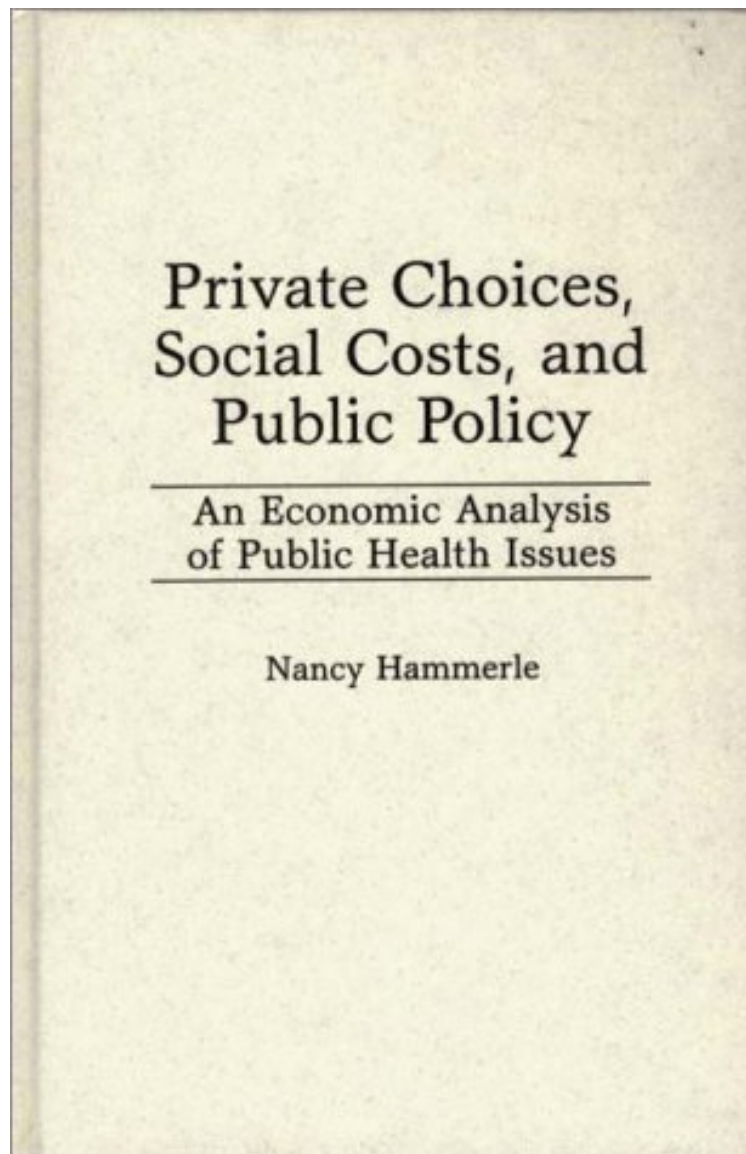


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Private Choices, Social Costs, and Public Policy: An Economic Analysis of Public Health Issues

Nancy Hammerle

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This data-rich work examines today's most compelling and controversial public health issues, including alcohol and drug abuse, AIDS, abortion, black and infant mortality, drug-affected babies, child abuse, teenage pregnancy, and cigarette smoking. Hammerle's theme is that individual behavioral choices often have far-reaching and costly effects. When practiced by large numbers of people, the human and fiscal costs can be monumental, taxing virtually all of our social systems as well as our financial resources. Hammerle enumerates these costs and, employing economic analytical tools, recommends public policies that will reduce the incidence of such behavior or otherwise reduce its social cost. Some recommendations are outside the mainstream, but all are well substantiated and soundly argued. This volume will be of great interest to academics, practitioners, and policy-makers in the fields of public health, health care administration, public policy, child protection, and family planning. The work will also interest economists and sociologists in the field of social welfare, as well as lay persons who are concerned about these timely public health issues.

"This text provides the best economic analysis of public health issues this reviewer has seen. The six chapters on (1) Cigarette Smoking, (2) Substance Abuse, (3) Infectious Diseases, (4) Racial Disparities in Health and Mortality, (5) Children at Risk, and (6) Teenage Pregnancy and Childbearing are outstanding. . . . This text will be of great value to academics, practitioners, and policy-makers in the fields of public health, health care administration, public policy, child protection, and family planning. Economists and sociologists in the field of social welfare, as well as lay persons who are concerned about these timely public health issues, will also find it useful and interesting. I will require it of all my graduate students involved in health related research activities."-Journal of Health Social Policy

"Recommended as a concise reference for all levels of academic audience interested in health care and health-care policy."-Choice

"I hasten to add that this book should be read by those involved in public health policy. The author's analysis is informative and her work offers an important database for guiding broad choices of emphasis for public policy around important questions of social and health risk."-Inquiry

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. . . provides a wealth of information for health care policy planners and reveals the critical interplay between economics and the serious public health issues facing our society."-John C. Duffy, M.D. Assistant Surgeon General U.S. Public Health Service

About the Author
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