

UNEDITED TRANSCRIPT

JOAN SHORENSTEIN CENTER ON THE PRESS, POLITICS AND PUBLIC POLICY

HARVARD KENNEDY SCHOOL

THE GOLDSMITH AWARDS IN POLITICAL JOURNALISM

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MR. JONES: Good evening. I'm Alex Jones. I'm Director of the Shorenstein Center on the Press, Politics and Public Policy. It is my great pleasure to welcome you to the Goldsmith Awards tonight. This is always a very happy night for the Shorenstein Center. This year marks the 21st anniversary of the Goldsmith Awards. And each year we look forward to this night as a kind of high point for the Shorenstein Center, but also, and I say this in all modesty, a high point for American journalism.

There is a story of course. Bob Greenfield, then a Philadelphia lawyer, now retired, had a client named Berta Marks Goldsmith who told him of her intent to leave him her entire estate. He declined to accept it and went searching for a good way to use the money for a purpose that he thought Berta would have approved. She was passionately interested in good government, followed the news ardently and was particularly outraged by misconduct of people who had responsibility in a public sense. Eventually Bob connected with Marvin Kalb, the Shorenstein Center's founding Director, who I am glad to say is with us tonight. And the result was the Goldsmith Awards in Political Journalism, which include the Investigative Reporting Prize, book prizes, fellowships and the Career Award.

Thank you to the Greenfield Foundation of which Bob is Chairman and to the board members and to the family. The Greenfield Family is most remarkable and I am very glad that many of them are here tonight. Mike Greenfield, who serves as a Goldsmith Prize judge, his wife Elaine and their new daughter, Carina, who at five months is probably the youngest person ever to attend the Goldsmith Awards.

(Applause)

MR. JONES: Also here representing the Greenfield Family and the Foundation are Bill and Jody Greenfield, Jill Feldman, Bill Epstein and Charles and Barbara Kahn. Without the Greenfield Family's and the Foundation's continued support and good faith this night would not be possible. Could I ask all the members of the Greenfield Family and those associated with the Greenfield Foundation to stand so that we can express our thanks.

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(Applause)

MR. JONES: I would be remiss if I did not also take the opportunity to thank the Shorenstein Family for their generosity and support. Walter Shorenstein originally endowed the Shorenstein Center as a memorial to his daughter, Joan, who was a distinguished journalist. Walter died in 2010 at the age of 95 and the family continues its support of the Shorenstein Center and its engagement with all aspects of the media and we are very grateful.

The first Goldsmith Awards are the book prizes and making those presentations will be my colleague, Tom Patterson, the Bradlee Professor of Government and the Press at the Kennedy School.

(Applause)

MR. PATTERSON: Thank you, Alex. We award two Goldsmith Book Prizes each year, one for the best academic book in the field of press and politics, the other for the best trade book. I'd first like to thank this year's judges. Alex Jones was a judge, as were Matt Baum and Marion Just. Marion is here somewhere, I know. I was the fourth. Service on the committee has a material reward. You get a big stack of books, some of them keepers. We're here to recognize the two best. And I'll start with the Academic Award winner.

As we all know, the news system has been fragmenting forcing news outlets to scramble for audience and revenue. But what has it meant to presidents? It has meant that presidents can no longer reach 50 million or more Americans each night through the network evening news. It has meant when they give a prime time televised address that they are speaking to a smaller and less diverse audience, one slanted toward viewers who agree with them. Those who think differently increasingly aren't interested in what the President has to say.

This year's award winning author also shows that presidents have increasingly aimed their communication at local media bypassing what they see as a hyper-critical national press. They pursue their local strategy in several ways. One of which is to make

more frequent trips within the United States where they can count on positive local coverage. It's big news when Air Force One comes to town. Presidents' narrow casting strategy also includes aiming more messages at interest groups, which are always paying attention. This strategy has raised the level of political fragmentation and also the level of political polarization. Presidents now rarely communicate with groups tied to the other party.

Such findings are among the many contributions in Jeffrey Cohen's remarkable book, *Going Local: Presidential Leadership in the Post-Broadcast Age*. The review in *Political Science Quarterly* called the book pertinent and compelling. The award committee agrees. Jeffrey Cohen, an old friend of mine, please step up to accept the Goldsmith Academic Book Award for *Going Local*.

(Applause)

MR. PATTERSON: It's always dangerous when you have an old friend who gets an award and you pass it along and are on the committee. As I mentioned, the Goldsmith Awards also include a book prize in the trade category. This year's winner is *The Net Delusion* by Evgeny Morozov. Read it. It will change how you think about the internet and the social media. We've heard countless claims in recent years about what Evgeny calls cybertopia, the idea that the internet is transformative, nearly always in beneficial ways. We heard about the Twitter revolution in Iran, followed by those in Tunisia, Egypt, Libya. It's almost as if citizen revolution somehow didn't happen, or couldn't happen before the internet came along.

In fact, however, the 2009 Iranian demonstration was not Twitter driven. Smart phones were few and far between in Iran. Word of mouth and outside broadcasts, such as those of the BBC and VOA brought people into the streets, as did courage and conviction, the age old staples of popular revolutions. But the real contribution of *The Net Delusion* is to show that the internet is a two-way street. Although it empowers citizens, it also empowers governments, often in frightening ways. In Iran the government used the web to identify photographs of protesters to track them down to their homes, to whip the

bystanders into a counter revolutionary fervor.

China and Venezuela are among the other places where cybertopia is being turned on its head, something closer to George Orwell than to Thomas More. Repressive regimes' private sector twin, crime syndicates also use the internet to prey on the innocent. Let me read my favorite line in the book. "Technology changes all the time. Human nature hardly ever."

The New York Times book review called *The Net Delusion* brilliant and courageous, a judgment shared by the Goldsmith Book Awards Committee. Evgeny Morozov, please step forward to receive the Goldsmith Award for your remarkable trade book, *The Net Delusion*.

(Applause)

MR. JONES: It is now my honor to introduce each of the six finalists for the Goldsmith Prize for Investigative Reporting. This year's competition was extremely competitive, I'm glad to say. In these difficult times for journalism one might fear that the quality and ambition of investigative reporting would be in decline, but that was definitely not the case with this year's entries. In addition to Mike Greenfield, the judges for this year's competition were Karen de Sá, an investigative reporter for *The San Jose Mercury News* and a Goldsmith finalist in 2011; Trey Grayson, Director of the Institute of Politics here at the Kennedy School; Raquel Rutledge of the *Milwaukee Journal Sentinel*, winner of a Pulitzer Prize for investigative reporting and also the 2010 Goldsmith Prize winner; and Maralee Schwartz, former Political Editor of *The Washington Post* and former visiting lecturer and Fellow at the Shorenstein Center. No judge is allowed to vote for an entry from his or her own news organization.

In January, after long deliberation, the judges select the six finalists and also the winner. We announce the finalists at once because part of the purpose of the Goldsmith Prize for Investigative Journalism is to call attention to the excellent work that all the finalists have done and to the other great investigative work that is being done, which they represent. So it is with great pleasure that I describe the six finalists, each of which in

its own way was regarded as extraordinary. They will be presented in alphabetical order by news organization.

The first finalist is from *ABC News*. On the 50th anniversary of the Peace Corps founding, a ten month investigation by *ABC News* focused on the murder of a young volunteer named Kate Puzey. What *ABC* uncovered was a shocking systematic failure to protect Peace Corps volunteers who were victims of sexual assault or whistle blowers who tried to report such assaults. Kate Puzey was a 24 year old from Georgia who went to Benin to try to do some good. And in 2009, after telling superiors in an e-mail that she believed a fellow Peace Corps employee was molesting female students she was murdered.

The e-mail she sent to warn her superiors about the man who had been doing the molesting ended up in the hands of the man's brother and Kate was later killed. The Peace Corps refused to provide Kate's family with information about her death and stopped communication altogether after four months. As Kate's mother said, had *ABC's 20/20* not investigated her murder, we would not have heard from the Peace Corps again. The result of the investigation was a three part series on *20/20* plus more than two dozen print and broadcast follow up reports on *ABC News*, *Good Morning America* and on the team's daily website, *The Blotter*.

The impact of their work was passage of what was called the Kate Puzey Peace Corps Volunteer Protection Act, requiring the Peace Corps to protect volunteers and whistle blowers, hire victims' advocates and provide training to reduce the risk of sexual assault. Senator Johnny Isakson and Representative Ted Poe, who introduced the bill in Congress, gave credit to the *ABC* journalistic work. As Senator Isakson said, it is the kind of journalism that can really make a difference. Please join me in recognizing the outstanding work of Brian Ross, Anna Schecter and the *ABC News* Investigative Team for "Peace Corps: A Trust Betrayed." Would you please rise.

(Applause)

MR. JONES: In the decade since the terrorist attacks of 9/11, the New York Police

Department in a unique partnership with the CIA spent hundreds of millions of dollars to build one of the most aggressive intelligence units in the United States. The NYPD's intelligence division operated in near total secrecy, without significant oversight, either official or from reporters. That changed in 2011 when a series of investigative reports by the Associated Press revealed that the intelligence division was in fact targeting ethnic communities in ways that would run afoul of civil liberties rules practiced by the Federal Government. Over five months the *AP* reported that the New York Police Department had dispatched undercover officers, known as rakers, into minority neighborhoods as part of a human mapping program run by its demographics unit, a squad so secret that the police force denied it even existed until the *AP* published documents showing it did.

Police used informants, known as mosque crawlers, to monitor sermons, even absent evidence of wrong doing. Plainclothes officers and informants infiltrated universities to keep tabs on Muslim student groups. Police secretly assigned an undercover officer to monitor a prominent Muslim leader even as he decried terrorism, cooperated with the police and dined with Mayor Michael Bloomberg. The police created what they called ancestries of interest, nearly all from Muslim countries.

Undercover officers snapped photographs of restaurants frequented by Moroccans, including one that was noted for serving religious Muslims, and documented where Moroccans bought groceries and which hotels they visited and where they prayed. The list goes on and on. And much of this domestic spying was done with the help from the CIA, which is prohibited from spying on Americans. A veteran CIA officer who was still on the agency's payroll was the program's architect.

Neither the city council nor the Federal Government was told exactly what was going on until they read about it in the *AP*'s reporting. At first both Mayor Bloomberg and Police Commissioner Ray Kelly denied it. The *New York Post* praised the police commissioner for essentially telling the *AP* to take a long walk off a short pier. But the *AP* kept reporting. By year's end three dozen law makers joined in calling for a House Judiciary Committee and Justice Department investigation. Perhaps most important is

that the *AP*'s revelations opened a vitally important conversation about how far we should go in the name of security, how much privacy should we surrender.

And while we want intelligence and to be vigilant against terrorism, must we surrender all sense of privacy and the fundamental value that domestic spying is un-American? These questions don't have easy answers but they are being asked with a new passion and much greater knowledge of what is at stake because of the work of Matt Apuzzo, Adam Goldman, Eileen Sullivan and Chris Hawley of the Associated Press. Please stand.

(Applause)

MR. JONES: In Ponca City, Oklahoma, black mist from a carbon plant rained on people, pets and lawns for so long that residents filled 20 binders of complaints with regulators. One mother made her young daughter ride her bike inside the house to avoid the black mist. Prize possessions had to be wrapped in plastic to avoid the sooty residue. In Muscatine, Iowa, haze from a corn processing plant hung over a scenic stretch of the Mississippi River because the company, while appearing to comply with air pollution rules actually was exposing residents to toxic by-product of ash and bits of corn, which smothered homes and cars. In Hayden, Arizona, federal regulators forced a century old copper smelter to excavate the yards of nearly 300 residents because the soil was tainted with arsenic and lead.

Across America toxic air pollution is not a thing of the past. It continues to punish communities 21 years after the passage of the Clean Air Act, yet until the Center for Public Integrity's investigation, the full extent of that harm was a closely guarded secret within the Environmental Protection Agency. The Center's report, given the title "Poisoned Places" is probably the most in-depth report to be published ever on the Clean Air Act and it exposed regulatory failures and political forces that conspired to cause millions of Americans to continue breathing unsafe air.

"Poisoned Places" publicly revealed the EPA's internal watch list of the nations most troublesome air polluters, some 400 facilities from Texas to Iowa, New York to

Arizona. These refineries, steel mills' incinerators, cement kilns and pharmaceutical plants polluted communities with solvents that caused cancer and metals that caused brain damage. In partnership with the National Public Radio, the reports shared information only that the EPA had seen, not the communities involved and not even the facilities themselves. The series triggered immediate enforcement action in two states, an avalanche of coverage across the country and demands for more openness at the EPA.

The findings included the revelation that though it had been 21 years since the Clean Air Act directed the EPA to focus its regulatory muscle on nearly 200 hazardous air pollutants liable to cause cancer and brain damage, only five toxic air criminal cases had led to penalties. Usually the cases were settled with the lowest levels of fines and prison time. As part of the report the series included a link to the EPA watch list and featured an interactive map allowing concerned people to check pollution, risk levels and enforcement histories for 17,000 facilities nationwide.

As a result of this journalistic endeavor there has been a heightened awareness about the menace of air pollution and a demonstration that exposure can create change. Only days after "Poisoned Places" was published enforcement actions were taken in Arizona and Iowa. The EPA began posting monthly online updates of its watch list for the public to see. The team for the Center for Public Integrity that did this work, Jim Morris, Ronnie Greene, Chris Hamby and Keith Epstein and for NPR, Elizabeth Shogren, Howard Berkes, Sandra Bartlett and Susanne Reber, would you please stand.

(Applause)

MR. JONES: KHOU-TV in Houston is extraordinary in that it is a local television station that takes investigative reporting seriously. There aren't many like it. The work we recognize tonight is a series of reports entitled "A Matter of Risk: Radiation, Drinking Water and Deception." It begins with ordinary tap water. You probably assume it is safe and it probably is. But what if you found that your tap water was making the plumbing in your home so radioactive that it could set off a Geiger counter and that every time you took a shower or turned on the dishwasher you were releasing dangerous gas and that

merely drinking the water increased your cancer risk. And then imagine that the people who were supposed to protect you from this situation not only knew about it and failed to do much of anything about it, but instead spent decades covering it up. That's what KHOU's investigative team discovered to be the case for half a million or more Texans during a 12 month investigation into the quality of the state's drinking water.

What they found was that a particularly risky and destructive form of naturally produced radiation was prevalent in the drinking water of many Texas communities, often in amounts far more than allowed by U.S. water standards and was in some cases deemed a serious health threat when tested by the state's own scientists. They also found that the state's environmental agency had not only minimized the risk of this sort of naturally occurring radiation, but for years had falsified the results of its water radiation tests. The prevailing view seemed to be that because it was natural it was simply okay.

And then there was the financial problem of dealing with water that people shouldn't be drinking, regardless of whether it was nature or man behind it. The amounts of radiation found were always, and that's a hundred percent of the time, wrongfully reduced, sometimes as much as cut in half, despite being ordered by the Federal Government to stop the practice. Instead with consent of Governor Rick Perry state officials simply continued to change the results. The story wasn't an easy one to get. The investigative team analyzed millions of state water quality tests. They spent months studying scientific papers and surveys on the impact of ingesting radiation. They fought for and won access to documents and reports that had been suppressed by both the state and local authorities.

They also talked to scientists and experts in Boston, New York, Washington and other cities and flew some scientists to Houston. When they began reporting what they found, the City of Houston launched a campaign to shut the investigation down. The mayor called the president of KHOU and persuaded a local prominent but misinformed local scientist with no expertise in the area to make wrong or misleading claims. Instead of buckling, KHOU spent thousands of dollars on water testing by qualified scientists in

laboratories. And the result, a number of Texas cities, including Houston, shut down and permanently sealed many of the water wells producing water with radiation that exceeded federal standards.

Citizens all over the state began having town hall meetings on the contamination that they knew was in their drinking water. And the EPA retracted mistakes in its science and public policy that KHOU had discovered and opened and the EPA opened up formal internal discussion about revising the amounts of certain types of radiation it allows in the nations drinking water. Please join me in recognizing Mark Greenblatt, David Raziq and Keith Thomshe of KHOU-TV for “A Matter of Risk: Radiation, Drinking Water and Deception.”

(Applause)

MR. JONES: Some drowned in bathtubs, others tumbled down stairs to their deaths and still others were crushed to death while being restrained. Over the past decade more than 1,200 developmentally disabled people in the care of New York State died for reasons other than natural causes. And yet, no one seemed to notice. No one questioned why state workers who beat or sexually abused the developmentally disabled were allowed to keep their jobs. No one pressed for the attackers to be prosecuted.

The New York Times is sometimes skewered for not being focused sufficiently on New York, but only seeing the larger world. Not this time. Because of *The Times* investigation, New York’s shameful system of care for these vulnerable people was dragged from the shadows into glaring light. The focus was the 135,000 New York citizens who were dependent upon the state because they had autism, Down’s Syndrome, cerebral palsy and other disabilities. At first the issue seemed to be one of providing basic needs. But as the investigation deepened it became clear that developmentally disabled people had been raped and beaten by group home workers. Yet these abusive workers were protected by their union and rarely fired, even after repeated offenses. Often they were just moved to another group home to do the same thing again.

The reporters found that some workers had criminal records or histories of violence, like the state employee who asphyxiated a 13 year old in the back of a van. They found that residents of the group homes were often being heavily over-medicated with psychotropic drugs. They found that the families of these vulnerable people were kept in the dark about abuse and mistreatment. And that state employees that tried to speak out were ignored or worse. Sometimes the whistle blowers were retaliated against, even after they had been promised confidentiality.

And to make it even worse the reporters found that American and New York taxpayers were paying a fortune for such care and far more than any other state. Some executives of taxpayer financed nonprofit organizations caring for the developmentally disabled were paying themselves as much as a million dollars a year. One had the nerve to bill his nonprofit group \$50,000 for an apartment for his daughter who was in graduate school. Home care agencies were hiring people to take care of their charges for \$10 to \$15 an hour and then charging the state almost \$70 an hour.

And then there were those 1,200 unexplained deaths. The state wasn't interested in knowing the details. But using Freedom of Information Act access the reporters scoured for patterns and found repeated instances of residents drowning in bathtubs, choking on food, falling down stairs or running away, only to be found dead. When the report was published the response was immediate. Governor Andrew Cuomo forced out two state officials, the ones in charge. The state moved to fire 130 employees found to have abused or neglected developmentally disabled people in their care. A new law requires that attacks be reported to police. Another law prevents state workers with records of abuse or criminal behavior from being rehired. And protections were put in place for whistle blowers who report abuse or other problems. All tolled, the two reporters forced the release of 10,000 pages of state documents, conducted more than 200 interviews and acquired ten government databases.

What their work revealed was what a columnist for a rival newspaper called an Albany disgrace for the ages. He wrote, "As breaches of the public trust go, this makes

philandering governors and bribe taking legislators look minor league.” Please join me in recognizing the work on the series called “Abused and Used” by *The New York Times* team Danny Hakim and Russell Buettner.

(Applause)

MR. JONES: The power to pardon is, as old as the Constitution, is the President’s alone. Former Chief Justice William Rehnquist called pardons the fail safe of our criminal justice system intended solely to fix mistakes and grant forgiveness. A *ProPublica* investigation co-published in *The Washington Post* found something entirely different. Inside the Justice Department’s Office of the Pardon Attorney, a small group of career prosecutors choose whom the President will consider for pardon. Their work has been conducted out of sight of the public and even of the presidents they seek to serve, until now.

“Shades of Mercy,” the title of the series laid bare a system in which race, privilege and bureaucracy combined to frustrate justice. Opaque, indirect, probably unintended, the results of the pardon process produced a kind of polite form of institutionalized racism. Senior reporter Dafna Linzer obtained exclusive access to thousands of internal documents and conducted scores of interviews with pardon applicants, Justice Department insiders and top legal advisors to every president since Ronald Reagan. What Linzer found were repeated instances in which white applicants with serious criminal records received pardons while minority applicants who committed lesser crimes were rejected.

She also found that the pardon’s office, in effect, was protecting the Justice Department prosecutors from embarrassment by insisting that applicants stipulate that they were guilty, not just of what they were convicted of, but also for any crime that the prosecutors had charged them with. Jennifer LaFleur, *ProPublica*’s Director of Computer Assisted Reporting built a statistically valid model capturing eight years of pardons data and quantifying something never measured before, the relative weight of the factors underlying pardon decisions. *ProPublica* selected a random sample of 500 pardon

applicants whose cases were decided from 2001 to 2008.

Reporters and researchers then set out to obtain more than a dozen pieces of information about each applicant, from type of crime to length of sentence to race to marital status. The data showed that the tiny number of African Americans pardoned, only seven in eight years, was not due to any lack of qualified applicants. Whites were nearly four times as likely to receive a pardon. President George W. Bush pardoned 189 people during his two terms, all but 13 of them white. President Obama continues the trend. Twenty of his 22 pardons have gone to whites.

Applicants who persuaded a member of Congress to write a letter on their behalf tripled their chances of a pardon. The series prompted immediate reaction. The Justice Department proclaimed anew that race had no place in the President's grants of mercy and launched a review that is ongoing. Please join me in recognizing Dafna Linzer and Jennifer LeFleur of *ProPublica* for their excellent work.

(Applause)

MR. JONES: Each year the Goldsmith judges have the option of awarding a special citation to an entity that for one reason or another is deemed not a finalist, but worthy of special recognition. This sometimes happens, but not always. And it is only at the initiative of the judges. This year the judges did think a special citation was called for. In May of 2008 as the global financial meltdown was accelerating a former police reporter named Mark Pittman kept returning to a few simple questions. How much money was the Federal Reserve Bank doling out and to whom and what would ordinary folks get in return for what would turn out to be the biggest bailout in history.

Mr. Pittman filed a freedom of information request to get the relevant documents and when that failed he was joined by Bloomberg News in suing. In March of last year the Supreme Court decided that the Fed had to open its files and a team of Bloomberg went to work finding the answers to Mr. Pittman's questions that resided in 29,000 pages of documents. The answers were explained in more than 20 stories with graphics and databases and the entire enterprise was a huge civic service. It was considered by the

judges to be more of a superb example of explanatory journalism than investigative journalism. But the judges regarded it to be such exemplary work that a special citation was required.

The citation goes to Bradley Keoun, Phil Kunz, Bob Ivry, Craig Torres, Scott Lanman and Christopher Condon of Bloomberg News and it states, "In the wake of the worst economic crisis since the Depression a murky pall settled over the role of the nation's central bank, the Federal Reserve regarding what happened and why." Bloomberg News sued the Federal Reserve under the Freedom of Information Act and won an unprecedented release of records. The Bloomberg team then used sophisticated database reporting to reveal how the Fed dispatched \$1.2 trillion in bail-out loans to Wall Street's biggest banks.

The overall result was greater transparency in an institution that has long been cloaked in secrecy. The Goldsmith judges wish to recognize this signature piece of explanatory journalism with a special citation. Would those cited please stand.

(Applause)

MR. JONES: Before I announce the winner of the 2012 Goldsmith Prize for Investigative Reporting I would like to ask all the finalists to rise one more time to be recognized for their very important work. Please.

(Applause)

MR. JONES: Each of the finalist teams will win an award of \$10,000, thanks to the generosity of the Goldsmith Foundation, the Greenfield Foundation I should say, with a \$25,000 prize going to the winning team. So, I am honored to announce that the winner of the 2012 Goldsmith Prize for Investigative Reporting is the Associated Press for "New York PD Intelligence Division." Would Matt Apuzzo, Adam Goldman, Eileen Sullivan and Chris Hawley come forward.

(Applause)

MR. JONES: On the 10th of December, 2009, Alan Rusbridger, the Editor of *The Guardian*, was paid a visit in his office by Sir Paul Stephenson, the then Commissioner of

Police in London. *The Guardian*, under Rusbridger's leadership had been in hot pursuit of a story about phone hacking by the Rupert Murdoch owned *News of the World*. *The Guardian's* stories were raising dust. The phone hacking scandal had been sparked in 2005 when the *News of the World* had published a story about the medical treatment Prince William had received after an injury. The curious thing was that only a tiny handful of people had that information.

In 2006 the *News of the World* had been exposed for phone hacking, but the investigation by Scotland Yard, which is shorthand for the Metropolitan Police, was contained and it looked as though the story would gradually fade. But then in July of 2009 *The Guardian* re-opened the story with news that News Corp, owner of *News of the World*, had paid a million pounds to settle and silence cases. *The Guardian* had been on the story ever since, which eventually prompted the visit from Sir Paul to Alan Rusbridger. Sir Paul's message was that the hacking investigation was over-egged and incorrect. Even though over-egged is a British expression that is new to me, I get the idea and I'm sure you do and as no doubt Alan Rusbridger did. But Sir Paul's mission was in vain. That night as Sir Paul had dinner with the former deputy editor of the *News of the World*, he had to tell him that Rusbridger had declined to cease and desist.

In fact, Scotland Yard, as we later found out, was up to its eyeballs in this whole affair. Over-egged or not, *The Guardian* was going to continue its investigation and there turned out to be plenty of egg. It's a continuing scandal and has shaken the Murdoch empire to its shoes. But its importance journalistically is that it demonstrated that one news organization had the courage to report on another about journalism and a journalistic enterprise breaking the law. That, in my experience, is very rare.

But Alan Rusbridger's tenure at the helm of *The Guardian* has been filled with surprising turns and stunning innovations. His most recent is something he calls open journalism. And it involves inviting the audience, the world in fact, to participate in the journalistic process. But instead of just writing about open journalism, which he has done, Rusbridger just put online a video that I want to show to you. Before I do, I want to

remind any of you who weren't versed in children's stories that the *Three Little Pigs* is an account of how three pigs take refuge in their houses from a big, bad wolf who declares he is going to huff and puff and blow the house down. You'll understand why this is germane in just a few moments.

The wolf does blow down the houses of straw and sticks, but then he comes to a third house which is good solid English brick. Huffing and puffing doesn't work so he climbs on the roof, comes down the chimney and lands in a pot of boiling water, which is the end of the wolf. The video is about how *The Guardian* would report that story of death and destruction today.

(Whereupon, a video was played.)

MR. JONES: I don't know how relevant it is but I think I should mention that Alan Rusbridger has written three children's books.

(Laughter)

MR. JONES: The point of open journalism, as I understand it, is that news organizations have limited resources and also limited expertise. If you will notice, the guy who seems to solve the crime is in a bathrobe. And that in a digital world you can ask for help and most important, get it. The concept is not a brand new one. What is new is the way *The Guardian* under Alan Rusbridger is applying it, embracing it as a way, a new way to do high quality journalism. He was born in what is now Zambia and was then the British Colony of Northern Rhodesia where his father was director of education. He read English at Maudlin College at Cambridge University and then went to work for *The Cambridge Evening News*.

At 26 he went to *The Guardian* as a reporter, left to be *The Observer's* TV critic, moved to Washington to be Washington Editor of *The London Daily News* and then in 1987 returned to *The Guardian* for good. Eight years later he was made editor, a position he has held ever since. His triumphs in his tenure as editor include creation of The Guardian United Website and defending the paper from a series of high profile defamation suits, including one brought by the Police Federation. And of course, *The Guardian* was one of

the papers that dealt with the WikiLeaks materials not too long ago.

The Guardian is owned by a trust and he is on the trust board. Despite *The Guardian's* journalistic triumphs it has faced serious money problems and he has made headlines recently by announcing that he had voluntarily taken a ten percent cut from his base salary for this year and also asked the company's contribution to his pension to be cut in half. I think one of his most fascinating innovations has been to conduct a yearly review of how *The Guardian* lives up to its own values. He seems to believe in walking the walk. Not surprisingly, *The Guardian* has grown in influence and prestige during his tenure and now has a huge following in the United States. And also not surprisingly the paper has gathered a host of awards, including the 2011 Newspaper of the Year Award. That was for *The Guardian*.

Tonight it is my pleasure and my honor to present him with an award that is personal. The winner of the 2012 Goldsmith Career Award for Excellence in Journalism, Alan Rusbridger.

(Applause)

MR. RUSBRIDGER: I'm glad you enjoyed the video. I wasn't sure it was going to cross the Atlantic. Thank you, Alex, and my congratulations to the fellow award winners tonight and thank you to all of you for turning out tonight. I realize you could have been at home this evening watching events unfold across the country on TV, but there is something irresistible about the fact that the Kennedy School is mocking Republican Super Tuesday by giving the award to a European liberal.

(Laughter)

MR. RUSBRIDGER: It is rather humbling to be bracketed when I was told that I had won this award and I looked at the roll call of amazingly distinguished American journalists, to realize I was going to be bracketed with the same winners because several of them were my own personal heroes. All awards are nice to win but an award for a career is particularly pleasing, particularly if the career is not yet over. It's like reading a flattering obituary without having to go to the trouble of dying.

(Laughter)

MR. RUSBRIDGER: It's also wonderful to receive it from the Joan Shorenstein Center whose work I have admired from a distance for a long time. Journalism is an immensely influential force in society and it's precisely because of its power that it demands scrutiny, arguably more so than other types of power because of its ability to set or ignore or distort or to silence itself or about other things. And the Shorenstein Center does very well at that and I should add my own thanks to the Greenfield Family for sponsoring these awards and for continuing them.

All careers need a slice or two of luck and I've had many such breaks since my first day as a trainee reporter on a local paper 35 years ago. And I want to single out two. The first has been to work for the great majority of that time on one of the very few newspapers in the world and Alex mentioned this, which is owned by a trust. I first joined *The Guardian* in 1979 after three years learning the craft on a local paper in another place called Cambridge. *The Guardian* was founded in 1821 after the Peterloo Massacre in response to it which was, as you know, an unprovoked response on civil protest.

When I arrived at the paper it was only 20 years since it had dropped the word Manchester from its title. So the paper with its nonconformist and northern routes has always been something of an outsider. In 1936 the owners, who could have cashed in their shares and become wealthy, decided instead to place the paper into a trust and in a trust it has remained to this day. Along the way it has invested wisely with the results that it has sufficient resources to tend *The Guardian* through the maelstrom of change which is not unlike the Industrial Revolution of the 1820's which saw its birth which is now gripping the whole of the newspaper business itself.

But *The Guardian* isn't a charity. We do operate in a peculiar sector of the British newspaper market in which all of our rivals are owned by billionaires, be they oligarchs, global corporations or just plain billionaires. The trust ensures that *The Guardian* gets onto the playing field and also that it can take a long view of how best to protect and nurture serious journalism while remaining fiercely independent. Our only relationship is with

our readers. So all in all and to paraphrase Cecil Rhodes, if you're still allowed to quote the man, to work for the Scott Trust is like winning the first prize in the journalism, in the lottery of journalism.

My second great stroke of fortune has been to work with some immensely talented journalists. Someone once likened the job of editing to that of a conductor. You waive your arms and hope that you make a difference, but you're nothing without the musicianship, talent and skill of the individual players in an orchestra. I joined *The Guardian* on the same day in July in 1979 as another young reporter fresh from the provinces. He was the extrovert, I was the introvert. He loved standing on doorsteps. I loved polishing sentences. With his beaten leather jacket he looked like a fusion of Starsky and Hutch. As has sometimes been remarked, I look more like Harry Potter just out of college.

(Laughter)

MR. RUSBRIDGER: Though one American magazine recently updated this to Harry Potter's lonely uncle.

(Laughter)

MR. RUSBRIDGER: His name was Nick Davis. And our careers went separate ways in time, but I brought him back to *The Guardian* when I became editor and I gave him the time and freedom to dig around. And over the years he has been responsible for some extraordinary journalism culminating in the last three years in two stories that broke through to global attention, the story of WikiLeaks and their release of the cables and phone hacking. And I'm kind of glad they came in that order because taking on the combined might of the Pentagon, the CIA and the State Department was a useful warm-up act for Rupert Murdoch.

(Laughter)

MR. RUSBRIDGER: And it was in early 2009 that Nick told me over lunch how he thought that he could demonstrate that the so-called rogue reporter, the rotten apple theory of what had gone on in the *News of the World* was wrong, that there had been many

reporters and editors involved and thousands of potential victims. That the police had behaved in a deeply troubling way and that news international were engaging in a cover up that included the payment of enormous sums to make the legal cases go away. So we both knew that this was a story that would cause a lot of trouble, but we had no idea quite how much.

The extent of the hacking, certainly of phone messages, probably of computers and it's been claimed the ability to track phones as well as hack them was far greater than we thought. And so it would transpire was the cover up. For the purposes of assessing damages the News Group has now accepted that its senior executives and directors misled the public, lied to the police and destroyed evidence. We could never have imagined that Nick's reporting would lead to the closure of the *News of the World*, to the resignation of police officers at the most senior level, including Sir Paul Stephenson who came to see me that day, to the resignation of the Prime Minister's closest aide, to full blown public inquiry, to so many arrests and to so many resignations within News Corp itself.

People sometimes ask what was it like during that long investigation before and after Nick's story in July of 2009 and the answer is pretty lonely. For a long time, for about 18 months, very few people wanted to know. Such was the power, the dominance and, to be frank, the menace of News Corp in the U.K. where they own nearly 40 percent of the national newspaper market and were within days of gaining a hundred percent control of a broadcaster which is twice the size of the BBC in terms of revenues. They had virtual immunity from the normal scrutiny and restraints that we expect in civil society. The press, with one or two honorable exceptions, stayed off the story. The police did their best to throw us off the scent. The regulator was worse than useless and, again, with a few exceptions, Parliamentarians were either too close to or too afraid of the Murdoch papers to dare to take any close interest. Seldom have I been more conscious of the need for a strong independent inquiring press to bring scrutiny to bear on the exercise and governance of power.

In February of 2010, after we became aware that the man that was about to walk into Downing Street as Press Secretary to the Prime Minister had been responsible for his paper, using as one of his networks of corrupt outsourced investigators, a criminal then on remand for an axe murder, I did a most unusual thing. I rang the editor of another paper and offered to share all our material with him. If the British press wouldn't look at this scandal, maybe *The New York Times* would. The executive editor at the time, Bill Keller, put three first class reporters on a plane to London and it was a *New York Times* story about six months later in September of 2010 which independently verified everything *The Guardian* had written and added a fair amount more that reignited a story that a lot of people in power hoped and thought would die away.

So working with great journalists, such as Nick Davis, was my second stroke of luck. And in all the other lessons we are having to learn about the way in which journalism is changing, perhaps the most important of all is that we need reporters. A colleague on *The Guardian* recently wrote a book called *A World Without Bees*, which was a warning that we should pay more attention to the health and well being of bees, because were we to lose them our planet would be done for. And I sometimes feel the same about reporters. Reporters are the bees of the world's information systems. And without reporters like Nick Davis, like the late Anthony Shadid of *The New York Times* or Marie Colvin of the *Sunday Times*, both of whom recently died trying to keep the world's highest focus on things that matter deeply, we're in serious trouble.

And what I love about the phone hacking story was that it took a piece of brilliant reporting to expose journalism at its most indefensible. But essential though reporters are, they are only part of the story of news media today. And while, if I go back to phone hacking, while much of the mainstream media couldn't see that mass illegality, regulatory failure, police complicity, parliamentary intimidation and corporate cover up within their own industry was what we call a story, there were plenty of others who were not so blind. And they had their own publishing system, the web, and they used it well. Hacked Off, a campaigning group around the disclosures and in support of the hacking

victims sprang up and ventilated all the actions and kept the campaign going there.

One of the leading MP's to dig into the scandal took to Twitter. Twitter, which is sometimes derided as a medium for bird brains and those with the attention span of a goldfish is of course quite the opposite. It unites communities of interest. It builds momentum and depth around such stories. It distributes news and ideas and it has an infinite attention span. One or two of the alleged perpetrators of hacking have even taken to the web to explain themselves. Some of the best legal analysis of the affair and of Lord Justice Leveson's inquiry has been on blogs, not in newspapers. The most creative thinking about the legal and regulatory solutions to the mess created by a tiny minority of British journalists has been aired and discussed not in the pages of newspapers but in blogs, think tanks and universities and in the Leveson inquiry itself.

Now saying such things is uncomfortable and it doesn't always win *The Guardian* many friends in some quarters of an industry which is under scrutiny as never before and which has some pretty firm views about the best place to wash dirty laundry. But it points to a wider divide in how journalists are thinking about the present and future of our profession or trade and it's striking that we can't agree which word best describes what we do. Should we be open to all this material which others can now create, disseminate and respond to or does journalism have a unique authority and polity which will allow it to stand apart? Should it embed itself in this new information system, co-opt it, be part of it and celebrate it. Or should it find comfort and seek economic salvation in a 19th and 20th Century idea of the journalist, somebody who had privileged access to news not easily obtained by others and somebody who had the sole means of distribution.

Now, since Frank Rich was the distinguished recipient of this award last year, let me illustrate what I mean through the example of the theatre critic. *The Guardian* has got a great drama critic, Michael Billington. He's been *The Guardian's* man in the stalls since 1971. So no serious editor in his or her right mind would be without a theatre critic like Michael Billington. But ask three different questions. The first is this. Is Michael

Billington the only person in the audience on the first night of a new production of the National Theatre in London with something interesting to say? Or would it be interesting to know what was in the minds of the 900 other people around him? The answer is obviously yes, it would be better to have a number of responses. So will a newspaper create that forum for their views or will it cede that territory to others? The answer is surely obvious.

By encouraging a wide variety of responses we'll have a rich account of a cultural event. And if we shun the opportunity to do so, others will certainly take that opportunity. So both editorially and commercially it's a risky proposition to go it alone. So that's the first question. The second is how do we filter the good responses from the bad, the mundane from the perceptive, the Brecht experts from the Broadway fans. But newspapers are hardly alone in wanting to crack this question. In an age of abundant information is a question which is preoccupying virtually everyone, from the largest search engines or businesses toying with social media to the solitary academic.

So the third question is does this open principle apply to other areas of newspaper life? Can it work for investigative reporting, for sports, for smuggling the truth out of repressive regimes, a better environmental understanding for a more complete, scientific awareness, for travel coverage or for fashion? Again, in everything we do at *The Guardian* we're finding the answer is yes. Open is best. It worked in finding out who killed a news seller in the middle of a protest and enlisting 23,000 readers to sort through 400,000 documents about MP's expenses. In building the most comprehensive news site for environmental news in the world, I would say. In covering the Arab Spring, in finding a network of fans who knew more than we ever could about the 32 national football teams in the World Cup.

We ask for help in checking facts. We think that a thousand people who know Berlin or Barcelona like the back of their hand will contribute profoundly useful insights alongside the words of a travel writer. We love the fact that since launching on Facebook we've acquired four million additional active users, half of whom are under 25, a very

difficult audience that we've always found to get to. That's on their platform, not ours, or built with the help of having an open API. Now, this rapid growth of global traffic which is growing, in *The Guardian's* case of up to 75 percent a year, we've now got 63 million unique browsers a month, doesn't translate into instant cash anymore than it does for Twitter or for Facebook. But doing things which are editorially better, which build engagement and trust and for which there is a large growing and appreciative appetite -- only this week we were rated the most viral newspaper site in the world -- seem to me the essential first steps on a road to sustainability. And the news organizations which understand this new context of information and journalism can increase their reach and influence and viability beyond imagining.

So this debate between open and closed is not just a debate about newspapers. It's a fundamental choice in every corner of public and business world. You see it in academic study and pharmaceuticals and research, in how all governments are facing up to handling data and information. In journalism it's not about just planting or replacing the skills of a reporter or an editor. It is about understanding how life has changed and how we can harness this revolution that we're living through to produce a better account of the world around us.

In some ways the job of a journalist and the skills required has changed a great deal. And in some ways Nick Davis and his resolute pursuit of the truth and some of the other award winners tonight, it looks much the same as it always did. Like the phone hacking saga, the biggest story of open versus closed is still unrolling. So it feels a bit odd to be standing in front of you tonight to be getting an award at the half-time break. But I'm immensely honored to be recognized tonight. I shall take the award back with me to home, to London, to share with the staff and with the hundreds or thousands of others who are taking *The Guardian* on this exciting journey beyond a newspaper. And to borrow from a very famous Murdoch headline, it was them that won it.

(Applause)

MR. JONES: Alan has agreed to take a few questions, if there are any. If you are

interested in asking a question, there are mics here, up there, here and here. And we ask that if you go to the mic to ask a question you identify yourself and that you speak briefly and end your comment with a question mark. I would like to ask a question to Alan, if I may, under these circumstances, getting a chance to talk with someone who was there at the beginning of the WikiLeaks moment, I wondered if you would describe your experience at that very, very formative stage in the WikiLeaks process.

MR. RUSBRIDGER: The beginning?

MR. JONES: The very beginning.

MR. RUSBRIDGER: Well, it began at the same thing, of Nick Davis coming to my office and saying he couldn't understand. Nick always believes that the most significant stories in any newspaper are buried in a news in brief on page seven. He believes that idiots run newspapers and we always miss the most significant story. And it was true perfectly, it was perfectly true. Buried somewhere in *The Guardian* there was a story about this man on the run called Julian Assange and he said can't you see that this man has truly got this enormous, you know, millions and millions of State Department and Department of Defense cables, that's an amazing story and I'm going to find this story and I'm going to persuade him to give me all the cables. And you always have this feeling of the sort of air being sucked out of your body when Nick Davis tells you this because you realize it's just going to be an amazing story but it's going to be extremely scary along the way, whether it's Rupert Murdoch or the Defense Department.

So that's how it started and it was Nick who suggested that we, again, there's a pattern here. He suggested we should bring in *The New York Times* because he thought this was going to need First Amendment protection and he was right about that. And then Julian Assange wanted to bring in *Der Spiegel* so we had a hideous problem of dealing with a German weekly and American daily on a different time zone. And an anarchist in a bunker with whom we couldn't communicate at all after a while. And it's remarkable, we all get on so well.

(Laughter)

MR. RUSBRIDGER: Though there have been ups and downs along the way.

FROM THE FLOOR: Paul Hill from the Knight Science Journalism Program at MIT. You mentioned being a trust and the question is how much does that help in pushing you forward into openness, ahead of everyone else. And what advice would you give to newspapers who want to follow your lead but have to make profits as well. Is there some additional thing you can say?

MR. RUSBRIDGER: I think the trust, not having shareholders helps. And having a trust that is there solely for journalism helps too. Sitting in the front row is my seer, Andrew Miller. And I worship before him too, but having a trust that says think this through from a journalistic principle. So that's how I thought about it. I think what I said about tonight about the editorial value of what we're doing is a better starting place than thinking, oh, my God, this is terrifying. Well, let's build a gigantic wall between ourselves and the readers. I think that's a better starting point because it will create something that is journalistically more valuable. So that's what the trust does and they give us the backing to do so. But they wouldn't dream of doing that if Andrew didn't believe it as well.

So it's extremely important. As I said, the trust is not a charity and it realizes *The Guardian* has to be there forever. If Andrew went to them and said the editor is a lovely chap but he is deluded and this is never going to make money they would take me aside and either sack me. So it's important. CP Scott and his famous essay in 1921 which coined the term comment is free, facts are sacred also said a newspaper consists of the editor and the business manager walking hand in hand. But the important thing is the trust enables you to start from a journalistic point rather than from what seems like the obvious commercial starting point. Does that answer your question?

FROM THE FLOOR: Yes, thank you.

FROM THE FLOOR: Thanks very much for your speech. My name is Joel. I'm a grad student here and I'm a contributor to Comment is Free. In open journalism, as you see it, do you think that we need to re-look at what tools reporters are actually trained in

for source verification in a digital age? It's one thing to do a face to face interview and try and work out if someone is lying. It's another thing to try and check in IP address. And do you think we need to actually transform how we're training reporters in this new age to be aware of this new open journalism if they are going to use it successfully?

MR. RUSBRIDGER: Terribly important question and the answer is yes, it's really vital. Some of this stuff is not. I can never tell if this stuff sounds revolutionary new or whether people are stifling their yawns because it seems old, so old. Some of the skills that you need to bring to bear are the same whether you're dealing with this world of new information or whether you're standing on a doorstep and trying to get a *News of the World* reporter to speak to you. But there are skills and especially skills to do with analyzing information and data, which an older generation of newspaper people, it's not instinctive to them. That doesn't mean that they don't pick it up. And I think a lot of training institutions and universities are being very slow to realize how necessary and marketable these skills are.

FROM THE FLOOR: Matt Storin, retired newspaper editor. There are great similarities between American and British newspapers, but there are some significant differences. If I heard you correctly, you identified yourself as a liberal, which almost no American newspaper editor would ever do, whether the truth was there are not. Could you describe the difference you see between your system of identifying biases or allegiances and our system of pretending there are none? If I can get a postscript in there too, it also is said by some of your journalists that American journalists take themselves too seriously. And I'd be just interested in a side comment on that as well.

MR. RUSBRIDGER: Have I just committed commercial suicide for *The Guardian* in America by using the L word? Well, I mean, the context, it's a different historical context. There are papers, but I am responsible for the comment and the news section of the paper. So that's an obvious difference and there have been for 200 years papers that have represented different political traditions and which come from a journalism of much more attachment than in the States. I wouldn't for the moment say that one is better than

the other. I think there are advantages to both. I think there are. That sometimes a truth is better ground out by having news organizations that start from a completely different ideological starting point. So they approach a question from a completely different point of view. And then there is this sort of grinding out as these two points meet. I think sometimes that doesn't happen in America and sometimes it particularly doesn't happen in towns and cities that now only have one newspaper where the editor feels he or she has to speak for the whole community.

There is then the whole debate about objectivity and partiality. The night is not long enough to get into that. So I think there are different traditions. I'm a huge admirer of American journalism and I think if I hadn't come to live in Washington in 1987 I wouldn't have ended up editing a paper. It was a six month crash course on how to take journalism seriously. And the seriousness, the approach to facts, the fact checking, a kind of sort of civic notion of the importance of journalists, the journalism, that the British could really learn from. And we've seen six outstanding examples of that tonight. But sometimes it can be a little stuffy and long winded.

(Laughter)

MR. RUSBRIDGER: And British journalists sometimes are more irreverent and write with a different style. So that's why we're here. And there seem to be lots of Americans that like the things that *The Guardian* is doing, so it will add to the gaiety of your nation, I hope.

(Laughter)

MR. JONES: One more question here.

FROM THE FLOOR: Hi. My name is Alex Remington. I'm a first year master's in public policy student here. Thank you so much for coming. I wanted to ask, you've mentioned how you see newspapers needing to change the roles of journalists changing. In this world that we're moving into and the ferment within the industry, are there any stories that are harder to write? Harder to write either politically, as you mentioned, harder to muster the resources to report out thoroughly, harder to get to the bottom of?

MR. RUSBRIDGER: There is a big resource question I think in journalism today. And it's one that is troubling us all. That's not simply a question of the declining results. The reason *The Guardian* is losing money at the moment is we lost 40 million pounds in classified advertising. So that's a big hole and that's going to take any, you know, this familiar story in every American newspaper. But at the same time we're having to experiment with all these new forms of journalism and satisfy an audience that wants immediacy. So the live blog, which I think we pioneered on *The Guardian* as a brilliant mechanism for telling one or two big stories in the day and drawing in multiple sources. It's a really brilliant way of telling a story from lots of different perspectives. It sort of tugs in the opposite direction of simply giving a liberal standpoint.

That's a really interesting thing to be doing. But at the same time you had to produce the newspaper at the end of the day. And to edit Comment is Free, which again, if we hadn't started Comment is Free, which is a kind of sort of Huffington Post and all credits to Arianna for doing that, the threat to *The Guardian* now would be considerable. So you have to -- the sheer quantum of what you're doing is expanding and that's a really important consideration in terms of your question. What is in peril by that. If you put specialist reporters on the treadmill of a live blog, are you taking them away from being able to report in a more considered way and how do you find time to give your investigative teams their talent, their time and their resources at the same time as doing everything that you need to do in multimedia because that's so popular with advertisers and with readers.

So I think the danger in what I'm describing is just simply one of resource in having to do. We're all balancing risks at the moment. We may be wrong about this and the Afghani sitting there probably thinks I'm a terrible utopian and that I've got at least half of this wrong, which I might have done. But it seems to me the greater risk is in not understanding this world and not experimenting. And that eats into resource. And so the danger of it is that by putting a resource here you're neglecting the resource that should be there.

MR. JONES: Alan, thank you.

(Applause)

MR. JONES: I'd like to once again congratulate all of our Goldsmith finalists and citation winners. We're going to be having a panel on investigative reporting tomorrow, breakfast at 8:30. The panel will start at 9:00. It will be in the top of the Taubman Building. We hope many of you will come. You will be most welcome. And we will also, as I say, have breakfast. I want to thank Alan especially for a terrific talk and for coming this far and you're right, we did not give you the Career Award because we thought that your career was over. We just thought that Murdoch might get you first.

(Laughter)

MR. JONES: Thank you all, very much.

C E R T I F I C A T E

This is to certify that the preceding transcript is an accurate record based on the recordings of the proceedings taken before: Alex S. Jones

In the Matter of:

THE GOLDSMITH AWARDS IN POLITICAL JOURNALISM

Date: March 6, 2012

Place: Cambridge, Massachusetts

– March 16, 2012

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