

News Frauds

Overview:

- Janet Cooke (1980), *Washington Post*, "Jimmy's World"
- Stephen Glass (1998), *The New Republic*
- Jack Kelley (2000), USA Today
- Jayson Blair (2001), *The New York Times*
- James Frey (2005), Random House book, *A Million Little Pieces*

Janet Cooke (from Wikipedia)

Janet Cooke (born July 23, 1954) was an American journalist who became infamous when she won a Pulitzer Prize for a fabricated story that she wrote for *The Washington Post*.

In 1980, she joined the "Weeklies" section staff of the *Washington Post* under editor Vivian Aplin-Brownlee. To secure this post, she claimed to have a degree from Vassar College, an alleged stint at Sorbonne University and to have been the recipient of an award at *The Toledo Blade* newspaper.

In an article entitled 'Jimmy's World',^[1] which appeared in the *Post* on September 29, 1980, Cooke wrote a gripping profile of the life of an 8-year-old heroin addict. She described the "needle marks freckling the baby-smooth skin of his thin, brown arms." The story engendered much sympathy among readers, including Marion Barry, then mayor of Washington DC. He and other city officials organized an all-out police search for the boy which was unsuccessful and led to claims that the story was fraudulent. Strangely, Barry claimed that 'Jimmy' was known to the city and receiving treatment.^[2]

Despite growing signs of problems, the *Post* defended the veracity of the story and Assistant Managing Editor Bob Woodward nominated the story for the Pulitzer Prize. Cooke was named winner of the prize on April 13, 1981.

When the editors of the *Toledo Blade*, where Cooke had previously worked, read her biographical notes, they noticed a number of discrepancies. Further investigation revealed that Cooke's credentials were false. Pressured by the editors of *The Washington Post*, Cooke confessed her guilt.

Two days after the prize had been awarded, *Washington Post* publisher Donald Graham held a press conference and admitted that the story was fraudulent. The editorial in the next day's paper offered a public apology. Assistant Managing Editor Bob Woodward said at the time:

"I believed it, we published it. Official questions had been raised, but we stood by the story and her. Internal questions had been raised, but none about her other work. The reports were about the story not sounding right, being based on anonymous sources, and primarily about purported lies [about] her personal life -- [told by men reporters], two she had dated and one who felt in close competition with her. I think that the decision to nominate the story for a Pulitzer is of minimal consequence. I also think that it won is of little consequence. It is a brilliant story -- fake and fraud that it is. It would be absurd for me or any other editor to review the authenticity or accuracy of stories that are nominated for prizes." ^[3]

Cooke resigned, the prize was returned and the reputation of the venerable Washington Post was sullied. She appeared on the *Phil Donahue* show in January 1982 and claimed that the high-pressure environment of the Washington Post had corrupted her judgment. She claimed that her sources had hinted to her about the existence of a boy such as Jimmy, but unable to find him, she eventually just created a story about him in order to satisfy her nagging editors.

For a while after the incident Cooke worked as a salesclerk in Washington. She married a Washington lawyer and briefly moved to Paris with him, but the marriage failed and she returned in 1996. She moved to Kalamazoo, Michigan and became a salesperson again.

Cooke was the subject of an interview by Mike Sager, appearing in GQ magazine in June of 1996. Sager's article was republished in an anthology *Scary Monsters and Super Freaks*. The movie rights to her story were reportedly purchased for \$1.6 million by Columbia TriStar Pictures, to be divided between Cooke (55%), Sager and their agents. The film has not yet been produced.

Stephen Glass (from Wikipedia)

Stephen Glass (born 1972) was an American reporter for *The New Republic*, who was fired for basing his articles on fake quotes, sources, and events. The story of Glass's downfall is told in the 2003 film *Shattered Glass*.

New Republic scandal

Glass was fired from *TNR* in May 1998, after it was discovered that he had committed numerous cases of journalistic fraud. The story that triggered these events appeared in the May 18, 1998 issue. It was called "Hack Heaven", and concerned a supposed 15-year-old computer hacker, who was purportedly hired to work for a large company as an information security consultant after breaking into their computer system and exposing its weaknesses. Like several of **Stephen Glass's** previous stories, "Hack Heaven" depicted events that were almost cinematic in their vividness and that were told from a

first-person perspective implying Glass was there as the action took place. The article opens as follows:

Ian Restil, a 15-year-old computer hacker who looks like an even more adolescent version of Bill Gates, is throwing a tantrum. "I want more money. I want a Miata. I want a trip to Disney World. I want X-Man comic [book] number one. I want a lifetime subscription to Playboy, and throw in Penthouse. Show me the money! Show me the money!"...

Across the table, executives from a California software firm called Jukt Micronics are listening – and trying ever so delicately to oblige. "Excuse me, sir," one of the suits says, tentatively, to the pimply teenager. "Excuse me. Pardon me for interrupting you, sir. We can arrange more money for you ..."

Soon after the publication of "Hack Heaven," Forbes magazine reporter Adam Penenberg presented evidence to The New Republic that the story was fabricated and that the company depicted in it did not exist. An internal review by TNR confirmed this, and found that Glass had created a shell website and voice mail account for the company in order to deceive TNR's fact checkers. Adam Penenberg, the journalist who uncovered the fabrications actually worked for Forbes.com, the online version of the magazine. Some commentators of the scandal considered it to be a great coming-of-age achievement for online journalism.[1]

TNR subsequently determined that at least 27 of 41 stories written by Glass for the magazine contained fabricated material. Of the remaining fourteen, former TNR executive editor Charles Lane said, "In fact, I'd bet lots of the stuff in those other fourteen is fake, too. ... It's not like we're vouching for those fourteen, that they're true. They're probably not, either."^[1] Three other magazines, Rolling Stone, George and Harper's, which Glass contributed to also reviewed his work. Rolling Stone and Harper's found the material generally accurate but had no way of verifying information from anonymous sources. George discovered Glass fabricated quotes in a profile piece and apologized to the article's subject, Vernon Jordan, a Clinton advisor.

Jack Kelley (from USA Today.com. I Googled "jack kelley and USA Today")

Ex-USA TODAY reporter faked major stories

By Blake Morrison, USA TODAY

Seven weeks into an examination of former USA TODAY reporter Jack Kelley's work, a team of journalists has found strong evidence that Kelley fabricated substantial portions of at least eight major stories, lifted nearly two dozen quotes or other material from competing publications, lied in speeches he gave for the newspaper and conspired to mislead those investigating his work.

Perhaps Kelley's most egregious misdeed occurred in 2000, when he used a snapshot he took of a Cuban hotel worker to authenticate a story he made up about a woman who died fleeing Cuba by boat. The woman in the photo neither fled by boat nor died, and a USA TODAY reporter located her this month. If Cuban authorities had learned she was the woman in the picture, she says, she could have lost her job and her chance to emigrate.

How USA TODAY is conducting the investigation

A team of reporters spent seven weeks examining the work of former USA TODAY reporter Jack Kelley. The reporters read about 720 stories Kelley filed from 1993 through 2003. Each of the stories was read and discussed by at least two members of the team. Hundreds were relatively routine news reports. But about 150 stories stood out to the group for a variety of reasons.

At least 56 were based on exclusive, eyewitness reports, usually reported overseas. Dozens cited anonymous intelligence officials. Others were human-interest stories that offered poignant details about the suffering of war, illness and oppression. In at least 10 cases, Kelley wrote that he watched someone die.

To verify the stories, members of the team interviewed dozens of people; reviewed scores of Kelley's expense reports; traveled to Cuba, Israel and Jordan; scoured records from Kelley's hotel, mobile and office phones; reread transcripts of speeches Kelley gave; ran at least 150 stories through plagiarism-detection software; and examined the contents of the laptop computer Kelley was issued by the company. Phone records were incomplete, and most of the documents on the laptop had been deleted before Kelley left the newspaper in January.

Three veteran journalists from outside the paper — Bill Hilliard, Bill Kovach and John Seigenthaler — monitored the process and spent about 20 hours interviewing Kelley about his stories and the newsroom culture at USA TODAY. The transcripts of those interviews were shared with the team. Seigenthaler is the founding editorial director of USA TODAY. Hilliard is former editor of The Oregonian in Portland, Ore. Kovach is chairman of the Committee of Concerned Journalists, a group devoted to discussing journalism's future.

Members of the team, which continues to examine Kelley's work, are: John Hillkirk, editor; Michael Hiestand, Kevin McCoy, Blake Morrison, Rita Rubin and Julie Schmit, reporters; Ruth Fogle and Tom Ankner, researchers.

Kelley, 43, resigned from the newspaper in January after he admitted conspiring with a translator to mislead editors overseeing an inquiry into his work. At the time, newspaper editors said they could not determine whether Kelley had embellished or fabricated stories.

After Kelley quit, a new investigation began, spurred by fears that Kelley might have plagiarized. A team of five reporters and an editor, monitored by a three-member panel of former editors from outside the newspaper, reviewed more than 720 stories Kelley wrote from 1993 through 2003. Each was examined by at least two members of the team.

A story was considered fabricated if expense reports, phone records, official documents or witnesses clearly contradicted all or parts of what was published, and if Kelley's explanations failed to reconcile those contradictions.

The three former editors spent about 20 hours interviewing Kelley. Throughout those interviews, Kelley insisted he had done nothing wrong and urged a quick resolution to the newspaper's investigation. "I've never fabricated or plagiarized anything," Kelley said.

Confronted Thursday with the newspaper's findings, Kelley spent 2 1/2 hours again denying wrongdoing. "I feel like I'm being set up," he told them.

But an extensive examination of about 100 of the 720 stories uncovered evidence that found Kelley's journalistic sins were sweeping and substantial. The evidence strongly contradicted Kelley's published accounts that he spent a night with Egyptian terrorists in 1997; met a vigilante Jewish settler named Avi Shapiro in 2001; watched a Pakistani student unfold a picture of the Sears Tower and say, "This one is mine," in 2001; visited a suspected terrorist crossing point on the Pakistan-Afghanistan border in 2002; interviewed the daughter of an Iraqi general in 2003; or went on a high-speed hunt for Osama bin Laden in 2003.

In addition:

- Significant parts of one of Kelley's most gripping stories, an eyewitness account of a suicide bombing that helped make him a 2001 Pulitzer Prize finalist, are untrue. Kelley told readers he saw the bomber. But the man he described could not have been the bomber.
- Kelley's explanations of how he reported stories from Egypt, Russia, Chechnya, Kosovo, Yugoslavia, Israel, Cuba and Pakistan were contradicted by hotel, phone or other records or sources he said would confirm them.
- Kelley wrote scripts to help at least three people mislead USA TODAY reporters trying to verify his work, documents retrieved from his company-owned laptop computer show. Two of the people are translators Kelley paid for services months or years before. Another is a Jerusalem businessman, portrayed by Kelley as an undercover Israeli agent.
- In speeches to groups such as the Evangelical Press Association, Kelley talked of events that never occurred.

Kelley's conduct represents "a sad and shameful betrayal of public trust," former newspaper editors Bill Hilliard, Bill Kovach and John Seigenthaler said in a statement. The three editors said their "analysis of how these abuses occurred" will conclude "in the near future." Reporters Michael Hiestand, Kevin McCoy, Blake Morrison, Rita Rubin and Julie Schmit investigated Kelley's work.

Before he resigned in January, Kelley spent his entire 21-year career at USA TODAY. Editors nominated him for a Pulitzer Prize five times. Now, Editor Karen Jurgensen said the newspaper will withdraw all prize entries it made on Kelley's behalf. The newspaper also will flag stories of concern in its online archive.

"As an institution, we failed our readers by not recognizing Jack Kelley's problems. For that I apologize," USA TODAY publisher Craig Moon said. "In the future, we will make certain that an environment is created in which abuses will never again occur."

Jayson Blair (also from Wikipedia)

Jayson Blair (born March 23, 1976, Columbia, Maryland) is an American former New York Times reporter who was forced to resign from the newspaper in May 2003, after he was caught plagiarizing and fabricating elements of his stories.

Blair's rise at The New York Times

By 2000, his editors were rebuking Blair for the high error rate in his articles and his sloppy work habits, but in January 2001, despite making more mistakes than any other writer in the paper's Metro section, Blair, who also wrote one-third more stories than any reporter in the paper's Metro section, was made a full-time staff reporter.

After several more mistakes, poor evaluations and a period of leave during which he was said to be dealing with "personal problems," Blair's editor Jonathan Landman sent a memo to management, warning them "to stop Jayson from writing for *The New York Times*. Right now." Instead, in 2002, Blair was promoted to the national desk.

Despite recurring criticism of his performance, he was assigned to the Beltway sniper attacks, in particular because he knew the area and seemed "hungry." Blair wrote 52 stories during the sniper attacks. His reporting errors were so serious that one led a prosecutor to hold a press conference to denounce the claim that "all the evidence" pointed to Lee Boyd Malvo being the shooter. The error rate of Blair's material again became an issue internally. In another instance, Fairfax County, Virginia, prosecutor Bob Horan claimed that 60 percent of a story written by Blair, in which he was quoted, was inaccurate.

Despite such accusations and many corrections the paper was forced to make in the wake of his reporting, Blair continued to cover critical stories for *The New York Times*, moving from the sniper attacks to national coverage of the Iraq war. In his four years at *The Times*, Blair wrote more than 600 articles.

Plagiarism and fabrication scandal

On April 28, 2003, Blair received a call from *Times* national editor Jim Roberts, asking him about similarities between a story he had written two days earlier^[1] and one written by *San Antonio Express-News* reporter Macarena Hernandez on April 18^[2]. Hernandez had had a summer internship at *The Times* years earlier, and had worked alongside Blair. She contacted *The Times* after details and quotes in Blair's story appeared exactly the same as in hers.

Blair's plagiarism of Hernandez's article was so blatant that it led to further pressing by *Times* editors, who asked him to prove that he had, in fact, traveled to Texas and interviewed the woman in his article. After being unable to provide proof, Blair resigned from *The Times* on May 2, 2003. Following the resignation, a full investigation of all of Blair's articles began.

An internal report was commissioned by *Times* editors, with a committee consisting of 25 staffers and three outside journalists, led by assistant managing editor Allan Siegal. The Siegal committee discovered that 36 of the 73 national news stories Blair had written since October 2002 were suspect, ranging from fabrications to copying stories from other sources.

A small sample of the suspect articles:

- In the April 19, 2003 piece "In Military Wards, Questions and Fears From the Wounded", Blair described interviewing four injured soldiers in a naval hospital. He never went to the hospital and only spoke to one soldier on the phone, to whom he later attributed made-up quotes. Blair wrote that the soldier "will most likely limp the rest of his life and need to use a cane," which was untrue. He said another soldier had lost his right leg when it had only been amputated below the knee. He described two soldiers as being in the hospital at the same time, when in fact they were admitted five days apart[3].
- In the April 7, 2003 piece "For One Pastor, the War Hits Home", Blair wrote of a church service in Cleveland and an interview with the minister. Blair never went to Cleveland; he only spoke to the minister on the phone, then copied most of the article from an earlier *Washington Post* article. He also stole quotes from *The Cleveland Plain Dealer* and *The Daily News*. He made up a detail about the minister keeping a picture of his son inside his Bible, and got the name of the church wrong[4].
- In the April 3, 2003 piece "Rescue in Iraq and a 'Big Stir' in West Virginia", Blair claimed to have covered the Jessica Lynch story from her home town of Palestine. Blair never traveled to Palestine, and his entire contribution to the story consisted of rearranged details from Associated Press stories[5].
- In the March 27, 2003 piece "Relatives of Missing Soldiers Dread Hearing Worse News", Blair again pretended to be in West Virginia, and stole quotes from an Associated Press article. He claimed to have spoken to one relative who had no recollection of meeting Blair; said "tobacco fields and cattle pastures" were visible from Lynch's parents' house when they were not; erroneously stated that Lynch's brother was in the National Guard; misspelled Jessica Lynch's mother's name; and made up a dream that he claimed she had had[6].
- In the March 3, 2003 piece "Making Sniper Suspect Talk Puts Detective in Spotlight", Blair claimed to be in Fairfax, Virginia. He described a videotape of Lee Malvo, the younger defendant in the case, being questioned by police and quoted officials' review of the tape. No such tape existed. Blair also claimed a detective noticed blood on a man's jeans leading to a confession, which did not occur[7].
- In the February 10, 2003 piece "Peace and Answers Eluding Victims of the Sniper Attacks", Blair claimed to be in Washington, stole quotes from a *Washington Post* story and made up quotes from someone he had not interviewed. Blair ascribed a wide range of facts to a man featured in the article, almost all of which the man in question denied. Blair also published information that he had promised to the man was off the record[8].
- In the October 30, 2002 piece "US Sniper Case Seen as a Barrier to a Confession", Blair wrote that a dispute between police authorities had ruined the

interrogation of suspect John Muhammad, and that Muhammad was about to confess, quoting unnamed officials. This was swiftly denied by everyone involved. Blair also named certain lawyers as having witnessed the interrogation who were not present[9].

The Times reported on Blair's journalistic misdeeds in an unprecedented 7,239-word front-page story that ran on May 11, 2003, headlined "Times Reporter Who Resigned Leaves Long Trail of Deception." The story called the Blair scandal "a low point in the 152-year history of the newspaper."

The fallout

Following the revelations of Blair's deceit, *The Times* moved to uncover how management had allowed a young reporter with what appeared to be obvious problems rise so quickly through the paper's ranks. The Siegal committee, after a months-long investigation, found "a series of management and operation breakdowns" and "a stunning lack of communication within the newsroom." It found that Blair's quick advancement may have become favored as part of a "star system" that advanced some reporters close to then-executive editor Howell Raines. "He was given a regular tenured reporting job despite the misgivings of his immediate boss," the report said of Blair. "He was put on high-profile national assignments with his new supervising editors receiving no notice of the serious problems that had marked periods in his previous four years at the newspaper."

Both Raines and managing editor Gerald M. Boyd, considered partially culpable for Blair's indiscretions, resigned a month after Blair's departure.

The Siegal committee made several recommendations, many of which have since been instituted at the paper, including the appointment of a public editor to encourage access to the paper and to monitor readers' complaints about the paper's performance.

The Blair scandal also stoked much controversy and debate over affirmative action hiring. Blair's editor, Jonathan Landman, told the Siegal committee he felt the fact that Blair was African-American played a large part in his initial promotion to full-time staffer. "I think race was the decisive factor in his promotion," he said. "I thought then and I think now that it was the wrong decision." [10] *Newsweek* reporter Seth Mnookin similarly believes that Blair was fast-tracked because of the *Times*'s desire for a more diverse workforce.

On May 14, 2003, while he was still *Times* executive editor, Howell Raines (who is white) acknowledged at a massive meeting of *Times* news staffers, managers, and its publisher, Arthur Sulzberger Jr., that Blair had gotten the breaks he had enjoyed, because of his race. Five days later, however, black *Times* op-ed columnist Bob Herbert asserted in his column that race had nothing to do with the Blair case: "Listen up: the race issue in this case is as bogus as some of Jayson Blair's reporting."

Blair wrote the memoir *Burning Down My Masters' House: My Life at the New York Times* (ISBN 1-932407-26-X), published on March 6, 2004. In the book, he accused *The Times* of racism, and described his ethical lapses as the result of previous drug problems and bipolar disorder.

After resigning from *The Times*, Blair returned to college and said he planned to go into human resources. Though he remains a controversial figure, Blair has gained some public acceptance as an advocate for the mentally ill. Blair has made efforts to start support groups, counsel families and those with mental illnesses, and has spoken to college and business audiences about mental health and substance-abuse issues.

James Frey (from Wikipedia)

James Christopher Frey (born September 12, 1969 in Cleveland, Ohio USA) is an American writer. He graduated from Denison University and also attended The School of the Art Institute of Chicago. His first memoir, *A Million Little Pieces*, was published by Nan Talese/Doubleday in spring 2003. Its follow-up, *My Friend Leonard* (also a memoir) was published by Riverhead in summer 2005. Both books became New York Times #1 bestsellers. In late 2005 and early 2006, The Smoking Gun and other investigators discovered that elements of his memoir, *A Million Little Pieces*, were untrue. Frey, along with his wife and daughter, currently resides in New York City.

Controversy

Public Skepticism

On January 8, 2006, The Smoking Gun website published an article: "A Million Little Lies: Exposing James Frey's Fiction Addiction" alleging that Frey fabricated large parts of his memoirs, including details about his criminal record. [1]One incident in the book that came under particular scrutiny was a 1986 train-automobile collision in St. Joseph Township, Michigan. [2]

The Smoking Gun alleged that Frey had never been incarcerated and that he greatly exaggerated the circumstances of a key arrest detailed in the memoir: hitting a police officer with his car, while heavily intoxicated and high on crack, which led to a violent, profanity-laden melee with multiple officers and an 87-day jail sentence. In the police report that TSG uncovered, Frey was actually held at a police station for no more than five hours before posting a bond of a few hundred dollars for some minor offenses. The arresting officer, according to TSG, recalled Frey as having been polite and cooperative, and said that a suspect would only be handcuffed if he was being unruly.

Both the book's hardcover and paperback publishers, Doubleday and Anchor Books, respectively, initially stood by Frey. But examination of the evidence caused the publishers to alter their stances. They released a statement noting, "When the Smoking

Gun report appeared, our first response, given that we were still learning the facts of the matter, was to support our author. Since then, we have questioned him about the allegations and have sadly come to the realization that a number of facts have been altered and incidents embellished." [3] As a consequence, the publishers decided to include a publisher's note and an author's note from Frey as disclaimers to be included in future publications.[4]

The *Minneapolis Star Tribune* had questioned Frey's claims as early as 2003. Frey responded by saying, "I've never denied I've altered small details." [link](#) In a May 2003 interview, Frey claimed that his publisher had fact-checked his first book. He stated, "The only things I changed were aspects of people that might reveal their identity. Otherwise, it's all true." [5]

On January 11, 2006 Frey appeared on *Larry King Live* on CNN. He defended his work while claiming that all memoirs alter minor details for literary effect. Frey consistently referred to the reality of his addiction, which he said was the principal point of his work. Oprah Winfrey called in at the end of the show defending the essence of Frey's book and the inspiration it provided to her viewers, but said she relied on the publisher to assess the book's authenticity. Winfrey removed the references to Frey's work on the main page of her website ([link](#)), but left references in the Oprah's Book Club section earlier in the week. ([link](#))

On January 13, 2006, it was reported that all subsequent pressings of *A Million Little Pieces* would include an author's note addressing concerns about the content. ([link](#))

Live confrontation with Oprah

As more accusations against the book continued to surface, Winfrey invited Frey on the show, to find out directly from him whether he had lied to her and her viewers or had simply embellished minor details as he had convinced Larry King. Frey admitted to several of the allegations against him. He acknowledged that *The Smoking Gun* was "right" when the website reported that Frey had only spent "a few hours" in jail rather than the 87 days Frey claimed in his memoirs. [6]

Winfrey then brought out Frey's publisher Nan Talese to defend her decision to classify the book as a memoir, and forced Talese to admit that she had done nothing to check the book's veracity, despite the fact that her representatives had assured Winfrey's staff that the book was indeed non-fiction and described it as "brutally honest" in a press release.

On January 27, 2006, Random House issued a [statement](#) regarding the controversy. It noted that future editions of the book would contain notes from both the publisher and Frey on the text, as well as prominent notations on the cover and on their website about the additions. It also noted that future printings of the book would be delayed until these changes were made, and these additions were also being sent out promptly to booksellers for inclusion in previously shipped copies of the book.

Aftermath

On January 31, 2006, it was announced that Frey was dropped by his literary manager, Kassie Evashevski of Brillstein-Grey Entertainment over matters of trust. In an interview with Publisher's Weekly, Evashevski said that she had "never personally seen a media frenzy like this regarding a book before." Though she will no longer be representing him, when asked to reflect on Frey's future as a writer, she said, "I still believe he's a very talented writer and suspect we haven't heard the last of James Frey."

On February 1, 2006, Random House published Frey's note to the reader which will be included in future editions of the book. In the note, Frey apologized for fabricating portions of his book and for having made himself seem "tougher and more daring and more aggressive than in reality I was, or I am." He added, "People cope with adversity in many different ways, ways that are deeply personal. . . . My mistake . . . is writing about the person I created in my mind to help me cope, and not the person who went through the experience." Frey admitted that he had literary reasons for his fabrications, as well: "I wanted the stories in the book to ebb and flow, to have dramatic arcs, to have the tension that all great stories require." He also said memoirists had a right to draw upon their memories, in addition to documents, in creating their written works.^[2]

On February 24, 2006, Frey's publicist revealed that Penguin imprint Riverhead had dropped out of a two book, seven figure deal with Frey. Riverhead had previously published Frey's bestselling 2005 book, My Friend Leonard.

On September 12, 2006, Frey and publisher Random House, Inc. reached a tentative legal settlement, where readers who felt that they had been defrauded by Frey's "A Million Little Pieces" would be offered a refund. In order to receive the refund, customers must submit a proof of purchase, pieces of the book itself (page 163 from the hard cover or the front cover from the paperback), and complete a sworn statement indicating that they purchased the book under the assumption that it was a memoir.^[3]