

In this episode ...

We're diving into the world of advocacy and organizing, specifically, public health's roots in social change and how the field can reconnect. In the first episode of our four-part series, we cover how the field of public health is rooted in organizing and how practitioners can re-engage and reconnect to their powerful, political origins.

Episode 1: Reviving public health's roots in organizing

Our guest, Dr. Abdul El-Sayed:

- Bio: <https://abdulelsayed.com/>
- *Healing Politics: A Doctor's Journey into the Heart of Our Political Epidemic*: <https://abdulelsayed.com/healingpolitics>
- Listen to Dr. El-Sayed's podcast, *America Dissected*: <https://crooked.com/podcast-series/america-dissected/>

Our hosts:

- **Beth Silver**: <https://uwphi.pophealth.wisc.edu/staff/silver-beth/>
- **Ericka Burroughs-Girardi**: <https://uwphi.pophealth.wisc.edu/staff/burroughs-girardi-ericka/>



Timestamps:

0:20 – Ericka and Beth discuss the new series on organizing, and introduce the guest, Dr. El-Sayed

2:49 – Ericka introduces Dr. El-Sayed

3:26 – Interview with Dr. El-Sayed

- **3:43** – The connection between organizing and public health
- **6:14** – Public health's roots in organizing: John Snow, Rudolph Virchow, taking data to action
- **9:21** – Modern day examples of public health organizing: Post-Roe v. Wade, racial injustice and COVID-19
- **11:15** – Challenges of organizing during the COVID-19 pandemic, universal health care, social media and isolation
- **15:23** – Lowercase "p" political to change the local status quo and structural determinants of health in Detroit
- **18:19** – How to get started in organizing
- **22:16** – Assumptions, facts and opportunities for the public health field today
- **25:25** – How public health can earn trust, bridge differences and address structural issues
- **30:53** – The politics of healing — it's not partisan, it's political; hopeful solutions during an epidemic of insecurity
- **34:33** – It's time to rebrand public health

35:50 – Beth and Ericka debrief and discuss what's next

Links to topics mentioned during this episode:

- The Lesson of John Snow and the Broad Street Pump: <https://journalofethics.ama-assn.org/article/lesson-john-snow-and-broad-street-pump/2009-06#:~:text=In%20the%20mid%2D1800s%2C%20London,water%20pump%20on%20Broad%20Street.>

- (Mitali Banerjee Ruths, MD. *History of Medicine*, June 2009. *AMA Journal of Ethics*)
- Rudolf Virchow — the father of cellular pathology and public health activist, social reformer, politician and anthropologist: <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC2603088/>
 - (Schultz M. *Emerg Infect Dis*. 2008 September [October 2024].)
- The Association Between Income and Life Expectancy in the United States, 2001-2014: <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/27063997/>
 - Chetty R, Stepner M, Abraham S, Lin S, Scuderi B, Turner N, Bergeron A, Cutler D. The Association Between Income and Life Expectancy in the United States, 2001-2014. *JAMA*. 2016 Apr 26;315(16):1750-66. doi: 10.1001/jama.2016.4226. Erratum in: *JAMA*. 2017 Jan 3;317(1):90. doi: 10.1001/jama.2016.18691. PMID: 27063997; PMCID: PMC4866586.
- The Derailment of Detroit: Public Transit as a Threat to the Brand of Capitalism: <https://www.acsa-arch.org/chapter/the-derailment-of-detroit-public-transit-as-a-threat-to-the-brand-of-capitalism/>
 - (Noah Resnick. *The Derailment of Detroit: Public Transit as a Threat to the Brand of Capitalism*, 2017. University of Detroit Mercy.)
- The Lincoln-Douglas debates of 1858: <https://www.nps.gov/liho/learn/historyculture/debates.htm>
 - (The Collected Works of Abraham Lincoln. The Abraham Lincoln Association. <https://abrahamlincolnassociation.org/>)

CHR&R Resources:

National Findings Report - Evidence shows that participating in our communities strengthens our social connections and sense of belonging, benefiting our physical and mental health. Learn more from our 2024 National Findings Report: <https://www.countyhealthrankings.org/findings-and-insights/2024-national-findings-report>

Data snapshots - Explore the data in your community: <https://www.countyhealthrankings.org/health-data>

What Works for Health includes 400+ evidence-informed policies and programs to address your community's priorities: <https://www.countyhealthrankings.org/strategies-and-solutions/what-works-for-health/strategies>

Curated strategies - Find a list of What Works for Health strategies that improve civic health:

https://www.countyhealthrankings.org/strategies-and-solutions/what-works-for-health/strategies?f%5B0%5D=curated-list%3ACivic%20Health&sort_by=search_api_relevance&preprocess_id=2732

Narrative change - Change what's possible with Narratives for Health:

<https://www.countyhealthrankings.org/strategies-and-solutions/narratives-for-health>

Webinars - Check out our library of webinars that provide practitioners with strategies and examples that improve health and equity: <https://www.countyhealthrankings.org/findings-and-insights/webinars>

Structural determinants of health – Read *Keeping It Political and Powerful: Defining the Structural Determinants of Health* to learn about the structural determinants of health: <https://www.milbank.org/quarterly/articles/keeping-it-political-and-powerful-defining-the-structural-determinants-of-health/>

- (Heller JC, Givens ML, Johnson SP, Kindig DA. *Keeping It Political and Powerful: Defining the Structural Determinants of Health*. *Milbank Q*. 2024;102(2):0227.)

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