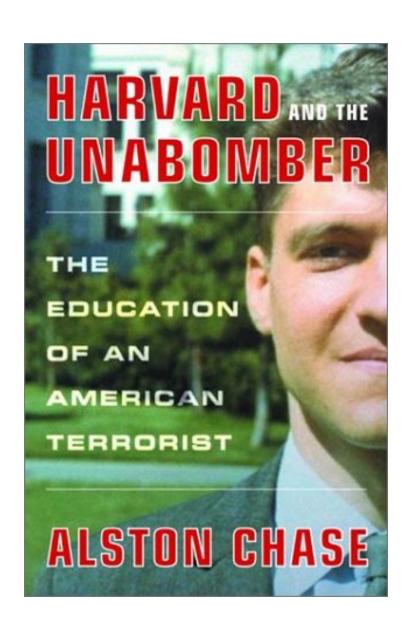


Murray, the Zelig



Drugs that affect the mind are only one example of the new methods of controlling human behavior that modern society is developing.

—TED KACZYNSKI,

"Industrial Society and Its Future"

The LSD movement was started by the CIA. I wouldn't be here now without the foresight of the CIA scientists.

TIMOTHY LEARY, 1977

In giving the six unwitting Harvard seniors LSD that spring of 1954, Dr. Hyde was motivated by the highest ideals. He and his colleagues believed that by studying the effects of this drug on the brain, they might find a cure for mental illness. But the CIA was paying his bills, and it had a different agenda in mind. The agency wanted a drug, as LSD historians Martin A. Lee and Bruce Shlain put it, that would "blow minds and make people crazy."

University researchers would soon discover that, like Dr. Faustus, the legendary Renaissance magician who sold his soul to the devil in exchange for knowledge and power, they had signed a contract before reading the fine print. And the fine print contained an ethical trap: Saving the world required the sacrifice—of others. In the name of the highest ideals, some would commit the lowest of crimes. Others, while not quite doing evil, simply lost their ethical direction. For both, this journey from high to low was such a gradual descent that many did not notice.

And among these fellow travelers would be Professor Murray himself.

* * *

The agency's interest began with its precursor, the OSS, in 1942, when General Donovan, anxious to perfect interrogation techniques for captured spies, established a "truth drug" committee of prominent psychologists, including Dr. Winfred Overholser, superintendent of St. Elizabethís hospital in Washington, D.C., and Dr. Edward Strecker, president of the American Psychiatric Association. The committee began testing a wide variety of chemicals on test subjects, from peyote and marijuana to "goofball" concoctions of sedatives and stimulants.

The following year, an obscure Swiss chemist named Albert Hoffmann, working for the Sandoz pharmaceutical company, accidentally imbibed a concoction he had created while looking for a circulation stimulant. The chemical was D-lysergic acid diethylamide, better known today as LSD. Without warning, Hoffmann found himself experiencing what was the world's first acid trip. Coincidentally, at the same time, across the Rhine River in Germany, Nazi doctors were testing another hallucinogenic drug, mescaline, on inmates at the Dachau concentration camp.

The discovery of the Nazis' Dachau notes after the war by U.S. Navy investigators triggered intense interest in mescaline in American intelligence circles. But it also generated alarm. The field of psychoactive drugs, it seemed, was yet another defense-related area in which the Nazis had been ahead of the Allies. To snatch up these Nazi experts in the dark sciences before the Soviets got them, the Pentagon launched 'Operation Paperclip,' a highly secret program to bring some of these German scientists into America. As most had been Nazis, their entry into the United States was prohibited by law. So Paperclip officials smuggled them in, forging, deleting, and doctoring documents to erase evidence of their Nazi past.

Some Paperclip scientists, such as the famous rocket specialist and Nazi Party member Werner von Braun, went to work in the U.S. space program. Others were chemical warfare specialists, experts on everything from sterilization to mass extermination. Among these were members of the former team of doctors already wanted by the U.S. Army war crimes unit for having conducted the ghoulish "high-altitude" (oxygen and pressure deprivation) experiments on Dachau inmates that killed at least seventy. These men would carry on similar research for the U.S. Air Force. Still other Paperclip scientists were sent to Edgewood Arsenal in Maryland, where they were put on the CIA payroll and began testing Nazi nerve and mustard gases on unwitting American GIs, seriously injuring several.

Soon, the very same Nazis who had helped to develop nerve gas and "Zyklon B"—tthe gas used to exterminate Jews at Auschwitzówere helping to perfect America's own "Psychochemical Warfare" program, testing everything from alcohol to LSD on unsuspecting American soldiers. At Edgewood and Fort Holabird, Maryland (where I was stationed as a young second lieutenant in intelligence in 1957-58) at least one thousand soldiers were given up to twenty doses of LSD. Some, locked in boxes and then given LSD, went temporarily insane. Others had epileptic seizures.

In 1949, a Viennese chemist named Otto Kauders gave a lecture on LSD at the Boston Psychopathic Hospital, claiming that this newly discovered drug artificially and temporarily induced psychosis. This claim would later be found false -- acid trips are not at all like psychosis -- but Kaudersís account impressed the hospital staff. If LSD reproduced the symptoms of psychosis, they reasoned, this proved that the disease had a chemical base. So studying LSD's effects might lead them to drugs for treating mental illness.

Shortly after Kaudersís talk, one hospital staffer, Max Rinkel, ordered a supply of LSD from Sandoz and then persuaded his colleague Robert Hyde to test it on himself. Hyde's ensuing trip—the first by an American—fired his enthusiasm for further experimentation. Research on one hundred subjects began at Harvard's Boston Psychopathic under Hyde's direction in 1950

Meanwhile, the CIA was in hot pursuit of the elusive truth drug. After the Soviets' 1949 show trial of the Hungarian prelate Cardinal JÛzsef Mindszenty, this pursuit turned into a race. At the trial, the cardinal confessed to crimes he clearly didn't commit, and acted as though he were sleepwalking. Other Soviet show trials demonstrated the same apparent "brainwashing" of prisoners. Later, it would be learned that the Soviets didn't use drugs at all to accomplish this. Their major weapon was psychology and sleep deprivation. But at the time, the CIA suspected the Soviets had some super-mind-control drug. And they had to have it too.

In 1949, according to John Marks, who first broke the story of CIA experimentation with LSD, the agency's head of Scientific Intelligence went to Western Europe to learn more about Soviet techniques and to supervise experiments of his own, in order, this official explained, to "apply special methods of interrogation for the purpose of evaluation of Russian practices." By the spring of 1950, the agency established a special program under its security division named "Operation Bluebird" to test behavior-control methods, and started

recruiting university scholars to work for the program. Bluebird scientists began experimenting on North Korean prisoners of war and others. They tried "ice-pick lobotomies," electroshock, and other "neural-surgical techniques," as well as a host of drugs including cocaine, heroin, and even something called a "stupid bush," whose effects remain classified to this day.

To pursue these shadowy endeavors, the government enlisted the elite of the American psychological establishment, either as conduits, consultants, or researchers. According to a later agency review, these helpers included at least ninety-three universities and other governmental or nonprofit organizations, including Harvard, Cornell, the University of Minnesota, the Stanford University School of Medicine, the Lexington, Kentucky, Narcotics Farm, several prisons and penitentiaries, the Office of Naval Research, and the National Institutes of Health.

Project Bluebird was renamed "Project Artichoke" in 1951, and in that same year the CIA discovered LSD. When the Korean War drew to a close the following spring, the CIA's interest in the drug became an obsession.

As American prisoners of the Chinese were repatriated, authorities discovered to their horror that 70 percent had either made confessions of "guilt" for participating in the war or had signed petitions calling for an end to the U.S. war effort in Asia. Fifteen percent collaborated fully with the Chinese, and only 5 percent refused to cooperate with them at all. Clearly, the Chinese had found new and formidable brainwashing techniques that could transform American servicemen into "Manchurian candidates" programmed to do Communist bidding. America faced a brainwash gap!

Pushing the panic button, in April 1953 the CIA replaced Project Artichoke with a more ambitious effort called MKULTRA, under the direction of Sidney Gottlieb, a brilliant chemist with a degree from CalTech. Gottlieb was the ultimate dirty trickster, having personally participated in attempts to assassinate foreign leaders. And he immediately put his talents to work, this time against Americans.

Once MKULTRA was established, say Lee and Shlain, "almost overnight a whole new market for grants in LSD research sprang into existence as money started pouring through CIA-linked conduits." Among these conduits was the Josiah J. Macy Foundation, whose director was an ex-OSS officer named Frank Fremont-Smith. And among the beneficiaries of this covert funding would be Harold Abramson, an acquaintance of Gregory Bateson's, who was an allergist at New York's Mount Sinai Hospital and a CIA consultant to Edgewood Arsenal's Paperclip scientists. Another was Hydeís group at Boston Psychopathic.

The aim, Gottlieb explained, was "to investigate whether and how it was possible to modify an individual's behavior by covert means." LSD, he hoped, would turn out to be the Swiss Army knife of mind control—an all-purpose drug that could ruin a man's marriage, change his sexual behavior, make him lie or tell the truth, destroy his memory or help him recover it, induce him to betray his country or program him to obey orders or disobey them.

Soon, MKULTRA was testing all conceivable drugs on every kind of victim, including prison inmates, mental patients, foreigners, the terminally ill, homosexuals, and ethnic minorities. Altogether, it conducted tests at fifteen penal and mental institutions, concealing its role by using the U.S. Navy, the Public Health Service, and the National Institute of Mental Health as funding conduits. During the ten years of MKULTRA's existence, the agency's inspector general reported after its termination in 1963, the program experimented with "electro-shock, various fields of psychology, psychiatry, sociology, and anthropology, graphology, harassment substances, and paramilitary devices and materials."

Its brainwashing research also took the CIA to Canada, where the agency hired an eminently prestigious psychologist, Dr. D. Ewen Cameron, president of the Canadian, American, and World Psychiatric associations and head of the Allen Memorial Institute at McGill University (which had been founded with money from the Rockefeller Foundation). Cameron's studies centered on what he called "depatterning" and what one CIA operative described as the "creation of a vegetable." This entailed giving unwitting test subjects bevies of drugs that caused them to sleep for several weeks, virtually straight, with only brief waking intervals. This was followed by up to sixty-five days of powerful electroshock "therapy," where each jolt was twenty to forty times more intense than standard electroshock treatment. After this program, some were given LSD and put in sensory deprivation boxes for another sixty-five days.

* * *

By the late 1950s, the CIA and LSD had become virtually inseparable. The advent of LSD, Timothy Leary would declare later, "was no accident. It was all planned and scripted by the Central Intelligence."

Indeed, it was. As Lee and Shlain explain:

Nearly every drug that appeared on the black market during the 1960s -- marijuana, cocaine, heroin, PCP, amyl nitrite, mushrooms, DMT, barbiturates, laughing gas, speed and many others -- had previously been scrutinized, tested, and in some cases refined by CIA and army scientists. But of all the techniques explored by the Agency in its multimillion-dollar twenty-five-year quest to conquer the human mind, none received as much attention or was embraced with such enthusiasm as LSD-25. For a time CIA personnel were completely infatuated with the hallucinogen. Those who first tested LSD in the early 1950s were convinced that it would revolutionize the cloak-and-dagger trade.

To push its drugs, the CIA sought help from the university elite. In 1969, John Marks reports,

the Bureau of Narcotics and Dangerous Drugs published a fascinating little study designed to curb illegal LSD use. The authors wrote that the drug's "early use was among small groups of intellectuals at large Eastern and West Coast universities. It spread to undergraduate students, then to other campuses. Most often, users have been introduced to the drug by persons of high status. Teachers have influenced students; upperclassmen have influenced lower classmen." Calling this a "trickle-down phenomenon," the authors seem to have correctly analyzed how LSD got around the country. They left out only one vital element, which they had no way of knowing: That somebody had to influence the teachers and that up there at the top of the LSD distribution system could be found the men of MKULTRA.

Fremont-Smith and Abramson were the links between the universities and MKULTRA.

Fremont-Smith organized the conferences that spread the word about LSD to the academic hinterlands.

Abramson also gave Gregory Bateson, Margaret Mead's former husband, his first LSD. In 1959 Bateson, in turn, helped arrange for a beat poet friend of his named Allen Ginsberg to take the drug at a research program located off the Stanford campus.

And Murray was part of this drug-testing pyramid. During this time, according to Frank Barron, he had supervised experiments "on the subjective effects of psycho-active drugs, injecting adrenaline . . . into naive subjects to study changes in their subjectivity." And in 1960, even as the "Multiform Assessments" on Kaczynski and his classmates were underway, Murray had, according to Leary, given his blessing to the latter's testing psilocybin, an hallucinogen derived from mushrooms, on undergraduates.

In his autobiography, *Flashbacks*, Leary, who would dedicate the rest of his life to "turning on and tuning out," described Murray as "the wizard of personality assessment who, as OSS chief psychologist, had monitored military experiments on brainwashing and sodium amytal interrogation. Murray expressed great interest in our drug-research project and offered his support."

Leary had taken LSD for the first time at Harvard in 1959, where, traveling in Abramson's orbit, he had attended Fremont-Smithís Macy Foundation conferences on the drug. And Murray, write Lee and Shlain, "took a keen interest in Leary's work. He volunteered for a psilocybin session, becoming one of the first of many faculty and graduate students to sample the mushroom pill under Leary's guidance."

By that time, Gregory Bateson was working at the Veterans Administration Hospital in Palo Alto, California. While he was introducing Allen Ginsberg to the drug, a colleague began testing it on Stanford undergraduates. One of these students was Ken Kesey, who would later write *One Flew over the Cuckoo's Nest* and was soon to be immortalized by Tom Wolfe as a "Merry Prankster" and LSD missionary in *The Electric Kool-Aid Acid Test*.

Meanwhile, Murray, already addicted to amphetamines, continued to flirt with hallucinogens. At Leary's suggestion, according to a former colleague, he took psilocybin again, this time with Aldous Huxley and Ginsberg. He introduced Morgan to LSD. And in 1961 he spoke at the International Congress of Applied Psychology in Copenhagen, which, thanks to Leary and Huxley's presence, turned into a virtual psychoactive circus. His talk there, wrote Forrest Robinson, featured "a highly literary rendering of a psilocybin 'trip' that he took with Timothy Leary a year earlier. . . . 'The newspapers described it as the report of a drug-induced vision,' he wrote [Lewis] Mumford, with obvious delight."

Not all scientists worked for the CIA. And many did so unwittingly. Nor was this agency the only covert intelligence bureaucracy sponsoring Cold War studies. The U.S. Army, Navy, Air Force, and other defense agencies financed their own experiments as well, often duplicating each other efforts, sometimes at the same institutions. (The Harvard Medical School, for example, conducted LSD research on unwitting subjects for the Department of the Army in 1952-54, even as Hyde continued with similar work at Boston Psychopathic for the CIA.)

And although LSD may have been the most sensational subject, Lee and Shlain make clear that it was far from the only field in which the government was prime mover. Cold War research ran the gamut, from investigations of sleep deprivation to perfecting anthrax delivery systems. It co-opted nearly an entire generation of scholars in the physical, social, and health sciences. This work was so various, so widespread, and so secret that even today it is impossible to grasp its full dimensions.

Among MKULTRA papers that later came to light, Lee and Shlain write, were

CIA documents describing experiments in sensory deprivation, sleep teaching, ESP, subliminal projection, electronic brain stimulation, and many other methods that might have applications for behavior modification. One project was designed to turn people into programmed assassins who would kill on automatic command. Another document mentioned "hypnotically-induced anxieties" and "induced pain as a form of physical and psychological control." There were repeated references to exotic drugs and biological agents that caused "headache clusters," uncontrollable twitching or drooling, or a lobotomy-like stupor. Deadly chemicals were concocted for the sole purpose of inducing a heart attack or cancer without leaving a clue as to the actual source of the disease. CIA specialists also studied the effects of magnetic fields, ultrasonic vibration, and other forms of radiant energy on the brain. As one CIA doctor put it, "We lived in a never-never land of 'eyes only' memos and unceasing experimentation."

As university professors and hospital researchers pursued their devil's bargain with the intelligence community, victims accumulated.

On January 8, 1953, Harold Blauer, a professional tennis player, reportedly died from a massive overdose of a mescaline derivative at the New York State Psychiatric Institute. The drug, say the investigative journalists H. P. Albarelli, Jr., and John Kelly, was administered "as part of a top-secret Army-funded experimental program . . . code named Project Pelican, in which Blauer was used as a guinea pig." The supervisor of the project was Dr. Paul H. Hoch, director of experimental psychiatry and, according to Albarelli and Kelly, an associate of Harold Abramson's.

Project Pelican, write Albarelli and Kelly, was part of a larger cooperative venture between the CIA and the army's Chemical Corps Special Operations Division at Fort Detrick, Maryland, called MK-NAOMI -- reputedly named after Abramsonís assistant, Naomi Busner. The project's purpose, according to CIA documents, was to develop biological weapons that could be used on "individuals for the purposes of affecting human behavior with the objectives ranging from very temporary minor disablement to more serious and longer incapacitation to death." At the behest of the Chemical Corps, the New York medical examiner conducted no autopsy of Blauer, kept the army's name out of its report, and described the death as an accidental overdose.

Eleven months later, the CIA claimed another victim. On November 28, 1953, a Fort Detrick biochemist fell -- or was pushedófrom a thirteenth-floor window of New York's Statler Hotel on Seventh Avenue, falling 170 feet to the sidewalk. He was still alive and trying to talk when the night manager, Armond Pastore, reached him, but died a few minutes later.

Frank Olson, a chemist and joint employee of the CIA and Army Chemical Corps, had worked his entire professional life at Fort Detrick. An expert in germ warfare, during World War II he had designed clothing intended to protect Allied soldiers from possible German biological attacks during the Normandy invasion. In 1949 and 1950, he worked briefly on "Operation Harness," a joint US-British effort to spray virulent organisms -- so-called BW antipersonnel agents -- around the Caribbean, decimating untold thousands of plants and animals. At the time of his death, Olson was developing a new, portable, and more lethal form of anthrax that could be put into a small spray can.

By 1953, Olson was acting chief of Fort Detrick's Special Operations Division, which, according to a Michael

Ignatieff article in the *New York Times Magazine*, had become "the center for the development of drugs for use in brainwashing and interrogation." But he was becoming increasingly disillusioned.

The turning point came during the summer of 1953. Olson had traveled to England and Germany to observe the use of mind-control drugs on collaborators and German SS prisoners considered "expendable." Some died. While in Europe, according to his son, Eric, Frank Olson also learned that the Americans were deploying Anthrax against enemy troops in Korea. When returning American POWs reported this -- the first use of bacterial weapons by the United States in war -- authorities in Washington dismissed their claims as products of brainwashing. Returning to America shaken, Olson resolved to quit.

On November 19, Gottlieb met with six MKULTRA personnel, including Olson, at Deep Creek Lodge in rural Maryland. The CIA would claim twenty-two years later that during the retreat, on Gottlieb's order, his deputy, Robert Lashbrook, spiked the after-dinner Cointreau with LSD. Olson and all but two of the others (one a teetotaler, the other abstaining because of a headcold) drank it. In fact, Eric Olson believes that only his father's drink was spiked, and that the substance he imbibed was probably not LSD but something stronger. In any case, soon, Olson was experiencing disorientation.

When he came home, his wife, Alice, found him withdrawn, saying repeatedly that he "had made a terrible mistake." The next day he told his supervisor, Vincent Ruwet, that he wanted to resign from the agency. But officials couldn't afford to let him leave. He knew too much. Once outside, he could be an acute embarrassment. So Ruwet and Lashbrook took Olson to New York, supposedly to see a psychiatrist. In fact, they brought him to Harold Abramson, who prescribed nembutal and bourbon.

According to the CIA, Ruwet and Lashbrook had earlier taken Olson to see John Mulholland, a magician hired by the CIA to advise on "the delivery of various materials to unwitting subjects" -- i.e., on how to spike drinks with drugs or poisons. Olson was suspicious of Mulholland and asked Ruwet, "Whatís behind this? Give me the lowdown. What are they trying to do with me? . . . Just let me disappear."

That evening, Olson wandered the streets of New York, discarding his wallet and identification cards before returning to the Statler. And the next day, the CIA claims its experts decided Olson must be institutionalized. Yet he seemed to be feeling better. After he and Lashbrook ate a dreary Thanksgiving meal at a Horn & Hardart restaurant, the two men returned to their room at the Statler, which they shared, and Olson called Alice to say he "looked forward to seeing her the next day."

Around 2:00 a.m. the next morning, Pastore found Olson on the sidewalk. Olson tried to tell Pastore something, but his words were too faint and garbled to be understood. He died before the ambulance arrived. Immediately afterward, Pastore asked the hotel operator if she'd overheard any calls from Room 1081A. Yes, she said, two. In one, someone from the room said, "He's gone," and the voice at the other end of the line said, "That's too bad."

The CIA hushed up Olson's death. The medical examiner made no mention of the CIA, did not do an autopsy, and ruled the death a suicide due to depression. The family didn't believe this story, as Olson had never seemed depressed until after the retreat at Deep Creek Lodge. Yet it would not be until 1975 that they would learn some of the circumstances of his death, and even then not apparently the whole story.

At the request of Frank Olson's son, Eric, an autopsy was performed in 1994, revealing that Olson had apparently been struck on the left side of the temple and knocked unconscious before going through the window. In 1998, the Manhattan District Attorney's office reclassified Olson's death "cause unknown."

With Olson's death, the culture of despair had come full circle. Having experienced what Ellen Herman called "a collapse of faith in the rational appeal and workability of democratic ideology and behavior," the generation of scholars that emerged from World War II had sought to perfect the tools of social control by which the elite would save democracy. Following the rubrics of positivism, they believed that good and evil are fictions. People aren't bad, merely sick. By curing them, psychologists can prevent war. All problems can be fixed by the alchemy of the mind sciences.

But a world in which morality has no meaning is one in which eventually everything is permitted. The same narrow focus on value-free science that led Nazi concentration camp doctors to commit atrocities encouraged many of these well-meaning scholars to cross ethical lines. By following a path of moral agnosticism, they reached a dead end. Rather than saving democracy, they created tools for coercion, and many people were hurt.

Murray was a product of these times, a man whose career and ideas embodied the development of his discipline and its role in American culture. Like other leading psychologists of his generation, he was a beneficiary of the Rockefeller Foundation's efforts to promote psychology in public policy. He was intensely patriotic and served on the Committee for National Morale. He flourished during World War II and he was a star in the OSS.

After the war, Murray's contributions to personality theory, including the TAT, personnel assessment, and techniques for analyzing foreign leaders and countries, became virtual Cold War institutions. Throughout this undeclared conflict he continued to serve, albeit quietly, America's defense efforts. And among the services he performed would be the experiments on Kaczynski and his cohort.

Even today, however, neither Murray's friends, his widow, nor even some historians believe this. Murray, they argue, was a world federalist who, in Herman's words, was "transformed into a militant pacifist and peace activist after the U.S. dropped the atomic bomb on Hiroshima and Nagasaki."

Their skepticism is understandable. It is rare when even spouses know of these connections. The CIA never reveals the identity of its "assets." Often the professor himself doesn't know the originating source of research monies he receives. And Murray made much of his supposed transformation into 'peace activist' following Hiroshima.

Nevertheless, they are mistaken. Hiroshima did not convert Murray to world federalism. Even in 1943, during the same period when he was seeking combat duty in Europe, he wrote in his analysis of Hitler that "there is a great need now rather than later, for some form of World Federation" (Murray's italics).

Rather, like so many "nervous liberals" of his generation, Murray was both hawk and dove. He resembled his contemporary, Cord Meyer, the war hero and onetime president of United World Federalists, who eventually became a top officer in the CIA. Such ambivalence characterized virtually the entire elite clique of East Coast professionals to which he belonged. Theirs was a world in which everyone knew each other, and many worked for the CIA. Murray was so surrounded by agency people he couldn't have moved without bumping into one.

In fact, as we have seen, Murray was indeed a Cold War warrior—not, perhaps, as prominent a player as some, but a player nonetheless. He received steady funding from the Rockefeller Foundation, which had served as cover for his trip with Cantril to the Soviet Union for the CIA in 1958, and from the National Institute of Mental Health, also known to be a covert funding conduit. He apparently worked for HumRRo. He served as an adviser on army-sponsored steroid experiments. He helped found Harvard's Social Relations Department, which had been generously funded by covert intelligence agencies. He served the U.S. Army Surgeon General's Clinical Psychology Advisory Board and the National Committee for Mental Hygiene with the CIA's propagator of LSD, Frank Fremont-Smith. Along with Fremont-Smith, Abramson, and Leary, he occupied a spot on the agency's LSD pyramid.

And in 1959, Murray would cap off a long and distinguished career with the last of a series of studies inspired by his OSS assessments and originally undertaken for the U.S. Navy Department. And Ted Kaczynski would participate.

From:

Harvard and the Unabomber: The Education of an American

Terrorist

(CHAPTER 18)

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Note:

Henry Murray, Professor of Psychology at Harvard, played a key role in CIA psychological experimentation going back to his involvement with the OSS during World War II, as this chapter explains.

By a great biographical irony, I had already come to know Henry Murray quite well at Harvard in the early 1970's, before I knew anything about the role of the CIA—or the alleged role of LSD—in my father's death. My own critical response to Murray's Thematic Apperception Test was one of the factors that led to my work on the <u>collage method.</u>

— Eric Olson

The Frank Olson Legacy Project