations with Stephen Collier have continually challenged me to rethink the implications of my work. Liz Roberts, Natasha Schull, and Kate Zaloom are friends and colleagues who have generously engaged with this material over a number of years. Ivan Ascher, Jennifer Fishman, Duana Fullwiley, Frederick Keck, William Mazzarella, and Tobias Rees provided incisive comments on earlier drafts of this book. Randolph Starn was extremely generous in his support over the course of my years at Berkeley.

As a dissertation, this work would never have moved beyond the glimmer of an idea without the support and creative inspiration given by Julia Svihra. At multiple junctures, spiritual and intellectual sustenance has come from good friends: special thanks go to Miles Becker, Jon Eldan, Tal Lewis, Tanya Pearlman, Josh Siegel, Kurt Strovink, and Rebecca Plant. George Lakoff and Kathleen Frumkin have been extraordinary sources of cheer and inspiration. Robin Tolmach Lakoff was, as ever, unmatched in her wit, wisdom, and culinary prowess.

I must express my gratitude to the many Argentine psychiatrists and psychoanalysts who allowed me into their world of impassioned thought and practice. Following ethnographic convention, they receive pseudonyms in the book. Upon my arrival in Buenos Aires,

Cambridge University Press

052183760X - Pharmaceutical Reason: Knowledge and Value in Global Psychiatry

Andrew Lakoff

Frontmatter

[More information](#)*Acknowledgments*

ix

I encountered several seasoned anthropologists who became close friends and guides to the city. Adriana Stagnaro, Laura Ferrero, Axel Lazzari, and Juan Manuel Obarrio introduced me to the *porteño* intellectual and cultural worlds. Scholars of Argentine social thought were extremely gracious in linking me to the *mundo-psi* and teaching me about its history. I am grateful to Eduardo Keegan, Mariano Plotkin, Hugo Vezzetti, and Sergio Visacovsky. Mireille Abelin's personal warmth and spirited engagement with Argentina nourished this work immensely.

Early conversations with Allan Young and Tanya Luhrmann helped convince me that I was going in the right direction. My hosts at the Department of Social Medicine at Harvard, Byron Good, Mary-Jo Good, and Arthur Kleinman, along with Michael Fischer, brought me into a unique setting of ethically engaged reflection on the social dimensions of healing. In Cambridge and after, I have been lucky to have as interlocutors and friends Joe Dumit, Jenny Reardon, and Kaushik Sunder Rajan. In San Diego I encountered a fruitful place for interaction with colleagues and graduate students in Sociology and Science Studies. I would especially like to thank Jim Holston, Teresa Caldeira, Steven Shapin, Andy Scull, Steve Epstein, Geof Bowker, John Evans, John Skrentny, and Amy Binder for making me feel at home.

Thanks to Sarah Caro and Cambridge University Press for their excellent work in bringing the project to fruition. The project has been nurtured all along by Nikolas Rose, whose interventions at many stages have been of great help. Toward the end, Talia Dan-Cohen graciously helped shape the manuscript into its final form.

I am grateful to the institutions that have provided material and institutional support in my research and writing. Graduate study was funded by a National Science Foundation Graduate Fellowship. My research in Argentina was assisted by an NSF Dissertation Improvement Grant. Upon my return, I was fortunate to receive the financial support and stimulating company provided by a fellowship from the Townsend Center for the Humanities at UC Berkeley. At Harvard I was supported by a NIMH training grant in Medical Anthropology.

Chapter 1 appeared in modified form as "Diagnostic Liquidity: Mental Illness and the Global Trade in DNA," in *Theory and Society* 34 (2005); a portion of Chapter 3 appeared as "The Lacan Ward: Pharmacology and Subjectivity in Buenos Aires," in *Social Analysis* 47:2 (2003); and modified versions of Chapter 5 were published as "The Anxieties of

Cambridge University Press

052183760X - Pharmaceutical Reason: Knowledge and Value in Global Psychiatry

Andrew Lakoff

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

x

Acknowledgments

Globalization: Antidepressant Marketing and Economic Crisis in Argentina,” in *Social Studies of Science* 34:2 (2004), and as “The Private Life of Numbers: Pharmaceutical Marketing in Post-Welfare Argentina,” in Aihwa Ong and Stephen J. Collier (eds.), *Global Assemblages: Technology, Politics and Ethics as Anthropological Problems*.