

Project MKUltra

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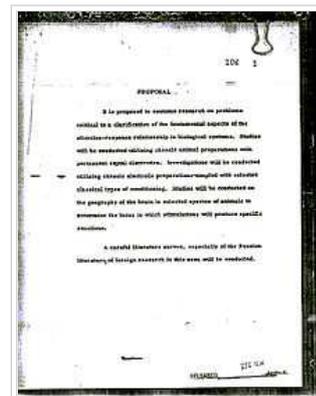
Project MKUltra is the code name of a U.S. government covert research operation experimenting in the behavioral engineering of humans (mind control) through the CIA's Scientific Intelligence Division. The program began in the early 1950s, was officially sanctioned in 1953, was reduced in scope in 1964, further curtailed in 1967 and officially halted in 1973.^[1] The program engaged in many illegal activities;^{[2][3][4][5]} in particular it used unwitting U.S. and Canadian citizens as its test subjects, which led to controversy regarding its legitimacy.^{[6][7][8][9]} MKUltra involved the use of many methodologies to manipulate people's mental states and alter brain functions, including the surreptitious administration of drugs (especially LSD) and other chemicals, hypnosis, sensory deprivation, isolation, verbal and sexual abuse, as well as various forms of torture.^[10]

The scope of Project MKUltra was broad, with research undertaken at 80 institutions, including 44 colleges and universities, as well as hospitals, prisons and pharmaceutical companies.^[11] The CIA operated through these institutions using front organizations, although sometimes top officials at these institutions were aware of the CIA's involvement.^[12] As the Supreme Court later noted, MKULTRA was:

concerned with "the research and development of chemical, biological, and radiological materials capable of employment in clandestine operations to control human behavior." The program consisted of some 149 subprojects which the Agency contracted out to various universities, research foundations, and similar institutions. At least 80 institutions and 185 private researchers participated. Because the Agency funded MKULTRA indirectly, many of the participating individuals were unaware that they were dealing with the Agency.^[13]

Project MKUltra was first brought to public attention in 1975 by the Church Committee of the U.S. Congress, and a Gerald Ford commission to investigate CIA activities within the United States. Investigative efforts were hampered by the fact that CIA Director Richard Helms ordered all MKUltra files destroyed in 1973; the Church Committee and Rockefeller Commission investigations relied on the sworn testimony of direct participants and on the relatively small number of documents that survived Helms' destruction order.^[14]

In 1977, a Freedom of Information Act request uncovered a cache of 20,000 documents relating to project MKUltra, which led to Senate hearings later that same year.^[7] In July 2001 some surviving information regarding MKUltra was officially declassified.



Declassified MKUltra documents

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Background

Precursor experiments

A precursor of the MKUltra program began in 1945 when the Joint Intelligence Objectives Agency was established and given direct responsibility for Operation Paperclip. The program recruited former Nazi scientists, some of whom studied torture and brainwashing, and several who had been identified and prosecuted as war criminals during the Nuremberg Trials.^{[15][16]}

Several secret U.S. government projects grew out of Operation Paperclip. These projects included Project CHATTER (established 1947), and Project BLUEBIRD (established 1950), which was renamed Project ARTICHOKE in 1951. Their purpose was to study mind control, interrogation, behavior modification and related topics.

MKUltra

The project's intentionally oblique CIA cryptonym is made up of the digraph *MK*, meaning that the project was sponsored by the agency's Technical Services Staff, followed by the word Ultra (which had previously been used to designate the most secret classification of World War II intelligence). Other related cryptonyms include Project MKNAOMI and Project MKDELTA.

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Headed by Sidney Gottlieb, the MKUltra project was started on the order of CIA director Allen Welsh Dulles on April 13, 1953.^[17] Its remit was to develop mind-controlling drugs for use against the Soviet bloc, largely in response to alleged Soviet, Chinese, and North Korean use of mind control techniques on U.S. prisoners of war in Korea.^[18] The CIA wanted to use similar methods on their own captives. The CIA was also interested in being able to manipulate foreign leaders with such techniques,^[19] and would later invent several schemes to drug Fidel Castro. Experiments were often conducted without the subjects' knowledge or consent.^[20] In some cases, academic researchers being funded through grants from CIA front organizations were unaware that their work was being used for these purposes.^[21]

In 1964, the project was renamed MKSEARCH. The project attempted to produce a perfect truth drug for use in interrogating suspected Soviet spies during the Cold War, and generally to explore any other possibilities of mind control. Another MKUltra effort, Subproject 54, was the Navy's top secret "Perfect Concussion" program, which was supposed to use sub-aural frequency blasts to erase memory. However, the program was never carried out.^[22]

Because most MKUltra records were deliberately destroyed in 1973 by order of then CIA director Richard Helms, it has been difficult, if not impossible, for investigators to gain a complete understanding of the more than 150 individually funded research sub-projects sponsored by MKUltra and related CIA programs.^[23]

The project began during a period of what Rupert Cornwell described as "paranoia" at the CIA, when America had lost its nuclear monopoly, and fear of Communism was at its height.^[24] James Jesus Angleton, head of CIA counter-intelligence, believed that the organization had been penetrated by a mole at the highest levels.^[24]

Goals

The Agency poured millions of dollars into studies examining methods of influencing and controlling the mind, and of enhancing their ability to extract information from resistant subjects during interrogation.^{[25][26]}

Some historians have asserted that creating a "Manchurian Candidate" subject through "mind control" techniques was a goal of MKUltra and related CIA projects.^[27] Alfred McCoy has claimed that the CIA attempted to focus media attention on these sorts of "ridiculous" programs, so that the public would not look at the primary goal of the research, which was developing effective methods of torture and interrogation. Such authors cite as one example that the CIA's KUBARK interrogation manual refers to "studies at McGill University", and that most of the techniques recommended in KUBARK are exactly those that researcher Donald Ewen Cameron used on his test subjects (sensory deprivation, drugs, isolation, etc.).^[25]

One 1955 MKUltra document gives an indication of the size and range of the effort; this document refers to the study of an assortment of mind-altering substances described as follows.^[28]

1. Substances which will promote illogical thinking and impulsiveness to the point where the recipient would be discredited in public.
2. Substances which increase the efficiency of mentation and perception.
3. Materials which will cause the victim to age faster/slower in maturity.
4. Materials which will promote the intoxicating effect of alcohol.
5. Materials which will produce the signs and symptoms of recognized diseases in a reversible way so that they may be used for malingering, etc.
6. Materials which will cause temporary/permanent brain damage and loss of memory.
7. Substances which will enhance the ability of individuals to withstand privation, torture and coercion during interrogation and so-called "brain-washing".
8. Materials and physical methods which will produce amnesia for events preceding and during their use.
9. Physical methods of producing shock and confusion over extended periods of time and capable of surreptitious use.
10. Substances which produce physical disablement such as paralysis of the legs, acute anemia, etc.
11. Substances which will produce a chemical that can cause blisters.
12. Substances which alter personality structure in such a way that the tendency of the recipient to become dependent upon another person is enhanced.
13. A material which will cause mental confusion of such a type that the individual under its influence will find it difficult to maintain a fabrication under questioning.
14. Substances which will lower the ambition and general working efficiency of men when administered in undetectable amounts.
15. Substances which promote weakness or distortion of the eyesight or hearing faculties, preferably without permanent effects.
16. A knockout pill which can surreptitiously be administered in drinks, food, cigarettes, as an aerosol, etc., which will be safe to use, provide a maximum of amnesia, and be suitable for use by agent types on an ad hoc basis.
17. A material which can be surreptitiously administered by the above routes and which in very small amounts will make it impossible for a person to perform physical activity.

Experiments

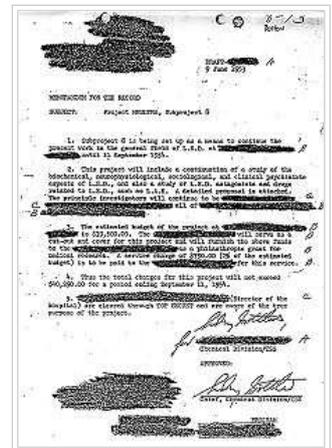
CIA documents suggest that "chemical, biological and radiological" means were investigated for the purpose of mind control as part of MKUltra.^[29] A secret memorandum granted the MKUltra director up to six percent of the CIA research budget in fiscal year 1953, without oversight or accounting.^[30] An estimated \$10 million USD (\$80 million adjusted for inflation) or more was spent.^[31]

Drugs

LSD

Early CIA efforts focused on LSD, which later came to dominate many of MKUltra's programs. Technical Services Staff officials understood that LSD distorted a person's sense of reality, and they felt compelled to learn whether it could alter someone's basic loyalties.^[32] The CIA wanted to know if they could make Russian spies defect against their will and whether the Russians could do the same to their own operatives.^[32]

Once Project MKUltra officially got underway in April, 1953, experiments included administering LSD to mental patients, prisoners, drug addicts and prostitutes, "people who could not fight back", as one agency officer put it.^[33] In one case LSD was administered to a mental patient in Kentucky for 174 days.^[33] LSD was also administered to CIA employees, military personnel, doctors, other government agents, and members of the general public in order to study their reactions. LSD and other drugs were usually administered without the subject's knowledge or informed consent, a violation of the Nuremberg Code that the U.S. agreed to follow after World War II. The aim of this was to find drugs which would irresistibly bring out deep confessions or wipe a subject's mind clean and program him or her as "a robot agent".^[34]



Dr. Sidney Gottlieb approved of an MKUltra subproject on LSD in this June 9, 1953 letter.

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In Operation Midnight Climax, the CIA set up several brothels in San Francisco, California to obtain a selection of men who would be too embarrassed to talk about the events. The men were dosed with LSD, the brothels were equipped with one-way mirrors, and the sessions were filmed for later viewing and study.^[35] In other experiments where people were given LSD without their knowledge, they were interrogated under bright lights with doctors in the background taking notes. The subjects were told that their "trips" would be extended indefinitely if they refused to reveal their secrets. The people being interrogated this way were CIA employees, U. S. military personnel, and agents suspected of working for the other side in the Cold War. Long-term debilitation and several deaths resulted from this.^[34] Heroin addicts were bribed into taking LSD with offers of more heroin.^[12]

The office of Security used LSD in interrogations but Dr. Sidney Gottlieb, the chemist who directed MKUltra, had other ideas: he thought it could be used in covert operations. Since its effects were temporary, he believed it could be given to high officials and in this way affect the course of important meetings, speeches etc. Since he realized there was a difference in testing the drug in a laboratory and using it in clandestine operations, he initiated a series of experiments where LSD was given to people in "normal" settings without warning. At first, everyone in Technical Services tried it; a typical experiment involved two people in a room where they observed each other for hours and took notes. As the experimentation progressed, a point was reached where outsiders were drugged with no explanation whatsoever and surprise acid trips became something of an occupational hazard among CIA operatives. Adverse reactions often occurred, for example an operative who had received the drug in his morning coffee, became psychotic and ran across Washington, seeing a monster in every car that passed him. Incidents like that reaffirmed that LSD is a dangerous weapon but that only made them more enthusiastic. The experiments continued even after Dr. Frank Olson, an army scientist who had not taken LSD before, went into deep depression after a surprise trip and later fell from a thirteenth story window (it is unclear whether he committed suicide or was murdered before being thrown out of the window).^[36]

Some subjects' participation was consensual, and in these cases they appeared to be singled out for even more extreme experiments. In one case, seven volunteers in Kentucky were given LSD for 77 consecutive days.^[37]

LSD was eventually dismissed by MKUltra's researchers as too unpredictable in its results.^[38] They had given up on the notion that LSD was "the secret that was going to unlock the universe," but it still had a place in the cloak-and-dagger arsenal. However, by 1962 the CIA and the army had developed a series of superhallucinogens such as the highly touted BZ, which was thought to hold greater promise as a mind control weapon. This resulted in the withdrawal of support by many academics and private researchers, and LSD research became less of a priority altogether.^[36]

Other drugs

Another technique investigated was connecting a barbiturate IV into one arm and an amphetamine IV into the other.^[39] The barbiturates were released into the person first, and as soon as the person began to fall asleep, the amphetamines were released. The person would then begin babbling incoherently, and it was sometimes possible to ask questions and get useful answers.

Other experiments involved drugs such as temazepam (used under code name MKSEARCH), heroin, morphine, MDMA, mescaline, psilocybin, scopolamine, marijuana, alcohol, sodium pentothal, and ergine (in Subproject 22).^[40]

Hypnosis

Declassified MKUltra documents indicate hypnosis was studied in the early 1950s. Experimental goals included: the creation of "hypnotically induced anxieties," "hypnotically increasing ability to learn and recall complex written matter," studying hypnosis and polygraph examinations, "hypnotically increasing ability to observe and recall complex arrangements of physical objects," and studying "relationship of personality to susceptibility to hypnosis."^[41] Experiments were conducted with drug induced hypnosis and with anterograde and retrograde amnesia while under the influence of such drugs.

Canadian experiments

The experiments were exported to Canada when the CIA recruited Scottish psychiatrist Donald Ewen Cameron, creator of the "psychic driving" concept, which the CIA found particularly interesting. Cameron had been hoping to correct schizophrenia by erasing existing memories and reprogramming the psyche. He commuted from Albany, New York, to Montreal every week to work at the Allan Memorial Institute of McGill University and was paid \$69,000 from 1957 to 1964 to carry out MKUltra experiments there. In addition to LSD, Cameron also experimented with various paralytic drugs as well as electroconvulsive therapy at thirty to forty times the normal power. His "driving" experiments consisted of putting subjects into drug-induced coma for weeks at a time (up to three months in one case) while playing tape loops of noise or simple repetitive statements. His experiments were typically carried out on patients who had entered the institute for minor problems such as anxiety disorders and postpartum depression, many of whom suffered permanently from his actions.^[42] His treatments resulted in victims' incontinence, amnesia, forgetting how to talk, forgetting their parents, and thinking their interrogators were their parents.^[43] His work was inspired and paralleled by the British psychiatrist William Sargant at St Thomas' Hospital, London, and Belmont Hospital, Surrey, who was also involved in the Intelligence Services and who experimented extensively on his patients without their consent, causing similar long-term damage.^[44]

It was during this era that Cameron became known worldwide as the first chairman of the World Psychiatric Association as well as president of the American and Canadian psychiatric associations. Cameron had also been a member of the Nuremberg medical tribunal in 1946–47.^[45]

Naomi Klein argues in her book *The Shock Doctrine* that Cameron's research and his contribution to the MKUltra project was actually not about mind control and brainwashing, but about designing "a scientifically based system for extracting information from 'resistant sources.' In other words, torture." Citing Alfred W. McCoy, Klein further writes that "Stripped of its bizarre excesses, Dr. Cameron's experiments, building upon Donald O. Hebb's earlier breakthrough, laid the scientific foundation for the CIA's two-stage psychological torture method."^[46]

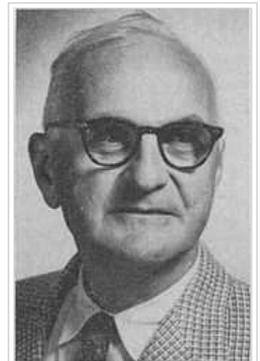
Revelation

In 1973, with the government-wide panic caused by Watergate, the CIA Director Richard Helms ordered all MKUltra files destroyed.^[47] Pursuant to this order, most CIA documents regarding the project were destroyed, making a full investigation of MKUltra impossible. A cache of some 20,000 documents survived Helms' purge, as they had been incorrectly stored in a financial records building and were discovered following a FOIA request in 1977. These documents were fully investigated during the Senate Hearings of 1977.^[7]

In December 1974, *The New York Times* alleged that the CIA had conducted illegal domestic activities, including experiments on U.S. citizens, during the 1960s. That report prompted investigations by the U.S. Congress, in the form of the Church Committee, and by a presidential commission known as the Rockefeller Commission that looked into domestic activities of the CIA, the FBI, and intelligence-related agencies of the military.



1953 experiment record



Donald Ewen Cameron
c.1967

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In the summer of 1975, congressional Church Committee reports and the presidential Rockefeller Commission report revealed to the public for the first time that the CIA and the Department of Defense had conducted experiments on both unwitting and cognizant human subjects as part of an extensive program to influence and control human behavior through the use of psychoactive drugs such as LSD and mescaline and other chemical, biological, and psychological means. They also revealed that at least one subject had died after administration of LSD. Much of what the Church Committee and the Rockefeller Commission learned about MKUltra was contained in a report, prepared by the Inspector General's office in 1963, that had survived the destruction of records ordered in 1973.^[48] However, it contained little detail. Sidney Gottlieb, who had retired from the CIA two years previously, was interviewed by the committee but claimed to have very little recollection of the activities of MKUltra.^[11]

The congressional committee investigating the CIA research, chaired by Senator Frank Church, concluded that "[p]rior consent was obviously not obtained from any of the subjects". The committee noted that the "experiments sponsored by these researchers ... call into question the decision by the agencies not to fix guidelines for experiments."

Following the recommendations of the Church Committee, President Gerald Ford in 1976 issued the first Executive Order on Intelligence Activities which, among other things, prohibited "experimentation with drugs on human subjects, except with the informed consent, in writing and witnessed by a disinterested party, of each such human subject" and in accordance with the guidelines issued by the National Commission. Subsequent orders by Presidents Carter and Reagan expanded the directive to apply to any human experimentation.

In 1977, during a hearing held by the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence, to look further into MKUltra, Admiral Stansfield Turner, then Director of Central Intelligence, revealed that the CIA had found a set of records, consisting of about 20,000 pages, ^[citation needed] that had survived the 1973 destruction orders because they had been stored at a records center not usually used for such documents.^[48] These files dealt with the financing of MKUltra projects and contained few project details, however much more was learned from them than from the Inspector General's 1963 report.

On the Senate floor in 1977, Senator Ted Kennedy said:

The Deputy Director of the CIA revealed that over thirty universities and institutions were involved in an "extensive testing and experimentation" program which included covert drug tests on unwitting citizens "at all social levels, high and low, native Americans and foreign." Several of these tests involved the administration of LSD to "unwitting subjects in social situations." At least one death, that of Dr. Olson, resulted from these activities. The Agency itself acknowledged that these tests made little scientific sense. The agents doing the monitoring were not qualified scientific observers.^[49]

In Canada, the issue took much longer to surface, becoming widely known in 1984 on a CBC news show, *The Fifth Estate*. It was learned that not only had the CIA funded Dr. Cameron's efforts, but perhaps even more shockingly, the Canadian government was fully aware of this, and had later provided another \$500,000 in funding to continue the experiments. This revelation largely derailed efforts by the victims to sue the CIA as their U.S. counterparts had, and the Canadian government eventually settled out of court for \$100,000 to each of the 127 victims. None of Dr. Cameron's personal records of his involvement with MKUltra survive, since his family destroyed them after his death from a heart attack while mountain climbing in 1967.^[50]

1984 U.S. General Accounting Office report

The U.S. General Accounting Office issued a report on September 28, 1984, which stated that between 1940 and 1974, DOD and other national security agencies studied thousands of human subjects in tests and experiments involving hazardous substances.

The quote from the study:^[51]

Working with the CIA, the Department of Defense gave hallucinogenic drugs to thousands of "volunteer" soldiers in the 1950s and 1960s. In addition to LSD, the Army also tested quinuclidinyl benzilate, a hallucinogen code-named BZ. (Note 37) Many of these tests were conducted under the so-called MKULTRA program, established to counter perceived Soviet and Chinese advances in brainwashing techniques. Between 1953 and 1964, the program consisted of 149 projects involving drug testing and other studies on unwitting human subjects

Deaths

Given the CIA's purposeful destruction of most records, its failure to follow informed consent protocols with thousands of participants, the uncontrolled nature of the experiments, and the lack of follow-up data, the full impact of MKUltra experiments, including deaths, will never be known.^{[23][28][51][52]}

Several known deaths have been associated with Project MKUltra, most notably that of Frank Olson. Olson, a United States Army biochemist and biological weapons researcher, was given LSD without his knowledge or consent in November, 1953, as part of a CIA experiment and died under suspicious circumstances a week later. A CIA doctor assigned to monitor Olson claimed to have been asleep in another bed in a New York City hotel room when Olson exited the window and fell thirteen stories to his death. In 1953, Olson's death was described as a suicide that had occurred during a severe psychotic episode. The CIA's own internal investigation concluded that the head of MK ULTRA, CIA chemist Sidney Gottlieb, had conducted the LSD experiment with Olson's prior knowledge, although neither Olson nor the other men taking part in the experiment were informed as to the exact nature of the drug until some 20 minutes after its ingestion. The report further suggested that Gottlieb was nonetheless due a reprimand, as he had failed to take into account Olson's already-diagnosed suicidal tendencies, which might have been exacerbated by the LSD.^[53]

The Olson family disputes the official version of events. They maintain that Frank Olson was murdered because, especially in the aftermath of his LSD experience, he had become a security risk who might divulge state secrets associated with highly classified CIA programs, about many of which he had direct personal knowledge.^[54] A few days before his death, Frank Olson quit his position as acting chief of the Special Operations Division at Detrick, Maryland (later Fort Detrick) because of a severe moral crisis concerning the nature of his biological weapons research. Among Olson's concerns were the development of assassination materials used by the CIA, the CIA's use of biological warfare materials in covert operations, experimentation with biological weapons in populated areas, collaboration with former Nazi scientists under Operation Paperclip, LSD mind-control research, the use of biological weapons (including anthrax) during the Korean War^[citation needed], and the use of psychoactive drugs during "terminal" interrogations under a program code-named Project ARTICHOKE.^[55] Later forensic evidence conflicted with the official version of events; when Olson's body was exhumed in 1994, cranial injuries indicated that Olson had been knocked unconscious before he exited the window.^[53] The medical examiner termed Olson's death a "homicide".^[56] In 1975, Olson's family received a \$750,000 settlement from the U.S. government and formal apologies from President Gerald Ford and CIA Director William Colby, though their apologies were limited to informed consent issues concerning Olson's ingestion of LSD.^{[52][57]} On 28 November 2012, the Olson family filed suit against the U.S. federal government for the wrongful death of Frank Olson.^[58]



Frank Church headed the Church Committee, an investigation into the practices of the US intelligence agencies.



1977 United States Senate report on MKUltra

In his 2009 book, *A Terrible Mistake*, researcher H. P. Albarelli Jr. concurs with the Olson family and concludes that Frank Olson was murdered because a personal crisis of conscience made it likely he would divulge state secrets concerning several CIA programs, chief among them Project ARTICHOKE and an MKDELTA project code-named Project SPAN. Albarelli theorizes that Project SPAN involved the contamination of food supplies and the aerosolized spraying of a potent LSD mixture in the village of Pont-Saint-Esprit, France in August, 1951. The 1951 Pont-Saint-Esprit mass poisoning resulted in mass psychosis, 32 commitments to mental institutions, and at least seven deaths. Albarelli writes that Olson was involved in the development of aerosolized delivery systems and had been present at Pont-Saint-Esprit in August, 1951. According to Albarelli, several months before resigning his position Olsen had witnessed a terminal interrogation conducted in Germany under Project ARTICHOKE. While most academic sources accept ergot poisoning, poisoning by mercury, mycotoxins, or nitrogen trichloride, as the cause of the Pont-Saint-Esprit epidemic,^{[59][60][61][62][63]} others like paranormal author John Grant Fuller in *The Day of Saint Anthony's Fire* have reached conclusions similar to Albarelli's.^{[52][64]}

On April 26, 1976, the Church Committee of the United States Senate issued a report, "Final Report of the Select Committee to Study Governmental Operation with Respect to Intelligence Activities",^[65] In Book I, Chapter XVII, p 389 this report states:

LSD was one of the materials tested in the MKUltra program. The final phase of LSD testing involved surreptitious administration to unwitting non-volunteer subjects in normal life settings by undercover officers of the Bureau of Narcotics acting for the CIA.

A special procedure, designated MKDELTA, was established to govern the use of MKUltra materials abroad. Such materials were used on a number of occasions. Because MKUltra records were destroyed, it is impossible to reconstruct the operational use of MKUltra materials by the CIA overseas; it has been determined that the use of these materials abroad began in 1953, and possibly as early as 1950.^{[66][67][68][69][70]}

Drugs were used primarily as an aid to interrogations, but MKUltra/MKDelta materials were also used for harassment, discrediting, or disabling purposes.^{[66][67][68][69][70]}

Another known victim of Project MKUltra was Harold Blauer, a professional tennis player in New York City, who died in January, 1953 as a result of a secret Army experiment involving MDA.^[71]

Legal issues involving informed consent

The revelations about the CIA and the Army prompted a number of subjects or their survivors to file lawsuits against the federal government for conducting experiments without informed consent. Although the government aggressively, and sometimes successfully, sought to avoid legal liability, several plaintiffs did receive compensation through court order, out-of-court settlement, or acts of Congress. Frank Olson's family received \$750,000 by a special act of Congress, and both President Ford and CIA director William Colby met with Olson's family to publicly apologize.

Previously, the CIA and the Army had actively and successfully sought to withhold incriminating information, even as they secretly provided compensation to the families. One subject of Army drug experimentation, James Stanley, an Army sergeant, brought an important, albeit unsuccessful, suit. The government argued that Stanley was barred from suing under a legal doctrine—known as the *Feres doctrine*, after a 1950 Supreme Court case, *Feres v. United States*—that prohibits members of the Armed Forces from suing the government for any harms that were inflicted "incident to service."

In 1987, the Supreme Court affirmed this defense in a 5–4 decision that dismissed Stanley's case: *United States v. Stanley*.^[72] The majority argued that "a test for liability that depends on the extent to which particular suits would call into question military discipline and decision making would itself require judicial inquiry into, and hence intrusion upon, military matters." In dissent, Justice William Brennan argued that the need to preserve military discipline should not protect the government from liability and punishment for serious violations of constitutional rights:

The medical trials at Nuremberg in 1947 deeply impressed upon the world that experimentation with unknowing human subjects is morally and legally unacceptable. The United States Military Tribunal established the Nuremberg Code as a standard against which to judge German scientists who experimented with human subjects... [I]n defiance of this principle, military intelligence officials ... began surreptitiously testing chemical and biological materials, including LSD.

Justice Sandra Day O'Connor, writing a separate dissent, stated:

No judicially crafted rule should insulate from liability the involuntary and unknowing human experimentation alleged to have occurred in this case. Indeed, as Justice Brennan observes, the United States played an instrumental role in the criminal prosecution of Nazi officials who experimented with human subjects during the Second World War, and the standards that the Nuremberg Military Tribunals developed to judge the behavior of the defendants stated that the 'voluntary consent of the human subject is absolutely essential ... to satisfy moral, ethical, and legal concepts.' If this principle is violated, the very least that society can do is to see that the victims are compensated, as best they can be, by the perpetrators.

In another law suit, Wayne Ritchie, a former United States Marshal, after hearing about the project's existence in 1990, alleged the CIA laced his food or drink with LSD at a 1957 Christmas party which resulted in his attempting to commit a robbery at a bar and his subsequent arrest. While the government admitted it was, at that time, drugging people without their consent, U.S. District Judge Marilyn Hall Patel found Ritchie could not prove he was one of the victims of MKUltra or that LSD caused his robbery attempt and dismissed the case in 2007.^[73]

Extent of participation

Forty-four American colleges or universities, 15 research foundations or chemical or pharmaceutical companies and the like including Sandoz (now Novartis) and Eli Lilly and Company, 12 hospitals or clinics (in addition to those associated with universities), and three prisons are known to have participated in MKUltra.^{[74][75]}

Notable subjects

- A considerable amount of credible circumstantial evidence suggests that Theodore Kaczynski, also known as the Unabomber, participated in CIA-sponsored MKUltra experiments conducted at Harvard University from the fall of 1959 through the spring of 1962.^[76] During World War II, Henry Murray, the lead researcher in the Harvard experiments, served with the Office of Strategic Services (OSS), which was a forerunner of the CIA. Murray applied for a grant funded by the United States Navy, and his Harvard stress experiments strongly resembled those run by the OSS.^[76] Beginning at the age of sixteen, Kaczynski participated along with twenty-one other undergraduate students in the Harvard experiments, which have been described as "disturbing" and "ethically indefensible."^{[76][77]}
- Merry Prankster Ken Kesey, author of *One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest*, volunteered for MKUltra experiments involving LSD and other psychedelic drugs at the Veterans Administration Hospital in Menlo Park while he was a student at nearby Stanford University. Kesey's experiences while under the influence of LSD inspired him to promote the drug outside the context of the MKUltra experiments, which influenced the early development of hippie culture.^{[78][79]}



The author Ken Kesey was a willing participant in the LSD experiments.

- Robert Hunter is an American lyricist, singer-songwriter, translator, and poet, best known for his association with Jerry Garcia and the Grateful Dead. Along with Ken Kesey, Hunter was an early volunteer MKUltra test subject at Stanford University. Stanford test subjects were paid to take LSD, psilocybin, and mescaline, then report on their experiences. These experiences were creatively formative for Hunter:

Sit back picture yourself swooping up a shell of purple with foam crests of crystal drops soft nigh they fall unto the sea of morning creep-very-softly mist...and then sort of cascade tinkley-bell like (must I take you by the hand, every so slowly type) and then conglomerate suddenly into a peal of silver vibrant uncomprehendingly, blood singingly, joyously resounding bells....By my faith if this be insanity, then for the love of God permit me to remain insane.^[80]
- Cathy O'Brien claims to have been subjected to the program since childhood. She names several prominent government participants in her book *Trance Formation of America*.^[81]
- Candy Jones, American fashion model and radio host, claimed to have been a victim of mind control in the 1960s.^[82]
- Boston mobster James "Whitey" Bulger volunteered for testing while in prison.^[83]

Conspiracy theories

MKUltra plays a part in many conspiracy theories given its nature and the destruction of most records.^[84]

Lawrence Teeter, attorney for convicted assassin Sirhan Sirhan, believed Sirhan was under the influence of hypnosis when he fired his weapon at Robert F. Kennedy in 1968. Teeter linked the CIA's MKUltra program to mind control techniques that he claimed were used to control Sirhan.^{[85][86]}

Jonestown, the Guyana location of the Jim Jones cult and Peoples Temple mass suicide, was thought to be a test site for MKUltra medical and mind control experiments after the official end of the program. Congressman Leo Ryan, a known critic of the CIA, was murdered by Peoples Temple members after he personally visited Jonestown to investigate various reported irregularities.^[87]

Aftermath

At his retirement in 1972, Gottlieb dismissed his entire effort for the CIA's MKUltra program as "useless".^{[24][88]}

Although the CIA insists that MKUltra-type experiments have been abandoned, some CIA observers say there is little reason to believe it does not continue today under a different set of acronyms.^[47] 14-year CIA veteran Victor Marchetti has stated in various interviews that the CIA routinely conducts disinformation campaigns and that CIA mind control research continued. In a 1977 interview, Marchetti specifically called the CIA claim that MKUltra was abandoned a "cover story".^{[89][90]}

See also

International

- Human experimentation in North Korea
- Human radiation experiments
- Nazi human experimentation
- Poison laboratory of the Soviet secret services
- Unethical human experimentation in the United States
- Unit 731

Operations

- Category:Central Intelligence Agency operations
- COINTELPRO
- Project MKCHICKWIT
- Project MKOFTEN

Other topics

- Kurt Blome
- Paul Robeson

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- ↑ Chapter 3: Supreme Court Dissents Invoke the Nuremberg Code: CIA and DOD Human Subjects Research Scandals (http://www.hss.doe.gov/healthsafety/ohre/roadmap/achre/chap3_4.html)
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External links

- Select GIF scans of declassified MKUltra Project Documents (<http://www.michael-robinett.com/declass/c000.htm>)
- Complete PDF archive of declassified MKUltra Project Documents (<http://www.abuse-of-power.org/foia-mkultra-document-archive/>)
- U.S. Supreme Court, *CIA v. Sims*, 471 U.S. 159 (1985) 471 U.S. 159 (<http://laws.findlaw.com/us/471/159.html>)
- U.S. Supreme Court, *United States v. Stanley*, 483 U.S. 669 (1987) 483 U.S. 669 (<http://laws.findlaw.com/us/483/669.html>)
- Entire Four (4) CD-ROM set of CIA / MKUltra Declassified documents released by the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) (<http://www.theblackvault.com/m/articles/view/CIA-MKULTRA-Collection>)

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