Recognition of the power of socioeconomic factors as determinants of health came initially from research on health inequalities. Thus, exercise and accidents are as much about a society’s transport system as about individual choice. But a major new element in the picture we have developed is the importance of the social, or psycho-social, environment to health. For example, health in the workplace for most employees—certainly for office workers—is less a matter of exposure to physical health hazards as of the social environment, of how supportive it is, whether people have control over their work, whether their jobs are secure. A similar picture emerges in other areas ranging from the health importance of the emotional environment in early childhood to the need for more socially cohesive communities.

Written by acknowledged experts in each field, Social Determinants of Health, 2E gives an authoritative overview of the social and economic factors which are known to be the most powerful determinants of population health in modern societies.