



## **Episode 2 – Mickey Huff – August 28, 2014**

JON GOLD (JON)

MICKEY HUFF (MICKEY)

JON GOLD Hi everyone and welcome to my show called “We Were Lied to About 9/11.” I am your host, Jon Gold, and this show is part of the Soapbox People’s Network.

This week’s show focuses on how the corporate media has treated those who question what we were told about 9/11. It is greatly because of how the corporate media has treated us that many people with followings won’t talk about the multitude of cover-ups concerning 9/11. It is greatly because of how the corporate media has treated us that many people think that 9/11 truthers or advocates for 9/11 justice are the equivalent of a baby killer or a dog torturer. It is greatly because of how the corporate media has treated us that we have failed to reach the critical mass necessary to resolve this issue. If the corporate media did its job, I would not have had to devote almost 12 years of my life to this cause. I ask you, in what world does it make sense to constantly attack and misrepresent those seeking truth, accountability, and justice for the murder of 2,976 people? Certainly not in the world I choose to be a part of.

JON            Okay, this is Jon and I'm here with Mickey and I'm going to quickly read his bio for us.

MICKEY HUFF is director of Project Censored and serves on the board of the Media Freedom Foundation. To date, he has edited or coedited six volumes of *Censored* and contributed numerous chapters to these works dating back to 2008. Additionally, he has coauthored several chapters on media and propaganda for other scholarly publications, most recently *Flashpoint in Ukraine* from Clarity Press (2014). He is currently professor of social science and history at Diablo Valley College in the San Francisco Bay Area, where he is cochair of the history department. Huff is cohost with former Project Censored director Dr. Peter Phillips of "The Project Censored Show," the weekly syndicated public affairs program that originates from KPFA Pacifica Radio in Berkeley CA. For the past several years, Huff has worked on the national planning committee of Banned Books Week, working with the American Library Association and the National Coalition Against Censorship, of which Project Censored is a member. He is also a longtime musician and composer. He lives with his family in Northern California. He's also the associate editor of the forthcoming SAGE publication *Encyclopedia of Censorship in 2017*.

Hi, Mickey, how are you doing today?

MICKEY      Jon, I'm doing really well. Thanks so much for having me come on to have a conversation with you about 9/11, media propaganda, and censorship.

JON            I very much appreciate having you on today to help me navigate through this very important issue. All right, so I'm just going to get into the questions then.

What was the day of 9/11 like for you?

MICKEY      9/11/2001, perhaps many other folks had some similar experiences. I awoke to a phone ringing wildly in my ear, six or so o'clock, almost, roughly—I'm in California and it was a student actually of mine saying, "Oh my God! You need to turn on the television." And, of course, I did, right? And we all started seeing the shock and awe of that day before us. And, I remember going to campus—I was teaching that day, and we just had conversations and discussions, and set up forums all over campus. In fact, that entire week

we did those things. And it was interesting because, you know, given that I'm an historian and social scientist, I mean, I'm also a person, I was horrified by the images and things that I was seeing.

And—but I also couldn't help the other part of me putting all of this into some kind of context. Both global, not nationalist context, and also historical, not merely present context. And I remember distinctly that from that period on for several years the questions that I had or questions that would come up were greeted with great degrees of hostility. And, in fact, I fashioned an entire course around critical thinking in 9/11 and I still teach that class, and—it was definitely a day that changed a lot of things for people, particularly in terms of perception and I think that one of the lasting things that we see from that very day is the constant attempts to rekindle to manipulate the emotions of the public that continues to support massive wars of aggression and empire-building.

And, so I again, I do remember the day and I suppose many people do, and it was an incredible, an incredibly emotional thing, and I know that people—particularly people that were most closely struck by that, that's a post-traumatic stress issue. I'm not going to use the word disorder. There's nothing disorder-related about having post-traumatic stress related to such a tragedy. (Right)

I also remember using that event, in a way, to say well, if we have some such stress and trauma about an event like this, imagine what people around the world feel when the United States bombs their towns and their villages, and—I mean, on and on, right. You know this history and this drill. And it's really a teachable moment—tragedies often are, sadly, (Right) that continues to be. And what's interesting, too, Jon, is that, you know, teaching this class over the years about these issues, looking at 9/11 is a—the class is basically about history in the making. Right? Looking at journalism as the rough draft of history, and it uses 9/11 and the so-called war on terrorism as sort of a focal point or a course topic to analyze how all of this, all these narratives have been erected around 9/11. And now I'm teaching people that were children, literally, when 9/11 happened. And so they have a remarkably different perspective on it than 10 years ago.

JON

Absolutely, yeah, one of the things that I've done, or tried to do, is go through the park that's close to me and interview people randomly. And within the last month or so I interviewed a group of students, and I asked

them how they were being taught 9/11 in their classroom. And what they told me was that they weren't taught anything about the context of the attacks or anything like that. They were just taught about the specifics of that day. And, actually, over the years I've made many efforts to reach out to teachers who write syllabuses to teach 9/11 to try and get them to incorporate, the unanswered questions of 9/11, the context of 9/11, and so forth. Because it's very scary to me to think of what they're being taught about, you know, they're being taught the myths, essentially.

MICKEY Indeed, Jon, and in fact an article that I did with Paul Rea for the *Censored 2009* book was literally ripping on that and the article was titled "Deconstructing Deceit: 9/11, the Media and Myth Information," meaning mythological information. And a lot of the way I go about teaching 9/11 issues, historically, is by deconstructing the mythologies and the narratives.

JON Right. Why don't you tell us a little bit about your background. You're a professor, obviously. (Laughter) Tell us a little about that.

MICKEY Teaching is something I've always been interested in. I taught music for a very long time. I started teaching music, actually, in high school. I took a real interest in media, propaganda, and history, politics, and so forth, and as I went through college and veered over to become a history major and went to graduate school for history, mostly looking at the recent past and recent historiography of the United States and its interpretation—particularly about myth-making and the power of official narrative to mold and shape the way people perceive the past, such that it creates a prism in the present that they are predisposed to see things in a certain light, or in a certain way, and less disposed to ask potential questions that challenge those narratives.

My graduate work focused on the Kent State shootings—I published more about that in the last couple years with Laurel Krause whose sister was murdered by the National Guard at Kent State, May 4, 1970. (Geez) It's the same kind of—it's the same analytical kind of approach of like, well there's a lot of things that are going on, both historically and in the present, that appear to be one thing, but there's often reluctance for people to sometimes address the severity or the roots of some of these issues because, again, we're predisposed through conditioning through our media, through education, to not necessarily question these things, and to just not know. As you said about 9/11, many people don't even really know the facts involved with these issues.

Of course, one of the things Project Censored does year-round is undercover—you know, report underreported—censored stories, but this is historic, I mean this is a history—is why we have to uncensor all of our un-histories in order to have context in the present such that we can, in real time, critically think about and deconstruct current events. And so, that's really my interest in this and that's why I ended up in education is because I just thought it was a great vehicle to be around people to just talk about these things as much as possible.

JON I think as being a citizen it is the responsibility to familiarize yourself with what's going on in this country. To familiarize yourself with what the country or the government is doing in your name with your tax dollars. I just—you know before 9/11 I was not like that at all. I didn't care. I was like most Americans. Most Americans don't pay attention to things. And 9/11 took me completely off-guard. Caught me off-guard and, the rest is history. From that point on I had to know what was going on next and, I became glued to the TV set and watched what was going on. And, as I said before, unfortunately, I picked Fox News as my resource (Laughter). They were the red, whitest, and bluest of all the networks. So I was trying to be patriotic, and so I watched Fox News—unfortunately.

All right, you mentioned Project Censored. What is Project Censored and when did you become a part of it?

MICKEY Project Censored is a media-research organization and academic-research organization that stresses the importance of news media literacy and critical thinking. And what you just said a moment ago about civic duty for us to be doing these kinds of things, yeah, I just said that this past week. I just started teaching for the fall semester and I was telling my critical thinking classes that this isn't just for tests. This is for your, the rest of your life. This is for what we're supposed to be doing in our society. And Project Censored, of course, mirrors that, and Project Censored was founded in 1976. It's been on the state university by communications professor Carl Jensen, and Peter Phillips, sociologist, took over the project 20 years later. I worked with Peter—I've worked with Peter off and on after the events of 9/11 and became much more involved with Project Censored after 2006 and 7. I had put together a 9/11 conference called: Lifting the Fog with several people in the Bay Area here, and Peter and I started to work more closely

after that. I became associate director of Project Censored 2008, and became director of Project Censored in 2010.

And what Project Censored does is researches and vets the most under-reported or censored stories in the U.S. press and, of course, we focus on the independent, alternative press and we point out what corporate media failed to do under alleged free press principles—and I say “under alleged” (laughter) is because the idea behind the free press is that the media, the news media, reporters, journalists, they will tell the public what is going on in a meaningful way, contextually, such that they can act intelligently in civic affairs. Unfortunately, of course, that’s not how corporate media functions and they are, in fact, a large propaganda arm of the establishment of military industrial security complex of the U.S. Nato Empire, and they’re also a commercial medium that provides sufficient distraction and tries to get people consuming and doing these various things. But lost in there is the free press principles that George Seldes saying—a great reporter in the 20<sup>th</sup> century—that the purpose of journalism and the news media is to tell people what’s really going on.

And that’s what Project Censored really tries to do is give people the opportunity to find out what’s really going on. And we do a book every year with Seven Stories Press, and we have a website [ProjectCensored.org](http://ProjectCensored.org). We have a new, award-winning documentary film [ProjectCensoredtheMovie.com](http://ProjectCensoredtheMovie.com). So your listeners can certainly go—if they don’t know about Project Censored, you can invite them to check out our website and our materials.

We’ve certainly covered 9/11, but we are not a 9/11-centric organization. (Right) But, how could we not cover 9/11. It’s not that people haven’t heard of 9/11. It’s not that people don’t know about 9/11 per se, but if you take a look and analyze, like you—you know, I would say it was a good thing you were watching some of the Fox News. I say good thing because at some point I think it becomes so obvious that it’s so completely biased and one-sided—as is the rest of a lot of the corporate media. It isn’t just Fox.

JON Oh, exactly. It’s MSNBC, CNBC, CNN, ABC, CBS—they’re all slanted.

MICKEY NPR, PBS—all of this. *The New York Times*, *The Washington Post*. I mean they all have angles and they may have some, you know, potentially on the surface ideological proclivities—Fox is on the right, MSNBC is on the left.

But that's all part of the framing of the propaganda that people are getting "both sides" of the story.

JON Well, it's just false left/right paradigm that they try to maintain.

MICKEY Correct. And they try to maintain it, but as we see year-after-year more and more Americans ARE turning away from these kinds of outlets and they're turning away from opinion-based journalism. Not because having opinions is bad, but people need to have access to just information before they can construct their own opinions. When you're feeding people over the head with opinion journalism—MSNBC led the way, by the way, last year. Eighty-five (85%) percent of their on-air news reporting was opinion-based journalism. And, you know, people figure that out and they start to not trust that these outlets are telling them what they "need to know" and rather are telling them what they want us to know, and what the establishment wants them to know, and what Wall Street wants them to know.

And when you take a look at something like 9/11, of course Project Censored covered this—Project Censored has not weighed in necessarily in terms of saying well this is exactly what happened, or this person's right and this person's wrong. You know it's not—we try not to get involved in movements politically in that regard because we're a free press organization and that is our movement, that's our concerns. But in the process we naturally had to talk some of the things that were going on with 9/11 that were just so preposterous in terms of media coverage. (Right) We certainly—and boy, when we weighed in on 9/11 issues, I have to tell you, man, that it really hit the fan. A lot of long-time Project supporters, you know, really just were like wow you guys are a bunch of conspiracy theorists. You're a bunch of conspiracy nuts. (Right) And, Peter Phillips had to really deal with this and I came on afterwards and, of course, since I had an interest in 9/11 as an educator and a critical thinker, as well as a concerned citizen, and as a human being in terms of how 9/11 was used by the establishment to wreak havoc around the globe literally killing millions of people, displacing tens of millions of people. We're still doing it as obviously you know. But I thought how could we possibly turn our backs and ignore 9/11 and just pretend that, you know, even that it would take the "Left" or take the Libertarian Right. Very critical government, very critical of the role of powerful institutions in our society. How is it that they could possibly suspend critical judgment about 9/11 and just the establishment narrative. To me, that was utterly remarkable. (Laughs)

JON Absolutely, and, it was said very early on—I wrote an article—Bill Moyers essentially wrote a hit piece against 9/11 truth and I wrote a response to Bill Moyers and in that article I said:

“It is well known and said by many that after the 9/11 attacks the media in this country did not do its job. Dan Rather said on May 17, 2002, “There was a time in South Africa that people would put flaming tires around people’s necks if they dissented and in some ways the fear is that you will be necklaced hear. You will have a flaming tire of lack of patriotism put around your neck. Now it is that fear that keeps journalists from asking the toughest of the tough questions.” On April 25, 2007, Dan Rather told Bill Moyers that “There’s no question that we didn’t do a good job. We weren’t smart enough. We weren’t alert enough. We didn’t dig enough and we shouldn’t have been fooled in this way.” And Helen Thomas was adamant about the media’s failure after 9/11. She said, “They rolled over and played dead.”

So, there’s that aspect to the corporate media after 9/11. Well there were people who didn’t want to be painted in an unpatriotic light, so they stayed away from certain issues. That’s not an excuse. I don’t condone it in any way, shape or form, but that’s what a lot of journalists used as their excuse. You spoke of an alleged free press, and I’m sure you’re familiar with Reporters Without Borders?

MICKEY Oh yeah.

JON You know, they ranked the United States in their freedom of the press over the last couple of years as high as 50<sup>th</sup> in the world—

MICKEY Yes—(Laughs)

JON I’m sorry?

MICKEY Yeah, as low as 50<sup>th</sup> in the world, right?

JON Yeah, as low as 50<sup>th</sup> for freedom of press. You know, in a country where our Constitution says that we have freedom of the press. To me, that's absurd and ridiculous (yeah) to be—

MICKEY Yeah, unfortunately, it's—I would argue that in addition to being absurd and ridiculous, it's also tragic and dangerous in a society the size of the U.S. with the resources of the U.S. and the military of the U.S.—the fact that we have an electorate that's not oft-treated to honest discourse about the matters of the day that hits the most. I would argue that it's literally dangerous how we have such high percentages of people in the population that support certain acts of aggression and restrictions on our Constitutional rights and so forth, particularly post-9/11, in the shadow of 9/11, with the constant refrain of Remember 9/11. Here we are 13 years later and Barack Obama is still reminding us of 9/11 as a means by which to get involved with Isis in Iraq and Syria now, and so forth.

I mean this is very problematic and the role of the journalism and news media is to cut through that type of propaganda. And, unfortunately, what we see—because most people still do, even if they're turning away, do get their news from corporate news media sources. And over the years we have warned and warned and warned people that while the corporate media does report on some things that matter, on occasion, a lot of their coverage is very skewed, very framed, a lot is omitted—and a lot of people don't know where to go. And the irony is that even though more and more people are admitting that—over 60 or 70 percent, in fact, in some polls—admit that they don't trust the news media, they don't trust corporate media, but then when they're polled on issues of the day, they parrot the same things that they hear from the news media that they just claimed that they didn't trust.

JON Well that's something that Paul Thompson, the creator of The Complete 9/11 Timeline at HistoryCommons.org said. He said that the news does report on the news, but you find these stories, these important stories in the back sections of newspapers and so on and so forth. If they had given any of these stories the attention that the ice bucket challenge just got, or Britney Spears or Michael Jackson's death, I mean this would be a different world.

MICKEY It really would be. We certainly are trying at the Project. (Laughs)

JON Right. Now, you told me before that Project Censored has been criticized for not covering certain theories about 9/11. Why don't you tell us a little bit about that.

MICKEY Well, it's interesting, because on one side we've been criticized because we bothered to cover the glaring problems of media propaganda and omissions regarding 9/11 and the 9/11 Commission, and so forth. And then on the other end of the spectrum we've been criticized by people within the 9/11 truth movement, so called. Because we won't widely publicize or get into some of the folks in the movement that—I can't really use the word folks anymore can I because Obama has pretty much trashed that. (Laughter) Aw shucks we tortured some folks and some folks cooked the books. I wonder if the folks cooking the books at the VA are the same folks tortured. But, anyway. I digress.

Some people, you know, do have theories of speculative points about 9/11 and I mean we're not really interested in the speculation elements so much. We're interested in critical questions that either have not been asked or not been answered. Certainly the victims' families that pushed so hard for a commission in the face of Bush's obstinance to not have one and Bush, President W. Bush asked congress specifically not to investigate 9/11 and did not create a commission which was totally biased allegedly independent hardly the case. And controlled by Philip Zelikow, complete partisan and friends and coauthor with people he's investigating, but that's – maybe we'll get into that later.

But, you know, we don't focus on just any Tom, Dick, or Harry or Sally or Sue, or whomever, because they have some theory or some speculative issue with 9/11. And, you know—so we've run into some snags and problems with people about say the Pentagon, or even one of the big issues that's gained some traction in places like New York, of course, on the Twin Towers and Building 7 (Right) where they were trying to get a measure on the ballot and it keeps getting tossed out or kicked off, and it rekindles the attacks of 9/11 and rekindles the whole smearing tactic that these are a bunch of conspiracy nuts and whack jobs, and what have you.

Let me give you a really specific case. You know, a lot of people knowing that the corporate news media is propaganda; knowing that we live in a culture based on a lot of lies and half-truths and so forth then gravitates to alternative news outlets, so that may be good. But some of the outlets they

gravitate toward, I would argue, maybe have more negative or detrimental effects in the long-term. The name Alex Jones comes to mind. (Right) InfoWars. And I won't say that there aren't some things on InfoWars that are really well done and are very important stories, but what I would unfortunately also have to posit—and Nolan Higdon did an article with us at Project Censored on our website on Alex Jones The War on Your Mind. It's more like Alex Jones' war on your mind. Because—and this is not a personal statement about Alex. It's not a personal attack. Nolan, and what we've done is we've looked at the way that Jones and InfoWars has covered 9/11 issues and Jones often inserts himself such into the debate that he becomes the issue. (Right) And, unfortunately, Jones has been discredited on so many different occasions for propounding nonsensical theories or unproven assertions that he's not a terribly credible source (No) on these matters. But he's a very high-profile character in the media, a lightning rod. The Drudge Report uses hundreds of his stories over the years—no joke. And that's a widely trafficked website.

But my point is that Alex is sort of like a lightning rod that becomes a defacto unelected spokesperson for a movement that ultimately ends up discrediting not only the movement but any serious researchers that have questions about the same subject.

JON Well this is an issue—(Very serious problem) We're going to get into this a little bit later.

But, Media Matters—I'm sure you're familiar with them (Yeah). They hate 9/11 people. They hate them. And they have portrayed Alex as the “leader” of the 9/11 Truth movement before, as you said.

MICKEY That's exactly the problem. You know, there is no leader. It's an issue and there is a faction of the 9/11 Truth and Justice movement I would say that really at the core wants to know what happened and want new investigations and want material released. Again, the notion that somehow people are called conspiracy theorists in the pejorative for asking questions goes all the way back to the CIA and the John Kennedy assassination when the CIA literally through their Mockingbird reporters said, look, anybody that challenges the Warren Commission, you need to smear them with these labels. You need to call them nuts, crazy, conspiracy freaks, whatever, as long as we can move this down the road such that, people aren't going to really ever find out what happened here. Because they don't want people to

understand the operations of the deep state and deep political affairs. As Peter Dale Scott would say (Right) or Mike Lofgren.

But the bigger issue here with now—9/11—is that because of some of the, and I would say irresponsible—this is my opinion, people could clearly disagree—but I think there have been so many irresponsible claims made about 9/11. Not just by the government and so forth, but by people questioning the 9/11 attacks themselves that it has made it a very confusing and difficult to navigate field or topic. And add into it the emotional reactions people have about the 9/11 events. And a lot of people in the public they don't necessarily know. Who do they trust? Where do they go? And so forth. And I would then argue that when people become sort of like one click away and you're over to Drudge, over to Jones, over to what have you, I think the general public sort of sees this as wow, look at this guy, bloviating, foaming at the mouth, wow, what a crack pot. He must really be crazy. And then by guilt-by-association somebody over here that argues that we don't know all these things, and the commission itself even has admitted that they were wrong and didn't get to investigate everything—that of course was the purpose, to erect some kind of story about it that might stick, despite the fact that it wasn't supported by all the evidence. We don't know all the evidence. We still don't know all the evidence about Saudi Arabia, etc.

But this kind of thing makes it very difficult to have reasonable discourse about the subject. Add into the mix the people that allegedly are watchdogs of the press and—stalwart progressives that are supposedly very interested in keeping government honest and so forth, they spend an awful lot of time attacking people that ask these unpopular questions, and then they use the guilt-by-association as a means by which to divert attention away from asking the questions in the first place. (Right) The issue isn't Alex Jones. The issue isn't InfoWars. The issue isn't—I mean, fill in the blanks. The issue is 9/11 and what we do and do not know about it. And that is where we should be placing the focus.

JON

Well—in 2006 or so when the media essentially couldn't ignore us anymore, and they did—they ignored us greatly but there were some hit pieces that were written very early on. In fact, the very first one documented was by Paul Lashmar, *The Independent*. He wrote a hit piece on September 23, 2001, entitled “America at War: Conspiracy Enthusiasts – Some Blame Jews, Others Bush. Everyone Has a Theory on the

Net.” (Laughter) And early hit pieces focused a lot on the Middle East. You know, they tried to say that there were—the people that questioned the 9/11 attacks only came from the Middle East, but there were many in America who questioned the attacks as well.

And as far as in 2006, when the media really couldn’t ignore us anymore, as you said, they focused—they had guests on, that I considered to be the fringe of the 9/11 Truth movement. They had people like Jim Fetzer, Webster Tarpley, Kevin Barrett, David von Kleist, Alex Jones, Morgan Reynolds, and you know, for trying to paint us as anti-Semites, they had on Christopher Bollyn at one time. (Yeah)

And what they do is they take these individuals and they portray them, or they portray us, as being no different than these individuals. And , you know, there are a lot of times before these people would go on television, you know, on 911blogger.com I, you know, because TV time is so precious I used to beg them to talk about the families, to talk about the unanswered questions, to talk about the 9/11 commission. In my mind, an author—because TV time was so precious—an author becomes an activist when they get on the television and you should use the best talking points possible to make our argument. And so many people, these individuals were used, they were essentially useful tools for the establishment to paint the 9/11 Truth movement as crazy conspiracy theorists and so forth. They would never have on family members and stuff like that.

Now, do you agree that—well, actually, Scott Ford wanted me to ask you about the class that you teach on 9/11 (Sure), so tell us a little bit about that.

MICKEY Well, it’s a critical thinking course, I mean, and it involves the events of 9/11 in a historical context, while simultaneously looking at record-keeping, history in the making, the role of journalism, how we know what we know, why we know what we know, why we don’t know certain things, or why a lot of people don’t know things that people that have been researching more closely these subjects. Why can’t they break through? Why don’t the facts speak for themselves as you yourself have written.

And the course is really designed just to get people to think critically and to ask questions and to ask intelligent informed questions about very key issues and the recent past—in this case 9/11—and how it has affected us. (Right) When I’m teaching, I don’t go into the class waving wands and

banners “inside job,” these kind of things (Laughter). Yeah, again, some people get this impression. You know, it’s either a 9/11 class that says that 19 hijackers hated our freedom; Islamic radicals hate our freedom. Or, it’s inside job. And that’s also part of the propaganda is that it's either/or. And it’s a more complicated subject, as you well know, and so what I get into in the class is, you know, we look at, and the students get to choose certain things that they want to investigate, and I tell them, of course, there is something very important to understand and that’s the myth of the right answer. There’s not always one answer. There’s not always a perfectly right answer. Or some positions and some arguments are better than others based on evidence. And where evidence stops is, of course, where speculation then begins, but I caution people to stop with the evidence.

JON Well, what I generally tell people is to look at both sides of every argument, every argument that you hear in the 9/11 Truth movement—

MICKEY Or all six sides. This is what I argue. Let’s look at all the sides. There’s more than—

JON Yeah, exactly. Exactly. Look at every—see, when I used to play devil’s advocate in the 9/11 Truth movement, every time somebody would come up with a theory, you know, and I would play devil’s advocate, I would get so much shit for that, and, just like you talked about being criticized for not covering certain theories, I took the same kind of thing.

And I gotta tell you, one of the problems that the 9/11 Truth movement has, as a movement, and I’m guilty of this as well, is that we would contact journalists and angrily ask them: Why aren’t you covering this? Why aren’t you covering that? And because of that many journalists don’t want to touch the issue anymore. Even journalists who used to report on issues, don’t want to touch this anymore because they don’t want to get blasted by the emails and so forth. And, to me, it's not an excuse to ignore the multitude of cover-ups concerning 9/11, but I do almost understand it.

MICKEY Well I can say, yeah, I’ve seen it first-hand and, frankly, I’ve seen it directed towards me and Peter Phillips, and at Project Censored and one of the things that I do, addressing Scott Ford’s sort of what’s going on in this class, question—you know, one of the things I stress, particularly in the beginning of the term, is that how we communicate to others and each other is at least as important as what we’re communicating. (Right) Because we’re humans and we have emotional thinking, we have critical thinking,

we have reactions—and when you're going after, not you personally, but when you're going after somebody with a big truth stick and you're very angry that other people won't unravel that and look at it and validate your concerns, that does enrage people. But it also makes people on the other end of that stick feel like they're being attacked.

And so I would argue that that's entirely counterproductive in terms of communicating. And what I've experienced is when I more soberly address critiques and questions in a macro way with some of these people in journalism or other professors and so forth is that they spend the first 5 or 10 minutes going off on a rampage about anecdotes of how many times they've been assaulted verbally from people. And it really wears on them. It really wears on them. And I know Bill Maher has railed on 9/11 Truth because of hecklers and, I know to some degree, Howard Zinn who originally was a little supportive of some of David Ray Griffin's work, later sort of distanced himself. Some of that, again, it's the teeth. It's just people just can only handle being berated and attacked so long until they start to just see everybody that has a question about something like 9/11 is the same. And now we're back to the Alex Jones' problem, right? (Right)

And somehow the sober, intelligent, legitimately concerned citizens—certainly the people, the victims' families of 9/11—it gets drowned in the sin of our contentious bread and circus media culture, such that we have to spend some time with each other really unpacking that baggage and tearing down those walls to say, okay, let's go now. Let's have our little therapy session, and now when we're done with that, let's address some of the key facts, key issues, and key unanswered questions and let people in to the dialogue and conversation in a way that they feel they're in the driver's seat and you can socratically sort of say, okay, so what's your aversion to the subject. Let's forget about the personalities; let's forget about the people; let's forget about your personal experiences; tell me how you can make sense of—fill in the blank, Jon, right? (Right) The unanswered questions. The facts speak for themselves. Go through a list of things that we know. I mean, something that's so common as the forewarnings (Well—) right? Historical—go ahead—

JON

What you're talking about is something that we would never see on the corporate television. We would never see an hour-long discussion (laughter)

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MICKEY I laugh, but you're right.

JON We would never see an hour-long discussion with somebody like Paul Thompson, or Kevin Fenton, or even myself, talk about these issues and not allow the corporate media to frame it in a certain way. You know, completely unedited. There was an interview years ago with Martin Luther King. He was on the Mike Douglas Show. And he had a chance to speak his views and make his arguments and so forth. You literally will not see that today.

And one thing I want to mention, you know, Cindy Sheehan (Mmm-hmm) is a good friend of mine, she used to tell me how much she hated 9/11 Truthers because of how aggressive they were against her. And there was a time where she wanted nothing to do with it, and then something happened in the 9/11 Truth movement—somebody called her a wretched liar, I'm not going to mention any names (Mm-hmm) and I emailed her and I said, look, this man is not representative of the 9/11 Truth movement. We very much respect what you do. I apologize and so forth. And from that point on, Cindy and I, became great friends. And now, she's open to discussing the 9/11 issue. She's open to promoting the 9/11 issue when she speaks. And so, again, it goes back to how you approach people and so forth.

Now, I have a question. How many companies own the majority of the media in this country?

MICKEY In the United States, we're down to about five or six that control roughly 90 percent (90%) of the media. And when we say that, it's not just news media, it's the entertainment and infotainment complex. I mean, the same companies historically, we have major military industrial complex companies owning vast percentages of various media outlets. Ben Bagdikian who wrote *The Media Monopoly* in 1982—it's now in multiple editions later—Ben Bagdikian was the canary in the coal mine, so to speak. Dean of journalism at UC Berkeley back in the day, saying that oh my, we're down to 50 corporations that are controlling the media. (Laughs). (Right) I'm not laughing because it's funny. (No, I know.)

We're down to five and it's amazing how little people seem to pay attention to this and—I mean, Phil Donahue, another talk show pioneer, along with Mike Douglas, Phil Donahue, who also by the way experienced the wrath of the nationalist post-9/11 climate that percolated through corporate

America and the news media losing his show because he asked questions about the invasion of Iraq (Right). Totally unrelated factoid of 9/11, but you wouldn't know that if you were watching the corporate news media back then, or now, for that matter I suppose. But, Donahue hit the nail on the head a number of years ago when he said, yeah, I've got 500 channels and 400 of them are selling Bowflex machines and the others are selling jewelry and Jesus. (Laughs) And, I mean, it's—yeah, but because people have all these channels and all these alleged choices, right, they don't necessarily ask the critical questions about like who is putting this out there, what are we paying for? Who is arranging this to be so convenient for us to consume and what do they get out of it?

JON A lot of times the corporate media will accept talking points from the government and portray it as news.

MICKEY Absolutely. It's common place, I'm afraid. So are video news releases, which are fake news stories done up from PR firms that hire actors to play journalists to read propaganda and then they send these tapes and these videos to news outlets in hopes that they will uncritically run them. And hundreds of times, Jon, they have run them. (Right, exactly.) Literally.

JON I've heard stories before, Sibel Edmonds tried to contact somebody from *Newsweek*, and that person refused to talk to her. She's a 9/11 whistleblower. She has explosive information that if it ever got out—it's one of those things that the corporate media did not bring attention to that if it had ever gotten out, Americans would be outraged. And she just mentioned one instance of trying to contact somebody in *Newsweek* and they refused to talk with her.

Now, with regard to that issue I have a story from Bob McIlvaine, who's a 9/11 (Mmm-hm), family member. At one point, there was a reporter from the *Philadelphia Inquirer* who wanted to do a story with Bob, and the editor would not let the story run. And, eventually, this reporter quit from the *Philadelphia Inquirer* and they called Bob to apologize, you know, because they really wanted to run that story.

Could you talk a little bit about that? Like, who has the say in corporate media as to what gets reported on and what doesn't? Where do those decisions get made?

MICKEY If you go back and look, one of the seminal works in this area of media literacy and propaganda that is particularly focusing on the United States was Noam Chomsky and Edward Herman's *Manufacturing Consent*. That was from 1988. And, I know in the 9/11 movement, Chomsky's name often draws great ire because (hmm) well, why don't you address these issues? And why don't you—again, I think that the litmus testing that we talked about earlier that the notion that there are people in both Left and Libertarian circles that, you know, if you have a certain view on 9/11, that determines whether or not they'll ally with you. And within the 9/11 movement, they have another litmus test that if you won't say X about the Pentagon, then you're on the wrong side of the issues, and on and on and on.

JON Correct, it became cult-like. The 9/11 Truth movement became very cult-like.

MICKEY Yeah, very cult-like, and very tunnel-vision. But, again, I'm not into throwing babies out with bathwater here. I have critiqued Amy Goodman or Noam Chomsky on some issues and I have agreed with them on many, many others, and I can at least acknowledge where people have contributed intellectually and culturally in very positive ways, I think, overall. And I don't think it's fair that we can just litmus test people on one issue and discard them. And I do think that's also what draws contempt for particular movements and outlets, both alike. (Right) And that's what I think is important—to cut through.

So, back to the question of who makes these decisions. Well, manufacturing consent is literally a term that's taken from the 1920s—Walter Lippmann, Edward Bernays, Freud's nephew—these folks were really instrumental in selling World War I to the American public, and engineering consent was one of the terms that comes out of that period. In other words, the modern democratic theory in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, it was that, well, we have more and more people voting and participating in society to the progressive era; we have more and more people that want to be part of government and so forth. That's fine, but the munitions industries, the banks, and established powers, well, how are we going to control the masses? Going back to the founding of the United States, Alexander Hamilton was, basically, look at the rabble, how can we deal with these ignorant people? Democracy will never work. We'd have to tell people what to do and think because they're too stupid and ignorant to do it on their own.

Well, that's where manufacturing consent comes from. And that's the idea that well, if you just control the range of opinion and control the flow of information, then you can ultimately attenuate the outcomes of public opinion that then maybe steered toward supporting policy X or policy Y. When prior to the steering and controlling of that information the public may have had a very different view about policy X or policy Y.

JON Well, obviously, this is extremely dangerous. It's an extremely dangerous practice, and—my belief is that the media outlets in this country need to be broken up into hundreds of different companies, forcing them to compete for the best story.

MICKEY I would argue they need to be broken up into a series of non-profits. I mean, this is one of the big problems with news media, and if you look at the propaganda model that was put forward by Chomsky and Herman in *Manufacturing Consent*, their book, in 1988, it has five significant components about what controls news media and information flow. And the first is ownership. In a capitalistic economy the idea that news is based on competition for profit creates serious problems because it means the bottom line matters more than the facts. (Right) Or what the “truth” might be about a particular issue. And when you compound ownership and private profit with advertising, which is the way most media companies make their money, then you've got to be careful that you're promoting the people that are advertising their products and services on your shows—which, by the way, are supposedly on the public airways, right? (Right) The Communications Act of 1934, says that the airways belong to the public, yet we have five corporations that control 90 percent (90%) of the information and the media that is going out to the public. So it's a complete oxymoron. It's a complete propaganda ploy.

JON They've also done away with what's called the Fairness Doctrine.

MICKEY 1987, that got axed. Now the Fairness Doctrine used to mandate that there were equal time for different candidates and that got disappeared in the Reagan years, and that then led to the rise of A.M. right-wing radio, which dominates across the U.S. almost 90 percent (90%) of the talk-radio programming in particularly small communities around the U.S. is piped in, is right-wing radio.

And I want to say something here—just very, very quickly, as a footnote. Possibly, a disclaimer. I don't consider myself a right-wing person, but I want to say that I don't personally have problems with people that have right-wing ideologies. My problem is when people act like their ideology is the only ideology. And I have a bigger problem with news media outlets that pretend they are objective when, in fact, they are entirely ideological operators. (Right) All the main big fives—the Disney, the Viacoms, the News Corp, and so forth—they have a clear ideological perspective, and it's not necessarily republican or democrat as you'll see on Fox and MSNBC. It's pro-capitalism. And it's not a free market, and it's not a fair market. It's dominating a market. And it's dominating the so-called marketplace of ideas. And when you couple the ownership and advertising issue, that's a serious means by which information can be wittled, funneled, controlled, omitted, etc.

And then you add to that the other elements of the propaganda model, which includes sourcing—only relying on official sources? (Right) Well, that totally crowds out the people that are involved in the society, the vernacular views, the bottom-up views, the grassroots views, bringing Howard Zinn back into this. The people's history, right? We need the people's media, Jon. And the people's media isn't on CNN. And it's not on Fox, and MSNBC, and ABC and so forth, and all these other channels. The people's media is something like Pacifica, right? It's a community based media.

And so I don't want to get into ideological fights with people by saying right-wingers or left-wingers, you know, these kinds of things. (No, I mean —) Yeah, I think like you said before, you called it a false paradigm. And I think people get really ensconced in this distraction.

But the part of the propaganda model that I was just mentioning—sourcing—is very significant. The news media that rely only on official sources, they're like stenographers for people in power.

JON Exactly. They also fight for what's called "access."

MICKEY Yeah, if you write a story that's critical of one of your sources, they'll talk to your "competitor." But I always say the competition is a ruse. I mean that whole idea that these groups are competing is—I mean, that's propaganda in and of itself. That's what's used to make people feel like this is really

competitive. They're definitely going to scoop each other and da-da-da. They're going to tell us what's really going on because that's how they make their money. No, nonsense. These are all people that hobnob with powerful people. They eat in the same restaurants. They hang out at the same meetings. In some cases, at some news outlets, they literally have people there that are married to people that are in powerful positions so they don't disclose. All kinds of stuff like this goes on.

So sourcing is a real serious problem, biased and newsfeed that a lot of people don't pay attention to, unfortunately.

And then the last couple points in the propaganda model, one's called flack and the other ideology. Well, we already addressed ideological bias. And in the United States where it masquerades as donkeys and elephants, it's really about bottom line and is about controlling markets and controlling profits for shareholders. Corporations are required through their charters, by law, to do what is necessary to maximize the profits of their investors. That clearly competes with the need to tell people, as George Seldes said, what's really going on. Because if it goes against the profit motive, then the people that make those decisions can be removed from leaderly roles in the corporation. So, we have the owners, the advertisers, we then—of course that trickles all the way down through the editors and so forth.

And I want to underscore one key point about this propaganda model. Flack, by the way, is feedback, boycotts. There are ways in which people at news media outlets can be influenced or pressured to report or not report certain things. So there are several different things that work together through the propaganda model. But the thing is that a lot of folks when you ask journalists—there's the “folks” word again, sorry, can't use it (laughs)—a lot of people in journalism, you know, they'll say well, nobody tells me what to report. Nobody tells me. (Right) Jim Lehrer was just saying this not long ago about PBS news. Nobody's ever told me what to do or what to report.

Or, what a lot of people don't know is that PBS, even though it's “public broadcasting,” the Lehrer News Hour, the flagship news program on that show, was basically privately owned and funded by Liberty Media, which was a conservative, organization, and so in other words, Jim Lehrer doesn't need to be told what to report or what not to report per se. Jim Lehrer is an intelligent person. He knows what he can and can't necessarily get away

with saying. And particularly not—look, Lehrer’s more like a superstar in the news media, right? These personalities and so forth. You take your rank and file journalist at this shrinking jobs that consolidation’s brought, and deregulation has brought, which has gotten us down to five behemoth corporations that own 95 percent (95%) of the media, you don’t need to tell these young journalists what to report and not report. If you’re reporting and writing about something and your editor doesn’t publish it, how long do you think that’s going to happen before you lose your job, Jon? (Not very long.) And covering controversial issues is always problematic.

JON Well, this brings us to a topic that I want to talk about. There were journalists who would report on some of the unanswered questions of 9/11 and some of the inconsistencies of 9/11. One person in particular, Robert Scheer wrote an article for the *Los Angeles Times* called “What We Don’t Know About 9/11 Hurts Us” and just a few months later he was fired.

MICKEY Yeah, he’s not working at the *LA Times* anymore. (Laughs)

JON No, he started Truthdig.com (Yes, I know.) And I think there are other instances where journalists who tried to do the right thing were let go. And we talked about Phil Donahue and so forth, but I mean, that was also one of the reasons—

MICKEY You can go down the list, I mean, with so many of these people. Ya know, Sharyl Attkisson, Kristina Borjesson, Peter Arnett, the imbedded reporters in the so-called wars and so forth. I mean there is a serious effort to control what people are saying, what journalists are allowed to report. There are military censors; there are corporate media censors; there are other government censors. I mean, it’s patently absurd, to be frank, that many in the public just don’t realize how many controls there are on the information. And it is exactly as you say, Jon, the very people that often try to call that out or point that out or point to the things that the media ought to be covering and doing, they might not be long for those particular pedestals, outlets, or megaphones.

One good thing about the Internet so far is that people like Scheer can go out and start his own kind of online publication and attract enough of viewers that want to know things that these folks want to say at Truthdig that they’re able to continue and they’re able to keep going.

But this gets back to the problem of the competition and the profits and so forth. And I'd argue that the non-profit model, the community based model (Right), like higher education, we have tenure for professors and even though some will say, well, tenure's abused and so on. But tenure is very important for academics because it protects academics' freedom. And journalists really need to have the same kind of freedom to report the things they see without the fear of retaliation that takes many forms. And, of course, this takes serious forms. You look in our last book *Censored 2014: Fearless Speech in Fateful Times*, the onslaught against whistleblowers; the deaths of journalists around the globe. This is all escalating. This is all increasing in the post-9/11 environment. (Absolutely) And I think that people need to be made much more aware of this and really get more involved in citizen's journalism and supporting journalists (Right) that really try to do the right thing.

JON People like Abby Martin and so forth.

MICKEY Yes, Abby is on our board and has a wonderful show "Breaking the Set" on RT. Now a lot of folks knee-jerks that right out of the gate and say, oh that's *Russia Today*; that's propaganda, Putin, Russian parliament funded. And I say, yeah, that's great, but who do you think funds *The New York Times*? Who do you think funds CNN? (Right) Do you think there's nobody behind that that has an interest involved? And so I say to people—

JON Well it just—

MICKEY You know what I say to people—back to the critical thinking class—is that yeah, that's fancy, that's wonderful, please pay attention to that. But, take a look at the subjects, the topics, the guests, the facts, and the arguments and THEN if there is an obvious bias, an obvious problem and a conflict of interest, yes, then that is very relevant. But, if you go through case-by-case and you take a look at who Abby Martin has on her program, including us, or Nafeez Ahmed, and so many other people that don't get the attention of *The New York Times* or CNN and so forth, has to make you wonder, has to make you wonder. Then why are people not being involved by being invited on these shows? Well, we know why, Jon. It's because these corporate news media outlets will not tolerate people that are criticizing this political economy issue, who are criticizing the blatant biases that go on in news media. They're just, they pretend they don't exist. And a show like Abby's, "Breaking the Set" really, I think, hits whereas—it's like a Who's

Who of who should be a part of the public debate about what's going on, who most people never hear of.

JON Right. Now, I want to—I brought up Abby for a reason (Yeah). You know, I coined the phrase 9/11 Truther and, unfortunately, because of how it's been tarnished over the years I now refer to myself as an advocate for 9/11 justice. But let me—I want to read the definition that I wrote for the phrase 9/11 Truther.

“In my mind a 9/11 Truther is someone who fights alongside the family members seeking truth and accountability for the 9/11 attacks. In my mind a 9/11 Truther is someone who fights for the sick and dying 9/11 first responders who need healthcare desperately. In my mind a 9/11 Truther is someone who does not like how the day of 9/11 is being used to inflict pain and suffering around the world and is trying to stop it, stop it by using the truth, something that we have been denied by our government regarding the 9/11 attacks.”

Now, that's the definition of a 9/11 Truther. I get to say that because I coined the phrase. Now, unfortunately, because of the corporate media's coverage of the—or the corporate media's attacks against 9/11 Truthers, they've essentially made a 9/11 Truther the equivalent of—

MICKEY It's a term of mockery.

JON Yeah, they've made it the equivalent of a baby killer or a dog torturer. If you even, oh my God! A 9/11 Truther!

Now Abby recently, she spoke out against Russia's actions in the Ukraine and she got a lot of flack for that. But one of the things that they did (Yeah) is they went through her history and saw her activism with 9/11 and tried to use that against her. And we've seen that in many cases. (Absolutely.) Van Jones, do you remember him?

MICKEY I remember well. I remember well.

JON I'm not saying I'm a fan of Van Jones, but you know he signed this 9/11 Truth statement years ago. And they used that against him to get him out of the Obama administration. How many times have we seen, let's talk about celebrities. Every time a celebrity has come out and spoken on behalf of

9/11—you know, Rosie O'Donnell (Mmm-hmm), Willie Nelson, Heather Thomas, Charlie Sheen, who I don't like, but whatever—every time someone like that has spoken out, the corporate media went into attack mode. (Of course!) And it—

I wrote an article years ago—I don't remember the title. It was something like "Recording mainstream media attacks in unison are hard." Just recording mainstream media attacks just happen to take place in unison. And it's across all networks that these people get attacked.

MICKEY It's very coordinated and the term has propagandistically been transformed quite successfully by the establishment and corporate media. I don't call it mainstream media, Jon, because I think you and I and—(Yeah, we're the mainstream) are the mainstream, and they're the corporate media. They're the media that has their agenda and our media, I think Jon, needs to have the people's agenda. And that's why we need to have these kinds of conversations. And that's why Peter Phillips and I have the show on KPFA Pacifica Radio once a week. I think that's what we need to be doing. We need to counter that. Corporate news media is irrelevant. I think. Other than being a propaganda arm of the state and the—the corporate state, to be more specific. And I think that we need to be aware of that. (Right) And they have successfully. You're correct, Jon, they have successfully turned the word TRUTH into a tarnishing term. And, boy, I have to say that is a travesty. (Yes it is) That the very thing that is pure about human existence to seek wisdom and seek understanding and compassion is part of a process of truth. The great Indian poet Robert Dranoff Tagore once wrote that truth comes as a conqueror only to those who have lost the art of receiving it as a friend. The truth meaning, the process of coming to reasonable, temporary conclusions based on facts, based on evidence, right?

And what has happened is our government and the corporate news media have literally turned that very term, described that process, into a negative pejorative attack. (Yep) And that—that is at the core of the propaganda organ. That is ultimately the way to control public opinion. Because you don't want to find yourself on the receiving end of that kind of attack, now do you, Jon?

JON No you don't, because look what happens. You lose your job and so on and so forth.

MICKEY And you lose your credibility and so forth.

JON Yeah, you lose your credibility—you lose your following—

MICKEY Yeah, yeah. It is a sickeningly devious attempt that, again, it pains me greatly to see otherwise thoughtful, caring people on whatever side of the political spectrum buy it, fall for it. And anytime that you're somebody uttering the term conspiracy theorist as a pejorative label, it has already told me enough about that person. Nothing much about the person or movements they may be attacking. It's told me they are intellectually lazy. They are potentially dishonest. And that they are not interested in having open dialogue. They're interested in attacking people to bolster their own position or status.

JON Right. Well one of the problems with demonizing people who question 9/11 is that it's very difficult to get people who have a voice, who have a following, to even address the issue anymore because of the fact that they're afraid of the backlash that they'll receive.

MICKEY Oh we've addressed it every year. It's been in our books for years. We've addressed it repeatedly. We're sure we've lost some support, from foundations, and so forth. A couple of people have quit as national judges of Project Censored. Out of the many people that have been judges, including Noam Chomsky and Howard Zinn, only two people resigned as judges of our stories, over 9/11 stories—Norman Solomon was one of them. Who, by the way, has since said that he thinks we may need to look into it again and so on. Who knows?

But my point is that you're right about that. There has been a tarnishing affect. But we focus on the media coverage of it and the lack of information that comes out through the corporate media about these types of events. Next week we're doing a 9/11 show yet again. (Right) We're participating in the 9/11 Film Festival in Oakland, not because we agree with everything that every movie there says, but because it's a key place that people in the community can go in and talk about these things and not feel attacked, and not feel threatened. And we're going to have Nafeez Ahmed on. Coming up here this week who obviously will be talking about post-9/11 related issues. We have Shahid Buttar coming on from the Bill of Rights Defense Committee in a couple weeks talking about post-9/11 civil liberties issues.

These are real issues connected to 9/11 and we cannot be afraid to address these issues or else we are throwing in the towel for the next generation.

JON

Well, I'm going to address a few things right now that you made me think of. Things that are omitted by the media. Things that are absolutely ignored by the media and—before we get into this, everybody should know that each time one of these things has happened, there's been mass email campaigns to different corporate media outlets informing them that these things are happening. So, it's not like they don't know they're happening. They just choose arbitrarily to ignore them. And—yeah, I'm going to go over a list of things that I believe are newsworthy events that happened that the news media completely ignored. And, one of the things at the many conventions we've had over the years, the very first, or one of the very first, was the 9/11 Omission Hearings, which took place in New York City on September 9, 2004, a few months after the release of the 9/11 report that was chaired by then former representative Cynthia McKinney. They had a multitude of family members speaking. They had authors and researchers speaking. There were hundreds of people in the room. And nobody covered that. And there were many examples of that from many different conferences over the years.

Now another few things that has been completely ignored by the media, unless it's an attack piece, the different Zogby Polls that 9/11Truth.org commissioned over the years. Those were completely ignored. The only polls that ever seem to get any attention were the ones that were run by CBS or *The New Times*. You know, that talked about conspiracy theories and stuff like that.

The 9/11 Congressional briefing that took place in July of 2005 that was chaired by then Representative Cynthia McKinney—she won her seat back. And The Jersey Girls—Lorie Van Auken, Mindy Kleinberg, Monica Gabrielle, the September 11th advocates. They testified at this hearing and—The September 11<sup>th</sup> advocates, The Jersey Girls, they during the time of the 9/11 Commission they were on TV all the time. And, we had this thing where in this country we should support the 9/11 family members and so forth, but after the release of the 9/11 report when the myth was written in stone, when The Jersey Girls would speak out, they were almost entirely ignored. They released so many press releases over the years calling into question this or that—and I'm going to give you two examples, and remember the word “newsworthy” okay? When I read these.

This is the first one. It's from August 4, 2006, it's called "9/11 Widows Issue Statement Regarding Pentagon Deception and 9/11 Commission."

"The fact the Commission did not see fit to tie up all loose ends in their final report or to hold those who came before them accountable for lying and/or making misleading statements, puts into question the veracity of the entire Commission's Report. Individuals who came before the commission to testify after NORAD's appearance had no reason to state the truth. It was abundantly clear that there would be no repercussions for any misrepresentations." And they finished their statement by saying that the "9/11 Commission was derelict in its duties. What we needed from them was a thorough investigation into the events of September 11<sup>th</sup>. Inexcusably, five years later we still do."

MICKEY Yeah, that's inexcusable. You're correct.

JON And nobody, nobody covered that. I mean, this is something, to me, that should have been plastered across the television screens across the country. And never did.

MICKEY Again, you're right. There are decisions that were made by people in very high places to report the press releases from the Commission. (Okay--) I mean, look, it's so amazing that there are even people associated with the Commission itself who have publicly stated that the Commission itself was a white wash. It was a cover-up. John Farmer comes to mind, Dean of Law at Rutgers University. You know, the former legal counsel to the Commission. I mean it's really riveting in a lot of ways. The two main commissioners, Kean and Hamilton, have discussed the problems and how they don't know, and how we really don't know. It reminds me, painfully, of the 1970s when the congress basically had the United States House Select Committee on Assassinations and so on and they basically said, yeah, that Kennedy thing, that Warren Commission Report, that hmmm, that's got a lot of problems. We don't think it's very accurate, but we don't know what to do about it, so move along. Nothing to see here. These aren't the droids you're looking for. [Laughs] Here we are at 9/11—here we are (Right) where there are ample statements from people both involved with

the Commission and outside, including the victims' families that are saying, we're still waiting for an actual investigation.

JON

I want to read the second press release from The Jersey Girls, the September 11<sup>th</sup> Advocates. And this was written on February 4, 2008, after the allegations from Phil Shenon's book the Commission came out that said Karl Rove was speaking to Philip Zelikow—the idea that he may have been taking direction from Karl Rove who knows came out—and they came out with a statement and it was titled “September 11 Advocates Comment on the Impending Release of Philip Shenon's Book.”

“Why when this congressionally mandated commission could have done much to fix the fatal flaws in our government by conducting a real investigation and making vital recommendations, would they instead allow it to become a sham. This investigation was meant to fix the loopholes that allowed our country to be so vulnerable. Why would they choose instead to succumb to political machinations? What would we find out if a real investigation into September 11, 2001 were ever done? The bottom line is that the most deadly attack on American soil, since Pearl Harbor, remains dangerously unexamined. This can only be remedied with an investigation guided by the facts and conducted outside the reach of those with a vested interest in suppressing the truth.”

Again, another press release from The Jersey Girls that should have been splattered across the TV screens across the country—and I want to go through a couple of other things really fast—the release of “9/11 Press for Truth.” That was completely ignored by the media.

MICKEY

Yeah, you don't see that—you don't see that in the 9/11 Museum—excuse me, I'm—[laughs]

JON

This is a film—you will not see “9/11 Press for Truth” at the 9/11 Museum. When it was released we had a mass campaign, sending out emails to different corporate media outlets; we gave a copy to each and every member of the House and the Senate; and nobody in the corporate media covered this. And this was The Jersey Girls calling into question—it destroyed the legitimacy of the 9/11 Commission, in my opinion, and it was completely ignored. It was not ignored by movie critics, which all gave it

favorable reviews, but it was ignored by the corporate media, and around the time of the release of “9/11 Press for Truth” 9/11 family members, Donna Marsh O'Connor, Christina Kminek, and Michele Little, got together along with Kyle Hence and Paul Thompson at the National Press Club on September 11, 2006, to call for a new investigation. Only one media outlet in the country covered that, and it was a small town, I forget which it was—it was just one news article that was written about that.

Now, in the latter part of 2006, the September 11 Advocates, or The Jersey Girls, wrote a petition calling for the release of pertinent documentation regarding the 9/11 attacks. I think one of the things was a July 10, 2001 meeting between Cofer Black and Condoleezza Rice. Another was the CIA Inspector General's report, and the final thing that they asked for was for the release of the 28 redacted pages of the Joint Congressional Inquiry. We got 17,000 signatures and not one media outlet in the country covered this effort.

And there have been many efforts over the years by the families to bring attention to the fact that we were lied to about 9/11. And, it's funny, because in the beginning we were told to support the families. And, instead, over time we were told that when we do this, when we're questioning the 9/11 attacks or whatever, that we were somehow dishonoring the family members. And we heard that repeatedly by the corporate media. And I can't think of anything more dishonoring of the family members than ignoring them, when they're trying to get real truth, accountability, and justice. That's what I used to tell people when they were told that you're dishonoring the family members is to throw it right back in their faces and saying, this happened, that happened, the family members tried to do this—you didn't cover that. Why are you dishonoring them?

MICKEY --five percent of their questions. Yeah, 75 percent of their questions were never even asked let alone answered. We could go on about that.

JON Lorie Van Auken and Mindy Kleinberg wrote a report in September 2006, that showed how poorly the 9/11 Commission answered their questions. Again, something completely ignored by the media.

MICKEY Well, I have to say, that the purpose of official “official commissions” in government—I mean, the purpose in Machiavellian fashion is to create a narrative and use that narrative and put to bed questions. It's not to

necessarily seek out the truth or to investigate all avenues. I mean, we even know this from listening to some of the commissioners who said well, we were never allowed to see that. Or these agencies would not give us these documents. (Right) So the erection of the Commission is political theater in many ways. And, attacking people that support the victims' families is another way of trying to own politically the message of the families. As you'll recall, there was no politician, really not too many politicians that weren't gaming to get photo ops at so-called ground zero. (Right) Only to kick the first responders to the curb for a decade thereafter. I mean even up to the present.

JON That's another thing, they completely ignored all of the good work that the 9/11 Truth movement did for the 9/11 first responders. We were the only group that was trying to support them, that was trying to bring attention to their issues, that was trying to get them healthcare—

MICKEY Well, until Jon Stewart, right? [Laughs]

JON Yeah, exactly, Jon Stewart, he was the hero of everything. Even though we tried for YEARS and years to bring attention to their issue.

MICKEY I would argue, it's interesting—that example is interesting because notice that if we DO use the big megaphone and the platform to rally people to just causes, they respond. Because it was, once many people were reminded of this travesty, per Jon Stewart on a comedy program (Right), that people mobilized and pressured congress to do something.

So, I mean, this is exactly why the media is controlled, Jon. Because once people understand what's going on, people, general every day regular folks like us, we react, we respond, we are not operating under the edict of corporate profit or global dominance (Right). We are operating as human beings that want justice and want truth and want to help each other. And, corporate media—let's look at that word corporate for a minute—if that technology was used in a way that addressed the injustices of the world, well, we would have far fewer of them now, wouldn't we? (Absolutely.) It's an incredibly powerful medium. How it's used, unfortunately matters. And who controls the levers of that machine matters even more. (Right) And, We The People, Jon, don't control CNN and Fox. All we can do is control our remotes, by turning them off. (Exactly--) Stop listening to their propaganda. Stop buying their products. Stop buying their messages and

become more involved in local, independent media, citizen journalism, and use critical thinking and media literacy skills.

Which is, again, what Project Censored over the years has been combatting—censorship and propaganda—and this is a message we hit home. We have hundreds of students and faculty on over 20 campuses across the United States, and what we want to do is really create this kind of curriculum (Right), where people have the opportunity to learn why it's not in their interest to watch these programs. I say “programs” purposely [Laughs], because there are brand names.

JON One thing I want to get into is how desperate the media got over the years. It was like blatantly obvious how desperate they were to destroy or discredit anyone questioning the 9/11 attacks. You remember when somebody interrupted Bill Clinton and said, “9/11 was an inside job!” and he said, “How dare you!” At the time, Bill O’Reilly said, “Clear thinking Americans must condemn the fascists (the 9/11 Truthers) and actively oppose the anarchy they embrace. Your children are getting this craziness in school, and it's 24/7 on the Net. Only public opinion and criminal proceedings against the loons will clamp them down. Let those actions begin in earnest.”

MICKEY Spoken like a true fascist. That’s what fascism sounds like, Jon. [Laughs] (Right) That tacky.

JON I want to get to—

MICKEY And don’t forget George W. Bush—let’s not tolerate outlandish conspiracy theories about the 9/11 events, right?

JON Concerning the 9/11 attacks [Laughs] yeah, exactly. It seems the media—

MICKEY That’s propaganda out of the gate.

JON The corporate media followed his advice it seemed over the years.

Now, I want to continue with how the media has treated us. Now, they had moved to the point, or they did move to the point where they were actually trying to paint us as murderers, as dangerous, murdering people, like psychopaths. And there are many instances of this. And I wrote an article

that 9/11 truth has always been non-violent and I suggest people read it. It's available at: [911TruthNews.com](http://911TruthNews.com)

But, they literally, they tried to paint us as murderers. There was something—we had a Treason in American Conference in March 2010, in Valley Forge, Pennsylvania, and two different media outlets showed up—ABC and RT. The reason—well, I'll get into this—the reason that ABC came there, there was a recent guy who shot some bullets at the Pentagon. He was called “the Pentagon shooter.” And, apparently, maybe he had written something about 9/11 online, and ABC was there to try and paint us all as dangerous as the Pentagon shooter. And I'm going to read two different quotes from two different articles.

One is from OnlyInPhiladelphia.com and that was called, “TV Media Info Wars Strikes at Valley Forge 9/11 Truth Conference” and it was by Nate Graham on March 9, 2010.

“Perhaps there truly is no such thing as objective journalism anymore. TV news media organizations have their own slant on every televised story. Unbeknownst to myself at the time, two separate TV news organizations, Russia Today (RT) and ABC News arrived to cover the same 9/11 Truth Conference here in suburban Philadelphia, but with different agendas.”

And Coleen Rowley, 9/11 whistleblower, she came there to speak and she was attacked by ABC and she wrote an article called, “Baring the Truth, Nightline Reporter Channels Bill O'Reilly and does a hatchet job.” And this is from May 10, 2010.

“When young, smiling female producer Katie Herman identified herself as being with ABC and asked for an interview, I had only just arrived at the conference, so although I was a little surprised that the Nightline TV crew was there, I immediately consented to an interview before anyone had a chance to warn me that the TV show was trying to concoct a connection between the conference and the mentally ill young man who had been killed a few days before while shooting at the Pentagon guard.”

They came there literally to paint us as murderers. And I want to say something, there are quite literally millions of people who question what we were told about 9/11, millions and millions of people. Whether or not they're active is another story, but there are millions. And polls over the years have shown this. If there are ten murderers and psychopaths who wrote something about 9/11 on the Internet out of millions of people, that doesn't mean that millions of people who question 9/11 are murderers and psychopaths. And, unfortunately, that hasn't stopped the corporate media from using those individuals to paint us as such.

There was a Holocaust Museum shooter who killed somebody. He went into the Holocaust Museum in Washington, DC, and Glenn Beck got on TV and said that he was a hero of the 9/11 Truth movement. And this is what it's come to. This is why people, you know, they squirm when they hear people talk about 9/11. They literally have been trained to stay away from the issue.

MICKEY Well, I can't disagree with you, Jon. And, you know, I do this, in addition to teaching critical thinking and political economy, I also of course teach modern U. S. history and I tell students to scroll over the last pages of the book. Go over the last chapter. How does it end? In other words, how do historians cover 9/11, and already, right, in the last several years, already, the narrative has gelled. This is the same narrative, by the way, as the Fox News man-on-the-street gave the day of 9/11 (Right).

That ended up essentially being the thesis of the 9/11 Zelikow Commission's and sits today now in stone, basically, in the history books because, you know, the questions, the unanswered questions, the controversies—all the things that we've been talking about, the things Project Censored has been covering since our Censored 2003 book, these are just written out of the historical narrative, Jon, so that subsequent generations of people will not be given the opportunity to think critically and ask questions about these issues, because they're not on the test. (Right)

And this is how propaganda works on so many multiple simultaneous levels and layers. And that's what needs to be regularly deconstructed. And I—you mentioned Pearl Harbor before, and I'm

not going to, you know, veer off historically through all the serious problems from the Mexican-American War, the Spanish-American War, WWI, Pearl Harbor, Gulf of Tonkin—fill in the blanks—the lies that lead to wars, WMDs, etc. but the Pearl Harbor event is interesting because everybody talks about Pearl Harbor so they know exactly what it means, even though the U.S. Army in 1944, issued a report saying the attack should have been prevented and were known about in advance.

We now see Roosevelt documents and Simpson documents, the Secretary of War—that's back when we were more honest about what we called these people. They show them having these conversations about needing to let these things happen to mobilize public support for war and so on. Yet, even when you see acclaimed historians and documentarians like Ken Burns at PBS and so forth, they just brush right over it, and still call it a sneak attack. There's no history of the 50 years of hostility between the U.S. and Japan. There's no talk about the oil embargoes. There's no talk about the reality of what actually is going on there. It's like a sacred historical cow. It's such an important propaganda victory in our historical narrative of official stories, that the Bush administration immediately likened 9/11 to Pearl Harbor, which I thought was, whoa, wait a minute, man, do you really mean that? (Right) Because if you really mean that, it means you did ignore the warnings and you did want it to happen. (Exactly.)

And if you do read over the Project for the New American Century, ending up in the Bush administration, you know well, they talked about needing a new Pearl Harbor in order to invade seven countries. And, by the way, Obama has helped fulfill the prophecy of the Project for New American Century by invading all of these countries that they had outlined. And absent a catalyzing and catastrophic event, like a new Pearl Harbor, it will likely be difficult to carry out these global ambitions for global dominance. And here we are, 13 years later, Republican, Democrat, doesn't matter on that count, we are in fact the global hegemon, and anybody who questions it: Remember 9/11.

Just this last week, Isis—I keep waiting for Shazam to come out too—but Isis, right, it poses a threat greater than 9/11. I mean, they're still using this Pavlovian fear button over 9/11.

JON Which shows just how important it is to point out the fact that we were lied to about 9/11. To take away their playing card.

MICKEY That's a conservative statement. Yeah, that's a very conservative statement. I know some people hear that and they say: oh my God, that's crazy talk. Look, the basic facts are that we were lied to about 9/11. That's what the facts show. (Right) The facts are that the public has not been given fair, open, honest, fact-based treatment about 9/11. It has been invoked relentlessly by both Democrats and Republicans as a bludgeon to beat the public into submission through fear, and it continues to be that way, and unless and until we continue to call out the incredible historical pattern of lies and deceit, right, by government. Remember, I.F. Stone, all governments lie... (Right) and this is the thing—that we need to focus, and we need to say let's reconstruct these events. And even if we don't bog down in the minutia of the Pentagon, or Building 7, or—remember the Anthrax attacks? Most people don't. We can, at the very least, look at the Commission as the pinnacle of the officializing of those lies.

JON Well there's an old expression that it's not the crime that gets you, it's the cover-up. And the 9/11 Commission itself and its report is literally the cover-up.

MICKEY It is.

JON And so by pointing out the ridiculousness of the 9/11 Commission—I mean, people think that 9/11 was investigated, and you know, unfortunately, nothing could be further from the truth. There were investigations but they all had their own version of compromise and corruption.

And, you know Mickey, I very much appreciate you coming on my show to talk about this issue. I want to try to wrap it up. We've already been talking for an hour and a half now.

One last question. How do we deal with this issue overall?

MICKEY I think, Jon, the way to do it is where we started. We need to talk to each other about overarching issues of how official narratives permeate our culture. We need to reinforce the idea that questioning our government, questioning our corporate institutions that lord over us in the globe. We need to stop tacitly and unthoughtfully supporting these organizations. We need to turn off corporate media. We need to think for ourselves, think critically, think independently, become more media literate, and become more compassionate with each other the way that we communicate our concerns and our issues with each other. And we need to not only be compassionate and critical thinkers and communicators, we need to be compassionate and critical listeners. And we need to give people the space that they need to feel secure, that they can come to their own conclusions. And if you give people the facts, and if you listen to them come back at you and you have this ongoing dialogue, everything doesn't need to be fit into a two-minute sound bite, and all issues in the world aren't going to be solved over dinner.

By the way, I would like to say that that's also an idea though. It's nice to share fellowship with people. We need to take the community and really insert this community element back into this. We need to not just sit around on Facebook and we need to be having Face Time. We need to go out and talk to each other as human beings and look at each other and earn respect for each other. By peddling truths and facts with transparent sourcing.

And I think that's the real way forward. And I think that when we pay attention as much as how we communicate to each other as what we're communicating to each other, I think we can really build mutual symbiotic audiences that resonate as a true, small "d" democratic community that really wants to move forward under the principles enshrined in the U.S. Constitution and, particularly, the Bill of Rights.

Particularly, about free speech and expression and assembly, and petitions and grievances, the right to bear arms, the right to not be imposed upon by government, the right to be secure in your person, and the rights to privacy, the right to due process, the right to

transparent jury trials, the right to be free from torture and cruel and unusual punishment, and the rights of states and local governments to decide things that the federal government has no business deciding.

I just rattled off the ten amendments that are the Bill of Rights. And if we really believe in these ideas, Jon, then the way to move forward is by actually practicing them. These are verbs, not abstract concepts. If we do not do these things, we do not have them. And if we don't think for ourselves, somebody else will gladly do it for us.

JON            There's an expression, you better take an interest in politics before politics takes an interest in you.

MICKEY       --an interest in you. I tell that to my students every semester, Jon.

JON            Well, thank you very much Mickey Huff for coming on today. Are there any websites you want to promote?

MICKEY       Sure. ProjectCensored.org. You can follow us on Facebook, the NSA and CIA surely do. We're at Project Censored on Facebook. Andy Lee Ross, our associate director and I just finished *Censored 2015: Inspiring We The People*, with a forward by Ralph Nader and cartoons, once again, by Kahlil van Deeb. We are mostly a donor-supported organization. We don't get a lot of grants and foundation support because of the kind of questions we ask and the stories we support. And we recently won a whistleblower—the Pillar Award in Washington, D.C. for our Persons of Conscience in New Media and Journalism—we're very honored to be working with whistleblowers and truth tellers. Thank you so much, Jon.

And we'd like to open up our organizations to all the people that have their stories to tell and their under-reported stories, and we'd like to help do it together. So, we'd certainly like to hear from people. They can contact us through Facebook Project Censored. They can go to ProjectCensored.org and show a screening of our film in your community—Project Censored the Movie. Go to ProjectCensoredtheMovie: Ending the Reign of Junk Food News. You can go to ProjectCensoredtheMovie.com. You can go to the Project Censored website and see that.

And, you know, start this dialogue. Start the dialogue about how media is the root of some of these serious problems of communication we have, and then insert your issue. Then open up a discussion. Have a weekly discussion with people in your community. Right? Use Project Censored as a leap, as sort of a springboard into the conversation. Next week let's talk about how media covers Gaza and Israel. After that, why don't we have a meeting on how the media covers—we could have whole hour and a half shows on all of this as you know. What about 9/11? What about the wars in Iraq? What about Isis? What about this? What about religious freedom? What about pensions being sold off to Wall Street and losing money in New Jersey and Rhode Island? What about the reform education movement? We could fill in the blanks forever. And I tell people, take the issue you care about. Take the issues that hit for you. Check out how it's covered in the corporate media and, all of a sudden, you've got your number two topic ready to go. Because if we don't address the problems of media and propaganda in this country, and in the world, we can't really further our own other interests and causes because the communication is controlled.

JON Right. All right, Mickey, thank you very much for coming on today and I will look forward to having you on again.

MICKEY My pleasure, Jon, any time, and we'll return the favor on KPFA. So, thanks again for all you do. And thanks to you and Cindy Sheehan for the Soapbox. It's been my pleasure to be on.

JON All right, thanks a lot, Mickey.

MICKEY Absolutely.

JON Bye bye.

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JON One thing that I neglected to mention during the show is the fact that the corporate media started to attack the 9/11 family members who are asking questions and seeking real accountability and justice. People like Glenn Beck, Rush Limbaugh, and most famously, Ann

Coulter. Ann Coulter viciously attacked The Jersey Girls in a book of hers and the corporate media gave her a tremendous amount of TV time. There were even people in the corporate media who defended Ann's actions. This took place around the time of the release of the documentary: "9/11 Press for Truth," which starred The Jersey Girls and destroyed the legitimacy of the 9/11 Commission.

Which do you think should have gotten the tremendous amount of TV time? Here's a hint: Not Ann Coulter.