

= John Stossel =

John Frank Stossel ( born March 6 , 1947 ) is an American consumer television personality , author , and libertarian pundit . In October 2009 , Stossel left his long @-@ time employment at ABC News to join the Fox Business Channel and Fox News Channel . He is the host of a weekly news show on Fox Business , Stossel , which was first broadcast on December 10 , 2009 . Stossel also regularly provides analysis , appearing on various Fox News programs , which include weekly appearances on The O 'Reilly Factor . He also writes a Fox News Blog , " John Stossel 's Take " . Stossel has also been a nationally syndicated newspaper columnist since February 2011 . Stossel was diagnosed with lung cancer in 2016 .

Stossel 's style combines reporting and commentary . It reflects a libertarian political philosophy and views on economics which are largely supportive of the free market . He began his journalism career as a researcher for KGW @-@ TV , was a consumer reporter at WCBS @-@ TV in New York City , and then joined ABC News as a consumer editor and reporter on Good Morning America . Stossel went on to be an ABC News correspondent , joining the weekly news magazine program 20 / 20 , going on to become co @-@ anchor .

As a reporter , Stossel has received numerous honors including 19 Emmy Awards , and he has been honored five times for excellence in consumer reporting by the National Press Club . Stossel has written three books recounting how his experiences in journalism shaped his socioeconomic views , Give Me a Break in 2004 , Myths , Lies , and Downright Stupidity in 2007 , and No They Can 't ! Why Government Fails but Individuals Succeed in 2012 . ABC said : " His reporting goes against the grain of the established media and offers the network something fresh and different ... [ but ] makes him a target of the groups he offends . " Stossel has also served as a spokesman for the Stuttering Foundation of America .

= = Early life = =

John F. Stossel was born on March 6 , 1947 , in Chicago Heights , Illinois , the younger of two sons , to Jewish parents who left Germany before Hitler rose to power . They joined a Congregationalist church in the U.S. , and Stossel was raised Protestant . He grew up on Chicago 's affluent North Shore and graduated from New Trier High School . Stossel characterizes his older brother , Tom , as " the superstar of the family " , commenting , " While I partied and played poker , he studied hard , got top grades , and went to Harvard Medical School . " Stossel characterizes himself as having been " an indifferent student " while in college , commenting , " I daydreamed through half my classes at Princeton , and applied to grad school only because I was ambitious , and grad school seemed like the right path for a 21 @-@ year @-@ old who wanted to get ahead . " Although he had been accepted to the University of Chicago 's School of Hospital Management , Stossel was " sick of school " and thought taking a job would inspire him to embrace graduate studies with renewed vigor .

= = Career = =

= = = Early career = = =

Stossel intended to go work at Seattle Magazine , but it had gone out of business by the time he graduated . His contacts there , however , got him a job at KGW @-@ TV in Portland , Oregon , where Stossel began as a newsroom gofer , working his way up to researcher and then writer . After a few years , the news director told Stossel to go on the air and read what he wrote . Stossel , who confesses to having been frightened of being on the air , has expressed embarrassment at watching videos of his early performances . Nonetheless , Stossel says his fear spurred him to improve , examining broadcasts of David Brinkley and Jack Perkins to imitate them . Stossel also struggled with a stuttering problem he had harbored since childhood . After a few years of on @-@ air

reporting , Stossel was hired by WCBS @-@ TV in New York City , by Ed Joyce , the same news director who hired Arnold Diaz , Linda Ellerbee , Dave Marash , Joel Siegel and Lynn Sherr . Stossel was disappointed at CBS , feeling that the journalism was of a lower quality than in Portland , and disliking the lesser quantity of time devoted to research there . Stossel cites union work rules that discouraged the extra work that Stossel felt allowed employees to be creative , which he says represented his " first real introduction to the deals made by special interests " . Stossel also " hated " Joyce , who he felt was " cold and critical " , though Stossel credits Joyce with allowing him the freedom to pursue his own story ideas , and with recommending the Hollins Communications Research Institute in Roanoke , Virginia , that largely cured Stossel 's stuttering problem .

Stossel grew continuously more frustrated with having to follow the assignment editor 's vision of what was news . Perhaps because of his stuttering , he had always avoided covering what others covered , feeling he could not succeed if he was forced to compete with other reporters by shouting out questions at news conferences . However , this led to the unexpected realization for Stossel that more important events were those that occurred slowly , such as the women 's movement , the growth of computer technology , and advancements in contraception , rather than daily events like government pronouncements , elections , fires or crime . One day , Stossel bypassed the assignment editor to give Ed Joyce a list of story ideas the assignment editor had rejected . Joyce agreed that Stossel 's ideas were better , and approved them .

= = = 20 / 20 = = =

In 1981 Roone Arledge offered Stossel a job at ABC News , as a correspondent for 20 / 20 and consumer reporter for Good Morning America . His " Give Me a Break " segments for the former featured a skeptical look at subjects from government regulations and pop culture to censorship and unfounded fear . The series was spun off into a series of one @-@ hour specials with budgets of half a million dollars that began in 1994 . They include :

" Give Me a Break " ? regular segment

You Can 't Even Talk About It ? 2009

Bailouts and Bull ( in association with ReasonTV ) ? 2009

Age of Consent ? 2009

John Stossel 's Politically Incorrect Guide to Politics ? 2008

Sex in America ? 2008

Sick in America , Whose Body Is It Anyway ? ? 2007

Cheap In America ? 2007

Myths , Lies and Downright Stupidity ? 2007

Cheap in America ? 2006

Stupid in America : How We Cheat Our Kids ? 2006

Privilege in America : Who 's Shutting You Out ? ? 2006

War on Drugs : A War on Ourselves ? 2002

Freeloaders ? 2001

John Stossel Goes to Washington ? Spring 2001

Is America # 1 ? ? 1999

Greed ? 1999

Nuts for Nintendo ? 1988

Common Sense ? 1995

Are We Scaring Ourselves to Death ?

Junk Science : What You Know That May Not Be So

Boys and Girls Are Different

You Can 't Say That !

The Power of Belief

During the course of his work on 20 / 20 , Stossel discovered Reason magazine , and found that the libertarian ideas of its writers made sense to him . Stossel was named co @-@ anchor of 20 / 20 in May 2003 , while he was writing his first book , Gimme a Break : How I Exposed Hucksters ,

Cheats , and Scam Artists and Became the Scourge of the Liberal Media , which was published in 2004 . In it , he details his start in journalism and consumer reporting , and how he evolved to harbor libertarian beliefs .

= = = Fox News Channel and Fox Business Network = = =

In September 2009 , it was announced that Stossel was leaving Disney 's ABC News and joining News Corp. ' s Fox News Channel and Fox Business Network . In addition to appearing on The O 'Reilly Factor every Tuesday night , he now hosts a one @-@ hour weekly program for Fox Business Network and a series of one @-@ hour specials for Fox News Channel , as well as making regular guest appearances on Fox News programs .

The program , entitled Stossel , debuted December 10 , 2009 , on Fox Business Network . The program looks at consumer @-@ focused topics , such as civil liberties , the business of health care , and free trade . His blog , " Stossel ? s Take " , is published on both FoxBusiness.com and FoxNews.com.

= = = Publications = = =

Stossel has written three books . Give Me a Break : How I Exposed Hucksters , Cheats , and Scam Artists and Became the Scourge of the Liberal Media is a 2005 autobiography from Harper Perennial documenting his career and philosophical transition from liberalism to libertarianism . It describes his opposition to government regulation , his belief in free market and private enterprise , support for tort reform , and advocacy for shifting social services from the government to private charities . It was a New York Times bestseller for 11 weeks . Myths , Lies , and Downright Stupidity : Get Out the Shovel ? Why Everything You Know Is Wrong , which was published in 2007 by Hyperion , questions the validity of various conventional wisdoms , and argues that the belief he is conservative is untrue . On April 10 , 2012 , Threshold Editions , an imprint of Simon & Schuster , published Stossel 's third book No , They Can 't : Why Government Fails ? But Individuals Succeed . It argues that government policies meant to solve problems instead produce new ones , and that free individuals and the private sector perform tasks more efficiently than the government does .

With financial support from the libertarian Palmer R. Chitester Fund , Stossel and ABC News launched a series of educational materials for public schools in 1999 entitled " Stossel in the Classroom " . It was taken over in 2006 by the Center for Independent Thought and releases a new DVD of teaching materials annually . In 2006 , Stossel and ABC released Teaching Tools for Economics , a video series based on the National Council of Economics Education standards .

Since February 2011 , Stossel has written a weekly newspaper column for Creators Syndicate . His articles appear in such online publications as Newsmax , Reason , and Townhall .

= = Political and personal beliefs = =

= = = Contrarianism = = =

Stossel 's news reports and writings attempt to debunk popular beliefs . His Myths and Lies series of 20 / 20 specials challenges a range of widely held beliefs . He also hosted The Power of Belief ( October 6 , 1998 ) , an ABC News Special that focused on assertions of the paranormal and people 's desire to believe . Another report outlined the belief that opposition to DDT is misplaced and that the ban on DDT has resulted in the deaths of millions of children , mostly in poor nations .

= = = Libertarianism = = =

As a libertarian , Stossel says that he believes in both personal freedom and the free market . He frequently uses television airtime to advance these views and challenge viewers ' distrust of free

@-@ market capitalism and economic competition . He received an Honoris Causa Doctorate from Francisco Marroquin University , a libertarian university in Guatemala , in 2008 . He told The Oregonian , on October 26 , 1994 :

I started out by viewing the marketplace as a cruel place , where you need intervention by government and lawyers to protect people . But after watching the regulators work , I have come to believe that markets are magical and the best protectors of the consumer . It is my job to explain the beauties of the free market .

I'm a little embarrassed about how long it took me to see the folly of most government intervention . It was probably 15 years before I really woke up to the fact that almost everything government attempts to do , it makes worse .

Stossel argues that individual self @-@ interest , or " greed " , creates an incentive to work harder and to innovate . He has promoted school choice as a way to improve American schools , believing that when people are given a choice , they will choose the schools best suited for their children . Referring to educational tests that rank American students lower than others he says :

The people who run the international tests told us , " the biggest predictor of student success is choice . " Nations that " attach the money to the kids " and thereby allow parents to choose between different public and private schools have higher test scores . This should be no surprise ; competition makes us better .

Stossel has criticized government programs for being inefficient , wasteful , and harmful . He has also criticized the American legal system , opining that it provides lawyers and vexatious litigators the incentive to file frivolous lawsuits indiscriminately . Stossel contends that these suits often generate more wealth for lawyers than for deserving clients , stifle innovation and personal freedoms , and cause harm to private citizens , taxpayers , consumers and businesses . Although Stossel concedes that some lawsuits are necessary in order to provide justice to people genuinely injured by others with greater economic power , he advocates the adoption in the U.S. of the English rule as one method to reduce the more abusive or frivolous lawsuits .

Stossel opposes corporate welfare , bailouts and the war in Iraq . He also opposes legal prohibitions against pornography , marijuana , recreational drugs , gambling , ticket scalping , prostitution , polygamy , homosexuality , and assisted suicide , and believes most abortions should be legal . He advocates lower and simpler taxes , and has endorsed or explored various ideas in his specials and on his TV series for changing the tax system , including switching to a flat tax , and replacing the income tax with the FairTax .

When the Department of Labor reissued federal guidelines in April 2010 governing the employment of unpaid interns under the Fair Labor Standards Act based on a 1947 Supreme Court decision , Stossel criticized the guidelines , appearing in a police uniform during an appearance on the Fox News program America Live , commenting , " I ? ve built my career on unpaid interns , and the interns told me it was great ? I learned more from you than I did in college . " Asked why he did not pay them if they were so valuable , he said he could not afford to .

= = = Agnosticism = = =

In the 16 December 2010 episode of Stossel titled ? Skeptic or Believer , ? Stossel identified himself as an agnostic , explaining that although he had no belief in God , he did not believe God was an impossibility .

= = Praise and criticism = =

= = = Awards = = =

Stossel has won 19 Emmy Awards . He was honored five times for excellence in consumer reporting by the National Press Club , has received a George Polk Award for Outstanding Local Reporting and a Peabody Award . According to Stossel , when he was in favor of government

intervention and skeptical of business , he was deluged with awards , but in 2006 he stated , " They like me less ... Once I started applying the same skepticism to government , I stopped winning awards . " On April 23 , 2012 , Stossel was awarded the Chapman University Presidential Medal , by the current president , James Doti , and chancellor , Danielle Struppa . The award has been presented to only a handful of people over the past 150 years . Stossel received an honorary doctorate from Universidad Francisco Marroquín .

= = = Praise = = =

The Nobel Prize ? winning Chicago School monetarist economist Milton Friedman lauded Stossel , stating : " Stossel is that rare creature , a TV commentator who understands economics , in all its subtlety . " Steve Forbes , the editor of Forbes magazine , described Stossel as riveting and " one of America ? s ablest and most courageous journalists . " P. J. O 'Rourke , best @-@ selling author of Eat the Rich and Parliament of Whores praised Stossel , stating :

... about John Stossel 's fact @-@ finding . He seeks the truths that destroy truisms , wields reason against all that 's unreasonable , and ... puncture ( s ) sanctimonious idealism .... He makes the maddening mad . And Stossel ? s tales of the outrageous are outrageously amusing .

An article published by the libertarian group Advocates for Self Government notes praise for Stossel . Independent Institute Research Analyst Anthony Gregory , writing on the libertarian blog , LewRockwell.com , described Stossel as a " heroic rogue ... a media maverick and proponent of freedom in an otherwise statist , conformist mass media . " Libertarian investment analyst Mark Skousen said Stossel is " a true libertarian hero " .

= = = Criticism and controversy = = =

Progressive organizations such as Fairness and Accuracy In Reporting ( FAIR ) and Media Matters for America ( MMfA ) have criticized Stossel 's work , for what they perceived as a lack of balance of coverage and distortion of facts . For example , Stossel was criticized for a segment on his October 11 , 1999 , show during which he argued that AIDS research has received too much funding , " 25 times more than on Parkinson 's , which kills more people . " FAIR responded that AIDS had killed more people in the United States in 1999 , but Stossel was speaking in more broad terms than a single country over a single year .

In a February 2000 Salon.com feature on Stossel entitled " Prime @-@ time propagandist " , David Mastio wrote that Stossel has a conflict of interest in donating profits from his public speaking engagements to , among others , a non @-@ profit called " Stossel in the Classroom " which includes material for use in schools , some of which uses material made by Stossel .

University of Texas economist James K. Galbraith has alleged that Stossel , in his September 1999 special Is America # 1 ? , used an out @-@ of @-@ context clip of Galbraith to convey the notion that Galbraith advocated the adoption by Europe of the free market economics practiced by the United States , when in fact Galbraith actually advocated that Europe adopt some of the United States ' social benefit transfer mechanisms such as Social Security , which is the economically opposite view . Stossel denied any misrepresentation of Galbraith 's views and stated that it was not his intention to convey that Galbraith agreed with all of the special 's ideas . However , he re @-@ edited that portion of the program for its September 2000 repeat , in which Stossel paraphrased , " Even economists who like Europe 's policies , like James Galbraith , now acknowledge America 's success . "

= = = Organic vegetables = = =

A February 2000 story about organic vegetables on 20 / 20 included statements by Stossel that tests had shown that neither organic nor conventional produce samples contained any pesticide residue , and that organic food was more likely to be contaminated by E. coli bacteria . The Environmental Working Group objected to his report , mainly questioning his statements about

bacteria , but also managed to determine that the produce had never been tested for pesticides . They communicated this to Stossel , but after the story 's producer backed Stossel 's recollection that the test results had been as described , the story was rebroadcast months later , uncorrected , and with a postscript in which Stossel reiterated his claim . Later , after a report in The New York Times confirmed the Environmental Working Group 's claims , ABC News suspended the producer of the segment for a month and reprimanded Stossel . Stossel apologized , saying that he had thought the tests had been conducted as reported . However , he asserted that the gist of his report had been accurate .

===== Frederick K. C. Price =====

In a March 2007 segment about finances and lifestyles of televangelists , 20 / 20 aired a clip of Apostle Frederick K. C. Price , a TV minister , that was originally broadcast by the Lifetime Network in 1997 . Price alleged that the clip portrayed him describing his wealth in extravagant terms , when he was actually telling a parable about a rich man . ABC News twice aired a retraction and apologized for the error . In August 2010 , a lower court 's dismissal of the minister 's defamation suit against ABC , Price v. Stossel , was overturned by the U.S. 9th Circuit Court of Appeals .

===== ? Sick Sob Stories ? =====

In an opinion piece published in The Wall Street Journal in September 2007 called " Sick Sob Stories " , Stossel described the case of Tracy and Julie Pierce that was explored in Michael Moore 's film , Sicko . Julie Pierce criticized Stossel , saying her husband would have been saved by the Canadian health care system , and she thought Stossel should have interviewed her and her doctor before writing about them . Stossel expressed sympathy , but said she had been misled to believe the treatment was routinely available in Canada . He said that the treatment is also considered ? experimental ? in Canada , and is provided there even more rarely than in the United States .

Stossel did not title the piece ? Sick Sob Stories ? ; that title was given to the piece by The Wall Street Journal .

===== Global warming =====

Stossel challenges the notion that man @-@ made global warming would have net negative consequences , pointing to assertedly warmer periods in human history . Central to his argument is the idea that groups and individuals get much more public attention , donations , and government funding when they proclaim " this will be terrible " than groups that say " this is nothing to worry about . " He points to groups like the World Wildlife Fund , Greenpeace , the Environmental Defense Fund , the Natural Resources Defense Council , and to activists such as Rachel Carson and former U.S. Vice President Al Gore as examples of environmental scaremongers .

In 2001 , the media watchdog organization FAIR criticized Stossel 's reportage of global warming in his documentary , Tampering with Nature , for using " highly selective ... information " that gave " center stage to three dissenters from among the 2 @, @ 000 members of the UN 's Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change , which recently released a report stating that global temperatures are rising almost twice as fast as previously thought . "

Stossel groups supporters of the scientific consensus on climate change with astrologers and psychics in his second book , Myths , Lies and Downright Stupidity . He claims that proposals surrounding the proposed solutions to reduce global warming are " myths , " which will not only not solve the problem but will " restrict freedom . "

===== David Schultz incident =====

On December 28 , 1984 , during an interview for 20 / 20 on professional wrestling , wrestler David Schultz struck Stossel after Stossel stated that he thought professional wrestling was " fake " .

Stossel stated that he suffered from pain and buzzing in his ears eight weeks after the assault . Stossel sued and obtained a settlement of \$ 425 @, @ 000 from the World Wrestling Federation ( WWF ) . In his book , Myths , Lies , and Downright Stupidity , he writes that he has come to regret doing so , having adopted the belief that lawsuits harm many innocent people . Schultz maintains that he attacked Stossel on orders from Vince McMahon , the head of the then @-@ WWF .

= = Personal life = =

Stossel lives in New York City , in the apartment building The Beresford , with his wife , Ellen Abrams . They have two children , Lauren , and Max . They also own a home in Massachusetts .

Stossel came to embrace his Jewish heritage after marrying his wife , who is Jewish , and their children have been raised in that tradition . Stossel identified himself as an agnostic in the December 16 , 2010 , episode of Stossel , explaining that he had no belief in God but was open to the possibility .

Stossel 's brother , Thomas P. Stossel , is a Harvard Medical School professor and co @-@ director of the Hematology Division at Boston 's Brigham and Women 's Hospital . He has served on the advisory boards of pharmaceutical companies such as Merck and Pfizer . Stossel 's nephew is journalist and magazine editor Scott Stossel .

On April 20 , 2016 , Stossel , who stated that he had never smoked , revealed that he had lung cancer which was caught early and given an excellent prognosis .

= = Books = =

Give Me a Break : How I Exposed Hucksters , Cheats , and Scam Artists and Became the Scourge of the Liberal Media ... ( Paperback ed . ) . Harper Paperbacks . 2005 . ISBN 978 @-@ 0 @-@ 06 @-@ 052915 @-@ 4 .

Myths , Lies and Downright Stupidity : Get Out the Shovel ? Why Everything You Know is Wrong ( Paperback ed . ) . Hyperion . 2007 . ISBN 978 @-@ 0 @-@ 7868 @-@ 9393 @-@ 5 .

No , They Can 't : Why Government Fails ? But Individuals Succeed . Threshold Editions . 2012 . ISBN 1451640943 .

= = = Biographies and articles about Stossel = = =

ABC News Biography

Johnson , Peter . " Stossel 's evolution from activist to contrarian angers some of his fans " , USA Today , April 30 , 2006

" John Stossel : Myth @-@ Buster " , FrontPageMag.com

Sullum , Jacob . " Risky Journalism : ABC 's John Stossel bucks a fearful establishment " Reason , April 1997 .

= = = Articles by Stossel = = =

John Stossel 's 20 / 20 Web Page

John Stossel 's Newspaper Columns

John Stossel 's contributions to Reason Magazine

" Confessions of a Welfare Queen : How rich bastards like me rip off taxpayers for millions of dollars " is an excerpt from his first book .

John Stossel 's Column on Creators.com