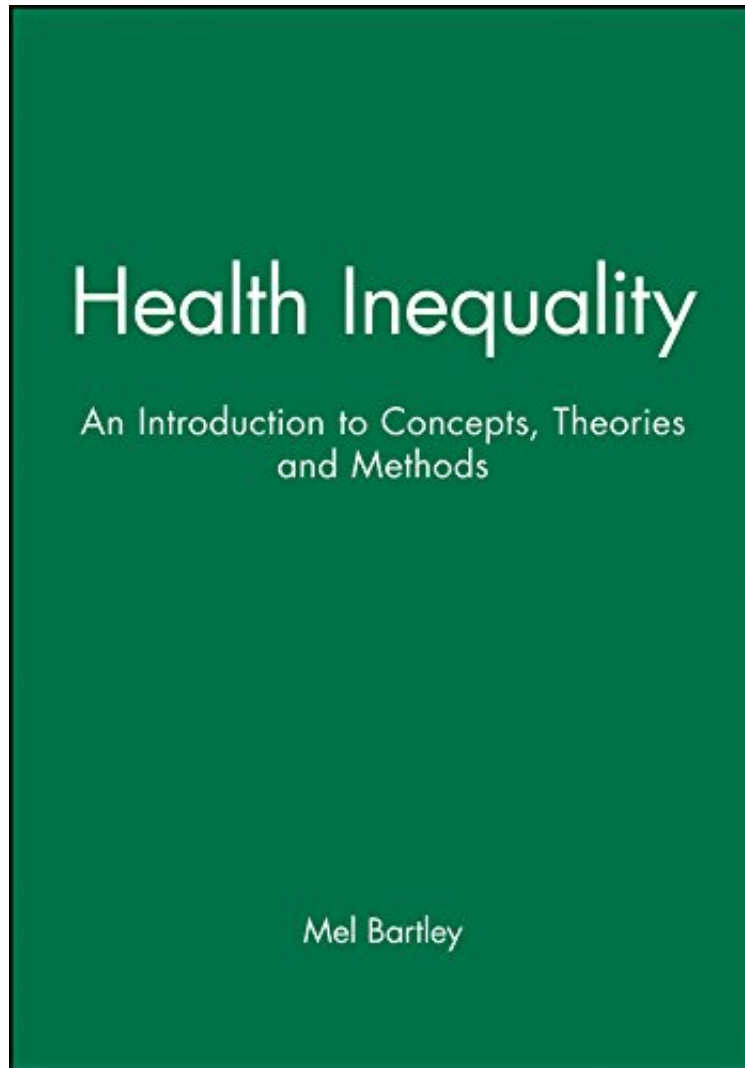


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This book provides all you ever wanted to know about health inequality but did not dare to ask. We know from many

studies that there are large differences in life expectancy between the most privileged and the most disadvantaged social groups in industrial societies. But we need to look beyond the figures to the social and biological processes that underlie them in order to understand why this is so. This book provides a key to understanding the four most widely accepted theories of what lies behind inequality in healthcare: behavioural, psychosocial, material and life-course approaches. The methods most commonly employed by health inequality researchers are carefully explained in simple terms in a way that enables readers to judge for themselves how good the evidence is for each theory. It makes concepts and methods more widely available which can be applied to any area of study that seeks to take account of social and biological factors. Health Inequality will be essential reading for students taking courses in the sociology of health and illness, social policy and welfare, health sciences, public health and epidemiology and all those interested in understanding the consequences of social inequality for health.