

John Marks

Behavior Controlled by CIA?

There must be several thousand schizophrenics around the country who think the government has them wired up," says John Marks, who—in the course of researching a new book—has forced the CIA to produce about 10,000 pages of documents detailing secret government efforts to control behavior. After a televised press conference on the subject last year, Marks received a flood of mail from strangers "thanking me, saying the CIA had them wired up for years which explains their wild behavior."

Marks, 34, is the former State Department employee who became famous in the early Seventies when the government censored portions of the book he wrote with Victor Marchetti called *The CIA and the Cult of Intelligence*. Since then neither the business of intelligence agencies nor the lives of the authors have been quite the same: the CIA's activities have received unprecedented scrutiny and Marks became a full-time spy-watcher for the Center for National Security Studies. (Marchetti, an ex-CIA worker, is now an author.)

Last summer Marks clashed publicly with the new CIA chief Stanisfield Turner, after Turner admitted in a letter to a senator that the agency had found evidence of drug testing. Marks—who a year earlier had received documents about the so-called MKULTRA program under a Freedom of Information Act request—charged Turner minimized the scope of the program. The press got interested and the world began learning dirty little CIA secrets, such as the former existence of a San Francisco apartment in which government-paid prostitutes administered LSD to unsuspecting patrons while a hidden CIA agent watched.

One true tale, the suicide of an Army chemist who was made the unwitting subject of drug tests, became public during the course of the Rockefeller commission review of intelligence activities in 1975. But Marks' eye was caught by a sentence in the commission's report that said the doctor's suicide was part of a larger problem of intelligence agencies dabbling in behavior control. He filed FOI requests on that subject and bit-by-bit Marks learned of the MKULTRA program.

"It went into virtually every area of the social and physical sciences, it's much more extensive than has come out so far," says Marks, who received a substantial five-figure advance from Times Books for a book on the subject. "There's more to come out about experiments with prisoners, more on hypnosis."

Marks, who became disillusioned with the foreign service after a tour in Vietnam, lives with his wife (a teacher) and young son in the Adams-Morgan neighborhood while he writes. He says he gets no help from the CIA and, so far, no cooperation from the Pentagon, though the man he approached there is an old hero: Tom Ross, the assistant secretary of defense for public affairs. Ross, a former Washington bureau chief for the Chicago Sun-Times, wrote a book in 1964 that shook the intelligence community. Its title: *The Invisible Government*.