



Understanding Health: A Sociological Introduction

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'The authors are to be commended on a very clear text, easily communicating the insights of a wide range of theoretical perspectives, and marshalling clear empirical evidence for the arguments of the sociology of health' - *Health Sociology Review*

'The book is well set out and easy to read with signposts provided throughout linking key concepts and topics to aid understanding. The diagrams and tables are clear and well labelled, adding to the reader's knowledge of the topic' - *Accident and Emergency Nursing*

'In their introduction to **Understanding Health** Barry and Yuill define their aim in writing this book as "to provide an introduction to the sociology of health to both health and social science students". To fulfill this aim a generalist and non-specialist approach is needed and unsurprisingly this is the one that they take. However, they do not fall into the potential of trap of providing the glib and simplistic approach that is characteristic of some of the other teaching texts with similar aims ... In summary Barry and Yuill have produced a clearly written and organized basic text on the sociology of health. It is properly and commendably sociological and may well have a market beyond its modest aim of non-specialist courses - *Critical Public Health*

'Lucidly written in simple language to explain very complex sociological concepts, it is well-rooted in history while providing the latest developments in the field of health... an immensely readable book' - **The National Medical Journal of India**

'Clearly and concisely explains what sociology is and how it contributes to our understanding of health. The text serves anyone wishing to broaden their own understanding of the topic or as an introduction for anyone new to the field. In all, it is an informative text that will be a valuable addition to the bookshelf of any student dietitian or those involved in working with, or teaching health care students' - *Journal of Human Nutrition and Dietetics*

A comprehensive and accessible introduction to the sociology of health and illness, written for students on a wide range of courses. This book clearly explains what sociology is and how it contributes to our understanding of health.

Beginning with an overview of the discipline, the authors set out the different theoretical perspectives offered by sociology. They describe how, for centuries, our understanding of health and illness has been dominated by the medical model and a focus on disease processes. In contrast, they show how sociology provides a broader understanding of health and inequalities in the health of populations by taking account of factors such as age, social class, gender and environment.

The book goes on to explore the social context of health care, the role of different professions (particularly the professions allied to medicine) and the organizational constraints on those involved in health care delivery.

This textbook is designed for students studying sociology as part of a wide range of courses. To help them get the most from the book, signposts are provided throughout that show where related topics appear elsewhere in the text. Other useful features include discussion points, definitions of key terms, and suggestions for further reading.

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Editorial Review

About the Author

Anne-Marie Barry is a research consultant in Edinburgh and former lecturer in health sociology at Robert Gordon University, Aberdeen. Her research interests primarily focus on social inequalities and health and wellbeing and have also included alcohol and drug use, sexual health, mental health and bereavement.

Chris Yuill is a sociologist at Robert Gordon University, Aberdeen, whose work focuses on the sociology of health and the sociology of urban experiences. In addition to a variety of journal publications and research reports he has written and co-edited a number of textbooks for SAGE, one of his most recent being *Sociology for Social Work* co-edited with Alastair Gibson. Other texts include *Understanding the Sociology of Health: An Introduction* with Anne-Marie Barry, which is now in its third edition and has also been translated into Chinese. Chris has also served two terms on the executive of the British Sociological Association.

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