

198-alex-jones-sandy-hook-deniers-and-why-it-matters-bonus-e...

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SPEAKERS

JJ Janflone, Kelly Sampson



JJ Janflone 00:08

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JJ Janflone 00:38

Everybody, it's JJ and Kelly here. And we have an important update for you.



Kelly Sampson 00:41

We wanted to bring you all an update on an episode that we did more than a year ago where we discussed Alex Jones. And probably now he's a conspiracy theorist who claimed that the Sandy Hook shooting was a hoax and that victims and survivors were, in fact, actors.



JJ Janflone 00:57

I think, Kelly and I have been talking before we started recording here, we're still angry. We're going to stay angry about this, I think for a while.



Kelly Sampson 01:05

Yeah, because it's disgusting. And, you know, as you probably seen, Alex Jones has made a lot of headlines lately. And this might make you a little happy II. because he's now been ordered to

pay \$49 million over his false claims. And, while it's true that because of some caps, he probably won't actually have to pay \$49 million, there are other court cases in jurisdictions that don't have those caps and those cases are still ongoing.



JJ Janflone 01:30

When you're a jerk, you lose your money, and it makes me happy. It's about time that he's being held accountable, surely. For folks who are listening who need a refresher, the Sandy Hook shooting occurred in December of 2012 in Newtown, Connecticut, it was massacre. 26 people were killed, including 20 students who are only between the ages of six-and-seven-years-old. And then six staff members were also killed.



Kelly Sampson 01:56

Sorry, every time I hear those numbers, it's still hard to take in. And as we discussed on the podcast, maybe because it's so hard to take in, I don't know, I don't understand psychology, but in the wake of the shooting, some people latched onto the idea that it never happened and that the children killed and teachers killed were crisis actors or didn't exist at all. And one of the loudest voices calling the shooting a hoax was Alex Jones. He said that the Sandy Hook shooting was faked and the purpose of faking it was to allow people to attack the Second Amendment.



JJ Janflone 02:30

Gross doesn't even begin to cover how heinous his behavior and a lot of other conspiracy theorists behavior was.



Kelly Sampson 02:38

Yeah, words fail. And the families of those killed at Sandy Hook sued Alex Jones in 2018, because of the additional pain and suffering that his life caused them, and those cases are continuing to this day. And during this latest trial, countless parents and family members detail the additional suffering that they face, due to these conspiracy theories that he was peddling. Everything from people showing up at their houses to online harassment and even death threats all because they, they just had the audacity be related to someone who was killed in a mass shooting.



JJ Janflone 03:13

We've talked to so many families who have had folks approach them in person and Kelly, you're right, I don't understand the psychology behind it. But like going up to grieving folks telling them that their loved one wasn't really killed, or that their loved one wasn't a survivor, that all that these grieving families were agents, you know, against the rights to own guns.



Kelly Sampson 03:30

One thing that has come up in our episodes that we did around grief, but also that comes up almost all the time when we talk to survivors, is how much people appreciate being able to talk about their loved one, being able to talk about their lives, their personality, what they were like and sort of honor them, right, by remembering them. And so I can't imagine what it's like for the Sandy Hook families to have someone say to their face, that their loved one wasn't real, or that they weren't killed, right, like that is so hard to even comprehend what that would be like. And to make matters worse, Alex Jones has, since peddling these lies, gone back and admitted that the Sandy Hook massacre actually happened, that the victims were real, and that they did die in the massacre.



JJ Janflone 04:22

I can't believe that was, like, that was a thing that needed to be said, right. Jones is facing other defamation lawsuits, as Kelly said, and is likely to remain in the news, unfortunately. But I think it's really important that we talk about this case as it fits into the broader world of conspiracy theories and the impact that these theories have on gun violence and on the survivors of gun violence, right like this has an impact beyond just the Sandy Hook case.



Kelly Sampson 04:48

Oh yeah, absolutely. Because, you know, like we both said up top like when we hear about the people killed at Sandy Hook, it is hard to take it in, right, that's horrible that that many people were killed just by living their day. And so it can be easy to try to brush it away. And so when people claim that these massacres, or gun violence in general, you know, just the daily gun violence that we have in this country, isn't real or that they're false flags, they're saying an epidemic that harms more than 100,000 real people every year isn't real. And it's saying that their pain isn't real, that their loss isn't real. And okay, then the problem is not real. And we don't have to think about a solution to a problem that doesn't exist.



JJ Janflone 05:31

I would like for it to not be real, Kelly, like, honestly, like, I wish I could believe that these things weren't real. Like, I wish that we didn't know that it's real. But we do. And if you're listening to this podcast, then you know it is too, right. And so there needs to be a solution. And solutions to gun violence do exist. So I just really want to hammer home that like we cannot let conspiracy theorists win. No. And so civil court cases that point out folks like Jones are wrong are so so important.



Kelly Sampson 05:57

Yeah. Because other people who might be thinking that they want to be like Alex Jones, which I don't know why you would, but people who are thinking that they want to do the same thing, and grift just to be able to make money need to see that they will be held to account. So you know, as more information becomes available about these cases, we'll definitely share it on the

podcast. But in the meantime, we just thank you for being here with us and listening and learning and being willing to work for a solution to a problem, that as you said, JJ, none of us wish was real. We don't. I wish this wasn't a real problem, but it is and so that's why we have this podcast. And that's why we're so grateful that you're listening, so that one day we can talk about something else. I don't know puzzles, I love to do puzzles.



JJ Janflone 06:47

I would much rather this to be the puzzle podcast. Yes, absolutely.



JJ Janflone 06:50

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Kelly Sampson 07:07

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