themindunleashed.com

A website that says it aims "to disseminate and inspire out-of-the-box thinking," which has repeatedly published false claims and unsubstantiated conspiracy theories.

Ownership and Financing

TheMindUnleashed.com is owned by The Mind Unleashed, Inc., a privately held company based in Streamwood, Illinois. Joseph Brown, who is identified on the website as its owner, founder, and CEO, is named as the company's president in registration documents.

The site generates revenue from advertising and sponsored content.

Content

TheMindUnleashed.com's About page describes the site as a "Conscious Media Aggregation organization."

"We seek to disseminate and inspire out-of-the-box thinking and act as a catalyst for people to discover the limitless potential that exists inside us all," the About page says. "Break free from the mold."

The site divides content into sections including U.S. politics, world news, health, science, and technology, with subsections such as Awareness, Corruption, and Bizarre. The site's Good News section focuses on positive and inspirational stories, with headlines such as "Los Angeles Church Wipes Out $5.3 Million in Medical Debt for Over 5,000 Homes" and "Elderly Woman's Dream Comes True After Fellow Passenger Gives Up First-Class Seat for Her."

Other typical headlines on the site include "Algorithms Have Already Taken Over Human Decision Making and Nobody's Talking About It," "From Vietnam to Afghanistan, All US Governments Lie," and "100+ Doctors Demand Assange Receive Safe Passage to Hospital Before It Is Too Late."

Credibility

The Mind Unleashed produces some originally reported articles and opinion columns. However, most of its content is republished from other sites, which range from credible organizations such as Scientific American, The Conversation, and Common Dreams to those that NewsGuard has found to have repeatedly published false claims, such as WakingTimes.com, ZeroHedge.com, and ActivistPost.com.

The site has repeatedly published false information, including conspiracy theories about the Sept. 11, 2001, terror attack. For example, a September 2019 article first published in WakingTimes.com, "Major University Study Finds "Fire Did Not Cause the Collapse of WTC 7 on 9/11," reported on a study by the Institute of Northern Engineering (INE) of the University of Alaska Fairbanks on the destruction of 7 World Trade Center, which collapsed near the twin towers hours after planes crashed into the buildings. The article quoted the study as saying that the collapse was "caused not by fire but rather by the near-simultaneous failure of every column in the building."

The study was not peer-reviewed and was funded by Architects & Engineers for 9/11 Truth, a group that has promoted a theory that the collapse of 7 World Trade Center was the result of a controlled demolition. Its conclusions have been directly refuted by, among other investigations, the exhaustive 2008 National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) World Trade Center probe, which determined that the building was "brought down primarily by uncontrolled fires" and did so in a "progressive collapse."

In 2006, NIST also debunked theories that the twin towers' collapse was caused by planted explosives, saying that the collapse was caused by the impact of the hijacked airplanes that crashed into the skyscrapers. Nevertheless, a September 2018 article published by TheMindUnleashed.com, headlined "Physicists Say Twin Towers Destroyed by Controlled Demolition on 9/11" asserted that "all three World Trade Center buildings were destroyed by controlled demolition in New York City on September 11th, 2001."

Another September 2018 article, headlined "Never Forget: What the Deep State Wants You to Remember About 9/11," republished from CorbettReport.com, suggested Israeli intelligence agents were responsible for the attacks. "Never forget that it was those scary dirty bearded Muslim boogeymen who did 9/11, and it was definitely the Muslims who were cheering the destruction of the Towers, not the Israeli Mossad agents who were there to 'document the event,'" the article stated sarcastically.

Conspiracy theories about Israel's purported involvement in the attacks date to 2001. The Anti-Defamation League said in a 2011 report that "these theories are still persuasive for anti-Semites who want to see a Jewish or Israeli involvement in 9/11 because of their belief that Jews are deceitful, ruthless, and willing to undertake any action, no matter how disastrous the consequences, to advance their power and influence."

The Mind Unleashed has also promoted misleading claims about the Wuhan coronavirus.

A January 2020 article titled "Bioslab for 'Most Dangerous Pathogens on Earth' Opened..."
The site has also promoted the false claim that marijuana can cure cancer. A September 2019 article, also republished from Waking Times, was headlined “Harvard Study on Cannabis Flavonoids Could Change Cancer Treatment Forever.” The article said, “Scientists have found success in treating cancer with cannabis compounds in the past. The main components of the plant, THC and CBD, have been found beneficial in the treatment of lung, blood skin, and liver cancer, among others, but until recently have been kept illegal by big money interests like the alcohol and prison industries, which benefit from the illegality of these highly medicinal compounds.”

Marijuana has been shown to help treat certain side effects of chemotherapy, such as nausea. However, cannabis has not been proven to be an effective treatment for cancer. A 2017 review of existing scientific evidence on the health effects of marijuana, published by the U.S. National Academies of Science, concluded that “there is insufficient evidence to support or refute the conclusion that cannabinoids are an effective treatment for cancers.”

Other stories have promoted unsubstantiated cancer claims. A December 2017 headline stated that “Radiation Causes Breast Cancer Stem Cells to Spread, But 5 Amazing Plant Compounds Help Stop Them,” listed five food ingredients that are likely more effective at killing breast cancer cells that radiation and chemotherapy.

According to the American Cancer Society, no human studies have shown that diets are more effective than radiation therapy or chemotherapy in treating cancer.

The website has also promoted Kremlin-backed claims that the Syrian government did not engage in chemical attacks against its citizens in Douma, Syria in April 2018. A May 2019 article titled “Leaked OPCW Bombshell Report Shatters the Official Syria Narrative,” cited an unpublished report by the chemical weapons watchdog group, the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons, that the site claimed “contradicts the conclusions of the final report that claim the gas canisters were dropped from the air in the infamous Douma attack,” suggesting it was staged by having gas canisters placed on the ground.

OPCW’s report actually concluded that chlorine was likely used as a weapon in the Douma attack, which killed more than 40 people. The claims that attacks in Syria have been staged have been contradicted by first-person accounts, photos, and videos documenting the victims, as well as reports from the United Nations.

Because The Mind Unleashed has promoted false claims and conspiracy theories in its articles and headlines, NewsGuard has determined that the site repeatedly publishes false content, fails to gather and present information responsibly, and does not avoid deceptive headlines.

A NewsGuard review of TheMindUnleashed.com found four corrections published in 2019, noted at either the top or bottom of articles. However, the site failed to correct multiple false claims in its articles published in 2019, including those cited above.

The Mind Unleashed also failed to update or correct a May 2017 article that said that Democratic National Committee staff member Seth Rich was in contact with WikiLeaks before he was killed in 2016. The article said of Rich, “Close to the Clinton campaign, many suspected he was killed for damaging their campaign, or even supplying WikiLeaks with the incredible info they leaked in 2016.” To back this claim, the article cited a Fox 5 DC report that a private investigator named Rod Wheeler had “solid evidence” to suggest Rich was in contact with WikiLeaks prior to his death.

Fox 5 DC corrected its story on May 17, 2017, a day after The Mind Unleashed article was published, saying that Wheeler had “backtracked” from claims that “he had sources at the FBI confirming there was evidence of communication between Seth Rich and WikiLeaks.”

Police have always said that Rich was killed in Washington following a botched robbery. An April 2019 report released by U.S. Special Counsel Robert Mueller on Russian meddling in the 2016 presidential election said that Rich died four days before WikiLeas received DNC emails from Russian hackers.

Because TheMindUnleashed.com has not corrected numerous false stories, NewsGuard has determined that the site does not meet NewsGuard’s standard for regularly issuing corrections.

The site publishes columns in a separate opinion section. However, opinionated language also appears in articles labeled as news, which does not meet NewsGuard’s standard for handling the difference between news and opinion responsibly.

For example, a December 2019 news article titled “BBC Calls for Media Critics to Be Purged From Social Media” claimed that the BBC was biased towards the U.K. Conservative Party in its coverage of December 2019 elections. “What an upside-down world we live in where an affable pacifist vegetarian like Jeremy Corbyn was turned into a bloodthirsty tyrannical terrorist and where those calling loudest for top-down censorship of speech are precisely journalists working for the West’s most prestigious media outfits,” the article said.
Another December 2019 news article, headlined "Pentagon Alarmed by Growing Russian 'Sympathy' Among US Troops," stated, "Perhaps American soldiers are simply sick and tired of the US military and intelligence machine's legacy of ashes across the globe and recognize the inconvenient fact that Russia most often has been on the complete opposite side of Washington's disastrous regime change wars."

Some articles are labeled as both news and opinion, such as an April 2019 story headlined "Mainstream Media Demands Trump Further Escalate Tensions With Russia." The article stated, "This is how depraved the mass media are. They're willing to lull the populace into complacency with the formation of a new cold war that threatens everyone they love, even get them demanding direct confrontation, all to please their plutocratic owners, their military-industrial complex sponsors, and the intelligence agencies with which they are aligned. They're willing to risk getting us all killed for money and crude oil."

The Mind Unleashed did not respond to four emails, including two sent in 2020, seeking comment on its history of publishing false claims, its approach to corrections, and its failure to separate news and opinion.

Transparency

The Contact Us page on TheMindUnleashed.com identifies Joseph Brown as its owner, and lists the site's other top editors, along with their contact information.

The Meet The Team section provides biographical information about the site's staff. Original articles typically include the names of authors, with the byline linking to a page with their biographical and contact information. The Mind Unleashed credits and links to the original source of articles republished from other websites.

The site's articles on marijuana often include unlabeled advertisements for CBD oil sold by a website called HigherHempCBD.com. For example, a paragraph in a December 2019 story titled "Major League Baseball Officially Removes Cannabis From List of Banned Substances" stated: "Here at the Mind Unleashed, we're big fans of CBD, and we use it for a variety of reasons. That's why the only brand we recommend is Higher Hemp! And today, by using the discount code MIND during checkout at HigherHempCBD.com, you'll get 20% off your purchase and help us fund our journalism."

The Mind Unleashed did not respond to NewsGuard's three emails, two of which were sent in 2018, seeking comment on the site's failure to label advertising.

History

The Mind Unleashed was created in January 2013, according to its domain registration.

Editor's Note: This Nutrition Label was last updated on Feb. 27, 2020. This label was updated in December 2019, and its rating was changed, to reflect NewsGuard's determination that TheMindUnleashed.com now meets NewsGuard's standard for disclosing ownership, revealing who is in charge, and providing information about content creators. The criteria checklist has been adjusted accordingly.

Written by: John Gregory
Contributing: Evan Haddad, Sophia Tewa
Edited by: Eric Effron, Amy Westfield
Send feedback to NewsGuard: Click Here

Sources

Ownership and Financing

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Content

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Credibility

Douma story #1: