

Community Issues Programming for July 1 - September 30, 2019

WCLH has identified the following issues as significant issues facing our community this quarter. Following each issue is a list of programs aired addressing that issue.

Issue: Gun Control: Recent mass shootings have some calling for stricter gun control.

Democracy Now! "'We Can't Wait for McConnell": Advocates Call for Bold Action to Curb Gun Violence Epidemic" Kris Brown, president of Brady, formerly the Brady Campaign to Prevent Gun Violence, and Igor Volsky, the executive director of Guns Down America are interviewed.
Airdate 6 August 2019 8:10 AM. Length 20 minutes.

Democracy Now! "Emergency Doctor to Trump: You Are Wrong, Mental Illness Is Not to Blame for Gun Violence Epidemic" President Trump went to Dayton, Ohio, and El Paso, Texas, Wednesday, where he was met by hundreds of protesters condemning his presence after the mass shootings over the weekend, which killed at least 32 people. Prior to his visits, Trump hinted at the need to strengthen background checks for gun purchases, and doubled down on what some healthcare professionals say is dangerous rhetoric linking illness to mass shootings. Numerous other political figures have pointed to mental illness as a contributing factor in mass shootings. From Montreal, we speak with Dr. Megan Ranney, an associate professor of emergency medicine at Alpert Medical School, Brown University, and chief research officer of AFFIRM Research, a nonprofit focused on firearm injury reduction.
Airdate 8 August 2019 8:10 AM. Length 20 minutes.

Democracy Now! "Texas Weakens Gun Laws One Day After Odessa Massacre Leaves 7 Dead, 22 Injured" A gunman killed seven people and injured 22 others on Saturday, including a 17-month-old girl. Police have identified the shooter as 36-year-old Seth Ator. He went on the rampage just hours after being fired from his trucking job. The deadly string of events began when a Midland police officer pulled over Ator for failing to use his signal. Police say Ator then opened fire using an AR-15-style weapon before speeding away. He then began shooting at random residents and motorists. The rampage ended 20 miles away when the gunman died in a shootout with police outside a movie theater in Odessa. Meanwhile, eight new laws easing gun restrictions went into effect in Texas on Sunday. It is now easier to carry guns in Texas churches, schools and apartment buildings. Ed Scruggs, president of the board of directors and spokesperson for Texas Gun Sense was interviewed.
Airdate 3 September 2019 8:15 AM. Length 18 minutes.

Issue: Opioid Abuse: Our community is concerned about the potential of abuse of prescription pain killers.

Democracy Now! "'This Ruling Is Huge": Johnson & Johnson Ordered to Pay \$572 Million for Fueling Opioid Epidemic" Fueled by Greed". In a landmark ruling, an Oklahoma judge has ordered Johnson & Johnson to pay \$572 million for contributing to the state's opioid crisis. It marks the first time a drug company has been held responsible for the opioid crisis, though it fell far short of the \$17 billion judgment sought by the state. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, almost 400,000 people died from an overdose involving opioids from 1999 to 2017, including from prescription and illicit opioids. Court documents say more than 6,000 people have died of painkiller overdoses in Oklahoma alone. The Oklahoma ruling sets the stage for the more than 40 states that are currently pursuing similar claims against drug makers and distributors. A massive federal lawsuit brought by almost 2,000 cities, counties and Native American tribes is scheduled to begin in October. Interviewed were Julia Lurie, senior reporter at Mother Jones, who has covered the opioid crisis for years.

Airdate 27 August 2019 8:16 AM Length 20 minutes.

Issue: Fairness and Accuracy in Reporting: Our community is concerned about media bias and censorship.

CounterSpin "Arun Gupta on No More Camps!, Zoe Carpenter on Oregon Power Grab"

The US is facing humanitarian and political crises, and media will be judged on how they choose to respond.

Airdate 13 July 2019 8:30 AM Length 29 minutes.

CounterSpin "Brenda Choresi Carter on the Electability Myth, Lawrence Glickman on Racism & The upshot for many seems to be that to beat Trump, Democrats should run someone as much like him as possible, and must on no account run a "nontraditional" candidate, no matter how excited people are about them.

Airdate 20 July 2019 8:30 AM Length 29 minutes.

CounterSpin "Ed Morales on Puerto Rico Protests"

Elite outlets are not the first place to look for a serious understanding of fast-moving but deeply rooted events in Puerto Rico, where massive popular protests have just led to the resignation of Gov. Ricardo Rossello.

Airdate 27 July 2019 8:42 AM Length 29 minutes.

CounterSpin "Sriram Madhusoodanan on Fossil Fuel Investigations, Amin Husain on Decolonizing Museums" While federal inaction and even regression on climate is distressing, some state attorneys general are pushing forward for accountability.

Airdate 3 August 2019 8:30 AM Length 29 minutes.

CounterSpin "Ruha Benjamin on Race After Technology" Some examples of discriminatory design are obvious—which doesn't mean the reasons behind them are easy to fix. And then there are other questions around technology and bias—in policing, in housing, in banking—that require deeper questioning.

Airdate 10 August 2019 8:30 AM Length 29 minutes.

CounterSpin "Ernest Coverson on Guns & Human Rights, Carey Gillam Under Attack From Monsanto" Vast majorities of Americans support serious regulation, but corporate media debate still seems to revolve around the supposed "rights" of the few, rather than the right of the many to live a life free from this scourge.

Airdate 17 August 2019 8:30 AM Length 29 minutes.

CounterSpin "Sasha Abramsky on Trump's New Attack on Immigrants". Who, at this point, is served when corporate media consider Trump's cruel attacks on immigrants in any context other than cruelty?

Airdate 24 August 2019 8:44 AM Length 15 minutes

CounterSpin "Mark Trahan on Indigenous and the Election; Tea Party Revisionism"

Election Focus 2020: The historic Native American Presidential Forum was ultimately less about the candidates than about the 5 million Natives across the country, and the possibility of their seeing government as representing rather than oppressing them.

Airdate 31 August 2019 8:30 AM Length 14 minutes.

CounterSpin "Hassan El-Tayyab on US Out of Yemen, Kate Bronfenbrenner on Labor Board vs. Labor" US media bring images of Yemen's suffering, but you could think it was happening on Mars, if the dots are not connected between the bombs and the hunger and the cholera, and elected US congressmembers voting again and again to be part of it.
Airdate 7 September 2019 8:44 AM Length 29 minutes.

CounterSpin "Marjorie Cohn on Afghanistan's Unending War, Amit Narang on Deregulation & Corporate America" New Yorkers who were here for September 11 remember vigils, hugs from strangers and signs all over the streets reading, "Our grief is not a cry for war." But war is what came, to the delight of many in media—first to Afghanistan, which the US invaded on October 7, 2001, and never left.
Airdate 14 September 2019 8:30 AM Length 29 minutes.

CounterSpin "Maha Hilal on Anti-Muslim Watchlist, Dana Brown on Public Option for Pharmaceuticals" The whole idea of the "terrorist watchlist," created in a context of anti-Islamic bias and ignorance, is untenable, and the whole frame of Muslims vs. national security needs to be upended.
Airdate 21 September 2019 8:30 AM Length 29 minutes.

CounterSpin "Shailly Gupta Barnes, Frances Fox Piven on Defining and Ending Poverty" Elite media coverage of poverty has long centered questions of measuring it at the expense of ideas about ending it.
Airdate 28 September 2019 8:30 AM Length 29 minutes.