Health Equity and Social Justice:
More Than a Walk in the Park and
an Apple a Day

University of South Florida, College of Public Health
February 8,2010
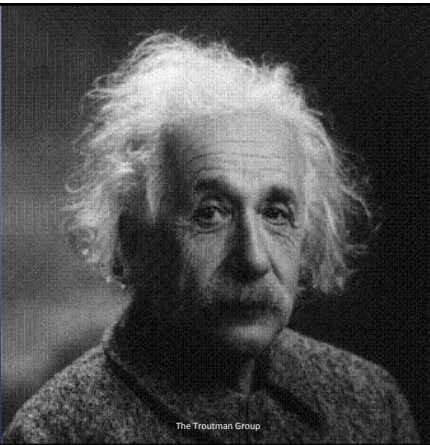
Adewale Troutman, MD, MPH, MA, CPH

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A Case Study; But Why

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Johnny's can't come out to play.

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Vital Statistics:

TRENDS

TRENDS

What If We Were Equal? A Comparison Of The Black-White Mortality Gap In 1960 And 2000

Closing this gap could eliminate more than 83,000 excess deaths per year among African Americans.

by David Satcher, George E. Fryer Jr., Jessica McCann, Adewale Troutman, Steven H. Woolf, and George Rust

ABSTRACT: The United States has made progress in decreasing the black-white gap in civil rights, housing, education, and income since 1960, but health inequalities persist. We examined trends in black-white standardized mortality ratios (SMRs) for each age-sex group from 1960 to 2000. The black-white gap measured by SMR changed very little between 1960 and 2000 and actually worsened for infants and for African American men age thirty-five and older. In contrast, SMR improved in African American women. Using 2002 data, an estimated 83,570 excess deaths each year could be prevented in the United States if this black-white mortality gap could be eliminated.

THE 1985 TASK FORCE report on black and minority health raised national concern that 60,000 excess deaths were occurring annually because of health disparities, primarily among African Ameri-

In the past forty years, African Americans have witnessed some progress in civil rights, housing, education, employment, and health care. In 1960 segregation was evident in hospitals and doctors' offices throughout the

Let's get on the same page.

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Health

- "The presence of physical, psychological, social, economic and spiritual well being not merely the absence of disease or infirmity"

- "The maintenance of a harmonious balance of mind, body and spirit"
  - Community and individual

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Health Equity

- "Health equity is the realization by ALL people of the highest attainable level of health. Achieving health equity requires valuing all individuals and populations equally, and entails focused and ongoing societal efforts to address avoidable inequalities by assuring the conditions for optimal health for all groups, particularly for those who have experienced historical or contemporary injustices or socioeconomic disadvantage."

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Health equity as a development outcome

The development of society can be judged by:

- the quality of its populations' health

- the fairness in distribution of health, and

- the degree of protection provided from disadvantage due to ill-health

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Marmot 2006 Harveian Oration

Health Inequities

- Systemic, avoidable, unfair and unjust differences in health status and mortality rates and in the distribution of disease and illness across population groups. They are sustained over time and generations and beyond the control of individuals

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Justice

- The quality of fairness
- The principle of moral rightness; equity
- Conformity to moral rightness in action or attitude

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Social Justice

- The application of principles of justice to the broadest definition of society
- Implies
  - Equity
  - Equal access to societal power, goods and services
- Universal respect for human and civil rights

Social Justice

- "When we approach health from a social justice perspective, we are necessarily concerned with the political, economic and social arrangements that impinge on the lived experiences of social groups." (Jones, Hatch, Troutman)

Universal Declaration of Human Rights
December 10, 1948

- Article 1: "All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights."

- Article 24: "Everyone has the right to a standard of living adequate for the health and well being of him self and is family including food, clothing, housing and medical care."

The Right to Health

- **Preamble to the constitution of the WHO states** " The enjoyment of the highest standard of health is one of the fundamental rights of every human being without distinction of race, religion, political belief, economic or social condition

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Framing

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How you frame an issue

- The questions you ask
- Determines your analysis of the issue
- Determines how you prioritize it
- Determines your policy choices
- Determines resource allocation
- Can determine your allies and your enemies
- Can define when an issue has been resolved

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Reframing

- Health vs. Healthcare
- Individual vs. Population Health
- Market Justice vs. Social Justice
- Rights vs. Privileges
- Biological/Behavioral Determinants vs. Social Determinants
- Creating Health Equity vs. Eliminating Health Disparities

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A New Direction; Social Determinants

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Looking upstream, finding the causes of he causes.

"The web of causation"

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Social Determinants

Socioeconomic Status
- Occupation
- Education
- Income
  - Income gaps
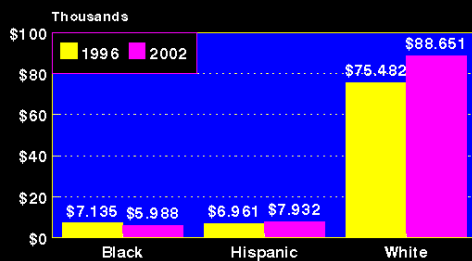- Racism & discrimination
- Housing
- Political power

WHO
- Early Life
- Social Exclusion
- Work
- Unemployment
- Social Support
- Addiction
- Food
- Transport
- *The Social Gradient*
- *Stress*

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Changing the Questions

TRADITIONAL	SOCIAL JUSTICE
What interventions are necessary to address health disparities?	What generates health inequity in the first place? Why is there inequality?
How can we reduce inequity in the distribution of disease and illness?	How can we eliminate inequity in the distribution of disease and illness?
What social programs and services are necessary to address health inequity?	What types of institutional and social change is necessary to tackle health inequity?
How can individuals protect themselves against health disparities?	What kind of collective action is necessary to tackle health inequity?
How can we promote healthy behavior?	How can we reorganize land use and transportation policies to ensure healthy spaces and places?

Median Net Worth of American Households, 1996 & 2002

Thousands

- 1996
- 2002

	Black	Hispanic	White
1996	$7.135	$6.961	$75.482
2002	$5.988	$7.932	$88.651

Note: 29.0% of Hispanic households and 32.3% of Black households had 0 or negative net worth in 2002

Source: Pew Hispanic Center Report, 10/04

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Stress

- Continuing existence of anxiety, insecurity, low self esteem and social isolation
- Lack of control over home and work life
- Profound effect on health
- Cumulative

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The social gradient

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Undoing Racism

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What is racism?

A system

What is racism?

A system of structuring opportunity and assigning value

What is racism?

A system of structuring opportunity and assigning value based on the social interpretation of how one looks ("race")

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– Unfairly disadvantages some individuals and communities

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What is racism?

A system of structuring opportunity and assigning value based on the social interpretation of how one looks ("race")

– Unfairly disadvantages some individuals and communities

– Unfairly advantages other individuals and communities

– Saps the strength of the whole society through the waste of human resources

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Source: Jones CP, *Phylon* 2003

Levels of Racism

- Individually Mediated

- Institutionalized

- Internalized

Tell me how a man died and I'll tell you where he lived
Aristotle

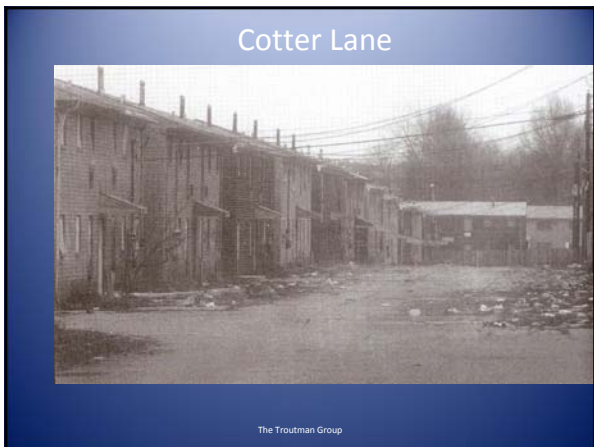Housing
PLACE MATTERS

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Cotter Lane

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Park DuValle

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Park DuValle

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Public Health' s Role; Assuring the conditions in which people can be healthy

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The Center for Health Equity

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The CHE is dedicated to *a civic process that builds social engagement,* autonomy and movement to *strengthen communities and influence public policy in an effort to Create Health Equity*

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Current Work

- Framing research
- Health Equity Community Hearings
- Civic capacity building mini grants (Community Dialogues)
- Health Equity Speaker Series
- Web based learning
- Retraining workforce (Dialogue process)
  - Outreach workers as community organizers
- Undoing Racism workshops (community wide)
- Health Equity Summit

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Current Work (Cont)

- Photo voice
- Community dialogues
- Operationalizing Health Equity within the department
- CHI project
- HIA-Shepard Square (Hope 6)
- The cabinet dialogue
- Food justice

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Health Impact Assessment

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Health Impact Assessment (HIA)

A combination of procedures, methods, and tools by which a policy, program, or project may be judged as to its potential **effects on the health of a population**, and the distribution of those effects within the population (Gothenburg consensus statement, 1999)

Food Access

Strategy 3: Expand access to and distribution of healthy food

Increased Neighborhood Access

Healthy in a Hurry Corner Store

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Phyllis Wheatley Students
present
Photo-voice Exhibits
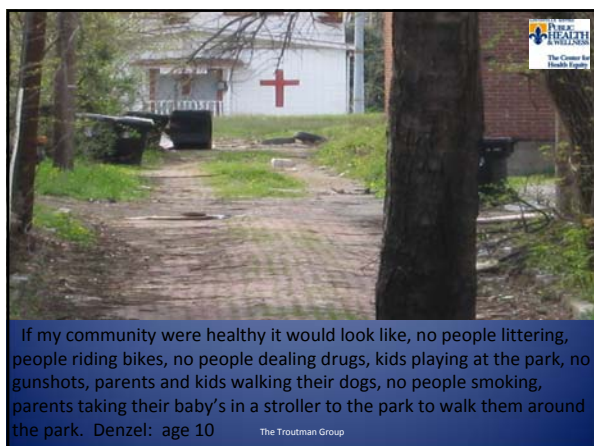on
Health Policy Issues
Youth Involvement

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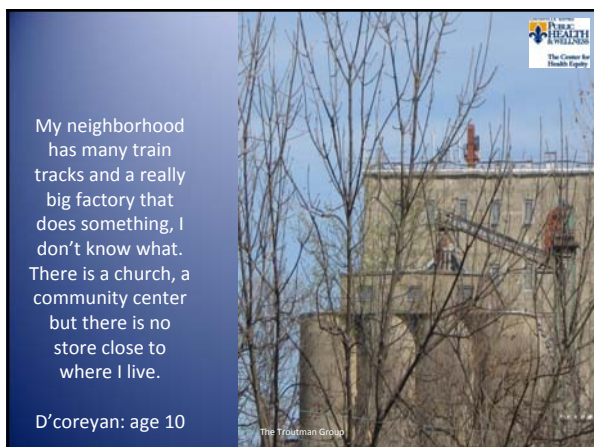

Photo Voice

- Youth empowerment through engagement
- Community health and barriers
- Youth as creators, producers, interpreters
- Raise awareness about the policy process
- Presentation to policy makers (Mayor Metro Council, Board of Health, Business Community

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If my community were healthy it would look like, no people littering, people riding bikes, no people dealing drugs, kids playing at the park, no gunshots, parents and kids walking their dogs, no people smoking, parents taking their baby's in a stroller to the park to walk them around the park. Denzel: age 10   The Troutman Group
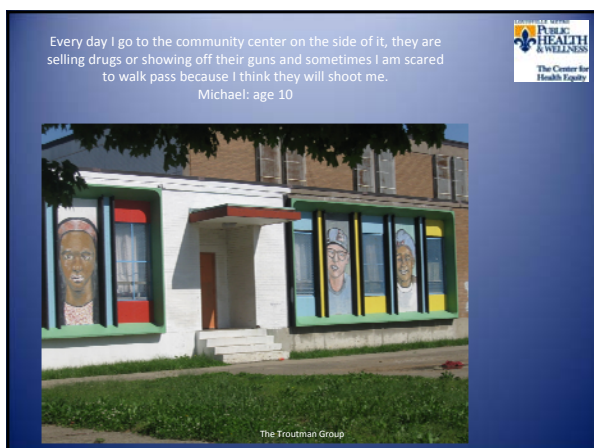

My neighborhood has many train tracks and a really big factory that does something, I don't know what. There is a church, a community center but there is no store close to where I live.

D'coreyan: age 10

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Every day I go to the community center on the side of it, they are selling drugs or showing off their guns and sometimes I am scared to walk pass because I think they will shoot me.
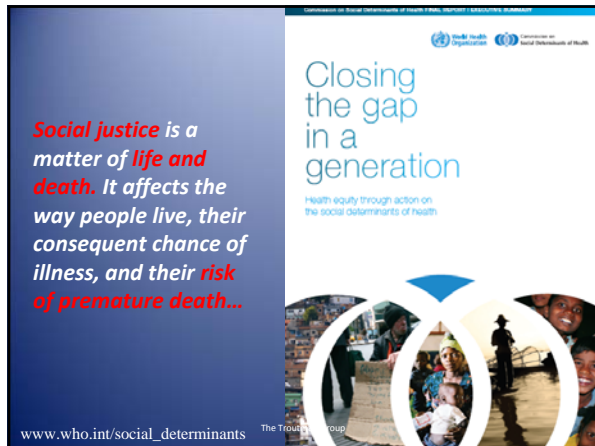Michael: age 10

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Health Policy Is Social Policy

Health in All Policies addresses the effects on health across all policies such as *agriculture, education, the environment, fiscal policies, housing, and transport*. It seeks to improve health and at the same time contribute to the ***well-being and the wealth of the nations through structures, mechanisms and actions*** planned and managed mainly by sectors other than health. Thus *HiAP is not confined to the health sector* and to the public health community, but is a complementary strategy with a high potential towards improving a population's health, with ***health determinants as the bridge between policies and health outcomes.***

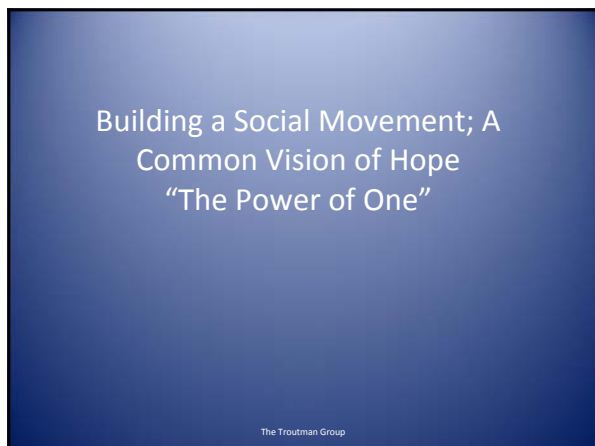## The London Health Inequalities Strategy

- Initiative of the Mayor of London
- Objectives
  - Empowering individuals and communities
  - Equitable access to igh quality health and social services
  - Income inequalities and health
  - Health, work and well-being
  - Healthy places

Social justice *is a matter of* **life and death.** *It affects the way people live, their consequent chance of illness, and their* **risk of premature death…**

Closing
the gap
in a
generation

Health equity through action on
the social determinants of health

CSDH three overarching recommendations:

1. Improve daily living conditions

2. Tackle the unequal distribution of power, money and resources

3. Measure and understand the problem and assess the impact of action

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Building a Social Movement; A Common Vision of Hope "The Power of One"

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The Civil Rights Movement Didn't Go Far Enough

We must complete the process.

Are You Willing to Take the Risk?

To laugh is to risk appearing a fool. To weep is to risk appearing sentimental. To reach out for another is to risk involvement. To expose your feelings is to risk exposing your true self. To place your ideas, your dreams before the crowd is to risk there loss. To love is to risk not being loved in returned. To live is to risk dying. To hope is to risk despair. To try is to risk failure.
.

But risks must be taken because the greatest hazard in life is to risk nothing. The person who risks nothing, does nothing, has nothing, and is nothing. He may avoid suffering and sorrow, but he can't simply learn, feel, change, grow, love or live. Chained by his certitude, he is a slave, he has forfeited his freedom. ONLY A PERSON WHO RISKS IS FREE

Adewale Troutman, M.D.,M.P.H.
The Troutman Group
5109 Forrest Grove Place
Louisville, KY 40059
denzibell@aol.com
502 544 8570
www.thetroutmangroup.org

Health Inequalities

- "Inequalities in respect of life expectancy or general state of health which are wholly or partly a result of differences in respect of general health determinants"

Creating Health Equity Through Social Justice; Strategies Towards Building Community Health

Cultural Competence Mental Health Summit XVI
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Integration of Behavioral Health Focus

- Inequities in access
- Inequities in misdiagnosis
- Inequities in health status of those in the behavioral health system
- Chemical Dependency; One of the "Original six"
- Dramatic need for culturally competent care

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Community Visioning Process

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Reform or Rebuild

A fragmented non system of sick care where inequity is common, prevention and wellness are after thoughts and outcomes correlate to societal status

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U.S. Non-System (cont)

- Poor ratings in other social indicators
  - Homicide rates
  - Number of prisoners as proportion of population
  - Mental illness
  - Voter turnout
  - Public social expenditure

House bill has multiple provisions to address "Health and Health Care Disparities"

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Strategies Something for Everyone

- Framing
- Social Determinants Focus (Unnatural Causes)
- Health Impact Assessment
- Community capacity building for policy development and civic engagement
- Community visioning processes
- Assessing the built environment

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Strategies (Cont)

- Food Security Task Force
  – Healthy in a Hurry Corner Store etc
- Youth Empowerment
  – Photo Voice
- Energizing the Faith Community around social justice and human rights
- Undoing Racism training
- Building a Social Movement

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HIA-based on a broad model of health which proposes that economic, political, social, psychological and environmental factors determine population health
as well as differential effects on sub populations including existing health inequities

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Place Matters
The Built Environment

The role of residential segregation; "The metropolitan areas with the highest segregation levels have the most unequal geographies of opportunity"
Delores Acevedo-Garcia et al

Opportunity Neighborhoods

- Sustainable employment
- High performing schools
- Access to high quality healthcare
- Adequate transportation
- High quality childcare
- Neighborhood safety
- Institutions that facilitate civic engagement

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