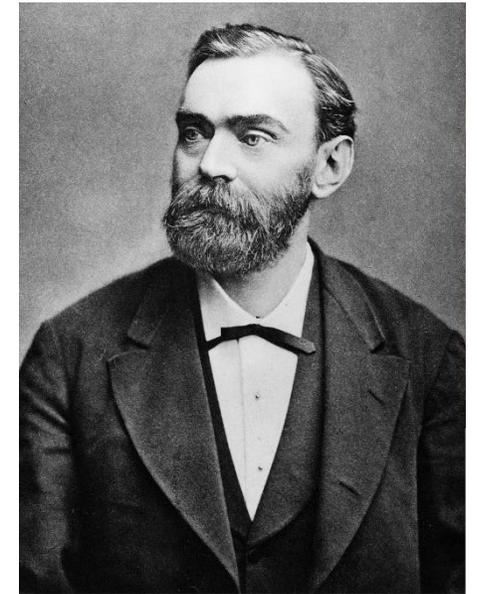


Advancing Health Equity and  
Optimal Health for All  
There is Health in All Policies

**Edward P. Ehlinger, MD, MSPH**  
Commissioner, Minnesota Department of Health  
October 14, 2016

Alfred Nobel, granted first patent for the preparation of nitroglycerin on October 14, 1863.

*“One can state, without exaggeration, that the observation of and the search for similarities and differences are the basis of all human knowledge.”*



# Bob Dylan Awarded Nobel Prize in Literature

## October 13, 2016

- Oh, where have you been, my blue-eyed son?  
And where have you been my darling young one?  
I've stumbled on the side of **twelve misty mountains**  
I've walked and I've crawled on **six crooked highways**  
I've stepped in the middle of **seven sad forests**  
I've been out in front of a **dozen dead oceans**  
I've been **ten thousand miles** in the **mouth of a graveyard**  
And it's a hard, it's a hard, it's a hard, and it's a hard  
**It's a hard rain's a-gonna fall.**



# Octavio Paz

Awarded the Nobel Prize for Literature  
October 11, 1990

## Wind and Water and Stone



The water hollowed the stone,  
the wind dispersed the water,  
the stone stopped the wind.  
Water and wind and stone.

The wind sculpted the stone,  
the stone is a cup of water,  
The water runs off and is wind.  
Stone and wind and water.

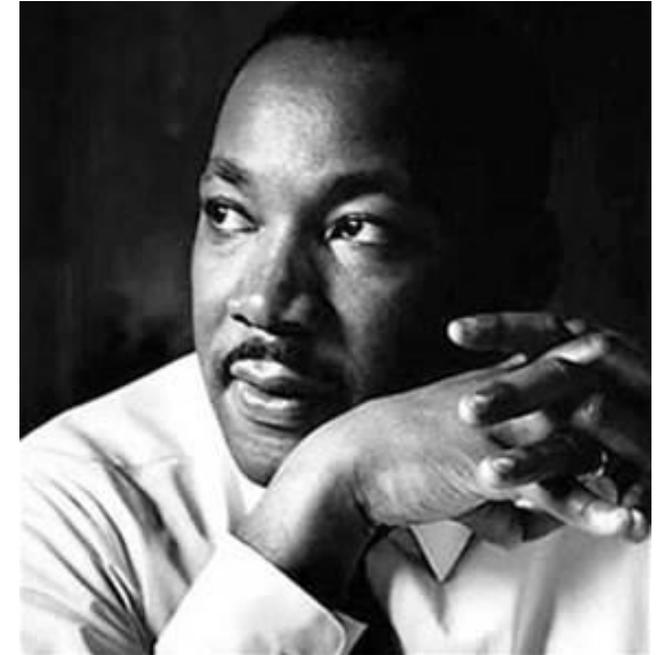
The wind sings in its turnings,  
the water murmurs as it goes,  
the motionless stone is quiet.  
Wind and water and stone.

One is the other and is neither:  
among their empty names  
they pass and disappear,  
water and stone and wind.

# Martin Luther King Jr awarded the Nobel Peace Prize on October 14, 1964

*“Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere. We are caught in an inescapable network of mutuality, tied in a single garment of destiny. Whatever affects one directly, affects all indirectly.”*

MLK, Jr, Letter from Birmingham Jail, April 16, 1963



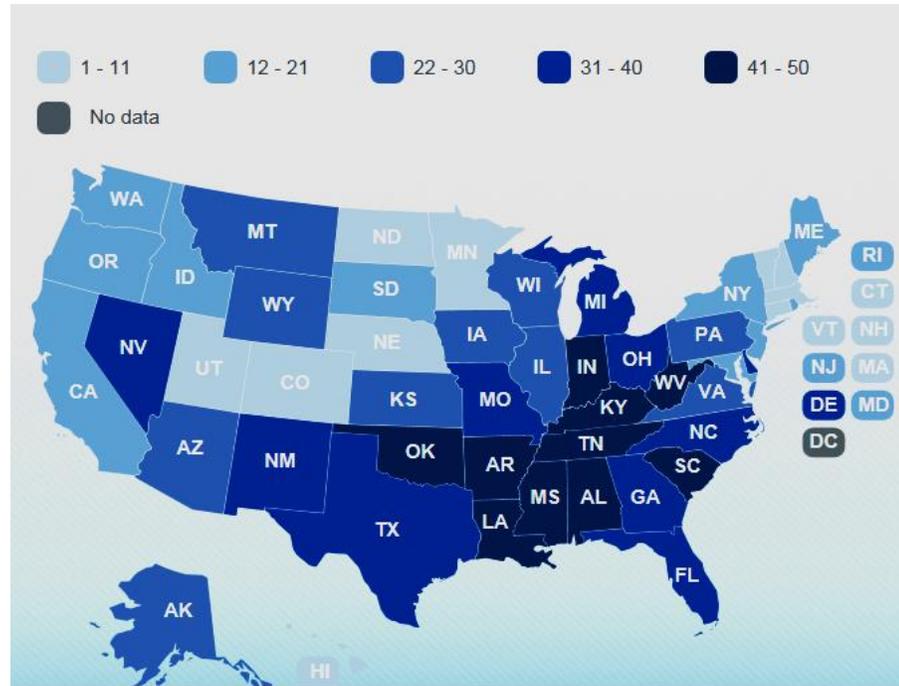
**Wind and Water and Stone**

# Advancing Health Equity

*The opportunity to be healthy is not equally available everywhere or for everyone.*

# Minnesota is a healthy state

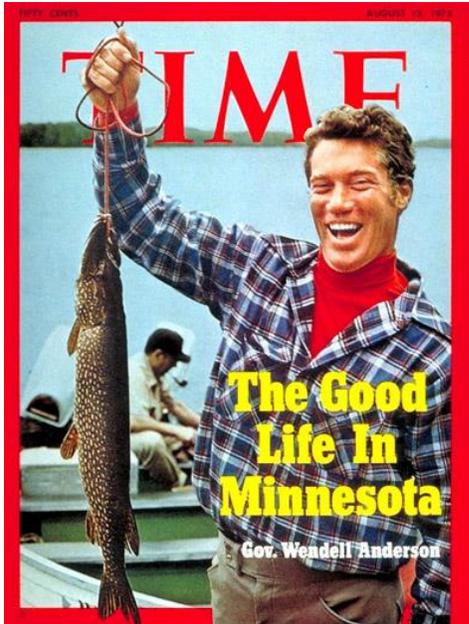
Healthcare system:	#1	Well-being index:	#3
Health of Seniors:	#1	Infant mortality:	#4
Life expectancy:	#2	Life expectancy after 65:	#6



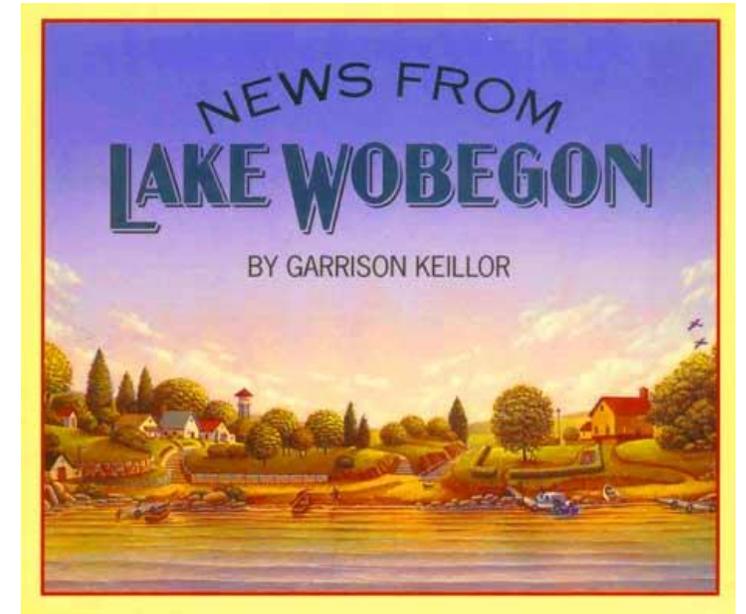
State Health Ranking – MN #4

MN – Best Place to Retire

Healthiest Cities Rank – Minneapolis #1



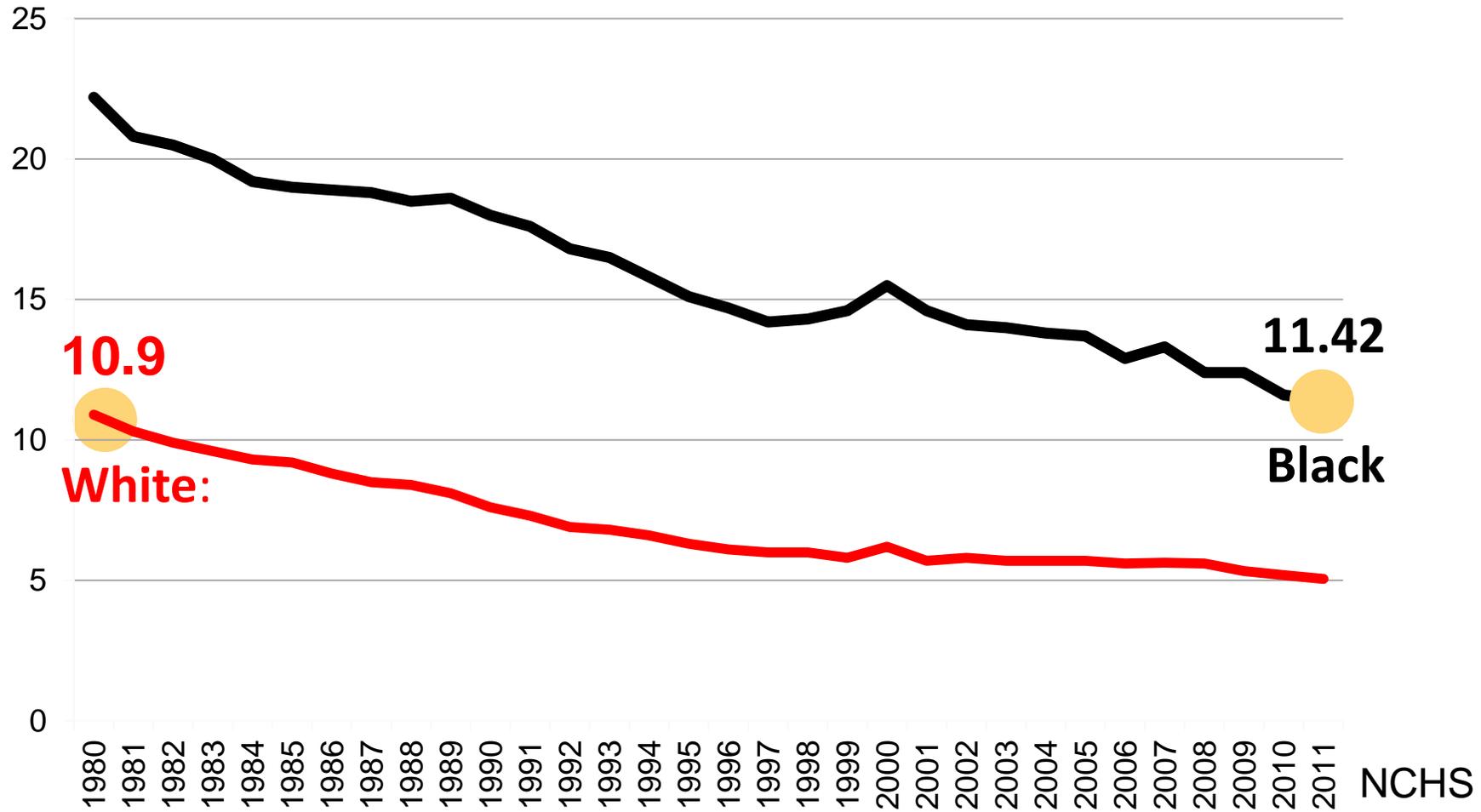
Minnesota!  
Where the women are strong,  
The men are good looking,  
And all our health statistics  
are above average –  
Unless you are  
a person of color or  
an American Indian.



Advancing health and health equity is not about averages  
It's about creating opportunities for everyone to be healthy



# USA White and Black IMR: 1980-2011



# Disparities in Birth Outcomes are the tip of the health disparities iceberg





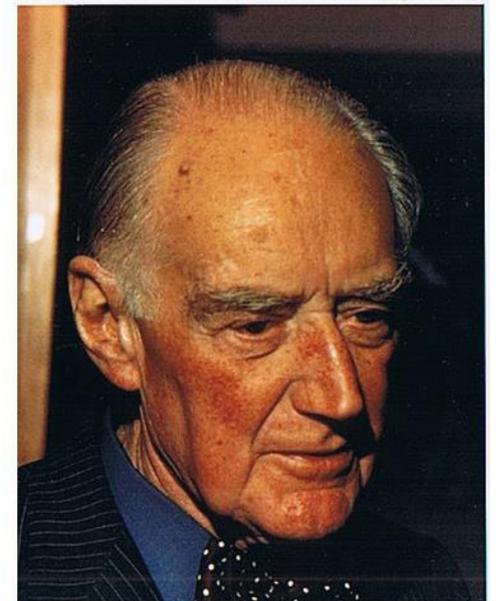
# Health Equity and Water

- Fewer protections for private wells
- Higher costs for smaller public water systems
- Limited capacity to support a community water supply
- “Downstream” contaminants introduced by others
- Reliance on consumption of contaminated fish
- **Limited access to lakes and rivers for recreation**

# *"What Sets the Goals of Public Health?"*

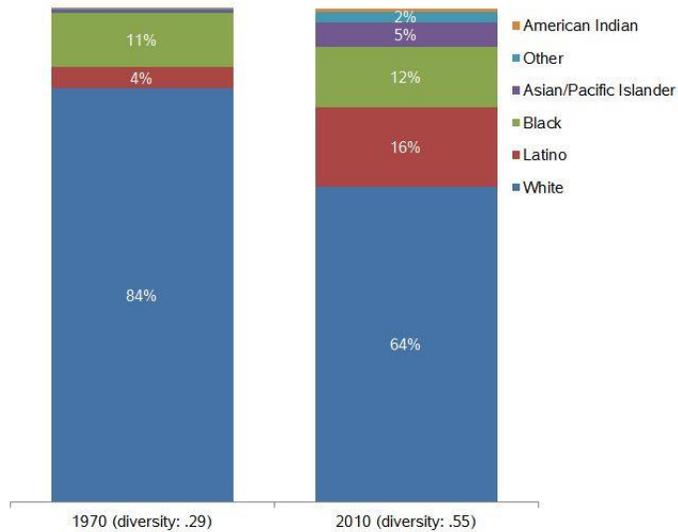
*Sir Geoffrey Vickers*

*"The landmarks of political, economic and social history are the moments when some condition passed from the category of the given into the category of the intolerable. I believe that the history of public health might well be written as a record of successive re-definings of the unacceptable."*



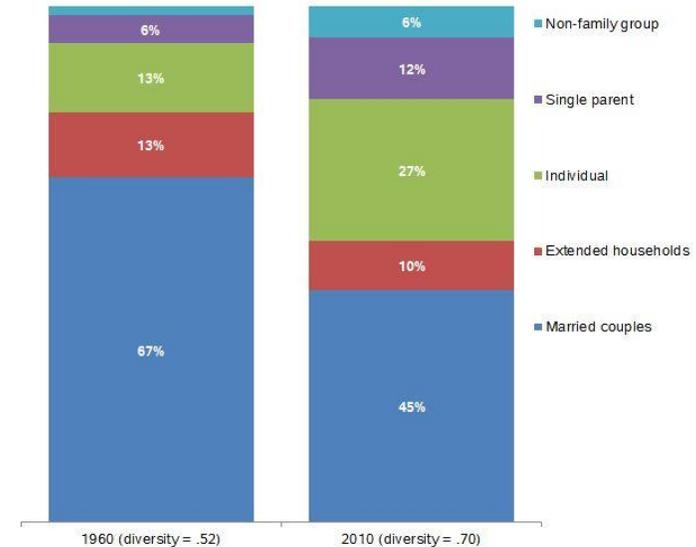
# Why Should People Be Concerned About Equity?

Race-ethnic identity, U.S. 1970-2010

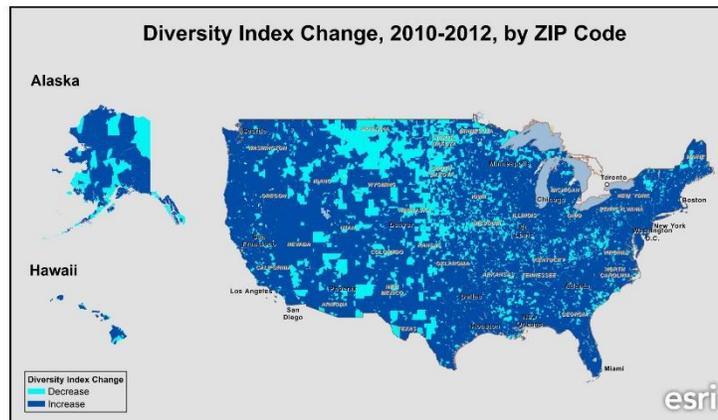


Source: U.S. Census Bureau

Household types, U.S. 1960-2010



Source: My analysis of US Census data.

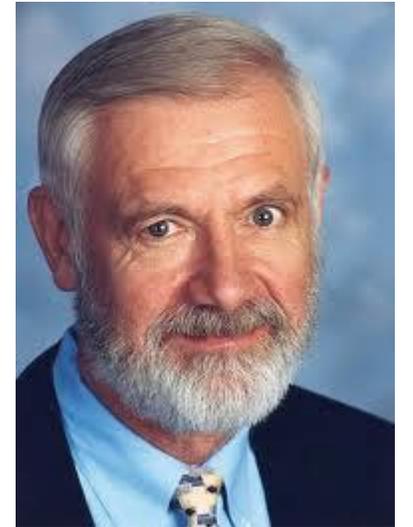


*It's a math problem*

*It's a social justice problem...*

# Health Equity is the public manifestation of social justice and social justice the core of public health

- *“The philosophy behind science is to discover truth.*
- *The philosophy behind medicine is to use that truth for the benefit of your patient.*
- *The philosophy behind public health is social justice.”*
  - *William Foege – CDC director, 1977-1983*



*“an inescapable network of mutuality...  
Injustice anywhere...”*

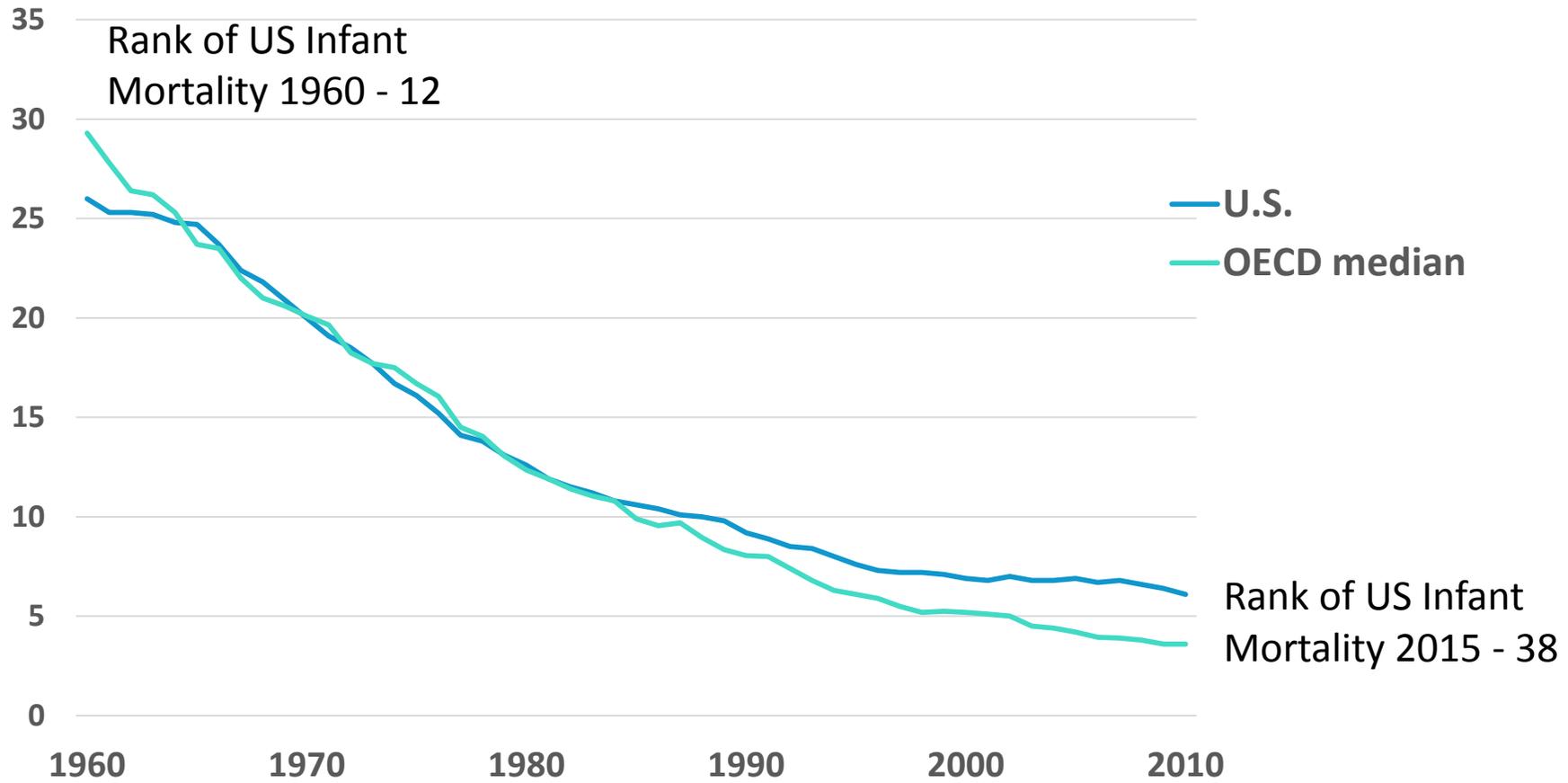
Black/White Disparity in Infant Mortality Rates, US, 1935-2007



National Center for Health Statistics, Health United States, 2009 (updated)

*...is a threat to justice everywhere.”*

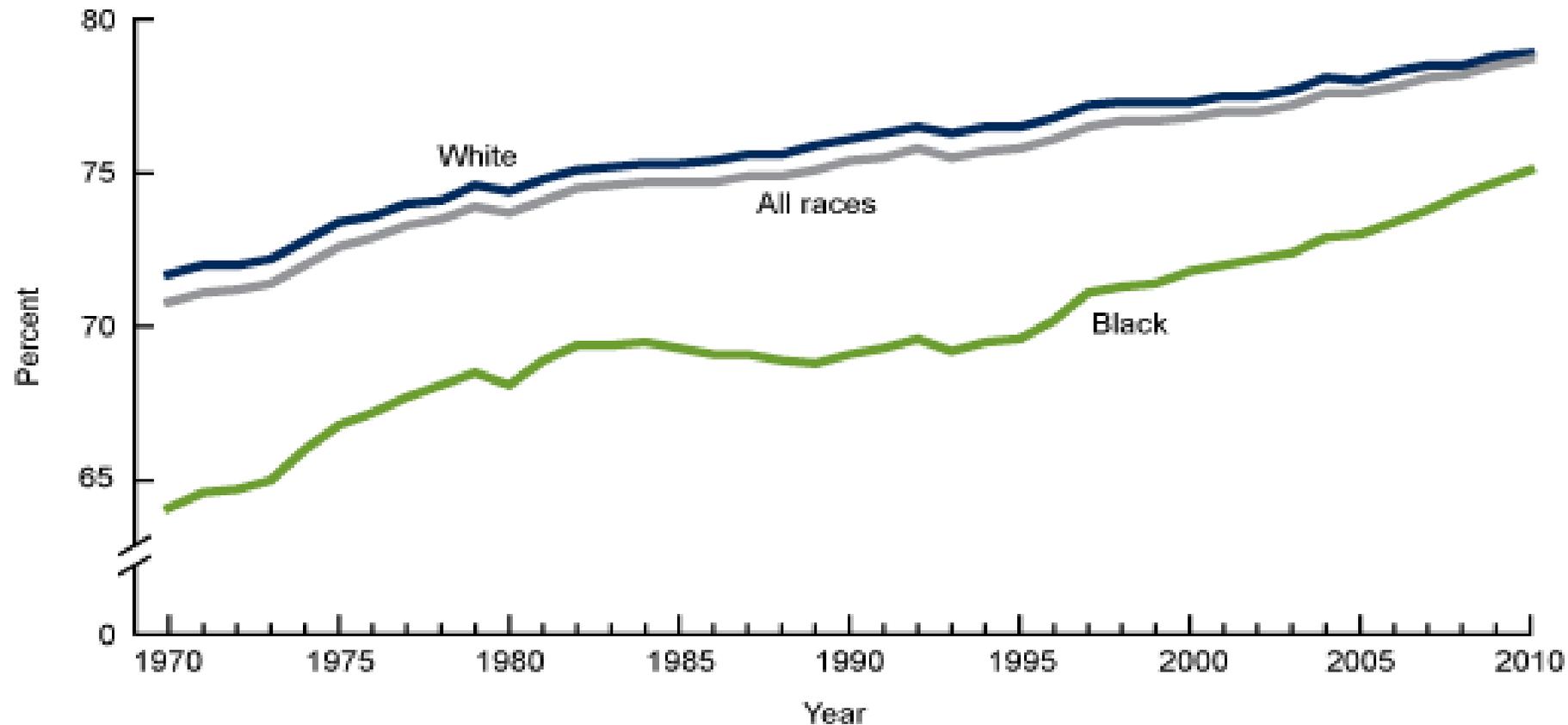
### Infant Mortality Rates U.S. and OECD Countries 1960-2010



Source: <http://stats.oecd.org>, accessed 6-10-16

*“an inescapable network of mutuality...  
Injustice anywhere...”*

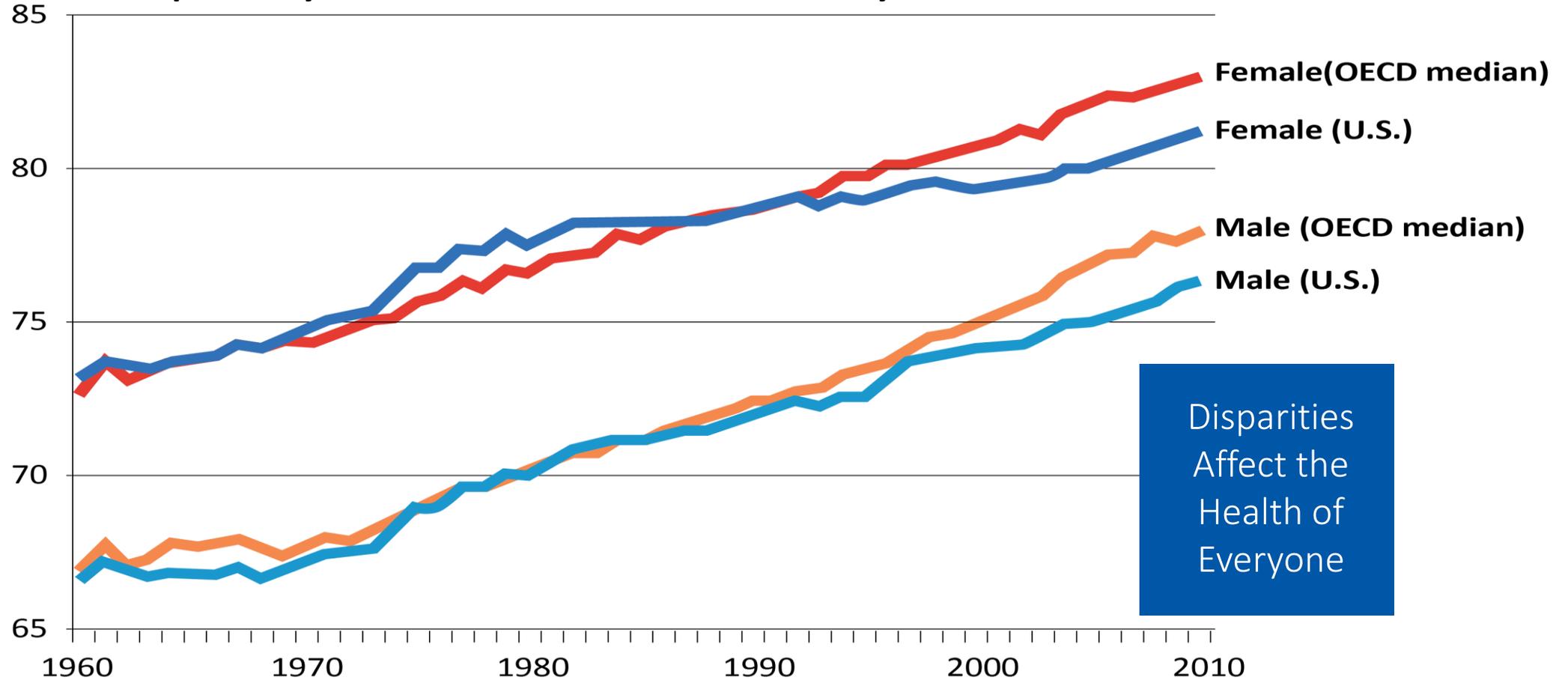
**Life Expectancy, by race: United States, 1970 - 2010**



SOURCE: CDC/NCHS, National  
Vital Statistics System, Mortality.

*...is a threat to justice everywhere.”*

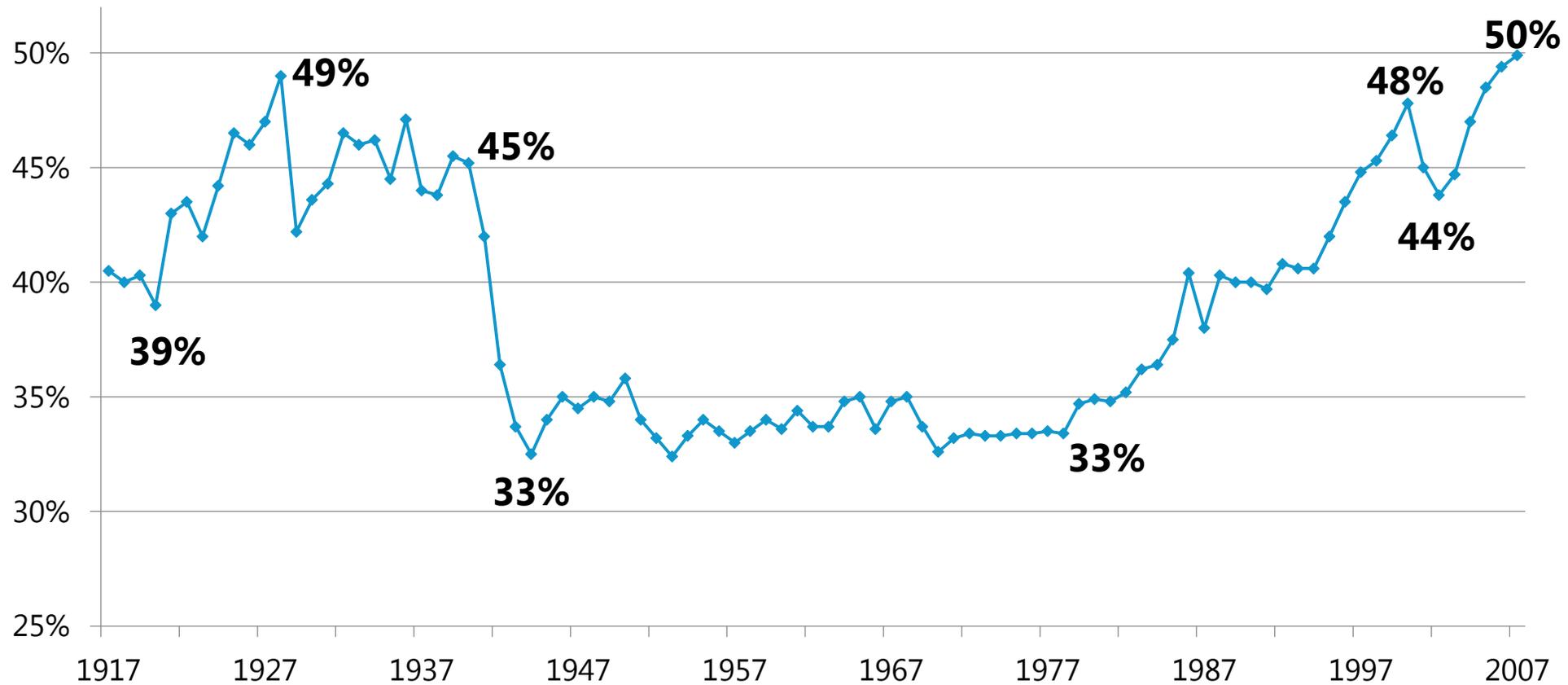
**Life Expectancy at Birth US and OECD Countries by Gender**



Disparities  
Affect the  
Health of  
Everyone

# Top Decile Income Share in the United States, 1917-2007

Growing income disparity

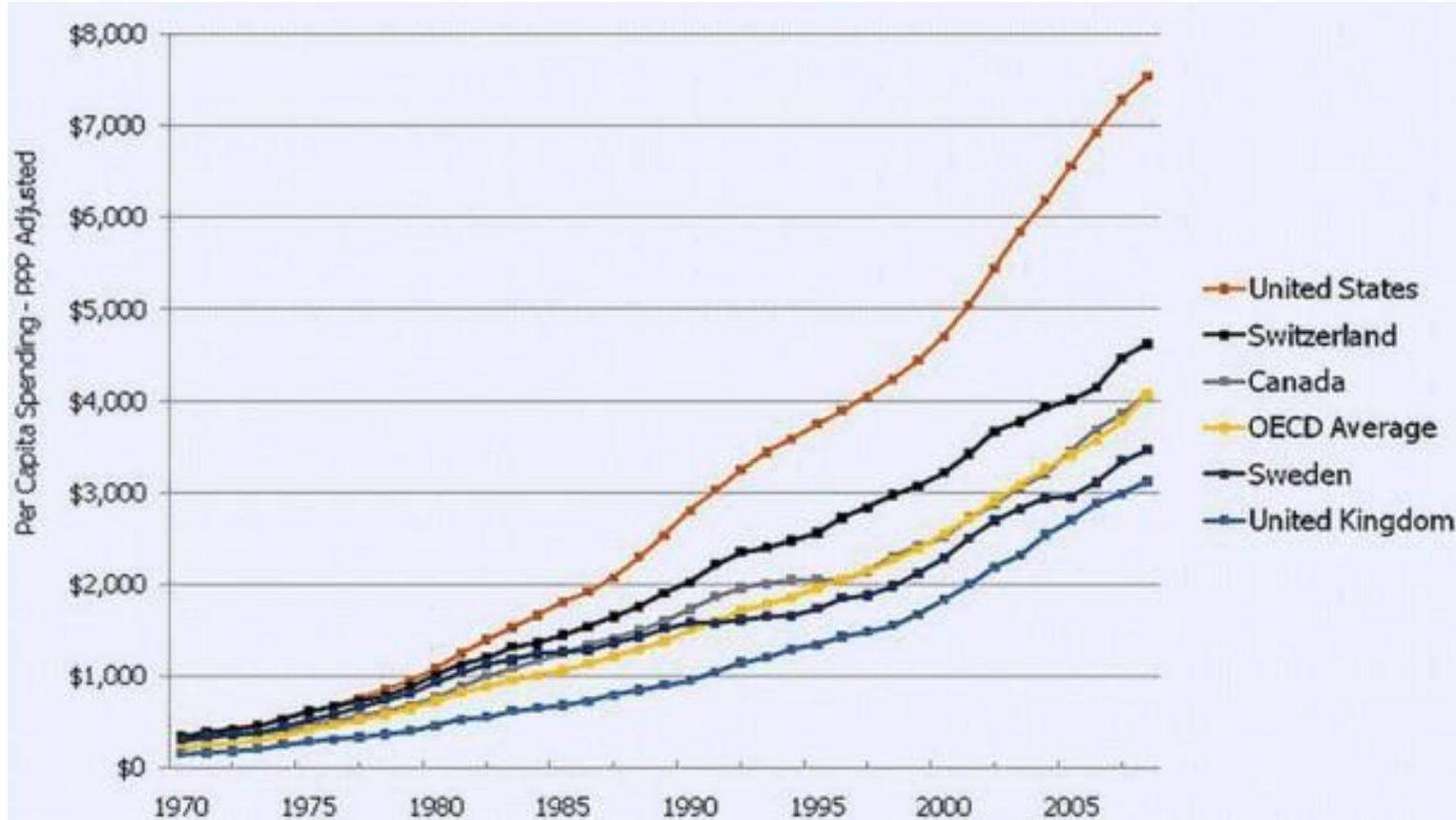


In 2007, top decile includes all U.S. families with annual income above \$109,600.

Sources: Piketty & Saez (2003), series updated to 2007, *Journal of Economic Literature*, Vol. XLIX (Mar -11)

# Average Health Care Spending per Capita, 1970-2009

(Adjusted for differences in cost of living)



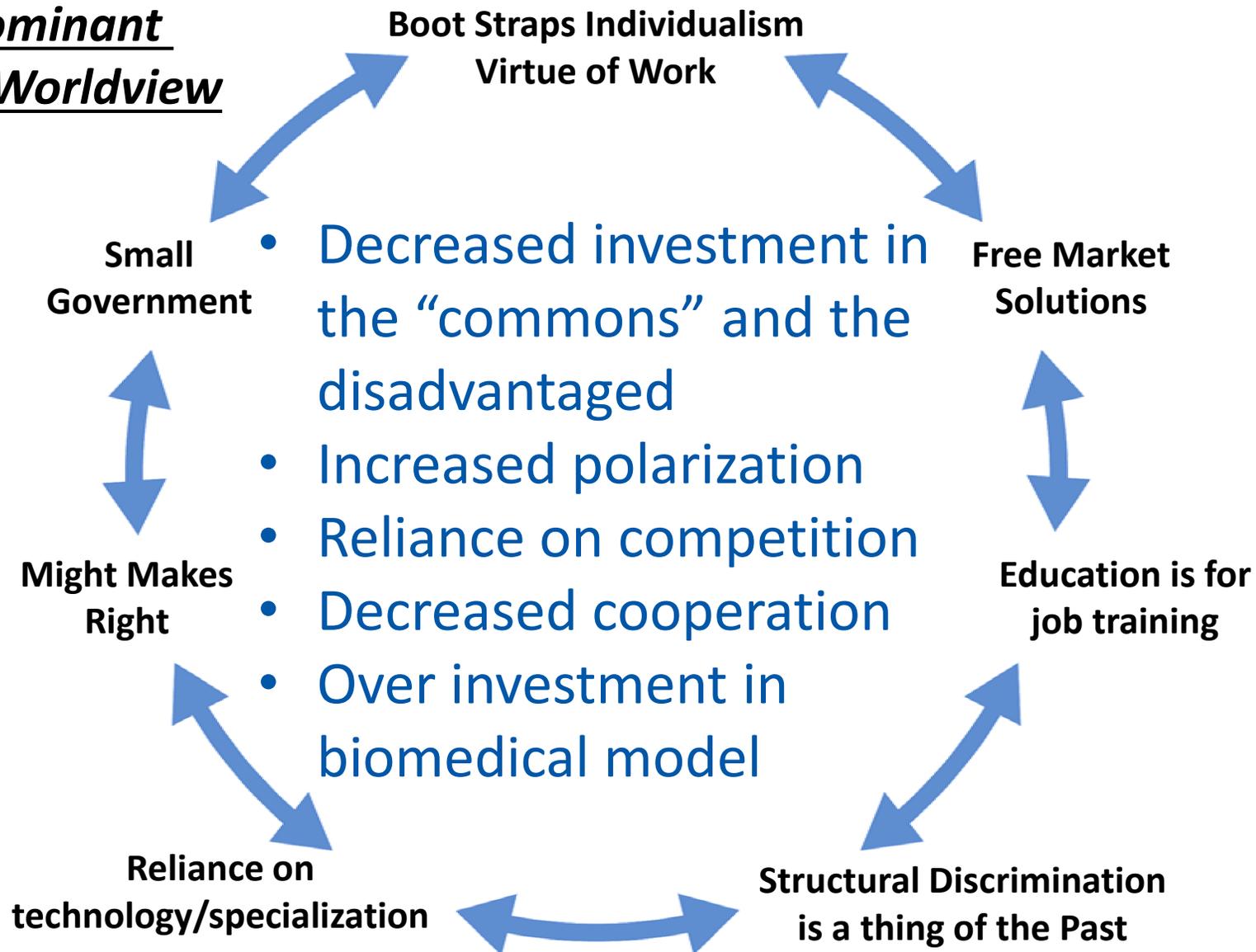
Source: OECD Health Data 2011 (June 2011)

# Disparities in health are the tip of the societal disparities iceberg



# How did this happen?

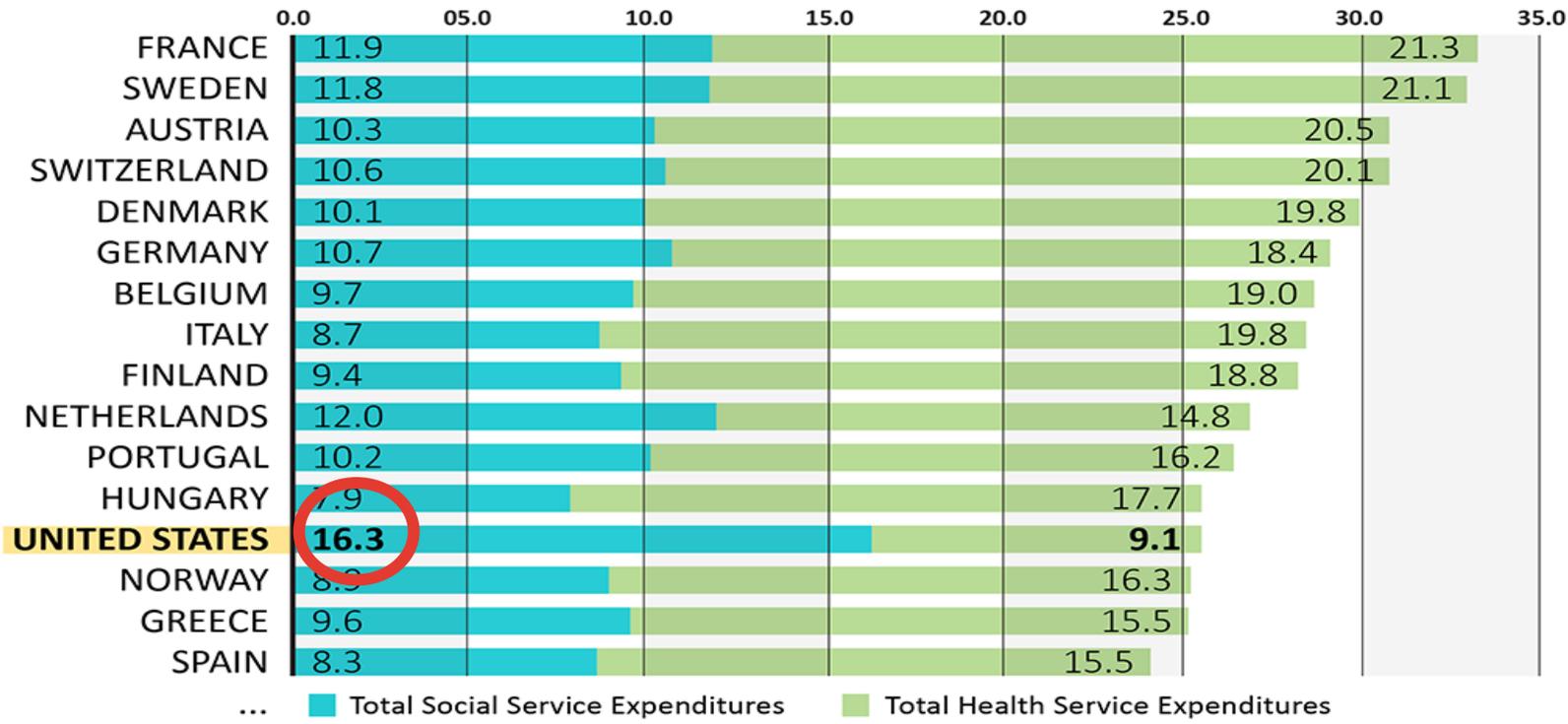
Predominant  
U. S. Worldview



# Re-defining the Unacceptable

## Total Investment in Health and Human Services

Expenditures as a % of GDP

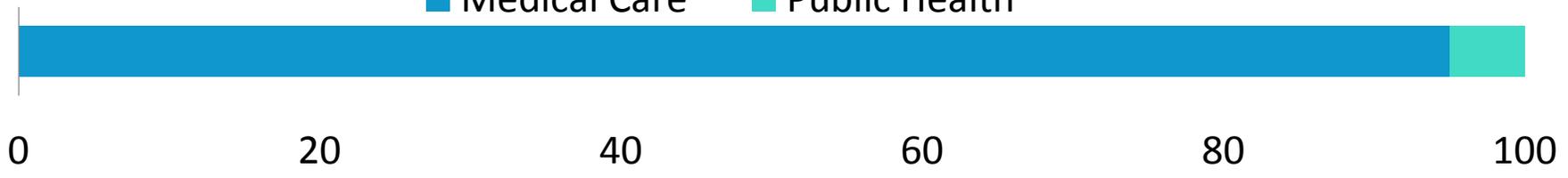


In OECD, for every \$1 spent on health care, about \$2 is spent on social services.

In the U.S., for every \$1 spent on health care, about 55 cents is spent on social services.

Distribution of Resources

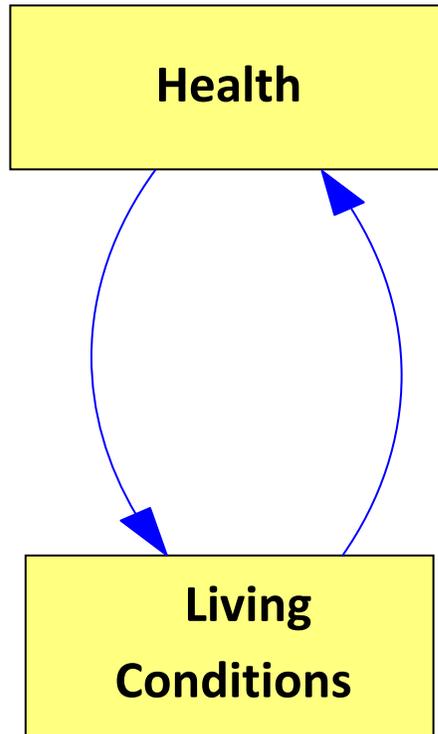
■ Medical Care    ■ Public Health



*“Public health is what we, as a society, do collectively to assure the conditions in which (all) people can be healthy.”*

*The Future of Public Health  
Institute of Medicine, 1988*

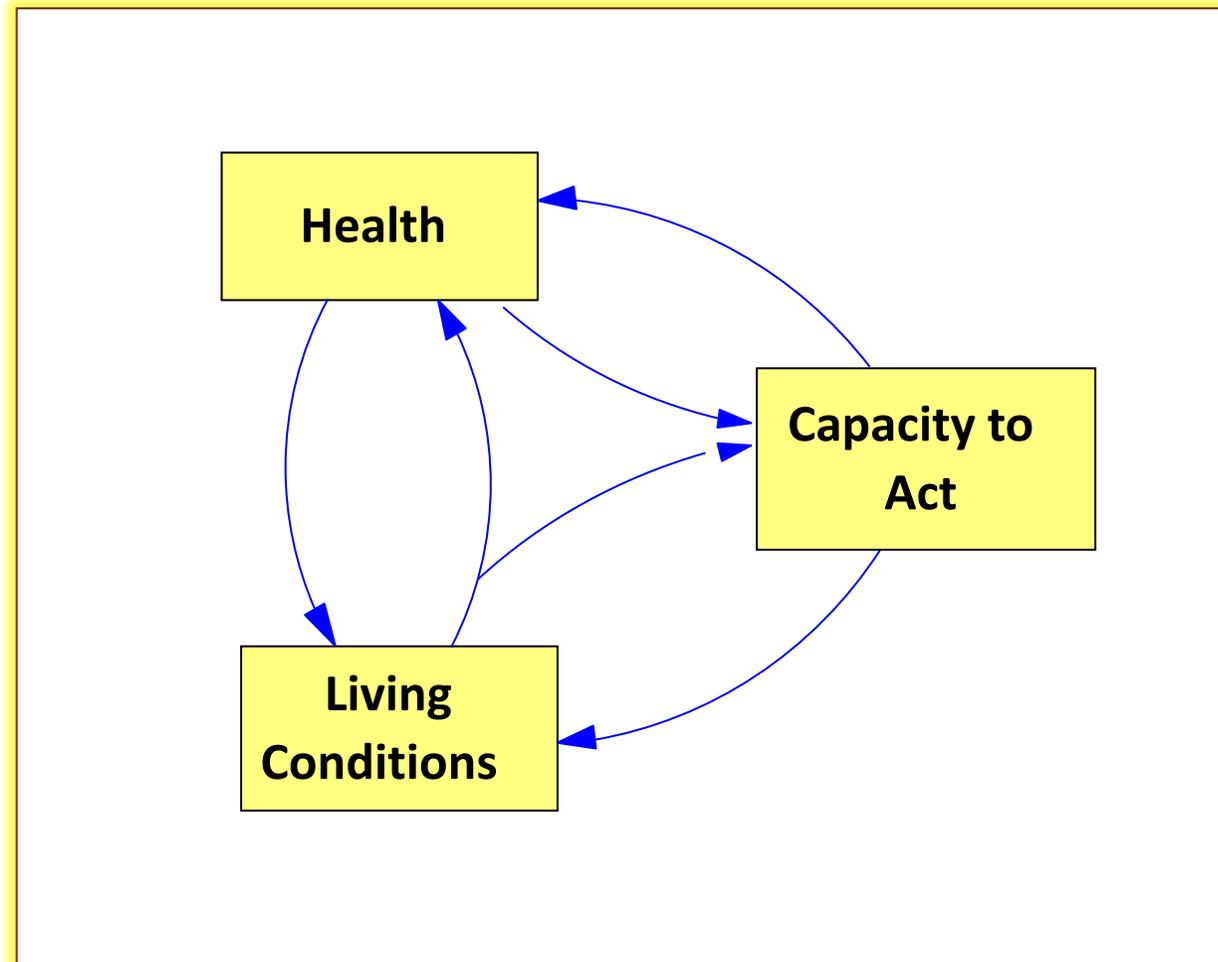
# Living Conditions Impact Health



## Social Determinants of Health

The conditions and circumstances in which people are born, grow, live, work, and age. These circumstances are shaped by a set of forces beyond the control of the individual: economics and the distribution of money, power, social policies, and politics at the global, national, state, and local levels.

# Changing the Conditions that Affect Health Requires the Capacity to Act



Some populations have a more difficult time than others in impacting living conditions

Public health has few skills in fostering the capacity to act

# Structure work to achieve our overall aim: Create/Strengthen “Capacity to Act”

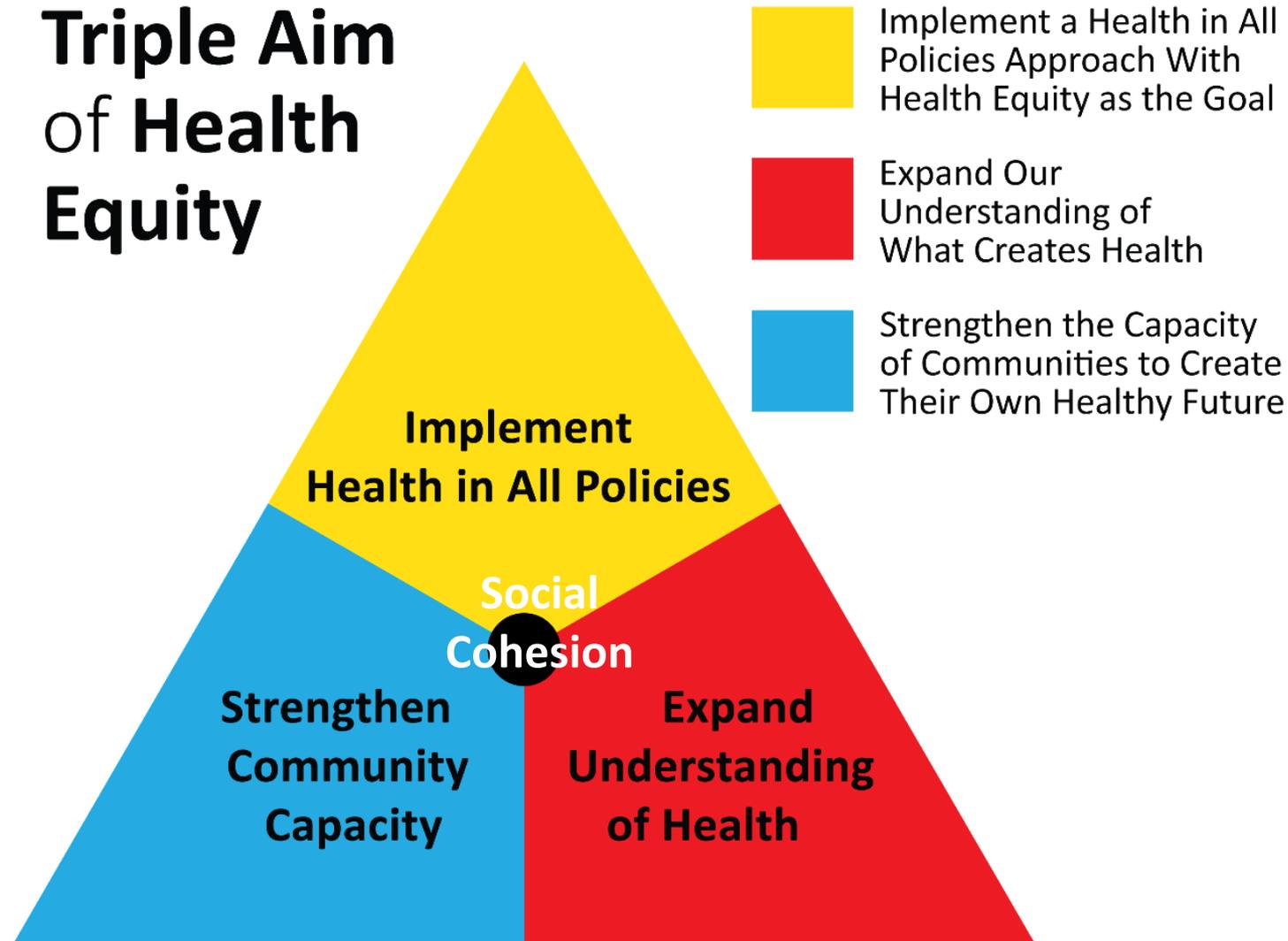
## Organize the:



- **Narrative:** Align the narrative to build public understanding and public will.
  - **Resources:** Identify/shift the resources-infrastructure-the way systems and processes are structured.
- **People:** Directly impact decision makers, develop relationships, align interests.

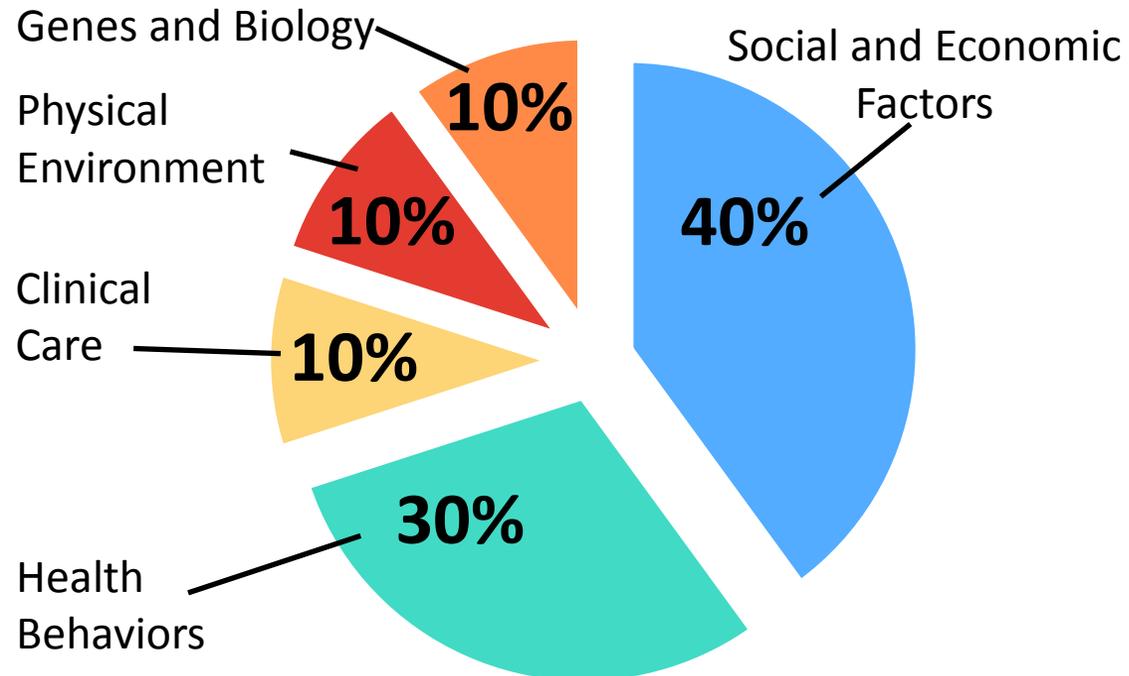
# Advancing Health Equity and Optimal Health for All

## Triple Aim of Health Equity



# Expand the Understanding of What Creates Health

## Determinants of Health



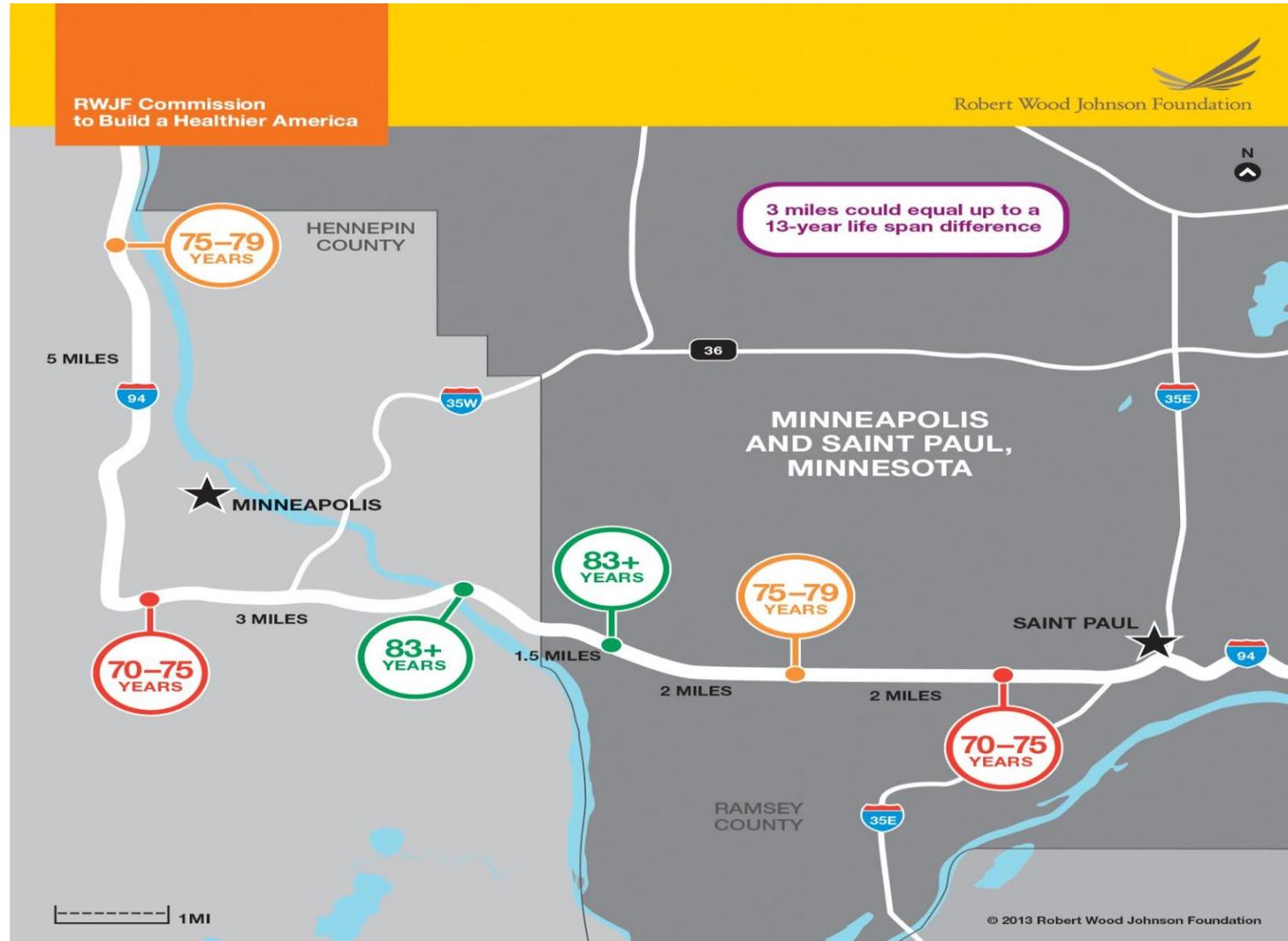
## Necessary conditions for health (WHO)

- Peace
- Shelter
- Education
- Food
- Income
- Stable eco-system
- Sustainable resources
- Mobility
- Health Care
- Social justice and equity

Determinants of Health Model based on frameworks developed by: Tarlov AR. *Ann N Y Acad Sci* 1999; 896: 281-93; and Kindig D, Asada Y, Booske B. *JAMA* 2008; 299(17): 2081-2083.

World Health Organization. Ottawa charter for health promotion. International Conference on Health Promotion: The Move Towards a New Public Health, November 17-21, 1986 Ottawa, Ontario, Canada, 1986. Accessed July 12, 2002 at <http://www.who.int/hpr/archive/docs/ottawa.html>.

# Life Expectancy in Twin Cities



## Communities of Opportunity

- Social/economic inclusion
- Thriving small businesses and entrepreneurs
- Financial institutions
- Good transportation options and infrastructure
- Home ownership
- Better performing schools
- Sufficient healthy housing
- Grocery stores
- IT connectivity
- Strong local governance
- Parks & trails

**Good Health Status**

**Poor Health Status**

Contributes to health disparities:

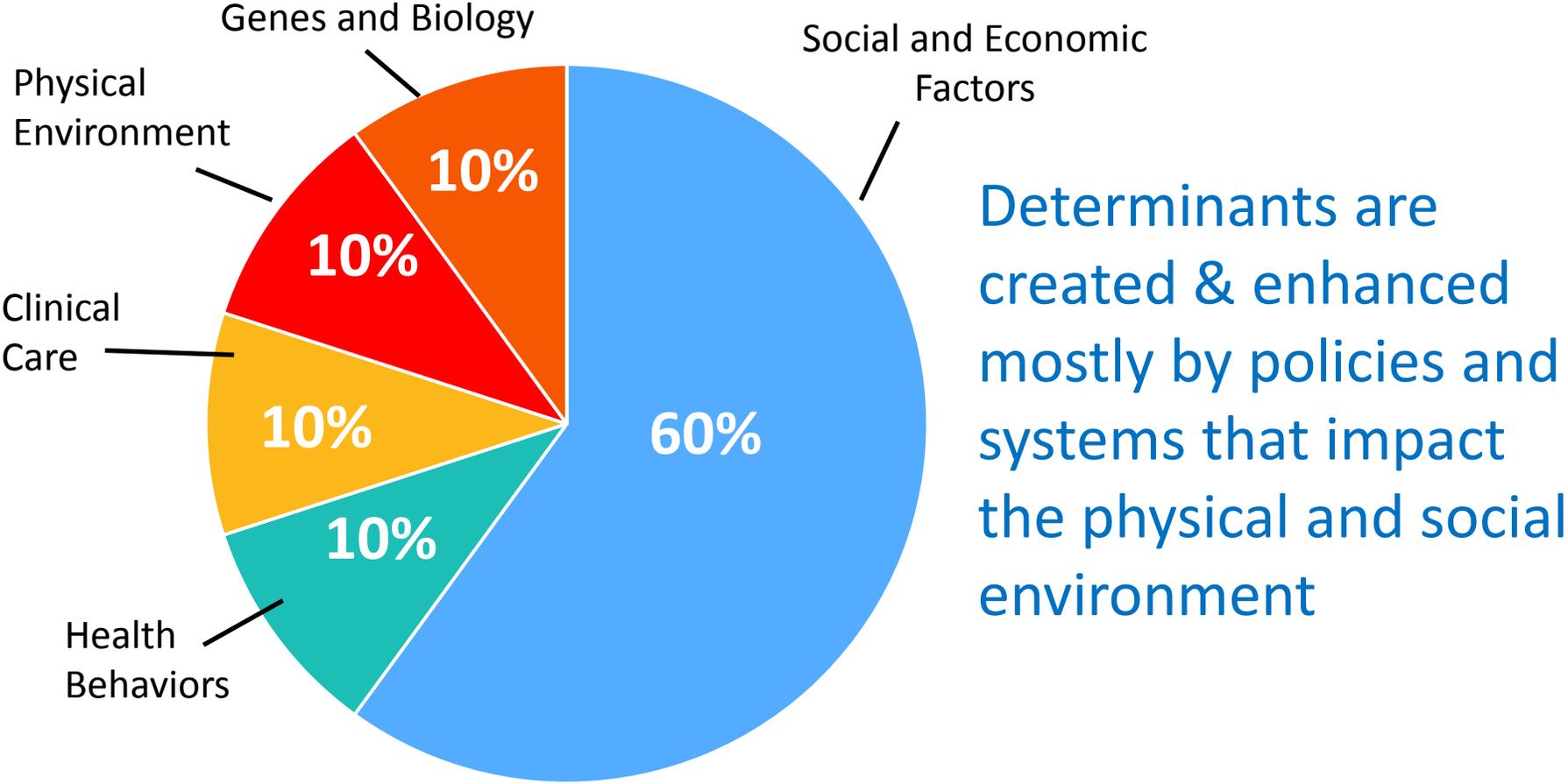
- Diabetes
- Cancer
- Asthma
- Obesity
- Injury

## Low-Opportunity Communities

- Social/economic exclusion
- Few small businesses
- Payday lenders
- Few transportation options
- Rental housing/foreclosure
- Poor performing schools
- Poor and limited housing stock
- Increased pollution and contaminated drinking water
- Fast food restaurants
- Limited IT connections
- Weak local governance
- Unsafe/limited parks

# Expand the Understanding of What Creates Health

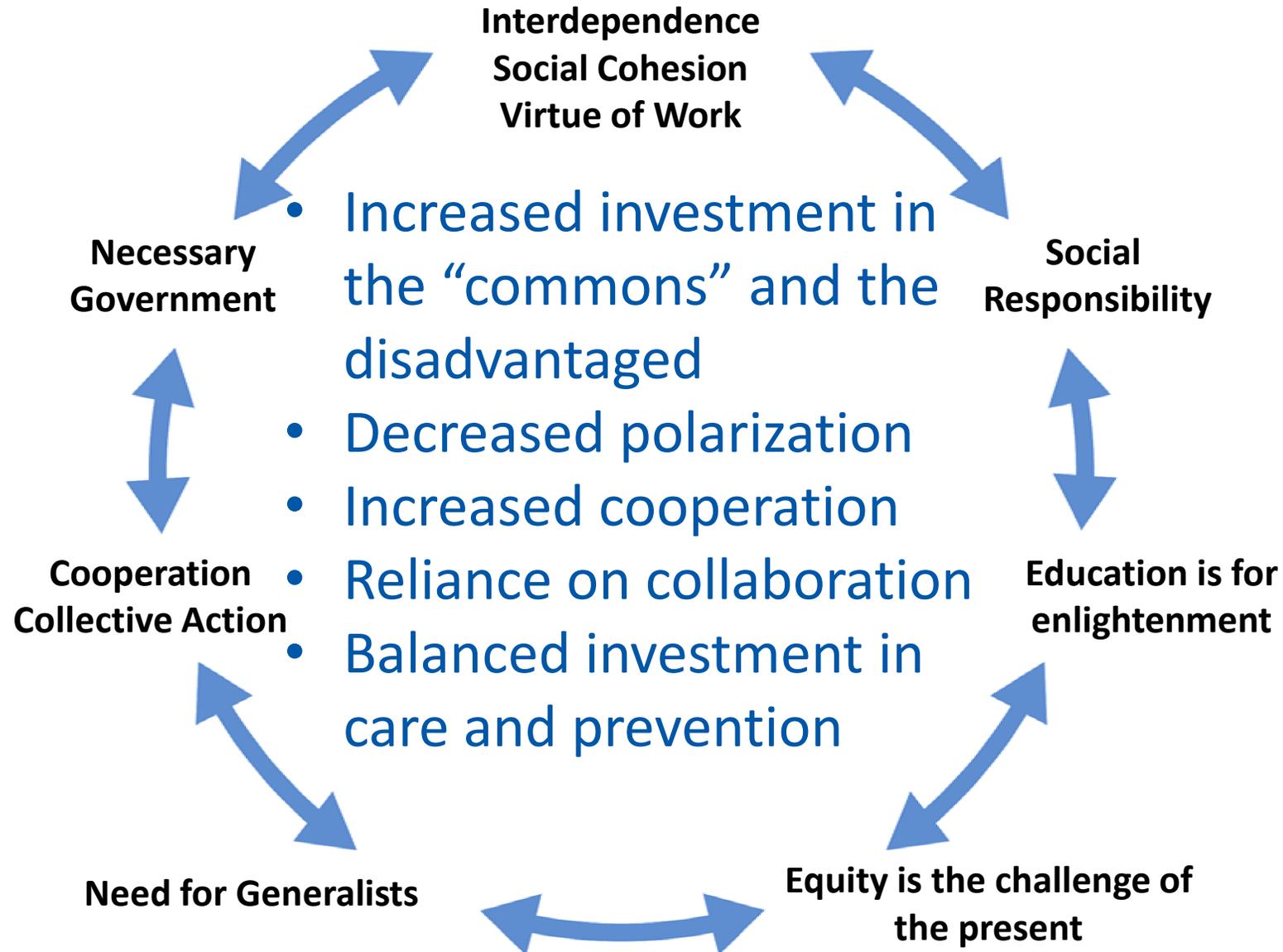
Ehlinger's beliefs about the contributions to health determinants



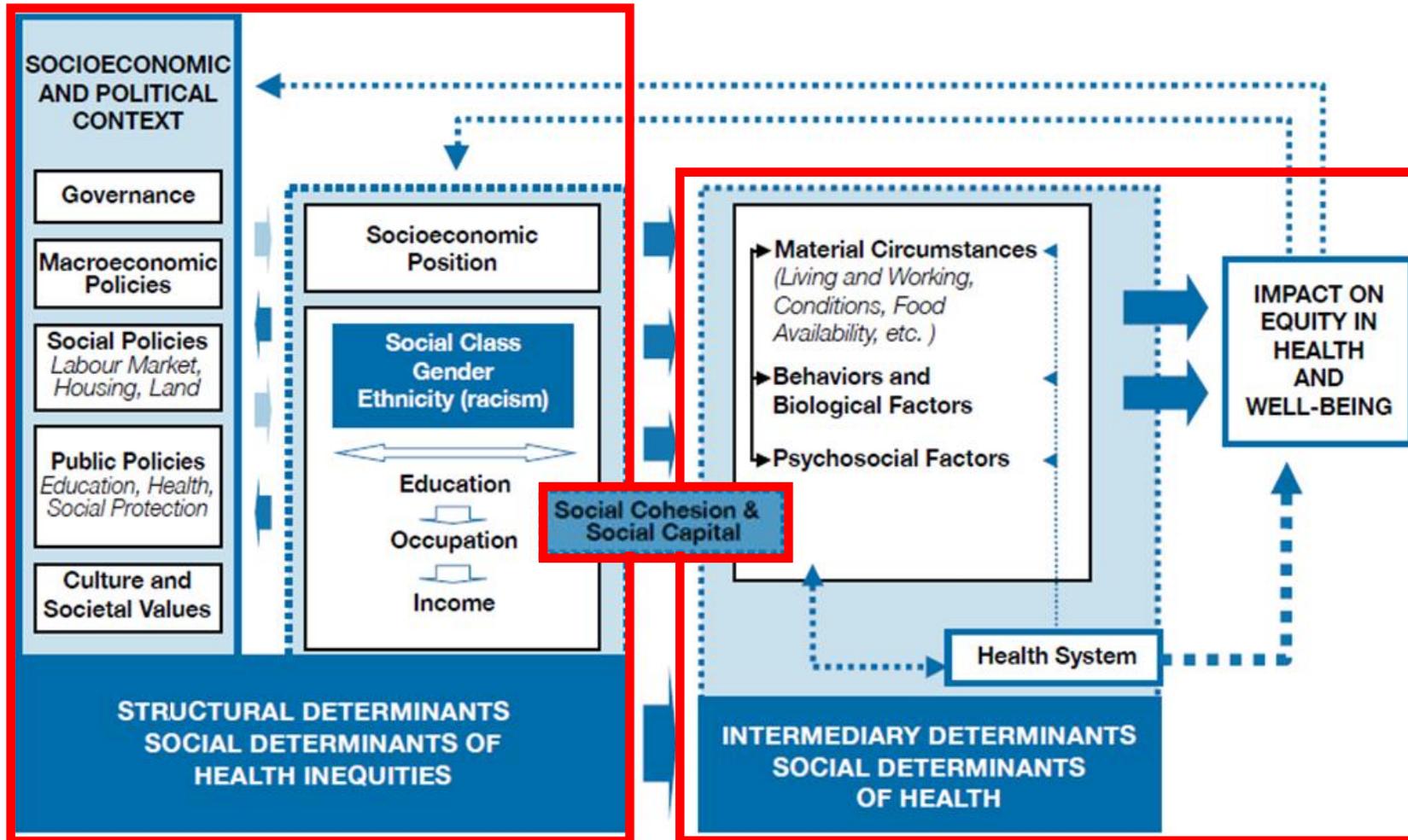
# And The Real Narrative of What Creates Health Inequities?

- Disparities are not just because of lack of access to health care or to poor individual choices.
- **Disparities are mostly the result of policy decisions that systematically disadvantage some populations over others.**
  - Especially, populations of color and American Indians, GLBT, immigrants, and refugees
  - Structural Racism

# Alternative Worldview for what creates health



# Implement Health in All Policies Approach with Health Equity as a Goal



Commission on Social Determinants of Health. (2010). *A conceptual framework for action on the social determinants of health*. Geneva: World Health Organization.

# Policy and System Changes Related to Social Determinants of Health (selected)

- **Minimum Wage**
- **Paid Leave**
- Diabetes and Income
- Incarceration and health
- Ban the Box
- Transportation Policy
- Broadband connectivity
- E-Health Policies
- Buffer strips – Ag policy
- Marriage Equity
- Payday Lending
- Water quality

# Minnesota State Agency Roles in Groundwater

## Quality

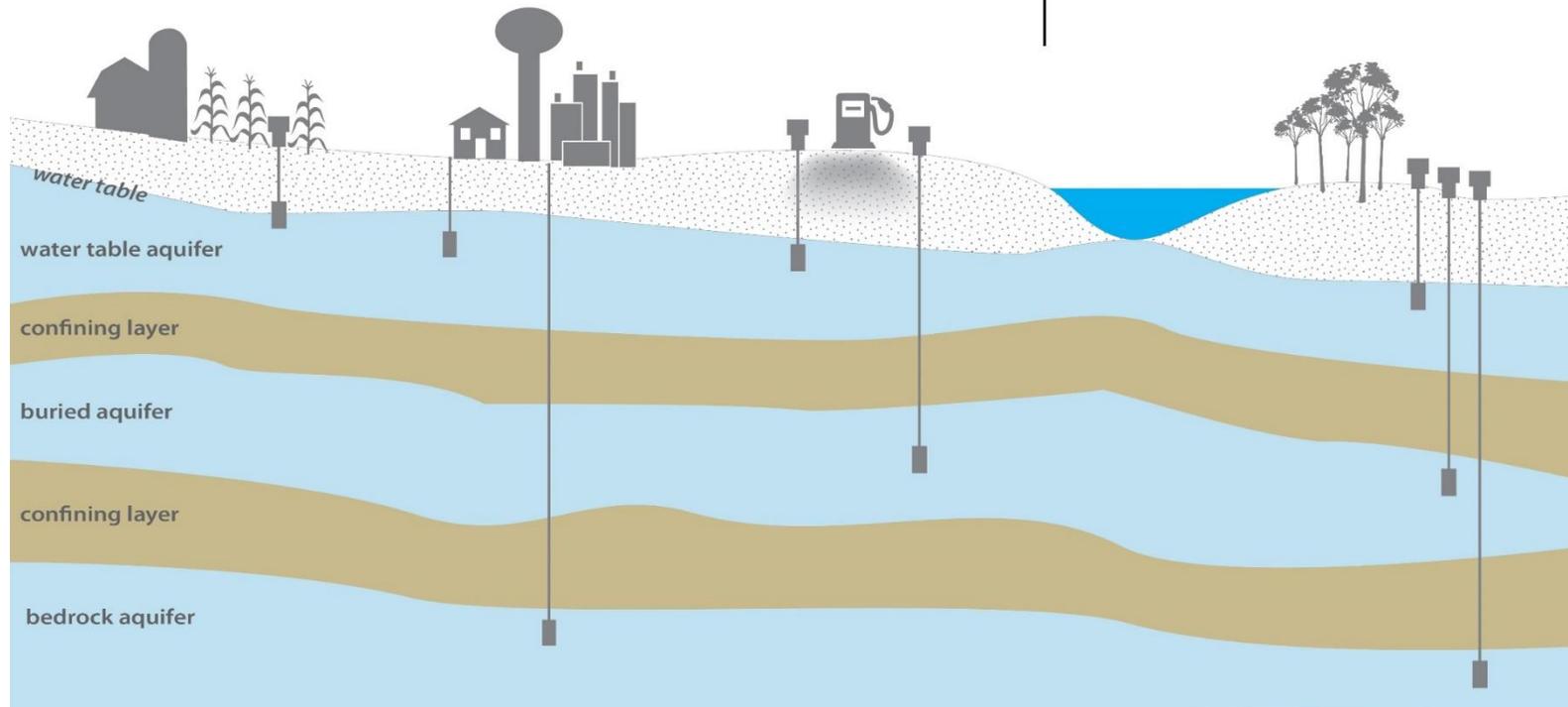
## Quantity

**MDA**  
Pesticides  
Fertilizer

**MDH**  
Public water supply  
Well construction  
Health risk assessment

**MPCA**  
Chemical releases  
Industrial pollutants

**DNR**  
Water supply/availability  
Natural resource/ecosystem functions



# Strengthen the Capacity of Communities to Create Their Own Healthy Future

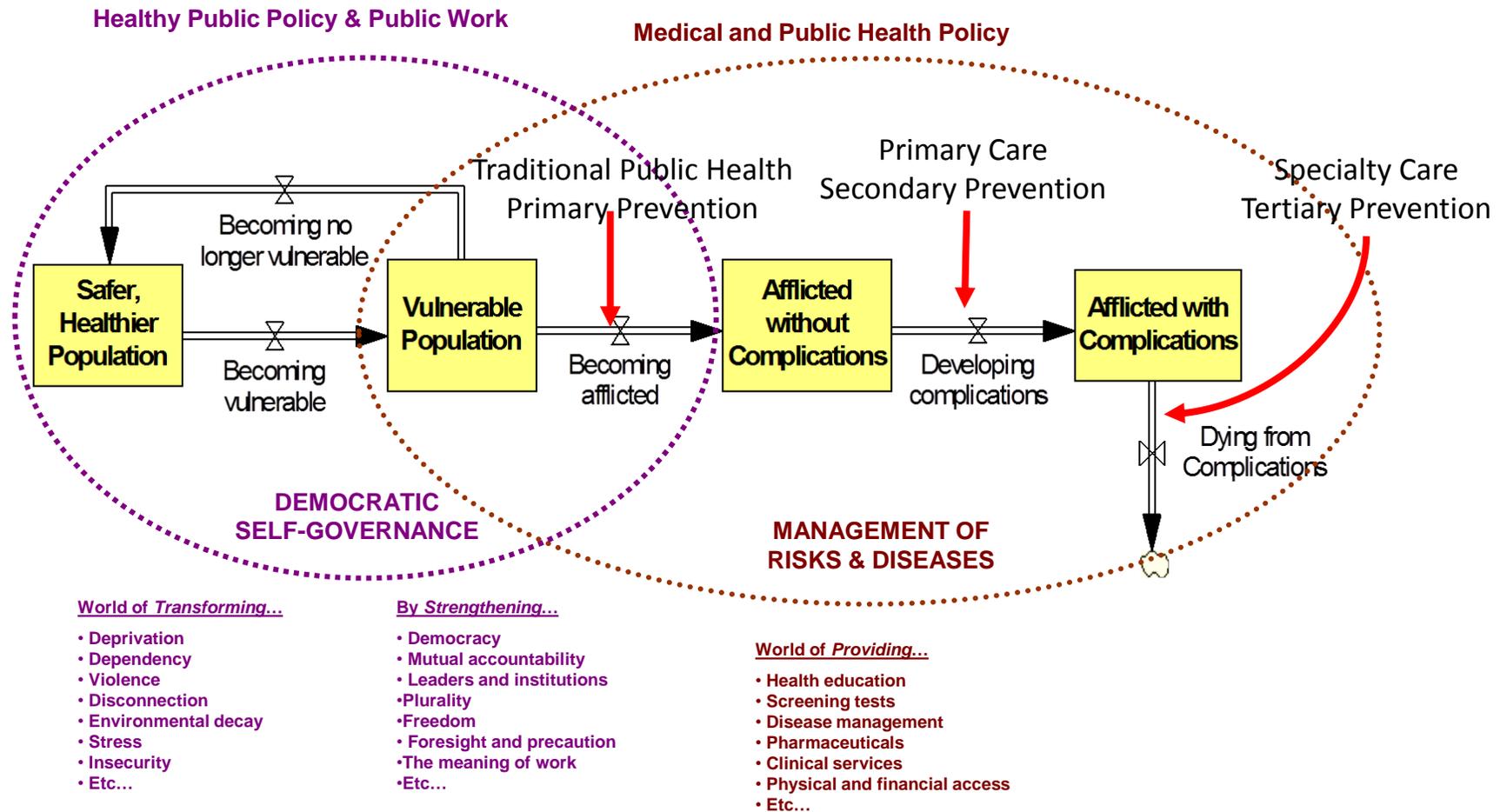


**“...the community in the fullest sense is the smallest unit of health...to speak of the health of an isolated individual is a contradiction in terms.”**

Wendell Berry in Health is Membership

Health is Community

# Strengthen the Capacity of Communities to Create Their Own Healthy Future



# Asking the Right Questions Can Advance Health Equity

## ***Expand Understanding***

- *What values underlie decision-making process?*
- *What is assumed to be true about the world and the role of the institution in the world?*

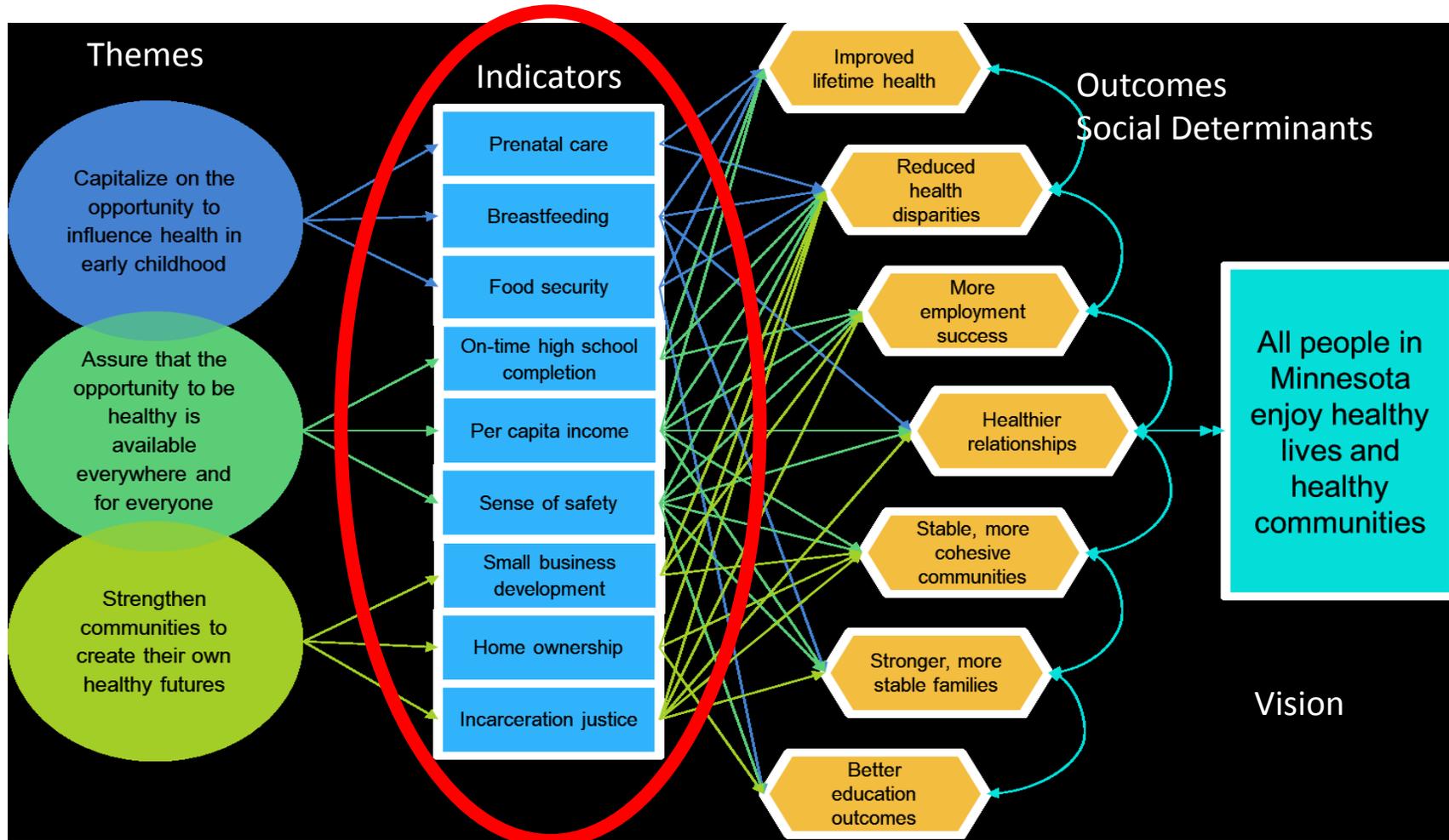
## ***Health in All Policies***

- *What are the health and equity implications of the policy/program?*
- *Who is benefiting and who is left out?*

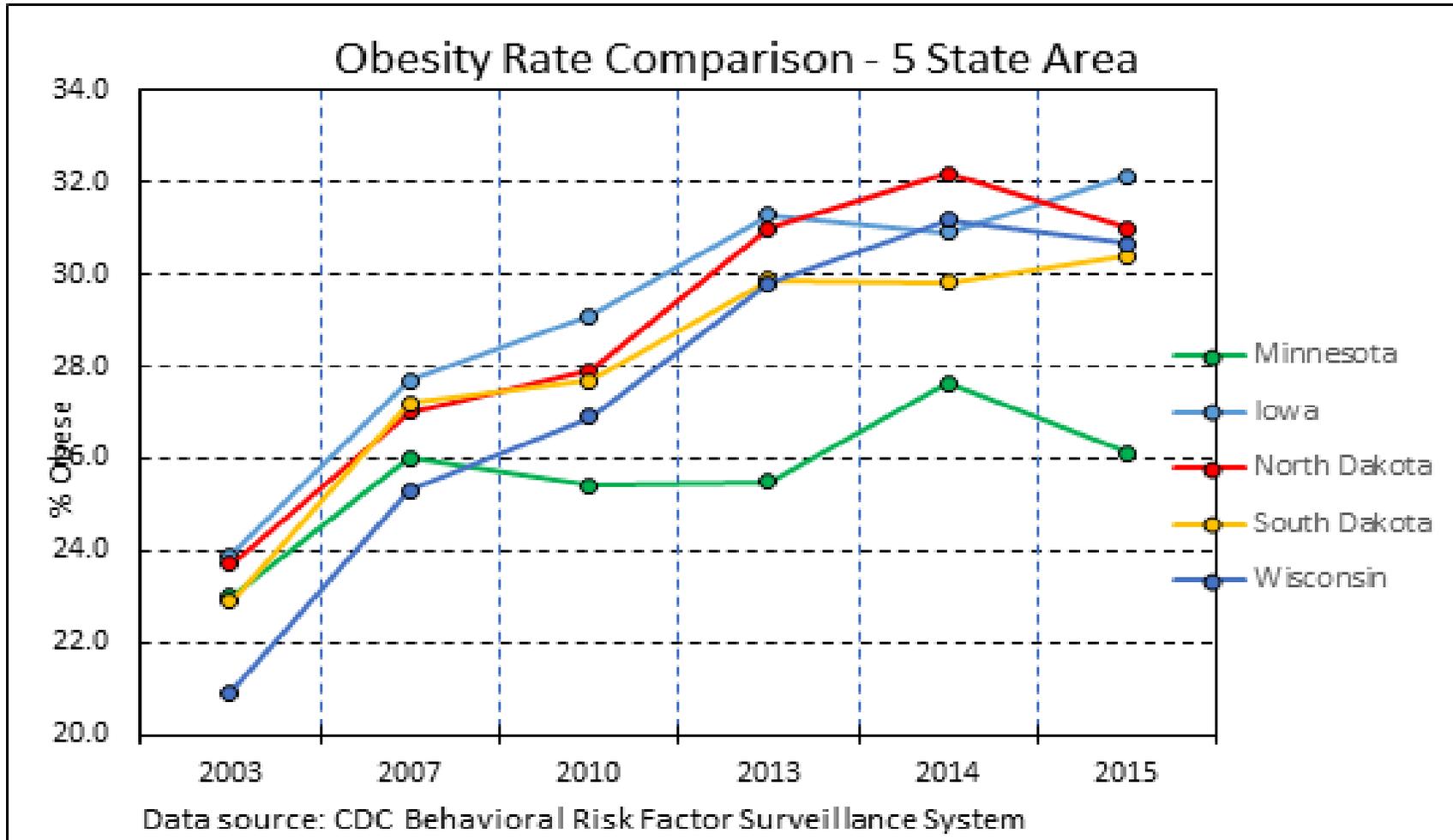
## ***Support Community Capacity***

- *Who is at the decision-making table, and who is not?*
- *Who is being held accountable and to whom?*

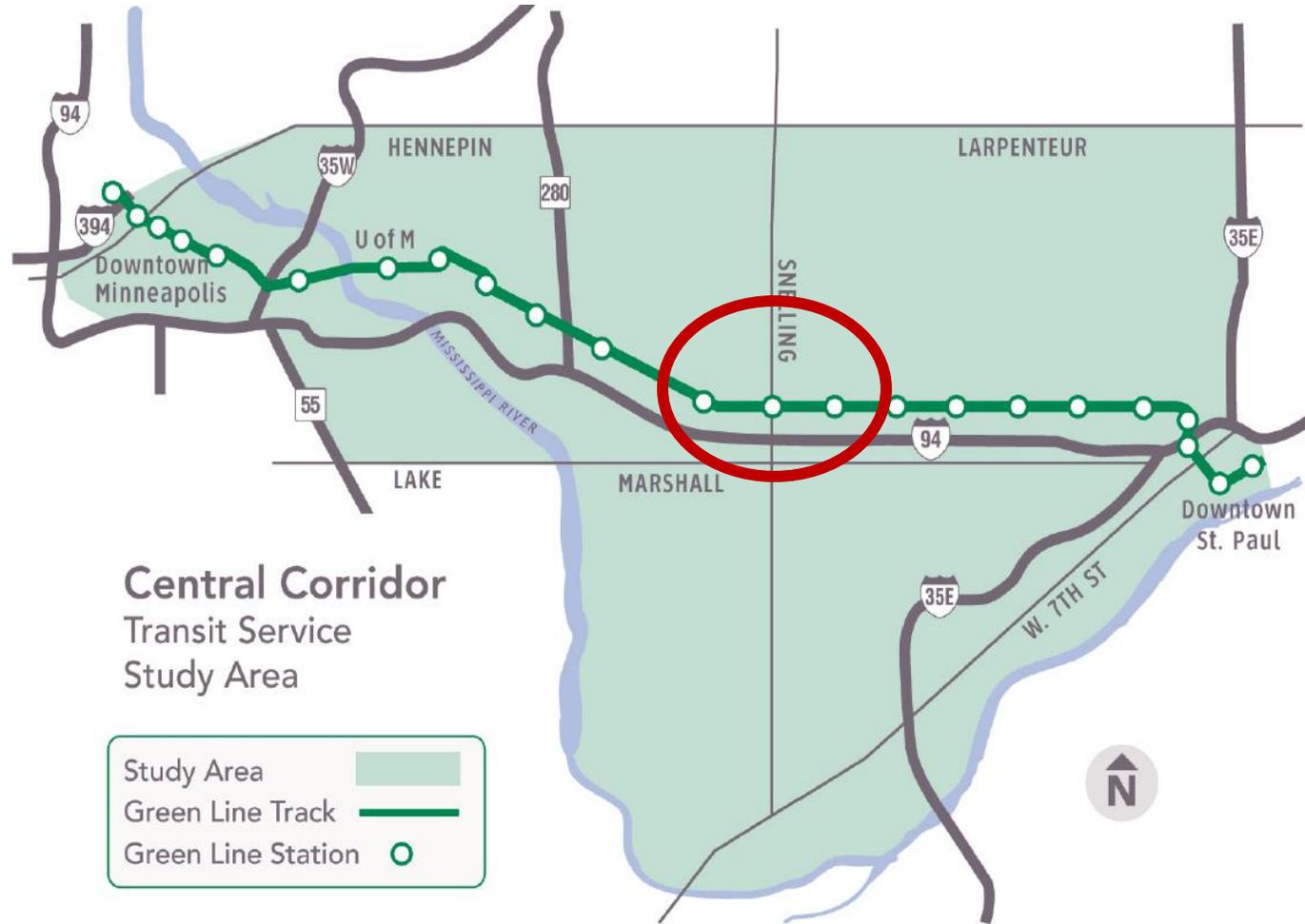
# Triple Aim of Health Equity in Action



# Triple Aim of Health Equity in Action



# Triple Aim of Health Equity in Action



# Triple Aim of Health Equity in Action

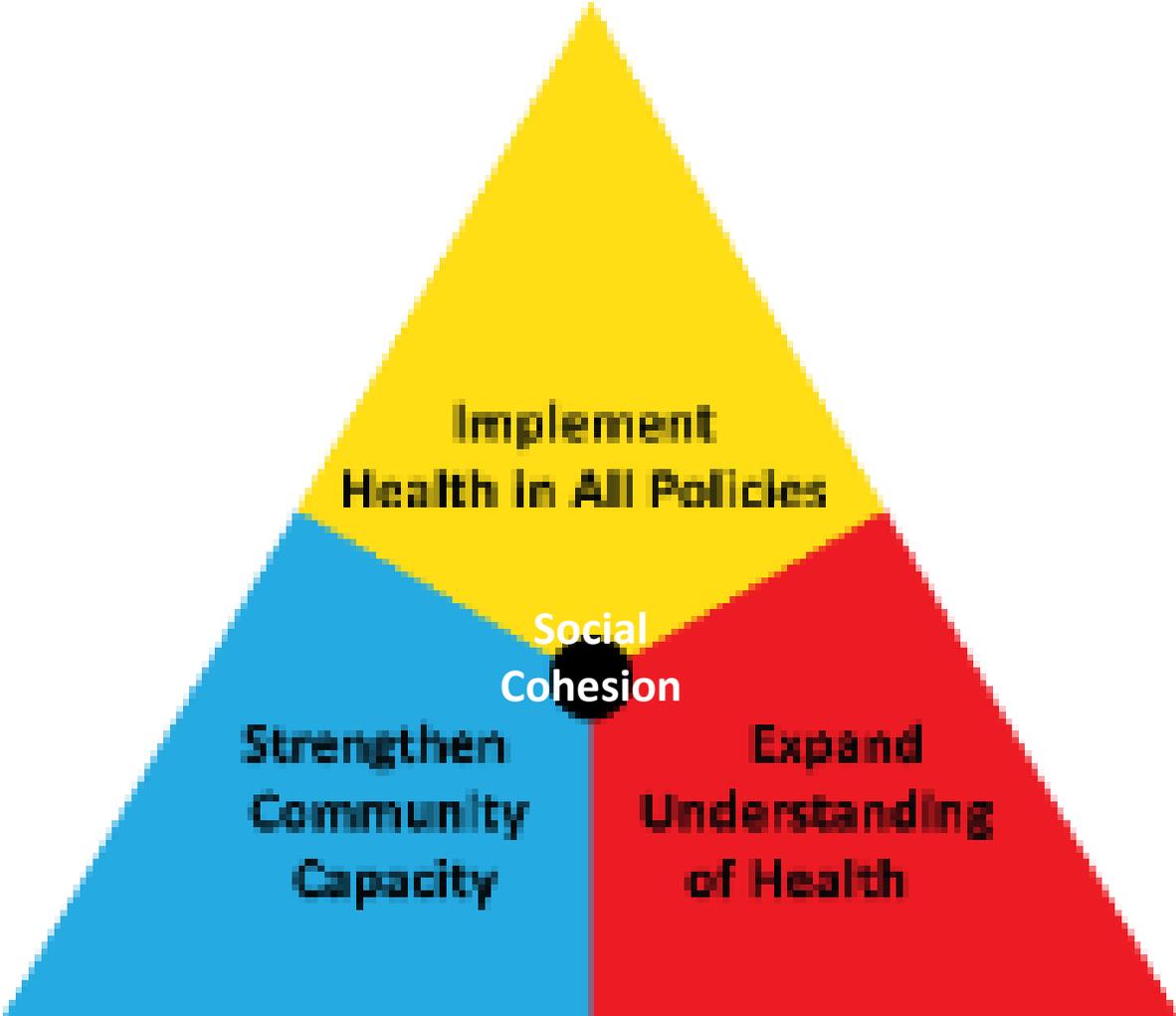


*ECOS President Martha Rudolph after signing an MOA on public health and environmental collaboration with ASTHO President Edward Ehlinger and U.S. EPA Acting Deputy Administrator Stan Meiburg*

## Asking the Right Questions Is a Path to Action for Change

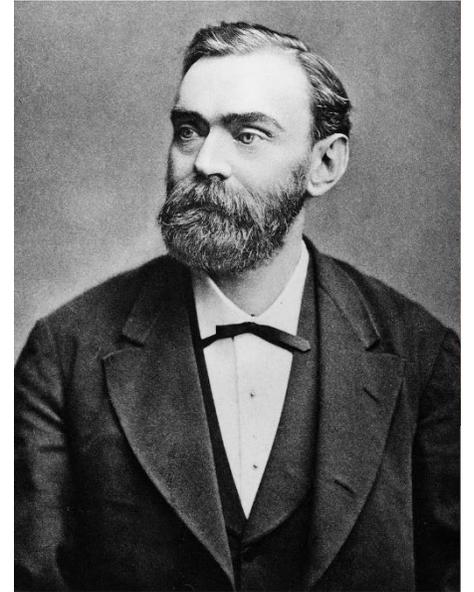
- *What would it look like if equity was the starting point for decision-making?*
- *Our work would be different.*

# Our Work Would be to Advance Health Equity and Optimal Health for All By:



Alfred Nobel, granted first patent for the preparation of nitroglycerin on October 14, 1863.

- *“Good wishes alone will not ensure peace.”*
- *“Justice is to be found only in imagination.”*



# Can You Imagine Social Justice in Your Work?

Imagination is Essential

In Advancing Health Equity and Optimal Health for All



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