

A Smoking Gun: Online DEA Manuals Show How Feds Use NSA Spy Data, Train Local Cops to Construct False Chains of Evidence

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Whoever suggests the Snowden revelations mean nothing to the lives of ordinary black people either isn't paying close attention, or is working for the police and prison state. The federal DEA, the Justice Department's federal drug police, have passed tons illegal NSA spying data to local police agencies and cynically coached them to lie about the sources of their evidence. It's not exaggeration or hype. You can view the manuals online for yourself.

One of the least remarked upon chunks of Edward Snowden's voluminous revelations about government spying on civilians has been the fact that the Drug Enforcement Administration, the federal police agency created to fight the war on drugs, has funneled illegal NSA surveillance to local police agencies around the country.

New disclosures now allow us to see online the [DEA training manuals](#) with which Drug Enforcement Administration agents are taught to coach local police departments across the country how to lie about their chains of evidence and sources, [how to willfully violate the law and cover their tracks](#) in thousands or tens of thousands of cases every year in order to fill the cells of the US prison state with drug defendants.

This is not hype. This is not exaggeration. It's the literal truth. You can read the [DEA's own manuals online](#) at Muckrock.Org spelled M U C K R O C K dot org. MuckRock.org is a project funded by the Sunlight Foundation to assist journalists and citizens make and disseminate the results of Freedom of Information Act requests from federal, state and local. Thanks to one such recent request, you can now go to the MuckRock.Org site and view copies of the DEA's own training materials. These materials depict an amoral, out of control police regime respecting no Constitution and no laws. DEA agents are told the evidence is unconstitutionally obtained, and that this has to be concealed from prosecutors, judges and above all from the public, some of which is still under the quaint notion that there are laws even cops and prosecutors must obey. The manuals cynically spell out how DEA agents should coach local police departments to use what they know is illegally obtained information in order to construct false chains of evidence.

This is a literal smoking gun that depicts how the intelligence apparatus seamlessly blends with federal and local cops to prosecute the 40 years failed war on drugs, the greedy front end of the US prison state. It's not "conspiracy theory". It's a fact.

There have been plenty of African American voices who have pooh-pooed the significance of Edward Snowden and his revelations. TV talking heads Joi Ann Reid and Melissa Harris-

Perry have called him a traitor and said he ought to be locked up. Congressional buffoons like Rep. Jim Clyburn say he only did it to embarrass the black president, and others insist that his whistleblowing has nothing to do with black life as we live it.

But chronic overpolicing only happens to black and brown people, and chiefly the poorest of those. Blacks and brown people are the majority of drug defendants, charged with stiffer offenses and given longer sentences than white drug defendants. Illegal surveillance, turned into illegal evidence, backed up by an officially condoned web of lies about how that evidence was obtained, have long been a crucial element in the unfolding of the prison state to enclose poor black and brown communities.

If Edward Snowden hadn't told us the NSA was gathering this evidence, and the DEA was using it, we'd never have known. So if Snowden is indeed a traitor he betrayed the cops not us. If he's a spy, he's spying for the people, not for the prison state, which is a problem for some of our black misleadership class.

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