

SAN FRANCISCO IS DIVING INTO THE THROAT OF THE HELL HOLE

Sun, 18 Jun 2023 09:47:40, swmf88, [post_tag: abandoned-stores, category: news, post_tag: streets-overtaken-by-the-homeless-and-drug-addled, post_tag: theft-so-rampant-that-candy-is-locked-away-welcome-to-san-franciscos-ghost-town-downtown]

[Abandoned stores, streets overtaken by the homeless and drug-addled, theft so rampant that CANDY is locked away: Welcome to San Francisco's ghost town downtown](#)



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San Francisco tourism is down by 16% from pre-pandemic levels, workers have abandoned their offices to work from home, shoppers are ordering online and tourists are staying away in droves. In their place more than 7,000 homeless have descended on downtown areas and tourist traps. Now hotels and stores are closing and the whole future of the Bay City - one of the most popular destinations in the United States - is under a cloud

EXCLUSIVE: Abandoned stores, streets overtaken by the homeless and drug-addled, theft so rampant that CANDY is locked away: Welcome to San Francisco's ghost town downtown

- San Francisco tourism is down by 16% from pre-pandemic levels, workers have abandoned their offices to work from home and stores are empty
- In their place, some 7,000 homeless have descended on downtown areas and tourist traps
- Now hotels and stores are closing and the whole future of the Bay City – one of the most popular destinations in the United States – is under a cloud

By [RUTH STYLES](#)

A photo plastered on the empty windows shows it as it used to be: a colorful branch of Gap surrounded by crowds of cheerful tourists and not a drug addict or scrap of litter in sight.

Today, San Francisco's once bustling Union Square and downtown area is a shadow of its former self: rows of empty stores, sparse crowds even on peak weekend shopping days and nearby hotels – including a huge Hilton - unable to cover their mortgage payments.

The historic Flood Building, a survivor of the 1906 San Francisco [earthquake](#), stands largely empty: Gap has gone along with nearly every other business in the property with the exception of a tired branch of Dr. Martens and an Urban Outfitters store offering 70 per cent discounts.

On the other side of Market Street is the soon-to-be sold Westfield San Francisco Center – its doorways reeking of urine and every store staffed by hulking security guards. [Westfield announced its planned departure on Monday](#) and several occupants of the mall have already said they'll follow.

Days later AT&T announced its iconic flagship store around the corner at 1 Powell Street, one of the largest in the country, [was to permanently close](#).

The local branch of Walgreens is boarded up, although still open, and was recently the scene of a fatal confrontation between a homeless trans woman and a security guard.

Ross Dress For Less and Saks Off 5th are operating a one-in, one-out system to deter thieves while Nordstrom Rack is closing down altogether in September – along with its sister Nordstrom and scores of other stores such as T-Mobile and Payless Shoes.



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• [**Messianic' San Francisco guru who founded 'orgasmic meditation cult' OneTaste heads to court with ENTOURAGE after being charged with keeping women in 'residential warehouses where they were forced into sex acts'**](#)



Nicole Daedone, former CEO of OneTaste, smiled for the cameras as she was flanked by 13 people on her way to the hearing at the Brooklyn Federal Court.

A map reveals the major businesses which have left, or plan to leave, San Francisco in recent months. Westfield, the most recent to announced its departure, will give up its huge mall - and several occupants have already said they intend to follow



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[The millionaire tech nerds who became the drug-fuelled swingers of Silicon Valley: Murder of cryptocurrency tycoon linked to sub-culture where rich geeks make up with a vengeance for years of being shunned by women](#)



Bob Lee, who made his millions as a cryptocurrency pioneer and founder of Cash App, was carousing with a beautiful and glamorous friend, 37-year-old Khazar Elyassnia.

Those tourists that still come can't avoid San Francisco's homeless problem. Here a tour bus drives past a tent city in the Tenderloin area

Edward Liu, 49, a local resident and hospital worker told DailyMail.com: 'A lot of the stores are closing, a lot of hotels are shutting down. "You don't get the numbers in downtown anymore because a lot of people are working from home.'

'The homeless don't make people want to stay for sure – it's just not very appealing.'

'They defecate, they urinate on the street. They do drugs on the street. The mayor isn't doing anything and it's been like this for a very long time.'

Commercial realtor Mark Ritchie told DailyMail.com that San Francisco had suffered particularly badly from the rise of remote working which has decimated footfall in the financial district and Union Square areas.

He said: 'The office market in San Francisco is devastated. It's had the most severe backlash from Covid and remote work because of how tech-oriented the economy in the Bay Area is.'

'San Francisco is one of the hardest cities to commute into downtown so the remote work crowd, there's even more resistance.'

Last week Park Hotels & Resorts announced it was stopping mortgage payments on two hotels, the 1,921-room Hilton San Francisco and the 1,024-room Park 55, saying: 'Now more than ever, we believe San Francisco's path to recovery remains clouded and elongated by major challenges.'



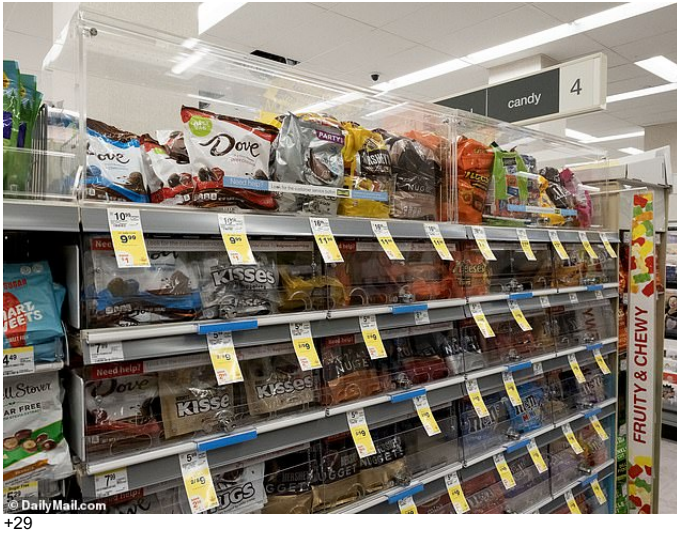
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An analysis of official figures and other research reveals San Francisco may lose hundreds of millions of dollars through an exodus of businesses and its failure to recover from Covid



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The reality: There's a gap where Gap used to be as building owners advertise desperately for new tenants



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Even the candy is under lock and key in Walgreens in San Francisco. A DailyMail.com reporter witnessed four thefts in 15 minutes at the store

The owner of the Huntington Hotel has sold up as he faced foreclosure, according to the [Wall Street Journal](#). The Yotel was sold in a foreclosure auction and Club Quarters is headed to foreclosure while 20 others have loans due in the next two years.

Convention bookers are avoiding San Francisco because of the homeless, leading to even more problems for hotels in a city where tourism numbers are down by 16% over pre-pandemic numbers. There were 26.2 million visitors in 2019, compared with 21.9 million last year.

Hotel revenues were 23 percent lower than pre-covid levels in April 2023 and appear to have stagnated, according to hospitality data firm STR.

Big companies are also leaving en masse, causing office vacancies to reach a record high of 31 percent in May, enough space for 92,000 workers. In April, Salesforce said it will leave its eponymous 30-story Salesforce East building in downtown, where around 1,000 staff had worked before the pandemic.

Leaders estimate [the situation will contribute to a budget shortfall of \\$1.3 billion in five years](#). The decline in property tax revenue alone could cost nearly \$200 million per year, according to a worst-case scenario drawn up by the city's chief accountant.

A security guard at another branch of Walgreens on Powell Street – home to San Francisco's famous cable cars – had different explanation for the hollowing out of the city center.

'Theft is constant. For my company, this is the busiest store in San Francisco. We used to have two guys here but now it's one so a lot of the time, I'll be dealing with one person and someone else will be taking things. I can't get them all.'

As if to prove his point, a bearded homeless man caught stealing hours earlier attempted to enter the store. Told he couldn't enter and blocked, he screamed: 'Excuse you! I have every right to be here' before swiping a brownie and an apple from a nearby counter and sprinting off.

It was one of four attempted or successful thefts DailyMail.com witnessed at the pharmacy within a 15-minute period and as a result, everything from chocolate bars to a \$4.99 bottle of cheap Moscato wine was either locked up or security tagged.

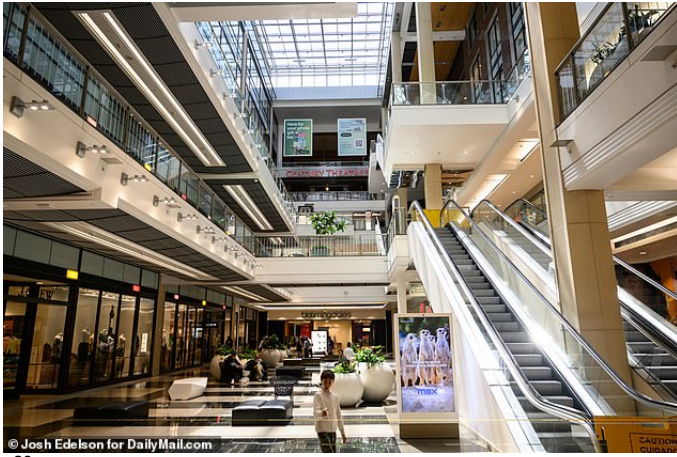


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People do drugs in front of one of the many empty storefront in downtown San Francisco on June 16, 2023. (Josh Edelson for DailyMail.com)



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A movie theater is seen inside an almost empty Westfield Mall on Market Street, both of which are expected to close down



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An empty storefront that used to house the Park City Cafe is seen vacant in downtown San Francisco



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Another empty storefront that used to house Ria Shoes, now permanently closed, in the Union Square area of San Francisco



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• [**Silicon Valley's shocking substance abuse: Facebook managers 'turned blind eye' if they thought it boosted productivity, insider claims, as killing of Cash App founder Bob Lee exposes hardcore drug-taking**](#)



Facebook managers allegedly turned a blind eye to substance abuse. It comes as the alleged killing of Cash App founder Bob Lee (left) by Nima Momeni (right) exposes drug use in Silicon Valley.

Along Market street and Mission Street homeless people congregate in hordes in front of an IKEA store



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• [**'We saw people defecating in the streets': Ron DeSantis takes his war with Gavin Newsom to San Francisco as he rips homelessness and influx of drug addicts**](#)

Ron DeSantis isn't taking attacks from California Gov. Gavin Newsom sitting down - releasing a video from San Francisco to share the horrors he saw walking through what he called a 'once-great city.' The Florida governor continued the east v. west coast feud with Newsom during his western campaign swing over the last week, which included a campaign fundraising event in Sacramento. He said Newsom is 'doing it all wrong' and detailed some of the sights of the city, including seeing homeless people go to the bathroom on the streets and using drugs out in the open.

Open air use of class A substances is rampant among San Francisco's burgeoning homeless population leading to others avoiding the downtown area of the city



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A woman lies passed out in front of a children's play area. Even upscale areas such as Russian Hill, which is part of the cable car route along Hyde Street, and tourist hotspots like the Golden Gate Bridge have been affected



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A family with two young children navigates its way through the filth and squalor at the junction of Jones and Eddy Streets in San Francisco's Tenderloin District



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Office workers in tech-heavy San Francisco are working from home and tourism is down 16% from pre-pandemic levels, so the streets have been left to the homeless and drug addicts

The exasperated guard added: 'That guy, we see him a lot. He's pulled a knife before which is why I remember his face.'

'At the Target down the street, we've seen people come in smoking fentanyl. Obviously, we chase them straight out but half the time they don't even realize they're doing it.'

'I've been doing this a year and I've seen enough. I'm moving to the country where homes are in the low 300s [\$300,000] and joining a police department there. It'll be nice to get one callout a week for a cow.'

But San Francisco's problems don't end with petty theft which is down 10 percent overall on the last six months of 2022 but has still occurred over 14,000 times citywide in the first half of 2023.

The city is suffering from a perfect storm: a downturn in the tech industry and workers reluctant to swap their remote jobs for a return to the office post-pandemic.

Footfall in the city's struggling downtown is only around 32 percent of what it was before the pandemic, and ridership on the BART public transport network is down 65 percent.

There has also been an explosion in the number of homeless people – drawn to the city in part by generous assistance programs worth up to \$687-per-month.

As of the last official count in 2022, more than 7,000 occupied the tented shanty towns that have sprung up downtown and in the nearby Tenderloin district.

Even Gavin Newsom, California's Democrat governor, has confessed [the homelessness crisis in San Francisco and elsewhere in the state is a 'disgrace'](#). He said California has 'not made progress in the last two decades' but claimed \$15.3 billion has been set aside to address the problem.

Newsom told Fox's Sean Hannity: 'I don't like what's happening with encampments, I don't like what's happening to streets and sidewalks.

'I don't like the bashing of my old city San Francisco. Whole Foods did shut down one business, but that was a bad location to begin with.'

Along with the homeless population has come a plague of drug dealers – many plying their trade openly and supplying users with fentanyl which they then smoke in full view of tourists boarding cable cars on Powell and Market Street.

As a result, city figures show there have already been more than 268 drug overdose deaths in the first six months of 2023 alone – a 41 percent increase on last year. Even upscale areas such as Russian Hill, which is part of the cable car route along Hyde Street, and tourist hotspots like the Golden Gate Bridge have been affected.

Both now carry signs warning people to remove their belongings from their cars to avoid break-ins while at the end of the cable car route, at Fisherman's Wharf, homeless people are starting to set up camp on the benches near the station.



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Homeless people smoke drugs in front of a vacated DSW Shoe Warehouse just off Union Square in downtown San Francisco



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A woman drags her earthly possessions past the flagship Westfield San Francisco Center on Market Street



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The streets of San Francisco have seen an explosion in the number of homeless people – drawn in part by generous assistance programs worth up to \$687-per-month



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Mark, 62, came to San Francisco 30 years ago, planning to jump to his death from the Golden Gate Bridge before changing his mind. Now he carves walking sticks for tourists. 'I started making them to defend myself,' he admits

But former retail paradise Union Square and the Tenderloin are in the eye of the storm: in just a few hours in the streets near Union Square, DailyMail.com repeatedly saw homeless people snoozing in doorways, openly smoking drugs, shoplifting, screaming obscenities at passers-by and, in one case, being revived by medics from the San Francisco Fire Department.

Dylan Anderson, 30, of nearby Alameda, says progressive policies are to blame. He told DailyMail.com: 'This is 100 per cent socialism and liberal views ruining downtown San Francisco.

'Defund the police, giving people money to live on the streets and be on drugs – the politics don't work.'



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Animal rights activist, Marie, 80, visiting from Sonoma, would like to see street dwellers helped into rehab and then homes

Others, such as Marie, 80, an animal rights activist who was visiting the city from Sonoma, would like to see street dwellers helped into rehab and then homes.

She told DailyMail.com: 'I do feel safe here. There's a lot more homeless than they were but they're not doing anything. I would like to see them taken to rehab and then helped with food and housing.'

For visitors, squalid encampments downtown can come as a shock. 23-year-old Izzy Gaine from Essex, England, was visiting the city – and the US – for the first time to attend a corporate event for architects.

She told DailyMail.com she was stunned by the scale of the drug problem, saying: 'I think it's more a drug problem than a homeless problem. It's shocking. I'm from a village and it's not something I'm used to seeing.'

'On my first day, I came out of the hotel at 9am and could just see street cleaners and homeless people. I thought, where are all the normal people? At 9am, you'd think you'd see lots of people going to work.'

Even San Francisco's downtown welcome ambassadors are fed up, with one telling DailyMail.com: 'You see foil, it's fentanyl. You see people hunched over, it's fentanyl. They say they want the tourists to come back – so do something about the homeless, do something about the fentanyl.'

Astonishingly, even the homeless residents themselves think the drug problem has gotten out of control.

Mark, 62, is originally from Oregon but said he came to San Francisco 30 years ago, planning to jump to his death from the Golden Gate Bridge before changing his mind.

Perched in a wheelchair with a stack of walking sticks which he had carved to sell to tourists, he said: 'I started making sticks to defend myself and I have had to use them. I see things they don't see in their hotel – it's not safe.'



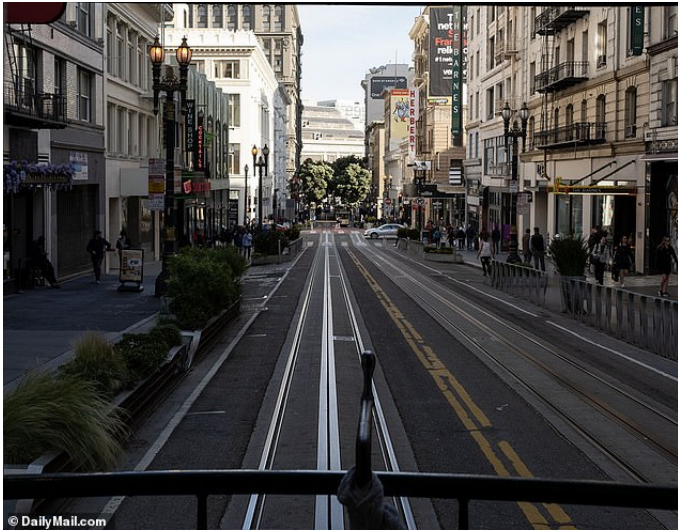
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The Market Street branch of Walgreens is boarded up, although still open, and was recently the scene of a fatal confrontation between a homeless trans man and a security guard



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For Lease signs are everywhere downtown due to stores being frightened away by the number of homeless who have invaded the city



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It's 5:30 on a Friday afternoon and once-bustling Union Square is virtually deserted as the Bay City faces its existential crisis



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Ross Dress for Less and Saks Off 5th are both operating a one-in, one-out system in a bid to deter thieves



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T-Mobile's Metro store on Market Street is barricaded, one of the victims of San Francisco's economic turmoil

He added: 'As far as the drugs go, I hate to say it but I don't see enough of the police. You have to have them. It has to be consistent.'

The signs are that the authorities are beginning to listen. In April, California Governor Gavin Newsom announced he was deploying the California Highway Patrol and National Guard to the city to help tackle the problem.

Ultra-woke DA Chesa Boudin was turfed out by angry voters last November and replaced with the more pragmatic Brooke Jenkins who has made it her mission to tackle the drug problem.

Detailing the new city budget in an address at the end of May, Mayor London Breed vowed to crack down on drug dealers while also announcing three 'wellness hubs' which are aimed at getting the homeless off the street and will include safe consumption areas for addicts.

And last week, San Francisco Sheriff Paul Miyamoto announced that a new emergency unit staffed by 130 deputies would be deployed to work alongside the SFPD in the Tenderloin – focusing on arresting drug dealers but also drug users with the aim of getting them off the streets and into the health system.

Speaking to DailyMail.com, he said the new deployment has been made possible by recruiting new deputies and says his staff will 'proactively' tackle dealers.

'In terms of public safety, it's very challenging. We have an area of our city that has been overrun with people engaged in harmful behavior which has affected the entire community,' Miyamoto said.

'The Tenderloin historically has been a challenge for the city as a whole, in terms of creating a safe place for the entire community.

'There are really good people who live in the community but a lot of the individuals who populate the community right now, who are engaged in the criminal and harmful behavior, they are transitory.



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A security guard ushers a man he suspected of shoplifting out of Walgreens on Powell Street



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Dylan Anderson, 30, says progressive policies are to blame, while British visitor Izzy Gaine was amazed there was no-one on the streets when she left her hotel at 9am



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Russian Hill and tourist hotspots including the Golden Gate Bridge both now carry signs warning people to remove their belongings from their cars to avoid break-ins



San Francisco's woes deepened last week when the owner of the Hilton Union Square, the city's largest hotel, and Parc 55, said it would pull out, saying the city's 'path to recovery remains clouded and elongated by major challenges'

'They're not residents of the neighborhood but they're unhoused people, people living out on the street, people hurting themselves out on the street.

'We have a lot of people who come here for help or because we're an open, caring city, and some people are engaged in some harmful behavior right now.

'We have resources and a strong healthcare system but people have to act on getting that help.

'One of the reasons both we and the police department are out there very actively right now is to create a safer community by getting people the help they need.'

He added: 'Our number one priority is making sure everyone, not just the residents, but our visitors as well feel safe here.'

But Cassandra Costello of the San Francisco Travel Association disputed the idea that the city is in decline. She told DailyMail.com visitor arrivals were up 29% in 2022 compared to the previous year and international visitors were up 211%.

'The demand for international travel to San Francisco has sparked the introduction of new airline routes to the San Francisco International Airport,' she said.

'Starting July 1, Norse Atlantic Airways will be providing three direct flights per week between SFO and London-Gatwick. Norse joins other airlines who have recently added nonstop routes to SFO including LEVEL Airlines, providing direct flights from Barcelona and ZIPAIR, providing direct flights from Tokyo.'

And others see hope. Realtor Ritchie says bad though things might be in San Francisco now, he expects the city to bounce back – helped by an artificial intelligence boom.

He told DailyMail.com: 'San Francisco will be back. We'll surprise everyone.'

'I think we're going to see an AI employment boom in the Bay Area, that's what I'm going to say.'

'Drugs are a big problem. It's not all over the city and it's in a few obvious spots but unfortunately, those obvious spots like the Tenderloin are right under the feet of the business tourists and the conventions. It couldn't be worse because they're right on top of each other.'

'But when you drive out to the wealthier neighborhoods or the outer more middle-class neighborhoods of San Francisco, it's fine and the neighborhood street retail system is thriving. There's plenty of good news out there.'

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Tourists, workers and shoppers abandon San Francisco leaving it to homeless and drug addled

[Operation Midnight Climax: How CIA ran an LSD-fueled brothel from a San Francisco safe house at the height of the Cold War to see if 'truth serum' hallucinogens could be weaponized against the Soviets](#)



The CIA set up the illegal experiment to find a 'truth drug' which could be used in interrogations to force confessions through brainwashing and torture. American men were lured back to the property by prostitutes to have sex and were pumped with drugs without their knowledge as CIA agents watched on. Operation Midnight Climax was set up to see if hallucinogens could be weaponized against the Soviets in a new breed of 'brain warfare'.

Operation Midnight Climax: How CIA ran an LSD-fueled brothel from a San Francisco safe house at the height of the Cold War to see if 'truth serum' hallucinogens could be weaponized against the Soviets

- The CIA set up the illegal experiment to find a 'truth drug' which could be used in a new breed of 'brain warfare'
- The brothel was run out of a safehouse in one of San Francisco's poshest neighborhoods
- American men were lured to the property by prostitutes and pumped with drugs without their knowledge

By [KAMAL SULTAN FOR DAILYMAIL.COM](#)

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-
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-
-
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[Top](#)
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At the peak of the Cold War - as the US grew increasingly concerned over reports that the Soviet Union had used mind control techniques on American prisoners - the CIA set up an astonishing illegal experiment.

Its plan was to find a 'truth drug' which could be used in interrogations, forcing confessions through brainwashing and psychological torture.

Operation Midnight Climax, established in 1954, was based in an LSD-fueled brothel, run out of a safehouse in one of San Francisco's poshest neighborhoods. The purpose? To see if hallucinogens could be weaponized against the Soviets in a new breed of 'brain warfare'.

Unwitting American men were lured back to the property by prostitutes to have sex, and were then pumped with drugs without their knowledge as CIA agents watched from the other side of a two-way mirror.

The home has since been turned into a four-story mansion, complete with six bedrooms and seven bathrooms, and sold for more than \$10million in October 2015.



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Operation Midnight Climax was led by CIA agent George Hunter White



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The home at 225 Chestnut Street has since been turned into a four-story mansion, complete with six bedrooms and seven bathrooms, and sold for more than \$10million in October 2015



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It last sold in October 2015 for \$10.7million and serves as a luxury home worlds away from the LSD-brothel it used to serve as

TRENDING

ORGASM (SEXUAL CLIMAX)
An orgasm is the body's natural response to intense pleasure and arousal during masturbation or other sexual activity. At first, all muscles tighten, your heart rate rises, and you might make sounds out of pleasure. Did you know that some women also ejaculate? This is when fluid flows or squirts from the urethra (but it's not pee!). You may not orgasm every time you have sex (which is OK). It's important to get to know your body and what you like, as this will help you experience sexual pleasure more when you're with a partner or alone.

This is Zoë
Zoë is non-binary which means they are neither a boy or a girl.

EXCLUSIVE The shocking lesson plans used by teachers in UK classrooms

216.8k viewing now

LOST \$100K

LOST \$80K

LOST \$450K

I'm a mom who lost my entire \$401(K) to a scammer I met on Tinder

20.1k viewing now

Three photos of a woman in a white and blue striped sweater and black pants, carrying a black bag. The photos show her in different poses and settings. A small inset photo in the bottom right shows a woman's face.

Make-up free Meghan Markle looks glum after her Spotify deal ends

79.7k viewing now

The hidden brothel at 225 Chestnut Street was run by federal agents for eight years until 1963, and was orchestrated by George Hunter White, who had been a captain in the Office of Strategic Services, the CIA's predecessor, and an agent in the Federal Bureau of Narcotics.

The agency was obsessed with finding a mind control drug to force prisoners to reveal their secrets, and turned their attention to LSD, an unbelievably powerful drug that had been developed by Swiss chemist Doctor Albert Hofmann about a decade earlier, in 1943.

The technical branch of the CIA quickly latched on to its potential and chemist Doctor Sidney Gottlieb persuaded his colleagues to investigate it as a spy tool.

CIA director Allen Dulles approved a program for the 'covert use of biological and chemical materials' on April 13, 1953. It was called MKULTRA and started with an initial budget of \$300,000 - about \$3.4million in today's money.

It experimented with drugs including mescaline, psilocybin, morphine and amphetamines and Gottlieb preferred to use them on people without their knowledge - often on prisoners, drug addicts, mentally and terminally ill patients.

Gottlieb then approved an MKULTRA subproject on LSD in June 1953, with a much smaller budget of \$40,290.

Operation Midnight Climax was born, and White was hired to run a safe house for LSD testing initially in New York's Greenwich Village, which then transferred to San Francisco in 1955.

He rented an apartment on Telegraph Hill and spent \$4,000 decorating the place to make it look like French brothel, furnishing it with a picture of a French can-can dancer, Toulouse-Lautrec posters and photos of women in bondage.

A narcotics agent who regularly visited the apartment told former Foreign Service Officer John Marks: 'It was supposed to look rich but it was furnished like crap.'

White then bugged the place and installed a two-way mirror where he would sit on a portable toilet and drink from a pitcher of martini he kept in the fridge and watch what unfolded.

The prostitutes who took part in the operation were paid with favors they could use to get out of jail or exchange for \$100 cash.

The agents played on the fact prostitution was illegal at the time, and that the sex workers and their clients were unlikely to report anything to the police.



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The hidden brothel was run by federal agents for eight years until 1963 to test the effects of LSD on unsuspecting visitors

8-15
Boston

DRAFT A
9 June 1953

MEMORANDUM FOR THE RECORD

SUBJECT: Project MKULTRA, Subproject 8

1. Subproject 8 is being set up as a means to continue the present work in the general field of L.S.D. at [redacted] until 11 September 1954. B
2. This project will include a continuation of a study of the biochemical, neurophysiological, sociological, and clinical psychiatric aspects of L.S.D., and also a study of L.S.D. antagonists and drugs related to L.S.D., such as L.A.E. A detailed proposal is attached. The principle investigators will continue to be [redacted] all of [redacted]. C
3. The estimated budget of the project at [redacted] is \$39,500.00. The [redacted] will serve as a cut-out and cover for this project and will furnish the above funds to the [redacted] as a philanthropic grant for medical research. A service charge of \$790.00 (2% of the estimated budget) is to be paid to the [redacted] for this service. B
4. Thus the total charges for this project will not exceed \$40,290.00 for a period ending September 11, 1954. B
5. [redacted] (Director of the hospital) are cleared through TOP SECRET and are aware of the true purpose of the project. C

[Signature]
[redacted] A
Chemical Division/TSS

APPROVED:
[Signature]
Chief, Chemical Division/TSS

[redacted]

[redacted] PROGRAM

The CIA set up the illegal experiment in Telegraph Hill to find a 'truth drug' which could be used in interrogations



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Doctor Sidney Gottlieb persuaded the CIA to investigate LSD as a spy tool



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It experimented with drugs including mescaline, psilocybin, morphine and amphetamines and Gottlieb (left) preferred to use them on people without their knowledge

They would meet the unsuspecting men in local bars and lure them back to the brothel where they would be drugged with LSD, knockout drops and marijuana concealed in food, drinks and cigarettes.

The CIA was also keen to observe how sex could be used to get a man to open up - and whether extra sexual favors could help get the men to talk.

But an observer noticed they were open to discuss anything anyway and said: 'We found the guy was focused solely on hormonal needs. He was not thinking of his career or anything else at that point.'

The short period after intercourse - when the men expected the women to move on to the next client in a hurry - proved to be the most effective time to gather information. This is when the subjects became emotionally vulnerable, and wanted to stay longer.

As their search for subjects grew, CIA agents began venturing outside the apartment to drug people with acid and other drugs in restaurants, bars and beaches, where they would slip it into people's drinks.

'If we were scared enough of a drug not to try it out on ourselves, we sent it to San Francisco,' a CIA source told Marks.

At first the agents targeted working class men, but soon began luring in targets from all layers of society back to the safe house.

The project ran for eight years until 1963, when it was shut down by the CIA's inspector general John Earman. The San Francisco joint was eventually closed in 1965.

'I toiled wholeheartedly in the vineyards because it was 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 is claimed to have said.

Perhaps surprisingly, only one death has been associated with the program. Frank Olson, a high-ranking scientist who worked for the CIA and the Army's Biological Warfare Laboratories, is said to have killed himself after Gottlieb slipped LSD into his drink and it sparked a mental health crisis.

In the days after Olson was drugged, he had asked to leave the program. He had been paranoid and disoriented and depressed.

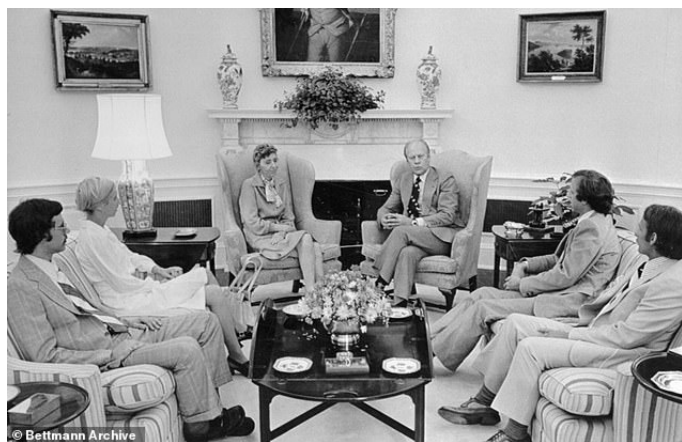


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Frank Olson is said to have killed himself in 1953 after Gottlieb slipped LSD into his drink. He jumped out of a 10th-floor window in New York



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President Gerald Ford met privately with the family of Olson and apologized on behalf of the US Government for the scientist's suicide after he was secretly given LSD by the CIA

He fell to his death from of a 10th-floor window in New York City in 1953. And while Gottlieb would always maintain that he'd sent Olson to Manhattan to receive psychiatric treatment and that his death was suicide or an accident, Olson's family believe that his desire to leave the CIA's most clandestine project led to his murder.

The MKULTRA program was only briefly put on hold.

Decades later, Olson's son had his father's body exhumed and a new autopsy performed.

The pathologist noted that, although Olson landed on his back, the skull above his left eye was disfigured. He changed the manner of death from suicide to misadventure.

The same year that Olson died, Gottlieb wrote a CIA handbook on assassination. One of the methods he recommended was 'the contrived accident.'

He wrote: 'The most efficient accident... is a fall of 75 feet or more onto a hard surface. It will usually be necessary to stun or drug the subject before dropping him. A rock or heavy stone will do...'

'Blows should be directed to the temple.'

Olson's family sued the government for wrongful death and were awarded a \$750,000 settlement and received personal apologies from President Gerald Ford and then CIA Director William Colby.

The agency destroyed most of the files relating to MKULTRA and Operation Midnight Climax in 1973 so it is not known how many people's lives and minds were damaged or destroyed by the illegal experiment.

Gottlieb is said to have told his agents never to write down any details of what they were doing.

And to make matters worse, it reportedly produced nothing of value for the spy agency and they never came close to discovering a 'truth drug' to use against America's enemies.

A congressional report in 1977 described the program as offensive, unethical and illegal.

White quickly moved out of San Francisco following the end of the project and retired from the federal government later that year.



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The property, which boasts magical views of San Francisco Bay, Alcatraz and the Bay Bridge, was eventually converted into a private residence

He moved to Stinson Beach, where he became the chief of the local fire department, according to his autobiography, and died a few years later in 1975, aged 67, from liver cirrhosis.

Gottlieb later estimated that he himself had taken LSD more than 200 times. He retired on June 30, 1973 and was awarded the Distinguished Intelligence Medal - one of the agency's highest orders.

Not long after, he and his wife Margaret decided to sell everything, board a freighter from San Francisco to Australia and travel the world doing volunteer work and seeking spiritual fulfillment.

Gottlieb thought he had destroyed all proof of the past but the truth finally caught up with him.

The scandal was first exposed by New York Times reporter Seymour Hersh in 1974 and it led to subsequent investigations on the illegal spying of Americans.

Gottlieb died in 1999 at the age of 80 - with the New York Times describing him as 'a kind of genius.'

The property on Chestnut Street, which boasts magical views of San Francisco Bay, Alcatraz and the Bay Bridge, was eventually converted into a private residence.

It last sold in October 2015 for \$10.7million and serves as a luxury home worlds away from its seedy past.