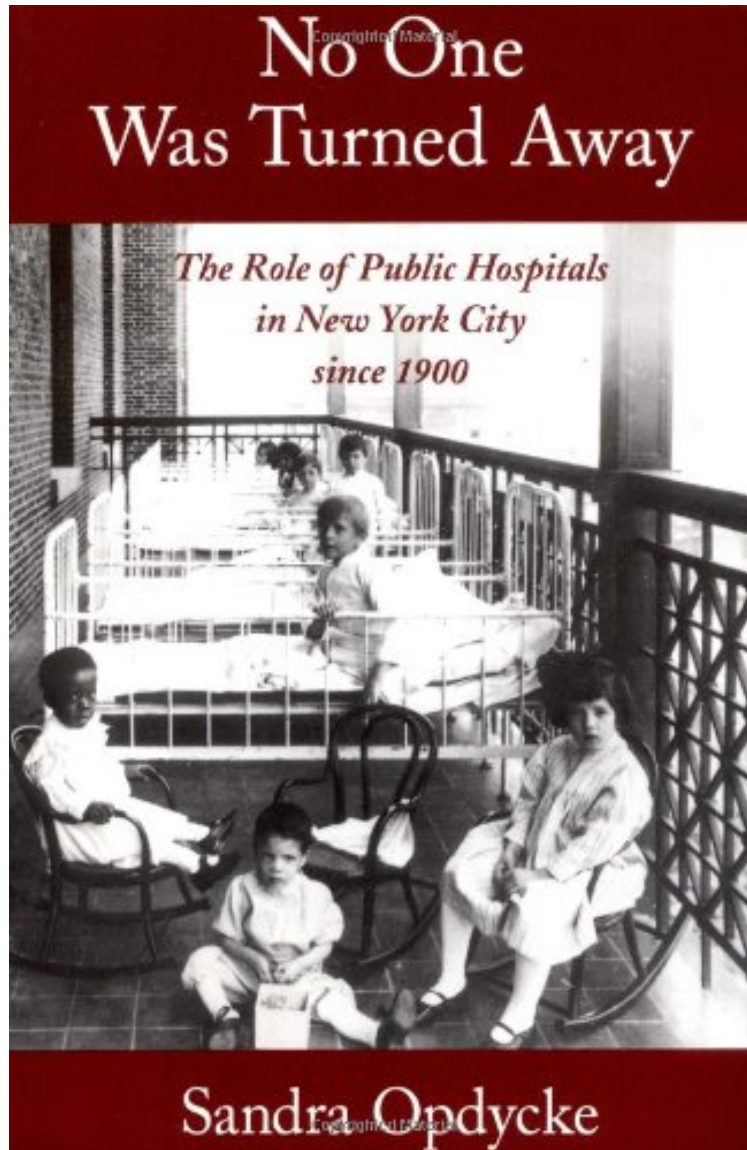


[FREE] No One Was Turned Away: The Role of Public Hospitals in New York City since 1900

# No One Was Turned Away: The Role of Public Hospitals in New York City since 1900

*Sandra Opdycke*

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Away: The Role of Public Hospitals in New York City since 1900:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Five StarsBy RWA V.Excellent6 of 6 people found the following review helpful. The public's healthBy Robert G. JohnsonHaving spent most of my life in inner city academic medical institutions, I thought I knew much about the healthcare of the underprivileged. Having never worked in a truly public hospital, however, it wasn't until I read Opdycke's very readable book comparing a traditional academic, private hospital (New York Hospital) with a public one (Bellvue) that I could understand the real difference between the two. The book is well-written and easily read. There are sufficient facts to support her premises. It is a mark the book's worth, that I only lament that the author condensed some time periods that could have been even more detailed. Still, this is a must read for anyone committed to healthcare, but who has never had the experience of working in a public hospital. It raises many important issues that must be solved if universal healthcare is ever to become a reality in this country. Five stars!2 of 2 people found the following review helpful. Five StarsBy ObserverVery informative if you are interested in NYC's health care system.

*No One Was Turned Away* is a book about the importance of public hospitals to New York City. At a time when less and less value seems to be placed on public institutions, argues author Sandra Opdycke, it is both useful and prudent to consider what this particular set of public institutions has meant to this particular city over the last hundred years, and to ponder what its loss might mean as well. Opdycke suggests that if these public hospitals close or convert to private management--as is currently being discussed--then a vital element of the civic life of New York City will be irretrievably lost. The story is told primarily through the history of Bellevue Hospital, the largest public hospital in the city and the oldest in the nation. Following Bellevue through the twentieth century, Opdycke meticulously charts the fluctuating fortunes of the city's public hospital system. Readers will learn how medical technology, urban politics, changing immigration patterns, economic booms and busts, labor unions, health insurance, Medicaid, and managed care have interacted to shape both the social and professional environments of New York's public hospitals. Having entered the twentieth century with high hopes for a grand expansion, Bellevue now faces financial and political pressures so acute that its very future is in doubt. In order to give context to the Bellevue experience, Opdycke also tracks the history of a private facility over the same century: New York Hospital. By noting the points at which the paths of these two mighty institutions have overlapped--as well as the ways in which they have diverged--this book clearly and persuasively highlights the significance of public hospitals to the city. *No One Was Turned Away* shows that private facilities like New York Hospital have generally provided superb care for their patients, but that in every era they have also excluded certain groups. This exclusion has occurred for various reasons, such as patients' diagnoses, their social characteristics, behavior, or financial status--or simply because of a lack of unoccupied beds. Fortunately, however, year in and year out, Bellevue and its fellow public facilities have acted as the city's medical safety net. Opdycke's book maintains that public hospitals will be as essential in the future as they have been in the past. This is a thoughtful and well-written study that will appeal to anyone interested in the history of medicine, public policy, urban affairs, or the City of New York.

"Detailed and well-researched....Should be required reading for urban officials, hospital administrators, and others struggling to provide care for the underserved."--Journal of the American Medical Association  
"The twentieth-century transformation of urban hospitals, from small-size and small-budget institutions to huge complexes with thousands of employees, multiple buildings, and billion-dollar budgets, is a story that few people have understood and that fewer still have studied. Comparing two world-famous medical centers--one public, one private--Sandra Opdycke demonstrates with grace and elegance why a taxpayer-funded municipal system is the best way to meet the health care needs of the nation's neediest citizens."--Kenneth T. Jackson, Columbia University, Editor-in-Chief of *The Encyclopedia of New York City*  
"Public hospitals have long played an essential, integral role in American society. Visible, responsive to public pressures, and, above all, inclusive, these hospitals are perhaps nowhere so visible as in New York City. They are brilliantly portrayed in Sandra Opdycke's fascinating book, which will be of interest to historians and policy-makers alike."--Joel D. Howell, University of Michigan  
"Sandra Opdycke's book combines urban history, social history, and the history of medicine in exemplary fashion. By comparing two notable hospitals, Bellevue and New York Hospital, she shows readers all that a public system could provide for its citizens. At a time when public hospitals are under attack, her history offers critical guidelines for policy."--David J. Rothman, Columbia University  
"This is a dramatic, impeccably researched, and well-told story of two important American hospitals, Bellevue and New York Hospital, as their sponsors negotiated the hospitals' roles through decades of change. Focusing on the two great traditions of urban hospital care represented in these institutions, one public and one private, this book is a major contribution to the history of American hospitals, urban history in general, and in particular to the social and political history of New York City."--Rosemary Stevens, University of Pennsylvania  
About the Author  
Sandra Opdycke is Adjunct Visiting Professor in the Department of Urban Studies at Vassar College and Associate Director of the Institution in Social Policy at Fordham University.