

# Healing US: Uniting across the political spectrum to save lives?

*Featuring  
Maddy Purves & Laura Fielding*



*Maddy Purves, filmmaker &  
editor of Healing US*

## *This time on Code WACK!*

How did the new documentary [Healing US](#), about the drawbacks of America's for-profit healthcare system, get made? Which harrowing stories did they highlight? **When Americans need health care, *why do so many worry whether they can afford to be treated?***

For answers to these questions and more, we spoke to award-winning documentary filmmaker **Maddy Purves**, who is editor of the film, and **Laura Fielding**, founder of [Red Berets Medicare for All](#) and associate producer of Healing US. This is the first in a two-part series with Maddy Purves and Laura Fielding.

## **SHOW NOTES**

# WE DISCUSS

*Let's start with introductions. Maddy and Laura, tell us a little about yourselves and how you got involved in the fight for Medicare for All.*

"I am a documentary filmmaker, and I had gotten in touch with the director, Kenny Ballantine, who knew ... that they wanted to do a story about ... the cute little old people (and they're not really old) who were knitting Red Berets for health care in Washington." - **Maddy Purves**

"My roots go back to when I was a military spouse. I was an active duty veteran, served my time and then lived overseas in the UK with my husband who was stationed there. That was the foundation of my activism because so many of the people that I was working and going to school with said, 'Laura, how can you stand to serve a country that leaves so many people behind? We hear all these horror stories about people that don't have health care, and it's just a tragedy.' So that really affected me because I wasn't aware, really, at that time about the horrors of the system because I grew up in a middle-class family and we had health care ... That was not something that I was aware was affecting so many people and then I had heard Bernie Sanders' message about Medicare for All and felt really, really inspired that maybe I could get involved. And through the seeing and the knitting of some of the Pink Hats, I thought maybe we could do that for healthcare justice." - **Laura Fielding**

*The documentary argues that it's time to change America's for-profit healthcare system. How did this film get made and why is this issue so important now?*

"Kenny went out to Washington to interview and also film The Red Berets doing their thing... And prior Laura had called the digital masses and had arranged I think a dozen interviews for Kenny upon Kenny arriving in

Washington, which was not part of the original plan, but it was Laura [Fielding] thinking, *"This person's voice needs to be involved."*

"Among those was [Scott Desnoyers](#) who was actually the first interview Kenny did that day... immediately upon doing all these interviews with Steve and Leah Perkel with many of the other Washingtonians, it just became very clear very quickly that this was a larger scale thing. And it wasn't just about the specific group of craftivists in Washington. It was much more than that..."  
- **Maddy Purves**

*The documentary notes that roughly 68,000 Americans will die this year due to lack of adequate health care and nearly half a million families will file for bankruptcy due to healthcare costs. Numbers like these are mind boggling. But individual stories like Steve and Leah Perkel's really bring these statistics to life. What can you tell us about their situation?*

"The thing that really hits me about their story right now ... is that as they mentioned in the film, they were already involved in the cause. They were already actively out in the Medicare for All movement, being activists and advocates for people to have healthcare justice in this country.

"... Sorry, I could come to tears with this. Though they were already doing the good work of trying to make sure people had health care and then this story you know, of how medical bankruptcy and getting underneath medical debt happened to them. So I guess it sort of strikes me as a beautiful tribute to people that are out doing this work who are affected by it even as they're trying to do the work of healthcare justice." - **Laura Fielding**

# Helpful Links

[Watch Healing US Now](#)

[Maddy Purves](#)

[Kenny Ballentine Productions](#)

[Red Berets for Medicare for All](#)

[Tacoma 'craftivist' featured in documentary on 'health care for all' movement](#), *Northwest Public Broadcasting*

[Whole Washington](#)

['Legalized manslaughter for profit?' Grieving dad demands change](#), *Code WACK!*

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## Episode Transcript

Read the full [episode transcript](#).

## Biography:

### Maddy Purves

**Maddy Purves** is a dynamic filmmaker with a passion for crafting stories into captivating and impactful experiences. Equipped with a B.A. in Media Studies from Brigham Young University, Maddy's filmmaking journey began with her directorial debut, "**Same-Sex Attracted**" (2020), earning her accolades from festivals around the country by the age of 25.

Maddy's next feature **ANCHOR POINT** (2021) secured awards like the Pitch Fund at AmDocs 2021, the Fort Myers Beach International Film Festival's People's Choice Award, and Best Feature Documentary at both Cinequest and Paris International film festivals.

Maddy's recent work continues with local creative partner Kenny Ballentine on Healing US (2023), the most expansive project to date. Narrated by Susan Sarandon, **Healing US** and its companion the **Healing US Network** are disrupting the entire political narrative in America. Maddy, Kenny, and the rest of the Healing US team are committed to breaking down barriers and building bridges across America by sharing stories of empathy, compassion, and hope.

## Laura Fielding

Laura Fielding is a holistic healthcare practitioner, a veteran for peace, founder of the creative grassroots coalition of craftivists [Red Berets for Medicare for All](#), and Associate Producer of **Healing US**.

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