



Written by on May 28, 2009

Tracking Your Digital Trail

At this writing, Republican Congresswoman Virginia Foxx of North Carolina is busy apologizing for her politically incorrect gaffe in arguing against legislation that would expand federal hate-crime laws to include sexual orientation. She pointed to the infamous Matthew Shepard case as a “hoax” inasmuch as Shepard’s killers appeared to have been interested in drugs, not sexual-identity issues.

Were Foxx a teenager today, she would be spared the necessity of balancing her conservative views on sexuality against the left’s Orwellian obsession with semantics. School counselors would steer her away from career paths in politics, journalism, or teaching (all careers that influence public perceptions) based on her answers on school-based, opinion-oriented tests and surveys, cross-matched with her family’s religious affiliations, magazine and newspaper subscriptions, and other “private” information that she might inadvertently let slip throughout her K-12 years. She would also be “guided” by social-studies and “health” teachers who are aggressive in “helping” students overcome “inflexible” and “intolerant” attitudes — a strategy now made infinitely simple via computer.



Since the mid-1970s, market research firms and pollsters have worked to collect value and lifestyle (“VALS”) data on children and adults from any source capable of generating an analysis — popular magazines, surveys, telephone polls, school questionnaires, psychological screening instruments, census forms, and even academic tests (eventually renamed “assessments” to avoid allegations of testing fraud). The idea was to cross-match information so that behavioral analysts could find out what makes certain groups (and individuals) tick — *and then see if people could be made to “tick” differently via an advertising or public relations campaign*. The purpose was to sell a product, be it coffee, a candidate for public office, or a political agenda.

A few parents were aware that such tactics were encroaching upon educational settings, but viewed them as more an invasion of privacy than an outright violation of their childrearing prerogatives.

Until the other shoe dropped.

Along came the computer and the Internet. Both vastly facilitated identification, data-capture, and cross-matching capabilities. The technology morphed like greased lightning on steroids in the 1980s and ’90s. Today, the “dream degree” is a dual doctorate in psychology and statistics, considered staples of marketing, polling, and advertising industries. What it means to the average citizen is that behavioral scientists (i.e., psychologists and statisticians) can *predict* how people might react to hot-button issues as many as five years down the road and work to change perceptions or reactions. In an environment where one political worldview dominates (i.e., controls the bureaucracy), this equates to *psychopolitics* — a term first popularized by science-fiction writer Isaac Asimov just 30 years ago.

Governments, of course, have long recognized the advantages of knowing everything about their citizens, especially their attitudes. Hitler and Stalin would have drooled over today’s global positioning satellites and information systems. Even in the 1990s, politicians had to confine their information quests to groups, factions, and socio-demographic blocs. Now data-collection and analysis have been taken to a whole new level of individualization. Terms like “data mining” and “profiling” became increasingly familiar following September 11, 2001. In reality, both were in the works prior to 9/11, but understated as in expressions like “market/consumer research,” “background check,” and “psychographics.”



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Certainly, it was not evident to average Americans that their behaviors and beliefs were undergoing long-term monitoring, although phrases like “molding public opinion” rang an alarm bell among more sophisticated audiences. What most people, including the well-read, did not realize was how much money was being poured into behavioral and psychological research during World War II and the post-war years, via facilities like the Tavistock Institute in Britain, the Office of War Information in the United States, and various colleges’ and universities’ psychology departments, such as Esalen Institute and Columbia University.

Both the funders and the recipients of research grants subscribed to a vastly different ethical code from mainstream America, unfettered by constitutional considerations. Canadian psychiatrists such as Drs. Brock Chisholm and Ewen Cameron were among the first to publicly blame religious morality, especially Christianity, for “mental illness” and war. Chisholm told the World Federation of Mental Health in 1946 that parents holding such backward doctrines were “creating a thousand neurotics for every one psychiatrists can hope to cure.”

British psychologist John Rawlings Rees, head of the Tavistock Institute in the 1930s and '40s, once bragged that he could create a psychological environment that forced people to let go of even firmly entrenched beliefs using “controlled stress” experiments that had been done on U.S. and British soldiers. German immigrant psychologist Max Kallmann and his U.S. protégée, Linda Erlenmeyer-Kimling, promoted eugenics among many Americans despite the prevailing Judeo-Christian ethical climate of their day.

Molding the Masses

Most people never realized that after World War II, the higher-ups among these various radical entities ventured forth to head educational institutions and media outlets. For example, Edward Barrett, who served as head of our government’s overt psychological warfare program from 1950-52, became dean of Columbia University’s Graduate School of Journalism. He once boasted that “among OWI [Office of War Information] alumni are the publishers of *Time*, *Look*, *Fortune*, and several dailies; editors of such magazines as *Holiday*, *Coronet*, *Parade*, ... the *Saturday Review* ... the *Denver Post* [and] the *New Orleans Times-Picayune* ... ; the heads of Viking Press [and] Harper & Brothers.” William Paley, an alumnus of the U.S. Army’s Psychological Warfare Division went on to head CBS, and C.D. Jackson led *Time/Life*. Another, Charles Dollard, became president of the Carnegie Corporation, which wound up setting policy in banking, education (Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching), and international relations (Carnegie Endowment for International Peace), and served as a trustee of the Rand Corporation, which developed the Delphi Technique of underhanded consensus-building.

The thrust of their collective learning experiences was mass psychology, particularly manipulation strategies that feature “psychological control of environment,” in which high- and low-stress techniques are applied alternately to a setting, producing a group that ultimately cannot follow its own train of thought and winds up behaving and thinking erratically. Eventually, experts realized that their efforts would be simplified if they knew where individuals “were coming from” in the first place. But mass data collection was only marginally feasible at that time, and the sheer volume of information was too overwhelming to be useful — until a mathematical algorithm could be applied to computerized data in order to categorize and compare data and serve as fodder for trend analysis.

Among the first forays into mass data collection was the program-planning-budget-system (PPBS) in the early 1970s, followed by the School and Staffing Survey (SASS) system. Soon the software and hardware were outstripping even the experts’ expectations. An integrated data system was constructed in 1985 under the Office of Educational Research and Information (OERI), an office of the U.S. Department of Education; it became known as the Elementary and Secondary Integrated Data System (ESIDS).

All of these sounded innocuous and legitimate: a set of tidy statistics for comparing one state’s schools with another. What it really amounted to, however, was the first electronic transfer system — something everyone takes for granted today. For behavioral psychologists, however, it was a “Eureka!” moment. Suddenly older pros like Dustin Heustin of the World Institute for Computer-Assisted Technology realized what they could really accomplish. “We’ve been absolutely staggered by realizing that the computer has the capability to act as if it were 10 of the top psychologists working with one student.... Won’t it be wonderful ... when no one can get between that child and that computer?” he gushed.

Subjects Unaware

Being sneaky was the key. Ralph Tyler, the famous behavioral testing pioneer (deceased 1994), like his colleague, Benjamin Bloom (*Taxonomy of Educational Objectives*, 1956), insisted that the purpose of education was to induce students to change their beliefs and behaviors. Citing five aspects of the privacy issue in *Crucial Issues in Testing* (1969), Tyler’s co-editor, Richard Wolf, allowed for the “permissibility of deception.” Wolf alleged that extracting information from students sometimes outweighed privacy considerations because there “are occasions in which the test constructor [finds it necessary] to outwit the subject so that he cannot guess what information he is revealing.” Tyler and Wolf lobbied hard for a new mission in America’s schools — what we know as “psychological profiling” today. Another colleague, Walcott Beatty, admonished his peers around the same time to make sure that their efforts to capture “nongenerative” details on students’ lives “avoid the appearance of [being] a national initiative.” Tyler, Wolf, Bloom, and Beatty comprised an emerging behaviorist faction (called behavioral psychology) that ignored



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legal experts like Charles W. Sherrer and Ronald A. Roston who warned that anything resembling personality testing could be construed as an invasion of privacy. They concurred with, yet decided to disregard, the legal admonitions of Reed Martin, who wrote a book warning that educators promoting mental health and behavior modification questionnaires in schools were in danger of being charged with “entrapment.” The behaviorist educators sided instead with Bernard Berelson (*Journal of Educational Measurement*, Spring 1967) who claimed that “‘great society’ programs ... have heightened the demand on behavioral scientists to work on social problems.”

The problem was that the computer made it all just so darned easy and tempting; consequently, such questionnaires became a federal scheme — one that is now pervasive as “mental illness prevention” in the nation’s schools.

The U.S. Department of Education began demanding that states create assessments that combined both cognitive and noncognitive questions as a prerequisite of receiving any sort of federal funding. The term “cognitive” was redefined at the federal level, using the rationale that every piece of “knowledge” necessarily contains an emotional component. Thus, any use of noncognitive items did not violate the demand for substantive curriculum or testing. Not only that, but “getting along” and “teamwork” in the workplace demanded a new emphasis on “social compliance.” Thus did noncognitive, worldview-based education get “sold” in a career-oriented package, and the word “test” was changed to “assessment” in case of a legal backlash over fraud.

The term “assessment” is there for a reason. The U.S. Department of Education’s National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) Statistical Standards define it thusly: “An *assessment* is any systematic procedure for obtaining information from tests and other sources that can be used to draw inferences about characteristics of people, objects, or programs.” Another major source, *Constructing Curriculum for the Primary Grades* by D.T. Dodge, et al., states: “Assessment is the process of gathering information about children in order to make decisions about their education. Teachers obtain useful information about children’s knowledge, skills, and progress by observing, documenting, and reviewing children’s work over time. Ongoing assessment [also] occurs in the context of classroom activities.” The words “ongoing” and “over time” are key. These point to the *longitudinal study*, a mainstay of today’s long-term data-collection process, allowing opinions and worldviews to be tallied and followed over the child’s school years, then on into college and the workplace.

Noncognitive questionnaires entail nailing down controversial opinions on issues ranging from the worth of the United Nations to homosexuality to climate change. Upon examining the questions (which are difficult to obtain), anyone schooled in marketing or public relations would recognize a certain familiarity: what-would-you-do-if queries; confession-style probes; and psychological “fishing expeditions.” One of the first, Pennsylvania’s 1984 Educational Quality Assessment (EQA), contained the following:

- “I get upset easily at home. The student checks: [a] Very true of me, [b] Mostly true of me, [c] Mostly untrue of me, [d] Very untrue of me.”
- “You are asked to dinner at the home of a classmate having a religion much different from yours. In this situation I would feel: [a] Very comfortable, [b] Comfortable, [c] Slightly uncomfortable, [d] Very uncomfortable.”
- “There is a secret club at school called the Midnight Artists. They go out late at night and paint funny sayings and pictures on buildings. I would JOIN THE CLUB when I knew ... [a] my best friend had asked me to join; [b] most of the popular students in school were in the club; [c] my parents *would ground me* if they found out I joined.” [Italics added.]

Tackling Intransigence

Parents paid scant attention to this sort of thing in the 1980s, until their kids started saying schools were asking questions about Mom and Dad, about their finances, methods of discipline, attitudes toward race and medications. When parents balked, they got the runaround. This writer’s 1991 whistle-blower, *Educating for the New World Order*, showcases the efforts of parents in three different states. The mother in Pennsylvania who proved her case to the satisfaction of U.S. Senator Arlen Specter was nevertheless unable to “prove harm,” which is the standard for a successful lawsuit involving compensation. That allowed the state to continue what it was doing and actually emboldened the federal government plus state education agencies to steamroll over the 10th Amendment and parental prerogatives, and to withhold funding from local education districts that flinched.

In the end, doctors’ offices and businesses, and even criminal justice, were sacrificed on the altar of “mental health.” If a child came in with a broken leg or a bump on his head, doctors were charged with looking for signs of parental abuse, emotional and physical. If a female or a member of an ethnic minority was having problems at work, it might be a hostile work environment, which was, of course, emotionally unhealthy. Defendants in criminal cases were assigned psychologists to determine “fitness” for trial, often as not resulting in the miscreant being back out on the street to repeat his or her crime.

Individuals and groups are even categorized and marginalized for politically incorrect thoughts or “crimes of opinion” that would then need to be fought (or so the public would be led to believe) with a new weapon, “preventive psychology.” Increasingly, crimes



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of opinion come with mandatory counseling. Such was the case of baseball star John Rocker, who uttered two tactless comments in a New York subway about sitting next to kids with purple and green hair, and women with 10 illegitimate children. Both remarks were taken for racial slurs even though it was mainly white teens who were applying weird hair dyes and unmarried females of many races who were bearing children. Referrals for prescriptions of dangerous drugs like Ritalin and Concerta, aimed at inattentive and naughty schoolchildren, have become routine. Involuntary commitment, initially confined to fines and short jail sentences, is gathering popularity as punishment for “inflexible” adults who still cling tenaciously to their privacy (e.g., refusing to provide DNA and urine samples without probable cause), or who view parental decisions on issues such as discipline and health as superseding government edicts (e.g., spanking toddlers being categorized as child abuse, and refusing radical treatments such as chemotherapy or radiation for minor children with cancer being equated with medical neglect, along with refusing to dispense a psychotropic drug to a child).

Details on Data Mining

Mental “health” screening (a.k.a. “profiling” or “data mining”) now is locked ideologically with behavioral *prediction* — even though the computerized algorithms used by behavioral analysts to analyze compilations of data often utilize only selected snippets of information and arrive at often-incorrect “findings.” In a surveillance society, it is easy to dispatch positive information about an individual to the cutting-room floor, while highlighting anything that smacks of political incorrectness, as occurred when Congresswoman Virginia Foxx uttered the words “hoax” and “Matthew Shepard” in the same sentence.

Now new evidence has come to light that proves that so-called data mining, which the government uses in conjunction with “terrorism,” actually originated in America’s classrooms. Most of these documents emanate from the National Center for Education Statistics. For example, a piece entitled “Data-Mining Journals and Books: Using the Science of Networks to Uncover the Structure of the Educational Research Community,” published by the American Education Research Association’s *Research News and Comments* (April 2005), details how identification numbers are assigned *each* child, *ostensibly* by the state, but under the auspices of a *federal* mandate, meaning that the states are the “fall guys.” Documents from the Nebraska Department of Education show that each state is supposed to craft its own ID procedures using federal guidelines, then transmit all the gathered data to the federal government, where private information is cross-matched with other information already in hand from non-school sources. For instance, Nebraska’s “Uniq-ID System” for schoolchildren’s assessments automatically is shown linked to the child’s *federal* Social Security number in a table.

Another Nebraska document explains how state officials and school counselors can apply a step-by-step, “drill down” method to locate sensitive information about a student or his family. For example, the same educrats who are not even supposed to mention religion or put up red-and-green paper at Christmastime can select from 30 numerical codes that include religious particulars such as “Nazarene,” “Calvinist,” and “Pentecostal” to categorize students.

To prepare schools for their new marching orders, conflicts of interest were inevitable. Ralph Tyler, for example, not only headed the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, but was president of its wealthy for-profit spinoff, the Educational Testing Service. He was also tapped to head the U.S. Office of Education, then under the U.S. Department of Health, Education and Welfare. He not only went all over the country, formulating copycat quasi-cognitive tests in state after state under contract, but he also headed the effort to formulate the first real national test, the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP).

Moreover, the staples of soft-psychological surveying techniques, inserted surreptitiously into bona fide academic tests, moved into other realms — the job application process, the medical establishment, airport security, etc. — making government intrusion just that much easier with every new incursion.

For example, the Transportation Security Authority (TSA) is set to station some 500 Behavioral Detection Officers (BDOs) at airports by the end of 2009. Again, these are psychologists, who will monitor not only body language, but also “micro-expressions” — of *anyone* in an airport security line who raises an eyebrow in a manner that specialists interpret as “disgust, anger, fear or antipathy to the screening process.” Any perceived negativity on the part of a passenger (called an “allegation of nonphysical interference”) could result in a fine as high as \$1,500 and loss of one’s flight reservation.

In 2004, Congress funded the New Freedom Initiative (NFI) — a Marxist-sounding moniker detailing a plan to screen every man, woman, and child in America for “mental illness.” How this occurred is a textbook case of the method by which outrageous pieces of legislation morph from tiny “pilot projects” to federal mandates.

In 1995, under then-Texas Governor George W. Bush, a scheme was hatched at the state level, the Texas Medication Algorithm Project (TMAP), to screen schoolchildren in Texas. TMAP was an alliance of individuals from the pharmaceutical industry, the University of Texas, and the mental health and corrections systems of Texas. Subsequently, the New Freedom Commission designated TMAP a “model” medication treatment plan, whereupon President Bush instructed more than 25 federal agencies to develop a *nationwide* “implementation plan.”



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It was funded in large part through the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation's philanthropic (a.k.a. "public relations") arm of the Johnson & Johnson medical-supply/household-products empire. RWJ has been a longtime player in promoting controversial "prevention" curricula in schools, especially in sex education. But the real kicker about TMAP was that it promoted something much worse: the use of newer, more expensive antidepressants and antipsychotic "cocktails." Several drug companies stood to gain billions of dollars from what were at that time deemed "unproved, radical drug therapies" to combat mental illness. TMAP was one of those "trial balloons" that seem to come out of nowhere: vast, bureaucratic overreaches that, when confined to one town or state, have as their real goal to assess the level of public resistance to an idea.

By the 1990s, of course, child misbehavior was becoming downright scary, so a strange thing happened. Parents were more relieved than annoyed when they were told something was "really wrong" with their child, and not that they had merely bought in to poor disciplinary practices from people calling themselves "child experts." Consequently, a majority of Texas parents more-or-less acquiesced in the TMAP experiment. Which, of course, emboldened a whole cottage industry of mental health advocates, from psychopharmacologists to social workers to behaviorist educators.

The TMAP data-mining project went national in 2002 under the "New Freedom Initiative."

Only in the Pennsylvania Office of the Inspector General did the red flags go up. OIG inspector Allen Jones blew the whistle when he found that key officials had received money and perks from drug companies with a stake in the old TMAP, then gone on to advise the NFI project. Some members of the New Freedom Commission had served on advisory boards of the same pharmaceutical companies whose products were being recommended in 2002. George Bush, Sr. was himself a member of psychopharmaceutical giant Eli Lilly's board of directors. So, the younger President Bush rewarded Lilly's chief executive officer, Sidney Taurel, with a seat on the Homeland Security Council — *the worst possible place for someone pushing psychological screening and drugging of the populace!*

Like the two Border Patrol agents (Jose Compean and Ignacio Ramos) who were jailed for guarding the border, the good inspector Jones was sacked for, um, inspecting, and especially for speaking to the *British Medical Journal* and the *New York Times* about any discrepancies he found in the NFI project.

Consequences of Inculcation

Ironically, NFI was forging ahead at a time when Congress, the FDA, and some consumer groups were questioning the *culpability* of antidepressants and antipsychotics in suicide and violent aggression. Pharmaceutical giant Eli Lilly, maker of psychological drugs like Prozac and Zyprexa, was on the hot seat. Dr. David Healy, renowned former secretary of the British Association for Psychopharmacology, had just finished penning his watershed book, *Let Them Eat Prozac*, detailing the unrecorded failures during drug trials in the rush to launch the antidepressant Prozac, along with similar failures in that whole class of antidepressants known as SSRIs (selective serotonin reuptake inhibitors). His facts bested every attempt to counter him.

Since the NFI program went national, the nation has seen violent incidents at West Paducah, Kentucky; Springfield, Oregon; Edinboro, Pennsylvania; Red Lake, Minnesota; Virginia Tech, Virginia; Binghamton, New York; and more. Nearly every perpetrator was already on a psychotropic drug — usually a cocktail of such drugs, in an attempt to offset side effects. In other words, if Ritalin makes an inattentive kid "hyper," then let's give him a tranquilizer to calm him down. If that makes him sleepy, maybe he needs an anti-seizure medication to keep him awake, and so on, until his brains are scrambled eggs.

President Barack Obama is a proponent of mental health screening and "treatments." He voiced his supports numerous times while still a senator and on the campaign trail. Former Vice President Al Gore, at the urging of his wife, "Tipper," sponsored the first White House conference touting psychological screening on June 7, 1999.

Mandatory drugging of nonconformists, slow learners, and naughty kids is now part and parcel of a nasty and little-publicized agenda to engineer uniformity of opinion without appearing blatant about it. Children, always happy to talk about themselves, are busy filling out opinion polls and surveys — especially in social studies and "health" (sex education) classes. They have no idea how this will play out. Even toddlers are being assessed in "early childhood programs." The 2004 New Freedom Commission Report stated, "Early detection and treatment of mental disorders can result in a substantially shorter and less disabling course of illness." But where's the track record to back up such a claim? Simple: it doesn't exist. Even so, prospective teachers (including this author) have been taught in their teacher-preparation classes for the past 35 years that "high religiosity" is akin to "intolerance" and "inflexibility," both alleged "markers" for mental illness.

While data is being collected for schools from mothers' records, beginning in their *pregnancies* (weight gained, number of prenatal visits and so forth), along with the baby's statistics (weight at birth, gestational age and health), followed by a page-long list of possible dental anomalies (occlusion, decay, gum condition, soft-tissue quality, etc.), teachers cannot seem to find time to teach



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any facts.

Surveys of parents also find their way into a child's permanent record. The Early Childhood Longitudinal Study (ECLS) is a detailed questionnaire that must be filled out by the "Resident Father and Other Important People." The 15-page questionnaire appears to be optional, but parents say there are penalties for refusing. The questions are audacious, invasive, and personal. "When did you first hold your child?" asks one, followed by multiple choices. Fifteen pages of intimate questions could easily provide child protection agencies (i.e., government) with an excuse to label a child with a psychiatric problem or a "developmental delay" — thus holding the threat of child removal over a parent's head, should any member become troublesome to government agencies down the road. One Michigan homeschooler, for example, explained how her call to Poison Control regarding a thermometer that she dropped on her bathroom floor led to her being ordered to remove all the tiles, plus her carpets in the bedroom and hall — under the threat of removing her three children from the home if she did not follow directions.

Meanwhile, schools find every excuse to refer pupils for psychiatric counseling — an activity that usually results in prescriptions for psychiatric drugs having questionable track records. Nor is the drugging of Americans limited to children. Last June we learned that the Veterans Administration lured exhausted returning veterans into lethal psychotropic drug tests. The hook was a stop-smoking regimen. Congress feigned shock, but involuntary commitment in order to conduct human experiments with drugs is becoming pervasive. Canadian journalists Christine Hahn and Toni Eatts blew the whistle in 1998 on a "Texas-to-Canada Corridor" project aimed at literally kidnapping homeless persons in Texas and taking them to psychiatric facilities in Canada (and vice versa) to conduct psychotropic drug experiments. They particularly targeted individuals who, they thought, would not be missed. In *Cloning of the American Mind*, this author cited reports in Florida newspapers of two incidents, one involving a grandmother who wanted to lose weight and the other about a couple going through a divorce who needed a change of scene. Both were referred to pricey establishments. Once there, they were stripped of their clothes and belongings. They were screened for "depression," and despite a flat zero on the depression scale, injected with experimental drugs for depression. As soon as their health insurance ran out, they were discharged.

Between personal data such as online book purchases (including political books and magazines), children's opinion surveys, and the parent "self-administered" survey, powerful determinants for predicting future *political* behavior can be collated and analyzed. If government ever gets to the point where it can profile and predict personal and public opinion with even a *perceived* degree of accuracy, then it can take kids away from parents for no reason, forcibly drug citizens who balk against government policies, commit *refuseniks* to institutions involuntarily, create eugenics programs that prevent procreation or adoption of children, and reward youngsters for "reporting" on their parents. It can groom some for positions of leadership or influence (via the colleges and universities) and deny such positions to others.

This is what we are facing if we continue to allow the mental health industry to run amok, particularly in our schools, since educators are the foot soldiers in this unholy alliance to "mold public opinion."

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