

**Marianne Klowak, CBC Whistleblower**  
**Testimony to the National Citizens Inquiry**  
**18 May 2023, Ottawa**

*Watch her testimony as a stand-alone video here: [TinyUrl.com/CBC-whistleblower](https://tinyurl.com/CBC-whistleblower)*

*Watch all 12.5-hours of testimony from that day here: [TinyUrl.com/NCI-18May2023](https://tinyurl.com/NCI-18May2023)  
(Marianne's testimony begins at 3:27:53)*

MK = Marianne Klowak, CBC whistleblower

SB = Shawn Buckley, National Citizens Inquiry lawyer

SB: Our next witness is Marianne Klowak. Marianne, can you please state your full name for the record, spelling your first and last name.

MK: It's Marianne Klowak. M-a-r-i-a-n-n-e. Klowak. K-l-o-w-a-k.

SB: Marianne, do you promise to tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, so help you God?

MK: I do.

SB: Now, Marianne, my understanding is, and it might be easier for *you* to give the highlights, but I'll try and go through some of them. But you have been a veteran, senior reporter for the CBC - which, for our international participants, is the Canadian Broadcast Corporation - for 34 years.

And as a journalist, you've been involved in all aspects of news gathering and investigative reporting for radio, television, web live reporting, short and long form documentaries. You have been involved with Current Affairs as a current affairs news anchor for radio and television. You've filed stories nationally for World Report, the World This Weekend, and the Hourlies.

You've basically done regional stories, published on CBC national's digital platform. And the highlights could go on and on. Are there any other highlights that you'd like to just kind of describe your career? Cuz you've been at this for 34 years and there's, like, I've got a whole list of highlights, I just don't know which ones to touch.

MK: The only other thing I'd wanna touch on is, the year I left I was given an award for a series I pitched on Pandemic Perspectives. And the piece that won the award was a homeless person's perspective of how their life had changed. That was a national, a national award.

SB: Good. And David, I'll ask if you can turn Marianne up, because I'm having trouble hearing her. Or if you can speak clearly into the microphone, Marianne.

MK: Thank you. Is this better? Is that better?

SB: Thank you. So now you're here basically to share your experiences while you were still at the CBC, and working as a reporter, and some of the stories you tried to run and what happened. So I'm wondering if you can just start into that and then if, if we need any clarifications or that, I'll jump in.

MK: Before I get into that, I think there's a little bit of background that's required. You know, I know that as a public broadcaster, you expect us to be telling you the truth, and we'd stopped doing that. And there was a number of stories that I had put forward that were blocked. But it seemed to me, as a journalist who'd been there 34 years, it's like the rules had changed overnight. And it changed so quickly that it left me just dizzy, in disbelief.

I was blocked and prevented from doing stories that I had pitched, that I'd put forward. They never saw the light of day. They never made it to air or print. And some of those stories were protests against vaccine mandates, people's safety concerns about the vaccines, and also the many problems with reporting adverse reactions in Canada.

And for me, what was so disorienting about this was that, you know, I had learned from the best-of-the-best at the CBC. This is where I learned to think critically and fearlessly hold power to account. To break stories and uncover information that you, the public, has a right to know.

And I also would like to mention that the newsroom I worked in, in CBC Manitoba, that they were a leader in investigative journalism. Across the entire network, second only to Toronto. And this was a newsroom that produced award-winning stories, that sparked change at the highest level of corporations and government.

By the time I left in December of 2021, I no longer recognized the CBC. And I really didn't think my career would end this way. That the skills I learned and honed at the CBC would be used to hold power to account *within* the corporation.

SB: Can I, can I just slow you down? Cuz I think it's important for people to understand what you're saying. And especially because you were working as a journalist, and as an investigative reporter, for much of the 34 years. So my understanding is, is when you're a senior reporter like yourself, you can just follow a story. Like, okay, I'm gonna report on this and, and you can do the story. And generally speaking, you're not second-guessed or your story isn't changed. So

your experience, in learning from true journalists in the past, was just to run a story, to be fair, and that was your experience until COVID hit.

MK: Absolutely. I would say, like prior to COVID, you know, I was expected to come into that editorial meeting. I would have two or three original stories - what we call enterprising journalism, original stories. And I was able to work on those unless there was big breaking news that day.

But normally I would be assigned that story, given a time. And within, you know, a day or two I could turn those stories around on all three platforms - radio, TV, and web. And I would also like to mention that I had one producer vetting for TV and radio. And rarely were there any changes made in my script or the content. And for web, it was another producer. But it was minor things, like let's move this sentence, let's change this word, we'll tighten the lead. That was prior to COVID.

SB: So, and now I'll just follow up on that again. Because I think it's important for people to understand. So basically, your stories were standing as you made them.

MK: Absolutely. And they backed me in doing that. I was supported in doing it. That's what they wanted. Original, enterprising journalism.

SB: Okay. And so that ties into when you're saying the Manitoba News desk, at the CBC prior to COVID, I mean, that was a hardcore journalistic news desk. They were expecting you to get, you know, truthful, fair stories. And they were not censoring, they were wanting the news.

MK: That's the way it was prior to COVID.

SB: Okay. And so COVID, that was a completely new ballgame, when COVID hit. So even the [2009] swine flu, like cuz we experienced that, you know, during your career?

MK: Yes.

SB: None of none of this, it just started with COVID.

MK: No, it changed so quick that it left me spinning. And I mean, the way I saw it, I'm just gonna give you a little bit of a synopsis and then I'll get into specifics in terms of what was done with my stories. But that we had - we betrayed the public, we broke their trust.

And we had been riding on a reputation of excellence for years. And now we were quickly shutting down one side of the debate. And how were we doing that? We branded the doctors and the experts the CBC chose, that we used in our stories, we branded them as competent and trustworthy.

And those who questioned and challenged the narrative were portrayed as dangerous and spreading disinformation. And that was regardless of what their specialty was, what their background was, and what their experience was. And I just also want to sort of give you a window into how this affected me, personally.

As a veteran journalist, I had solid contacts in the community. I had people calling me with stories. So I was seeing, and I was hearing, and I was absorbing all their stories of suffering and pain. And they were sharing them with me. And these stories weren't being told.

Some of those were from the vaccine injured. Some were from people who had lost their job because of their vaccination status. Those whose families had been blown apart, and they'd been ostracized. University students who were depressed over repeated lockdowns and mandates. And parents who were calling me, that were agonizing on whether they should vaccinate their child or not.

So all these stories were sitting inside of me, they were left with me. And I felt the crushing burden and the weight of their truth not being given a voice. And it affected my well being because these people trusted me and I felt I had failed them and I had let them down.

SB: So can I just interject? So, when you're a journalist and people are coming to you with stories that should be reported, you're feeling a responsibility to give voice to those stories. But you're not being allowed to do so for the first time and that's, that's what was causing the distress internally.

MK: Absolutely. I was losing sleep. It was distressing. It was like I had failed these people, as a journalist. To give voice to their truth.

So I had witnessed, in a very short time, the collapse of journalism, news gathering, investigative reporting. And the way I saw it is that we were, in fact, pushing propaganda. And to define propaganda: it's information, ideas, opinions, or images that give one part of an argument. Which are broadcast, published in order to influence a person's opinion.

And mental health workers have their own definition of propaganda: as manipulative persuasion in the service of an agenda.

In a [published article](#) written by a former CBC editor-in-chief in 2018, she outlines what's called the Journalistic Standards and Practices. And these are the most fundamental principles that govern who we are as journalists, and who we are as a public broadcaster. Basically, these are the pillars - the holy grail for journalists. This is what - every story we do can be measured against these. And they are accuracy, fairness, balance, impartiality, and integrity.

She goes on to say that "The JSP is not merely a guide for the people who work at CBC/Radio Canada. It's a key component of our promise to Canadians that the work we do is, first and

foremost, a public service." Then she says: "The real test, of course, is ensuring that our journalism is credible, reliable, and worthy of your trust."

So in other words, you the audience decide if we're trustworthy - if we're telling the truth. It's not up to us to hammer you with what we define, decide, or think the truth is. Because the pillars of balance and fairness require us to present both sides. And after you examine them, you ultimately decide what the truth is.

She says, "you can hold CBC News accountable against the principles that are laid out" in the journalistic standards and practices. In my last year and a half at the CBC, we violated all of them. Not only had we shut down one side by silencing and discrediting anyone opposing the narrative, we had elevated and designated ourselves as the gatekeeper of the truth. We no longer believed our audience was capable of critically thinking for themselves.

I'm gonna give you very specific examples of that. But before that, I'd like to read you a page out of a journal that I wrote a month after I left the CBC. It gives you a sense of the culture and the toxic work environment that led me to leave before I had wanted to:

For months prior to my departure in December 2021, the complaints and criticism from listeners and viewers continued to mount from the public. Calls. Emails. People stopping me on the street and saying, "What the heck is going on at the CBC?" People telling me they felt betrayed, lied to, a gut feeling that they weren't being told the whole truth.

They no longer trusted the CBC to tell them both sides of an issue. What was most troubling for me as a journalist is that they no longer felt safe to tell me their story, and have their voice heard by their beloved public broadcaster.

Passion for the truth has been my driving force as a journalist. And we become journalists because we see ourselves as truth tellers. The vast disconnect between the stories people were telling me and what we were broadcasting and publishing just tore me apart. So armed with documented examples and specifics, I voiced my dismay about our editorial direction to all levels of management over several months. Both locally, and at the highest level of power in Toronto.

And I did this, I brought in a witness to every scheduled meeting. Who would document what happened in those meetings. The narrative among mainstream media, including the CBC, emerged early on in the pandemic. By narrative, I mean presenting one side of a complex issue and effectively censoring, cancelling, and silencing the other side. Only giving voice to experts who control and reinforce the narrative.

I had seen it happen on issues in the past, but never to this degree. For the most part logic, common sense, and critical thinking are suspended - preventing deep dives on stories, holding power to account. Facts may be omitted if they don't fit into the narrow focus of the narrative.

Who were we to deliberately withhold information the public needed to know - and had a right to know - in order to make a decision based on informed consent about their health? Canadians were starting to see this, and they were calling us out on it.

So, for me things started to escalate, I would say it was early 2021. And I was disturbed and alarmed about the language that was being used in some of our editorial meetings. All of a sudden, the term anti-vaxxer came up.

And I said, "Whoa, whoa, let's stop right there. What is an anti-vaxxer? Who is an anti-vaxxer? What do they believe? Because are you saying it's someone who's against all vaccines? Because the people I'm speaking to, who are vaccine hesitant, have had all their other shots. But they have problems with this particular one."

I also brought up those who couldn't get it for health reasons, because of allergies. And what about people who just needed more time and information to make a decision? And yet we were lumping them all in this same pot as being an anti-vaxxer. I said, "Using this term is dangerous. It's discriminatory. And why are we talking about these people with such hostility and such contempt?"

SB: So Marianne, can I just stop you there cuz that's, that's a term that's become very sensitive at this hearing, and I'll explain that in a second. So when the term comes up in the newsroom, it's being used in a really negative term. Like, it's meant to be pejorative?

MK: Almost laughing, ridiculing. It's like these people aren't educated. That was, that was the kind of term that was being used and that was what was inferred.

SB: And, and I'll tell you why I, you know, I stopped you with that. So we've had, and I think it was the Saskatoon hearings where I started to notice it. So we'd have witnesses, like literally vaccine injury witnesses, talking about how, you know, their lives were literally destroyed by this particular vaccine. But then they would add during their testimony, just literally out of context, "But I'm not an anti-vaxxer."

And then we had a lady that really was part of one of the biggest freedom groups in Saskatoon, you know, that arose because of the mandates and things like that. And she made a point, "But we're not an anti-vaxxer group."

And so that told me, because my understanding - and it's based on a lot of the evidence that was here, but also, you know, prior to me coming here, is that these terms are created basically to ridicule. And basically to close our minds, right? Because no one wants to be labeled as an anti-vaxxer. So if somebody is labeled as an anti-vaxxer, you'll close your mind to them, right? So it's just interesting. I'm sorry to stop you, but it's interesting to hear, cuz you basically used, you know, laughter as a description that these people would be laughed at in a newsroom.

MK: And ridiculed. And I think that was the prevailing consensus in the newsroom. That if you were educated and if you were intelligent, you got the shot. To question it meant you weren't intelligent, which really flies in the face of critical thinking - and it's opposite of journalistic practice.

In June of 2021, the Manitoba government had carried out its own [survey on vaccine hesitancy](#).

SB: And we'll just pull up your slide for a second. There we go.

MK: So in the [next slide](#) it looks, you see the reasons for vaccine hesitancy. Why you're not in a rush to get it, not sure if you will get it, or why you're not going to get it at all. Look at the top three. They found 25% were concerned about long-term effects. 18% were concerned about side effects and reactions. And 15% said the vaccine was experimental and unproven. So more than half, that's 58% - almost 60% - had concerns about safety and that it was experimental.

Now, notice where religion comes in. It comes in at 4%. So more than half of the people were listening to their gut, and they weren't convinced by the mantra of "safe and effective." But instead of critically thinking, doing news gathering and real journalism on safety concerns, scrutinizing the Pfizer data, and asking some of the hard questions people were asking me like, "Why is the CBC the arm of public health?" we chose to focus on that 4%. Those who were hesitant for religious reasons.

So our mission at the CBC now was to educate these people, or for that matter, educate anyone who was vaccine hesitant and eliminate it. Because surely, if they were educated they would've changed their mind. This to me was arrogant. It was condescending. And we were telling people what to think. Because we didn't trust them to think for themselves.

Our tone implied they were a danger to society if their thinking didn't fall in line with the narrative. And to me, this was mind boggling. Because I understood our mandate at the CBC was to elevate the voice of Canadians. To tell stories on a local, a regional, and a national level reflecting Canadians to Canadians - to promote understanding and unity.

And instead, we were fanning the flames of fear, of division, of segregation - and hatred against a particular group, the unvaccinated. So the stereotype we were creating emerged early on. The person who was unvaccinated was uneducated. They were likely a person of faith. They were denying that COVID was real. They probably lived in a rural community. And they were branded a danger to public safety.

SB: Sorry, I'm just gonna stop you. So these are themes that the CBC, in their newsroom, came up to actually use to basically denigrate - and create a group called the anti-vaxxers and denigrate them. So we actually have our state-funded news organization coming up with themes to basically create a separate group and to make them, you know, look uneducated and basically like Luddites.

MK: That, that was the image that was portrayed.

SB: And this was a deliberate decision.

MK: It *was* a deliberate decision, because look at the government survey. It showed that almost 60% of people were concerned about safety, and yet we were focusing on religion. And I'll give you a couple examples of stories—

SB: If I can just interact a little bit, cuz it would seem to me the story is, here's what people's concerns are, and let's go talk to those people.

MK: That would be the common thinking, wouldn't it?

SB: And let's see what flows from that, as the story develops.

MK: That would be the common thinking. So here, this is a story we ran in May of 2021 — [Death bed denials](#) in southern Manitoba hospital patients, the doctor says.



So it was a fact that pockets of Southern Health in Manitoba did have the lowest uptake of the vaccine. But I challenged this stereotype. I'm saying, you know, "I know doctors, I know educated people. I know people in the trades. I know people working in garment factories, social workers, people all over the province that are vaccine hesitant. They do not fit this stereotype." But many of them by now were too afraid to be interviewed because they knew it wasn't safe. They knew what would happen to them, that they would be labeled, stigmatized, and they would likely lose their job.

Here was [another story](#) we did, targeting people in faith communities. That we ran a few months later, and that was in September of 2021.





Manitoba health officials were targeting the low vaccination rate in the southern part of the province. And they thought the best way to get through to these people was to get the community leaders and the religious leaders on board, and then we can convince people to get the shot. The story says there's no legitimate reason for religious exemptions to get the shot across several major belief systems, the leaders say.

That's not what I was hearing from people. People were applying for exemptions, on their deeply held spiritual beliefs, and their applications were consistently being rejected and they were losing their jobs because of it. And these were gut-wrenching stories, of people who are calling me, saying you know, I'm being escorted out my workplace right now. I can't believe this is happening. I'm being discriminated against because of my faith.

They said, "Where's the right to religion, freedom of religion? And where's the right to bodily autonomy?" And where was the CBC? And why weren't we telling their stories? I mean, there was one man that I'd spoken with. He had been with a company for 25 years. And he was in a management position, and he was working from home and he applied for an exemption that was rejected.

He lost his job because he wouldn't get the shot. And he was continuing to work from home. It was ludicrous. It was absolutely ludicrous. And we didn't do these stories. So this was all sort of coming to a head, and on June 3rd, 2021, I called for a meeting with the managing editor of CBC Manitoba, the executive producer, and I asked that a witness be present at all of the meetings to hear my concerns about our editorial direction.

Now that witness was the person who was recently hired as the executive producer of diversity and inclusiveness. So in that meeting, I raised a number of issues. I said, why weren't we investigating the safety of the vaccines when that's what came up at 60% in a government survey? Why were we creating a dangerous stereotype of who we thought a vaccine hesitant person was? And why were we creating a hate culture against them and demonizing these people as a threat to public safety?

Why were we endorsing and promoting an experimental drug that we didn't know much about - other than what the *government* and the manufacturer were telling us?

I'm gonna give you an example of how that happened. Going back to the journalistic standards, about how we're supposed to be impartial. We had reporters posting on their CBC Facebook page at the local and national level with a sticker on their arm and their hand up in the air [thumbs up] saying, "I'm part of Team Pfizer," and "Team Moderna." You know, with their hand up.

And I said, "How is that being impartial? And how is that being objective?" And why were we getting behind Pfizer, which paid out huge criminal settlements? And would these images convince people who were not sure to get the shot? I said, "Clearly this is a journalistic breach."

When I flagged this to management, they didn't have an issue with it. They didn't think it was a problem. I also brought up to them—

SB: Let me just stop you. Management didn't view those issues as a problem?

MK: No, they said, if they wanna do that, that's their choice.

SB: You mean, if who wants to do it?

MK: If a reporter wants to post on Facebook they've gotten the shot, and they've got a sticker, and they're part of team Pfizer or Moderna - they didn't have an issue with that.

SB: Okay.

MK: I also brought up, at that meeting, what happened with Thalidomide. That's a drug that was endorsed in the early 1960s for pregnant women who were nauseated, a drug that caused severe birth defects. And that we shouldn't be getting on this bandwagon, we should be very cautious because this was a brand new vaccine that had just become available.

Now I'm gonna give you a specific example of a story that I was shut down on. So June 2021 was the time when Israel was starting to see some links between the Pfizer vaccine and heart inflammation. And I was getting calls from parents who were really distressed and just saying, "There's the potential risk of heart inflammation in young people, I don't know if I should vaccinate my child. I don't know what to do. How safe is this vaccine?" They were in angst about - they wanted more information.

And at that time, the Center for Disease Control and the FDA had put a warning on their factsheet about rare cases of myocarditis. And some parents in Manitoba thought, you know, Manitoba should be doing the same for their factsheet on Pfizer, because that was the only one that was authorized in Canada for those 12 and older.

They had sent letters to the province, the health minister, public health officials. And they shared all these documents with me. So I pitched this story on the June 3rd meeting, and I was given the go-ahead. And I interviewed several parents and I approached this story like I would approach any other story. Is this true? The government and the manufacturer are saying it's safe and effective, and yet we've got parents worried about some evidence that's emerging that there could be some health concerns.

So I set out to newsgather, investigate, do the research, and find the answers to the questions people were asking. And for me, this story was reflective of that 60% - where people were saying, this is what we're concerned about. So I thought, great, we're gonna do a story that the public has a right to know. And these are some of the things that parents said to me on the record. They said, "You know, giving youth a drug that's still in the trial phase is a terrible idea. It's dangerous." They wanted to know who would be responsible if their child had an adverse reaction. Most troubling, in their opinion, was that some of these children didn't need to have their parents' consent to get the shot. "Why was the state taking control of their children?" They were asking me this. This is all credible. And legitimate questions.

They were fed up with their kids being threatened and bullied in school, for not being vaccinated. I'll tell you one story. There was a rural community and this mother phoned me and there were two families. One family was vaccinated, one wasn't, and the daughters were best friends. And one of the daughters said, "Well, you know, if you wanna get the shot, you can come over to my house on the weekend and my mom will take you and your mother never has to know." So that was the end of that friendship. That was the end of that, and it divided the whole community.

And these people were questioning. They were asking me, they were saying, "Well, if this vaccine is safe [effective], then why does someone who's vaccinated have to be afraid of someone who's unvaccinated?" Very logical questions.

And they were angry with the CBC. They expressed that to me. They said, why was the CBC and the media cheerleading the government's message that the vaccine was safe and effective? Because they weren't convinced by it.

So that's basically what they said to me on the record. And most of them had referenced and voiced their support for a body of scientific research that was put forward by the Canadian COVID Care Alliance, specifically by Byran Bridle, a world class immunologist from the University of Guelph. And the Alliance had been raising flags about the safety of the vaccine based on scientific studies. And they'd even filed a petition with the federal government. And they were calling on the feds to suspend the use of the vaccines in children, in youth, in adults, in women of childbearing age until there would be long-term and short-term safety trials that were completed and published in peer review journals.

Many of the parents I spoke with had signed this petition. Certainly this was newsworthy, and something the public had a right to know. These were Canadians that were voicing a different

or a dissenting voice. And up until now, all we were airing and publishing were experts aligned with the government's view. This is a story I thought would bring some fairness and balance to our one-sided coverage, and it would, it would punch a hole in the narrative.

I contacted the Alliance and I spoke with a scientist by the name of Steven Pelech. He's a highly reputable scientist. He's a professor of neurology in the Department of Medicine at the University of British Columbia. He had been doing COVID research in his lab for two-and-a-half years. He also published more than 200 scientific papers over the course of his career.

He praised the parents I interviewed and he said, "You know, they're wise. They're wise to question this narrative." Because he had serious concerns with vaccinating children with this new vaccine. He shared with me the Pfizer data that showed with children there's the least amount of data from testing on whether there's a long-term or short-term side effect. So according to the document I was looking at from Pfizer, it was just over 1,130 adolescents between 12 and 15 in the US were vaccinated in Phase 3 trials. And in his opinion, that was problematic.

He said the tests were done on a very small number of children and the test wasn't powered enough. So what that meant is there wasn't enough participants to determine if, let's say there was a reaction of one in 5,000 - that wouldn't have been picked up by Pfizer. So I had Pelech on camera, I had these parents all lined up. And I told you what my workflow was like prior to COVID, but it changed with this story.

When it came to this story, I never had more hands in the vetting of this story. While it was cleared by the Manitoba managing exec and the director, a local web writer flagged it. And she said, "You know, maybe we should get, a response from Pfizer." I says, "No, I think we've heard more than enough from Pfizer."

Then she said, "You know, I don't think the vaccine is still in the trial phase." And I produced a document saying it is. Until 2023. But she sent out an internal email to several people in the newsroom and she decided that my story should be forwarded to the Toronto Health Unit. Now this is a special unit within the CBC, and she wanted them to do a final vet of my story.

So now the CBC Toronto Health Unit was in charge of my story. It was the end of June. And I was, I was really getting anxious over how long this was taking. Because as I mentioned before, I was used to turning stories around in a day or two. And, but to me it was critical timing because the rollout was ramping up for the vaccination of young people in Manitoba. It was in full swing. Finally, five weeks later on July 8th—

SB: Five weeks?

MK: Five weeks. Remember, I could turn around stories in two or three days. This was five weeks. So I think it was being, they were sitting on the story, maybe they were just hoping that I would go away and not persist in doing this story. But five weeks after, July 8th, I pitched the

story, I was called into a meeting - while this was on Zoom cuz we were all working at home from home by then. And that they, they had a verdict from Toronto.

And you know, I should mention to you that over three decades at the CBC, I'd say 30 to 35% of the stories I did were health stories. Never had I had a story that had to go to the Toronto Health Unit. And never was a story given this level of scrutiny.

SB: So I just, I just want to emphasize this. Cuz you had told us earlier that, you know, basically things changed at COVID. So what you're saying is, is for your 35 years as a journalist, like 35 to 40% of your stories were health stories. So it was, you knew what you could run, what it took to run a health story. And that never before had it been sent to, you know, this Toronto Health Unit. Or no story in your career had ever been put under this much scrutiny.

MK: Never. Like I had mentioned, it was one producer and the story was put through and it was published. And all of a sudden, now there were all these hands in the story. And what I wanna mention to you, which is key to know here, is that before I tell you what happened, that none of the facts, none of the data, none of the research - nothing I put forward in that story in terms of any of the information was, was contested. It was rock solid journalism. And I knew that I could put my name to that and defend every word I had written.

They raised two concerns, that was an issue for them. Did I know that the Alliance promoted Ivermectin? And did I know that some of the members of the Alliance chose to be anonymous? Those were their two concerns.

So my thought was, okay, now the story is being blocked further up the chain. I did know they supported Ivermectin, but that was not the focus of the piece. And I had been sending for weeks links to management from medical journals about the success of Ivermectin in treating COVID. I got no response. I said, "We should be having a debate about Ivermectin on air and hear from experts who support its use."

But that was not the focus of this piece. As for members being anonymous, I was confused by that. Because I thought: I interviewed Steven Pelech. He went full face on camera with his credentials. So there was no anonymity there. And I could only guess that maybe some were choosing to be anonymous because they wanted to be able to continue to practice without fear of being disciplined in any way.

But what came next left me just speechless. I was just astonished. They said, while there's a story to be told about the parents' concerns, the Canadian COVID Care Alliance was problematic. I should drop them out of the story, keep the parents' concerns in, but interview two experts that CBC Toronto was recommending.

And of course I did my research, well who are these people? One of them was a pediatric immunologist who told me both of her kids were vaccinated. She had worked with the federal government. She chaired a national committee overseeing the approval process of COVID-19

vaccines in Canada. I was being told to drop Pelech out of the story - who was raising flags about safety concerns - and put this woman in.

I was just stunned. I was shocked. I could not believe that they were asking me to do this. I said, "This is unethical. This is immoral. You're violating all our principles of fairness and balance and accuracy and being impartial and acting with integrity." And I says, "What you're asking me to do is dishonest and it's manipulative."

The parents I had on tape, I'd interviewed, they were backing the science of Bridle. And to include them in the story, but leave the Alliance out to me defied logic. It didn't make any sense. We were effectively censoring people in the scientific community with impeccable credentials because they just didn't fall in line with the narrative.

I said to the managing editor, "I'm standing down, I'm walking away from this story. I'm not gonna do what you're asking me to do. I've invested too much in this. I'm not gonna sell these people out. And why should I have to include two doctors that Toronto has picked out?"

And then I think, you know, like what if, what if this story had made it through and it went national? Wouldn't that have changed the narrative across the country? If parents had been armed with this information, would we have seen fewer vaccine injuries?

SB: Can I just stop you? Because another thing just kind of occurred to me when you were sharing that story and you mentioned how they were actually critical of the, the CCCA. And I'm thinking, well just wait. So just so people that don't know the term, so that stands for the Canadian COVID Care Alliance. My understanding is, I mean, if it's not hundreds, it's thousands of scientists and doctors. Like we're talking very credentialed people that have formed an organization to basically look into COVID issues objectively and to provide fair and balanced information. And, you know, if that leads them in a direction that goes against the government narrative. But isn't, isn't the fact that that group formed and exists *itself* a story that should be covered? Like, let alone cutting them out of a story? I was just thinking that, in itself, is somewhat fantastic and likely would be a story.

MK: And they formed specifically because of COVID and to give an alternative perspective. And I had pitched let's do a story on them, but it was like they weren't interested in it. They weren't interested in hearing what these people have to say because they figured they supported Ivermectin. So they didn't wanna do any of those stories.

SB: And, just to give perspective, cuz I know when we had a conversation and likely you'll get to it, that like a reporter will go to a demonstration on an issue where there's like 12 people and report a story. But like when tens of thousands of people don't, you know, or show up for demonstration, it might not be covered if it's going against the government narrative now. So just kind of along those veins, like just even the size of the CCCA itself is quite—

MK: The numbers.

SB: Yeah. Isn't that something.

MK: The fact that they had filed this national petition was, to me, was huge. They were saying, "No, we need to stop. We need to pause. We need more information before we roll this out across the country for young people." And that story was shut down.

SB: And that was a petition backed by scientists and medical doctors citing peer-reviewed evidence.

MK: Correct.

SB: Okay.

MK: So the day that that happened to me, which was July 8th, it's, it's burned in my memory, cuz for me that was, part of me died that day with that story. And that was the death of journalism for me - July 8th, 2021. Instead, we were clearly pushing propaganda.

So I had to call back everyone and I thought, "How am I gonna handle this?" So I apologized, and I told them the truth. And it was shameful and it was humiliating cuz these people had put themselves on the line to tell me their story. And I said, this is why I can't do it. This is why I won't do it. And it wouldn't see the light of day. And I said, "I'm sorry that I have failed you, and I have let you down."

I didn't go to work the next day, cuz I thought "I have to strategize. How, am I gonna deal with this? Do I quit right now? Do I stay and try to push stories through even harder?"

The following day I asked for a conference call with the managing editor, the exec, and the witness. And, and I said, "Here's the deal." I says, "You know that story was solid journalism. I'm asking you to publish it. You have that power." And I said the timing was key, as the province was ramping up the vaccinations of young people. It was urgent that this critical information get out there. And I said, "I'm asking you to do this" despite what Toronto has said. And if they wouldn't, I could no longer continue to work in this environment.

They didn't publish it. It was also at that time I decided I had to start reaching out to other journalists, because I felt like I was just losing my mind. Surely other people were seeing what I was seeing. And I did reach out. I reached out locally to a competing network. I also talked to someone south of the border. Through internal email at CBC I sent out notes saying, "This is what I'm seeing. What are you seeing?" And I didn't hear back from anybody. So I thought, you know, I'm gonna call the CBC union.

I called the CBC union and they said, "Oh yeah, we're getting all kinds of calls about people concerned about our biased reporting." And I said, "Well, where are they? Put me in touch with them." And she said, "Oh no, they're not - it's staying with the union. They're not gonna go past

the union." I says, "What does that mean?" And she says, "Well, they're not prepared to do what you're doing. They're not prepared to go all up the ladder and call, you know, power to account."

So then I reached out to somebody. And I guess, you know, I understand that. Cuz I was sort of at the end of my career, but a lot of the journalists that were calling the union were midway in their career, and they were afraid of losing their jobs. I contacted a senior reporter from a competing network and I said to her, "What are you seeing?" She says, "Oh, I'm seeing the same thing. You know, why has the media become the mouthpiece of public health?"

Then I managed to contact a reporter who worked for the *New York Times*, who told me what was happening to me was exactly what was happening to him. His stories were being shut down, he was being blocked. As he saw it, we had two options. One of them was quit and be a whistleblower. Or just stay, and fight it out, and keep trying to push those stories through. He also gave me some advice. He said, "Document everything that's happened to you as you would cover a news story: Who said what? When? Who was present. And the date."

I was just reeling from all this because I thought, you know, we have betrayed our audience on a massive scale. Massive. And even the CBC acknowledged that erosion of trust [in a blog](#). It was written by the editor-in-chief, Brodie Fenlon, in March of 2021.

49% of Canadians think journalists are purposely trying to mislead them. About half of the 1500 people, of the Canadian survey, felt the CBC was more concerned with supporting an ideology, or a political position, than informing the public. And that the media was not doing well at being objective.

How is the CBC going to rebuild trust in journalism? In 2019, it became a member of the Trusted News Initiative. So that brings together news organizations from all over the world and tech platforms to combat coronavirus disinformation. To identify and stop the spread of it. False claims, half truths, conspiracy theories. Basically a way to filter news through its own filter system.

I saw it basically as a mechanism to call people out who disagreed with the narrative. And to label them dangerous and extreme. Why do you need a trust filter system if you're consistently telling the truth? Why are tech platforms involved in combating disinformation? And who are these people in this Initiative? Are they journalists? Are they scientists? Is artificial intelligence involved? Who is the Trusted News Initiative?

This was an effective way to stop the flow of information, to censor one side, skewed reporting, and labeling opposing opinion and thought as disinformation. Sometime after signing on with the Trusted News Initiative, there was a shift in the lens of how we saw news. It was no longer from the bottom up, it was from the top down.



Let me give you a specific example of how this played out in the newsroom. And another story that I was blocked in doing. I'd gotten a tip about a peaceful protest in Winnipeg about vaccine mandates. And it was in September of 2021. There was about 2,000 people out on the street. We didn't cover it because it was decided - at the editorial level - these people were spreading disinformation.

This was just unbelievable. I was stunned because I had been sent, you know, to cover stories and do live hits from protests with 12 people present. But we were going to ignore a group this large and not send a camera and find out what these people had to say. I thought: not only is the size of the group newsworthy, it was the fact that it was both vaccinated and unvaccinated people walking together and they were united in their opposition to vaccine mandates.

I had gotten a call from someone on the protest line who says, "Where's the CBC? There's people here that are cutting up their vaccine passports as a show of solidarity against the mandates." And I thought, wow, this is a great story. This is great visuals. This is a powerful story of people at the grassroots uniting.

Why wasn't the CBC there? It was a decision made at the top level. That rather than looking at the news that was unfolding on the ground. When I asked why we weren't there, I didn't get an answer. It wasn't worthy of covering because - in the CBC's eyes - these people were disseminating disinformation. How could we say that if we had never even spoken to any of them?

We ran a few lines of copy that day saying "more than 250" people in Winnipeg held a protest against mandates. That was misleading, and it was a half truth. There was at least 2,000 people. By saying "more than 250," we were trying to minimize, in fact, how large it was. And to me, we missed the story entirely, which was people uniting against a cause.

Instead, that day I was assigned a story about a cricket infestation. No one was sent to cover the protest, and the cricket story went national. But there was nothing about the Manitoba protest.

SB: So Marianne, just so that we have contrast. Cuz you've told us about, listen, there's this protest, 2,000 people. The real story is that both sides are coming together, that people with the passport are so concerned about the mandate, they're cutting that up. So tell us about the exciting cricket story that became national news in Canada. What was the story? Just so we're not left in suspense.

MK: The people's back lanes, and garages, and houses are being filled with crickets. And I'm thinking, "Really. We're gonna tell that story and we're going to basically ignore 2,000 people walking through the city, uniting in a cause? We are just gonna ignore these people." To me that was just unconscionable.

SB: And was the cricket story urgent?

MK: No, I don't. Well, I guess if you were living in a house full of crickets, it might be. But that was not the story to be told that day, but that was the story *they* decided should be told that day. Later that month, I pitched another story and it was shut down.

SB: Can I just stop, you. And I'm sorry. So we have, we have literally vaccinated people and non-vaccinated people coming together against the mandate. And we have crickets from the CBC. I'm sorry, I couldn't resist. [laughter from the audience]

MK: It's shameful.

SB: That was just too easy. So, okay. And I'm sorry to interrupt, I truly couldn't resist.

MK: So later that month, I pitched another story that was also shut down. And it was about what vaccine mandates were going to look like at universities in Manitoba. I had a professor lined up, an immunologist lined up from Ontario. They were on a committee there helping to draft the rollout of mandatory vaccines at the University of Guelph and McGill. They talked about students having less freedom on campus, there'd be more security, more policing of students. Those who refused to wear a mask could be hauled off by campus police. I also had an ethicist lined up who was willing to talk about his concerns over mandatory vaccinations for students. And both the experts were saying they were worried about the mental health of students that were going into a second year of restrictions. Both were getting contacted by parents and students who just were not in support of this.

And I thought this would be an excellent discussion to have in Manitoba with faculty and parents and students, for our audience to hear. Because it was already rolling out in Ontario and it was going to be coming into Manitoba. They were ahead of us. And I also said, I had spoken with two legal firms that were fighting mandatory vaccines on campuses, and they felt the court ruling in Ontario could set a precedent for the rest of the country.

There was no response to what I pitched that day. Instead, I was assigned another story about an infestation. This time it was bedbugs in a local housing complex. And no one else had been assigned to that story that I had pitched.

So I interpreted that as I was quickly becoming silenced and canceled. For trying to get the other side of the story out. I was battle weary. I was exhausted from fighting. I never felt more alone in my profession. And as a veteran journalist who is usually fearless and outspoken, I no longer felt it was safe to pitch stories that I knew that we should be telling. And I quickly felt that my existence there was becoming null and void.

But I wasn't done yet. In September, I decided I'm gonna go directly to Toronto to voice my concerns about our editorial direction, and I was gonna tell them what I was experiencing. I started sending emails to [Brodie Fenlon](#), CBC's editor-in-chief, and Paul Hamilton - who was the head of journalistic standards. Now, he's no longer with the CBC. He left a month after I did.

I shared with them what I had documented about what was happening with my stories, specific details, what was going on in the newsroom in Winnipeg, the language that was being used, how we had created this culture of hate and division feeding people's fears. And why were we so hostile to people who had an opinion that was different from ours?

And while I applauded the CBC's initiative of diversity and inclusiveness in hiring people of different cultures and ethnic backgrounds, I said, "Where, where is our diversity in thought? Where is that?" Again, I was hearing the word anti-vaxxer being used in the newsroom, and this is already a year and a half into the pandemic. We failed to create a safe environment for people to speak to us on the record, so their voices could be heard. I told them we had violated all our journalistic standards. We'd broken the public trust. And we withheld information the public had a right to know, and we were guilty.

I asked to have a conversation with them before I left. And Brodie Fenlon emailed me back. He said, he thanked me for what I sent, said he'd be happy to talk to me. But with the federal election going on could we schedule a time afterwards in October and he would invite Paul Hamilton into this discussion, as well. I was pleased he had responded. At that point, I knew, I had my end date. I'd spoken to [Human Resources], I knew when I was gonna be leaving the CBC.

But I had one more story in the queue I wanted to get out. And it was about a woman who was vaccine injured. I had several calls and conversations with people who had contacted me about - they had been vaccine injured, they knew someone who had been vaccine injured, or there was a family member. One of them was the mother of a teenage boy, he was an elite athlete. He had gotten the shot, he had chest pain, he was told he was gonna have to spend his summer lying on a sofa, recovering, and he could not do any sports that summer.

A woman called me who got her first shot and she was really sick and she was anxious because she went for medical help and she was told that she should still get the second shot, but maybe she should be admitted to hospital to get the second shot in case she had a worse reaction. This, to me, was madness. It was madness.

The rest were afraid that they wouldn't be believed because of, you know, the media mantra we were putting there - safe and effective. The way I saw it, we were gaslighting these people. You know, let's say you have, you have a refugee coming into the country and you know they've suffered trauma and they've been through hell. How do we treat them? We treat them with mercy and compassion and kindness.

And yet these people who were being injured, we were gaslighting them. One man who had an adverse reaction said to me, it had to be him. "It's gotta be me. There's gotta be something wrong with me, because it's safe and effective." So getting back to the woman I did the interview with, she had had an adverse reaction after her first shot in May of 2021. It took me weeks to gain her trust, for her to go on the record.

She was 30 years old. She was an avid runner and she was, she worked with the federal government. She had no previous heart condition. The very next day after getting the shot, May 27th, she had chest pain. And she said she was short of breath. She felt like she had this huge weight sitting on her chest. The pain got worse. She had trouble breathing. She described it as the feeling like there was thick smoke in her lungs, but she wasn't a smoker. She knew something was really wrong. She went to Emergency at St. Boniface Hospital where she was diagnosed with pericarditis. And that's inflammation of the tissue around the heart.

She shared her written medical report with me from the Emergency room doctor. Since her shot in May, within the next month she'd been to Emergency five more times with increased chest pain. She could no longer run. She was winded from walking up a flight of stairs. And she said she thought that she was dying.

And I had interviewed a cardiologist, as well, who told me if there's damage to heart cells as an adult, they don't regenerate. The damage is permanent. And yet we were running stories saying: Take a couple of Advil, and there shouldn't be any lasting symptoms from heart inflammation.

This woman was on anti-inflammatory medication for months. She was battling depression and anxiety because she was no longer the outgoing, active, happy-go-lucky person she used to be. She also told me how difficult it was to get someone to document what happened to her as an adverse reaction. She said the first doctor who diagnosed it was hesitant to put it in writing. Some doctors didn't know how to fill out the form. Finally, a nurse had filed it for her.

And that that was another story I pitched. The problems with doctors reporting adverse reactions in Canada. They have to download a pdf. It takes about 15 minutes to fill it out. The doctor has to sign it, then it goes to a Health Authority who has to approve it. And some of the doctors were telling me that their reports were getting rejected. And I was hearing more and more about the problems with reporting these adverse reactions in Canada. And there was even a period during the pandemic that the line that they used to report these adverse reactions was down, the link wasn't working. Surely this was newsworthy. No interest in that story.

But getting back to the woman I interviewed, I stayed in touch with her. After doing her own research, she connected with three other women who were diagnosed with heart inflammation after being vaccinated. I wrote her story. Here was my first line based on what she told me. This was the original before it was edited:

A 30-year-old Winnipeg woman says she's not confident the COVID-19 vaccine is safe for everybody and is advising people to do their research. She admits she was hesitant at first to get the shot, but she felt pressure from people posting online that she was selfish if she didn't.

Two words the editors didn't like in there: *vaccine* and *hesitant*. Again, several hands were in this story, several. A managing editor, two web writers, another producer. And I fought several edits that were made. But now, at this point, I was sort of afraid because I thought if I pushed them too hard, they could pull the story entirely.

Okay, here's [the story the CBC published](#) on July 12th, 2021. This is my story and this is what they changed. "Winnipeg woman shocked by heart lining information after a COVID vaccine, but experts say the risk remains low."

Look at the first line: "A 30-year-old Winnipeg woman says she was shocked to be diagnosed with a condition involving inflammation of the lining around her heart days after she got her COVID-19 vaccination in late May."

The changes that they made didn't reflect what she was saying to me about the safety concerns. It was propaganda editing to change the meaning entirely. Any reference to vaccine hesitancy was taken out.

I fought the web writer on that first sentence. He says, "Well, no, we can't say that. We don't want to scare people." I says, "That's not journalism." I said, "Maybe we should be concerned. Look what happened to her." And I said, "We can't negate her personal lived experience. Her story is one of caution and to do research."

And if you look at the next sentence, which says, "But a Winnipeg cardiologist says despite concerns about heart inflammation, vaccines are preventing illness from COVID-19."

Why would anyone read any further in my story? Basically the message was: It happened to her, it's too bad, it's unfortunate, but vaccines are still doing what they're supposed to be doing. But there were medical experts who were disputing this. But they had been canceled by the CBC. Because according to the CBC, they were spreading disinformation.

The fact she was an avid runner was taken out of the story and I fought to have that put back in. I says, "No, I think that's important. You know, she was a runner and now she can barely walk up the stairs. It shows what happened before and after the shot. And she never got the second one because her reaction was so severe after the first."

And I also didn't think there should be experts or stats negating what she was saying. Because we'd heard more than enough from all of the experts. It should be just a straight ahead story about someone who suffered an adverse reaction, and we shouldn't downplay it. Instead, the way I saw it, her story was buried in experts and health officials and stats. It was sanitized.

I lost sleep the night before that story was published. I knew we didn't do justice to her story. I spoke with her the next day and she was so traumatized she couldn't read the story. I should also tell you, I contacted her five months after I left the CBC and she was still suffering from health problems, blood clots.

That story was the breaking point for me. I was waiting for that final exit meeting with Fenlon and Hamilton in October. And when I had it, I told them what had happened to my stories, how devastated I was to be leaving the CBC after spending three decades in a career that I loved. I asked them, "What's the makeup of the CBC Toronto Health Unit? Like, who are these people? Are they journalists? Are they scientists? Like, who are they?"

I was basically told they were experts who are really good at what they do, but I still don't know who they are.

Then I brought up the issue of mandatory training and seminars for journalists that we had to take on what was called "conscious and unconscious bias." We had to sign off on this training. It was to identify any bias we may have in doing a story and to be aware of it, to make sure it doesn't impact the story that we're doing and that we are more inclusive.

I said, "You know what? We, the CBC, have a glaring bias - both conscious and unconscious." When it came to stories involving experts opposing the narrative and with those who were unvaccinated, we had a glaring bias. I said I was worried about the next generation of journalists. They're young, they're inexperienced, and that the editorial meeting is not a safe place to have a different opinion. Why are we so mean and hostile to people with different opinions?

And I said, did you know how we were being branded outside the walls, the corporate walls of the CBC? I've seen those protests, I've seen those signs. We were being known as the Canadian Brainwashing Corporation. Or, in faith circles, the Christian Bashing Corporation.

Some of my final words to them, as I saw it, I said, "the CBC is morally and ethically culpable of the narrative that it pushed to the public and we are going to be held accountable. We failed to hold power to account and no one was holding the media to account. We failed to serve the public. We broke their trust." I told them, "You can silence and cancel scientists with impeccable credentials, you can even cancel me." But I said, "My solace is that the truth will come out. It will come out."

Brodie thanked me and he said he was sorry that it had ended this way - and that he didn't think the CBC had done all that bad. He wished me well. Hamilton, who was the head of journalistic standards, he was still on the screen and he told me that the most heat that he took during COVID was over Ivermectin. People calling and writing letters, with no let up. I said, "The CBC should have listened. On many fronts."

The truth will come out. That's what I said in October, 2021. So here we are, a year and a half later. The truth has come out. Even though people still do not want to believe the truth. According to Health Canada's own website, up and to including March 3rd, a total of 427 deaths were reported following vaccination.

427. Each and every one of those deaths was worthy of a story. Where was the CBC? Where was any media on this? And is that number accurate? The same Health Canada website posted more than 10,000 serious injuries for the same time period. Are those numbers accurate? Are they higher because of all the problems with reporting adverse reactions in Canada? Who are they injured? What are their names? What are their stories? What are they suffering?

Lawsuits are going on and there's a few people of the vaccine injured who are getting settlements. We have one before the courts right now in Manitoba involving a young man from Steinbach. If reporters were doing their jobs, we would not be here today in this forum, funded by citizens, telling our stories. Mainstream media would've done it. Where are they? Where are they?

On February 27th of this year, papers with hundreds of profiles of suspected COVID vaccine injuries and deaths were plastered onto the doors and windows of CBC Toronto. I had a really hard time looking at those pictures cuz that, to me, was proof and evidence that the public had trusted us. And they had listened, and some of them paid dearly for it.

I waited to see, is CBC gonna cover this? Is any media gonna cover this? How could you ignore this? It was just unconscionable and appalling that nobody covered it. I thought, I wonder how employees felt that day when they came to work and they saw that - those posters on the outside of the building. Did they stop? Did they look? Did they read, did they look at the names? Or did they just go into the building and carry on with work that day?

The same thing happened in Winnipeg on a smaller scale. Again, no media coverage. And as mentioned earlier, CBC decided to pause its Twitter activity after it was labeled "government funded media" by Elon Musk. Brodie Fenlon had responded by publishing a piece saying "journalistic independence is the cornerstone of who we are as a public broadcaster." Then that tweet was removed.

CBC is not impartial. It is not independent. I think what I shared with you gives witness to that.

There was some excitement over the fact CBC Manitoba covered the [National Citizens Inquiry] when it stopped in Winnipeg in mid-April. Maybe finally the CBC was going to report the other side. But it was a [low impact piece](#) in that it didn't talk to anyone who was vaccine injured. It didn't delve into any of the Pfizer data. And it didn't talk about safety concerns or side effects.

SB: Can I, can I give you even more shocking information? Can you go back to that slide? So, Jay Battacharya is on the screen - while CBC is there - talking about CBC censoring him. And there was no mention about that.

MK: Those stories should have gotten out. And there's so much more that should have gotten out. I mean, basically it was a story, it was a lowball story in the sense the bar was low. They didn't delve into what they should have dug into there.

I don't know if any of you have heard of Naomi Wolf. She's a famous American author and journalist. She posted a video on YouTube last month exposing what is in the Pfizer documents. I think it's something that all critically-thinking journalists should have been digging into. The FDA wanted the documents to be hidden for 75 years. A judge said No. So Pfizer was ordered to release 55,000 documents a month. And according to Wolf, around 2,500 experts from all over the world are interpreting this data. They're churning out reports, to tell everybody what's in it.

And the evidence, in her words is, is: "Dark. Devastating." One of the many findings is that Pfizer knew the vaccine didn't stop the transmission of COVID one month after rollout in November of 2020. But yet public health officials were telling us, were running campaigns to say, "Get the shot to protect those you love." And the media, including the CBC, was still demonizing the unvaccinated as a danger to public safety.

I'm inspired by Wolf and those outside of legacy media who are tenacious and fearless about reporting the truth, and they're truly independent. For me, that would be on this side of the border, *True North*, *Western Standard*, the podcast by Trish Wood. I was fortunate that when I left, I was at the end of my career. I still wanted to work for two or three years, but to leave the way I did was crushing. It was heartbreaking. And it was definitely a journey of grief. I was able to take an early retirement.

SB: Marianne, I'm gonna have to focus you just cuz we're really running over.

MK: I got 30 seconds, maybe even less. So my heart goes out to those who are starting out, or midway in their careers. And for them the challenge is even more daunting.

When I was asked to testify, I said, "You know, it's dangerous to tell the truth." But I think someone with the inquiry said to me, "It's even more dangerous to not tell the truth."

So getting our institutions back. Will we get the CBC, our public broadcaster, back? I don't know. But I do know that more journalists need to stand up, speak out, and stand firm as a truth teller.

Thank you.

*In response to questions posed to her, Marianne subsequently made these additional comments:*

MK: That [a public debate] would be ideal, but that was not something they were open to. And I think in Mr [Rodney] Palmer's presentation earlier, in terms of that term 'expert,' it goes back to, when they were giving me the names of those two people. Do your research, who are these people? Are they really experts or are we just designating them experts? That was a problem



that I saw throughout the pandemic. It was very specific about who their experts were going to be. And they were going to be portrayed as competent and trustworthy.

But to have a debate, I mean that's something I challenged them on many topics. Like Ivermectin, in terms of experts on both sides. The vaccine injuries, being concerned about safety. I was constantly putting that before them, but it was like I wasn't being heard.

And that was coming from the highest level of the CBC. To be fair to CBC Manitoba, I mean they cleared the story except for that one web writer. And then it was shut down in Toronto. And I had no power at that point. In terms of, I said I think these people should have a say, for the sake of fairness and balance, they should be heard. And I even challenged them to publish the story without Toronto's consent, but they wouldn't do that.

MK: It just happened to this degree, I would say, during COVID. Before, we would do thorough vetting of people we put on the air as experts, and thorough checking of their credentials, and what their experience was. And usually, we'd even check them out with two or three other sources. If they were legitimate, and were they in good standing. But that seemed to have all gone by the wayside.

MK: That was an issue I'd brought forward a number of times at CBC, about the fact that how do we cover different faith groups? And we even had a working group on that. And we invited a number of people in from different faith communities to say: What are the stories that you think we should be telling? And for a while there, we *were* doing that. It was a wonderful forum we had a rabbi in there. We had Muslim people. We had Catholics. We had evangelicals. We had Mennonites. We had Jewish people in there. And it was a consensus working group on how do we move forward stories that are faith-based.

And we were going in the right direction for a while. And then all of a sudden it just swung the other way, where we'd become hostile again. And anyone who expressed their faith in a [news] story, I mean I look at all the pastors in Manitoba that stood out during the pandemic, and defied rules, and said, "How can you have 300 people in Costco and you're telling us we can only have 25 people in our church at a service on Sunday? We're not gonna stand for this." And they didn't. And, you know, they were hammered by the media. For expressing their faith and standing up for it.

So there's definitely a hostility towards faith, in just my experience, at the CBC. And I was constantly bringing that to the forefront, and trying to do more stories that way. And sometimes I was able to get those stories out, and some I wasn't able to. But clearly, we made a specific decision here, in our coverage during the pandemic, to hammer those communities in southern Manitoba that were faith-based, that were pushing back against this narrative and the agenda. And that was so wrong.

MK: Well, I think the [CBC] management just bought into [the COVID narrative]. I think, you know, I look at other stories where the language changes in order to make it acceptable to the

public, and that's basically what was being done. The mantra of "safe and effective." We didn't even investigate that. And yet the people that were in management, I mean these were people that had worked at that I-Team you were talking about. So for me, I was shocked and disoriented about why wasn't there any pushback about the language, and the words we were choosing to use, that were dangerous and misleading?

MK: I was aware of that [character assassination by CBC journalists]. I mean, to give the best example would be Byram Bridle. Look what was done to him. This guy has impeccable credentials. Immunologist. And the smear campaign against him was just, it was unconscionable. What was done to his career was a character assassination to discredit him for all the safety concerns he was raising.

And I raised that with management, cuz I wanted to interview him in a story. And I actually, what was interesting is I wanted to interview, as well, Dr. Christiansen in Saskatoon - Dr Francis Christian. He was the doctor who stood up and said, you know, "I haven't met a 12-year-old yet that understands informed consent." And I wanted to interview him. And I was blocked from doing that, as well. It was like, Oh no, his reputation, he stood up, he's pushing against the narrative. And I'm thinking that's exactly the people we should be talking to, to have fairness and balance.

MK: I wasn't told [the members of the Toronto Health Unit] were anonymous. I was told they were experts at what they did. But I didn't know if that meant they were journalists or were they scientists - I still don't know who they are. They were not anonymous. But the reference was, the Toronto Health Unit was concerned that some members of the Canadian COVID Care Alliance were anonymous.

And I said I didn't think that was an issue because the fella I interviewed had gone full face on camera. But the reason for their anonymity, they were concerned, like what did that mean? And I said maybe it meant that they're trying to continue in their practice without being disciplined. But for them, that was an issue. But it was unrelated to the story.

*This transcript was prepared and publicly released by independent journalist Donna Laframboise - a former National Post and Toronto Star columnist. All hyperlinks inserted by Donna.*

*Donna blogs daily at [ThankYouTruckers.substack.com](https://www.thankyoutruckers.substack.com), which serves as a first draft of her book-in-progress which is based on interviews with Freedom Convoy truckers.*