

Stolen Elections and Media Blackouts

An Interview With Mark Crispin Miller

By [Carolyn Baker](#)

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(Burlington, Vermont: October 24, 2008) Shortly before a public lecture presented at Champlain College, I sat down with Mark Crispin Miller, Professor of Media Studies at New York University, to ask him a number of questions regarding stolen elections—a subject Miller has researched and written about extensively. Greg Palast, Robert F. Kennedy, Jr., Bev Harris, Steve Rosenfeld, Bob Fitrakis, and Lynne Landes, have provided monumental contributions to the subject of election fraud, each with their own unique styles and methods of targeting the issue. Mark Crispin Miller's 2005 book [Fooled Again](#), impeccably documents the stealing of the 2004 election, and [Loser Take All](#), a 2008 collection of essays on stolen elections incorporates the research of other investigators of election fraud such as Robert Kennedy, Jr; Bob Fitrakis, and Steve Rosenfeld.

Generously, Professor Miller gave me both time and disturbing insights regarding the upcoming election of 2008.

CB: In progressive circles there are countless issues that attract people, and I'm curious about what drew you to fight for clean, legitimate, democratic elections in the United States as opposed to some other issue.

MCM: What immediately drew my interest was the overwhelmingly obvious fact that the 2004 election was stolen. We already know the 2000 election was stolen because the Supreme Court intervened so flagrantly, but I think the 2004 election was stolen on an even grander scale. What struck me was not just that fact, but no less, the general refusal to admit it which was evident not only throughout the corporate media but on the left as well. Even now I can't quite get over how the left fell into line and dismissed the evidence as "conspiracy theory" on the basis of very sloppy reporting by very good reporters in progressive circles.

So the immediate reason why I got into it was because of this staggering miscarriage of proper civic procedure and a betrayal of democracy. The more I thought about it, the more I also came to believe that this is the most important issue, precisely because we can make no progress on any other front if we don't have the right to pick our representatives, and more importantly, reject those who don't represent our interests. That's vital, so I often say in my talks that regardless of what your issue is, you're kidding yourself if you think you can get anywhere when government is able to act with impunity.

CB: So what are the maybe top half-dozen pieces of evidence that the 2004 election was stolen?

MCM: Well primarily, there is the audit of the vote in 18 counties of Ohio that was carried

out by [Richard Hayes Phillips](#) who published Witness To A Crime which is the result of three years labor by Richard and his researchers who literally scrutinized every single ballot that was cast in 18 Ohio counties. This book is scrupulous, precise, and explicit-fully illustrated and comes with a CD with illustrations of ballots and how they were tampered with.

CB: Who published this?

MCM: Well this is an interesting story. This book was supposed to be published by Kent State University Press, but when Phillips handed in the manuscript, they told him that it was twice as long as it should be and that they couldn't afford illustrations. This was not their original agreement. Phillips told them that without illustrations, the book isn't convincing, and he then decided to self-publish. Nevertheless, it's a superb book, beautifully written, but it has sold to date, 900 copies. He put his life savings into it and he's been trying to promote it, and as you can see, it's highly specific and technical. Therefore, it's a sort of an unwieldy smoking gun, but it is a smoking gun because they discovered that John Kerry was variously robbed of two hundred thousand votes in those 18 counties alone. There's no argument with this. In the illustrations you can see ballots with stickers placed over the square beside John Kerry's name, thousands of ballots that were marked so that they would be over-votes when people voted on them. The range and the ingenuity of the fraud tactics are astonishing. After Phillips did his research, 55 boards of election out of 86 counties in Ohio, in defiance of a court order, destroyed all or part of their ballots-that is 1.5 million ballots. That was a malicious destruction of evidence.

CB: Where can one purchase this book?

MCM: You can only get it on Phillips' [website](#).

CB: What evidence do we have currently, in addition to the voluminous evidence that you've provided in your books, that the 2008 election may already be stolen?

MCM: I do resist putting it that way with all due respect to Greg ([Greg Palast](#)) and Bobbie (Kennedy). I don't like to say that it's already been stolen because it's demoralizing, but I will say that they (the Republicans) have made enormous strides toward a McCain victory already.

CB: In what way?

MCM: Well, election theft is a two-part process. On the one hand is vote suppression. The purpose of vote suppression is to shrink the electorate before the fact. In the last four years or so they have moved somewhat away from fraudulent manipulation of ballots cast toward grand pre-emptive tactics meant to prevent people from voting in the first place. So within the realm of vote suppression, they have managed to purge literally millions of names from the voter roles. In New York state alone, we learned last week, 1.5 million voters have been purged without their knowledge. That's New York; it's not even a swing state.

There was a report, I think on [Daily Kos](#), that the Justice Department has managed to effect the purge of 13 million votes. I don't know how many of those are legitimate purges because a lot of peoples' names shouldn't be on the list because they're dead or something. But between legal purges conducted by the Department of Justice and illegal purges of the electronic voter roles carried out by various partisan secretaries of state, and [voter caging](#) and other tactics, they've managed to do a great deal to shrink the pool of voters who would

vote against McCain. That kind of thing will require a lot of fighting and amassing evidence which means that there's got to be a lot of video interviews, polls, phone calls placed to the hotlines-what I'm saying is that this grand stroke of dis-enfranchisement before election day has to be exposed and evidence thereof collected and made available.

But that's not the only thing you do when you steal an election. You also engage in electronic fraud. Here, we have the [testimony](#) of an incredibly important person named Stephen Spoonamore who is the star witness in a [RICO](#) (Racketeer Influenced and Corrupt Organizations Act) investigation in Ohio. He's a conservative Republican and a former McCain supporter, but most importantly, he is a prominent expert in the detection of computer fraud.

CB: Yes, Spoonamore and his testimony are featured in Lynn Landes newly released documentary "[Stealing America Vote By Vote](#)" which I recently watched and for which you, Professor Miller, were a consultant.

MCM: Yes, and Spoonamore has named the principal players in the Bush-Cheney election fraud conspiracy. Specifically, he has named [Mike Connell](#), who has been helping Karl Rove steal elections since Florida, 2000. Connell is the head of a company called [GOVTECH Solutions](#). If you check out a piece by Rebecca Abrahams on the [destruction of White House emails](#), which is actually about much more than that, you'll learn that there's a list made up by Spoonamore that he composed after a very troubling meeting of all the online entities and companies that Connell runs or is involved with. It's a huge menu of partisan and theocratic [Christianist, pro-life] outfits-all part of the same terrifying matrix of disinformation, subversion, and sabotage. Connell told Spoonamore that his motive for helping Bush-Cheney steal elections was "to save the babies". As progressives, this is something we have to wrap our minds around because it turns out that most of the people who are involved in the management of high-tech fraud are Christianists. These people are fanatics who hate the majority. The majority doesn't buy their pro-life agenda; the majority isn't going to sit still for bans on contraception. The only way around that, in their eyes, is to subvert the electorate.

There's an enormous corporate component to this too. One of the defendants in the RICO suit is the [U.S. Chamber of Commerce](#) because they have spent to date \$400 million on front organizations to defeat candidates for the judicial bench nationwide who have an insufficiently pro-business agenda. So we have a really unholy marriage here of theocratic extremists and ruthless corporate interests.

CB: Hmmmm. So how do you spell "fascism"?

Both your website, [News From The Underground](#) and Truth to Power recently reported the October 4 [interview with Naomi Wolf](#) in which she noted that police departments are mobilizing around the country for unrest in relation to the economic crisis and the election, and of course she mentioned what is now common knowledge, namely, that a brigade of troops has returned from Iraq to assist with "crowd control." In the light of this and your research on stolen elections, I'm wondering how obvious you think a stolen election would have to be in order for massive unrest to erupt.

MCM: I think at this point it would be quite obvious just because Obama's lead is so big, and McCain is doing so poorly. All the standard indicators suggest that the race is over and

should be over. I think, and I believe Naomi would agree with this, that all this terrifying preparation for crackdown can only fail if there's a sufficiently widespread mass resistance movement. I have always thought that there's a lot more dissatisfaction and distrust around our last few elections than we think there is. The press and the Democratic Party are so blind to it that we tend to think that nobody cares. I don't think that's true; I think a good half of the country is suspicious.

CB: Well, that reminds me that I saw you recently on Free Speech TV presenting a lecture at University of California at Santa Barbara discussing stolen elections, and you suggested that there's kind of an addiction in this society to voting even when we know our vote may be meaningless as if we have a hopeless attachment to the belief that we have legitimate, democratic elections in the United States. Would you say more about that?

MCM: Yes, in all this talk about voting, it's important to acknowledge that we have fetishized the ballot box and overestimated voting as if it were the only instrument available to us for democratic action. It's not the only instrument-there are all kinds of things we can and should do; however, I do think that voting is a fundamental and necessary instrument, but it's not really a democratic action if there isn't popular control and oversight. We have a long way to go before we have a democratic voting system. What we actually have is a ritual-the same as in Iraq. People voted there too!

Precisely because we have fetishized voting we are often that much less able to face the fact that the whole process has been subverted just as surely as it is subverted in closed societies. It's very hard for Americans to wrap their minds around this because it's a tremendous blow to our self-image and our exceptionalism. I don't think that the general public has as much trouble facing that as the establishment and media do.

CB: Last week CNN reported the story of former GOP operative, Allen Raymond who wrote the book [How To Rig An Election](#). What do you think about CNN's reporting of the story?

MCM: The book is actually about vote suppression in New Hampshire in 2002. The context for this is that Republicans had lost control of the Senate in 2002 as a result of the defection of Jim Jeffords. There's strong evidence that they then stole a number of Congressional elections as in Colorado, Minnesota, and New Hampshire. One of the things they got caught for doing was a phone-jamming scheme in the four cities of Southern New Hampshire which prevented the unions from getting out the Democratic vote. Allen Raymond was a hired gun and became a patsy who went to prison. After doing his time, he wrote the book, but he doesn't really talk about election rigging, and all he ends up saying is that he was part of a culture that would do anything to win and that both parties are guilty of such behavior-perfectly harmless stuff. He doesn't mention, for example, that the phone-jamming operations were paid for by Jack Abramoff with two checks from the Choctaw Indians. That's interesting because it ties the two scandals together.

The reason he gets to go on CNN is that he's a much more palatable witness to wrongdoing than I would be. Raymond's book is worth reading, but it certainly doesn't compare with Richard Phillip Hayes' book.

CB: You've just released *Loser Take All: Election Fraud And The Subversion Of Democracy* which is a compilation of essays on stolen elections, edited by you. In that book you offer a Twelve-Step Program for taking back the American election process. First, I'm wondering what inspired you to compile and edit this book, and I'd like to hear your twelve steps.

MCM: I was simply tired of hearing people say that there's no evidence of election fraud. There were essays out there that constitute strong evidence as well as studies that could be done to make this case, so I collected a number of pieces and asked the authors to polish them up because I wanted to make available a collection of these writings within six months of the election because I wanted it all to be in one place.

The overall effect of the collection was necessarily kind of harrowing and possibly demoralizing as this kind of analysis is for people who haven't heard of this stuff which is pretty much everybody because the press hasn't reported it. So I wanted something at the end of the book that would give people a sense of constructive possibility-of what they might fight for to fix the problem.

But the problem can't be solved unless we acknowledge that there is a problem.

Summary: Mark Crispin Miller's [Twelve Step Program](#) can be viewed at his News From the Underground website. I am deeply grateful to him for his generosity in giving this interview in the midst of a very busy schedule. Subsequently, we discussed our differences regarding our willingness to participate in a rigged election system, my sharing with him my unwillingness, for a plethora of reasons, to cast a vote for a president on November 4. Professor Miller and I have differences on a number of issues, perhaps the most fundamental, although we did not discuss it, my contention that [the values of Western civilization](#) itself have created not only irreparable corruption in the American election system, but have contributed to planet earth's triple threat: Climate change, energy depletion, and global financial catastrophe and my belief that without the total collapse of empire, humanity will continue to annihilate itself and the earth community. Election fraud, from my perspective, is only one aspect of a planetary affliction that is both ubiquitous and daunting.

Is that a potentially "demoralizing" perspective? Indeed it is if one feels that a solution within the current paradigm of empire is possible. Nevertheless, while I do not believe that the issue of stolen elections trumps all others, I do believe that understanding the scope and severity of electoral corruption is necessary for any individual in pursuit of unmitigated truth-telling. Awakening to the reality of rigged elections in the United States is as essential for inhabiting adult reality as parting with one's belief in Santa Claus or the Easter Bunny. Moreover, awakening from our denial about rigged elections may enable us to penetrate other and more frightening chimeras inherent in empire that not only provide illusions of choice, but threaten to extinguish life on this planet as all of its species have known it.

*Mark Crispin Miller is professor of media studies at [New York University](#) and the author of the book: *Fooled Again, How the Right Stole the 2004 Elections*. He is known for his writing on American media and for his activism on behalf of democratic media reform. His books include *Boxed In: The Culture of TV*, *Seeing Through Movies*, and *Mad Scientists*, a study of war propaganda.*

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