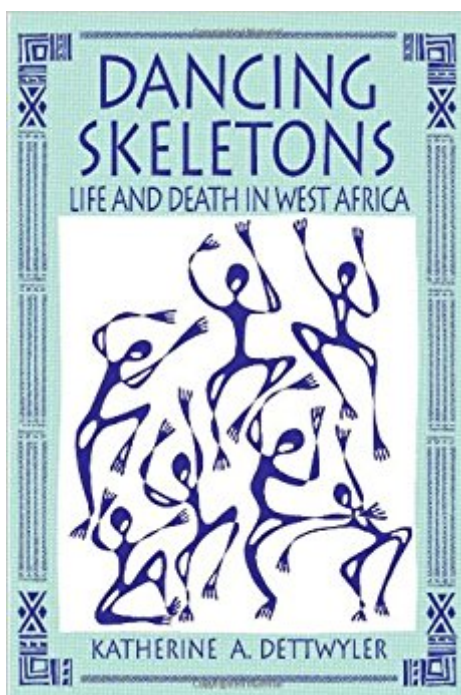


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# Dancing Skeletons: Life And Death In West Africa



## Synopsis

1995 Margaret Mead Award winner! This personal account by a biocultural anthropologist illuminates important, not-soon-forgotten messages involving the more sobering aspects of conducting fieldwork among malnourished children in West Africa. With nutritional anthropology at its core, *Dancing Skeletons* presents informal, engaging and oftentimes dramatic stories from the field that relate the author's experiences conducting research on infant feeding and health in Mali. Through fascinating vignettes and honest, vivid descriptions, Dettwyler explores such diverse topics as ethnocentrism, culture shock, population control, breastfeeding, child care, the meaning of disability and child death in different cultures, female circumcision, women's roles in patrilineal societies, the dangers of fieldwork, and the realities involved in researching emotionally draining topics. Readers will alternately laugh and cry as they meet the author's friends and informants, follow her through a series of encounters with both peri-urban and rural Bambara culture, and struggle with her as she attempts to reconcile her very different roles as objective ethnographer, subjective friend, and mother in the field. (Not-for-sale instructor resource material available to college and university faculty only; contact the publisher directly.)

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

" . . . a sobering, painful look at problems of a still-poor developing country that will be particularly instructive to international public health workers, nutrition educators, planners and clinical nutritionists concerned with Third World problems. It is a recommended reading." -- ECOLOGY OF FOOD AND NUTRITION 1995". . . this book has two main advantages. First, it engages the reader,

because it is well written. Second, it offers a broad scope for discussion of academic and practical issues." -- JOURNAL OF BIOSOCIAL SCIENCES, Vol.27 1995"Katherine Dettwyler has written an easily accessible and particularly vibrant description of life in modern Mali . . . It offers a vivid portrait of Malian people and places as well as thoughtful account of the issues and problems that face anthropologists in the field." -- AFRICAN STUDIES REVIEW, Vol. 38, No. 2 1995"The ongoing critique of ethnography has, happily, changed the genre, and today real people walk the pages of the best ethnographies. Dettwyler's DANCING SKELETONS is surely one of the best. The text emerges as an extended meditation on applied fieldwork as a gradual melding of people and meaning." -- AMERICAN JOURNAL OF HUMAN BIOLOGY, Vol. 6, No. 5 1994

Also available by Katherine A. Dettwyler from Waveland Press: Cultural Anthropology and Human Experience: The Feast of Life (ISBN 9781577666813).

Excellent read. The writer mixes a style of research ethnography with personal fieldwork. Informational and emotional read. I highly recommend.

Extremely boring, but even worse, it's completely lacking in compassion. The author and her daughter are clearly the most important people in the universe, according to what I got out of the book. Be prepared to read about mentally disabled people getting yelled at and disabled kids getting mean nicknames.

had to read this book for population health class.... only b/c I had to.. otherwise don't spend your \$ on it

I am not an anthropologist but a tourist who has visited Africa and is interested in learning more about African people. I found Katherine Dettwyler's book an excellent introduction to how real people live and deal with their lives in Africa. Dettwyler tells us how mothers and children interact, the way families view their children, what day-to-day life in rural Africa is really like. I found it fascinating especially because Dettwyler talks honestly about her reactions to what she found. This book shouldn't be restricted to anthropoogy students.

I needed this book for an Anthropology class. The used price was fantastic, and it's a very interesting study even outside of my class. For anyone seeking to be enlightened on life in West

Africa, this is a really good read.

I had to read this book for school did not think I would like it, but wrong it is excellent! I would read this book over and over. I recommend this book for everyone even if you are not interested in Anthropology!

don't waste your money. there are better books on this subject. The author thinks very highly of herself, even though she doesn't write well. And while I can tolerate arrogance, this author does nothing to back it up. I love the cover photo, though.

This was a positive experience, product arrived quickly and in the condition described by the seller.

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