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# Sick Societies: Responding to the global challenge of chronic disease

*David Stuckler, Karen Siegel*

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## Sick Societies

Responding to the global challenge  
of chronic disease

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**David Stuckler, Karen Siegel : Sick Societies: Responding to the global challenge of chronic disease** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Sick Societies: Responding to the global challenge of chronic disease:

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Chronic diseases are the leading causes of death and disability worldwide. Within the next few decades, the burden of chronic disease will more than triple, with the greatest rises occurring in developing countries. However, the rapid

growth of chronic diseases is not being met with a proportionate increase in global attention, with global health traditionally focusing on infectious disease and maternal and child health. This book is the first to synthesise the growing evidence-base surrounding the chronic disease, comprehensively addressing the prevention and control of chronic diseases from epidemiologic, economic, prevention/management, and governance perspectives. *Sick Societies* is written in five main parts; the first part of the book aims to understand the causes and consequences of chronic diseases on a global level. The second part of the book identifies approaches for preventing and managing chronic diseases while the third part of the book considers the power and politics in global health that have stymied an effective response to chronic disease. In the fourth part of the book the themes from the first three parts come into focus through a series of invited contributions from leading public health experts. The final part of the book sets out a model of pragmatic and imaginative solidarity, wherein the struggles of the rich and poor to survive are united by a common cause and shared goals.

"*Sick Societies* is a highly ambitious and accessible book that succeeds in bringing together key material to make the case for accelerated action to address the global chronic disease epidemic. I would highly recommend it to anyone with an interest in chronic disease, especially to those working in this field, and as a key text for courses in global health and public health." Christopher Millett, *International Journal of Epidemiology*"This is a fascinating sociological and political view of the structure of food and health industries in the modern world and how they are responsible for the epidemic we are seeing of obesity and its associated diseases...As a doctor, it is hard to ignore the case made in this book for action to address the potential for human misery...Buy this book, read it and then lend it to your friends and colleagues." - *Occupational Medicine*"This is a surprising book and one which makes an important contribution to our understanding of the complexities of global chronic diseases." - *Journal of Public Health*"The book is a tour de force! Stuckler and Siegel's book expertly pulls together the essential data and ideas needed to combat chronic diseases. It will be a mandatory reader for courses in global health. It is the book Geoffrey Rose would have written if he were still around." -- Professor Shah Ebrahim, London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine, UK"From health system financing to the financialization of the global economy, there is scarcely a dimension of our chronic disease pandemic that this book leaves unexplored . . . Knowing their social, economic and political vectors of risk is the important first step public health practitioners and advocates must take to avoid the trap of a simplistic and victimizing health behaviourism. There is no better or more timely a text than this one from which to take that step." - Professor Ronald Labont, Institute of Population Health, University of Ottawa, Canada

**About the Author**David Stuckler, MPH, PhD, is an economic sociologist and epidemiologist at Harvard University and the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine. He received his undergraduate degree from the University of Texas, his MPH from Yale University and his PhD from Cambridge before becoming a Research Fellow at the London School and receiving his appointment to the Department of Sociology at Oxford. He has been widely-recognized as an expert on economics and global health, winning grants from the World Health Organization and UNICEF on the political economy of healthcare, and from the European Centers for Disease Control on the impact of economic crises on public health. He has taught at Yale, Cambridge and Oxford on the subjects of global politics, economics and health as well as quantitative methods. His work has been featured in *The New York Times*, *The Economist*, *Guardian*, *New Scientist*, *BBC News*, *Scientific American*, *NPR*, and *Slate*, among other print, radio and television venues.

Karen Siegel, MPH, received her BA from the University of Pennsylvania and her MPH from Yale School of Public Health. She has written articles on environmental and policy approaches to prevent chronic diseases in India and globally, as well as on diabetes advocacy issues and chronic disease curricula improvement, in *Health Affairs*, *The Lancet*, *Globalization Health*, and *Nursing Standard*. Previously, she played a major role in the development of the Oxford Health Alliance's Community Interventions for Health as part of the study's evaluation team, based at Matrix Public Health Solutions, Inc. and later at Oxford University. She is actively involved in the development of the Young Professionals Chronic Disease Network, an online community with membership that spans over 150 members in 20 countries worldwide.