

The “Deep State” Then and Now

By [Edward Curtin](#)

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Theme: [History](#), [Law and Justice](#), [Media Disinformation](#), [Police State & Civil Rights](#), [US NATO War Agenda](#)

“...since grasping the present from within is the most problematic task the mind can face.” – Frederic Jameson

Have you ever seen a photograph of yourself from the past and laughed or grimaced at the way you were dressed or your hair style? It’s a common experience. But few people draw the obvious conclusion about the present: that our present appearance might be equally laughable. The personal past seems to be “over there,” an object to be understood and dissected for its meaning, while the present seems opaque and shape-shifting – or just taken-for-granted okay. “That was then,” says the internal voice, “but I am wiser now.” Historical perspective, even about something as superficial as appearance, rarely illuminates the present, perhaps because it makes us feel ignorant and unfree.

This is even truer with political and social history.

In recent years there has been a spate of books and articles detailing the CIA’s past Cold war cultural and political propaganda efforts, from the creation of the Congress for Cultural Freedom (CCF) with its string of magazines, to its collaboration with many famous writers and intellectuals, including Peter Matthiessen, George Plimpton, Richard Wright, Irving Kristol, et al., and its penetration and working relationships with so many publications and media outlets, including *The New York Times*, *the Paris Review*, *Encounter*, etc. These exposés show how vast was the CIA’s propaganda network throughout the media and the world, and how many people participated in the dirty work.

Joel Whitney, in his recently published book, *Finks: How the CIA Tricked the World’s Best Writers* (the word “tricked” ignores the eager accomplices), tells this scandalous story in illuminating detail. His account informs and nauseates simultaneously, as one learns how the CIA penetrated NGOs, television, universities, magazines, newspapers, book publishing, etc., finding willing collaborationists everywhere – scoundrels eager to spy on and betray even their friends as they deceived the public worldwide; how well-meaning leftist writers such as Ernest Hemingway and Garcia Marquez were tricked into lending their names and work to propaganda publications; how leftists were set against leftists in an elaborate effort to sow paranoia and confusion that could be used to put the Soviet Union in the worst possible light; and how many front organizations were created to secretly funnel money to support these endeavors and make and break careers. The story makes your skin crawl.

But that was then. What about now? Whitney doesn’t say, presumably because he doesn’t know; doesn’t have documentary evidence to name names. This is not a criticism. He does say that “we understand vaguely that our media are linked to our government still today, and to government’s stated foreign policy,” and he wonders if the ideology that drove the CIA’s past endeavors “remains with us. (I am reminded of Emerson’s words: “What you do

(or don't) speaks so loudly that I cannot hear what you say."). Despite his use of tepid language about the present, especially that word "vaguely," it seems that Whitney thinks similar propaganda activities are going on today, which is why a blurb for *Finks* at his publisher's website (OR Books) and at amazon.com by James Risen of the New York Times, who has written two books about the CIA, strikes such an odd note. It reads:

It may be difficult to believe that the American intellectual elite was once deeply embedded with the CIA. But with *Finks*, Joel Whitney vividly brings to life the early days of the Cold War, when the CIA's Ivy League ties were strong, and key American literary figures were willing to secretly do the bidding of the nation's spymasters.

"Difficult to believe." For whom?

"Once." When? In the bad old days?

"When the CIA's Ivy League ties were strong." Does the CIA now recruit from community colleges?

Are these the good old days? Such language usage makes one wonder: is it just a quickly scribbled blurb or carefully chosen words?

The Future is Now

No doubt the archives and sealed documents will be pried loose through repeated FOIA requests in thirty or forty years and the moans and groans about today's bad old days will fill the air. How could they have done such things? It's just outrageous! But that was then, not now. It's different now; we are older but wiser.

It's hard to suppress a sardonic laugh, so I won't. Today we are obviously drowning in CIA propaganda throughout the corporate mainstream media, and in the alternative online media as well. One has only to see "what they do, or don't." The documentation is in the doing, and it doesn't take a genius to grasp how blatant it is. It is in no way "vague." But it does take good faith, and a passion for truth, which is sorely lacking. Why this is so is a key issue I will return to.



Source: 21st Century Wire

As in the past, some propaganda is obvious and other subtler and indirect. Yet it is relentless. There may or may not be a comparable Congress for Cultural Freedom today, but with advanced technology and the internet, it may not be needed. Methods may change;

intentions remain the same. What was once done surreptitiously is now done blatantly, as I wrote in January: [the deep state has gone shallow](#). Fifty years ago the CIA coined the term “conspiracy theory” as a weapon to be used to dismiss the truths expressed by critics of its murder of President Kennedy, and those of Malcom X, MLK, and RFK. All the media echoed the CIA line. While they still use the term to dismiss and denounce, their control of the MSM is so complete today that every evil government action is immediately seconded, whether it be the lies about the Attacks of September 11, 2001, the wars against Afghanistan, Iraq, Syria, Libya, Yemen, etc., the coup in Ukraine, the downing of the Malaysian jetliner there, drone murders, the looting of the American people by the elites, alleged sarin gas attacks in Syria, the anti-Russia bashing – everything. The New York Times, the Washington Post, CNN, NPR, etc. – all are stenographers for the deep state.

Denying Existential Freedom

One of the first things an authoritarian governing elite must do is to convince people that they are not free. This has been going on for at least forty years, ever since the Church Committee’s revelations about the CIA in the mid-seventies, including its mind-control programs. Everyone was appalled at the epiphany, so a different tactic was employed. Just have “experts,” social, psychological, and biological “scientists,” repeat ad infinitum that there is no longer any mind control since we now know there is no mind; it is an illusion, and it all comes down to the brain. Biology is destiny, except in culturally diversionary ways in which freedom to choose is extolled – e.g. the latest fashions, gender identity, the best hair style, etc. Create and lavishly fund programs for the study of the brain, while supporting and promoting a vast expansion of pharmaceutical drugs to control people. Do this in the name of helping people with their emotional and behavioral problems that are rooted in their biology and are beyond their control. And create criteria to convince people that they are sick.

We have been told interminably that our lives revolve around our brains (our bodies) and that the answers to our problems lie with more brain research, drugs, genetic testing, etc. It is not coincidental that the U. S. government declared the 1990s the decade of brain research, followed up with 2000-2010 as the decade of the behavior project, and our present decade being devoted to mapping the brain and artificial intelligence, organized by the Office of Science and Technology Project and the Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency. How convenient! George H. W. Bush, Clinton, George W. Bush, Obama, Trump — what a difference! But this is science and the welfare of the world. Science for idiots.

Drip by drip, here and there, articles, books, media reports have reiterated that people are “determined” by biological, genetic, social, and psychological forces over which they have no control. To assert that people are free in the Satrean sense (*en soir*, condemned to freedom, or free will) has come to be seen as the belief of a delusional fool living in the past, a bad philosopher, an anti-scientist, a poorly informed religionist, one nostalgic for existential cafes, Gauloises, and black berets, but being totally out of it. One who doesn’t grasp the truth since he doesn’t read the New York Times or watch CBS television.

The conventional propaganda – I almost said wisdom – created through decades-long media and academic (don’t forget the pathetic academy) repetition, is that we are not free. Let me repeat: we are not free.

Investigator reporter John Rappoport has consistently exposed the propaganda involved in

the creation and expansion of the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual (DSM) with its pseudo-scientific falsehoods and collusion between psychiatrists and the pharmaceutical industry. [As he correctly notes](#), the CIA's MKULTRA mind-control program has morphed into modern psychiatry, both with the same objectives of disabling and controlling people by convincing them that they are not free and are in need of a chemical brain bath.

Can anyone with an awareness of this history doubt there is a hidden hand behind this development? Once you have convinced people that they are not free in the most profound sense, the rest is child's play. Convinced that they are puppets, they become puppets to be played. Who would want to get people to believe they were not free?

Terrified to See the Current Truth?

There are many excellent writers who, because they are truth seekers, have used logical analysis to deconstruct the patent propaganda of deep state forces and their media scribes. They do so through close reading (a skill once taught in schools) and historical knowledge without waiting for documentation, though sometimes it arrives from sources such as Wikileaks, FOIA requests, or government leakers like Edward Snowden or Chelsea Manning. While not always definitive, many of these analyses clearly raise disturbing questions that give the lie to the press's claims of innocent objectivity. Their arguments are laid bare so the CIA's and deep-state's handiwork shines through. Robert Parry, Michel Chossudovsky, Paul Craig Roberts, John Pilger, James Petras, David Ray Griffin, Graeme MacQueen and many others have so demolished the propaganda that the question of why so many liberals and left-leaning people still refuse to accept the obvious echoes in the ears of those familiar with the Congress for Cultural Freedom's machinations to set leftists and liberals against each other through media manipulation. While left and right-wing disinformation collaborationists are everywhere and the CIA obviously has its people placed throughout the cultural and media landscape, it is clear to me that there is something else involved.

So much of the ongoing propaganda travels under the banner of "the war on terror," which is, of course, an outgrowth of the attacks of September 11, 2001, appropriately named and constantly reinforced as 9/11 in a wonderful example of linguistic mind-control: a constant emergency to engender anxiety, depression, panic, and confusion, four of the symptoms that lead the DSM "experts" and their followers to diagnose and drug individuals. The term 9/11 was first used in the New York Times on September 12, 2001 by Bill Keller, the future Times' editor.

Douglas Valentine, a true expert on the CIA and author of *The CIA as Organized Crime* and *The Phoenix Program*, has shown that the CIA's highly structured assassination program in Vietnam – the Phoenix Program – is the template for "the war on terror." In other books he has shown how the CIA's role in drug trafficking is directly linked to the massive increased usage of heroin and other street drugs, another face of the drugging of the country. Thus the "institutional" structure and consequent practices of one of the most ruthless propaganda and terrorist organizations of the United States' deep-state (the Phoenix program) continues to this day here and abroad. To think that the Agency's handiwork once carried on under the banner of the Committee for Cultural Freedom does not continue today would take extreme naïveté, the inability to reason, historical ignorance, plain bad faith, or a combination thereof.

Which brings me back to the issue of why so many "liberal" Democrats – those whose bibles are the *New York Times*, *NPR*, *The Washington Post*, *Democracy Now*, etc. – can only see

propaganda when they can attribute it to Donald Trump or the Russians. Why has this group, together with their Republican and conservative fellow travelers, embraced a new McCarthyism and allied itself with the deep-state forces that they were once allegedly appalled by? It surely isn't the policies of the Trump administration or his bloviating personality, for these liberals allied themselves with Obama's anti-Russian rhetoric, his support for the U.S. orchestrated neo-fascist Ukrainian coup, his destruction of Libya, his wars of aggression across the Middle East, his war on terror, his trillion dollar nuclear weapons modernization, his enjoyment of drone killing, his support for the coup in Honduras, his embrace of the CIA and his CIA Director John Brennan, his prosecution of whistle-blowers, etc. The same media that served the CIA so admirably over the decades became the media that became liberals' paragons of truth. Why?

Let me try to answer by referring to two articles that appeared side-by-side in *The New York Times Magazine* for May 28, 2017. Their content, style, and juxtaposition suggest an answer to the schizoid subtleties of master manipulators, and how cultural/political propaganda works in oblique ways off the front pages.

The cover story for that issue, "Aleppo After the Fall," accompanied by the words "Life And Loss Amid The Ruins of Syria's Fractious And Devastating Civil War" and a photo of a demolished Aleppo district, sets the tone, especially the lie in the words "civil war." The war was started under President Obama in March 2011 by the United States/NATO/Israel with the arming of Islamist "freedom fighters" in an effort to overthrow President Bashar al Assad. But the Sunday morning Times reader is immediately told otherwise, as they have been for the past six years of carnage. Most probably don't notice the deception as they flip to the table of contents where they see a photo of cream puffs and coffee.

As they sip their morning coffee and think about cream puffs, let's imagine our readers turning to the first major story preceding the Aleppo piece by Robert F. Worth, a contributing writer for the magazine. It is an article titled "Empire of Dust" by Molly Young, also a contributing writer. It is a title that suggests further disintegration of a most serious nature (no, not the American Empire), yet it is an article about Amanda Chantal Bacon and the rise of the wellness industry. A photo of this "beatific" 34 year old entrepreneurial guru in a flowing white gown in a half-lotus position, seated on a marble kitchen countertop surrounded by some "magical" rocks, takes up an entire page. The photo, a Barthian signifier if ever there were one, is clearly meant to be deciphered by the *Times'* clientele for secrets to the beautiful, luxurious, and peaceful life due to one of means and exquisite taste, one who will spend five dollars on a newspaper and live a balanced, Epicurean life of self-care and sophistication. Bacon's massive light-filled kitchen with its marble countertops - a sine qua non of today's "good life" - serves the usual elitist function of drawing in readers with a discerning, moneyed eye.

Alternately fawning and critical, Young begins by telling the reader,

"The amount of time I waste finding and consuming alternative-medicine supplements for 'brain function' has made me at least 10 percent dumber, and that paradox is not lost on me. It was that impulse that made me pause last year at a fancy store in Brooklyn when I spotted a glass jar labeled 'Brain Dust'."

From there Young takes us to Los Angeles, where she interviews the lifestyle guru Bacon,

and we hear about Spirit Dust, Beauty Dust, Sex Dust, vaginal steaming, spirit truffles, and sunbathing the vagina, and to the Hamptons where she again spots Brain Dust in an expensive store that also sells “boeuf-bourguignon-flavored dog biscuits.” Young, having traversed the golden triangle – Brooklyn, L.A., and the Hamptons – tells us how Bacon captures her imagination even as she “was ashamed of its capture.” She drinks Power Dusted coffee with the Moon Juice founder who tells her,

“I was told growing up in NYC that I had learning disabilities and mental illness. That was all the rage in the ‘90s.”

(Presumably they are raging no longer.) After offering mild criticisms’ and writing that after visiting Bacon’s house she “wanted to move to California and eat bee pollen,” Young covertly orders bee pollen from her phone and ends by telling us that the Moon Juice bee pollen she has ordered “would arrive in two to four business days.” The reader is left to wonder who is dumber or smarter despite or because of the Brain Dust.

But if one is feeling brain dead, one can move or jump-cut to the next article, a piece of cosmopolitan gravitas meant to clarify who are the good guys and who the bad in the Middle East, specifically Syria.

Turning to this article on Aleppo, a juxtaposing of pornographic proportions, one is greeted with a two page photo of totally destroyed buildings in front of which walk a woman pushing a toddler in a stroller and a man pushing another toddler in a makeshift wooden cart covered in plastic sheeting. One flips from “Sex Dust” to disgust and heartbreak in a page turn. The reader is walked step-by-step into a piece of political propaganda, as Robert Worth tells us that

“The Syrian tragedy started in a moment of deceptive simplicity, when the peaceful protesters of the 2011 Arab Spring seemed destined to inherit the future.”

This deception is then quickly followed with the claim that Assad used “chemical weapons in the town of Khan Sheikhoun in early April,” an assertion backed by no evidence and clearly refuted by Seymour Hersh, among others. Worth tells us that “the Syrian regime (note the sly use of the word regime, a staple of linguistic mind-control) and its Russian allies repeatedly bombed hospitals and civilian areas,” and that in the United States such actions were “widely deplored as a war crime comparable to the worst massacres of the Bosnian war during the 1990s.” One has to give credit to Worth for a masterful double-deception here, first by accusing the Syrians and Russians but not the United States of repeatedly bombing hospitals and civilian areas, and then segueing to the “Bosnian” war with nary a mention of the U.S./NATO conspiracy to dismantle Yugoslavia through proxies and the subsequent massive bombing of Serbia and Serbian civilians that were clearly war crimes committed by the liberal saint, Bill Clinton. Throughout this piece Worth repeatedly accuses the Assad government of war crimes and atrocities while whitewashing the United States.

Immediately following his assertion of Syrian war crimes, he tells the *Sunday Times*’ readers that

“the State Department released satellite photographs suggesting that the

regime is burning the bodies of executed prisoners in a crematory at the Sednaya prison complex, north of Damascus, in an alleged effort to hide evidence.”

This claim is based on a totally discredited claim made in February 2017 by Amnesty International, and Worth, knowing that there is no evidence for this, cagily uses the words “suggesting” and “alleged.” But juxtaposed with the war crimes assertions, only a careful reader searching for truth would notice the trick, surely not a Time Magazine reader already predisposed by the daily Times’s constant flow of government lies. Quoting a speech by Assad in which he claimed there was a “huge conspiracy” to dismantle and destroy Syria, Worth dismissively rejects this obvious truth by quoting an anonymous former regime official (a common tactic) who says he was shocked by the speech. If Assad had given a different speech, Worth notes,

“the past six years would have unrolled very differently, and oceans of blood might have been spared.”

This is the imperial mindset at its finest, all rolled into an extensive *New York Times Magazine* article meant to enlighten and inform its alleged sophisticated readers.



What I am suggesting with these magazine examples is that the old trick perfected by the Congress for Cultural Freedom to juxtapose cultural pieces with political ones is alive and well today, even if the CCF or its equivalent doesn’t exist, since it isn’t needed. Illiteracy has become the norm and stupidity the rule as the electronic revolution has destroyed people’s ability to concentrate or stay focused long enough to realize they are being taken for a ride by propagandists and that they are being purposely overloaded with information meant to create a felt need for “Brain Dust.” This has been going on for so long that to admit one is still being taken for a ride is equivalent to admitting to gullibility so profound that it must be denied. It is one thing criticize the politicians you hate – George W. Bush and Donald Trump for liberal Democrats and Bill Clinton and Obama for conservative Republicans – and to call them liars; but to contemplate the fact that the CIA has been lying to you through all these mouthpieces and your vaunted news sources are stenographers for the intelligence agencies is too much reality to bear. “I might have looked funny in that old photograph, but today I am with it and stylish.”

Sure.

Everything has become style today, and no doubt the CIA has learned that the trick is to hide truthful substance behind the style. Evidence is beside the point. Just assert things in a slick style. Assert them repeatedly, even when they have been proven false or fraudulent.

Sex Dust and Power Dust may be absurd con jobs, but they sell. They meet a “need,” a need created by the society that has slyly equated power with sex for a population that has been convinced they have neither and need drugs to endow them with both. A piece about Brain Dust may not have the drawing power of a *Paris Review* interview with Ernest Hemingway or Boris Pasternak, but then there were no “lifestyle gurus” in those days when people read real literature, not today’s *New York Times* best sellers. Propaganda was more literary in those days; it had to have substance. In a “wellness culture,” it has to have style. Today the only time you hear the word substance, is in “substance abuse,” which is fitting.

The CIA is in the styling business; they’ve gone shallow. Everyone looks great that way, or so they think.

Edward Curtin is a writer whose work has appeared widely. He teaches sociology at Massachusetts College of Liberal Arts. His website is <http://edwardcurtin.com/>

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