

CIA gave prof \$6,056 for mind control study

by David Hulien
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A former I.U. sociology professor was secretly given more than \$6,000 in 1960 by the CIA to learn about the influence of the mass media on children's perceptions of job status, it has been learned.

But the professor who conducted the tests, Melvin L. DeFleur, says he was not aware then that his research was funded by the CIA and called his research "harmless." DeFleur, now a professor of sociology at the University of New Mexico, said he was surprised when he was told last week that the agency had secretly sponsored his research.

"I'm very amused that they (the CIA) went through the cloak and dagger routine just to fund basic behavioral science research," DeFleur told the Daily Student in a telephone interview Saturday.

DeFleur's research was funded through the Human Ecology Fund, a now-defunct New York foundation that has been identified as a CIA front for other research in the agency's project that included DeFleur's tests.

The project, code-named MK-ULTRA, was a \$44 million effort aimed at learning the secrets of human

mind control. The project was started in the early 1950s and discontinued in 1964.

DeFleur's research using students 6-13 years old from the Bloomington public school system, was designed to measure how the media affected children's perceptions of occupational status and prestige.

I.U. was informed by the CIA in mid-August that it was one of 44 colleges and universities where MK-ULTRA research secretly was sponsored. But the agency gave I.U. officials no details of the research funded here.

The University requested further information from the agency late last month, although none has been received.

Information about the DeFleur research was obtained from the CIA by the Center for National Security Studies through the Freedom of Information Act. A spokesman for the Washington D.C.-based organization said documents on DeFleur's research were the only information on I.U. projects revealed to the organization by the CIA.

A CIA spokesman at the agency's Langley, Va., headquarters would not say whether the CIA funded other research here besides DeFleur's.

DeFleur and several teachers from

Bloomington schools interviewed approximately 300 randomly picked students in their homes in 1960-61. They asked the students about their attitudes toward various jobs and tried to determine how their opinions were formed.

DeFleur concluded that most children's perceptions of jobs were obtained directly from television or by personal contacts.

In addition, he said that television grossly distorted the types of jobs in society with an overemphasis on criminal justice and other jobs while almost no blue-collar roles were shown.

DeFleur's findings were published in three academic journals in 1963 and 1964.

Although DeFleur said he was unaware of the CIA sponsorship at the time of the research, he said he believes he knows why the agency might have been interested in his research.

"Any government is concerned about how the media can be used to shape attitudes, beliefs and values," he said. "In the U.S. it goes back to propaganda used during World War I. I'm just surprised that they were so secretive in funding it."

The \$6,056 primarily was used for salaries, according to the CIA documents.