

WVIZ/PBS AIRS “UNNATURAL CAUSES: IS INEQUALITY MAKING US SICK?” **Sundays, July 12–26**

– Groundbreaking New PBS Series Explores Causes, Seeks Solutions to America’s Health Crisis –

UNNATURAL CAUSES is a four-hour series that, for the first time on television, sounds the alarm about glaring socio-economic and racial inequities in health and searches for their causes. UNNATURAL CAUSES looks at what’s making us sick in the first place, investigating startling new findings that suggest there is much more to poor health than bad habits, inadequate health care or unlucky genes. The series circles in on a slow killer in plain view: the social circumstances in which we are born, live and work that can affect our risk for disease as surely as germs and viruses.

“In Sickness and in Wealth”

Sunday, July 12, 3pm

This is a story about health, but it’s not about doctors or drugs. Set mostly in Louisville, Kentucky, it’s a detective story out to solve the mystery of what’s stalking and killing so many Americans before their time. The program uncovers the connections between healthy bodies and healthy bank accounts - and why residents of so many other nations, including many poorer countries, live longer and healthier lives. Solutions, evidence suggests, may lie not in more pills but in more equality.

“When the Bough Breaks/Becoming American”

Sunday, July 19, 3pm

African-American infant mortality rates remain twice as high as white Americans regardless of education level. Investigators are circling in on how the chronic stress of racism throughout a life can become a risk factor embedded in the body. Recent Mexican immigrants, on the other hand, though poorer, tend to be healthier than the average American. But the longer they’re here, the worse their relative health becomes. Is there something about life in America that is harming their health? Conversely, what is protective about new immigrant communities that we can learn from?

“Bad Sugar/Place Matters”

Sunday, July 26, 3pm

“Bad Sugar” travels to the O’odham Indian reservations of southern Arizona where residents are marked not just by poverty but with the dubious distinction of perhaps the highest rates of Type 2 diabetes in the world. While public attention has been focused on risky behaviors and genes, evidence increasingly points to a link between chronic disease and “futurelessness.” The program also looks at a new approach to health - one rooted in communities regaining control over their destiny. In many poor inner cities like Richmond, California, recent Southeast Asian immigrants and Latinos are moving into what have been neglected black urban neighborhoods - and now their health is being eroded, too. What policies and investment decisions create neighborhood environments that harm - or benefit - the health of residents? And what actions can make a difference?

“Collateral Damage/Not Just A Paycheck”

Sunday, July 26, 4pm

Mainlanders view the Pacific Islands as a paradise, but diabetes, cardiovascular and kidney diseases and tuberculosis are taking a toll on the Pacific Islander population. In the Marshall Islands and in the unlikely spot of Springdale, AR, this program shows how globalization is affecting health – often in unanticipated ways. How does job insecurity and unemployment affect health? In rural western Michigan, residents struggle against depression, domestic violence, heart disease and diabetes when the largest refrigerator factory in the country shuts down. Ironically, the plant is owned by a Swedish company. In Sweden, shutdowns are relatively benign events and, for some people, even create opportunities thanks to Swedish government policies.