Today’s Goals

1. Discuss the role of **building community power** in advancing health equity

2. Discuss how **public narratives** play a role in policymaking — and opportunities for public health to engage in narrative change

1. Discuss strategic practices to drive transformational change for health equity

1. Q & A Discussion

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Human Impact Partners

Through research, advocacy, and capacity-building, we bring the power of public health to campaigns and movements for a just society

Criminal Justice  Economic Security  Immigration  Housing  Land Use and Transportation

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Building Power to Advance Health
Health equity means that everyone has a fair and just opportunity to be as healthy as possible.

To achieve this, we must remove obstacles to health:
➢ Poverty
➢ Discrimination
➢ Deep power imbalances

And we must remove the consequences of these obstacles:
How Health Happens

Source: Booske, et. al. 2010. County Health Rankings Weighting Methodology
Confront Racism & Power to Advance Equity

Health Inequity

Inequity
In Social Determinants
of Health

Power Imbalance
maintained by racism and
other forms of oppression

Power Balance
with systems & institutions
accountable to all

Equity
In Social Determinants
of Health

Health Equity
Transform What? The Power Structure!

Racial System

| White | POWER | People of Color |

Class System

| People who Control Capital | POWER | Workers & People in Poverty |

Gender System

| Men | POWER | Women, Trans, Non-conforming |

Government
The Faces of Power
1. Organizing people and resources for direct political action
2. Building infrastructure and shaping the political agenda
3. Making and shaping meaning of ideology and worldview
Forms of Oppression Used to Maintain Power

Racism  Classism  Sexism  Ableism  Hetero-sexism

... all contribute to systemic, avoidable, unfair, and unjust health outcomes and are used to maintain power.
Racial Narratives as a Political Strategy

- “Welfare queens”
- Willie Horton
- “Super predators”
- “Food stamp president”
- “Rapists”
Transactional  Transactional
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Problem identification</th>
<th>Technical Problem / Transact</th>
<th>Adaptive Problem / Transform</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Easy</td>
<td>Difficult (easy to deny)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Approach</th>
<th>Routine solutions using skills and experience readily available</th>
<th>Require changes in values, beliefs, roles, relationships, and approaches to work</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>People responsible</th>
<th>Often solved by an authority or expert</th>
<th>Solved by the people with the problem</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Changes required</th>
<th>Require change in just one or a few places; often contained within organizational boundaries</th>
<th>Require change in numerous places; usually cross organizational boundaries</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Receptivity</th>
<th>People are generally receptive to technical solutions</th>
<th>People try to avoid the work of “solving” the adaptive challenge</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Timeframe</th>
<th>Can be implemented quickly - even by edict</th>
<th>“Solutions” take long to implement and require innovation &amp; experimentation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

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Health Equity

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Lead Exposure

Low-income children
Black children

Owners of large corporations (paint manufacturing) & landlords

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Paid Sick Days

Owners of large corporations (big box retail, services, etc.)
Reflections, Questions
Health Equity Guide
Local health departments are building power for health equity

After years of struggling to close health disparities, a new movement has taken root: local health departments are using a set of strategic practices to confront the power imbalances and forms of oppression at the root of health inequities, change the conversation about what creates health equity, develop leadership and support innovation, and build a movement for health equity.
To systematically address power imbalances, racism, and other forms of oppression – the roots of health inequities – health departments must pursue a wall-to-wall transformation.

They must:

– Build internal capacity and a will to act
– Change government
– Partner and strategize with community
Key Messages

- Advancing equity is a complex, non-linear process that takes adaptive leadership skills and transformative change.

- Needs to be embodied in everything the agency does – it is not a side project.

- All LHDs can start down the path toward putting the practices in place.
Health Equity Guide Domains

- Foster Community Partnerships
- Work Across Government
- Build Internal Infrastructure
- Champion Transformative Change
Foster Community Partnerships

- Build Community Alliances
- Share Power with Communities
- Engage in Movements

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Work Across Government

Build Government Alliances

Develop a Shared Analysis

Broaden Regulatory Scope

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Build Internal Infrastructure

- Mobilize Data, Research, & Evaluation
- Prioritize Upstream Policy Change
- Build Organizational Capacity
- Change Internal Practices and Processes
- Allocate Resources

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Champion Transformative Change

- Confront the Root Causes
- Develop Leadership and Support Innovation
- Build a Health Equity Movement
- Change the Conversation
Narrative and Why It Matters
Public sentiment is everything. With public sentiment, nothing can fail; without it nothing can succeed…

Consequently, he who molds public sentiment goes deeper than he who enacts statutes or pronounces decisions. He makes statutes and decisions possible or impossible to be executed

– Abraham Lincoln
Message

A communication containing information — in the form of writing, in speech, audio and/or visuals, etc.
How marginal tax rates actually work, explained with a cartoon

The recent Republican pushback against Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez’s 70 percent proposal repeats a common error.

By Alvin Chang | @alv9n | alvin@vox.com | Jan 7, 2019, 12:30pm EST
Google search trend for "marginal tax rate"
Frames

Frames are metaphors that help us make sense of what we hear and see by triggering concepts that already exist in our minds. Frames point us toward solutions that are grounded in a particular worldview.
The Crippling Cost of 70% Tax Rates

Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez's proposal would smother investment and innovation, leaving America poorer.

By Edward Conard
Jan. 21, 2019 3:58 p.m. ET

Newly elected Rep. Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez spent her first few weeks on Capitol Hill calling for a 70% top marginal income-tax rate, and suddenly the debate over optimal rates has reopened. To support her charge, some liberals are citing a 2011 study by economists Peter Diamond and Emmanuel Saez, which advocates for confiscatory upper-range tax rates. But a quick look at their analysis reveals grave caveats that only an advocate of higher taxes could possibly overlook.

Messrs. Diamond and Saez admit that taxes can have detrimental...
Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez
@AOC

Explaining marginal taxes to a far-right former Governor:

Imagine if you did chores for abuela & she gave you $10. When you got home, you got to keep it, because it’s only $10.

Then we taxed the billionaire in town because he’s making tons of money underpaying the townspeople.

Scott Walker
@ScottWalker

Explaining tax rates before Reagan to 5th graders: “Imagine if you did chores for your grandma and she gave you $10. When you got home, your parents took $7 from you.” The students said: “That’s not fair!” Even 5th graders get it.

10:41 AM - 15 Jan 2019

44,169 Retweets 190,223 Likes
Public Narratives

Values-based meta-stories about how and why the world operates that can shape public consciousness, including our collective senses of responsibility and possibility.

- Free market solutions
- Individualism
- Government is inefficient
- Racism is in the past
- Market for common good
- Interdependence
- Government by/for us
- Radical, structural inclusion

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Worldviews

The beliefs, norms, values, and commonsense that are socially derived and provide shared meanings for us.
Worldviews

Ilhan Omar

@IlhanMN

Budgets are a reflection of our values.

We have the opportunity to create a people-centered budget—one that invests in universal health care, debt-free higher education, and a Green New Deal. That change starts with the House Budget Committee.

Let’s get to work 💪

7:33 AM - 24 Jan 2019

308 Retweets 2,783 Likes
Dominant Public Narratives are...

- Public narratives held by many people at this moment in time
- Omnipresent and insidious; they are in our heads and actions without us being aware of them
- Embedded in our institutions, structures, and norms
- Created, advanced, and maintained by people for a purpose - to intentionally shape possibilities and outcomes
- More powerful than facts in changing outcomes
- Drawn from a subset of values and beliefs people already hold
- Changeable! Unmasking them makes them lose some of their power.
• A just and fair society provides everyone with an opportunity to live a long, healthy life

• Our tax structure is a critical component of building an inclusive, healthy society

• High-quality public goods must be equally accessible to everyone

• We can move to a fair and inclusive society with a social compact that supports everyone’s health

• We need to reimagine, reinvent, and transform our systems to create a better lot for future generations

• We have the knowledge, resources, and the power to change our tax system so that we all can all thrive
Healthy MN 2020: Health Narrative

*DRAFT*

- Health is a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being.
- All people should have the opportunity to attain their highest level of health possible.
- The conditions necessary for health include peace, shelter, food, income, education, a stable environment, sustainable resources, social justice and equity.
- We are all responsible for creating the conditions necessary for health.
- Health is a resource that can be enjoyed by all, to the benefit of all.
- Health equity is essential to improve the health of all.
- Talking about race and structural racism is essential for advancing health equity.
- Health equity is created in the community by people working together to create just economic, social and environmental conditions.

Healthy Minnesota Partnership & Minnesota Dept. of Health
Ways to Harness Narrative in Your Work

- List your shared values and vision prominently.
- Identify the dominant narratives your work pushes up against.
- Develop new, transformational narratives.
- Practice reframing and using new language.
Reflections, Questions
Resources

• HIP Toolkit to Develop a Transformational Narrative on Criminal Justice: http://bit.ly/narrativetoolkit

• Public Health Awakened’s #TaxesMakeHealthHappen Narrative: http://bit.ly/taxesmakehealthhappen

• Grassroots Policy Project: https://grassrootspolicy.org/
Thank You!

Ana Tellez: ana@humanimpact.org
Jonathan Heller: jch@humanimpact.org

HumanImpact.org
HealthEquityGuide.org
PublicHealthAwakened.com

@HumanImpact_HIP
@HumanImpactPartners

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