



Part 21: The Role of the Media — Whatever Happened to Investigative Journalists?

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“The primary purpose of gathering and distributing news and opinion is to serve the general welfare by informing the people and enabling them to make judgments on the issues of the time.”¹ — Statement of Principles by the American Society of Newspaper Editors

What is wrong with the Western media? Why have they not jumped at the opportunity to cover the scoop of the century — the wealth of crystal-clear evidence that proves the government has been lying about the attacks of September 11, 2001, for the past sixteen years?

That's a question many of us in the 9/11 Truth community have wrestled with — even agonized over — ever since that world-changing, tragic day.

American Society of Newspaper Editors ASNE's Statement of Principles

ARTICLE I - Responsibility

The primary purpose of gathering and distributing news and opinion is to serve the general welfare by informing the people and enabling them to make judgments on the issues of the time. Newsmen and women who abuse the power of their professional role for selfish motives or unworthy purposes are faithless to that public trust. The American press was made free not just to inform or just to serve as a forum for debate but also to bring an independent scrutiny to bear on the forces of power in the society, including the conduct of official power at all levels of government.

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Consider, then, how much more investigative journalists, who are trained to delve for truth and adhere to the above-cited principles of their profession, have been agonizing — not just since 9/11, but for decades — over the disastrous breakdown of the press. Some of them have written volumes about their frustration and disillusionment, and in those volumes they have analyzed the causes of that breakdown.

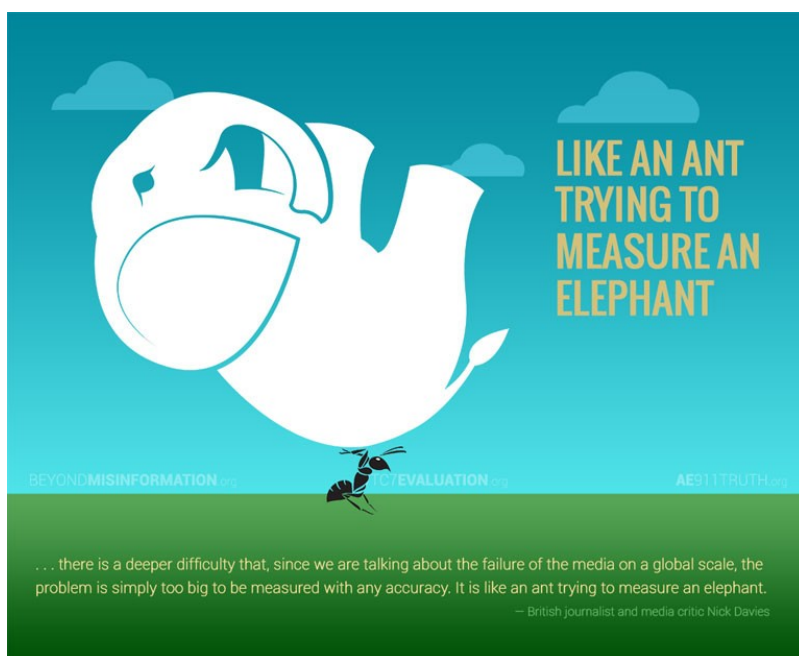
Now that I've read their plethora of analyses probing what has gone wrong with the Western press, how can I possibly summarize these investigative journalists' conclusions so that my readers will understand the enormity of the problem?

British journalist and media critic Nick Davies sums up my dilemma with this astute observation:

... there is a deeper difficulty that, since we are talking about the failure of the media on a global scale, the problem is simply too big to be measured with any accuracy. It is like an ant trying to measure an elephant.²

Precisely.

Nonetheless, because the role of the media is arguably the most



powerful reason why good people become silent — or worse — about 9/11, I will do my best to measure and describe this elephant.

I will approach the subject as if we — my readers and I — are attending a courtroom hearing, listening to the testimony of one witness after another. In this courtroom, all of our witnesses are award-winning journalists and/or whistleblowers-turned-journalists. Each of them has a distinguished track record of truth-telling. After we listen to them present their evidence, which they have laid out in numerous books, articles, and interviews, I will attempt to distill this testimony into a simple summary of the key reasons for the media censorship we observe today.

Then, based on this summary, I will explain *why* there has been no serious truth-seeking in the mainstream media's coverage of the September 11, 2001, events. The same case can be made, unfortunately, for the absence of truth-telling in much of the alternative media. My focus will be on the American media, but there will be occasional references to the international media, which likewise have refused to violate the taboo against questioning the official account of 9/11.

The next four installments — or “acts” — of this series will focus on the media. (The terms “media” and “press” will be used interchangeably throughout.) I will explore such topics as:

- Who and what are the obstacles to reporting on the most critical story of the 21st century?
- Is there any chance the topic of 9/11 will ever be seriously broached and honestly investigated by the media anytime soon?
- What is the history of the media?
- How have the institutions charged with delivering the news changed over time?
- How do we recognize propaganda and disinformation?
- How do we ferret out the truth in a world where mendacity and calumny are the norm?
- Finally, what are the solutions to this dismal failure of the media to fulfill its primary duty — namely, to report the truth — so that citizens can make informed decisions?

To illustrate the depth of the problem, I will tell a story about my encounter with a well-socialized American who holds a firm faith in the unfettered freedom of this country's press.

An urbane American on the patio

It was a gorgeous summer day in 2005. I was at a housewarming party in the Rocky Mountain foothills of Denver, Colorado, chatting amicably with an urbane man I had just met on the red-flagstone patio of my friend's lovely home. Between bites of appetizers and sips of drinks, we inadvertently found ourselves on the sensitive subject of 9/11. So I mentioned that I was reading an article indicating that elements within our government may have at least cooperated with those who attacked us.



His eyes widened as he retorted without hesitation: “I’ve *never* heard of this and *I* read *The New York Times*! Surely if there were anything to this accusation, we would have heard of it from our liberal media. The *Times* is constantly Bush-bashing, so that liberal rag would have *certainly* reported such evidence, if it were credible.”

At the time I was fairly naïve about our media but was at least aware that it was anything but “liberal.”³ Had it been, we would have seen political pundits at least questioning the sanity of bombing and invading Iraq. Instead, columnists and reporters had militantly cheered the upcoming invasions of both Afghanistan and Iraq.

I responded to his remark by describing the stunning evidence of air defense failure that I had learned from watching Barrie Zwicker’s DVD, *The Great Conspiracy: The 9/11 News Special You Never Saw*.⁴ I also mentioned the intelligence breakdown described in Nafeez Mossadeq Ahmed’s book, *The War on Freedom: How and Why America was Attacked, September 11, 2001*.⁵ Then I concluded, in a matter-of-fact tone, that there seemed to be a media blackout on evidence that contradicted the official story.

Hearing me question the media’s integrity, my acquaintance’s eyes now narrowed with suspicion. His body language let me know that he was unwilling to give me any more of his precious time on this beautiful, sunny afternoon. He abruptly headed toward the snack tray on the far side of the patio, leaving me standing there quite alone. Clearly, his faith in America’s “free press” was unshakeable.

We skeptics of the official story of 9/11 are painfully aware of the mythological nature of our “free and liberal press.” This awareness, however, is not unique to us. Nor do we have the distinction of being the lone recipients of silent treatment and ridicule by the mainstream — as well as much of the so-called alternative — media, as will be seen by the following accounts from our “witnesses.” Similar

censorship was imposed on the early opponents of slavery and on the suffragettes. By studying these historical examples, we can be encouraged that the media's mockery cannot prevent the ultimate success of those who endeavor to reverse egregious policies and practices.⁶

Stepping back

But let's step back for a moment. A reader brand new to this subject may be wondering if journalists *should* publish material that contradicts the official 9/11 narrative. After all, is there really strong enough evidence to warrant their deviating from the authorized version of these catastrophic events?

My answer is an unqualified "yes." For one thing, many of the 9/11 victims' relatives posed questions that were never answered by the 9/11 Commission, despite its promise to these grieving families. For another, a plethora of books, DVDs, and websites have already addressed the contradictory evidence, which is voluminous. One book that ably refutes the party line on 9/11 is *Towers of Deception: The Media Cover-up of 9/11*, written by Canadian journalist and media critic Barrie Zwicker. He devotes a full chapter to listing 26 "exhibits" from 9/11 that he contends warranted articles by investigative journalists. Had these articles been allowed to be penned and published, Zwicker observes, the newspapers in which they appeared would have sold like hotcakes.⁷ I'll refer readers to several handy "cliff-notes" studies in the endnotes.⁸



The most powerful reason good people become silent

To reiterate, the role of the media is the primary reason why good people become silent — or worse — about 9/11. The media's prominence is so embedded in our culture that its influence must not be underestimated. As noted in [Part 2](#), the “early adopters” in *any* society influence the population to consider — or not consider — the reality of a new idea. In ours, it is neither the shaman, nor the tribal chieftain, nor the wise elder whose edicts, opinions, and ideas we hold in such high regard.

Rather, in modern Western societies, if a new idea is covered in a serious way on television or in the newspaper, then, and only then, is it considered “real.” Well, at least it becomes discussable in polite company.

But, at the time of this writing, 16 years after 9/11, the idea that elements within the United States government could pull off such a massive false flag operation as 9/11 is *still not* discussable in polite company. For many Americans, the very notion is shocking and disgusting, or at least discomfiting. It brings a pall to any party.

Let's imagine that, soon after 9/11, *some* of the mainstream media had even *begun* to research and carefully question aspects of the official account of the day's events. It's fair to say that readers and listeners would have realized that they, too, had permission to question the government-sanctioned narrative — even in polite company. The official story would not have garnered such a unified consensus.

But that's not what happened. Instead, the media became loyal stenographers of the government's account, resulting in the official story becoming solidly anchored in the public mind.^{[9](#)}

In other words, if, early on, the media had honestly investigated and questioned the official pronouncements about 9/11, and had *continued* being honest, many of us would not have been as thoroughly caught in the trap of the psychological dynamics that are explained in the earlier installments of this series.

Polls and third rails

For a wider perspective, let's explore for a moment two institutions Americans are trained to trust: the media and our leaders whom we've elected to be our protectors. Both are authority figures, and in [Part 3](#) of this series, we learned that fully two-thirds of us believe and obey authorities, even when doing so betrays some of our most sacred values.

But in recent years the edges of that trust have been fraying. The Gallup Poll has been assessing respondents' feelings about the media since 1972. In 2016, pollsters found that “Americans' trust and confidence in the mass media ‘to report the news fully, accurately and fairly’ [had] . . . dropped to its lowest level in Gallup polling history, with 32% saying they have a great deal or fair amount of trust in the media.”^{[10](#)} That nadir compares to a 1976 peak of 72% in the wake of news coverage of the Vietnam War and the Watergate scandal, when Americans clearly appreciated the media's honest reporting and high professional standards.^{[11](#)}



Dissecting the 2016 poll results, we learn that trust in the media plummeted among younger voters and Republicans — likely spurred by the contentious presidential election. In the same polls, there was only a marginal decline in trust in the media among older voters and Democrats. That gap should not be surprising, considering that for the past 20 years, Democrats’ confidence in the fourth estate has consistently exceeded that of Republicans.^{[12](#)}

According to Gallup, “Before 2004, it was common for a majority of Americans to profess at least some trust in the mass media, but since then, less than half of Americans feel that way. Now, only about a third of the U.S. has any trust in the Fourth Estate, a stunning development for an institution designed to inform the public.”^{[13](#)}

In 2016 the print media fared even worse than the overall media. As Gallup put it: “The 20% of Americans who are confident in newspapers as a U.S. institution hit [an all-time low](#) this year, marking the 10th consecutive year that more Americans express little or no, rather than high, confidence in the institution.”^{[14](#)}

Gallup has been checking on Americans’ confidence level in 14 institutions for more than three decades. It found that between 2006 and 2016, trust in banks, organized religion, media, and Congress dropped more precipitously than in the other 10 institutions — and more than in the previous two decades. Winning the trust of only 9% of the public in 2016, “Congress has the ignominious distinction of being the only institution sparking little or no confidence in a majority of Americans,” declared

Gallup. In fact, the polling firm asserted, “Even as Americans regain confidence in the economy . . . they remain reluctant to put much faith in [most of these 14] institutions at the core of American society.”¹⁵

Confidence in the executive branch of the federal government fluctuates greatly, depending on circumstances. In times of war, the Commander in Chief generally receives high ratings. For example, in March 1991, shortly after Iraq was pushed out of Kuwait in the Gulf War, George H. W. Bush enjoyed the highest confidence rating any president has ever received — 72%. Similarly, in the immediate aftermath of 9/11 in 2001, George W. Bush’s ratings increased — to 58% — before diving to 25% in his seventh year of office — an all-time record low for any U.S. president.¹⁶ Weekly “job-approval” polls indicate, however, that by the end of his tenure in office, President Donald Trump might set a new low for Americans’ trust in the executive branch.¹⁷

So, which institutions do Americans trust the most? Well, the mass media and Congress both rate at the bottom of the barrel, but the real answer depends upon circumstances as well as upon which Americans are being asked. For example, an older person who votes the Democratic ticket when a Republican is president will likely trust the media more during those years. A Republican who supports Donald Trump, on the other hand, likely has a very low view of the media, which have scorned him, but a high degree of trust in the president.¹⁸

Like citizens of other countries, citizens of the United States *want* to believe that their leaders are trustworthy. After all, they are ostensibly there to protect and represent us. This could be one reason why, in wartime, a majority of Americans across the board rally around the Commander in Chief.

Despite their paltry confidence in the media, consumers of news still seem to be swayed by that institution’s monolithic decision to air or not to air. Have you ever noticed that *only* when a recognizable news source publishes a story on an issue do you feel you have, in a sense, been given permission to safely discuss the topic? If, on the other hand, a story is suppressed by the mainstream media, are you reluctant to discuss it for fear of being shunned? And if that story is also suppressed by the alternative media, are you even *more* reluctant to share it — except with like-minded colleagues?

I see first-hand evidence of that phenomenon when I participate in street actions in Colorado. When the subject of 9/11 comes up with visitors at our People’s Fair booth, for example, it’s no surprise to hear them exclaim, “Oh, yes, I saw something about that on TV!” The reference they’re making is to one of the several programs aired in recent years on Colorado Public Television’s Channel 12 (CPT12) — perhaps *9/11: Blueprint for Truth* or *9/11: Explosive Evidence — Experts Speak Out*. My point: The topic had become discussible thanks to the station’s courageous decision to touch the highly charged “third rail” topic of 9/11.

Cynthia McKinney

The term “third rail” is a metaphor referring to the high-voltage third rail in some electric railway systems. Stepping on this rail would usually result in electrocution.¹⁹ Thus, political third rail issues are those that are considered “charged” and “untouchable,” promising that any public official or media outlet that dares seriously broach these topics will suffer. This is a lesson the courageous former U.S.



Rep. Cynthia McKinney (D-GA) learned the hard way when she questioned the official 9/11 narrative in Congress. Her outspokenness on the sensitive subject was political suicide.²⁰ Theoretically, a dedicated group of politicians could nonetheless escape “electrocution” if they worked together, especially if they were to receive even minimal serious reporting from the press.

<https://youtu.be/c6crfATz6PI>

Returning to and wrapping up our discussion of the Gallup Poll results, confidence in media is steadily declining, yet one-third of Americans continue to hold the mainstream media in esteem, despite the painfully obvious deterioration in journalism’s standards in recent decades. They cling to the traditional notion that the media are training their ever-watchful eyes on — and directing their ever-skeptical questions to — all

branches and layers of government in order to keep our leaders in line. Such sacred myths and outworn beliefs have enormous inertia, as we witnessed with the urbane man at the housewarming party. They die a protracted death, as we discovered in [Part 8](#) on brain research. But at least they *do* eventually die, as the Gallup polls confirm — sometimes when people change their views to fit new facts, and other times, unfortunately, by the death of members of the current older generation. Younger people are not as calcified in their worldview, so change can often occur when they take their place as adults in society — a fact also reflected by these surveys.

The foregoing goes to show that if the media were to expose government shenanigans, stand on the side of truth, and thus regain the admiration it earned in the mid-1970s, the public would once again trust investigations conducted by respected journalists at prestigious publications. Why, the public would even trust news stories that actually challenge presidential pronouncements — were any investigative reporter bold enough to write them.

Some of us remember the days when gumshoe journalists were once allowed by their bosses to seek, find, and share truth, no matter how inconvenient. They wore the mantle of this terrible and wonderful responsibility with pride. What has happened to those esteemed members of the fourth estate?

Warriors for truth

They are still in our midst, though they must remain silent to keep their jobs. Despite the prima facie evidence that today’s media are censoring truth, there are in fact reporters who are chomping at the bit to expose the mounds of evidence that clearly contradict the official tale of 9/11. They are eager to

interview insiders and whistleblowers, to follow the evidence trail, to connect the dots, and to provide the context.^{[21](#)}

The truth about 9/11 — and the chance to tell it to an audience that hungers for honesty — would be the blockbuster story of the 21st century. It would far surpass in substance, scope, and significance the 20th century's *publicly perceived* iconic journalism — Bob Woodward and Carl Bernstein's exposé of the Watergate burglary.



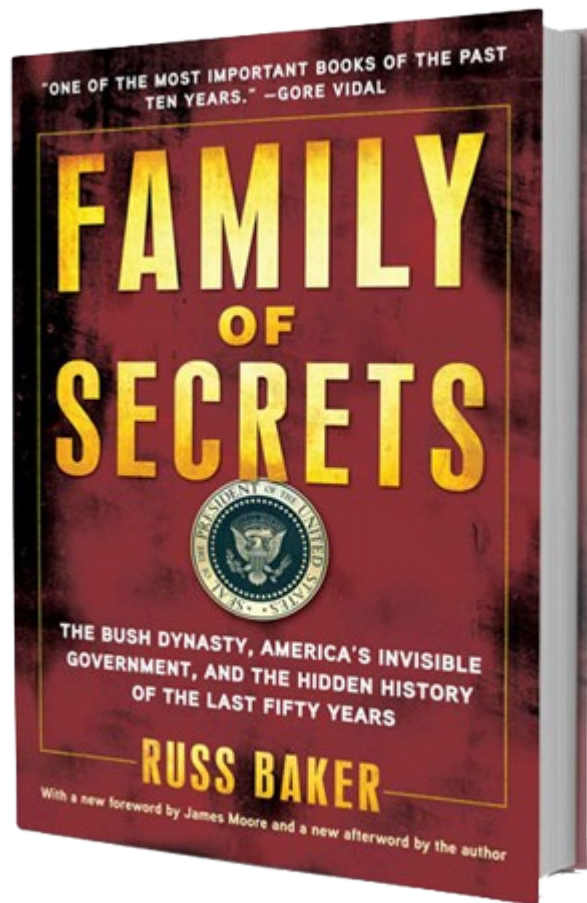
What's that? "Publicly perceived" iconic journalism? Meaning not *actually* iconic? Yes, I am afraid so. For many years I was as fooled as the average citizen about this so-called epitome of investigative journalism. Then I read about a Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) document that was released through a Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) lawsuit filed by Judicial Watch in July 2016.^{[22](#)}

Well before that FOIA request was granted, though, several journalists were painstakingly researching and writing books about the deeper politics of Watergate. Russ Baker is one such muckraker. His page-turner, *Family of Secrets: The Bush Dynasty, America's Invisible Government, and the Hidden History of the Last Fifty Years*,^{[23](#)} chronicles the convoluted intrigue that wormed its way through the halls of power during the Nixon years. According to Baker's analysis of the conspiracy, the Watergate debacle was an elaborate clandestine affair orchestrated by the CIA, in which Nixon was the *target* of a plot rather than the *planner* of the break-in. It appears that the CIA's goal was to rout President Nixon out of the White House. In other words, Watergate was a soft coup, and one that could not succeed without the CIA having its tentacles deeply embedded in *The Washington Post*, the employer of Woodward and

Bernstein. To keep Woodward off the trail of the agency, CIA agents fed him only the information they wanted him to know.

The reason for the soft coup? As Baker tells it, Nixon was playing fast and loose with the oil depletion allowance, a tax break for investors in exhaustible mineral deposits²⁴ that costs U.S. taxpayers billions of dollars. In so doing, the President was seen as disloyal by those who brought him into power — the Bush family and other oil-baron elites.

Russ Baker's *Family of Secrets*



Here we have two perfect examples of deep state actions: (1) the CIA illegally embedding itself within media organizations and (2) the CIA illegally and deceptively meddling in U.S. political affairs. Both are indicative of a corrupt agency responsive to wealthy individuals who operate behind the scenes in Washington politics — that is, outside normal democratic processes — for the purpose of shaping public policy to benefit themselves.²⁵ (For further reading on the deep state, see [Part 13](#) of this series.)

Later, we shall learn that Watergate was not an isolated deception by the CIA involving the press — but that, in fact, the CIA has long been secretly embedded in the media for the purpose of doing the bidding of behind-the-scenes powerful individuals.

<https://youtu.be/6FpyED4uJwQ>

Idealistic investigative journalists enter their profession because they are attracted to the heroic job of delving into and exposing crimes. Their motivation appears to be a desire to make the world a better place to live. I am in awe of these warriors for truth.

So why haven't even a handful of our journalist watchdogs — especially those who still work for establishment media outlets — reported on the story of the 21st century? A story that would likely reverse the United States' inexorable march toward a closed society.²⁶ A story that could halt the misdirected, perpetually warring course upon which our country is dangerously careening in its imperialistic pursuit of the planet's resources. A story that could stop the murder and devastation of the lives of millions of the men, women, and children who just happen to reside in oil-rich nations.

For an answer, we need look no further than the “Great Game for Oil,” which investigative reporter Charlotte Dennett calls “the missing context” so essential to a comprehensive discussion of 9/11.²⁷ She observes that in their coverage of the seemingly endless Middle East wars sparked by 9/11, the mainstream media — and even much of the alternative press — avoid mentioning oil as a key reason for the fighting.

Winston Churchill as First Lord of the Admiralty (October 1911)



Why the reluctance? Because oil, which the military of each country relies upon to transport troops and weapons, is deemed a national security issue. Very succinctly, here's the background: In 1911, Winston Churchill concluded, in his role as First Lord of the Admiralty, that if the British Empire were to retain its position as a preeminent world power, its Navy would need to be modernized by converting its fuel source from coal (of which Britain had plentiful supplies) to cheaper and more efficient oil (of which Britain had none). Quoting Shakespeare's Hamlet, Churchill declared that if the Empire were to “take arms against a sea of troubles,” oil was required to maintain economic might and military mastery. Thus, by the time World War I started in 1914, the “Great Game for Oil” was off and running, with every world power scouring the globe to locate — then gain access to and control over — this prize

resource. But if a journalist were to explain this race for oil and link it to wars, such honest reporting would be deemed a threat to national security and would thus cost him his job.²⁸

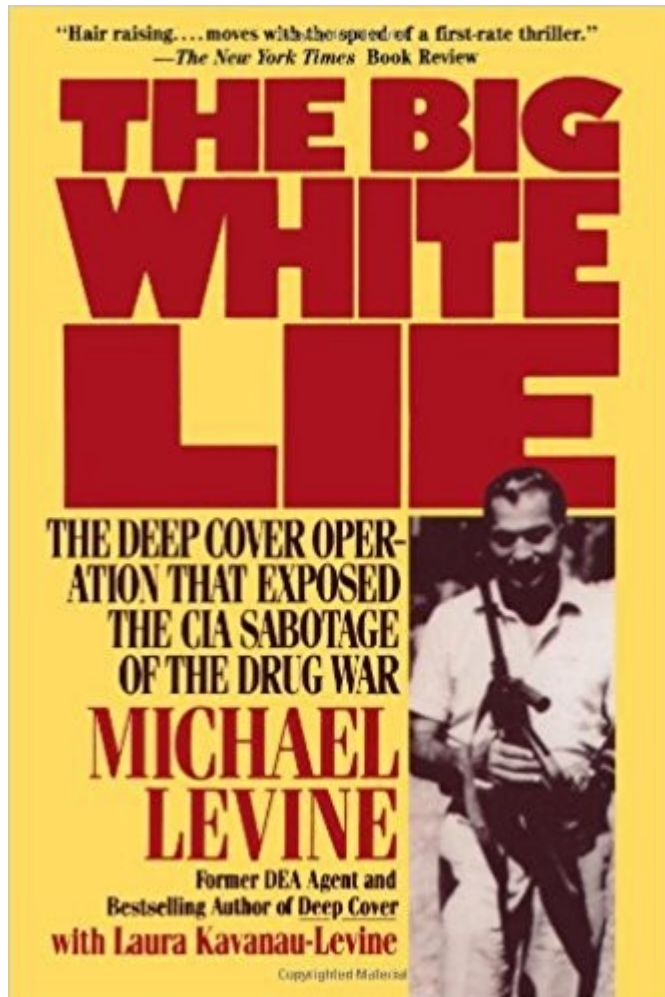
Below, we shall delve into the miserable mismatch of journalist detectives and the corporate entities for which they work — or for which they once worked. We shall also discover how investigations crucial to an open and democratic society are, across the board, being thoroughly censored by editors, by media's corporate owners, and by intelligence agencies. And we shall see that this censorship is not unique to the topic of 9/11 — not by a long shot.

In former CBS reporter and freelance journalist Kristina Borjesson's award-winning anthology, *Into the Buzzsaw: Leading Journalists Expose the Myths of a Free Press*,²⁹ highly acclaimed journalists tell their stories — how their well-researched, well-documented exposés of high crimes by officials were thwarted from making it into print or broadcast news. They explain how, even if their stories *did* make

the news, editors had rendered them into watered-down, impotent versions, unrecognizable to the authors.

With four case histories — three from Borjesson’s remarkable anthology and one from a 9/11 whistleblower — I will demonstrate the extent to which the holders of power and the owners of media institutions will go to censor stories that, by any rational standard of truth-telling, should have been reported.

Michael Levine



Take, for example, Michael Levine’s story, “Mainstream Media: The Drug War’s Shills.”^{[30](#)}

A “shill,” according to *Merriam-Webster*, is a person who is paid to describe someone or something in a favorable light. Levine describes a shill as a con man who entices suckers (that’s most of us) into a phony game to convince those watching the game that it is being played fair and square. In this way, the mainstream media shill for the official line of the “War on Drugs” — a war first declared in 1971 by President Nixon — yet they remain dead silent about CIA drug trafficking.

Michael Levine

A twenty-five-year veteran of the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) and now a whistleblower and journalist, Levine narrates, in what reads like a murder mystery novel, his personal experiences with the mainstream media — a media that became strangely silent about the CIA’s drug running. Not once, but time after time.

Composed of undercover DEA agents who were honestly trying to prevent illegal drugs from entering America’s streets, Levine’s unit was charged with investigating all heroin and cocaine smuggling through the Port of New York. This meant scrutinizing every major smuggling operation known to law enforcement.

Witnessing CIA protection of major drug traffickers around the world, therefore, became unavoidable.

These traffickers, writes Levine, included “the Mujahedeen in Afghanistan, the Bolivian cocaine cartels, the top levels of the Mexican government, top Panama-based money launderers, the Nicaraguan Contras, right-wing Colombian drug dealers and politicians, and others.”^{[31](#)}

In every case, just as a sting was about to succeed, the CIA *stopped* Levine and his DEA agents! On those occasions when the CIA did not manage to stop the bust and the cases warranted investigation, the media cooperated with the con game, presenting the CIA in a favorable light. Levine explains:

It was also clear to us that *CIA protection of international narcotics traffickers depended heavily on the active collaboration of the mainstream media as shills*. Media's shill duties, as I experienced them firsthand, were twofold: first, to keep quiet about the gush of drugs that was allowed to flow unimpeded into the United States; second, to divert the public's attention by shilling them into believing the drug war was legitimate by falsely presenting the few trickles we were permitted to interdict as though they were major "victories" when in fact we were doing nothing more than getting rid of the inefficient competitors of CIA assets.³² [Emphasis added.]

What Levine came to realize is that the mainstream media and the CIA are not entirely separate entities.

He also learned that the CIA, to avoid having to account to the U.S. Congress for its every action and expenditure, has made drug trafficking a major source of funding for covert operations. This is the realpolitik, the *underlying* reality, Levine tells us. The con game is the illusion propagated by the media that the "War on Drugs" is a reality and that it is succeeding.³³

Similarly, those of us who are suspicious of the official 9/11 account are sorely aware that the mainstream media and many of the alternative news outlets shill for the government's version of the events surrounding 9/11. When we credibly question this official version, we are met with silence or scorn. It's fair to observe that, except for a few independent news sources, the "War on Terror," designed to rise from the ashes of 9/11, is presented unanimously by media outlets as a necessary response to a real attack by dangerous outside enemies.

It is worth noting that, in a court of law, shills are considered co-conspirators of the con men.³⁴

Michael Levine surely must be one of those warriors for truth who would love to expose the crime of the 21st century. Why do I say that? Listen to Levine's parting missive in his superb exposé:

If you go back to the beginning of this chapter and substitute "World Trade Center" for "Drug War," perhaps you'll come to realize how very dangerous a shill game is being run on us right now.³⁵

So the longer "we the people" buy into the con games and the shilling, the more emboldened become the cons and shills. Doubters of the official line on 9/11 intuit that we have come to a crossroads. We still have a choice to return to our roots — a constitutional republic, or what I call a "constitutional democratic republic"³⁶ — rather than remain the imperialistic, relatively closed society our country has become. If we do not act now, at this 9/11 crossroads, will the con men and con women in power up the ante of violence, domination, and deception in the near future — to a point of no return?

Kristina Borjesson

On July 17, 1996, twelve minutes after takeoff from John F. Kennedy International Airport, TWA Flight 800 exploded over the Atlantic Ocean, killing all 230 people aboard.

Investigative journalist and news producer Kristina Borjesson was assigned to look into the story by the executive director of CBS television.



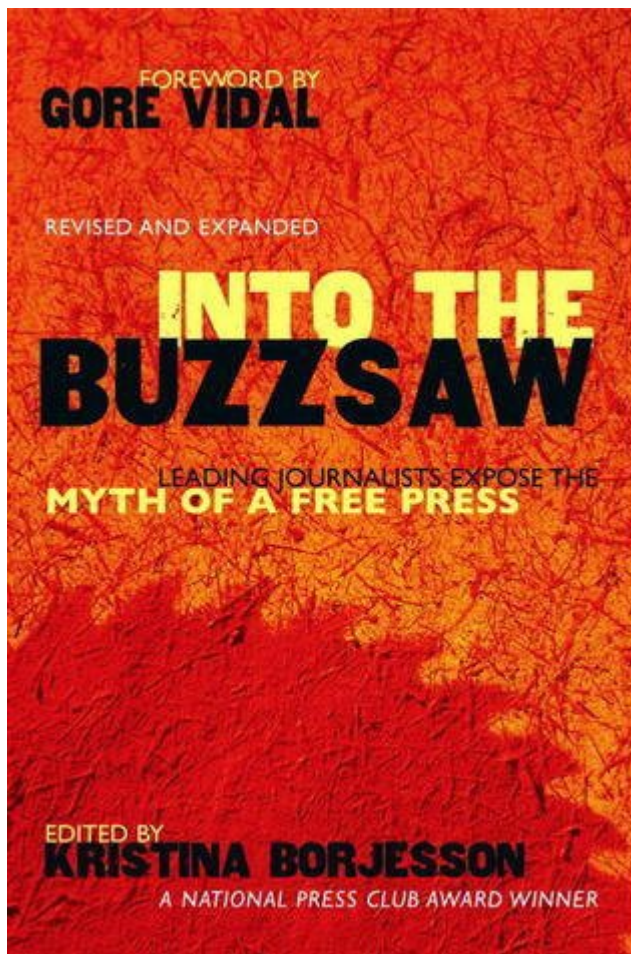
After months of probing and analysis by the FBI, the CIA, and the National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB), the official investigation ended with the NTSB's final report determining that the "probable" cause of the accident was an explosion inside the center wing fuel tank, sparked by faulty wiring.

One of the problems with this account is that many of the eyewitnesses reported seeing a streak of light that shot up and exploded upon intersecting with the plane. "For instance, 94 percent of the witnesses who saw the streak early enough to note its origin, said it rose from the ocean's surface," writes Borjesson. "Of the 134 witnesses who provided information related to the rising streak's trajectory, 116 are inconsistent with the official (CIA video) explanation for the streak."³⁷

Kristina Borjesson/Gore Vidal

The CIA became involved in this case because the eyewitness reports suggested that TWA Flight 800 may have been downed by a terrorist missile.³⁸ What's interesting, though, is that the same intelligence agency then put together a team that produced a patently false, invalid animation designed to debunk the eyewitness accounts. How so? The narrator in the video tells the witnesses that the surface-to-air streak they saw was simply an optical illusion — that what they actually saw was "jet fuel streaming down from the crippled craft after it had exploded."³⁹

Needless to say, the CIA's video did not go over well with the eyewitnesses. Yet because the media, including *The New York Times*, unquestioningly accept the CIA as a credible official source, they regurgitated its bogus analysis and assessment without even talking to the witnesses.⁴⁰ Is it possible that the elaborately contrived video was really *meant for the media*? That is, did the CIA intend for the



media to buy into its concocted theory and then churn out a tale that would persuade the public it was true? I strongly suspect so.

But this contradiction of the witnesses was only one of many problems with the official account, as Borjesson discovered.

Within her anthology *Into the Buzzsaw*, Kristina Borjesson's article of the same name^{[41](#)} describes her punishing ordeal as she tried to report evidence contrary to the official assertions about the demise of Flight 800.

She opens her account with:

I had no idea that my life would be turned upside down and inside out — that I'd been assigned to walk into what I now call "the buzzsaw." The buzzsaw is what can rip through you when you try to investigate or expose anything this country's large institutions — be they corporate or government — want kept under wraps. The system fights back with official lies, disinformation, and stonewalling.^{[42](#)}

Those of us who have innocently walked into the 9/11 Truth buzzsaw can easily relate to her chilling description, which continues:

You feel like you're being followed everywhere you go. You feel like you've been sucked into a game of Dungeons and Dragons. It gets harder and harder to distinguish truth and reality from falsehood and fiction. The sense of fear and paranoia is, at times, overwhelming. Walk into the buzzsaw and you'll cut right to this layer of reality. You will feel a deep sense of loss and betrayal. A shocking shift in paradigm. Anyone who hasn't experienced it will call you crazy. Those who don't know the truth, or are covering it up, will call you a conspiracy nut.^{[43](#)}

Borjesson's page-turner reveals what happened to her as she followed the evidence trail that strongly suggested TWA Flight 800 was destroyed by a missile. The extent that *officials* went to conceal this forbidden trail and the extent to which the *media* went in faithfully parroting the official account will remind those readers who've seen the impossibilities of the official 9/11 account of their own frustrating, futile efforts to interest politicians and journalists in the evidence and facts that clearly contradict the government's explanation of what happened before, during, and after September 11, 2001 — the ill-fated day that changed the world.

As a seasoned investigative journalist, Kristina Borjesson understood that on sensitive stories such as the demise of TWA 800, she would need to be especially leery of official government sources. She

knew she could inch closer to the truth by asking questions of the people who were not allowed to talk to the press — those, for example, who worked at the crash site recovering the debris. “One of my rules of investigative reporting is: The more sensitive the investigation, the more you avoid ‘official’ sources and the harder you try to get to the firsthand people.”⁴⁴

The plethora of parallels between the evidence undermining the official account of the TWA explosion and the evidence undermining the official account of the 9/11 attacks five years later is uncanny. A few examples will suffice to make the point:

1. Flight 800: Metal from the plane recrystallized, indicating the existence of higher temperatures than jet fuel could have delivered.

9/11: Huge steel beams from the World Trade Center (WTC) Twin Towers were bent smoothly, without cracks; molten metal was seen flowing from the South Tower and running beneath the debris pile; and meteorite-like fusion of concrete and other debris all indicated higher temperatures than jet fuel could have delivered.

2. Flight 800: Traces of PETN and RDX (explosives used in missiles) were found in the wreckage.

9/11: Red/gray chips were found in the WTC dust, determined by independent researchers to be nano-thermite, but explained away by officials as primer paint chips.⁴⁵ Also, iron-rich microspheres, which are a byproduct of thermitic reactions, were found in the WTC dust.

3. Flight 800: The NTSB ordered NASA to test red residue found on the top surface of the fuel tank, but NASA was *prohibited* from doing the very tests that would have discovered if the red material contained explosives.

9/11: The National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) refused to test for explosives in the WTC dust.

4. Flight 800: Based on a report that included a provably false story about how weeks before Flight 800 blew up in the sky, explosive residue had been left inside the plane after a bomb-sniffing dog training exercise, the FBI explained away evidence of explosive residue found both inside and outside the aircraft.

9/11: NIST has no explanation for the red/gray chips or the iron-rich microspheres found in the WTC dust — and apparently does not acknowledge their existence.⁴⁶

5. Flight 800: Attempts were made to shame independent investigators for their efforts to uncover the truth. They were accused of preventing the victims’ families from finding peace of mind and closure.

9/11: Ditto.

6. Flight 800: Data concerning the investigation into the demise of the carrier was falsified by officials.

9/11: Analyses show NIST’s report on the destruction of WTC 7 to be fraudulent, leading to the suspicion that its omissions and distortions served a political purpose rather than a scientific one.⁴⁷

7. Flight 800: Physical evidence from the wreckage was confiscated by officials.

9/11: The physical evidence at both the WTC and the Pentagon was illegally removed by officials.

8. Flight 800: Independent investigators and even the NTSB’s own crash investigators, who said that the physical evidence did not support government conclusions, wanted access to physical evidence and

information that the CIA, FBI, and other government agencies refused share.

9/11: To this day, NIST refuses to release the input data for its computer models of WTC 7's collapse. NIST explained, not facetiously, that release of the data might jeopardize public safety.⁴⁸

9. Flight 800: Independent journalists — as well as film director Oliver Stone, who attempted to do an episode on the TV series *Declassified* about the TWA tragedy — were disparaged as “conspiracy theorists,” “conspiracists,” or “bottomfeeders” by official government sources and other journalists.

9/11: Activists and researchers for 9/11 Truth are commonly referred to as “conspiracy theorists,” among other derogatory terms.

10. Flight 800: *Initial* news coverage about the plane's demise reported observable evidence that pointed to a bomb or a missile, but later reports conformed to the government line, no questions asked.

9/11: *Initial* news coverage of the demise of the three WTC buildings and Flight 93 reported observable evidence, such as:

- secondary explosions;
- the destruction of the three WTC buildings appearing to be controlled demolitions; and
- the absence of any evidence of an airliner at the alleged crash site in the Shanksville, Pennsylvania, field.

Later reports avoided all of these initial observations and adhered closely to the official line about these events, no questions asked.

11. Flight 800: Ad hominem hit pieces were published by mainstream media about reporters who dared question the official account.

9/11: When Colorado Public Television's Channel 12 (CPT12) aired 9/11 documentaries featuring evidence that exposed the lies of officialdom, *The Denver Post* printed two hit pieces smearing the station.⁴⁹

Since there is an unwritten code among media outlets not to criticize each other, such attacks as the one leveled at CPT12 are rare, except when one media competitor is determined to silence the dissenting voice of another — or when powerful entities such as the CIA are part of the investigation, as in Michael Levine's narrative. Additionally, journalists who step outside the echo chamber of an official account tend to be shunned by their peers at social or work functions. As I mentioned in the [Introduction](#) to this series, humans' greatest fear may be social ostracism or even physical banishment. At a primal level, we're aware of our dependence upon one another for survival as well as our strong need to belong and to connect with our fellow beings. Thus, there can be devastating psychological effects on reporters who are shunned or avoided in social or business functions.

Why did Kristina Borjesson's investigative work not air on CBS — or any other mainstream station, for that matter? Her own employer plus other media giants turned a blind eye to the documented facts and physical evidence she had unearthed, and instead faithfully bolstered the statements emanating from the FBI and NTSB. After a heroic struggle, Borjesson finally realized that “there was no way CBS was going to air a story that would rile the Pentagon. Silly me.”⁵⁰

So, my dear, “silly” 9/11 Truth activists, one of my reasons for providing lengthy summaries of these accounts by Michael Levine and Kristina Borjesson is to demonstrate that idealistic journalists with integrity *do* exist. In order that humanity may benefit from their commitment to transparency, these two have answered the clarion call to expose high crimes — also known as State Crimes Against Democracy.⁵¹

This commitment to truth can be seen as one manifestation of the “hero’s journey”⁵² popularized by comparative mythologist Joseph Campbell. When individuals accept the call of the hero’s journey, no matter its nature, they tread an arduous path of personal growth that transforms them in unpredictable but positive ways. As difficult as these journeys can be, they take us in the direction of increased integrity and to a meaningful life in which one’s destiny is fulfilled. Refusing to accept the hero’s mantle tends to take us in the opposite direction — toward becoming a villain or else a victim in need of rescue or even a bored person living a life devoid of enthusiasm and meaning.

My other reason for summarizing these stories is to inspire fellow 9/11 skeptics to hang in there. We are in very good company indeed — the company of these dedicated detectives who did not throw in the towel, despite unrelenting and daunting obstacles. When higher-ups rejected their stories, they wrote books and articles, gave lectures and interviews, and/or made documentaries. In other words, they themselves became the media so they could share their hard-won, immensely valuable information with the public.

Soul-tired from the ripping of the “buzzsaw,” at one point Kristina *wanted* to throw in the towel, to abort this unborn story. She tried to do just that, but perhaps fate did not want to cooperate with her longing for respite. Indeed, one step led to another, and she found herself writing and directing a documentary, *TWA Flight 800*,⁵³ with scientific help from physicist Tom Stalcup. The film features six former members of the official crash investigation breaking their silence to refute the official account and expose how the investigation was systematically undermined.

Thus, on June 20, 2013 — 17 years, nearly to the day, after the explosion of Flight 800 — the production of the film was completed and promoted on *Democracy Now!*, with Borjesson and Stalcup as guests.⁵⁴

I am reminded of the locust that emerges from underground, after metamorphosing for 17 long years in the dark, to finally fly.

Monika Jensen-Stevenson

Another powerfully moving account in Borjesson’s anthology is “Verdict First, Evidence Later: The Case for Bobby Garwood,”⁵⁵ by former Emmy-winning *60 Minutes* producer Monika Jensen-Stevenson.

Jensen-Stevenson trod where other journalists refused to tread when she exposed the U.S. government’s pitiless persecution of Marine Private First Class (Pfc.) Robert R. (Bobby) Garwood and the cover-up of 3,500 prisoners of war (POWs) left behind in Vietnam and Laos.



The forsaken Garwood cunningly transmitted word of his status to a Finnish diplomat, who was savvy enough to take Bobby's note to the British Broadcasting Channel (BBC) rather than to U.S. authorities. As a result, after 14 years in the brutal Vietnamese penal system, Garwood was finally released in 1979.



But why would his release be problematic for U.S. authorities?

When the Vietnam War ended in 1973, the government had declared that all troops missing in action (MIA) had been accounted for and that all POWs had been returned. Garwood's sudden appearance was a glaring and embarrassing exposure of this lie. How would the U.S. government cover for itself?

Thinking he was returning a free man in 1979, the Marine was instead summarily met on his home soil with charges of desertion.

At the time, Garwood estimated that there were still 200 POWs still left in Vietnam. Yet, the media sat on this statement and continued to regurgitate the government's assertions that he was a deserter and traitor, not a prisoner.

Why did both the U.S. and Vietnamese governments, former enemies, cooperate in creating this monstrous deception? The North Vietnamese communists initially held the POWs to ensure that the U.S. would fulfill its secret promise, made by Nixon, to pay more than \$3 billion in reparation monies. But the U.S. did *not* pay and had *no intention* of paying. Therefore, by 1979 the American POWs had

become worthless pawns. Washington convinced the poverty-stricken Vietnamese not to reveal the existence of the prisoners if they wanted to exchange ambassadors and establish trade relations.⁵⁶

After all, abandonment of war prisoners was the kind of mistake that could destroy not only careers, but entire political administrations. No amount of effort or money was spared in preventing that from happening Garwood's court-martial ended up being the longest in U.S. history.⁵⁷

Although Garwood was cleared of desertion charges, he was found guilty of collaborating with the enemy. The media ignored the *lack* of evidence backing up this charge.

Then, to add horrific insult to injury, early in the court-martial, "headlines shrieked from every supermarket tabloid: 'Garwood Accused of Child Molestation.'"⁵⁸ Even though he was thoroughly cleared of this specious charge in a separate trial, the original tabloid slur "festered on." Obviously, character assassination was the strategy of both the military and the cooperating media against Garwood, thus to ensure that in the public mind he was crucified, one way or another.

As Jensen-Stevenson continued to follow the Bobby Garwood story, she was also working on a *60 Minutes* program, "Dead or Alive?" on the general issue of POWs and MIAs. Despite continuing pressure and threats that Jensen-Stevenson received from intelligence agencies — particularly the National Security Council and the Defense Intelligence Agency (DIA) — and despite pressure put on CBS's news correspondents and the CBS president by the head of Pentagon covert operations, urging the station to drop the story due to "sensitive matters of national security," *60 Minutes* nevertheless aired Jensen-Stevenson's "Dead or Alive?" in December 1985.⁵⁹

Yet despite her best efforts, CBS would not allow Jensen-Stevenson to do a full story on television about Pfc. Garwood, not even after she got film footage of him in Vietnam that proved his prisoner status. His court-martial conviction, coupled with the ongoing government propaganda against him, made networks unwilling to tell his story.⁶⁰

Jensen-Stevenson's book, *Spite House: The Last Secret of the War in Vietnam*,⁶¹ was published in 1997, exposing the full story of Bobby Garwood's ordeal. Learning of his story, veterans invited Garwood to speak to more than 200,000 Vietnam veterans near the Vietnam Memorial. When he came to the stage, they erupted into wild cheers of "Welcome home," and "We love you, Bobby!"⁶²

Filled with emotion, Garwood could not speak. One highly decorated soldier and then two more jumped to the stage to prop him up. In this soldier's embrace, he finally began to speak. A hush settled over the crowd as Bobby spoke only of the country he loved and of the darkness he felt in his heart, knowing that his brothers, both dead and alive, were left behind.⁶³

Garwood suffered from Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD), which could only have been exacerbated by his government's and its puppet media's brutal betrayal. So it was an especially touching moment when his stateside military mates finally gave him the welcome home and tribute he so richly deserved.

Due to the participation in "Dead or Alive?" by Lieutenant General Eugene F. Tighe, Jr., who headed the DIA from 1978 to 1981 and who had a worldwide reputation as one of the finest intelligence

professionals ever in the U.S., Congress screened this program several times. These screenings resulted in the formation of a DIA commission on MIAs and POWs chaired by General Tighe. The Tighe Commission concluded in 1986 that prisoners *had* been left behind and that there was strong evidence many were still alive. Nevertheless, the report was immediately classified, without public explanation.⁶⁴

From 1991 to 1993, U.S. Senator John Kerry chaired a Senate select committee on POWs, which exposed explosive scandals on the issue. The “committee established one indisputable fact: American prisoners were left behind in Vietnam and other countries where we fought secret wars.”⁶⁵ *Yet the media provided no coverage of this shocking finding.*

From these three examples, as well as from most of the other stories in *Buzzsaw*, emerges an obvious pattern: A story screams to be told in the mainstream media, yet the media do nothing but avoid the evidence and bolster the official account received from intelligence agencies, the military, and the White House. It’s a media that, except for the *60 Minutes* “Dead or Alive?” exposé, feed the American public whatever story line the military and government want us to believe.

I am unavoidably reminded of the words of former CIA Director William Casey, who remarked in early February 1981 to then-incoming President Ronald Reagan: “We’ll know our disinformation program is a success when everything the American public believes is false.”⁶⁶



So, once again, we see that big media, the Department of Defense, the intelligence community, and big business are all tightly intertwined.

Sibel Edmonds: A 9/11 story offered on a silver platter

The stories investigated by Levine, Borjesson, and Jensen-Stevenson are highly sensitive issues — issues that, had the truth about them been laid bare, would have seriously threatened key figures in the U.S. power structure during those years. As sensitive as they are, however, the evidence that disproves the official 9/11 story surely surpasses them as an intolerable threat to those in power.



The forensic facts of 9/11 are a peril to the powerful, in part because they are being kept alive by an international truth movement. That movement has persevered and grown over the past 16 years. Its researchers, analysts, and activists continue to exert pressure on the media to report the facts that question the official proclamation.

Will 9/11, therefore, eventually be treated seriously by the media? Health sciences librarian and author Elizabeth Woodworth has written a three-part series, “The Media Response to the Growing Influence of the 9 /11 Truth Movement,”⁶⁷ in which she surveyed media coverage of 9/11 from 2009 through 2014. She found that recent reporting, especially in Europe and Canada, has been more balanced than was the news coverage in the years closer to the tragedy. We may hope this trend will persist, but there are further facts about the media that we should also take into consideration.

It makes sense that on the heels of the devastating 9/11 attacks, journalistic questioning of the official account would have been sparse. After the initial shock was over, however, when family members of the 9/11 victims and independent researchers were digging for answers to anomalies, the press should have begun seriously scrutinizing the official story — and would have, *if* it had been open-minded, inquisitive, and functioning as a true fourth-estate force to check government assertions.

No such response, however, was forthcoming. And to this day, mainstream media and the “foundation-funded alternative media”⁶⁸ have still refused to treat this subject with any seriousness or depth — even when an explosive story was offered to them on a silver platter.

Sibel Edmonds blew the whistle when, as a translator for the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), she discovered and reported malfeasance by the department. Some of these allegations include information that could blow wide open the official 9/11 story.

Dubbed by the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) “the most gagged person in the history of the United States of America,” Edmonds was subject to the rarely applied “State Secrets Privilege” law. Violating it would mean facing prison. Nevertheless, she argues, this privilege cannot be used to cover up illegal activities that have consequences to public health, security, safety, and welfare.

So in spite of the gag orders, Edmonds offered to go public on any *mainstream media* outlet — print or broadcast — that would *fully* cover her story.⁶⁹ “This is *criminal* activity. That’s why I went to Congress, to the Courts, to the IG [Inspector General of the FBI]. I am *obligated* to do so. And that’s what I’ve been doing since 2002.”⁷⁰

But is Edmonds credible? Let’s see: Her allegations have been confirmed by none other than the “FBI Inspector General, several sitting Senators, both Republican and Democratic, several senior FBI agents, the 9/11 Commission, and dozens of national security and whistleblower advocacy groups.”⁷¹ One might conclude, therefore, that any rational media owner would consider her information a safe topic for coverage.

What’s going on, then? In an interview on the subject, Pentagon Papers whistleblower Daniel Ellsberg put the situation in perspective:

I’d say what she has is far more explosive than the Pentagon Papers . . . in that it deals directly with criminal activity that may involve impeachable offenses . . . There will be phone calls going out to the media saying “don’t even think of touching it, you will be prosecuted for violating national security.”⁷²

Ellsberg further explained that Edmonds’ story will stay off the radar without mainstream corporate media attention. Thus, her damaging contentions will never be allowed to do harm to the powers that be. Besides, Ellsberg reasoned, Bush, Congress, and the media are all incapable of shame. In his words:

She’s not going to shame the media, unless the public are aware that there is a conflict going on. And only the blog-reading public is aware of that. It’s a fairly large audience, but it’s a small segment of the populace at large. As long as they [the media] hold a united front on this, they don’t run the risk of being shamed.⁷³

Even more perplexing, Sibel Edmonds claims that many of the major publications already have in their hands the information she would reveal. How does she know this?

I know they have it because people from the FBI have come in and *given* it to them. They’ve given them the documents and specific case-numbers on my case. These are agents that have said to me, “if you can get Congress to subpoena me I’ll come in and tell it under oath.”⁷⁴

Apparently, there are honest employees in the FBI who would very much like this evidence to see the light of day.

Power and structure

So, who and what has censored the truth about crucial stories that we need to know in order to make better decisions in open societies?



What we know from Michael Levine's experiences is that the infamous CIA itself thwarted his story of high crimes from being reported to the public. From Kristina Borjesson, we learn that the FBI, NTSB, and the Pentagon did everything possible to stop her investigation and to cover up the probable accidental shoot down of TWA 800. Monika Jensen-Stevenson's investigation of Bobby Garwood's ordeal was blocked by the intelligence community and the Pentagon. As for the gagging of Sibel Edmonds, we find the FBI and the Department of Justice at the top of the culprit list.⁷⁵

As though in a legal hearing, these four journalists and whistleblowers are our witnesses, testifying to us of their experiences — experiences that patently demonstrate how our corporate-owned media and much of the alternative media have become controlled. Unlike the officially managed media in closed societies, such as the state-operated radio, television, and print press in the former Soviet Union, media control in relatively open Western societies is invisible to ordinary citizens. Ironically, then, the Western media, covertly directed from behind the scenes, has become an even more effective tool for disseminating propaganda.

Award-winning Australian journalist John Pilger pungently observes:

Long before the Soviet Union broke up, a group of Russian writers touring the United States were astonished to find, after reading the newspapers and watching television, that almost all the opinions on all the vital issues were the same. "In our country," said one of them, "to get that result we have a

dictatorship. We imprison people. We tear out their fingernails. Here you have none of that. How do you do it? What's the secret?"

The secret is a form of censorship more insidious than a totalitarian state could ever hope to achieve. The myth is the opposite. Constitutional freedoms unmatched anywhere else guard against censorship; the press is a "fourth estate," a watchdog on democracy. The journalism schools boast this reputation, the influential East Coast press is especially proud of it, epitomised by the liberal paper of record, *The New York Times*, with its masthead slogan: "All the news that's fit to print."

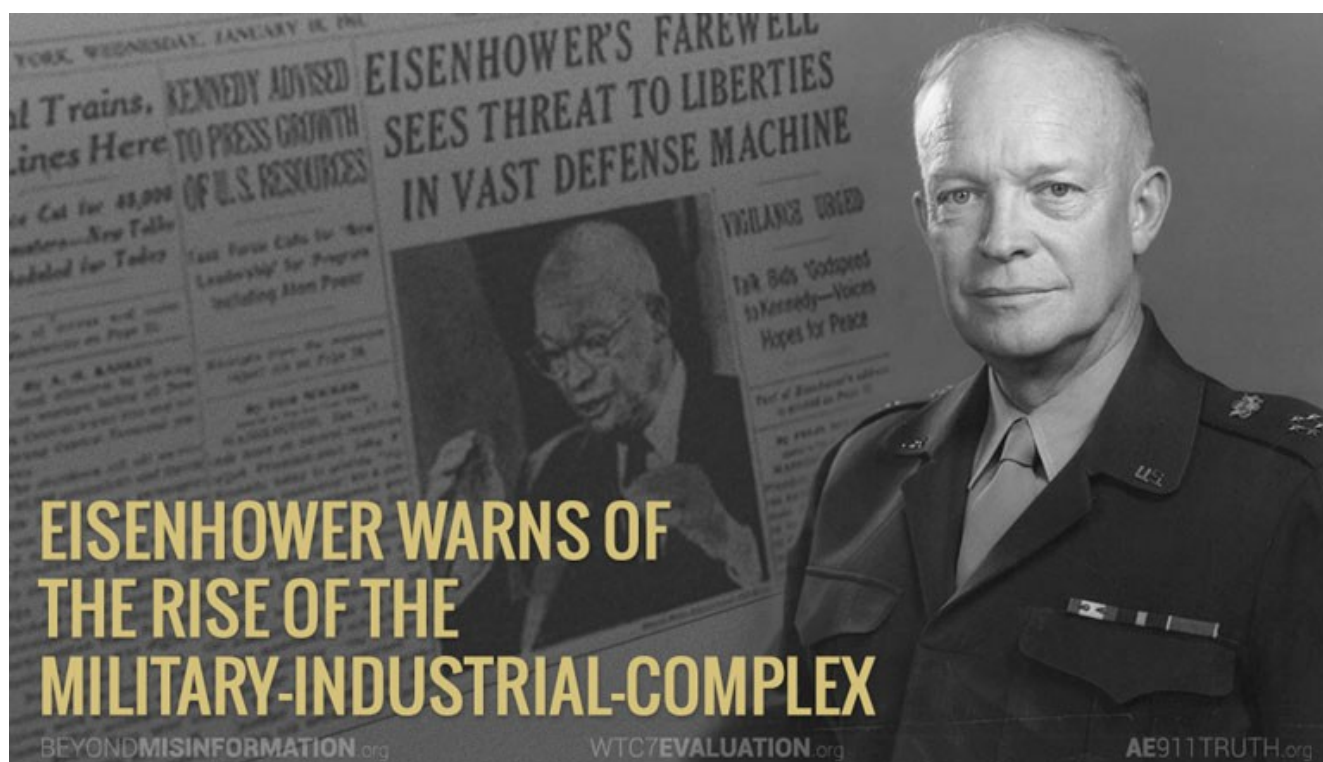
It takes only a day or two back in the US to be reminded of how deep state censorship runs. It is censorship by omission, and voluntary.^{[76](#)}

Of course, in each of the four cases presented, the corporate-owned media and the foundation-funded alternative media became the shields, enabling the cover-ups of these State Crimes Against Democracy by loyally reporting only what those in charge wanted them to report.^{[77](#)}

When one analyzes all of the 19 stories in *Buzzsaw*, a more complete list emerges of the entities that censor information from being given to or shared by the broadcast or print media. When the curtain is pulled back, we discover powerful puppeteers such as the CIA, the FBI, the Pentagon, military intelligence, media owners with conflicting political agendas, the White House, advertisers, powerful family dynasties, and extremely wealthy individuals pulling the strings of the marionette media.

To summarize: The press, an institution that should be the preeminent truth-teller in a democratic society, is thoroughly corrupt because of the inordinate influence wielded by hidden heavy-hitters. We can call this the "influence of the powerful."

But that's not the full picture.



Further analysis of *Buzzsaw* narratives — as well as accounts in many other books and films by media critics⁷⁸ — reveals that the rest of the story of news suppression and journalist co-option involves the *corporate structure* itself. Our global media have become subsidiaries of massive corporate conglomerates that do business in many other industries, including the manufacture of weapons for the military. These mega-corporations, in turn, contribute huge sums of money to members of Congress as well as enormous research grants to universities. In his farewell address, President Eisenhower warned of the military-industrial complex.⁷⁹ But he surely knew that, in reality, the U.S. is saddled with the military-industrial-congressional-academic-media complex that is working overtime to achieve its own narrow goals, not for the benefit for the majority of citizens, not for the country as a whole.

But why is there an inherent conflict of interest between the corporate structure of the news media and truth-telling? In a nutshell, corporations must meet stringent requirements to be publicly traded on a stock exchange, such as the New York Stock Exchange or NASDAQ. With their financial and reporting requirements, stock exchanges — and the institutional investors that own the stocks traded on them — pressure these mega-conglomerates to grow profits from one quarter to the next, one year to the next. Moreover, the news portion of the conglomerate is expected to generate the same financial results as its non-news counterparts. Therefore, profit-making, not truth-telling, necessarily becomes the bottom line for a publicly traded corporation. The primary aim of earning profits, accomplished through both cutting costs and boosting revenues, exerts tremendous pressure on news budgets. The effect of this facet of Wall Street on media conglomerates will be fleshed out in Part 22.

This media *corporate structure* is, of course, tightly tied to the previously discussed *influence of the powerful*. Just as bones and muscles seamlessly work together as a unit to control our physical actions, these two aspects of media — its structure and the influence of the powerful — seamlessly work

together to control media's actions. But in this case, regrettably, they cooperate for the exclusive benefit of the mega-conglomerates and the special interests of individuals holding positions of undue power. Obviously, this structure stunts the media's ability and willingness to tell the truth — a key requirement for a healthy nation.

Pressure on the media to conform to a “consensus”⁸⁰ view of the world, therefore, comes from both powerful entities and from the



corporate structure itself. Pressure produces fear, and, not surprisingly, fears abound in the “news factories”:⁸¹

- Fear of not meeting financial analysts’ expectations for the next quarter’s increase in profits.
- Fear of low TV news ratings.
- Fear of litigation by powerful corporations such as Phillip Morris and Monsanto or by other non-corporate but equally powerful entities.
- Fear of the withdrawal of ads by Madison Avenue’s mega advertisers.
- Fear of attacks by other media outlets if reporters or editors veer from a “consensus” viewpoint.
- Fear of persecution by an employer if the reporter refuses to toe that media outlet’s party line.
- Fear of the consequences of *not* telling a story that other media *are* telling, even if it is *not* a credible story.
- Fear of offending influential local public figures or groups.

And so on. The stress resulting from those fears is enormous. Fear and stress, as we know, are anathema to truth-telling.⁸²

Conclusion

At this point, we may be wondering: “Where are the truth-warrior journalists whose bread is not buttered by the media mega-corporations and who could therefore bring the 9/11 issue to the public’s attention?”

More specifically, we may be asking: Why do Amy Goodman, Chris Hedges, John Nichols, Matt Taibbi, Greg Palast, Jeremy Scahill, Glenn Greenwald, Bill Moyers (one of my heroes), Robert Parry,⁸³ Seymour Hersh, and others who speak up courageously and cogently on controversial issues — even Wikileaks founder Julian Assange — become strangely silent or else erupt in defensive anger or ridicule when questioned about 9/11 evidence that refutes the official account? There appears to be a 9/11 threshold over which none of them dare cross. They don’t need a degree in structural engineering to understand the obvious signature of controlled demolition of the three World Trade Center buildings — and, more importantly, the dire implications of that evidence. Nor do they need to be aerospace experts to understand 9/11’s air defense failures or spooks to grasp the intelligence agency failures. In short, each of them is intelligent enough to reach the conclusion that there’s something terribly amiss with the story we have been told by authorities.

So what gives?

Along with hundreds of thousands — if not millions — of other 9/11 skeptics, I’m dying to know, but can only speculate. I seriously doubt that any of these journalists, who are surely educated about the dark side of U.S. history — including the fact that false flag operations are routinely staged as pretexts for wars — are prone to denial as a means of avoiding cognitive dissonance. But I could be wrong.

Obviously, though, they’re savvy enough to realize that the subject is taboo. Several of my friends and I have speculated more than once about their motives. Are they worried about being blacklisted from reporting on the issues that are especially important to them? Afraid of relinquishing their bully pulpit? Dreading loss of funding from foundations that support them?⁸⁴ Anxious at the thought of imperiling their lives or the lives of family members? Distrustful that telling the truth about 9/11 — a conspiracy that implies unprecedented perfidy by elements within our government — could eventually result in a healthier nation and world?

I finally decided to reach out to Kristina Borjesson with this question. After all, she’s been deeply entrenched in the profession, is well-known and respected as a truth-teller, and has suffered the consequences of attempting to report the facts about the controversial TWA 800 story. Her insider analysis certainly holds more weight than my outsider surmisings, so I share her answer with you:

They are talented journalists and have worked hard to navigate between reporting that goes right up to the line of what is acceptable to the powers-that-be and reporting that goes over the line and would cost them everything. It took Parry years to get over being blackballed for his *Newsweek* reporting on Iran-Contra. When he was at *The New York Times*, Hedges was reprimanded by his bosses after he criticized what was happening in Iraq while giving a commencement address in 2003. These individuals would immediately become targets for marginalization, loss of funding, and/or outlets for their work, or even worse forms of retaliation if they crossed the line, because they have achieved a “critical mass” audience — i.e., a big enough audience to create problems for the powers-that-be if used to counter official narratives on third rail issues. If they did that they would attract dangerous if not fatal attention from powers-that-be. The fact that they are widely viewed as good journalists not beholden to the powers-that-be makes them dangerous, but not too dangerous. *They would only become dispensable if they invested that credibility in scrutinizing the ultimate third rail issue — 9/11.* They’re doing a lot of good carefully hoeing the rows they’re hoeing now, and that would all go down the tubes if they turned their attention to looking into whether or not the official narrative about 9/11 is true. [My emphasis.]

Another exemplary investigative journalist — one who wishes to remain anonymous — had this to say:

Brave reporters know just how far they can go before risking their lives. Some have taken risks regardless, perhaps naïvely, perhaps not, and their “suicides” [or “accidents”] have sent a clear message. Gary Webb and Michael Hastings come to mind.⁸⁵

<https://youtu.be/FS-oNTe9kwE>

Before I cease speculating, let me for one moment assume that I’m wrong — that at least some of these journalists *are* literally incapable of conceiving that criminal elements are embedded in our government. Were that the case, it is understandable that they would be in deep denial. For, as Graeme MacQueen writes in an article whose title includes the words “beyond their wildest dreams,” one must first be able to imagine — to conceive — that officials *could* have orchestrated the attacks of 9/11.



“Once the imagination stops filtering out a hypothesis and allows it into the realm of the possible,” then the hypothesis, the Canadian 9/11 researcher explains, “can be put to the test. Evidence and reason must now do the job.”⁸⁶

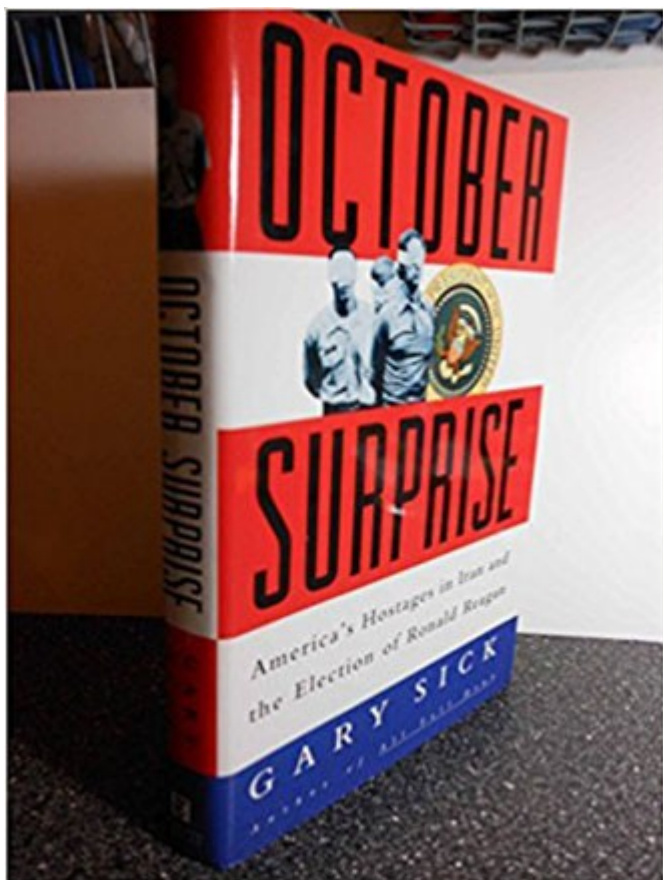
Alternatively, it is possible that some of these relatively independent journalists are not in denial at all, but rather that their clear grasp of the implications of the 9/11 evidence has them shaking in their boots at the thought of challenging fundamental beliefs about their own country. Gary Sick, President Carter’s National Security Council liaison, elucidates this phenomenon in his book, *The October Surprise: America’s Hostages in Iran and the Election of Ronald Reagan*:

We in Washington are accustomed to the petty scandals of Washington politics. However, there is another category of offenses, described by the French poet Andre Chenier as “les crimes puissants qui font trembler les lois,” crimes so great that they make the laws themselves tremble. . . . For example, when the Iran-Contra scandal exploded in 1986, both the Congress and the national mainstream media pulled up short. . . . The laws trembled at the prospect of a political trial that threatened to shatter the compact of trust between the rulers and the ruled, a compact that was the foundation upon which the very law itself rested. . . . The lesson was clear: accountability declines as the magnitude of the crime and the power of those charged increase.⁸⁷

Similar to Sick’s description is this revelation by former Pentagon official and retired U.S. Air Force Lieutenant Colonel Karen Kwiatkowski of what journalists have confided to her:

I have been told by reporters that they will not report their own insights or contrary evaluations of the official 9/11 story, because to question the government story about 9/11 is to question the very foundations of our entire modern belief system regarding our government, our country, and our way of

life. To be charged with questioning these foundations is far more serious than being labeled a disgruntled conspiracy nut or anti-government traitor, or even being sidelined or marginalized within an academic, government service, or literary career. To question the official 9/11 story is simply and fundamentally revolutionary. In this way, of course, questioning the official story is also simply and fundamentally American.⁸⁸



Whatever the reason each of the aforementioned journalists — and their other brave and gifted colleagues — have for their tomb-like silence about 9/11, I hold out the hope that one day we will hear their confessions — genuine, penitent confessions, not simply face-saving excuses.

Gary Sick/October Surprise

Some Americans may fear that a real investigation into the events surrounding 9/11 could challenge our entire political system to the point of paralysis. But this is fear of fear itself and is a ruse of the mind. A real investigation would actually put our system to work as the framers of this country's founding documents intended — preventing the further encroachment of tyranny.

Think of the alternative: If 9/11 is never officially uncovered as the cruel false flag that it was, more such monstrosities will surely be perpetrated by such conscience-less

criminals. The results would include millions more deaths, many millions more refugees, even more extensive pollution and the ensuing illnesses engendered by massive military conflicts, and the exponential expansion of worldwide chaos. Which option would you choose: more false flags and other treacherous deceptions — with their accompanying fallout — or the righting of our government so it will operate by the people and for the people?

If we decided, as a nation, to shine light into the cave of corruption underlying 9/11, what would be required to expose the wrongdoing and the wrongdoers? Congress would have to find within itself the fortitude to commence an unbiased investigation or, better yet, to authorize an independent investigation with subpoena power and a mandate to grant immunity to insiders who tell all they know. These subpoena and immunity provisions would enable the independent prosecutor to convict and sentence 9/11's key perpetrators.

That's what would happen in a corruption-free system. And that's what the 9/11 Truth Movement is demanding. In theory, our political system should already have brought us that official, impartial investigation. In practice, though, we find a different political reality.

A massive unearthing of the facts of this shockingly treacherous deed — a deed almost certainly planned and executed by U.S. political figures, military brass, intelligence operatives, corporate elites, and others (including foreign parties) — would allow us to peer into the inner workings of the minds, the values, and the system that have spawned and sustained our currently corrupted institutions. One would hope that, as part of this unearthing, the names of complicit members of the media who shilled for, ignored, or concealed the corruption would also be dredged up and exposed to the light. Perhaps this excavation of 9/11 will one day come to pass, as most of us believe was the case with World War II by way of the Nuremburg Trials,^{[89](#)} so that humanity can move beyond the inhumane, unjust, unsustainable conditions in which we now live, and toward the peaceful and sustainable world most of us can envision.

In the meantime, let's be clear that our mainstream media and much of the so-called alternative media are simply extensions of our corporatized, crooked political system.

Yet to some, such as my urbane acquaintance on the patio in the foothills above Denver, *The New York Times* appears liberal and independent. Why?

One reason is that there are two types of political issues — with overlap, of course. On *social issues* such as abortion, race, gender, and immigration, the media have been given leeway to be liberal, even when this stance contradicts a conservative president or Congress. But with *third rail issues* such as the Israel-Palestine conflict, big-business profits, war, or the false flag nature of 9/11, mainstream media march in lockstep with their government and corporate news sources, repeating their narratives ad nauseam. Official suppression of the truth, journalists' self-censorship, and prosecution of whistleblowers regularly accompany these third rail issues.^{[90](#)} As a journalist friend tersely remarked, "It's okay to be liberal with domestic issues, but don't mess with the empire."

A side note: Occasionally, reports on third rail issues unexpectedly pop up in the corporate-owned press, but these online reports can be "disappeared" in a flash, since many mainstream media outlets do not allow their articles to be archived on the Internet. One example of this censorship is *The New York Times*' threat in 2006 to sue WanttoKnow.info for posting a December 25, 2001, *Times* article that actually questioned the collapses of the Twin Towers on 9/11!^{[91](#)}

Fortunately, some of the alternative media push boundaries and cross into these third rail territories. But, unfortunately, few of them dare cross the threshold of acceptability into the 9/11 issue.^{[92](#)}

The preponderance of evidence we gathered from our exploration of the cases of Michael Levine, Kristina Borjesson, Monika Jensen-Stevenson, and Sibel Edmonds demonstrates that the corporate-owned media, by and large, remain loyal stenographers of those in power. Thus, I won't hold my breath that they will address 9/11 seriously, honestly, or with any profundity. Rather, I predict they will not attempt to connect dots and draw a picture of reality — not as long as that reality differs from the contrived news that the holders of power insist we swallow. Nor will they report on the context of the 9/11 wars — though they ought to follow up on Charlotte Dennett's marvelous, must-read article, "The Global War on Terror and the Great Game for Oil: How the Media Missed the Context."^{[93](#)} They most likely will do none of these things, at least not in my lifetime.

In summary, my study of the modern-day media has revealed that the active censoring parties are powerful institutions and individuals working seamlessly with the corporate media *structure*. But a critical, as-yet-unexamined piece of the puzzle is the *self-censorship* that naturally arises from the culture within the media monoliths. Indeed, it doesn't take long for an astute journalist to learn to self-censor if he or she hopes to remain employed.

Former Federal Communications commissioner Nicholas Johnson (1966 – 1973) succinctly describes the process of self-censorship:

A reporter . . . first comes up with an investigative story idea, writes it up and submits it to the editor and is told the story is not going to run. He wonders why, but the next time he is cautious enough to check with the editor first. He is told by the editor that it would be better not to write that story. The third time he thinks of an investigative story idea but doesn't bother the editor with it because he knows it's silly. The fourth time he doesn't even think of the idea anymore.⁹⁴

“One might add a fifth time,” writes historian Michael Parenti, “when the reporter bristles with indignation at the suggestion that he is on an ideological leash and is not part of a free and democratic press.”⁹⁵

As for the question I posed, “Whatever happened to investigative journalists?”: If my conclusion seems too conspiratorial, I urge you to examine the nineteen accounts of insider journalists in *Buzzsaw*. They are essential reading for anyone seeking to understand what happens to journalists when they attempt to report on issues inconvenient to power brokers or various elements within the corporate structure. From these accounts we learn how investigative reporters are ground up by the system that controls, suppresses, manipulates, and distorts the very facts we require to be informed and functioning citizens of a free society.

I trust you'll also read the works of other insider journalists whom I will be citing in these four segments. Plus, you'll probably find still other sources on your own. If you come to a conclusion that differs from mine, I hope you will contact me in the spirit of continuing this crucial conversation.

On a positive note, let me say that we 9/11 Truth activists have done exactly what Michael Levine, Kristina Borjesson, Monika Jensen-Stevenson, and Sibel Edmonds have done: We've *become* the media. Observe the research being undertaken; the books and films and articles and online blogs being written; the array of videos, from pithy to lengthy, that are being produced. Witness the perseverance and passion of 9/11 victims' family members, who are intent on winning a real investigation into the greatest crime of the 21st century. All around me, I see warriors for truth who are refusing to let information be stifled and are mounting vigorous grassroots media efforts that, according to many polls,⁹⁶ have successfully challenged the mainstream media's repetition of the official 9/11 account.

My curiosity now takes me in a different direction and wonders, “Was the press always so intertwined with those in power? Were the media always such efficient transcribers of the “leaks” and press releases from the Pentagon, from the so-called intelligence community, and from the executive branch? How exactly does the organizational structure of the mainstream media promote censorship? What happened to the laudable goal of reporting the truth? In sum, what happened to our “free press”?

The next two installments will answer these questions. In Part 22, I will provide an in-depth look at how and when the CIA and the news media became entangled, and whether we are still subjected to the resulting censorship and propaganda. In Part 23, I will address the history of the news media and how the corporate structure itself contributes to the loss of our cherished fourth estate.

Part 22 will begin with a dramatic demonstration of the depth of denial — or perhaps “vehement avoidance” — that journalists are apt to display when confronted with questions about the significant outside influences (notably the CIA) that dominate today’s news organizations. Hint: I’ll be telling a personal story about a public altercation I had with a 50-year distinguished journalist who reported on national and international issues in his more than two decades with *The New York Times*.

Editor’s note: To be continued in the next issue with Part 22: The Role of the Media: Act II — The Special Role of the CIA. Electronic sources in the footnotes have been archived. If they can no longer be found by a search on the Internet, readers desiring a copy may contact Frances Shure [here].

Endnotes

¹ See “ASNE Statement of Principles,” <http://asne.org/content.asp?pl=24&sl=171&contentid=171>.

Also see Elizabeth Woodworth, “Ethical Reflections on the 9/11 Controversy: The Responsibility of the Media to Tell the Truth,” <https://www.globalresearch.ca/ethical-reflections-on-the-9-11-controversy-the-responsibility-of-the-media-to-to-tell-the-truth/21156>.

² Nick Davies, *Flat Earth News: An award-winning reporter exposes falsehood, distortion and propaganda in the global media* (Vintage, 2009), 32.

³ Edward S. Herman, *The Myth of the Liberal Media: An Edward S. Herman Reader* (Peter Lang Inc., International Academic Publishers, November 1999).

Also, see the documentary “The Myth of the Liberal Media: The Propaganda Model of News.” For a summary of the points made in this documentary, see <http://hope.journ.wvu.edu/tpilgrim/j190/mythlibmediavidsum.html>.

⁴ This DVD can be found within the covers of Canadian journalist and media-critic Barrie Zwicker’s seminal book *Towers of Deception: The Media Cover-up of 9/11* (New Society Publishers, 2006). *Towers of Deception* remains at the time of this writing the only book dedicated to analyzing the media cover-up of evidence that challenges the official 9/11 account. Find more information about this DVD at https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Barrie_Zwicker or at <https://www.amazon.com/Towers-Deception-Media-Cover-up-11/dp/0865715734>.

⁵ Nafeez Mosaddeq Ahmed, *The War on Freedom: How and Why America Was Attacked on September 11, 2001* (Tree of Life Publications, 2002).

⁶ For an example, see J. R. Thorpe, “How Were Suffragettes Treated by the Media?” at <https://www.bustle.com/p/how-were-suffragettes-treated-by-the-media-55319>.

⁷ Barrie Zwicker, *Towers of Deception: The Media Cover-up of 9/11* (New Society Publishers, 2006), chap. 2.

⁸ Be aware that there are many websites, books, and DVDs that, while glitzy in their appearance and seductive in their allure, appear to be misinformation or disinformation, disseminated perhaps malevolently, perhaps innocently. The following are a few of the credible resources for your perusal and further study. The information contained in them is accessible to a wide range of readers, from the layperson to the scientifically minded:

- For journalists, researchers, or other individuals researching the events of 9/11, the points made by a panel of experts at this site are clear statements on the best evidence opposing the official narrative: <http://www.consensus911.org>.
- For individuals who want more depth and detail, this site is the home of peer-reviewed studies covering the research related to the events of 9/11: <http://www.journalof911studies.com/beginners>. The sister site of the Journal is <http://stj911.org/index.html>.
- For a timeline from before the 9/11 attacks through 2014, see “9/11 Facts Summary: 10-Page Summary of 9/11 Facts From Major Media,” <https://www.wanttoknow.info/911/9-11-facts>.
- For evidence on the destruction of the three World Trade Center (WTC) buildings on 9/11: <http://www.ae911truth.org/news/evidence.html>.
- For two short videos by Architects & Engineers for 9/11 Truth, see *Solving the Mystery of WTC 7, with Ed Asner*: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nyogTsrsgI>; and *Stand for the Truth: A Government Researcher Speaks Out*: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GvAv-114bwM>.
- For an 88-minute video featuring architects, engineers, and scientists testifying about the destruction of the three WTC buildings, download or purchase *9/11: Explosive Evidence – Experts Speak Out*: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LrjcXOJIWw0>.
- For a peer-reviewed study documenting the forensic evidence of explosives in the WTC dust: “Active Thermite Material Discovered in Dust from the 9/11 World Trade Center Catastrophe”: <https://benthamopen.com/ABSTRACT/TOCPJ-2-7> and: http://www.911research.wtc7.net/mirrors/bentham_open/ActiveThermite_Harrit_Bentham2009.pdf.
- “The Top 40 Reasons to Doubt the Official Story”: <http://911truth.org/top-40-reasons-doubt-offical-story>.

- Kevin Ryan, “Fourteen Incredible Facts About 9/11”: <https://digwithin.net/2015/08/08/fourteen-facts>; and “Sixteen More Reasons to Question 9/11”: <https://digwithin.net/2017/08/27/sixteen-more-reasons>.
- Elizabeth Woodworth, “The Media Response to the Growing Influence of the 9/11 Truth Movement: Reflections on a Recent Evaluation of Dr. David Ray Griffin,” <https://www.globalresearch.ca/the-media-response-to-the-growing-influence-of-the-9-11-truth-movement/16505>.
- The Corbett Report, “9/11 Suspects,” <https://www.corbettreport.com/?s=9%2F11+suspects>.

⁹ The “anchoring effect” refers to the common human proclivity to rely heavily on the first piece of information offered (“the anchor”) when making a decision or judgment. There is a cognitive bias toward interpreting other information in relation to the anchor.

¹⁰ See <http://www.gallup.com/poll/195542/americans-trust-mass-media-sinks-new-low.aspx>.

¹¹ For research on what makes people trust and rely on news, see <https://www.americanpressinstitute.org/publications/reports/survey-research/trust-news/single-page>.

¹² See <http://www.gallup.com/poll/195542/americans-trust-mass-media-sinks-new-low.aspx>.

¹³ Ibid.

¹⁴ See http://www.gallup.com/poll/192665/americans-confidence-newspapers-new-low.aspx?g_source=position2&g_medium=related&g_campaign=tiles.

¹⁵ See http://www.gallup.com/poll/192581/americans-confidence-institutions-stays-low.aspx?g_source=position1&g_medium=related&g_campaign=tiles.

¹⁶ See http://www.gallup.com/poll/183605/confidence-branches-government-remains-low.aspx?g_source=position3&g_medium=related&g_campaign=tiles.

¹⁷ See <http://www.gallup.com/poll/203207/trump-job-approval-weekly.aspx> and <http://www.gallup.com/poll/202811/trump-sets-new-low-point-inaugural-approval-rating.aspx>.

¹⁸ See <https://www.forbes.com/sites/brettedkins/2017/02/23/poll-finds-that-more-americans-trust-the-media-than-donald-trump/#1cf5af01105d>.

¹⁹ See https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Third_rail_of_politics.

²⁰ See https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cynthia_McKinney.

²¹ This eagerness has been reported to me by key 9/11 activists who have told me of their conversations with reporters working for mainstream news corporations. These journalists are keenly aware that any story they might write that contradicts the official 9/11 account would not be published. Furthermore, they would likely be terminated from their jobs or at least sidelined into meaningless positions within

the company. So this situation is a “Catch-22,” in that if they were to slip the bonds of silence imposed on them and run with a verboten story, they would be silenced!

²² James Rosen, “Watergate: CIA withheld data on double agent” (FoxNews.com, August 30, 2016) <http://www.foxnews.com/politics/2016/08/30/watergate-cia-withheld-data-on-double-agent.html>.

The CIA document titled “Working Draft—CIA Watergate History” can be found at <http://www.judicialwatch.org/document-archive/jw-v-cia-watergate-cia-report-00146>.

²³ Russ Baker, *Family of Secrets: The Bush Dynasty, America’s Invisible Government, and the Hidden History of the Last Fifty Years* (Bloomsbury Press, New York, 2009) chapters 9–11. Note: Speculation on the motivation for ousting President Nixon from the White House varies from author to author.

²⁴ See https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Oil_depletion_allowance.

²⁵ Peter Dale Scott, in *The Road to 9/11: Wealth, Empire, and the Future of America* (University of California Press, 2007). Scott defines the term “deep state” as the covert parts of government that respond to wealthy private influences as those influences shape government policy outside of normal democratic processes

²⁶ A “closed society” is synonymous with a totalitarian one, in which there is no freedom of thought and expression without punishment by the state apparatus. For descriptions of both open and closed societies, see https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Open_society.

Naomi Wolf, *The End of America: Letter of Warning to a Young Patriot* (Chelsea Green Publishing, 2007). Wolf shows ten steps that dictators or would-be dictators always take when they wish to close down an open society. She describes how each of those steps is being implemented in the U.S. today.

²⁷ Charlotte Dennett, “The War on Terror and the Great Game for Oil: How the Media Missed the Context,” *Into the Buzzsaw: Leading Journalists Expose the Myth of a Free Press*, ed. Kristina Borjesson (Promethius Books, 2004).

²⁸ Daniel Yergin, *The Prize: The Epic Quest for Oil, Money, and Power* (Simon & Schuster; 1st edition, January 1991).

²⁹ Kristina Borjesson, ed., *Into the Buzzsaw: Leading Journalists Expose the Myth of a Free Press* (Promethius Books, 2004).

For short summaries of some Buzzaw stories, see <http://www.wanttoknow.info/massmedia>.

³⁰ Michael Levine, “Mainstream Media: The Drug War’s Shills,” *Into the Buzzsaw: Leading Journalists Expose the Myth of a Free Press*, ed. Kristina Borjesson (Promethius Books, 2004).

³¹ Levine, “Mainstream Media,” 166.

³² Levine, “Mainstream Media,” 167.

³³ A few exceptions appear to prove the rule that CIA involvement in drug running receives a stunning silence from the media.

An early exception to the media silence was a Frontline program first aired May 17, 1988. See transcript: <http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/shows/drugs/archive/gunsdrugscia.html>.

A later one was this 1993 *New York Times* article: “The CIA Drug Connection is as Old as the Agency”: <http://www.nytimes.com/1993/12/03/opinion/03iht-edlarry.html>.

More recently, on October 10, 2014, *The Huffington Post* broached this topic. See “Key Figures in CIA-Crack Cocaine Scandal Begin to Come Forward” at http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2014/10/10/gary-webb-dark-alliance_n_5961748.html. This article vindicates Gary Webb, a Pulitzer Prize-winning journalist for *The San Jose Mercury News*, the paper that published his 1996 “Dark Alliance” series on the CIA/crack cocaine/Contra alliance, an exposé for which Webb was smeared by the mainstream media (via the hidden hand of the CIA) and for which he lost his job and perhaps his life. Webb’s story, featured in *Into the Buzzsaw*, and his supposed “suicide” are told in the 2014 movie *Kill the Messenger*.

Even more recently, in June 2017, to my astonishment, A&E Networks, via its History channel, aired “America’s War on Drugs,” an eight-hour series in four episodes, which actually tells the truth about the CIA’s overarching control of the worldwide drug trade. I say “actually” because let’s not forget that in these last 16 years, the History channel has played a major role in supporting the official 9/11 story and obfuscating facts that contradict that narrative. Since the drug war was declared 44 years ago by Nixon, does this mean that we will have to wait until 2045 — 44 years from September 11, 2001 — for the History channel to tell us the real story about 9/11? Maybe. But let’s hope that revelations of truth — on all fronts — will come at a much faster pace in today’s world.

Toward the end of the first episode of “America’s War on Drugs,” there is a taped conversation between John Ehrlichman, counsel and chief domestic advisor under President Nixon, and a *Harper’s Magazine* journalist, which took place decades after the “war on drugs” was declared. Here is Ehrlichman’s chilling admission of deep politics at play:

“The Nixon campaign had two enemies, the antiwar left and Black people,” Ehrlichman said. “We knew we couldn’t make it illegal to be either against the war or Black, but by getting the public to associate the hippies with marijuana and the Blacks with heroin and then criminalizing both heavily, we could disrupt those communities. We could arrest their leaders, raid their homes, break up their meetings, and vilify them night after night on the evening news. Did we know we were lying about the drugs? Of course we did.”

To watch this series, see <http://www.history.com/shows/americas-war-on-drugs>.

³⁴ In Britain, the Serious Crime Act is a law that designates enablers of crime (such as solicitors, accountants, and other professionals) to be as guilty as those who actively commit the crime. See https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Serious_Crime_Act_2014 and <https://www.palmerslaw.co.uk/articles/law-body-concerned-over-professional-enabler-offence>.

³⁵ Levine, “Mainstream Media,” 192.

³⁶ Some people call our system of government a democracy, but this is not technically correct. According to the founders, we have a republic (“if you can keep it,” quipped Benjamin Franklin). I

prefer to use the term “constitutional democratic republic” because while our republican system of government is based in the U.S. Constitution, we use democratic processes for choosing our representatives.

³⁷ Kristina Borjesson, “Into the Buzzsaw,” *Into the Buzzsaw: Leading Journalists Expose the Myth of a Free Press*, ed. Kristina Borjesson (Promethius Books, 2004), 318.

Watch this video to see how the CIA team built a false narrative to discredit the eyewitnesses:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IyluFVxqBlo>.

³⁸ See https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/TWA_Flight_800.

³⁹ Borjesson, “Buzzsaw,” 317.

⁴⁰ Ibid.

⁴¹ Kristina Borjesson, “Into the Buzzsaw,” *Into the Buzzsaw: Leading Journalists Expose the Myth of a Free Press*, ed. Kristina Borjesson (Promethius Books, 2004).

⁴² Borjesson, “Buzzsaw,” 284.

⁴³ Ibid.

⁴⁴ Borjesson, “Buzzsaw,” 286–287.

⁴⁵ See http://www1.ae911truth.org/downloads/documents/primer_paint_Niels_Harrit.pdf.

⁴⁶ See NIST’s “Frequently Asked Questions” about the collapses of WTC 7 and the Twin Towers: <https://www.nist.gov/pba/questions-and-answers-about-nist-wtc-7-investigation> and <https://www.nist.gov/el/faqs-nist-wtc-towers-investigation>.

⁴⁷ David Ray Griffin, *The Mysterious Collapse of World Trade Center 7: Why the Final Official Report about 9/11 is Unscientific and False* (Olive Branch Press, 2010) chapters 7–10.

Chris Sarns, “Fraud Exposed in NIST WTC 7 Reports,” Parts 1–5:

<http://www.ae911truth.org/news/317-news-media-events-fraud-exposed-in-nist-wtc-7-reports-part-1.html>

<http://www.ae911truth.org/news/318-news-media-events-fraud-exposed-in-nist-wtc-7-reports-part-2.html>

<http://www.ae911truth.org/news/319-news-media-events-fraud-exposed-in-nist-wtc-7-reports-part-3.html>

<http://www.ae911truth.org/news/320-news-media-events-fraud-exposed-in-nist-wtc-7-reports-part-4.html>

<http://www.ae911truth.org/news/321-news-media-events-fraud-exposed-in-nist-wtc-7-reports-part-5.html>

Simon Falkner and Chris Sarns, “NIST’s WTC 7 Reports: Filled with Fantasy, Fiction and Fraud,” Parts 1–6:

<http://www.ae911truth.org/news/186-news-media-events-1-of-6-nist-fraud.html>

<http://www.ae911truth.org/news/190-news-media-events-2-of-6-nist-fraud.html>
<http://www.ae911truth.org/news/197-news-media-events-3-of-6-nist-fraud-3.html>
<http://www.ae911truth.org/news/206-news-media-events-4-of-6-nist-fraud-4.html>
<http://www.ae911truth.org/news/215-news-media-events-5-of-6-nist-fraud-5.html>
<http://www.ae911truth.org/news/217-news-media-events-6-of-6-nist-fraud-6.html>

⁴⁸ See <http://cryptome.org/nist070709.pdf>.

⁴⁹ See <http://www.denverpost.com/2009/09/25/carroll-public-tv-and-the-truthers> and <http://colorado911truth.org/2009/08/denver-post-publishes-hit-piece-on-kbdi-and-9-11-truth>. See *Denver Post* article: <http://www.denverpost.com/2009/08/19/kbdi-pushes-limits-on-controversial-pledge-tie-ins>.

See the response by Colorado 9/11 Truth and friends to these two hit pieces:
<http://colorado911truth.org/2009/10/open-letter-to-the-denver-post>.

⁵⁰ Borjesson, “Buzzsaw,” 304.

⁵¹ See Lance deHaven-Smith, “Frequently Asked Questions about State Crimes Against Democracy (SCADs)”: <http://dehaven-smith.com/faq/default.html>.

⁵² See https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hero%27s_journey and <http://www.mythologyteacher.com/documents/TheHeroJourney.pdf>.

⁵³ See <https://www.amazon.com/Twa-Flight-800-Kristina-Borjesson/dp/B00GDIHO5M>.

⁵⁴ See http://www.democracynow.org/2013/6/20/did_us_govt_lie_about_twa.

⁵⁵ Monika Jensen-Stevenson, “Verdict First, Evidence Later: The Case for Bobby Garwood,” *Into the Buzzsaw: Leading Journalists Expose the Myth of a Free Press*, ed. Kristina Borjesson (Promethius Books, 2004).

⁵⁶ Jensen-Stevenson, “Verdict First,” 263 and 278.

⁵⁷ Jensen-Stevenson, “Verdict First,” 263–264.

⁵⁸ Jensen-Stevenson, “Verdict First,” 271.

⁵⁹ Jensen-Stevenson, “Verdict First,” 260.

⁶⁰ Ibid.

⁶¹ Monika Jensen-Stevenson, *Spite House: The Last Secret of the War in Vietnam* (W W Norton & Co Inc; 1st ed. edition, March 1997).

⁶² Jensen-Stevenson, “Verdict First,” 275–276.

⁶³ Ibid.

⁶⁴ Jensen-Stevenson, “Verdict First,” 260.

⁶⁵ Jensen-Stevenson, “Verdict First,” 277.

⁶⁶ In a personal e-mail to me, Barbara Honegger confirmed that she was the source of this quote, having been in attendance as the then-White House Policy Analyst at the February 1981 meeting in the White House Roosevelt Room with President Reagan and his new cabinet secretaries and agency heads. New CIA Director William Casey spoke these words in response to a question the President put to all of the cabinet secretaries and agency heads: “What are your main goals for your department or agency?” Having worked with radio show host Mae Brussell upon returning to California from the White House, Honegger was also the source for Brussell’s second-hand report about Casey’s words. Honegger also said she recalls Casey saying “. . . program is a success . . .,” rather than “. . . program is complete.” For further detail on Honegger’s account of this quote, see <http://www.infiniteunknown.net/2015/01/15/did-cia-director-william-casey-really-say-we-know-our-disinformation-program-is-complete-when-everything-the-american-public-believes-is-false>.

⁶⁷ Elizabeth Woodworth, “The Media Response to the Growing Influence of the 9/11 Truth Movement.” See especially Parts II and III: <http://www.globalresearch.ca/the-media-response-to-the-growing-influence-of-the-9-11-truth-movement-2/17624> and <http://www.globalresearch.ca/the-911-attacks-keeping-the-lid-on-the-lie-media-response-to-the-growing-influence-of-the-911-truth-movement/5373217>.

⁶⁸ I have borrowed this term from Dr. Kevin Barrett, who has observed that the alternative media that receive major funding from foundations are the ones that refuse to report on evidence that contradicts the official 9/11 narrative, implying that they would lose their funding if they step over the 9/11 threshold. I cannot say with any certainty why these particular alternative media will not address 9/11 with any seriousness or depth, but I suspect his analysis is largely correct.

⁶⁹ “Exclusive: Daniel Ellsberg Says Sibel Edmonds Case ‘Far More Explosive Than Pentagon Papers,’” <http://www.bradblog.com/?p=5260>.

⁷⁰ “Exclusive: FBI Whistleblower Sibel Edmonds is Ready to Talk!” <http://www.bradblog.com/?p=2498>. This article contains a general list of Edmonds’ allegations.

⁷¹ “Exclusive: Daniel Ellsberg Says,” <http://www.bradblog.com/?p=5260>.

⁷² Ibid.

⁷³ Ibid.

⁷⁴ Ibid.

⁷⁵ See https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sibel_Edmonds.

⁷⁶ John Pilger, “In the freest press on earth, humanity is reported in terms of its usefulness to US power,” February 20, 2001. See <http://web.archive.org/web/20050307033903/http://pilger.carlton.com/print/47638>.

⁷⁷ For a thumbnail sketch of why the true events of 9/11 — as well as other issues that threaten powerful interests, our political system, or U.S. foreign policy — are not covered in the media, see Washington's Blog, "7 Reasons that the Corporate Media Is Pro-War": <http://www.washingtonsblog.com/2016/12/7-reasons-corporate-media-pro-war.html>.

⁷⁸ Here are a few books (besides Kristina Borjesson's *Into the Buzzsaw*) illuminating how press censorship occurs, via both the influence of the powerful and the corporate structure:

- Ben H. Bagdikian, *The New Media Monopoly* (Beacon Press, 2004).
- Kristina Borjesson, Editor, *Feet to the Fire: The Media After 9/11—Top Journalists Speak Out* (Prometheus Books, 2005).
- Robert Cirino, *Don't Blame the People* (Random House; First Vintage Books Edition, 1972).
- Alex Constantine, *Virtual Government* (Feral House, 1997).
- Deborah Davis, *Katharine The Great: Katharine Graham And Her Washington Post Empire* (Sheridan Square Press, 1991).
- Lance deHaven-Smith, *Conspiracy Theory in America* (University of Texas Press, 2013).
- Edward S. Herman, *The Myth of the Liberal Media: An Edward S. Herman Reader* (Peter Lang Inc., International Academic Publishers, November 1999).
- Yahya R. Kamalipour and Nancy Snow, eds., *War, Media, and Propaganda: A Global Perspective* (Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc., 2004).
- Bill Kovach and Tom Rosenstiel, *The Elements of Journalism: What Newspeople Should Know and the Public Should Expect — Revised and Updated Third Edition* (Three Rivers Press, 2014).
- Robert W. McChesney, *Digital Disconnect: How Capitalism is Turning the Internet Against Democracy* (The New Press, 2013).
- Robert W. McChesney, *Our Unfree Press* (The New Press, 2004).
- Robert W. McChesney, *Rich Media, Poor Democracy* (The New Press; new edition June 2, 2015).
- Michael Parenti, *Inventing Reality: The Politics of News Media* (St. Martin's Press, 1993).
- Nancy Snow, *Information War: American Propaganda, Free Speech and Opinion Control Since 9-11* (Hushion House, Toronto, 2003).

- Hugh Wilford, *The Mighty Wurlitzer: How the CIA Played America* (Harvard University Press, 2008).
- Barrie Zwicker, *Towers of Deception: The Media Cover-up of 9/11* (New Society Publishers, 2006).

And here are a few films about press censorship, each of which can be found by an Internet search: “The War You Don’t See” (John Pilger); “Buying the War” (Bill Moyers); “The Myth of the Liberal Media” (Edward Herman and Noam Chomsky); “Fear and Favor in the Newsroom”; “Who’s Afraid of Rupert Murdoch?” (by Jim Gilmore on Frontline); and “Psywar” and “The Power Principle—Part 2: Propaganda” (two Metanoia Films by Scott Noble).

⁷⁹ See https://www.eisenhower.archives.gov/research/online_documents/farewell_address/Reading_Copy.pdf and <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8y06NSBBRtY>.

⁸⁰ The term “consensus” has different meanings depending on the context. In this context, the term refers to the media echo chamber, which begins with some reporters parroting an official account and others jumping on the bandwagon without deeper investigation or analysis.

⁸¹ “News factories” is a descriptive term from Davies’ *Flat Earth News*.

⁸² This information is a compilation from Borjesson’s *Into the Buzzsaw* and Davies’ *Flat Earth News*. It is also found in dozens of media critics’ books, DVDs, and articles, some listed in endnote 78.

⁸³ See “9/11: Why Do Bill Moyers and Robert Parry Accept Miracles?” <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vKJGsCPrdfw>.

⁸⁴ For compelling information on funding and relationships of some of the Left alternative media, which have been censoring 9/11 Truth, see “Norman Solomon: FAIR/Institute for Public Accuracy” at <http://www.oilempire.us/solomon.html>.

⁸⁵ Regarding the controversy of Michael Hastings’ death by accident, see [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Michael_Hastings_\(journalist\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Michael_Hastings_(journalist)).

Regarding the controversy of Gary Webb’s death by suicide, see https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gary_Webb.

Also see Ryan Devereaux, “Managing a Nightmare: How the CIA Watched Over the Destruction of Gary Webb,” at <https://theintercept.com/2014/09/25/managing-nightmare-cia-media-destruction-gary-webb>.

Whether these deaths were murders or not, the psychological agony, even terror, that intelligence agencies can inflict on reporters serves as a warning to other journalists to watch their step. Simply the controversy surrounding these deaths has an unmistakably chilling effect on any journalist who may be considering stepping into third rail territory.

⁸⁶ Graeme MacQueen, “The ‘Inside Job’ Hypothesis of the 9/11 Attacks: JFK, 9/11 and the American Left: Beyond Their Wildest Dreams,” <https://www.globalresearch.ca/the-inside-job-hypothesis-of-the->

[911-attacks-911-and-the-american-left/5579911;](https://truthandshadows.wordpress.com/2017/03/14/911-and-american-left/#more-4073)

[https://truthandshadows.wordpress.com/2017/03/14/911-and-american-left/#more-4073.](https://truthandshadows.wordpress.com/2017/03/14/911-and-american-left/#more-4073)

⁸⁷ From Russ Baker's article "Why We Don't Get—And Don't Want to Hear—the Truth," April 4, 2014, <https://whowhatwhy.org/2014/04/04/dont-get-dont-want-hear-truth>.

⁸⁸ David Ray Griffin and Peter Dale Scott, eds., *9/11 and American Empire: Intellectuals Speak Out* (Olive Branch Press, 2007), 26.

⁸⁹ Many weaknesses purportedly plagued the Nuremberg trials, making them a less-than-ideal standard for future trials. Critics cite the double standard that exempted the Allies from being charged with crimes similar to those of the Nazis. Other faults may have existed, but this vast subject is beyond the scope of my essay. In the final analysis, though, these historic trials became the model and impetus for the Genocide Convention, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the Nuremberg Principles, the Convention on the Abolition of the Statute of Limitations on War Crimes and Crimes against Humanity, and the Geneva Convention.

To understand the roadblocks to indicting today's U.S. war criminals, see an interview with Rebecca Gordon, Ph.D., regarding her book, *American Nuremberg*, on RT's "Watching the Hawks," April 6, 2016: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WcRNhg-R4Sg>.

⁹⁰ My thanks to Kristina Borjesson for the information in this paragraph and for educating me about the distinction between social issues and third rail issues and how they are each treated by the press.

⁹¹ See <https://www.wanttoknow.info/011225nytimes>. For other examples of media cover-ups, see <https://www.wanttoknow.info/massmedianewsarticles>.

⁹² Exemplary independent news sources on the subject of 9/11 include Global Research (<http://www.globalresearch.ca>); The Corbett Report (<https://www.corbettreport.com>); and Sibel Edmonds' Newsbud (<https://www.newsbud.com>).

⁹³ Charlotte Dennett, "The War on Terror and the Great Game for Oil: How the Media Missed the Context," *Into the Buzzsaw: Leading Journalists Expose the Myth of a Free Press*, ed. Kristina Borjesson (Promethius Books, 2004).

⁹⁴ Quote found in Michael Parenti's *Inventing Reality: The Politics of News Media*, Second Ed. (St. Martin's Press, Inc., 1993) 41.

⁹⁵ Ibid.

⁹⁶ See https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Opinion_polls_about_9/11_conspiracy_theories. Also, <http://rethink911.org/news/new-poll-finds-most-americans-open-to-alternative-911-theories>.

Note: Electronic sources in the endnotes have been archived. If they can no longer be found by a search on the Internet, readers desiring a copy may contact Frances Shure [[here](#)].