

The Propaganda System That Has Helped Create a Permanent Overclass Is Over a Century in the Making

AlterNet [1] / By Andrew Gavin Marshall [2]

April 12, 2013 |

Where there is the possibility of democracy, there is the inevitability of elite insecurity. All through its history, democracy has been under a sustained attack by elite interests, political, economic, and cultural. There is a simple reason for this: democracy – as in *true* democracy – places power with people. In such circumstances, the few who hold power become threatened. With technological changes in modern history, with literacy and education, mass communication, organization and activism, elites have had to react to the changing nature of society – locally and globally.

From the late 19th century on, the “threats” to elite interests from the possibility of true democracy mobilized institutions, ideologies, and individuals in support of power. What began was a massive social engineering project with one objective: control. Through educational institutions, the social sciences, philanthropic foundations, public relations and advertising agencies, corporations, banks, and states, powerful interests sought to reform and protect their power from the potential of popular democracy.

Yet for all the efforts, organization, indoctrination and reformation of power interests, the threat of democracy has remained a constant, seemingly embedded in the human consciousness, persistent and pervasive.

In his highly influential work, *The Crowd: A Study of the Popular Mind*, French social psychologist Gustav Le Bon suggested that middle class politics were transforming into popular democracy, where “the opinion of the masses” was the most important opinion in society. He wrote: “The destinies of nations are elaborated at present in the heart of the masses, and no longer in the councils of princes.” This was, of course, a deplorable change for elites, suggesting that, “[t]he divine right of the masses is about to replace the divine right of kings.” Le Bon suggested, however, that the “crowd” was not rational, but rather was driven by emotion and passion.

An associate and friend of Le Bon’s, Gabriel Tarde, expanded upon this concept, and articulated the idea that “the crowd” was a social group of the past, and that “the public” was “the social group of the future.” The public, argued Tarde, was a “spiritual collectivity, a dispersion of individuals who are physically separated and whose cohesion is entirely mental.” Thus, Tarde identified in the growth of the printing press and mass communications a powerful medium through which “the public” was shaped, and that, if managed appropriately, could bring a sense of order to a situation increasingly chaotic. The newspaper, Tarde explained, facilitated “the fusion of personal opinions into local opinions, and this into national and world opinion, the grandiose unification of the public mind.”

The development of psychology, psychoanalysis, and other disciplines increasingly portrayed the “public” and the population as irrational beings incapable of making their own decisions. The premise was simple: if the population was driven by dangerous, irrational emotions, they needed to be kept out of power and ruled over by those who were driven by reason and rationality, naturally, those who were already in power.

The Princeton Radio Project, which began in the 1930s with Rockefeller Foundation funding, brought together many psychologists, social scientists, and “experts” armed with an interest in social control, mass

communication, and propaganda. The Princeton Radio Project had a profound influence upon the development of a modern "democratic propaganda" in the United States and elsewhere in the industrialized world. It helped in establishing and nurturing the ideas, institutions, and individuals who would come to shape America's "democratic propaganda" throughout the Cold War, a program fostered between the private corporations which own the media, advertising, marketing, and public relations industries, and the state itself.

'A Genuinely Democratic Propaganda'

World War I popularized the term "propaganda" and gave it negative connotations, as all major nations involved in the war effort employed new techniques of modern propaganda to mobilize their populations for war. In the United States, the effort was led by President Woodrow Wilson in the establishment of the Committee on Public Information (CPI) as a "vast propaganda ministry." The central theme of the CPI was to promote U.S. entry into the war on the basis of seeking "to make a world that is safe for democracy." This point was specifically developed by the leading intellectual of the era, Walter Lippmann, who by the age of 25 was referred to by President Theodore Roosevelt as "the most brilliant man of his age." Lippmann was concerned primarily with the maintenance of the state-capitalist system in the face of increased unrest, resistance, and ideological opposition, feeling that the "discipline of science" would need to be applied to democracy, where social engineers and social scientists "would provide the modern state with a foundation upon which a new stability might be realized." For this, Lippmann suggested the necessity of "intelligence and information control" in what he termed the "manufacture of consent."

Important intellectuals of the era then became principally concerned with the issue of propaganda during peacetime, having witnessed its success in times of war. Propaganda, wrote Lippmann, "has a legitimate and desirable part to play in our democratic system." A leading political scientist of the era, Harold Lasswell, noted: "Propaganda is surely here to stay." In his 1925 book, *The Phantom Public*, Lippmann wrote that the public was a "bewildered herd" of "ignorant and meddlesome outsiders" who should be maintained as "interested spectators of action," and distinct from the actors themselves, the powerful. Edward Bernays, the 'father of public relations' and nephew of Sigmund Freud got his start with Wilson's CPI during World War I, and had since become a leading voice in the fields of propaganda and public relations. In his 1928 book, *Propaganda*, Bernays wrote: "The conscious and intelligent manipulation of the organized habits and opinions of the masses is an important element in democratic society. Those who manipulate this unseen mechanism of society constitute an invisible government which is the true ruling power of our country." Modern society was dominated by a "relatively small number of persons... who understand the mental processes and social patterns of the masses," and this was, in Bernays' thinking, "a logical result of the way in which our democratic society is organized." Bernays referred to this – "borrowing" from Walter Lippmann – as the "engineering of consent."

For the leading intellectuals and social engineers of the era, "propaganda" was presented as distinctly "democratic" and as a necessity to the proper functioning of society. John Marshall of the Rockefeller Foundation focused on what he called the "problem of propaganda" and sought to create, as he wrote in 1938, a "genuinely democratic propaganda." Marshall pursued this objective through the Rockefeller Foundation, and specifically with the Princeton Radio Project in the late 1930s under the direction of Hadley Cantril and Frank Stanton, though including other intellectuals such as Paul Lazarsfeld and Harold Lasswell.

In 1936, Marshall wrote that the best way to expand the use of radio and film was for the Rockefeller Foundation to give "a few younger men with talent for these mediums an opportunity for relatively free experimentation... men interested primarily in education, literature, criticism, or in disseminating the findings of the social or natural sciences."

In 1939, with the war in Europe under way, the Rockefeller Foundation had organized several conferences and published several papers on the issue of mass communication, directed by what was called the Communications Group, headed by Marshall and other Foundation officials, and with the participation of Lasswell, Lazarsfeld, Cantril, and several others. Early on, the Communications Group noted that with "an

increasing degree of [government] control... in regard to all phases of communication, such as in the schools, the radio, the films, the press, and even eventually in all public discussion," it was necessary to arrive at a consensus – among the “experts” – as to what role they should play as the state expands its authority over communication. Sociologist Robert Lynd took a page from Lippmann and wrote that a “goal” of experts in communication should “be that of persuading the people that there are many issues too complicated for them to decide, which should be left to experts.” One other participant commented on Lynd’s suggestion: “Mr. Lynd feels we need a restructuring of democratic action in terms of the capacity of different groups of the population and an abandonment of the American idea of the responsibility and capacity of the man on the street.” In 1940, John Marshall wrote:

In a period of emergency such as I believe we now face, the manipulation of public opinion to meet emergency needs has to be taken for granted. In such a period, those in control must shape public opinion to support courses of action which the emergency necessitates... No one, I think, can blame them for that impulse.

In a 1940 memo for the Communications Group, Marshall wrote that, “We believe... that for leadership to secure that consent will require unprecedented knowledge of the public mind and of the means by which leadership can secure consent... We believe... that we have available today methods of research which can reliably inform us about the public mind and how it is being, or can be, influenced in relation to public affairs.” The memo concerned some officials at the Rockefeller Foundation, noting that it could be misinterpreted and that such research should be careful about becoming a mere tool of the state, with one official noting: “Public opinion and vested interests are... violently opposed to such a development which would be labeled as fascist or authoritarian.” Another official suggested that the memo “looks to me like something that [Nazi propaganda chief] Herr Goebbels could put out with complete sincerity.” While one Foundation official referred to the memo as resembling “the methods by which democracy has been destroyed,” he added that, “finding out regularly and completely what the mass of the people feel and believe and think about things and policies is a necessary part of the modern democratic process.” Marshall and the Communications Group refined their approach from a more overt authoritarianism of “one-way” communication between the state and the population, to a more Lippmann-centered concept of “manufacturing consent” and what has been referred to as “democratic elitism.” In the final report of the Communications Group in 1940, it was noted that two-way communication between the government and population was essential, as without it, “democracy is endangered,” and that it was required for the population to give “consent.”

Frank Stanton, along with Hadley Cantril, was one of the co-directors of the Princeton Project since its inception. As Michael J. Socolow wrote in the *Journal of Broadcasting & Electronic Media*, Frank Stanton had “devoted much of his life to understanding the cultural, social, and psychological effects of the mass media.” Stanton was the president of CBS from 1946 until 1973, during which he “proved to be an effective corporate strategist” and “a skillful political operator,” not least of all because he “collaborated closely with the U.S. government, performing propaganda tasks during the Second World War and the ensuing Cold War.”

Stanton’s first job was in the advertising industry, beginning in 1929 and cut short by the market crash, though Stanton maintained that advertising “was the greatest thing since sliced bread.” In school, Stanton studied business administration and psychology, being particularly influenced by John B. Watson, the developer of behaviorism, who himself went to go work for an advertising agency. Throughout his own life and career, Stanton viewed himself as “a behaviorist, a social scientist valuing the application of psychological technique across a variety of human endeavors.”

Behaviorism was a brand of psychology which emerged in response to the development of the field by social scientists seeking to make “scientific” what was previously the realm of philosophy and spirituality, drawing in

political scientists, economists, sociologists, and others. The field of psychology had become more prominent following World War I, after having proved its worth to power interests in mobilizing, manipulating, and studying populations and their perceptions. In 1929, the president of Yale, James Agnell, announced the creation of the Yale Institute of Human Relations (IHR), with a generous grant from the Rockefeller Foundation. Agnell explained that the IHR was “directly concerned with the problems of man’s individual and group conduct,” out of which the purpose was “to correlate knowledge and coordinate technique in related fields that greater progress may be made in the understanding of human life.”

The IHR helped facilitate the rise of behaviorism in psychology, as in the 1920s and 30s, social unrest was a growing problem, and so psychologists attempted to promote themselves and their field as a possible solution to these problems, as a “scientific psychology” – or “social psychology” – could “be instrumental for attaining democratic social order and control.” Such a theory was based upon the view that the individual was not well “adjusted” to a rapidly changing environment, and therefore, with the help of psychology, the individual could be “adjusted” successfully. Of course, the notion that there is something inherently problematic with society and the social order (and the hierarchy upon which it was built) went unquestioned. In other words, it was not society which needed to “adjust” to individuals and the population, but rather the opposite. Psychologists and Yale’s Institute of Human Relations would promote themselves as the solution to this complex problem. Behaviorism was thus concerned with environmental and behavior control in human relations. This influenced not only Frank Stanton, but other key officials who were involved in the Princeton Radio Project, including Paul Lazarsfeld.

Frank Stanton eventually got a job at CBS following some research he had done on radio audiences and had sent to CBS headquarters. In 1935, Stanton was the third employee hired by CBS for the research division, concerned largely with the ability of advertisers to sell to radio listeners. As Stanton explained in 1936, the contribution of psychology to radio research “should be largely one of technique,” adding: “It isn’t enough to know what programs are heard and preferred. We want to know why they are listened to and liked, and furthermore, we want to quantify influence.” Weeks later, Stanton – with the suggestion of Hadley Cantril – wrote a draft memo of a research proposal for the Rockefeller Foundation, out of which would come to Office of Radio Research at Princeton.

The Princeton Radio Project, established with Rockefeller funding and directed by Paul Lazarsfeld, Cantril, and Stanton, focused on studying the uses and effects of radio communications upon the population, and almost exclusively led to the field of mass communications research. Theodor Adorno, a critical theorist whom Lazarsfeld invited to join the Princeton Radio Project ran into several problems during his research with his associates. Lazarsfeld brought Adorno into the project hoping that he could bridge the gap between American and European approaches to research. Adorno, however, sought to understand not simply the effects of radio in mass communications, but the role played by the “researcher” – or “expert” – in the social order itself. This put him in direct conflict with the project and its philosophy. For Adorno, wrote Slack and Allor, “not only the processes of communication but the practice of communication research itself had to be viewed critically.” Reflecting upon his experience some decades later, Adorno wrote that, “there appeared to be little room for such social research in the framework of the Princeton Project.” He noted: “Its charter, which came from the Rockefeller Foundation, expressly stipulated that the investigations must be performed within the limits of the commercial radio system prevailing in the United States.” Thus, “the system itself, its cultural and sociological consequences and its social and economic presuppositions were not to be analyzed... I was disturbed.”

Shortly after World War II and into the 1950s, the U.S. State Department became increasingly interested in the subject of propaganda, or what was termed “information management” and “public diplomacy.” Television was of particular interest in promoting American state interests, specifically those defined by the Cold War. Francis Russell, the director of the State Department’s Public Affairs (PA) division from 1945 to 1953, noted that “propaganda abroad is indispensable” in the Cold War, but that the State Department had “diligently cultivated the concept of PA as a service to the American people, a place where the public can come to obtain

information.” He explained his worry that, “if the American people ever get the idea that the same high-powered propaganda machine” used abroad was “also at work on them, the result will be disaster for both the domestic and overseas programs.” The role of the PA was not in a censorship bureau, but as a dispenser of “information,” to which the media – largely privately owned – would use as a consistent source for reporting, re-printing press releases, and seeking official sources for comment. Edward Barrett, another top official in the PA division, later noted: “We really tried to stick to the truth and tell nothing but the truth, but we didn’t always tell the whole truth.”

Nancy Bernhard, writing in the journal *Diplomatic History*, explained this contradiction aptly: “While Americans defended commercial broadcasting because it was free from Communistic government control, commercial broadcasters voluntarily collaborated with the government information services in the name of anticommunism. “Free” broadcasters volunteered as a virtually official information agency.” It was no surprise, then, that government “information programs” used the specific talents of corporate tycoons in the media world, bringing in talent from networks, advertising agencies, public relations agencies, and marketing bureaus. The State Department established a number of “advisory boards” to monitor its “public affairs” operations, largely made up of industry and corporate officials. Among the influential board members was Frank Stanton.

When Eisenhower came to power, a new agency was created to handle information and cultural programs previously undertaken by the State Department, the US Information Agency (USIA), established in 1953. In attempting to create a terminology to describe the activities of the USIA and its relationship to foreign policy goals – without using the obvious term “propaganda” – the term “public diplomacy” was commonly used. Frank Stanton, who left CBS in 1973, subsequently chaired a research report by the prominent American think tank, the Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS) in 1975, entitled, *International Information Education and Cultural Relations – Recommendations for the Future*. The report recommended “that the international information and cultural programs [of the U.S. government] deserve all possible support in the years ahead, that they have demonstrated their success and are therefore an exceptional investment of government energy and the taxpayer’s dollar.”

While head of CBS, Stanton developed relationships with American presidents, whose Cold War strategies he would help promote through his network. When Kennedy became president, he offered Frank Stanton the job as head of the United States Information Agency (USIA), which Stanton declined (though recommended the appointment of Edward R. Murrow, a prominent journalist with CBS, whom Stanton had no lack of problems with). In fact, in 1958, Edward R. Murrow delivered a speech before the Radio-Television News Directors Association in which he “implicitly indicted Stanton” for the way in which he managed CBS, stating: “The top management of the networks... has been trained in advertising, research, or show business... by the nature of the corporate structure, [these managers] also make the final and crucial decisions having to do with news and public affairs. Frequently they have neither the time nor the competence to do this.”

Stanton developed a reputation as a trustworthy propagandist for the Cold War, but was not unwilling to flex his own power when confronted with state power, such as when President Lyndon Johnson, angry at specific coverage of Vietnam on CBS, called up Stanton and stated, “Frank, are you trying to fuck your country?” Stanton refused to budge on his coverage under pressure from the president. Yet still, he remained a propagandist, and even participated in the CIA’s program to infiltrate the domestic media, with general knowledge of the Agency’s program with CBS, though according to one CIA agent involved in the matter, he didn’t “want to know the fine points.”

Stanton, however, was ultimately a corporation man. Not only did he help in the development of the government’s official propaganda systems, but he was a key figure in the promotion of the “corporatization” of news and information. Thus, for Stanton, “information management” was not simply to be done in the interests of the state, but also – and arguably primarily – in the interests of corporations. In Stanton’s own words, “since we are advertiser supported we must take into account the general objectives and desires of advertisers as a whole.” Stanton was not the only executive to voice such views, as one executive at NBC as

early as 1940, declared, "we should make money on our news."

The 'Social Control' Society: A Background to 'Democratic Propaganda'

One of the primary institutions of social control is the educational system. For primary and secondary educational institutions, the original objective was to foster a strong sense of national identity, bringing a cohesive world view to the development of a national citizenry, and thus, to establish a system of social control. For university education, the original and evolving intent had been to develop an elite capable of managing society, and thus, to produce the controllers and technicians of society, itself. As the modern university underwent a major transformation in late 19th century America, it sought to apply the potential of the "sciences" to the social world, and thus, in a society undergoing rapid industrialization, urbanization, poverty, immigration, labour unrest, and new forms of communication, the "social sciences" were developed with an objective of producing social engineers and technicians for a new society of "social control."

The major industrial and financial elites had a direct role to play in the transformation of this educational system, and a substantial interest in the ideologies which would emerge from them. As Andrew Carnegie wrote in 1889, at the top of the list of "charitable deeds" to undertake was "the founding of a university by men enormously rich, such men as must necessarily be few in any country." It was in this context, of robber barons seeking to remake education, that we see the founding of several of America's top universities, many of which were named after their robber baron founders, such as Stanford (after Leland Stanford), Cornell (after Ezra Cornell), and Johns Hopkins, who owned the Baltimore & Ohio Railroad.

This new class of industrialists, who emerged out of the Civil War in America, "challenged the position of the old propertied, pre-industrial elite. This struggle crystallized in particular around the reform of the educational system that had legitimated the old elite's domination." The modern university was born out of this struggle between elites, with the old educational system based upon religious and moral values, "and the making of gentlemen," while the "new education" focused on "the importance of management or administration" as well as "public service, [and] the advancement of knowledge through original investigation."

John D. Rockefeller founded the University of Chicago in 1891, and the President of the University, "initiated a new disciplinary system, which was enormously influential." Ultimately, it "led to the formation of the department structure of the American university, which was internationally unique," and was later exported around the world "with the help of American foundations." This disciplinary system consisted of separating politics from economics (rejecting the notion of "political economy" and its "ideologies"), as ideology was "deemed unscientific and inappropriate in social sciences and political scientists have increasingly seen their function as service to the powerful, rather than providing leadership to populist or socialist movements."

Nicolas Guilhot wrote in the journal *Critical Sociology* that since "social reform was inevitable," these industrialists "chose to invest in the definition and scientific treatment of the 'social questions' of their time," and subsequently, they "promoted reformist solutions that did not threaten the capitalistic nature of the social order," and instead constructed a "private alternative to socialism." Social control was not simply seen as the means through which a society – as it exists – could be maintained, but more often sought to preserve elements of that society (such as its hierarchical structure, the position of the elites) through periods of profound social change. In this sense, the question was "whether the processes of social control are able to maintain the social order [hierarchy] while transformation and social change take place."

The United States was viewed "as the laboratory for the study of transitional society in the framework of a rapidly changing social structure," and therefore, at a time when sociology was being established as an intellectual and academic discipline, "the United States could be viewed as a microcosm of social change and disorder." The sociologist Edward A. Ross was the first to popularize the concept of social control in the *American Journal of Sociology* in 1896 and 1898, and later in his 1901 book, *Social Control*. Ross "viewed individuals as objects of society's domination," and suggested that society had to establish order "by

channeling the behavior of its members into orderly relations.” Ross, largely influenced by Gabriel Tarde, did not believe that individuals were rational, but rather, that they would need to be "controlled" in one fashion or another. As some sociologists lamented in the 1920s, “all social problems turn out finally to be problems of social control,” and “the study of society was the study of social control.”

Sociology largely emerged from the University of Chicago (founded by John D. Rockefeller), with the world’s first department of sociology founded in 1892. The sociologists who rose within and out of the University of Chicago made up what was known as the "Chicago School of Sociology." The school developed the most influential sociologists in the nation, including George Herbert Mead and W.I. Thomas, two scholars who had profound influence on the development of the concept of "social control," and sociologists became “reform-oriented liberals, not radical revolutionaries or conservative cynics.”

The *American Journal of Sociology* was founded out of the University of Chicago by Albion Small, who was the head professor of the department of sociology, and became the editor of the journal for thirty years from 1895-1925. Between 1915 and 1940, the University of Chicago was the dominant force in sociology in the United States, and “the dominance of the Sociology Department was representative of the social sciences at Chicago during that period.” The school was largely made the center of not only sociology, but many areas of the social sciences, due to funding from outside sources, namely the major philanthropic foundations created by the Robber Baron industrialists in the early 20th century. The foundations became, in effect, engines of social engineering and perhaps the most effective institutions in the application of social control in modern society.

The Foundations of Social Control

The new industrial elite accumulated millions and even hundreds of millions by the end of the 19th century: Andrew Carnegie was worth roughly \$300 million after he sold Carnegie Steel to J.P. Morgan in 1901, and by 1913, John D. Rockefeller was estimated to have a personal worth of \$900 million. In the late 1880s, Rockefeller met Frederick T. Gates, a minister, educator, and administrator in the Baptist Church when they were negotiating the founding of a new university, which resulted with a pledge of \$600,000 from Rockefeller to found the University of Chicago in 1889. At this time, Rockefeller hired Gates as his associate in charge of Rockefeller’s philanthropic ventures. Gates became central in inculcating the notion of “scientific benevolence” within Rockefeller’s philanthropies. As Gates wrote in his autobiography, “I gradually developed and introduced in all his charities the principle of scientific giving.” Gates advised Rockefeller to form a series of “self-perpetuating” philanthropies.

The circumstances in which the Rockefeller Foundation emerged are notable. In 1913, a coal strike began at a Colorado mine owned by the Rockefellers in the small mining town of Ludlow, where roughly 11,000 workers (mostly Greek, Italian, and Serbian immigrants) went on strike against the “feudal domination of their lives in towns completely controlled by the mining companies.” Repression quickly followed, culminating in what became known as the Ludlow Massacre in 1914, with the Rockefellers hiring the National Guard to attack the strikers and destroy their tent city, machine gunning the crowd and setting fire to tents, one of which was discovered to have housed eleven children and two women, all of whom were killed by the fire.

The Congressional Walsh Commission was founded to investigate the activities which led to violent labour repression at the Colorado Fuel & Iron Company in Ludlow, though the scope of the Commission was expanded to study philanthropic foundations themselves. The Commission’s founder, Frank P. Walsh, explained:

...the creation of the Rockefeller and other foundations was the beginning of an effort to perpetuate the present position of predatory wealth through the corruption of sources of public information... [and] that if not checked by legislation, these foundations will be used as instruments to change to

form of government of the U.S. at a future date, and there is even a hint that there is a fear of a monarchy.

In 1916, the Walsh Commission produced its final report, the Manly Report (after the research director, Basil M. Manly), which concluded that the foundations were so “grave a menace” to society, that “it would be desirable to recommend their abolition.” Frank Walsh referred to foundations as “a menace to the welfare of society.”

As the Walsh Commission began their work, the Rockefeller Foundation sought to join forces with other major corporate leaders to advance their formation of ideology, and attended a conference “held between representatives of some of the largest financial interests” in the United States. This conference resulted in two approaches being pushed forward in terms of seeking to “educate the citizenry in procapitalistic ideology and thus relieve unrest.” One view was the interpretation that the public was provided with “poor quality of facts and interpretation available on social and economic issues.” Thus, they felt there was a need for a “publicity bureau” to provide a “constant stream of correct information” targeted at the lower and middle classes. The Rockefeller Foundation agreed that a publicity bureau was a good strategy, but added that what was also needed was “a permanent research organization to manufacture knowledge on these subjects.” A publicity bureau would “correct popular misinformation,” while a research organization would study the “causes of social and economic evils,” though of course avoiding problematic considerations of institutional analysis or radical critiques. They were instead to focus on “disinterested” and “detached” studies of social problems, portraying themselves as scientists and technicians for society, focused on reform and social control.

Rockefeller interests quickly undertook both strategies. While the Foundation was engaged in the manufacture of ideology (which specifically states that it is “non-ideological,” meaning that it supports power), the corporate arm of the Rockefeller empire hired the first public relations man, Ivy Lee, a Progressive era journalist. The Foundation hired the Canadian labour expert, William Lyon Mackenzie King (who would later become Canada’s longest-serving Prime Minister) to manage “labour relations,” promoting “company unions” over “autonomous unions,” thus undermining the freedom of labour to organize and oppose the social order as a whole, bringing them firmly within the corporate-state ideology and institutions.

Ivy Lee, for his part, attempted to undertake “damage control” for the Rockefellers, who were widely despised at the time, acting as a PR man, disseminating communiqués to media and educators attempting “to cultivate middle-class allies.” His efforts at stemming animosity toward the Rockefellers following Ludlow failed, but for years he continued to present “the human side of the Rockefellers,” earning him the rather unfavourable nickname “Poison Ivy.”

While Lee’s specific efforts were unsuccessful, the ideas behind them continued to grow and evolve. Two major social engineering projects were underway: one, the manufacture of ideology, largely the initiative of philanthropic foundations (and the social sciences), and the other, public relations as a modern form of propaganda. Both of these social engineering projects were designed to ensure social control through social engineering, and both were to have a profound impact upon both the definition and function of modern “democracies.”

Through the educational system, the social sciences, philanthropic foundations, public relations, advertising, marketing, and the media, America and the industrialized states of the world developed a unique and complex system of social control and propaganda for the 20th century and into the 21st. It is imperative to recognize and understand this complex system if we are to challenge and change it.