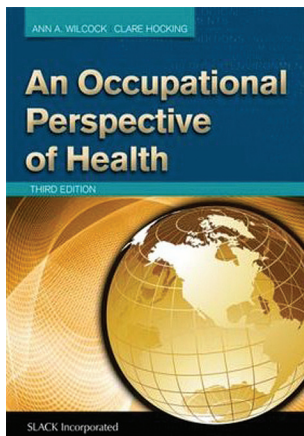


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An Occupational Perspective of Health

Ann A. Wilcock and Clare Hocking. Published by Slack Incorporated, Thorofare, NJ, 3rd edition, 2015. ISBN: 978-1-61711-087-0. Price: £49.50. 493 pp.



Ann Wilcock works in Australia, and Clare Hocking in New Zealand. They are both occupational therapists by background and have academic credentials. The book is aimed at occupational therapists and public health practitioners and is divided into four sections: Health and Illness, Occupation, Occupation in Illness and Health and Occupational Perspectives of Health.

The first section covers well-travelled ground including the various definitions of health, the evolution of health beliefs and what are called dominant concepts and contemporary priorities (non-communicable diseases, population ageing, poverty and HIV/AIDS). Health and ill health, disease and illness are covered from a largely historical point of view and some of the links with occupation, outlined.

Section 2 deals with aspects of occupation. The definitions of occupation in this text range far wider than those familiar to occupational physicians which normally comprise, mostly, 'paid employment'. This narrowly based definition is considered reductionist by the authors and by 'occupation', they mean 'all the things that people need, want or have to do across the sleep/wake continuum, individually and collectively'. In terms of this holistic view of occupation, the book explores people's occupational natures, needs, wants and obligations as well as how they feel about what they do, how they relate to others through doing, and the growth, development and enhancement potential of involvement: doing, being, belonging and becoming, in other words. This is, apparently, territory familiar to 'time-use researchers, occupational therapists and occupational scientists'.

Section 3 covers, briefly, 'medically recognised occupational disorders'—related to work, mental determinants and sleep. It doesn't pretend to be comprehensive but on the other hand it mentions diseases such as 'computer vision syndrome' and 'carpal tunnel syndrome

associated with information processing'. There are also chapters on occupational deprivation covering forced relocation, discrimination and economic causes.

Section 4 covers occupational, environment and community development, occupational justice, illness prevention through occupation and occupational health and well-being. Most of this will be pretty familiar to occupational physicians and of course there is much discussion of work-life balance and occupational stress. The latter is mainly covered in Chapter 11 entitled 'occupation as a dynamic in health and illness' in a completely unsatisfactory fashion—no mention of the Health and Safety Executive's management standards and their scientific underpinning, for example.

The book could either be described as comprehensive or, alternatively, as sprawling. Much of it reads like an extended literature search so it might be a useful resource textbook for students (of occupational science, occupational therapy?) except for the narrative which tends to be descriptive and over-inclusive rather than critical. They would find the Open University's Health and Disease modules (U205) a lot more readable. Others, attempting to read it chapter by chapter, may not stay the course.

Rating

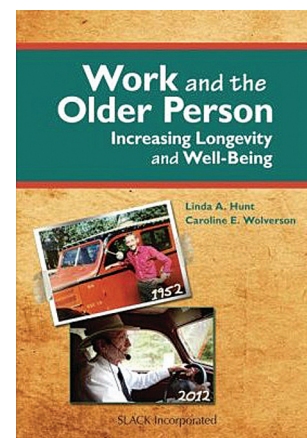
★☆☆☆ (Not recommended)

David Snashall

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Work and the Older Person: Increasing Longevity and Well-Being

Edited by L. A. Hunt and C. E. Wolverson. Published by Slack Incorporated, New Jersey, 2015. ISBN: 978 1 61711-078-8. Price: £53.95 (paperback), also available on Kindle. 150 pp.



The ageing population brings with it a host of new challenges, made more acute by falling birth rates and