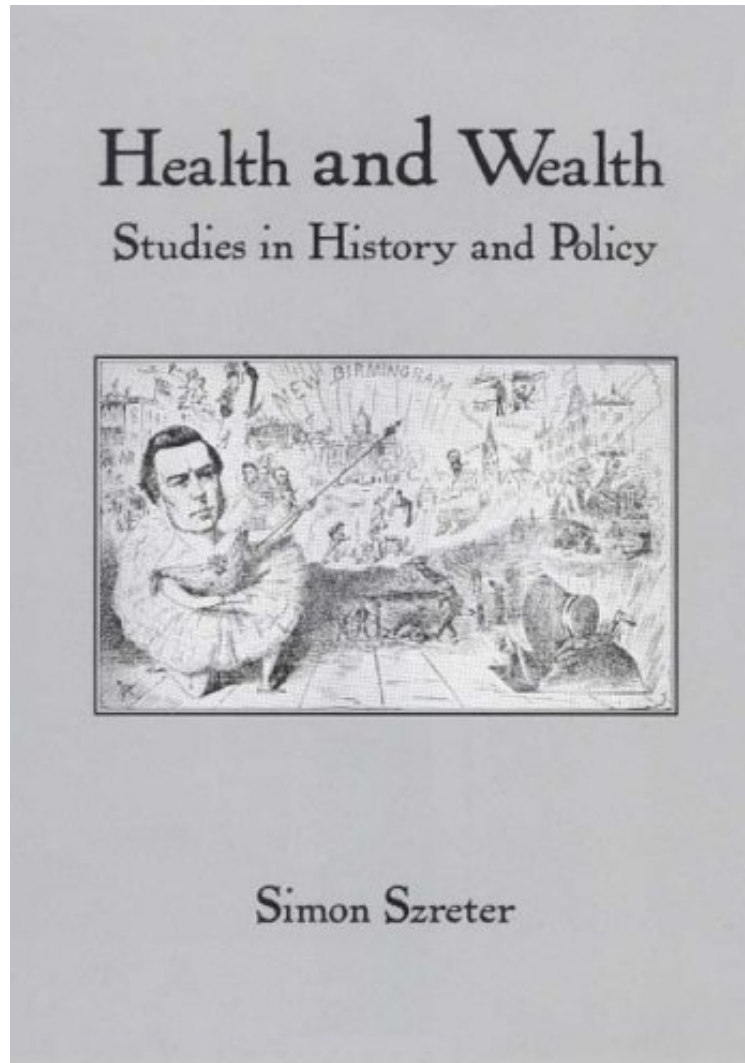


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Simon Szreter

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before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Health and Wealth: Studies in History and Policy (Rochester Studies in Medical History):

Today's complex policy problems cannot be understood by the social, medical, and policy sciences, alone. History is also required to interpret the present and to inform attempts to mould the future. The essays in this volume seek to

bring an historical perspective to bear on today's national and international policy concerns and to present original historical research, which challenges conventional assumptions and viewpoints. In *Health and Wealth* the essays in Part I offer an historian's reappraisal of several of the most influential ideas dealing with the relationships between health and economic development in the post-war international policy sciences, such as demographic transition theory; the McKeown thesis; and the population health approach. Part II presents a distinctive interpretation of the course and causes of mortality change in Britain during the 'long century' of industrialisation, c.1780-1914. British history shows that rapid economic growth is a highly disruptive process, unleashing potentially deadly challenges. The key to life and death in Britain lay less in medical science or rising living standards than in the changing electoral politics of the nation's industrial cities. Class relations, political economy, ideology, religion and the public health movement were all significant elements in this story. A late-Victorian flowering of vigorous municipal government was the precursor to central state activism in the twentieth-century. Part III reflects on history to make direct contributions to contentious current policy issues. The persistence of social and health inequalities today in developed nations and debates over the new concept of social capital are addressed, along with the economic and health problems of today's less developed countries. The lessons of history are awkward and heterodox, indicating the importance of establishing state-sanctioned institutions to ensure social security, legal identity and civic freedoms in advance of measures to stimulate and open these countries' economies to global trade.

These essays are an intellectual delight. They also have profound implications for policy. Szepter arrays persuasive evidence that the preconditions for economic growth include economic and social security that is initiated and sustained by effective governments in collaboration with autonomous civic institutions. --Daniel M. Fox, Milbank Memorial Fund
Health and Wealth is applied history at its most perceptive and most timely. Simon Szepter deploys his profound knowledge of the history of mortality to critique Britain's welfare policies, and to argue that in poorer countries government provision for public health should be developed before, not after economic modernisation. This book is essential critical reading for policy-makers. --John Tosh, Professor of History, Roehampton University, UK
To understand Brazil in the 21st century, study the English city of Birmingham in the 19th. The powerful insight at the heart of this nuanced and highly readable account of health and social change is that the lessons of history are fundamental to understanding the relation of economic growth to health. --Professor Sir Michael Marmot, Director International Institute for Society and Health
About the Author
Simon Szepter, University of Cambridge, is author of *Fertility, Class and Gender in Britain 1860-1940*, and coauthor of *Changing Family Size in England and Wales 1891-1911: Pace, Class and Demography*.