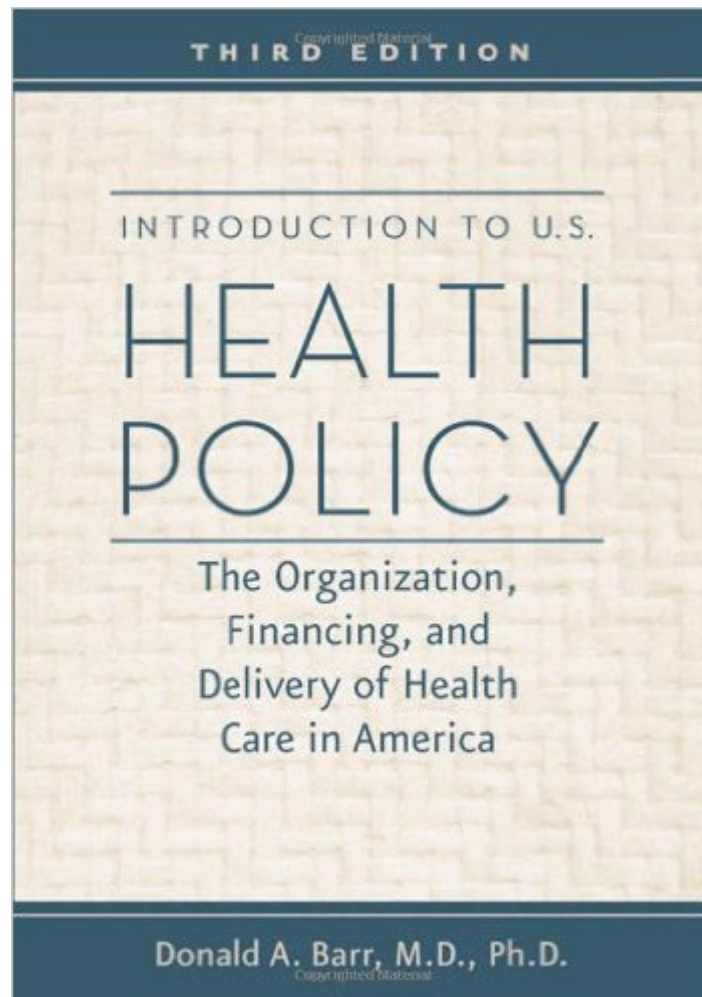


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# Introduction To U.S. Health Policy: The Organization, Financing, And Delivery Of Health Care In America



## Synopsis

Health care reform has dominated public discourse over the past several years, and the recent passage of the Affordable Care Act, rather than quell the rhetoric, has sparked even more debate. Donald A. Barr reviews the current structure of the American health care system, describing the historical and political contexts in which it developed and the core policy issues that continue to confront us today. This comprehensive analysis introduces the various organizations and institutions that make the U.S. health care system work—or fail to work, as the case may be. A principal message of the book is the seeming paradox of the quality of health care in this country—on the one hand it is the best medical care system in the world, on the other it is one of the worst among developed countries because of how it is organized. Barr introduces readers to broad cultural issues surrounding health care policy, such as access, affordability, and quality. He discusses specific elements of U.S. health care, including insurance, especially Medicare and Medicaid, the shift to for-profit managed care, the pharmaceutical industry, issues of long-term care, the plight of the uninsured, medical errors, and nursing shortages. The latest edition of this widely adopted text updates the description and discussion of key sectors of America's health care system in light of the Affordable Care Act.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

In these days of intense debate over health care reform, this should be a non-fiction best-seller.

Written as a textbook to inform medical students in the area of health policy, Dr. Barr integrates

issues of culture, economics, and medicine in a highly readable overview of our current U.S. healthcare system. He illustrates a number of problems by contrasting the evolution of our healthcare system, and the strongly held political/cultural assumptions that underlie it, with the evolution and values underlying the Canadian system. He is realistic about the struggles of both systems. A number of U.S. practices and assumptions don't make for better medicine. This text goes a long way towards helping the reader understand the problems in ways that are necessary before tackling solutions. Dr. Barr offers several critical options (some implicit and others explicit) for improving U.S. health care.

I don't like reading textbooks for class. But this book was actually well written and easy to understand. It dives into health care policy and looks at the Canadian model as well as other countries. Many people talk about Canada and how bad their model was but that is a bit unfair. You can talk about how reliable the Model T was too compared to a Ford Fusion today. The book gives history and perspective on topics versus politicians spitting out "facts" based on what they heard from their neighbor's neighbor while eating a corn dog at some festival where they do a lot of baby hugging. I digress. Excellent book. Enough said.

I am a physician, former researcher, and public health officer. My primary work is public health practice and administration. I needed to get up-to-date on health care reform and I chose this book because of its historical approach. I was not disappointed -- in fact, I was blown away how good it was! Dr. Barr is able to synthesize a complex topic. I especially like how he includes Canada's health care system as a comparison. This book is best for readers with a health background. I got the Kindle edition to save money, and it was fine. Tom's

Anyone involved in healthcare, including consumers, should read this book. "Introduction to U.S. Health Policy" while clearly advocating the "Affordable Care Act" is an exhaustive study of how our medical system works. As the government has become the principle funding source and consumer of healthcare the impact of laws, regulation and policy has become the largest influence on healthcare. To work or sell in the healthcare space this book is an indispensable guide. The breadth of this long book is amazing. However it is never hard to read and actually makes sense of what can seem like an overwhelming and impenetrable subject. Perhaps that is why so many colleges and graduate studies have "Introduction to U.S. Health Policy" as required reading. "Introduction to U.S. Health Policy" is extensively documented, is chock full of tables, charts and references. Almost

every other credible study, book, and peer reviewed literature is used here. Really a remarkable book fully updated. While I don't always agree with the arguments or solutions proposed, such as the enthusiasm for ACA, no-one can argue the crisis or ineffective fragmentation system we have currently. This book compares other countries healthcare systems, looks back into history and uses various models to inform us not only where we are but where we should go. Again, a must read for any of us that want to be informed and not simply have opinions on healthcare. Great book.

Dr. Barr presents the subject of health care delivery in an engaging format and addresses the shortfalls of past policies. However, he presents the Affordable Care Act of 2010 in a comprehensive and understandable way so that all of us interested in pending changes to the manner in which health care is organized, financed, and delivered will be better able to deal with the Act's implementation. The book is highly recommended.

This author may have some bias in his writing, however, he is extremely good at providing a historical account of the Health Policy system and offers great detailed examples from other countries than America. I appreciate the fact that I can learn a lot of the basic principles of health policy through this book. I recommend this book to people who don't know much about health policy because it definitely increased my understanding of the system.

As a college student looking to pursue a career in medicine, I picked this book up hoping to develop at least a fundamental knowledge about the field I will (hopefully) be working in. It answered just about every question I had beforehand, and it did so in a way that made it easy for someone with little prior knowledge to understand. I was also pleasantly surprised by the relatively unbiased opinions it provided in regards to healthcare, and any opinions that were listed were well supported with facts and figures. After having read this book, I can now effectively participate in (somewhat) sophisticated discussions regarding the U.S. healthcare system, how it works, and in what direction it is heading. A great read for anyone considering a career in healthcare, or someone just looking to gain a little knowledge on the subject.

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