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25 Years Of Nightmares

Victims of CIA-Funded Mind Experiments Seek Damages From the Agency

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Harvey Weinstein, a quiet, bearded man who practices psychiatry at Stanford University, says there are days when he is "ashamed" of his profession, nights when he cannot stop thinking about the Canadian psychiatrist who "ruined my father's life . . . Left him with nothing. It's a nightmare that never ends."

With funding from the CIA, the late Dr. D. Ewen Cameron did a series of mind-control experiments on 53 people, including Harvey Weinstein's father, Louis, a prosperous Montreal businessman. All had come to the Allan Memorial Institute of McGill University in Montreal between 1957 and 1961 for treatment of various psychological ailments.

The experiments, Weinstein says, left his father "a human guinea pig, a poor pathetic man with no memory, no life. He lost his business, he lost everything." Weinstein is one of nine plaintiffs in a lawsuit, seeking damages from the CIA.

To erase or "de-pattern" personality traits, Cameron gave his subjects megadoses of LSD, subjected them to drug-induced "sleep therapy" for up to 65 consecutive days and applied electroshock therapy at 75 times the usual intensity. To shape new behavior, Cameron forced them to listen to repeated recorded messages for 16-hour intervals, a technique known as "psychic driving." Cameron and the CIA were interested in brainwashing and the ability to redirect thought and action. The patients did not consent to the treatment and were never told they were being used for research.

"When you're 13 years old and you see your father—an independent, kind, smart person—become a different man before your eyes, it's impossible to accommodate that," Weinstein says. "I remember one of his first visits home from the hospital. He didn't talk much, and when he did talk it made no sense. When he wasn't sleeping he was drowsy. He asked us things about his parents, even though they'd been dead for years. His memory was gone. At night once, when I was in bed, I saw him come into my room and urinate on the floor. He didn't know where he was.

"My father has ended up feeling guilty that he had done something to deserve this punishment. He is convinced the CIA listens to his telephone. He's ashamed, embarrassed. My mother died without seeing the end of this. It will be a tragedy if my father dies without

restoring some sense of dignity to his life." Today Louis Weinstein lives alone in Montreal, cared for by his two grown daughters.

No one knows the whereabouts of all the subjects, some of whom may be dead. But Louis Weinstein and eight others, including Velma Orlikow, the wife of a New Democratic Party member of the Canadian parliament, claim they have been injured irreparably by the experiments. "I'd say Velma operates at about 20 percent of capacity," David Orlikow says. "It's horrific."

The CIA's involvement in mind control experiments has been coming to light for years. The suit filed by the group against the U.S. government has been pending here in U.S. District Court since December 1980 before Judge John Garrett Penn. The plaintiffs originally asked for \$1 million each in damages but have cut that to \$175,000. The government has offered to pay \$25,000. The group's attorney, Joseph Rauh Jr., calls the settlement offer "demeaning" and contends that the CIA has managed to delay the proceedings by "stonewalling."

The CIA's counsel, Lee Strickland, declined to comment on the case. Agency spokeswoman Kathy Pherson said, "We don't comment on cases under litigation. It's inappropriate to try cases in the press."

In Cameron's defense, Brian Robertson, the present director of the Allan Institute, and James Farquhar, a psychiatrist there, wrote in the Montreal Gazette that "we have not been able to uncover a single shred of evidence that Dr. Cameron knew of the CIA connection with his research funding." They said Cameron's work "must be placed in its historical context" and that "in Cameron's day [researchers] were not expected to inform their patients of the nature of their research in the way that they are today."

The CIA has asked Judge Penn to block Rauh from taking depositions from two key agency figures—Stacey Hulse and John Knaus, who have been publicly identified as former CIA station chiefs in Ottawa. They are both retired.

Cameron, who died of a heart attack while mountain climbing in 1967, had been one of the most prominent psychiatrists in North America. A former president of both the Canadian and American psychiatric associations, he was selected to diagnose Nazi

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