

A four-hour documentary series exploring our socio-economic and racial inequities in health

Airing four consecutive Thursdays, March 27 to April 17, 2008 (check local listings)




# UNNATURAL CAUSES

...is inequality making us sick?

Hour Three

## **BAD SUGAR / PLACE MATTERS**

*Hour Three* airs Thursday, April 10, 10pm on PBS (check local listings)

Hour Three contains two segments: *Bad Sugar* explores the causes and effects of diabetes within two Native American communities. *Place Matters* connects the dots between health, wealth and zip codes.

### **BAD SUGAR (1st Segment)**

The Pima and Tohono O’odham Indians of southern Arizona have arguably the highest rates of Type II diabetes in the world. A century ago, the disease was virtually unknown here. But the diversion of river water destroyed their farms and traditional ways, plunging local tribes into poverty and dependence. A sense of “futurelessness” took hold. And so did diabetes.

Decades of medical interventions have not stemmed the tide among Native Americans and globally. But in 2004 the Pima finally won back their water rights and are beginning to farm again. Leaders are cautiously optimistic that community empowerment, along with sustainable and culturally appropriate development, can restore prosperity, hope and health.



### **VOICES & EXPERTS**

- Terrol Dew Johnson, an award winning basket-weaver and photographer, is co-founder of Tohono O’odham Community Action (TOCA), which focuses on community health through cultural revitalization and development.

(continued on page 2)

## UNNATURAL CAUSES: Is Inequality Making Us Sick?

- Donald Warne, MD, comes from an Oglala Lakota family of traditional healers. He is a Harvard-trained doctor, a professor of law at Arizona State University and an expert on American Indian health policy.
- Rod Lewis, tribal attorney for the Gila River Indian Community (Pima), battled for the water rights of local tribes and helped negotiate the largest water settlement in Arizona history.

### ***Bad Sugar Credits:***

***Produced and Directed by James Fortier (Metis-Ojibway)***

***Co-produced by Sativa January***

## PLACE MATTERS (2nd Segment)

**W**hy is your street address such a good predictor of your health? Latinos and Southeast Asians like Gwai Boonkeut have been moving into long-neglected urban neighborhoods like those in Richmond, CA. Segregation and lack of access to jobs, fresh foods, safe parks, and affordable quality housing have been harmful to long-time African American residents, and now the newcomers' health is suffering too.

In the Pacific Northwest, a similar neighborhood, High Point in West Seattle, is emerging as a promising alternative. Community members, local government, and developers took a radical approach, using federal funding to rebuild a mixed-income community with health as its focus.



## VOICES & EXPERTS

- Gwai Boonkeut, a Laotian refugee who moved to Richmond in 1981, suffered a major heart attack at age 49. The chronic stress of daily life has taken a heavy toll on his entire family.
- Ana Diez-Roux, MD, an epidemiologist at the University of Michigan, is a leading expert on neighborhoods and health.
- Angela Glover Blackwell is founder and CEO of the Oakland-based PolicyLink, a research and advocacy organization advancing economic and social equity.

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***Place Matters Credits:  
Produced and Directed  
by Ellie Lee***

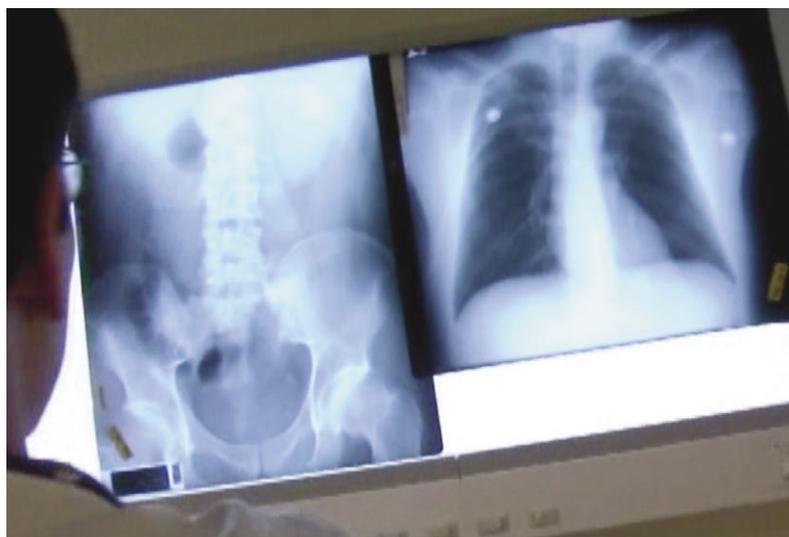
3

## UNNATURAL CAUSES: Is Inequality Making Us Sick?

- David Williams, of the Harvard University School of Public Health, is executive director of the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation Commission to Build a Healthier America.
- James Krieger, MD, director of epidemiology, planning and evaluation, Seattle-King County Public Health Department, helped envision the new High Point.

### REPORTING TIPS

- How do economic, social and built environments affect health, and what can be done? See the PolicyLink report *Why Place Matters: Building a Movement for Healthy Communities*. (2007). [http://www.policylink.org/documents/WhyPlaceMattersreport\\_web.pdf](http://www.policylink.org/documents/WhyPlaceMattersreport_web.pdf)



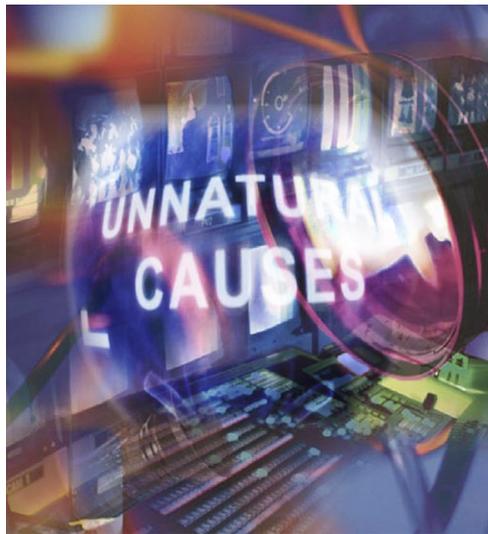
- More about Dr. William's research can be found in David Williams et al. (2003). "Racial/Ethnic Discrimination and Health: Findings from Community Studies," *American Journal of Public Health*, 93(2),1-9.
- More of Dr. Warne's research can be found in D. Warne, "Health and healing among American Indians," *EXPLORE: The Journal of Science and Healing*, 1(2), 122-129.
- Learn about the exciting work of Terrol Johnson and other members of Tohono O'dham Community Action (TOCA) at [www.tocaonline.org](http://www.tocaonline.org).

- More about access to fresh food and segregation from Dr. Diez-Roux and others at <http://minority-health.pitt.edu/archive/00000412/>.
- Learn more about High Point at [www.thehighpoint.com](http://www.thehighpoint.com) and [http://www.bcbsmnfoundation.org/objects/Tier\\_3/krieger.pdf](http://www.bcbsmnfoundation.org/objects/Tier_3/krieger.pdf)

## UNNATURAL CAUSES: Is Inequality Making Us Sick?

*UNNATURAL CAUSES* was produced by the San Francisco-based film production and distribution center California Newsreel, in partnership with Vital Pictures of Boston. It is being presented on PBS by the National Minority Consortia of public television. California Newsreel is the nation's oldest nonprofit documentary production and distribution center, dedicated to disseminating social interest films and videos. Vital Pictures is a documentary company dedicated to social justice issues.

The series has received major funding from the Ford Foundation, Corporation for Public Broadcasting (National Minority Consortia), John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation, W.K. Kellogg Foundation, The California Endowment, Joint Center for Political and Economic Studies Health Policy Institute, Kaiser Permanente and Nathan Cummings Foundation. Additional funding provided by Annie E. Casey Foundation, Akonadi Foundation, Falk Foundation, and Wallace Alexander Gerbode Foundation.



Strategic public engagement partners include the Health Policy Institute of the Joint Center for Political and Economic Studies, the American Public Health Association, the National Association of County and City Health Officials, Opportunity Agenda and the Praxis Project.

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**Larry Adelman is the series creator and executive producer; Llewellyn M. Smith is co-executive producer and Christine Herbes-Sommers is series senior producer.**

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3