

Health prof sees wind symptoms as nocebo response

Dr. Simon Chapman, a professor of Public Health at the University of Sydney, Australia, has now documented almost 240 categories of subjective symptomatic complaints, up from 198 in September, and has documented his findings on a video entitled '12 things you need to know about wind farms.'

In part, the video states that turbines have been around since about 1980 (possibly earlier in Alberta) but asks why there were no complaints anywhere until 2002 (about 20 years later) and why complaints have escalated since 2009.

It answers its own question by citing examples of where complaints ballooned at wind farms where anti-turbine groups were most active. Dr. Chapman suggests this demonstrates a nocebo response, and the reported symptom as being a psychogenic condition.

(Nocebo, from Latin 'I will harm,' is the evil twin of Placebo. Psychogenic generally is a symptom that originates in the mind.) The video quotes Sir Francis Bacon on the issue of inviting infections by believing you have them. 'If you fear, you call it upon yourself.'

Prof. Chapman might be better known for his stance against cigarette smoking for which he received awards from the World Health Organization and American Cancer Society, among others. But his current research involves examining policy how health and medical issues are covered in the news media; how people stop smoking unaided; the psychogenic aspects of wind farms and health; and characteristics of public health research (and its dissemination) which impact on public health policy.

He has published 469 articles in peer reviewed journals and 17 books and major reports. His H index is 46 and he has over 7960 citations. His video was inspired in part by a Shelburne Free Press article on the Environmental Review Tribunal decision picked up by Wind Resistance Ontario.

Dr. Chapman lists, among other things, claims that wind turbines have caused cancer, hemorrhoids, herpes, bowel and lung cancer, multiple sclerosis, weight loss, weight gain, hair loss or graying and death. Included among the complaints, one says the alleged victim could sense the turbines from 100 km away. More common were complaints from 10 km, including lip trembling.

One of the major problems in establishing a causal effect, according to his information, has been that no complainant witness at hearings has agreed to disclose a prior medical history. (In Canadian law, medical records are the property of the patient.)

Dr. Chapman delves into 'gag orders.' He says his examination of blank contracts has revealed no such orders. He does not deny that they might exist, but has legal advice to the effect that the Common Law would uphold a negligence complaint, and override any such order one might have signed.

(There have been non-disclosure agreements on settlements reached between complaints and TransAlta/Canadian Hydro Developers in Melancthon. The companies would not disclose the terms of settlement as they, too, were bound by the agreements.)

The video is available on You Tube YouTube Video: [YouTube.com/watch?v=HfwqQr-4Ooo](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HfwqQr-4Ooo)

By Wes Keller