

SAN FRANCISCO SEX HOUSES ATTRACT THE CIA AND OTHER PERVERTS

Tue, 06 Jun 2023 11:32:05, swnof88, [category: news, post_tag: san-francisco-sex-houses-attract-the-cia-and-other-perverts]

San Francisco has never been afraid of the obscene. But the events unfolding inside a dimly lit apartment on Chestnut Street were some of the most shocking the city has ever seen.

A man was high on LSD and having sex with a sex worker on one side of the San Francisco apartment. Only a few feet away, a squat man with a face like "an extremely menacing bowling ball" observed the couple with a scientific curiosity as he sat on a toilet seat and drank a martini.

It was no scene out of a movie: For eight years, between 1955 and 1963, federal agents ran a hidden brothel in one of San Francisco's poshest neighborhoods and tested LSD on unsuspecting Bay Area residents. The apartment building is still there, although it has been converted from a CIA brothel into a four-story mansion worth over \$10 million.

At the center of this wildly unethical program was George Hunter White, a former San Francisco journalist-turned-cop who became one of the biggest crusaders of America's early war on drugs. In public, he railed against drug use and ruthlessly investigated jazz legends like Billie Holiday. Privately, however, he drank martinis by the pitcher and even used drugs like LSD and marijuana.



FILE: An undated photo shows George Hunter White, supervisor for the New England area of the Federal Bureau of Narcotics, as he enters federal court to go before a grand jury. Evelyn Straus New York Daily News/NY Daily News via Getty Images

White was the federal agent responsible for a top-secret CIA program called "Operation Midnight Climax." The CIA thought it could use hallucinogenic drugs like LSD as weapons of war against its enemies. To find out, the agency got Bay Area residents high without their consent.

White outfitted rooms inside a Telegraph Hill apartment building, at 225 Chestnut St., into a safe house for testing LSD. He gave sex workers get-out-of-jail-free cards in exchange for luring unsuspecting johns to the apartment, where the men were dosed with acid while White watched from the other side of a one-way mirror.

Operation Midnight Climax is now an infamous example of government abuse, but in White's opinion, according to a letter unearthed by John Marks in his 1979 book "The Search for the 'Manchurian Candidate,'" it was nothing but "fun, fun, fun."

"Where else could a red-blooded American boy lie, kill, cheat, steal, rape, and pillage with the sanction and blessing of the All-Highest?" White asked.

The drunk drug warrior

George White was never afraid to get his hands dirty. Before he was secretly getting people high on acid, he spent decades in a career that intertwined sex, drugs and war.

White was born in Los Angeles in 1908 and started his career as a journalist for the San Francisco Bulletin, according to a biography in the [Online Archive of California](#). He then took jobs at the Federal Bureau of Narcotics and later the Office of Strategic Services, a precursor to the CIA, and embarked on a global career, commanding troops in India and busting drug rings in France, Italy and Turkey.

More Cannabis Coverage

— [Over 90% of Calif. pot farms infected with 'severe' pathogen](#)

— [Calif. startup accused of running \\$60M Ponzi scheme](#)

— [Magic mushroom pastor is willing to go to jail for his SF church](#)

— [California is losing legal pot farm licenses by the hundreds](#)

At the core of White's work was a great hypocrisy: He was a fierce warrior against people who used or sold drugs, yet he was also a drug user himself.

This familiarity with both sides of the drug world made him a natural fit as a leader in the Federal Bureau of Narcotics, to which he returned after World War II to lead the bureau's work in New York City.

He developed a notorious reputation for his heavy drinking — he was known to finish a bottle of gin in one sitting — and his willingness to bend the rules in order to achieve his objectives. He would [spike women's drinks with drugs](#) during his investigations, and he once gave a subordinate of Lucky Luciano, a famous mafia ringleader, a cigarette laced with concentrated marijuana in an attempt to have the man divulge mafia secrets.

His behavior earned him enemies. J. Edgar Hoover had personally blocked White's appointment to the CIA years earlier, according to Marks, but it also led him to one of the most infamous spy campaigns in U.S. history: Operation Midnight Climax.

The hunt for mind control

White's work in the American drug war took a strange turn as the 1940s ended. Cannabis and opium prohibition was already in full swing, but Western society was only just rediscovering psychedelic drugs.

Between 1943 and 1956, European chemists investigating traditional medicines discovered [LSD](#), [psilocybin](#) and [DMT](#). This set off a frenzied era of research into psychedelics and how they affect humans.



FILE: Dr. Harry L. Williams (left) administers LSD to Dr. Carl Pfeiffer, chairman of Emory University's pharmacological department, in 1955 during early research into the drug. Bettmann/Bettmann Archive

For psychologists, these mind-warping drugs offered hope that they could be powerful tools to treat mental illnesses like schizophrenia and depression. But America's spy agencies saw something different. They thought the drugs could be new weapons of war.

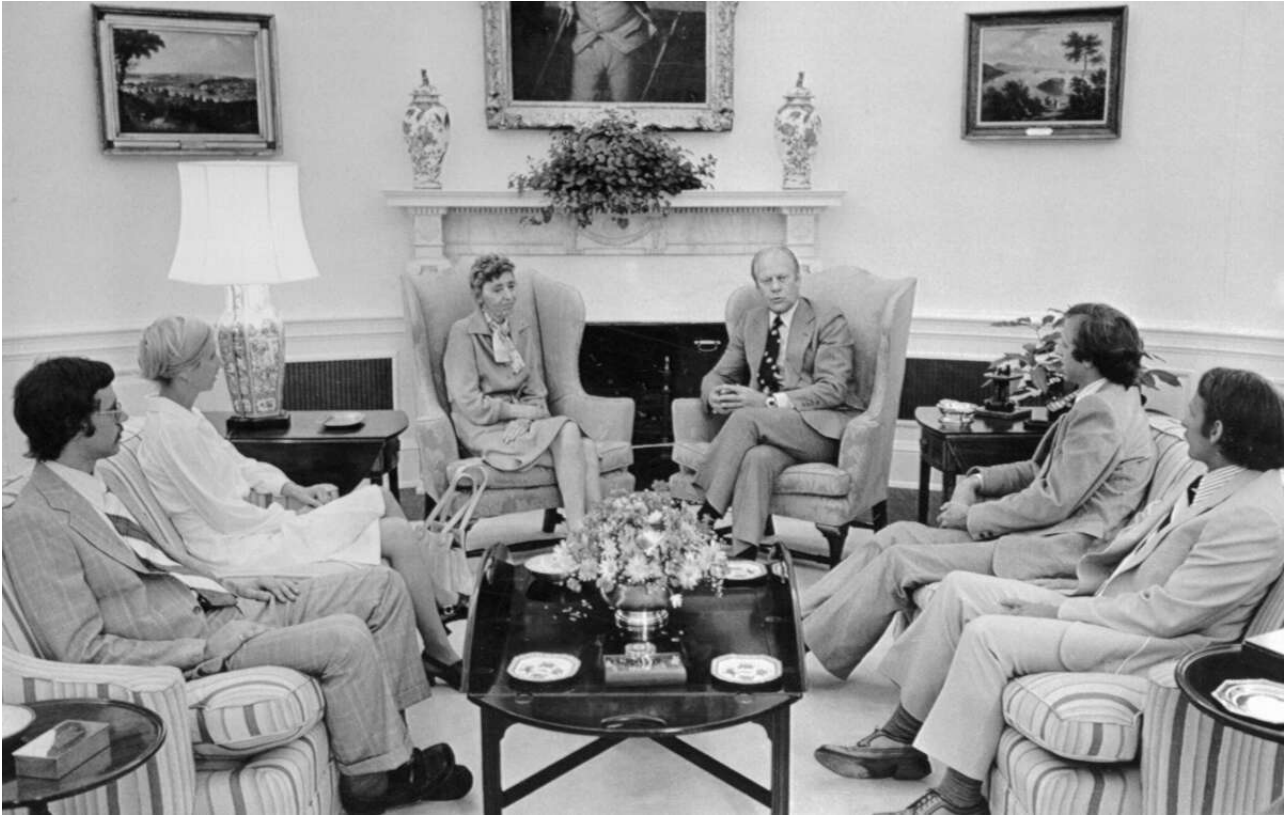
In 1953, the CIA created Project MKUltra to research how psychoactive drugs could be used against foreign enemies. Under the leadership of Sidney Gottlieb, an American chemist, the program experimented with a wide range of drugs, including mescaline, psilocybin, morphine and amphetamines.

Gottlieb preferred to give drugs to subjects without their knowledge or consent, often using prisoners, drug addicts and mental patients as test subjects. This ran against the basic ethics of medical research at the time, like the [1949 Nuremberg Code](#)'s first rule: "The voluntary consent of the human subject is absolutely essential."

White was working as a high-ranking agent in the Federal Bureau of Narcotics' New York office when he came to the attention of Gottlieb. The chemist was impressed by White's earlier work giving mafia figures marijuana during interrogations, so he recruited White to set up a safe house in Greenwich Village to continue MKUltra's drug studies.

White spent \$4,000 outfitting the house (equivalent to over \$45,000 today) and began luring people to the location while [posing as an artist and seaman](#), attempting to use the neighborhood's bohemian culture and the city's large maritime community as cover, according to Marks' research. White would secretly dose people with drugs and then see if he could get information out of them.

The operation almost ended abruptly a year later when Frank Olson, a high-ranking CIA chemist working on the MKUltra program, was found dead after he fell from a New York City building in November 1953. Gottlieb had secretly dosed Olson with LSD during a work trip 10 days before the fall. That left the doctor mentally unstable and threatening to divulge the CIA's secrets, according to Marks' book.



FILE: President Ford met privately with the family of Dr. Frank Olson and apologized on behalf of the U.S. government for the scientist's death after he was secretly given LSD by the CIA. Bettmann/Bettmann Archive

Gottlieb, worried that Olson's death would expose the top-secret program, paused MKUltra activities. But the CIA was effective at covering up the situation. Olson's death was kept secret until 1975, when the *Washington Post* ran a story exposing the secret LSD dose. Decades later, newly unearthed evidence left the Olson family believing the CIA had killed the researcher: [A 1994 forensic analysis](#) of Olson's exhumed body found that his head had been struck multiple times before he fell to the ground.

With Olson's death covered up, Gottlieb restarted Operation Midnight Climax. Two years later, the Federal Bureau of Narcotics transferred White back to his former home in San Francisco. Gottlieb decided White's work should continue on the other side of the country.

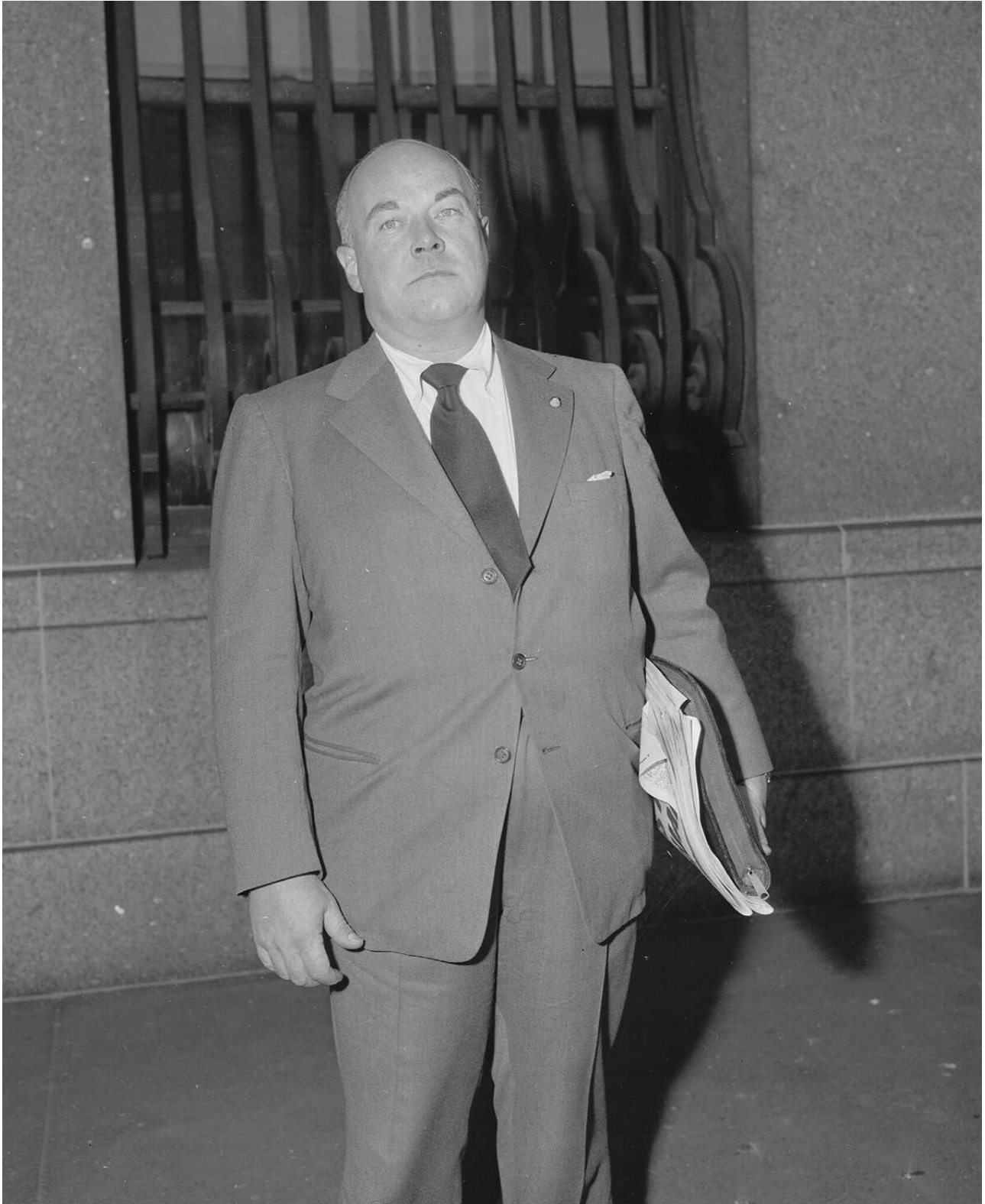
A San Francisco drug house

In 1955, Gottlieb instructed White to set up another safe house, this time in San Francisco. White rented an apartment at 225 Chestnut St. on Telegraph Hill, according to Marks. The apartment had sweeping views of San Francisco Bay, Alcatraz and the Bay Bridge, which can still be seen from the property today.

With one of San Francisco's most dramatic views outside, White went to work decorating the inside of the apartment. According to Marks, White hung French Toulouse-Lautrec posters and a picture of a cancan dancer and outfitted the apartment with hidden microphones. The narcotics agent then installed a room behind a one-way mirror, equipped with a refrigerator, frequently stocked with a pitcher of martinis, and a portable toilet so White wouldn't need to move while watching the action unfold.

White and his men then went out and found sex workers, who would bring their clients back to the apartment. This arrangement avoided the risk of another death like Olson's exposing the program. Prostitution's illegality meant that neither sex workers nor their clients were likely to report anything to the police, and the johns wouldn't be entirely shocked to be slipped a drug during one of these encounters.

White worked like a pimp, handing out "chits" that sex workers could use as get-out-of-jail-free cards or redeem for cash, according to Marks. And the sex workers brought back clients for White and his men to drug and observe.



FILE: An undated photo shows George Hunter White, supervisor for the New England area of the Federal Narcotics Bureau, as he enters federal court to go before a grand jury. Evelyn Straus New York Daily News/NY Daily News via Getty Images

The eight-year mission apparently produced almost nothing of value for the spy agency. The agents never discovered a mind control technique or truth serum they could use against America's enemies. They did learn at least one lesson: It's easier to get something out of a man after he had sex instead of before, according to Marks, who interviewed agents who had worked with White.

The agents were able to develop new methods for covertly poisoning people by venturing out of the safe house and into the city's bars, where they would slip LSD into people's drinks. There's no record of which bars received these conniving agents. The agency also used the San Francisco operation as a way to test brand-new drugs. One former agent told Marks, "if we were scared enough of a drug not to try it out on ourselves, we sent it to San Francisco."

The names of people who unwittingly took LSD during Operation Midnight Climax have been lost to history. Gottlieb told his subordinates to never write down details of what they were doing, and the CIA destroyed all known records of the MKUltra program in 1973, according to a 1977 [congressional](#) report, which described the program as offensive, unethical and illegal.

White's free pass to run a drug-fueled brothel in San Francisco came to an end in 1963, when the CIA's inspector general discovered MKUltra and "Operation Midnight Climax" and questioned their ethics. The agency's leadership fought to keep the program running but officially closed the safe house in 1965, according to Marks.

White didn't stick around San Francisco for very long. He retired from the federal government the same year and moved across the Golden Gate Bridge to Stinson Beach, where he became the chief of the local fire department, according to his autobiography. He died only a few years later, in 1975, from cirrhosis of the liver, ending the life of one of America's strangest drug warriors.



However, the history of 225 Chestnut St. lives on — although the former brothel is now far chicer than when White was decorating it. The apartment building has been converted into a single 6,000-square-foot residence, with six bedrooms and an elevator. The home's top floor has one of the best dining rooms in the city, with wall-to-wall windows revealing a stunning view of San Francisco Bay. It last sold in 2015 for over \$10 million.

The [real estate listing](#) described the location as "delightfully quiet," meaning the confused moans of White's test subjects must not haunt this infamous street in San Francisco history.

[Owner of San Francisco's two largest hotels - Hilton Union Square and Parc 55 - STOPS making payments on its \\$725 million loan due in November because the crime-ridden sex-cult city's 'path to recovery remains clouded'](#)



Park Hotels and Resorts announced on Monday it stopped making mortgage payments on the Hilton San Francisco Union Square and Parc 55. CEO Thomas Baltimore Jr said the city's 'path to recovery remains clouded and elongated by major challenges' as homicide rates are up 5 percent from the same time last year and robberies are up more than 16 percent. That rampant crime has driven major businesses to flee the city, with office vacancies at around 30 percent.

- [42 comments](#)
- [2 videos](#)
-

['Does nobody at JPMorgan have a conscience?' Three of Epstein's victims pen scathing letters pleading for bank execs to admit they turned blind eye to his behavior](#)



Filed by the US Virgin Islands and lawyers representing the victims, the suits contend the bank knew about Epstein's nefarious behavior for years - and even aided in the sex fiend's exploits.