

Quarterly Program Topic Report
WTTW PBS Programming

4th Quarter 2023

October, November, December

As the program schedule for WTTW-PBS is planned, special consideration is given to a variety of special interests in the Chicagoland area. During October, November, and December the following issues were covered in a variety of programming.

American History / Biography

Arts / Culture

Business / Industry / Economy

Crime / Legal Issues / Law Enforcement

Environment / Nature / Natural Disasters

Health / Health Care

American Politics / Government

Science / Technology

War / Veterans / National Security

The programming listed below represents ongoing series that continually touch upon the previously mentioned topics.

Amanpour & Company (Weeknights)

American Masters

American Experience

BBC World News & BBC World News America (Weeknights)

Chicago Tonight (Weeknights)

Frontline

Independent Lens

Nature

NOVA

PBS NewsHour (Weeknights)

POV

Pritzker Military Presents

Washington Week (Weekly)

American History / Biography

The American Buffalo “Blood Memory” (120) minutes

Aired Monday, October 16, 2023 at 7:00pm

The dramatic story of how America's national mammal, which sustained the lives of Native people, was driven to the brink of extinction. Ken Burns recounts the tragic collision of two opposing views of the natural world.

Chicago Stories “The Outrage of Danny Sotomayor” (60) minutes

Aired Friday, November 3, 2023 at 8:00pm

Fiery openly gay AIDS activist and political cartoonist Danny Sotomayor used civil disobedience to wage war on city officials who marginalized the LGBTQ community and ignored the AIDS crisis, while fighting a losing battle with the disease himself. This program chronicles his courageous fight for equality.

10 Homes That Changed America (60) minutes

Aired on Monday, December 11, 2023 at 9:00pm

Visit homes that transformed residential living, from grand estates like Thomas Jefferson's Monticello and Frank Lloyd Wright's Fallingwater to the pueblos of Taos, New Mexico, and the tenements of 19th-century New York.

Arts / Culture

Native America “New Worlds” (60) minutes

Aired on Tuesday, October 24, 2023 at 8:00pm

Native innovators lead a revolution in music, building, and space exploration. From the surface of Mars to the New York City hip hop scene to the Pine Ridge Reservation, Native traditions are transforming life on Earth and other worlds.

10 Towns That Changed America (60) minutes

Aired on Friday, November 10, 2023 at 9:00pm

Visit influential towns across the country from Greenbelt, Maryland, and Seaside, Florida, to Riverside, Illinois, and Levittown, New York, that had a lasting impact on the way our cities and suburbs are designed.

Lookingglass Alice (120) minutes

Aired on Friday, December 15, 2023 at 8:00pm

An exhilarating live theatrical adaptation of Alice In Wonderland, created and performed by Chicago's Tony-Award winning Lookingglass Theatre Company. Inspired by Lewis Carroll's beloved stories and infused with physical risk world-class circus arts, this Alice transports audiences down the rabbit hole

with new twists on the beloved characters and story, creating a wildly entertaining adventure for all ages.

Business / Industry / Economy

Frontline “Elon Musk’s Twitter Takeover” (120) minutes

Aired on Tuesday, October 10, 2023 at 8:00pm

Elon Musk's long and often troubled relationship with Twitter. Musk's journey from one of the platform's most provocative users to its sole proprietor, exploring the acquisition, free speech and the company's uncertain future.

Chicago Stories “The Rise and Fall of Mail Order Giants” (60) minutes

Aired on Friday, November 10, 2023 at 8:00pm

In an age before online commerce, two Chicago mail order giants were responsible for making goods and services accessible to all. Chicago Stories traces the histories of Sears, Roebuck and Montgomery Ward, and explores how they influenced the multitudes of retailers who came after them.

PBS Newshour “Episode 105” (3) minutes

Aired Friday, November 24, 2023 at 6:00pm (segment)

In our news wrap Friday, a wave of worker walkouts across Europe hit Amazon on Black Friday amid a long-running dispute over pay and working conditions, Russia and Ukraine escalated fighting in key areas as both sides try to make gains before the worst of winter sets in and a tense calm has returned in Dublin, Ireland, after anti-immigrant rioting.

Crime / Legal Issues / Law Enforcement

Amanpour & Company “Episode 68” (18) minutes

Aired on Wednesday, October 4, 2023 at 11pm (segment)

Sheelah Kolhatkar profiled Bankman-Fried and his family for The New Yorker and joins Hari Sreenivasan to discuss.

A Town Called Victoria “The Fire/The Suspect” (120) minutes

Aired on Monday, November 13, 2023 at 8:00pm

The Fire: A south Texas town is thrown into the national spotlight when a local mosque is burned to the ground in 2017. After the media moves on, the community is left to reflect on its complex history with racism.

The Suspect: With the arson trial near, the suspect's family argues his innocence. Meanwhile, facets of Victoria reveal the ingredients that might have turned him to hate.

Environment / Nature / Natural Disasters

Spy in the Ocean: A Nature Miniseries “Deep Thinkers” (60) minutes

Aired on Wednesday, October 25, 2023 at 7:00pm

Spy creatures reveal an ocean full of startling ways of thinking, including large-brained whales, smart octopi, diving monkeys, creative fish and other intelligent animals.

Earthshot Prize 2023 (60) minutes

Aired on Wednesday, November 22, 2023 at 7:00pm

With the help of scientists and genealogists, filmmaker Byron Hurt and his family members search for their ancestors. Follow their journey as they hunt for new details of a history long obscured by the enduring legacy of slavery.

Nature “Penguins: Meet the Family” (60) minutes

Aired on Wednesday, December 27, 2023 at 7:00pm

A celebration of one of Earth's most iconic and beloved birds, featuring footage of all 17 species of penguins for the first time, from New Zealand, Cape Town, the Galapagos Islands and Antarctica.

Health / Health Care

POV “Fire Through Dry Grass” (90) minutes

Aired on Wednesday, November 4, 2023 at 10:00pm

Wearing snapback caps and Air Jordans, the Reality Poets don't look like typical nursing home residents. In Fire Through Dry Grass, these young, Black and brown disabled artists document their lives on lockdown during Covid, using their poetry and art to underscore the danger and imprisonment they feel. In the face of institutional neglect, they refuse to be abused, confined, and erased.

POV “Wisdom Gone Wild” (60) minutes

Aired on Monday, November 20, 2023 at 9:00pm

Reflect on aging and transformation over the course of 16 years. This film blends humor and sadness between mother and daughter that blooms into an affectionate portrait of love, care, and a relationship transformed.

American Politics / Government

Frontline “McConnel, the GOP & the Court” (60) minutes

Aired on Tuesday, October 31, 2023 at 9:00pm

How Republican Sen. Mitch McConnell helped transform the Supreme Court and U.S. politics. Amid scrutiny of the high court, and a power struggle in the GOP, McConnell's rise and role pushing the judiciary to the right, and America's polarized democracy.

America at a Crossroads with Judy Woodruff (60) minutes

Aired on Tuesday, December 19, 2023 at 8:00pm

At a time of heightened partisanship, declining trust in institutions, increased political violence, and rapid social change, Judy Woodruff set out this year on a two-year reporting project, America at a Crossroads, to explore the forces driving Americans apart, and to ask people from all walks of life and all political persuasions what might be done to reverse these worrying trends. She crisscrossed the country, listening to researchers and writers, school board members and parents, activists, local leaders, even the President of the United States, discuss how they view challenges before us and what can be done to surmount them. She centered these stories on lived experience, historical context, and compassion, reporting on the phenomenon of negative partisanship - intense dislike from one party for the other; growing distrust of the judiciary, and the privileging of partisan politics over the rule of law; how school boards became the center of fights over social issues; ongoing concerns about domestic extremism and rising political violence; the difficulties of racial healing, and the progress that's been made; and how the disappearance of local news has contributed to the unraveling of civic connection. Now, to round out the first year of Crossroads, in an hour-long special we'll revisit some of our most compelling stories with a combination of writers, policymakers, big thinkers and regular people to explain what we've learned about America's divisions, what we're still grasping to better understand, and what might be done to move forward.

Science / Technology

NOVA “Ancient Earth: Birth of the Sky” (60) Minutes

Aired on Wednesday, October 4, 2023 at 8:00pm

Early Earth was a hellscape of molten lava and barren rock, bombarded by meteors, with no atmosphere at all. How did our familiar blue sky - the thin, life-giving band of gasses protecting our planet - come to be?

NOVA “Lee and Liza’s Family Tree” (60) minutes

Aired on Wednesday, November 22, 2023 at 8:00pm

With the help of scientists and genealogists, filmmaker Byron Hurt and his family members search for their ancestors. Follow their journey as they hunt for new details of a history long obscured by the enduring legacy of slavery.

NOVA “Decoding the Great Pyramid” (60) minutes

Aired on Wednesday, December 20, 2023 at 8:00pm

Stunning new archaeological evidence provides clues about the Egyptians who built the Great Pyramid of Giza -- and how they did it. Join researchers as they delve into the logbook of a work crew and discover how the massive project transformed Egypt.

War / Veterans / National Security

War in the Holy Land: A PBS News Special Report (60) minutes

Aired on Friday, October 13, 2023 at 9:00pm

Co-anchored by PBS NewsHour's Amna Nawaz from Israel and Geoff Bennett from our nation's capital, the one-hour primetime special will wrap the historic, devastating week of violence in Israel and Gaza with reports from the region, interviews and analysis on the path forward for the Middle East and rest of the world.

Salute to Service: A Veterans Day Celebration (60) minutes

Aired on Friday, November 10, 2023 at 10:00pm

A Veterans Day musical celebration hosted by Jon Stewart and featuring the U.S. Army Field Band with special guests Mickey Guyton, Amanda Shires and Mandy Gonzalez.

Frontline “Netanyahu, America & the Road to War in Gaza” (120) minutes

Aired on Tuesday, December 19, 2023 at 9:00pm

The struggle between the Israeli leader and multiple U.S. presidents over Middle East peace. Leading up to the Gaza war, Netanyahu's relations with the U.S. and Palestinians. Also, with The Washington Post, how Israel's security barrier was breached.