This AJN award-winning textbook helps readers understand and critically assess the U.S. health care system and policies. With a focus on the prevalence of disparities in health and health care, the book reviews the historical evolution and organization of our health care system.

Several social justice theories are used to critically evaluate current U.S. health care systems and policies, providing readers with various perspectives of the field. Extensive coverage of our health care system's structures, finances, and performance on a variety of population health indicators provides the necessary background, frameworks, and principles through which the adequacy of alternative health care system financing strategies can be analyzed.

New to this edition:

- Revised chapter on health care reform that considers the 2016 election and anticipated changes to the Affordable Care Act.
- Provides the latest information on the financing and organization of the U.S. health care system.
- Examines the nation’s health care needs, the prevalence of health and health care disparities, and the latest theories that explain the causal origins of health and health care disparities.
- Addresses the latest developments in health care policy domains such as long-term care, end-of-life care, and initiatives to reduce disparities in health.
- Updated data on long-term financing and expenditures including baby boomers' increased demand for long-term services and expanded entitlements for the disabled.