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The CIA affair: a bad trip revisited

By Julianne Labreche

The scene was long ago and far away, in Zurich back in 1957, when Dr. D. Ewen Cameron, described by one colleague as "the godfather of Canadian psychiatry," rose to present his startling and severe new treatment for schizophrenia. Some members of his distinguished audience at the Second International Congress for Psychiatry, which included the grand old man of the profession, Dr. Carl Jung, seemed surprised by Cameron's harsh "de-patterning" techniques, but he was not rattled. Cameron frankly described his method as "a sharp tool."

The real razor's edge of Cameron's research only became public last week with the release of a chilling new book, by American author John Marks, *The Search for the "Manchurian Candidate."* It links Cameron, who was director of McGill University's Allan Memorial Institute from its founding in 1943 until his abrupt departure in 1964, with a 20-year, \$25-million effort by the



NOURINE WS PHOTO

Author Marks: on the trail of the CIA

American Central Intelligence Agency to learn how to control the human mind. Between 1953 and 1973 the agency undertook a full-scale attempt to discover and develop techniques of mind control and brainwashing, fearing that the Soviets and Chinese had already perfected the methodology.

The project was hidden behind a succession of code names—first BLUEBIRD, then ARTICHOKE and later MK-DELTA—and then a "study group" called the Society for the Investigation of Human Ecology was established as a scientific front through which the CIA could subsidize research by recognized authorities who had no idea of the ulterior purposes of their new sponsor. The society was involved with 50 or 60 different universities in 21 countries. The little-known but fearsome drug LSD was em-

ployed in mind-influencing experiments involving, in some cases, unsuspecting prisoners, prostitutes and other "undesirables" on the fringes of U.S. society.

At McGill, the only Canadian university to become involved, the aggressive and pioneering Dr. Cameron conducted his experiments. The human ecology society, as Marks reveals in his book, sponsored the program at Allan Memorial from 1957 to 1964, advancing relatively modest amounts of \$4,000 and upward a year—never more than \$20,000. The centre's growing fame drew depressed and schizophrenic patients from all over the world, but of the 53 known to have undergone the treatment many were Canadians. *Maclean's* has talked to two of these. Val Orlikow, wife of federal NDP MP David Orlikow, describes her experiences as "the coldest, most impersonal treatment that anybody could give to anybody." (See box.)