

PREVIOUSLY ON “MEDIA EDGE” (January, 2017)

Episode 612 (January 28 - February 3)

Segment 1 -- "How Students of Color Confront Impostor Syndrome"

As a black woman from a tough part of the Bronx who grew up to attain all the markers of academic prestige, Dena Simmons knows that for students of color, success in school sometimes comes at the cost of living authentically. Now an educator herself, Simmons discusses how we might create a classroom that makes all students feel proud of who they are. "Every child deserves an education that guarantees the safety to learn in the comfort of one's own skin," she says.

Segment 2 -- "What Happened? ... And What Do We Do Now?"

On November 11, 2016 (just 3 days after the presidential election) Eugene Robinson, Pulitzer prize-winning columnist for the Washington Post and MSNBC contributor, spoke to a packed house in Sacramento about the shocking results of the election, and what we can do about this in the future. A Media Edge crew recorded the event at St. Mark's United Methodist Church as part of its Moon Lecture Series.

Segment 3 -- "To Prison for Poverty"

To Prison for Poverty documents the system that enables private probation companies to profit from charging excessive fees to low income people who can't pay small fines like traffic tickets. If they can't pay, they go to jail.

Episode 611 (January 21-27)

Segment 1 -- "Last Hours"

"Last Hours" was written by Thom Hartmann and co-produced by Leonardo DiCaprio's father, George. This short documentary leaps far ahead of immediate issues of oceans rising to take away coastland. Frequent extreme weather events are happening in unusual places, causing record breaking destruction. Hurricanes, tornados, ice, hail and snow storms, floods, droughts, wildfires all over the planet are happening nearly every week. Even the Department of Defense and the CIA have identified global warming as a threat to national security, as people around the world become climate change refugees, driven from their homes by the ensuing loss of food, water, livestock, shelter and employment.

Narrated by Thom Hartmann, "Last Hours" is tightly focused on the macro view of geologists, and scientists interested in the Permian Period, in which global warming resulted in the extinction of 95% of all life on Earth. The event was started by a massive volcano in Siberia, which raised the temperature 6 degrees. Then, warming of the oceans melted frozen methane at the bottom, so when it bubbled up and turned into gas, it entered the atmosphere and triggered the planet catastrophe. There have been Five Mass Extinctions since life began on Earth. The purpose of "Last Hours" is to start looking at the possibility of a Sixth Mass Extinction, triggered by the burning of fossil fuels. The film examines situations like the melting of the Arctic Ice Sheet. In July 2013 it melted at the rate of the size of Kansas, every two days.

Endorsements for "Last Hours": Al Gore; Robert Kennedy, Jr; Michael Brune, Sierra Club; Lester Brown, Earth Policy Institute; Denis Hayes, founder of Earth Day; and others too numerous to mention.

Segment 2 -- "The Great Divide with Joseph Stiglitz and Robert Reich"

Economist Joseph Stiglitz and former Labor Secretary Robert Reich reminisce about opposing "corporate welfare" during their days in the Clinton Administration and talk here about problematic trade deals, income inequality and Stiglitz's book, "The Great Divide: Unequal Societies and What We Can Do About Them." Recorded at UC Berkeley.

Segment 3 -- "Our Water, Our Future"

Cascade Locks, Oregon is heaven on earth—a small town nestled in the awe-inspiring Columbia River Gorge. But when Nestlé came to town with a proposal to bottle their water, citizens launched an all-out effort to protect their most precious resource. Our Water, Our Future tells the story of these unlikely activists and their advice for communities facing water grabs around the world.

Segment 4 -- "Tom Hayden & Naomi Klein - Journalism, Global Economy, NAFTA, The Sixties"

Author, activist and former California State Senator Tom Hayden (who passed away on October 23, 2016) talks in depth with the author of No Logo and The Shock Doctrine, Naomi Klein, about the state of the fourth branch of government: journalists. Both Hayden and Klein became serious journalists in college, and it was during that time that both experienced their defining moment.

When Tom Hayden interviewed Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. in 1960, he asked questions while imagining the headline, "Tom Hayden Interviews MLK," but by the time he wrote the article he knew there were more important things in the world than personal glory.

Naomi Klein rebelled from her liberal, feminist mother until Mark Lepine gunned down fourteen women in what became known as the Montreal Massacre. It was then she realized people were dying for the beliefs her mother fought for, and that realization awakened the activist within her.

After both events, Hayden and Klein dedicated their lives to telling the truth about the world, and doing everything in their power to not use subjects like "they," but use "we" instead. It is that distinction that defines their journalism to this day.

Segment 5 -- "Hands in Peace"

Hands in Peace builds peace among diverse communities by adapting the ancient Greek Olympics for children. The children celebrate our common humanity and cultural diversity through non-competitive festivals like this one held in Sacramento.

Episode 610 (January 14-20)

Segment 1 -- "How America's Public Schools Keep Kids in Poverty"

Why should a good education be exclusive to rich kids? Schools in low-income neighborhoods across the US, specifically in communities of color, lack resources that are standard at wealthier schools — things like musical instruments, new books, healthy school lunches and soccer fields — and this has a real impact on the potential of students. Kandice Sumner sees the disparity every day in her classroom in Boston. In this inspiring talk, she asks us to face facts — and change them.

Segment 2 -- "The Laura Flanders Show"

The Laura Flanders Show tries to find the common ground that unites Americans, stories of progress, equity, and resilience -- to discover that there is more evidence of congress, than of division. This week's guest speaks to some ways that he has built a career on these very philosophies of equity and unity.

Anthony Flaccavento is the founder of SCALE (Sequestering Carbon, Accelerating Local Economies) and author of "Building A Healthy Economy from the Bottom Up." Much of the Trump campaign and its cohorts campaigned for "trickle-down" economics -- the idea that, when those at the top (the 1%), do well, that prosperity "trickles down" to the bottom 10%. This concept has been disproven repeatedly. Flaccavento's experience and success in reinvigorating rural communities, which are often left out of macro policies, suggests one major way we can bridge the divides between these disparate parts of America. A restorative, perhaps, for the shared economic struggles that led to Trump's ascent.

Flaccavento hails from rural Virginia in Appalachian country, and has spent the last 25 years in community development advocating for directing government policy and resources towards building sustainable, thriving, rural communities. By building an economy from the bottom up -- that is, from the farm -- we make its foundations sturdy, says Flaccavento.

Segment 3 -- "Seeds of Freedom"

This film, narrated by Jeremy Irons, details how seeds, which have been the heart of traditional farming and natural biodiversity since the beginning of agriculture, are being transformed into an expensive, patented commodity used to monopolize the global food system.

Segment 4 -- "The Big Picture"

Former U.S. Labor Secretary Robert Reich and MoveOn.org Civic Action teamed up to create this new multi-video series of 12 short videos that focus on advancing bold, progressive policy solutions—such as expanding Social Security and making public higher education free.

Segment 5 -- "Help for Kids the Education System Ignores"

Define students by what they contribute, not what they lack — especially those with difficult upbringings, says educator Victor Rios. Interweaved with his personal tale of perseverance as an inner-city youth, Rios identifies three straightforward strategies to shift attitudes in education and calls for fellow educators to see "at-risk" students as "at-promise" individuals brimming with resilience, character and grit.

Episode 609 (January 7-13)

Segment 1 -- "Inside the Mind of a Former Radical Jihadist"

"For a long time, I lived for death," says Manwar Ali, a former radical jihadist who participated in violent, armed campaigns in the Middle East and Asia in the 1980s. In this moving talk, he reflects on his experience with radicalization and makes a powerful, direct appeal to anyone drawn to Islamist groups claiming that violence and brutality are noble and virtuous: let go of anger and hatred, he says, and instead cultivate your heart to see goodness, beauty and truth in others.

Segment 2 -- "The Laura Flanders Show"

Supposedly, the far right have won. So what now? We ask our guests this week the same question, taking from a mixed pot of loss and success. Whether it's about the fight for reproductive justice in the South, or a movement for rural agency in progressive work, our guests offer some wisdom on what's happening now, and what's next as we head into the new administration.

The Facing Race conference, coordinated by Race Forward this November in Atlanta, brought together some of the most noteworthy names in progressive organizing right now. This show has a special compilation of interviews from the conference with these very activists. Laura speaks with Tarso Luís Ramos, executive director of Political Research Associates, about the far right's global dawn; Kim Diehl of the National Employment Law Project, on strategy for progressive movements; Cara Shufelt and Jessica Campbell, of the Rural Organizing Project, on supporting rural mobilization; and Esha Pandit, from the Center for Advancing Innovative Policy, on reproductive justice victories in Texas.

Segment 3 -- "The Growing Danger of Nuclear War... and What We Can Do About It"

The 2016 Joint Annual Dinner of the Sacramento Chapters of Physician for Social Responsibility and the United Nations Association featured a keynote address by Dr. Ira Helfand, co-president of International Physicians for the Prevention of Nuclear War (IPPNW). Dr. Helfand has spoken at the United Nations, at meetings of the International Congress to Abolish Nuclear Weapons (ICAN), and at many other national and international venues regarding the ongoing threat of nuclear weapons and the urgent need to abolish these weapons altogether, and he's been actively involved in working toward this goal through PSR, ICAN, and the UN.

Segment 4 -- "A Queer Vision of Love and Marriage"

Love is a tool for revolutionary change and a path toward inclusivity and understanding for the LGBTQ+ community. Married activists Tiq and Kim Katrin Milan have imagined their marriage — as a transgender man and cis woman — a model of possibility for people of every kind. With infectious joy, Tiq and Kim question our misconceptions about who they might be and offer a vision of an inclusive, challenging love that grows day by day.

Segment 5 -- "Treatment vs. Jail"

David Moss was arrested 14 times for drug possession and never offered treatment. He finally got clean on his own. How much taxpayer money got wasted arresting this guy instead of helping him fix the problem? Can California afford to keep spending so much on criminal justice while getting so little in return? This video was produced by Brave New Films in partnership with the ACLU of California.

Episode 608 (December 31 - January 6)

Segment 1 -- "Islamophobia Killed My Brother"

On February 10, 2015, Suzanne Barakat's brother Deah, her sister-in-law Yusor and Yusor's sister Razan were murdered by their neighbor in Chapel Hill, North Carolina. The perpetrator's story, that he killed them over a traffic dispute, went unquestioned by the media and police until Barakat spoke out at a press conference, calling the murders what they really were: hate crimes. As she reflects on how she and her family reclaimed control of their narrative, Barakat calls on us to speak up when we witness hateful bigotry and express our allyship with those who face discrimination.

Segment 2 -- "An Evening with Barry Scheck: Justice for the Innocent"

Attorney Barry Scheck, DNA expert and co-founder of the Innocence Project, delivered a moving presentation to a capacity crowd at St. Mark's United Methodist Church in Sacramento, as part of the Moon Lecture Series. The Innocence Project exonerates the wrongly convicted through DNA testing and reforms the criminal justice system to prevent future injustice. A Media Edge crew recorded this event on September 16, 2016.

Segment 3 -- "Your Smartphone is a Civil Rights Issue"

The smartphone you use reflects more than just personal taste ... it could determine how closely you can be tracked, too. Privacy expert and TED Fellow Christopher Soghoian details a glaring difference between the encryption used on Apple and Android devices and urges us to pay attention to a growing digital security divide. "If the only people who can protect themselves from the gaze of the government are the rich and powerful, that's a problem," he says. "It's not just a cybersecurity problem — it's a civil rights problem."