

A Valiant Verbal Warrior Demythologizes the CIA. “The CIA as Organized Crime”

Review of Douglas Valentine's Book

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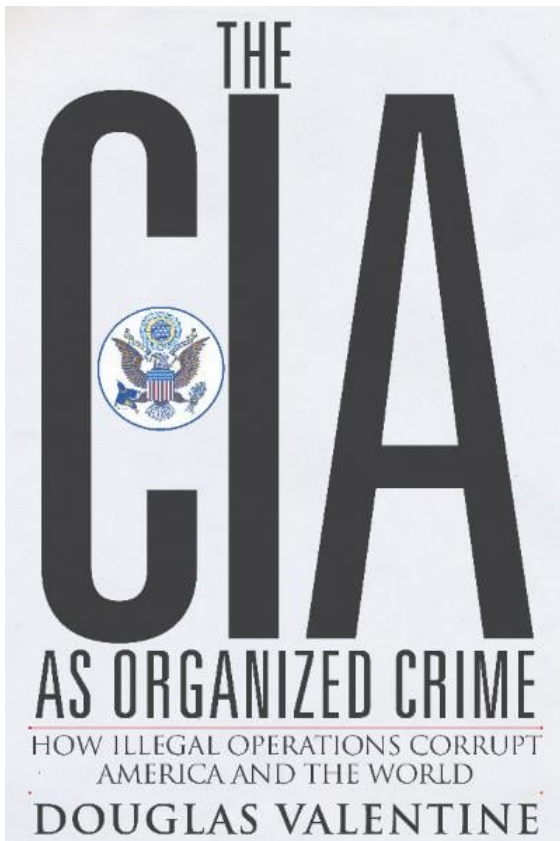
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Like Odysseus, Douglas Valentine is a wily warrior who managed to enter the enemy's stronghold disguised as a gift. Not Troy, and not within a wooden horse, but in the guise of a nice young “Nobody,” he was able, thirty or so years ago, to breach the walls of the CIA through William Colby, a former director of the Central Intelligence Agency. The guileful thing he brought was his proposal to demystify the Phoenix program, “the controversial CIA assassination program that resulted in the deaths of thousands of civilians during the Vietnam War,” with which Colby was notably associated.

Colby naively assumed “demystify” meant justify, so he welcomed Valentine into his inner sanctum. As in days of yore, Colby, and the CIA officers he referred Valentine to, were so disarmed by the bright young trickster that they divulged their secrets without being asked, defeating themselves in the boastful ways of men drunk on their own youthful exploits. Wanting to be heroes in their own myths, they became unwitting accomplices in their own besmirchment. So much for intelligence.

When the Trojan Horse that became Valentine's 1990 book, *The Phoenix Program: America's Use of Terror in Vietnam*, was opened, and many truths rushed out to slay them, they reacted with shocked outrage that they had been double-crossed by an amateur counterspy.



Legends fall, of course, battles are lost, but when the self-anointed heroic warriors of the CIA fell, they summoned their acolytes and media scribes to silence the counterspy who did not love them. It was not the Valentine that these spurned lovers were expecting.

In this case, their defender was the media celebrity reporter, Morley Safer, who had reported from Vietnam and was friendly with William Colby. Safer owed Colby a favor. When he was in Vietnam, Safer had accepted Colby's Mephistophelian offer to take a tour of the infamous Phoenix program's interrogation centers and meet the counterterrorism teams, but with one stipulation. In Safer's words, delivered to a conference in 2010: "I showed up and [Colby] said, 'Okay, here are the rules. . . . You can't take notes and you can't report anything you hear. . . . to this day, I still feel constrained in terms of talking about'" (what he saw and heard).

Valentine: "And like Don Corleone dispensing favors in *The Godfather*, Colby knew that one day Safer would be obligated to return it. That is how the CIA, as the organized crime branch of the US government, functions like the Mafia through its old boy network of complicit media hacks."

So *The New York Times*, which Valentine had criticized in his book for not reporting the truth about the CIA's Phoenix program, had Safer write a book review of [The Phoenix Program: America's Use of Terror in Vietnam](#). He wrote a scathing review in which he said the book was "as turgid and dense and often incomprehensible book as I have ever had the misfortune to open." Thus Valentine's work was disappeared like the Vietnamese victims of the Phoenix program. (Safer's "misfortune," however, became our fortune when in 2014 Open Roads publishers announced a "Forbidden Bookshelves" series and resurrected Valentine's exposé in a new edition.)

In his latest book, [The CIA as Organized Crime: How Illegal Operations Corrupt America And The World](#), Valentine explains it thus:

“But the left’s leadership is part of the CIA’s old boy network and like all American intellectuals, they look to the Times for direction and validation. So the word went out to ignore the book, not just because it revealed CIA secrets, but because it identified the media, and the Times in particular, as the reason why the public can’t see the CIA clearly for what it is: a criminal conspiracy on behalf of wealthy capitalists.”

But Valentine had been “neutralized,” and over the next quarter century the CIA, through its placement of its people throughout the media, including Hollywood and television, resurrected its mythic image—phoenix-like—from the fleeting and rarely examined ashes Valentine had reduced it to. Using what the CIA officer Frank Wisner called the agency’s “Mighty Wurlitzer”—its deep penetration of the news and cultural apparatus—it played the American people to a tune of CIA heroes defending the “homeland” from mad Muslim terrorists and evil drug dealers besieging the U.S. citadel through deception and direct attack. Movies, television shows, cognitive infiltration of the mainstream media across platforms repeated the message over and over again: We are the good guys in this mythic battle of good against evil. We are defenders of the “Homeland.”

But over these years Valentine had not disappeared, despite the CIA’s wish that he had. It took him fifteen years to recover from his “neutralization,” and then he wrote two books—[The Strength of the Wolf](#) and [The Strength of the Pack](#)—that examine the nexus between the CIA, the Federal Bureau of Narcotics, and the Drug Enforcement Administration in which he explains in documented detail how the CIA hijacked drug enforcement as it became a prime player in international drug trafficking. Joining hands with organized crime and corrupting law enforcement, the drug running and murder that was crucial to the CIA’s Phoenix program went international.

Most importantly, the Phoenix program’s organizational structure became the template for these world-wide bloody operations: among them, the Salvadoran Option, undertakings throughout South and Central America, the Middle-East, and later the war on terror, “the greatest covert op ever.” And the Phoenix became the conceptual model for The Department of Homeland Security, as “both are based on the principle that governments can manage societies through implicit and explicit terror.”

Valentine shows how the federal drug agencies protect the CIA’s drug running assets and operations, and spread addiction throughout the “homeland.” This is accomplished by CIA agents posing as federal narcotics agents. “The DEA has a public affairs branch staffed by creative writers who filter out anything bad and tell you only what the bosses want you to know. The media echoes what the DEA and the CIA PR people say. But it’s a big lie and it’s pervasive.”

But those important books had little effect on a drug addled population. They appeared in the midst of the dramatic rise in the use of “legal” pharmaceutical drugs (see [Deadly Medicines and Organized Crime: How Big Pharma Has Corrupted Healthcare](#) by Dr. Peter C. Gotsche) and the epidemic of heroin (Greek, *heros*, hero + German chemical suffix, *ine*, coined in 1898 by the Bayer Company as a morphine substitute) that has reduced so many people to walking zombies, while minorities have long had their neighborhoods devastated by CIA facilitated crack cocaine. The zombie myth itself has become a staple of American culture—pure entertainment for a brain devouring and brain dead population—entertainment for dummies.

It is no wonder. Because from 1990 when Valentine's *The Phoenix Program* was trashed by the *Times* until today, the U.S. government and the scientific/media establishment have worked to convince Americans that all our lives revolve around our brains and that the answers to our problems lie with more brain research, drugs, genetic testing, etc. It's been a quarter century deluge of propaganda of scientific materialism and biological determinism that we are not free but victims of our genes, neurotransmitters, brains/computers, and chemicals. Having lost our minds and fixated on our brains as instructed, we have chosen to be determined to be determined, not free. It is not coincidental that the U.S. government, beginning with ex-CIA Director and then President George H.W. Bush, declared the 1990s the decade of brain research, followed up with 2000-2010 as the decade of the behavior project, and our present decade being devoted to mapping the brain and artificial intelligence, organized by the Office of Science and Technology Project and the Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency. Brains and drugs, Big Pharma and the CIA, drug running and drug dealing, deaths at home and deaths abroad—a neat circle that has corrupted the country at the deepest levels.

This corruption is dependent on the creation of fictions that penetrate public consciousness to the level of myth. "The government," Valentine writes, "is creating conditions across the board that are conducive to taking drugs. The pharmaceutical industry is part of the problem, along with its co-conspirators in the advertising industry; every time you turn on the TV there's a commercial telling you to take a pill. The next commercial says don't take that pill, take this pill. This is the free market at work, sucking the life out of people."

But myths rise and fall, and recently the CIA's invincibility has come under increased scrutiny. As the Greeks warned us long ago, hubris leads to humiliation. Today, more and more Americans are learning, through independent Internet sources and a growing list of books, how to deconstruct the ways the CIA "uses language and mythology to control political and social movements." The fight is on.

Valentine, a warrior of astute knowledge from his wanderings in the CIA's labyrinth, has reemerged with his new guidebook to the Minotaur's deadly ways. *The CIA As Organized Crime* is a *tour de force*, a counterpuncher's no-holds-barred passionate battle to reverse "the terrible truth . . . that a Cult of Death rules America and is hell-bent on world domination." Unlike many writers, he holds back nothing. He names names. He is adamant in his accusations against those he considers accomplices—in particular, "the compatible left"—"liberals and pseudo-intellectual status seekers who are easily influenced"—in the CIA/media/elite's efforts at domination and mind-control. He claims that media celebrities of the left serve the function of pacifying the liberal bourgeoisie in these enterprises.

But knowing how leads on to way and one can easily get lost in a labyrinth, let me not tell the story of the man, Valentine, skilled in all ways of contending with such a formidable foe as the CIA. Better to give you a sampling of his words that explain what he has learned in his long wanderings in these strange and sick worlds.

"I have a very broad approach. . . . psychological, political, anthropological, sociological, historical, philosophical. When I look at a subject I look at it comprehensively from all those different points of view. Literary criticism teaches the power of symbolic transformation, or processing experience into ideas, into meaning. . . . one must, above all, understand the archetypal power of the myth of the hero. That way you can transform, through words, Joe the Plumber or even a mass murderer, into a national

hero. When I decided to research and write about the CIA's Phoenix program, that was how I went at it."

"They [CIA] create the myths we believe. If we were allowed to understand the CIA, we'd realize it's a criminal organization that is corrupting governments and societies around the world. It's murdering civilians who haven't done anything wrong."

"Nowadays, the only way you can discern what's going on is by studying and understanding the historical arc of these bureaucracies. Where did the CIA come from? Where is it going? If you look at it historically, you can see beyond the spin and it becomes demystified. And that is not a happy story. As power gets more concentrated in the security services, the media is no longer simply compliant, it's functioning as their public relations arm. It simply ignores anything that contradicts the official line."

"The most important fiction of all is the need for secrecy to preserve our national security."

"If you want to understand the CIA, you have to understand how it's organized. . . . The media organizes itself the way the CIA does."

"Journalism in the US is a traditional cover for CIA officers. And when the owners of the media aren't covering for the CIA, they're selling commercial time slots to the multinational corporations that in turn are selling you commodities made in sweatshops in foreign nations that have been subverted by the CIA. You could almost say there is no such thing as factual reporting. . . . The CIA and the media are part of the same criminal conspiracy. You're never going to learn anything substantive by reading what mainstream reporters dish out about the CIA. You can't take a journalism course in CIA Criminal Conspiracies 101."

"I'm sure the anthrax scare after 9/11 was a CIA provocation designed to justify a mail intercept program codenamed HTLINGUAL."

"The CIA and the military hire the smartest anthropologists, sociologists, and psychologists to figure out how to do this stuff [social engineering]. . . . That's why you need a broad historical view. If you focus on just what's happening now, you're shocked every day by what you see."

"When the United States took over drug law enforcement in Afghanistan, opium production increased dramatically. All of a sudden Afghan heroin is flooding the US and Europe. It still is. You can say it's a coincidence, except all the opium warlords are on the CIA payroll. The DEA sends six hundred agents to Afghanistan to make sure nobody knows about it."

"Phoenix is the conceptual model for the DHS [Department of Homeland Security]. Both are based on the principle that governments can manage societies through implicit and explicit terror. The strategic goal is to widen the gap between the elites and the mass of the citizenry, while expunging anyone who cannot be ideologically assimilated."

"Through their control of the media, political and bureaucratic systems, America's secret rulers engage in terrorism abroad and at home for economic purposes. . . . The objective is to maximize profits and concentrate wealth and political power in fewer and fewer hands. The global War on Terror and its domestic homeland security counterpart

are flip sides of the same coin. They are the capitalist ideology applied to foreign and domestic security policy. And like the capitalist system it serves, an unstated national security policy is consolidated in fewer and fewer ideologically correct hands as the empire expands and its contradictions become more apparent.”

This sampling of Valentine’s insights should be enough to show the depth and breadth of his demythologization of this “religious” cult of death that is the CIA. Yet myths die hard. And even when they do, they often rise again, especially when one controls the levers of a society’s storytelling powers, as does the CIA to a great extent through its incestuous coupling with the mainstream corporate media. That is why it is so important for people to take the time to read Valentine’s work.

While *The CIA As Organized Crime* is filled with detailed information labyrinthine in its complexity, his primary goal is to help us grasp the big picture, to see how the myth and the mythmaking work and how we might break through these fictions. He repeatedly reminds us that we are truly caught in the belly of the whale, in the underworld that will overwhelm us if we do not make the sustained effort to get beyond the blur of daily events and understand how the illusionists who are deluding us create and structure their evil propaganda.

Perhaps the only way to heaven is through hell, as Dante told us. Virgil was his guide. The valiant Valentine can be ours, if we are willing to accompany him on the journey.

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