RUST documentary film premieres on PBS
Tuesday, May 18, 2021
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How to break the chains of poverty in U.S. Inner Cities

NEWARK, NJ; APRIL 12, 2021 – In 86 minutes, RUST documentary film presents the history of Rust Belt poverty, detailing industrialization and deindustrialization, and racism and mass incarceration, using the city of Newark, New Jersey as a microcosm. It explores solutions to inner city poverty through the voices of scholars, economists, physicians, activists, and the community.


Eminent historians and economists chronicle the historic rise and fall of U.S. industrialization which, coupled with the aftershocks of slavery and failed government policies, left cities with abandoned factories and the human rust of deep persistent poverty. The history of racism in America is traced, beginning with slavery, then morphing into the Black Codes, Convict Leasing, and, ultimately, mass incarceration. Physicians explain the “Science of Poverty” and the toll of poverty on a community’s health. Activists cite how government-sponsored jobs and social insurance programs of the 1930s and beyond mobilized the country to economic recovery and should be resurrected today. A boot camp for the recently incarcerated provides what citizens need to successfully reenter society. A formerly troubled teen (documented in THE RULE), who became a college graduate and is now a social worker, offers proof of the need for counseling in inner city schools. The historic settlement houses of Jane Addams show how compassionate progressivism can alleviate poverty, although they were marred by segregation.

RUST offers a comprehensive “textbook” examination of poverty and racism in U.S. inner cities and presents time-tested solutions. To tell its tale, RUST is accented by archival visuals, cinéma vérité footage, music, and filmmaker Jerome Bongiorno’s bold animation to illustrate the film’s events and statistics.
RUST film website:  http://www.bongiornoproductions.com/RUST/Rust.html


RUST is produced by Bongiorno Productions in association with KTWU, Topeka, KS.

About Bongiorno Productions
Bongiorno Productions is the Newark, NJ-based film company of Emmy-nominated, award-winning, husband and wife filmmakers Marylou & Jerome Bongiorno. The Bongiornos create acclaimed documentary, fiction, and museum installation art films that are widely distributed. For more info, visit:  www.BongiornoProductions.com

About PBS
PBS, with more than 330 member stations, offers all Americans the opportunity to explore new ideas and new worlds through television and digital content. Each month, PBS reaches over 120 million people through television and 26 million people online, inviting them to experience the worlds of science, history, nature and public affairs; to hear diverse viewpoints; and to take front row seats to world-class drama and performances. PBS’ broad array of programs has been consistently honored by the industry’s most coveted award competitions. Teachers of children from pre-K through 12th grade turn to PBS for digital content and services that help bring classroom lessons to life. Decades of research confirms that PBS’ premier children’s media service, PBS KIDS, helps children build critical literacy, math and social-emotional skills, enabling them to find success in school and life. Delivered through member stations, PBS KIDS offers high-quality educational content on TV – including a 24/7 channel, online at pbskids.org, via an array of mobile apps and in communities across America. More information about PBS is available at www.pbs.org, one of the leading dot-org websites on the internet, or by following PBS on Twitter, Facebook or through our apps for mobile and connected devices. Specific program information and updates for press are available at pbs.org/pressroom or by following PBS Pressroom on Twitter.

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