



TURTLE ISLAND PRODUCTIONS

James M. Fortier • Writer/Producer/Director/DP

3/13/07

For Immediate Release

Turtle Island Productions Completes Work on National PBS Series.

Turtle Island Productions Owner/Producer James M. Fortier recently produced, directed, and shot an episode for the National PBS documentary series “*Unnatural Causes: Is Inequality Making Us Sick,*” for Boston based Vital Pictures and San Francisco based California News Reel. *Unnatural Causes*, a seven-part series for PBS broadcast and DVD release, for the first time on film, investigates the sources of our huge and alarming socio-economic and racial disparities in health. The four-hour series (formerly known as “Hidden Epidemic”) sifts through the evidence suggesting that there’s more to our health than bad habits, health care, or unlucky genes. The social environment in which we are born, live and work profoundly affects our wellbeing and longevity. Fortier was tapped to produce and direct program five, “*Bad Sugar,*” which explores connections between the staggering rates of Type II Diabetes among two Native American tribes in Arizona and the political, social, economic, and environmental structures which have drastically changes their lives over the past century. Diabetes is a growing American epidemic and Native Americans were the first to suffer its profound effects. Fortier and his crew traveled to the Tohono O’odham and Pima River Indian reservations of southern Arizona to see how history and powerlessness can drive the disease, while exploring tribal efforts to regain control of their communities’ economic destiny and re-connect to their culture in their struggle to bring the rates of the disease down.

Fortier and second Director of Photography Dan Krause shot “*Bad Sugar*” with the Panasonic AG-DVX100A, in 24p mode, utilizing the Century Optics Anamorphic Lens. The Co-Producer was Sativa January and the Associate Producer was Pam Belgarde (Ojibway).

The series is expected to air nationally on PBS stations in early 2008. For more information contact Senior Producer Christine Herbes-Sommers at Vital Pictures <http://www.vitalpix.com/contactus.html> or Executive Producer Larry Adlema at California Newsreel <http://www.newsreel.org/nav/contact.asp>.



TURTLE ISLAND PRODUCTIONS

James M. Fortier • Writer/Producer/Director/DP