

Welcome back to the Michael investigators podcast and they called the impromptu and with me today is Aymee Jones any how are you doing? I'm doing well thank you and we're going to talk about my recent article about Bryan Mineo and his and his nonprofit one with the ocean but you're an elite swimmer yourself so before we get into that, give the audience a little bit of background on things you accomplished as a swimmer.

I swam national champion relay team and I'm an swimmer and I was the first woman out of six Iron Man's division in the women and I grew up swimming. My dad was a gold medal in the Olympics. I studied swimming I teach swimming I love swimming. It's a great community and it's having a great schedule for people to have and you qualified and 80 except we were on that national team. We did go to Hawaii for three weeks cause they did have money they weren't sending a team so I know I was actually an alternate as well but it was it just didn't seem real, but it was the first time like politics had gotten into a sports that I had seen so because it was when I was swimming collegially, it was it was kind of difficult time...

...and a lot of swimmers and a lot of our alliances years and then you know Gerry Rodrigues School interview for the first article, I don't know how well you can do it, but give his résumé in my and you can go back and look at some of the things he's done but what he's really done in the last few years is through podcast and Group swims at Tower 26th and Online coaching. He has helped people really move through especially careers their swim because it doesn't affect easily the outcome of the race but you know if people have a terrible swim, they can never really be a top Tier swimmer so he actually created quite a great model that people have modeled after you know Group swims. The power in the Group tower 26 in what he did it in Los Angeles, which I think not only has a heart community to break into but he's successful you know not for years not for 10 years, but probably from 20 years doing this. He's also he was an editor of magazine, so he knows how to write. He knows how to research he knows how to reference. I think that's also helped him and his power of observation with helping people in their strokes because you know not only it was the written word powerful he also has I would say has a high integrity level, but he's also very embracing and he has the integrity to call out things that are right and to try to do you to help people do the right thing OK and when I interviewed him, Gerry said that Bryan had no Swimming qualifications.

I think I'm paraphrasing a little bit. I think you agree with him. Well do you agree with him and then what do you base it on?

I know I don't know him super well, but he's in high school, he had a girlfriend who was a trying to became his wife and I do think Bryan's probably very charismatic and he does look at what people are doing, and he knows and tries to create his own which you know is no problem, but he was never an elite was never an elite coach, but I think he's very good. at creating a following which is a great skill, but his swimming skills don't actually match the marketing. He does look a lot better and he would always be standing or dating you an Olympian or some elite person which I think helped his acceptance in the world of the world of Swimming and it's not a big deal but usually people know each other and where you swam what type you were on you know and it just seemed like - I was personally surprised, cause it doesn't seem like something you could make up or buy into and it's an interesting that it's been able to happen this way.

Then you ran into him --, but I think you accused them of basically lifting your ideas and getting them published in magazines and you also even contacted the magazine so walk the audience through what happened there?

It was a lot of a lot of swimming and a lot of analytical and I worked in laboratory and things and had people come from all over the world and so I was making a better way to swim. It was almost like a snowboard curve and I wanted to get out in the main stream and do some clinics and write for magazines and I would send in queries and then I would see they would turn me down and I would see Bryan's name with the query in the outline that I sent in. I called the editor and verbatim she said she liked him. She was trying to throw him a bone - they only pay \$300 and I

said well what about these clinics? They're like hey he's here we'd like him so to be able to make rather than on his accolades or his background or his research or his knowledge it was based on these in our personal relationships that he could develop which just it bothered me because it wasn't professional.

I just thought you know if somebody's great let them be great and I will step aside and if somebody has the background, I'm all for it. I can learn something, but when things are done in a strange way that it's just not very honest or open or transparent it was just very kind of upset and then because some of my stuff I felt like was so different than what was out there I got upset, and then I got upset when I called the editor because why what why are you giving somebody to fight but I did credit him cause I was like well he's doing that he's getting it out there, but I felt very shy and then at one point he called me and **I felt threatened because he said, "You know you're going to wish you never met me."**

And I said I already wish I never met you. **I have you know the emails.** I have everything there, but I couldn't believe that something I loved was getting hijacked almost by somebody that didn't deserve it and it was like I had to bless and release them and go all the same stuff. It's going to keep happening although I did call a few people he was dating and just said hey be careful you know he's not above board physically he's not above Board emotionally. He's not. I just said you know I would utilize caution and I did that because I try to help people not have some of the same frustrations that I've been through so it wasn't really against him. It was just kind of like you know be on the lookout for this, but I'm not saying that you know he didn't help somebody swim that's fine but you do need to get permits for the beach. You do need to get safety you do it would be better if you know what you were doing and maybe by now he has learned what he's doing?

Just to be clear though you presented some ideas for swimming articles and and the swim magazine rather than letting you write, it had Bryan write basically but well, let's get that so you presented some ideas for an article for a triathlon magazine, and he wrote the article you presented and found and it was no big deal but that is a big deal.

On that unfortunately have it happened to me. It happens to a lot of people who tried to try to do this and it's not right and you mentioned he had an ex-girlfriend's. Her wife was only and I think how did he use her to build his own credibility and then present himself as the coach and he know but he you know it's hard because there becomes a big blur between a personal relationship and a coaching relationship, which you know to me, it's always bothered me when you see the soccer kids dating their coach and marrying the coach. It's like I just feel like there should be separate things and even though people are older, it's kind of like **just cause you're standing in a garage doesn't make you a car just cause you're standing next to an elite. You're not an elite athlete, but you know and through the whole process I just tried to bless them and release him and stay away from him, but I felt like oh my God it's Bryan again like he's relocating he's resurfacing.**

He's doing the same thing, but the scale keeps getting bigger and bigger and more not so much inappropriate but just basically wrong like everybody needs to follow the same rules and of course it's easy to do things the way you wanna do them, but you can't we can't live like that especially as a group OK and then you mentioned that he he doesn't follow the rules. How do you? How do you know that I just know when he was doing when he first started doing Swim he wasn't doing he wasn't getting permit when you know he didn't have safety people in some of his swims and then he would get them. He would present himself in a vague way and all the sudden you know he get written in an article and people go because he wrote this article, he must be this and then this group had them and then oh that group had them so then oh yeah, let's have **Brian so he kind of climbed his way up because of you writing an article or being in a clinic or dating an Olympian or having a good like none of it was on his own accolades or merits or research or training or development.**

It was all bizarre associations that fell apart, but yet they took him to the next level and you know you don't want to judge people and you wish people the best, but when people are when you have stuff like this happen, you're like oh wait a minute like when is it going to stop? Like why does he keep doing this job so it sounds like he's essentially kind of like a media creation and I think as a culture some of it happened with social media when you used to have an

article written on you, it was written written on you you didn't present it. You didn't contact the TV station. You didn't write the article and turn it in. It used to be very, very different and I feel like now with Andrew Neumann if we work and Elisabeth Holmes of Thanos and Anna Dolby people not only invent themselves then they invent the company and then they invent the story that goes with the company and then it doesn't work but they get these people behind them and they get a cult like following. It's like a strange religion and people think it's so great you know because their suit has a OWO on a one with the ocean and you're just like oh wait a minute like it's a nonprofit like so where is some money go?

Who are you helping? Who's on the board who is on you know how does the salary breakdown? How much did you raise all this should be transparent and yes, it's a phenomenal idea. And people need to learn to swim, but there's a proper protocol in how to behave and do things and I just feel like with him. It just kept going that it's I can't believe that now it's been a decade later and the arena is bigger. What's happening? It's not OK and then they have this ability to make anybody that calls them out as a whistleblower then they're the bad people and he's a victim and it's like you know just cause you're not doing it right doesn't make you a victim do it right and everybody will wish the best for you.

You've created something that people want do it in the right way and then we will just say good for you right and you actually been approached by a few of his acolyte in the last few days you told me correct and so and what they've put pressure on you haven't put pressure on me but they act like I'm trying to say something bad about open water or Bryan and how much he's done for the community and I'm like no when you have a nonprofit or you're presenting yourself you have to do you have to use the proper channels like I cannot say I'm a physician and open a practice because my dad was a physician or because I know a physician and I know Swimming isn't of the level of being a physician, but it does take a while to have.

There are certain things you cannot buy. You cannot buy your background. You cannot buy you know your talent. You cannot buy your heart hard work and some of those things he's been able to skim over so it's really created a dissidence of people going oh my God you're saying something bad about this. We like this and there is huge power in a group so when you get people running together swimming together they meet people they their lives open up and especially during the pandemic so I do think I'm not saying some of his conceptual. Things are bad even though I don't agree with them I don't believe I will ever be one with the ocean. I think I need to respect and fear the ocean and it's not my home. I wish it were. I love it, but I don't think you know, but people are buying into that and that's fine but if you're having a nonprofit and if you're running a business, just the protocol has to be OK and that level of narcissist and self promotion is a little bit hard because you think it's you think it's real OK and were you aware of the problems with the nonprofit before the article came out because it sounds like you were

I had kind of heard, but **I really tried to distance myself because when he called me at home and when other people had said he had said stuff I just I just didn't want to live. I just don't want to live that way I don't want to I don't want somebody you know threatening me coming after me. I even got me to be much more exclusive with my work. I started writing lesson and just working with people and not putting as much out there, but then that actually hurts me** because then you don't get the following. You don't get you know that and not that I would want the following but it would make things a little bit easier I think in my life so I've heard about it but I didn't know, but I realized now that they think people are smearing him and I think people are just saying hey dude come on.

We all have to do the right thing you know you open a nonprofit you have to have a board your taxes have to be transparent everything you can't have one person getting the salary. You can't say you're doing this and doing it for this time, but if people actually look at his life and where he's lived, he has invented himself reinvented himself said you know he was a physical therapist said he was a trainer said he was he wasn't but I do think people they want to believe you want to believe the best people and especially when people are helping you with a steer based anxiety thing you want to think that they are what they say, and I think the nonprofit has started to raise so many issues with

people because there are so many charlatans now and I'm not sure if it was because of the pandemic or because people are just looking for. I don't know it's it. It's very prevalent now and so for those who believed it, this is all a smear well, what do you say to that I don't know if it's the critic but his biggest supporters that accuse you and others of smearing him what would you say to them?

I'm actually really happy and I love to me. It reminds me of when I taught eighth grade and Rome, Italy and I had to come in after their favorite teacher and middle schools want to love their teacher people want there is this thing where people want to give it up to their guru and whether it's a coach or a teacher everybody in the world is a middle school one that he has helped them. That is great. I felt like he first took Gerry's concept of tower 26 and develop something called SMOG people meeting and you know it's not like I wish him ill will, but I wish the people that are falling over him and saying that everybody is smearing him would go wait what do I know about this? What's true what's not true? Is this where oh I've donated \$100 where does my money go?

How is it broken down so that's the thing that I wish people would look at you know when they're donating or hiring and even people's backgrounds like well where did they live? Why did they live here? **They dated this person here and then they move here and then they create this and you know the hopscotch sing to me raise a red flag because if you go in every town there are stories** and it's not like people are behind talking about and they're just saying hey this is what you're going to do you need to do this you have your CPR do you have the permit? Do you have the background that you're saying? Do you know how do you do that so I think it got I think for people I'm not saying he hasn't helped people. I'm not saying he hasn't had people feel welcome and that they love him.

I'm just saying you know what it's time now you have to do things the way other people do and some of the things it's not that great it's not that great getting insurance. It's not that great getting permit. It's not that great working hours and hours and a nonprofit and not making much money and not getting paid right now. I agree with that and you can you can be helping people, but that doesn't excuse you from bolstering your résumé and it doesn't excuse you from not getting appropriate permits and it definitely doesn't excuse you from if you're starting a nonprofit any clearly is taking the bulk of the money and making it to your own salary last question if somebody's thinking about swimming, and you wanted to encourage them, what's like the best thing about swimming or why should people go to swimming? I think it's a lifelong activity. I do think it's close to meditation. I think it's also a skill if you fall off a boat or drowned, you can also help people. I think people get older and their joints are old and it really is the Fountain of Youth and I think now you know 3/4 of the Earth is covered with water people can't you know there's so much traffic riding become scary running their joints are bad so swimming is this beautiful wonderful thing and now people have more leisure time they're learning at late later in life and there's a great community and I just feel like it's not. It's not a leader, but you do have to have a little bit of respect and referenced for not only those that came before you, but those that are around you and you know even the ocean and I do not feel he has that as far as the way he's done fixed.

I'm not saying he won't get that and it won't develop but I just think it's an amazing thing and it's amazing thing of my life and he's not going to take away my love of swimming and you know he's created a group and they love it and they love him but it's like OK. You guys get it together and do it this way and guess what he might have to get a job he might have to do step away from it a year cause you I don't know how you could support yourself right and you're not supposed to make a lot of money start up nonprofit that's for sure. OK well, thank you for being here. Well, have a good night.

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https://openwaterpedia.com/index.php?title=Gerry_Rodrigues

https://openwaterpedia.com/index.php?title=Bryan_Mineo