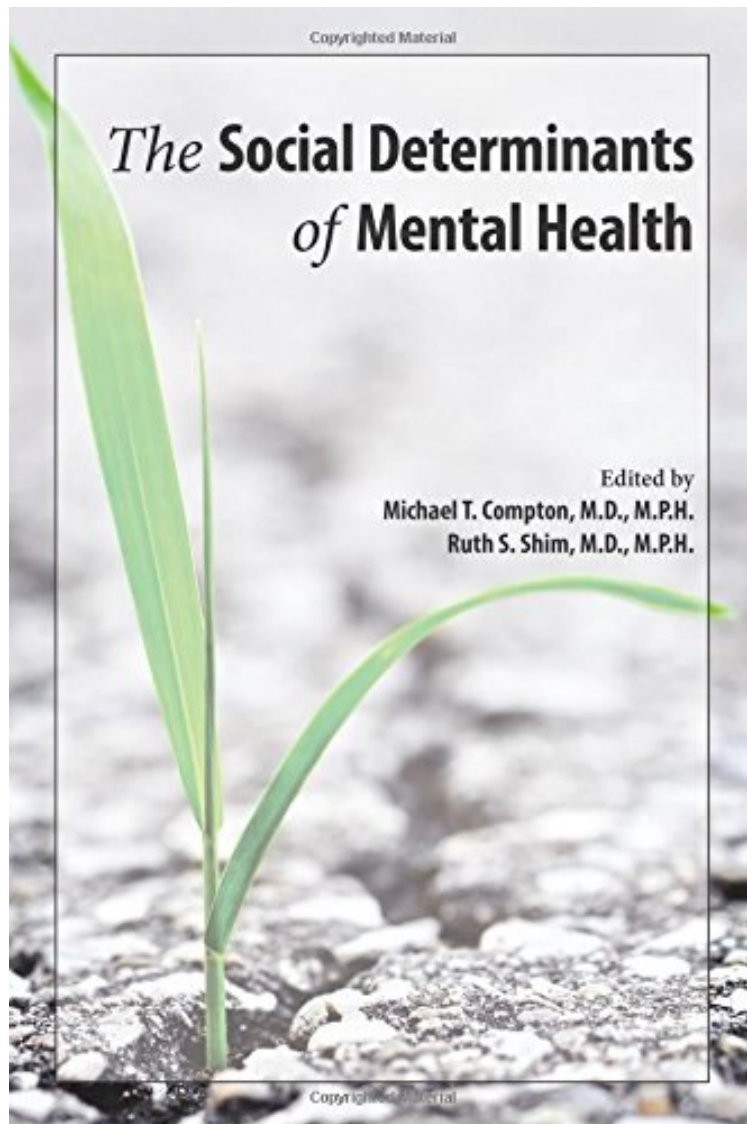


The Social Determinants of Mental Health

Michael T. Compton, M.D.

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Michael T. Compton, M.D. : The Social Determinants of Mental Health before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Social Determinants of Mental Health:

The Social Determinants of Mental Health aims to fill the gap that exists in the psychiatric, scholarly, and policy-related literature on the social determinants of mental health: those factors stemming from where we learn, play, live, work, and age that impact our overall mental health and well-being. The editors and an impressive roster of chapter

authors from diverse scholarly backgrounds provide detailed information on topics such as discrimination and social exclusion; adverse early life experiences; poor education; unemployment, underemployment, and job insecurity; income inequality, poverty, and neighborhood deprivation; food insecurity; poor housing quality and housing instability; adverse features of the built environment; and poor access to mental health care. This thought-provoking book offers many beneficial features for clinicians and public health professionals: - Clinical vignettes are included, designed to make the content accessible to readers who are primarily clinicians and also to demonstrate the practical, individual-level applicability of the subject matter for those who typically work at the public health, population, and/or policy level.- Policy implications are discussed throughout, designed to make the content accessible to readers who work primarily at the public health or population level and also to demonstrate the policy relevance of the subject matter for those who typically work at the clinical level.- All chapters include five to six key points that focus on the most important content, helping to both prepare the reader with a brief overview of the chapter's main points and reinforce the "take-away" messages afterward.- In addition to the main body of the book, which focuses on selected individual social determinants of mental health, the volume includes an in-depth overview that summarizes the editors' and their colleagues' conceptualization, as well as a final chapter coauthored by Dr. David Satcher, 16th Surgeon General of the United States, that serves as a "Call to Action," offering specific actions that can be taken by both clinicians and policymakers to address the social determinants of mental health. The editors have succeeded in the difficult task of balancing the individual/clinical/patient perspective and the population/public health/community point of view, while underscoring the need for both groups to work in a unified way to address the inequities in twenty-first century America. The Social Determinants of Mental Health gives readers the tools to understand and act to improve mental health and reduce risk for mental illnesses for individuals and communities. Students preparing for the Medical College Admission Test (MCAT) will also benefit from this book, as the MCAT in 2015 will test applicants' knowledge of social determinants of health. The social determinants of mental health are not distinct from the social determinants of physical health, although they deserve special emphasis given the prevalence and burden of poor mental health.

Michael Compton and Ruth Shim have edited a fine book on The Social Determinants of Mental Health. This readable volume is thoroughly scientific, as well as action oriented with respect to clinical practice and policy making. Ten outstanding chapters fall between a Foreword by Sir Michael Marmot and A Call to Action by former Surgeon General David Satcher and Ruth Shim. Written by experts in the field, including members of the Group for the Advancement of Psychiatry's Prevention Committee, these chapters explore various aspects of the social determinants of mental health. Individual chapters examine social determinants such as adverse early life experiences, poor education, adverse features of housing and neighborhoods, food insecurity, poverty, and poor access to health care and their relationship to poor mental health and mental illnesses. The result is a landmark book on a critical issue in public health. --Howard Goldman, M.D., Ph.D., Professor of Psychiatry, U Maryland School of Medicine, Baltimore, Editor, Psychiatric Services This is an outstanding and long overdue book that very clearly and comprehensively lays out the case for addressing the societal structures and personal behaviors that contribute to health and mental health disparities in the United States. The chapters are well written and organized in a very logical way, covering the most relevant and specific factors that significantly contribute to increased morbidity and mortality for persons who are affected by mental health and substance use disorders. Not only do the contributing authors provide clear and compelling evidence for how social policies, economic inequality, and other interdependent factors make us more vulnerable to illness, they provide strong recommendations for how communities and the larger society can correct these problems in ways that will benefit us all. The Social Determinants of Mental Health should be required reading for any thoughtful clinician or policy maker. --David Pollack, M.D., Professor for Public Policy, Oregon Health and Science University This groundbreaking book is a must-read for psychiatrists and other mental health professionals who seek to understand the complex interactions between the social environment in all of its manifestations and mental health. Once clinicians recognize the inextricable ties of social determinants and mental illness as set forth in this comprehensive volume, they will be compelled to practice differently, focusing their interventions not only in the context of the one-on-one therapeutic relationship but also in the community realm with consciousness of the impact of positive and negative societal forces at the population level. --Annelle B. Primm, M.D., M.P.H., Deputy Medical Director, American Psychiatric Association From the Inside Flap The Social Determinants of Mental Health provides a foundation of knowledge on the social and environmental underpinnings of mental health and mental illnesses for clinical and policy decision making, with a goal to improve the mental health of individuals across diverse communities and the mental health of the nation as a whole. The basic premise of this concise book is that society plays a prominent role in creating and shaping mental illnesses and thus is in a position to improve mental health and reduce risk for mental illnesses. Where an individual, family, community, or society is located on the continuum from health and wellness to illness and infirmity is multidetermined. Although genetic influences and biological factors are key drivers of health and wellness, the contexts of the individual, family, community, and society are also crucial. The Social Determinants of Mental Health provides psychiatrists, psychologists, residents, medical students, policymakers, and allied mental

health professionals with practical information in an accessible format for incorporating social and environmental determinants of mental health into practice and policy decision making, empowering them to act to build a culture of positive mental health and wellness. Students preparing for the Medical College Admission Test (MCAT) will also benefit from this book, as the MCAT in 2015 will test applicants' knowledge of the social determinants of health. The social determinants of mental health are not distinct from the social determinants of physical health, although they deserve special emphasis given the prevalence and burden of poor mental health.

About the Author
Michael T. Compton, M.D., M.P.H., is Chairman, Department of Psychiatry, Lenox Hill Hospital, New York, New York, and Professor, Department of Psychiatry, Hofstra North Shore--LIJ School of Medicine at Hofstra University.
Ruth S. Shim, M.D., M.P.H., is Vice Chair, Education and Faculty Development, Department of Psychiatry, Lenox Hill Hospital, New York, New York, and Associate Professor, Department of Psychiatry, Hofstra North Shore--LIJ School of Medicine at Hofstra University.