Expanding the Boundaries of Health and Social Science: Case Studies in Interdisciplinary Innovation

This volume will be an invaluable resource for scholars and scientists, as well as for decision-makers in academic settings, foundations, and government agencies seeking to develop and promote interdisciplinary programs that expand the boundaries of research dedicated to improving human health and well-being.

It is now widely recognized that research on human health requires more than a focus on human biology and disease entities. Lifestyles, attitudes, stress, education, income—all are now understood to contribute to the spread of disease, the effectiveness of curative therapies, and the prevention of illness, as well as to good health and an enhanced sense of well-being. However, despite such developments and the rise of interdisciplinary research, there is still considerable debate about how best to conduct research and shape policies that insightfully integrate concepts and methods drawn from the full range of the health, social, and behavioral sciences. Moreover, scholars and researchers who wish to engage in such interdisciplinary inquiry have no texts that serve as substantive and practical guides to the most effective avenues.

This volume fills this unfortunate gap by presenting a series of case studies that provide a variety of illustrative models of how best to undertake interdisciplinary research on health. All the authors have successfully carried out innovative, collaborative research programs; they give compelling accounts of the benefits of interdisciplinary research, and the central strategies required for successfully achieving such benefits.

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