



The News That Didn't Make The News

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PROJECT CENSORED

Fighting censorship and championing media literacy since 1976

“Today we mostly shut out news about our darker side, which is why we need Project Censored. Someone has to remind us to look in the mirror.”—**Matt Taibbi**, author of *Hate Inc.*, from the foreword to Project Censored’s *State of the Free Press 2021*

Project Censored is one of the preeminent free speech and media literacy advocacy organizations in the United States. For close to half a century the Project has steadfastly held to its core mission of protecting free speech and training professionals, students, and the general public to detect and resist media manipulation. It has long insisted that this dual approach—resisting censorship *and* teaching critical media literacy—is essential for a robust and functioning democracy. “Citizens need both access to information and the ability to evaluate that information if democracy is to flourish,” says Project Censored Director, Mickey Huff.

As new technologies and social norms have taken hold, Project Censored has been quick to recognize the changing face of censorship in the United States. When Silicon Valley companies began to dominate media, Project Censored was among the first to warn of the dangers of “censorship by proxy,” in which private companies, who are not beholden to the First Amendment, determine which news becomes public and which stories take center stage.

Each year Project Censored publishes its acclaimed yearbook, *State of the Free Press* (formerly *Censored*), which takes the pulse of media freedom in the United States, highlights the year’s 25 most “censored” news stories, and gauges the global impact of threats to free speech. The Project also offers a curriculum for college and high school educators to teach critical media literacy, produces a nationally syndicated radio show, and has been the subject and source of a series of acclaimed documentary films. In 2021, the Project

established The Censored Press, its own publishing imprint, in conjunction with its longtime partners at Seven Stories Press. Currently, they have five titles scheduled to be published through 2023.

Recently, the Project launched *Dispatches from Project Censored: On Media and Politics*, a bi-weekly column that takes a deep dive into the current state of media, free speech, and the intersection of media and politics.

Project Censored spokespersons are frequently sought-after media commentators and have appeared on numerous national and local outlets. They can discuss:

- Censorship by Proxy: Silicon Valley and the changing face of censorship in the United States;
- “Fake news,” along with mis- and disinformation, aren’t new and shouldn’t be used as pretexts for censorship;
- The critical importance of fighting censorship *and* providing media literacy at the same time;
- Recent and historical threats to free speech and academic freedom;
- The growing need for critical media literacy in the United States and throughout the world;
- The dangers of recent book bans and other attempts to clamp down on free expression;
- The need to understand censorship as a problem not limited to “prior restraint” or government reprisal for unpopular speech; today corporations and other private entities also function as “gatekeepers” that engage in censorship;
- Simple ways to recognize propaganda, news slant, junk food news (including “humilitainment”), and other recurrent forms of media manipulation;
- Taking a stand against both right and left-wing efforts to cancel, marginalize, or criminalize unpopular speech.

PROJECT CENSORED FACT SHEET

- Project Censored was founded in 1976 at Sonoma State University by Dr. Carl Jensen. Since then, the Project has consistently worked to provide critical media

literacy training to thousands of students and the general public and to expose censorship in the United States.

- Since 2010, it has produced a nationally syndicated public affairs radio program, *The Project Censored Show*, which airs on more than 50 stations around the country and is also featured on major podcast platforms.
- Since 1993, the Project has produced a yearbook highlighting independent news coverage of significant public issues that have been ignored or marginalized by establishment news outlets. This annual volume has won acclaim from some of the most eminent contemporary thinkers, activists, and journalists, including Daniel Ellsberg, Sharyl Attkisson, Matt Taibbi, Ralph Nader, Noam Chomsky, and the late Molly Ivins. In 2021, the Project launched The Censored Press, its publishing imprint, in conjunction with Seven Stories Press.
- The Project has been the recipient of numerous awards, including:
 - Two Firecracker Alternative Book Awards
 - PEN Oakland National Literary Censorship Award
 - The Pillar Award for New Media and Journalism, from the National Whistleblower Summit for Civil and Human Rights
 - Mt. Diablo Peace and Justice Center's "Justice and Peace through Education" Award
 - The Beverly Kees Educator Award from the Society of Professional Journalists (for Director Mickey Huff)
 - Certificate of special recognition for outstanding and invaluable service to the community from California Congressman Mark DeSaulnier
- In 2009, Project Censored launched its Campus Affiliates Program that now connects hundreds of students and faculty at colleges and universities around the world in a collective effort to identify each year's most important but underreported news stories.
- The Project provides college and high school educators around the country with resources for teaching media literacy, including the popular *Censorship Guide for Teachers, Our 21st Century Media Culture*, and teaching guides for the most recent editions of the Project's yearbook. In 2015, the Project co-founded the Global Critical Media Literacy Project and co-authored its *Educator's Resource Guide*, which is available at no charge online at gcml.org.
- In 2022, the Project formed the Media Revolution Collective, a group of scholars, activists, and students who authored *The Media and Me: A Guide to Critical Media Literacy for Young People*, which The Censored Press will publish in Fall 2022.

- The Project has been the subject of two acclaimed documentaries: *Project Censored: Is the Press Really Free?* (1998) which aired on PBS stations across the country and *Project Censored: The Movie: Ending the Reign of Junk Food News* (2013). Doug Hecker and Christopher Oscar, who directed *Project Censored: The Movie*, were recognized for Best Directing of a Feature Documentary at the Madrid International Film Festival.
- In 2020, Project Censored released *United States of Distraction: Fighting the Fake News Invasion*, a student shot and produced film, edited and narrated by Abby Martin of *The Empire Files*. This documentary features critical media literacy experts, students, and media makers who provide a dynamic understanding of so-called “fake news.” In addition to deconstructing the concept, the film reminds viewers that “fake news” is nothing new and is best understood as one form of propaganda. The film was featured at the Whistleblower Summit and Film Festival in Washington, D.C., in 2022.
- In 2013 Project Censored joined the National Coalition Against Censorship. It is also a longtime sponsor of the Banned Books Week Coalition, participating in Banned Books Week events presented each year in Fall in conjunction with the American Library Association.
- The Project’s bi-weekly column, *Dispatches from Project Censored: On News and Politics* offers timely, cogent analyses of current events and media politics. The Project’s *Dispatches* columns are made available free of charge to news outlets around the world.

SOCIAL MEDIA

- [Facebook.com/ProjectCensored](https://www.facebook.com/ProjectCensored)
- [Instagram.com/ProjectCensored](https://www.instagram.com/ProjectCensored)
- [Twitter: @ProjectCensored](https://twitter.com/ProjectCensored)
- [YouTube.com/ProjectCensored](https://www.youtube.com/ProjectCensored)

MORE INFO

[ProjectCensored.org](https://www.ProjectCensored.org)

[Censoredpress.org](https://www.Censoredpress.org)

[United States of Distraction, a film featuring Project Censored](#)

ABOUT MICKEY HUFF, PROJECT CENSORED DIRECTOR



Mickey Huff is the director of Project Censored and president of the nonprofit Media Freedom Foundation. To date, he has coedited fourteen editions of the Project's yearbook, including *Project Censored's State of the Free Press* (2022), with Andy Lee Roth. He is also co-author with Nolan Higdon, of *Unites States of Distraction: Media Manipulations in Post-Truth America (and what we can do about it)* (City Lights, 2019) and *Let's Agree to Disagree: A Critical Thinking Guide to Communication, Conflict Management, and Critical Media Literacy* (Routledge, 2022). Huff received the Beverly Kees Educator Award as part of the 2019 James Madison Freedom of Information Award from the Society of Professional Journalists, Northern California. He is professor of social science, history, and journalism at Diablo Valley College, where he co-chairs the history program and is chair of the Journalism Department. Huff is executive producer and host of *The Project Censored Show*, a weekly syndicated public affairs program that airs across the U.S. on Pacifica Radio.

ABOUT ANDY LEE ROTH, PROJECT CENSORED ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR



ANDY LEE ROTH is the associate director of Project Censored. He has coedited thirteen editions of Project Censored's yearbook, in addition to contributing chapters on Iceland and the commons (*Censored 2014*), the Military Commissions Act (*Censored 2009*) and news photographs depicting the human cost of war (*Censored 2008*). His research on topics ranging from ritual to broadcast news interviews and communities organizing for parklands has also appeared in journals including the *International Journal of Press/Politics*; *Social Studies of Science*; *Media, Culture & Society*; *City & Community*; and *Sociological Theory*. His articles have also appeared in *YES! Magazine*, *Index on Censorship*, Truthout, and *In These Times*. He earned a PhD in Sociology at the University of California–Los Angeles and a BA in Sociology and Anthropology at Haverford College.

SELECTED PRAISE FOR PROJECT CENSORED

“A clarion call for truth telling.”—**Daniel Ellsberg**

“Project Censored has shined the light for more than forty years on those critical stories and investigative reports that government officials, major media companies, and assorted gatekeepers of ‘respectable’ journalism too often ignore.” —**Juan González**, co-host of *Democracy Now!* and professor of journalism and media studies at Rutgers University

“A crucial contribution to the hope for a more just and democratic society.”—**Noam Chomsky**

“As trivia, celebrity gossip, blow-by-blow descriptions of the latest foibles of the political elites, entertainment, and corporate-approved stories replace journalism, real news happens increasingly on the fringes, where it is more easily marginalized and ignored. Project Censored rescues the most important stories you should have read but probably never saw from oblivion.”—**Chris Hedges**, bestselling author of *War is a Force That Gives Us Meaning* and *Empire of Illusion: The End of Literacy and the Triumph of Spectacle*

“Since 1976, Project Censored has been both calling out media propaganda and censorship as well as highlighting the best of the independent press. If journalism is the rough draft of history, this book goes a long way to getting the record right the first time, stopping fake news in its tracks and ensuring that we have fewer Untold Histories in the future.”—**Peter Kuznick and Oliver Stone**, co-authors of *The Untold History of the United States* book and documentary series

“[*Censored*] should be affixed to the bulletin boards in every newsroom in America. And, perhaps read aloud to a few publishers and television executives.”—**Ralph Nader**, consumer advocate, lawyer, and author of *To the Ramparts*

“Now, more than ever, press freedom is at stake. In opposition to the undemocratic censorship of information, I proudly stand with Project Censored.”—**Sharyl Attkisson**, Emmy Award-winning investigative journalism and host of *Full Measure with Sharyl Attkisson*

“For over 40 years, Project Censored has been our watchdog on the establishment media, casting its eye on how the information that we receive—and don’t receive—shapes our democracy. We need it more than ever today!”—**Christopher Finan**, executive director, National Coalition Against Censorship

“Project Censored brings to light some of the most important stories of the year that you never saw or heard about. This is your chance to find out what got buried.” —**Diane Ravitch**, author of *The Death and Life of the Great American School System*

“Activist groups like Project Censored . . . are helping to build the media democracy movement. We have to challenge the powers that be and rebuild media from the bottom up.”—**Amy Goodman**

“Project Censored is one of the organizations that we should listen to, to be assured that our newspapers and our broadcasting outlets are practicing thorough and ethical journalism.” —**Walter Cronkite**, *CBS Evening News*, 1962–1981

“Project Censored continues to be an invaluable resource in exposing and highlighting shocking stories that are routinely minimized or ignored by the corporate media... The world needs more brave whistle blowers and independent journalists in the service of

reclaiming democracy and challenging the abuse of power. Project Censored stands out for its commitment to such work.”—**Deepa Kumar**, author of *Islamophobia and the Politics of Empire*

“Project Censored has never been more necessary. Democracy is in jeopardy, with fake news, manipulation of our sense of reality, the demise of net neutrality, corporate dominance, and mindless entertainment. [Project Censored] brings clarity with insights we can all use to figure out what to do.”—**Sarah van Gelder**, author of *The Revolution Where You Live*, founding editor of *YES! Magazine*, and founder of PeoplesHub

“The systematic exposure of censored stories by Project Censored has been an important contribution.”—**Howard Zinn**, author of *A People’s History of the United States*

“Project Censored, locates cans of worms and opens them. It creates an awareness where one is needed.”—**Hugh Downs**, pioneering broadcast journalist