Approaching diabetes from different perspectives

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Both are ecological approaches

Adaptation to the environment

- Body is a product of natural selection with trade-offs and vulnerabilities that lead to disease
- Symptoms may be seen as evolutionary defenses
- Disease is a result of failure to adapt

Socio ecological model

- Importance of a multilayered approach
- Individual health is a product of policies, economics, regulations, community level factors, household level factors,
Ontology and epistemology

- Why KIND of thing is this?
- How do I come to KNOW about it?
Ontology and epistemology

- Why kind of entity is diabetes?
  - Failure to adapt to the modern environment
  - Result of uneven distribution of resources
  - Result of oppressive relationships

- The units of analysis, the perspective one takes, the priorities given to different variables all contribute to different ways of KNOWING about diabetes.
“Extrapersonal” etiologic models

- Medicalization of obesity
- “Toxic environment”
- Diabetes as an idiom of distress
- Epidemic metaphors
Local biologies (Lock)

- Disease expression is not universal
- The body is not a given
- Variation in expression of symptoms is a reflection of the different physical and social conditions of peoples’ lives
  - Biology differs because of culture, diet, environment, insurance
  - Structural violence
Inter and intra-personal etiologic models

- Adherence models
- Genetics models
- Self restraint models
Why can’t we all just get along?

- Reflexivity
- Multiple truths
- Multiple rationalities
Ontology and epistemology

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Epistemology

- Positivist approaches
  - Etic categories
  - Expert informed – may be unrelated to experience
  - Different approaches required for different layers

- Disparities related research
  - How to define/delimit groups?
  - CBPR – Emic approaches
Transdisciplinarity or Tower of Babel?
How do we work across disciplines?

- Different vocabularies
- Different training models/pedagogical strategies
- Different criteria for success
- Different views of research and research “subjects”
- Different views of the body
- Different views of disease/illness
Why is it worth it?

- Challenging assumptions and biases advances thought
- Diabetes is a problem with multiple origins and multiple solutions
- We need new paradigms