US Government Experiments On Children During The Cold War

This is the story of someone you know-your neighbor, your classmate, your brother or sister, your mother or father. It is the secret they have been holding within their hearts because they were afraid the American public could not believe their government would carry out human experimentation on children, in direct defiance of the Nuremberg Code, which has been official United States policy since 1946.

Some of the very same Nazi doctors who worked in mental institutions before WWII, deciding whether mentally deficient children should be sterilized or killed because of their defective genes, also perfomed horrendous experiments in the death camps. Their medical expertise, along with hundreds of Nazi scientists was considered so vital to the "Cold War" effort that they would be brought into the United States and Canada to work side by side with some of the greatest, but most perverse minds the 20th century would ever see. It is a story interwoven with incest and government mind control. It involves the use of drugs, sensory deprivation, hypnosis, and electric shock to gain control of these children's minds.

Impossible, you say. I wish it were. We live in such a sheltered little world. It's much easier to believe that incest and violence and mind control belong to the few; but they belong to the many. One in three girls faces some type of sexual abuse before they are eighteen years old. The statistics on men is one in seven, but that is debatable since it is so much more difficult for them to come forward. Dr. Alan W. Scheflin, Professor of law at Santa Clara University Law School, and a judicially recognized expert in mind and behavior control states in a letter dated March 9, 1995 that secret government mind control experimentation is ongoing and vastly more expansive than the government authorities are willing to admit. He also is co-author of a nonfiction book entitled The Mind Manipulators which was published in a dozen countries. He says that he has been studying these secret programs since 1975 and it is his conclusion that there are at minimum hundreds, and most likely thousands of American citizens who were used as guinea pigs against their will in government research projects. What he does not say is that most of the children used in these experiments were sold by one of their caretakers in the name of "National Security" and subjected to untold horrors at the hands of their government.

In light of so many abuses of power coming before the public in recent years, many adult survivors of these childhood experiments are stepping forward to be heard. The government has admitted wrong doing in the Tuskegee Experiments, where poor black man were allowed to go untreated for their syphilis so the government could study the effects. Best remembered are the atomic tests on 2584 military personnel in the Nevada desert in 1953. Less known were such experiments as the feeding of radioactive cereal in the 1940s and 1950s to young male science club members who were institutionalized at the Fernald School in Massachusetts. The researchers had little experience with radionuclides in humans; consequently this approach to medical investigation gave them that opportunity. The parents, as well as the children, were simply told they were being fed a diet rich in iron.

During the 1950s and 1960s, Dr. Saul Krugman of New York University conducted studies of hepatitis at the Willowbrook State School, an institution for the severely mentally retarded. To study the natural history, effects, and progression of the disease, Krugman and his staff systematically infected newly arrived children with strains of the virus. In October 1995 the President's Advisory Committee on Human Radiation Experiments reported that secret radiation experiments on indigent patients and mentally retarded children were not only done, but that these people were deceived about the nature of their treatments. Dr. William Silverman asserted that performing nontherapeutic experiments on childrenn without authorization from parents was part of a broader "ethos of the time" in which "everyone was a draftee" in a national war on disease.
Then there is the case of the 12 human "guinea pigs" who were secretly injected with radioactive Plutonium 239 and uranium in government experiments in the 1940's. Energy Secretary Hazel Oleary in announcing the settlement of $4.8 million to be paid to their families said the government was "grateful" to the victims for "the tough lessons they have taught us about trust, responsibility, and accountability between the government and the people." In a Congressional subcommittee hearing in Washington, DC on September 28, 1994 it was revealed that up to 500,000 Americans were endangered by secret defense-related tests between 1940 and 1974 -- including covert experiments with radioactive materials, mustard gas, LSD, and biological agents. The General Accounting Office testified that between 1949 and 1969, the Army released radioactive compounds in 239 cities to study the effects.

In a decision dated April 16, 1985 Chief Justice Burger of the United States Court of Appeals delivered the opinion of the Court in the case of CIA v. SIMS, 471 U.S. 159. This case focused around the public's right under the Freedom of Information Act, to have declassified the grant proposals and contracts, and the names of the institutions and individuals who had performed research under the CIA financed research project, code-named MKULTRA. MKULTRA was established to counter soviet and Chinese advances in brainwashing and interrogation techniques and consisted of 149 subprojects contracted out to at least 80 institutions.

In 1977, Director of Intelligence, Stansfield Turner described in an affidavit that the program was initiated because the Agency was confronted with "learning the state of the art of behavioral modification at a time when the U.S. Government was concerned about inexplicable behavior of persons behind the 'iron curtain' and American prisoners of war who had been subjected to so called "brainwashing". It began with a proposal from Richard Helms, then the Agency's assistant Deputy Director for Plans. Helms outlined a special funding mechanism for highly sensitive Agency research and development projects that would study the use of biological and chemical materials in altering human behavior.

MKULTRA was approved by Allen Dulles, Director of Central Intelligence on April 13, 1953. Twenty years after the conception of the MKULTRA project, all known files pertaining to it were ordered destroyed by Richard Helms before he retired. In 1977 through a Freedom of Information Act request by John Marks, 16,000 pages of documents were found; held as part of the Agency's financial history. Thank God, for the bean counters. Further attempts at declassification resulted in the decision rendered by Chief Justice Burger that the "intelligence sources" who were guaranteed confidentiality at the time of these CIA funded research projects would continue to remain protected and classified.

To those of us who have survived these experiments, this decision means that our stories will continue to lie in the government vaults of classified materials. Most of the important details were conveniently destroyed under orders of Richard Helms, probably not unlike what took place when the concentration camps were liberated. If not for the survivors, their stories would never have been told and the disappearance of 6 million people could have remained a question mark in history. I have no other choice than to tell this story myself. My goal in writing this book is to expose the misuse of power that took place in this country during the Cold War due to fear. Thousands of innocent children, who have now grown into adults are silently suffering from the effects of the experiments that were done to them by their own government. Many have been diagnosed incorrectly and institutionalized. Some died because they knew too much. Others, like myself, were able to obtain competent medical help, and are struggling to heal from the physical and mental ravages upon our beings.

Will we let this story lay in the shadows forever, or do we have the courage to address these wrongs and give survivors back their voices? You be the judge.