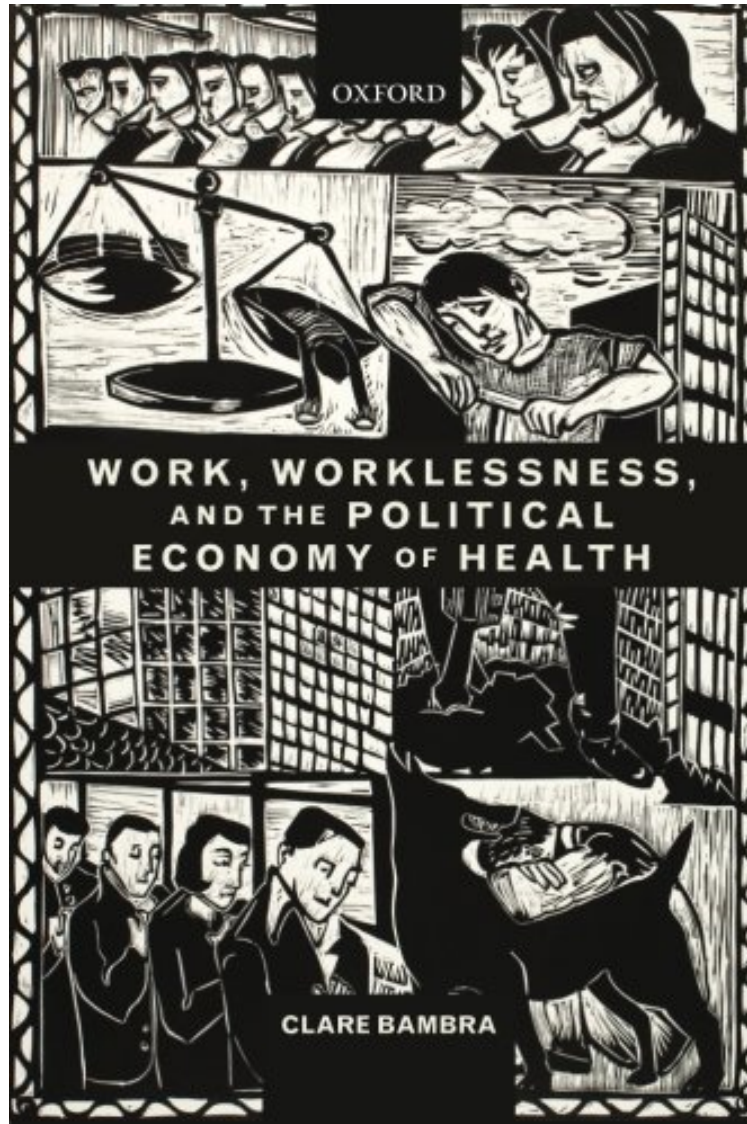


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Work, Worklessness, and the Political Economy of Health

Clare Bamba

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Clare Bamba : Work, Worklessness, and the Political Economy of Health before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Work, Worklessness, and the Political Economy of Health:

We are told that 'work is good for us' and that ill health is caused by 'individual lifestyles'. Drawing on research from public health, social policy, epidemiology, geography and political science, this evidence-based inter-disciplinary book

firmly challenges these contemporary orthodoxies. It systematically demonstrates that work - or lack of it - is central to our health and wellbeing and is the underlying determinant of health inequalities. Work is the cornerstone of modern society and dominates adult life with around a third of our time spent working. It is a vital part of self-identity and for most of us it is the foundation of economic and social status. As such, the material and psychosocial conditions in which we work have immense consequences for our physical and mental wellbeing, as well as the distribution of health across the population. Recessions, job-loss, insecurity and unemployment also have important ramifications for the health and wellbeing of individuals, families and communities. Chronic illness is itself a significant cause of worklessness and low pay. Drawing on examples from different countries, this book shows that the relationship between work, worklessness and health varies by country. Countries with a more regulated work environment and a more interventionist and supportive welfare system have better health and smaller work-related health inequalities. The book provides examples of specific policies and interventions that mitigate the ill-health effects of work and worklessness. It concludes by asserting the importance of politics and policy choices in the aetiology of health and health inequalities.

The evidence base used is extremely comprehensive and varied. I initially worried that this would be a very 'dry' read but found the chapters easy to read and interesting. My copy is covered in asterisks and underlined paragraphs, and my counter-arguments are scribbled at the sides, so Clare Bambra definitely got me thinking. This book is of use to anyone who has an interest in work and health and definitely should be part of the reading list for specialty trainees in occupational health. * Occupational Medicine *About the AuthorClare Bambra's work is highly inter-disciplinary, applying theories and methods from the social sciences to epidemiology and public health. She studied political science at Birmingham and Manchester, before first moving into public health research at the Liverpool Medical School.