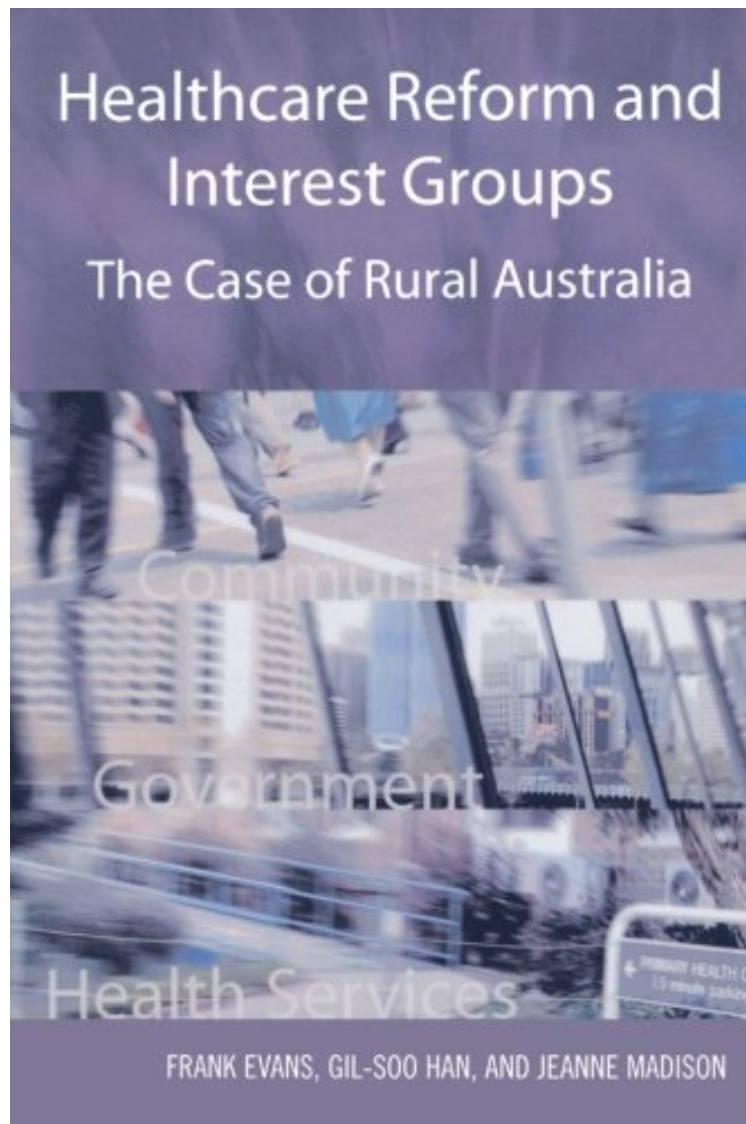


Healthcare Reform and Interest Groups: Catalysts and Barriers in Rural Australia

Frank Evans

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Rural Australia has faced many economic and demographic disadvantages. Advances in medical technology and economic reforms have led to the closure or near closure of many rural hospitals. Since the late 1980s, the Australian government has increased their focus on the quality and functionality of rural health. Most notable was the development of a rural health strategy and the introduction of flexibly funded, integrated health services, otherwise known as Multipurpose Services (MPS). *Healthcare Reform and Interests Groups* explores the resistance that the MPS's encountered from rural health professionals and rural communities and the critical role of these communities in Australia's healthcare reform.

About the Author Frank Evans is Chief Executive and Director of Nursing at Upper Murray Health Community Services and the Chief Executive of UMHCS Learning Services where he teaches business management. Dr Evans has managed rural health services in NSW and Victoria since 1992. Gil-Soo Han is an Associate Professor and Deputy Head of the School of Arts and Sciences at Monash University Malaysia. Dr Han is a sociologist and has previously taught at the University of New England and Monash University, Australia. His past publications include *Social Sources of Church Growth* (1994) and *Health and Medicine under Capitalism* (2000). Jeanne Madison is the Head of School of Health at the University of New England, Australia. Dr Madison's research interests are in the areas of health management, nursing, equity, diversity, leadership and human resource management.