

OVERSIGHT PROJECT

IT'S YOUR GOVERNMENT

Fedflix: Netflix, The Federal Government, and the New Propaganda State

*The Weaponization of Entertainment for Partisan
Propaganda*

An Interim Report

January 2026

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Governments have pushed propaganda on their citizens since the days of Ancient Greece. It is not a new concept. Whether dictatorship or democracy, governments have imposed propaganda on their own citizens in peacetime for purposes of reinforcing or changing national identity and behavior, and in times of war to promote noble causes of patriotism, national pride, and unity to defeat a common enemy. That propaganda is often assisted by ideologically aligned institutions.

The first half of the 20th century saw the maturing of the study of psychology, and the industrialization of psychology through journalism, entertainment, education, and advertising to condition people's thoughts and influence their behavior.

President Woodrow Wilson utilized domestic propaganda after winning his second term to generate enthusiasm for U.S. entry into World War I, and to change America's traditional values as part of his progressive agenda to transform America. Most of this propaganda was open. The Department of War became the first federal agency, during World War I, to institutionalize relations with Hollywood for the purpose of producing domestic propaganda.

At about this time, industrial-scale scientific manipulation of the mind became a political and business tool. Pioneers on this scale included Edward Bernays ("Bernays"), the nephew of Sigmund Freud ("Freud") known as the "father of public relations." Bernays' 1928 book, *Propaganda*, laid out a philosophy for democratic governments to manipulate the public.

"The conscious and intelligent manipulation of the organized habits and opinions of the masses is an important element of democratic society," he wrote as the opening words of Chapter 1, titled "Organizing Chaos." To Bernays, "Those who manipulate this unseen mechanism of society constitute an invisible government which is the true ruling power of our country."¹ Bernays mainstreamed the idea of what he called "Engineering of Consent."²

¹ Edward Bernays, *Propaganda* 9 (Horace Liveright 1928).

² Edward L. Bernays, *The Engineering of Consent* (1947), SCRIBD, <https://www.scribd.com/doc/160334467/Edward-L-Bernays-The-Engineering-of-Consent-1947> (last visited Jan. 20, 2026); *The Engineering of Consent* (Edward L. Bernays ed., 1955), available at https://ia601800.us.archive.org/25/items/kupdf.net_bernays-et-alli-engineering-of-consent-1955/kupdf.net_bernays-et-alli-engineering-of-consent-1955_text.pdf (last visited Jan. 20, 2026); Omar Ahmad Abu Arqoub et al., *The Engineering of Consent: A State-of-the-Art Review*, Pub. Rel. Rev., Dec. 2019, at 1, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.pubrev.2019.101830>.

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Bernays' influential book appeared with the rise of Communism, Nazism, and fascism in Europe, as well as the rise of gangster films in the United States that appeared to glamorize crime. The Federal Bureau of Investigation ("FBI") seized upon this climate and built formal relations with the entertainment industry to glorify the Bureau. By the mid-1930s, FBI Director J. Edgar Hoover personally reviewed Hollywood scripts, advised on technical details, and otherwise promoted pro-FBI features like "G-Men" (1935).

Director Hoover built his cult of personality, and the cult of the indispensable, untouchable FBI, through all mass media forms. Movies and later television became the preferred tools and either Bureau or Hoover himself appeared in the credits of productions. Hoover was the first to turn a three-letter agency into a perfect, sacrosanct, household "brand." No other government agency ever came close.

America's foreign intelligence services are restricted by statute to working against only foreign targets.³ But statutes never stopped the Central Intelligence Agency ("CIA") from targeting the American public with propaganda and thus directly and covertly influencing American political opinion and the democratic process.

Operation Mockingbird, beginning in the late 1940s, was a highly controversial program in which the U.S. intelligence community cultivated extensive ties with newsrooms and Hollywood studios to produce domestic propaganda. Based on all available evidence, it is not clear whether "Mockingbird" was the official, formal, internal codename for the operation, or whether what we know as Mockingbird was multiple operations under different names. The intended purpose originally was to recruit prominent American journalists to shape news coverage in ways to further U.S. foreign policy objectives against the Soviet Union, but as with any domestic influence campaign, the operation affected public perceptions to advance certain individuals, groups, and causes, and to damage others. The operation is estimated to have involved over 400 journalists and 25 major news organizations. Regardless of its official name, the operation lives on in practice to this day.

It is one thing to have propaganda promoting unified American values against the Nazi scourge, Imperial Japan after Pearl Harbor, or the "Evil Empire." This Report does not deal with that. But it is quite another thing to have United States Government propaganda that takes a side of a domestic political issue or dispute. That indisputable evil is what this Report is about.

³ 50 U.S.C. § 3036(d)(1).

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With the advancement of digital and streaming technology, the federal government has more means than ever to influence public perceptions, attitudes, and behaviors - including voting behavior. In the 21st century, propaganda has expanded further than ever into entertainment. Today, people absorb propaganda constantly as they scroll on their phones and watch streaming subscriptions. Few are aware that they are absorbing government propaganda, whether from a foreign government or their own.

This is all by design. The entertainment industry, and it appears Netflix in particular, has partnered with the U.S. Government to engage in social engineering through entertainment. The intended purpose is no longer to combat a foreign enemy or communist ideology. To the contrary, the purpose is social engineering to advance extremist ideology and the preferred narratives of the FBI and intelligence community.

This Report describes the apparent evolution of Netflix's and the entertainment industry's role as part of the federal propaganda apparatus to become "**Fedflix**." Through extensive investigation, including Freedom of Information Act ("FOIA") documents and court filings, and analysis drawing the Oversight Project's considerable investigative and legal experience, this Report documents how Netflix and the Hollywood production machine have engaged in strategic social engineering to radically transform America.

This social engineering comes in two forms. First, the available evidence indicates Netflix and the entertainment industry writ large have become a propaganda platform for the FBI, CIA, and Department of War to a degree never experienced in American history. As J. Edgar Hoover did in his day, the FBI in particular exercises close editorial control over content to ensure that any entertainment products with an FBI nexus to protect the Bureau's "brand." Second, Netflix has become an indoctrination platform. Its content and key personnel advance left-wing radical political ideologies and undermine and demean traditional American values. This is the same type of content so aggressively pushed by the CIA and FBI from the early Obama administration to the start of the second Trump administration.

Preliminary findings include:

- The FBI exercises significant influence, even content control, over Hollywood publications that relate to the FBI. In J. Edgar Hoover's tradition, the FBI's content control practices include pre-approving scripts, shaping narratives, binding agreements, and exercising effective veto power over what gets produced with FBI assistance.

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- Director of National Intelligence Tulsi Gabbard publicly confirmed in July 2025 that Operation Mockingbird-type activities never ended. They continue to operate today, with intelligence operatives still actively colluding with left-wing media outlets to influence public and elected leaders with favored, misleading, and even false narratives.
- Netflix's Board of Directors is largely composed of highly partisan Democratic operatives and donors, and like-minded global elites.
- The preliminary analysis of titles in the Netflix library reflects a predominantly left-wing orientation in its content , particularly on cultural and social issues, that advance social engineering. One study found that 41% of G-rated series, and 41% of TV-Y7-rated series on Netflix contain LGBTQ+ content.
- Netflix airs and produces content that has been slavishly pro-FBI and intelligence community, anti-populist, and pro-left wing politicians and causes.
- The Oversight Project's review of the OneTaste prosecution revealed that the FBI, or persons acting on behalf of the FBI, appears to have collaborated in some capacity with Netflix in its production of "Orgasm Inc: The Story of OneTaste" (2022).

Interim Recommendations:

1. Relevant federal agencies must carefully scrutinize any potential Netflix acquisitions of other media and entertainment companies to take into account the full ramifications of the impacts on American society and the health of the Constitutional Republic.
2. Full declassification and release, in unredacted form, all Operation Mockingbird-related records and any ongoing collusion between Netflix, Hollywood and government actors, particularly from law enforcement, intelligence, and defense actors.
3. Congressional and Executive Branch investigations of FBI, CIA, and the Department of Defense (now Department of War) ("DOW") involvement in content production, including subpoenaing all agreements, communications, and collaboration between these entities and Netflix.
4. Elimination of taxpayer subsidies for propaganda content through legislation.
5. Mandate transparency requirements for government-media collaboration, and restore the Smith-Mundt Act, with modernizations, to ban any federal agency or entity from generating or distributing propaganda to the American public.

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6. Protection of whistleblowers who expose these practices.
7. Defund and disband the FBI's Office of Public Affairs Long Form Team and similar teams at the CIA and DOW.

Government is unaccountable when it has the ability to stream propaganda at the public on whose legitimacy representative government is based. When government and media merge to shape narratives, manipulate public opinion, and engineer social change, the foundations of free society crumble. This Report is a call to action to restore transparency, accountability, and the American People's right to information free from government manipulation.

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I. NETFLIX LEADERSHIP IS COMPRISED OF PARTISAN EXTREMISTS

Netflix's leadership personifies the entertainment company's ideological bias and agenda. This left-wing mind meld at the top of the organization likely shapes content decisions.

Netflix's first CEO, co-founder Marc Bernays Randolph ("Randolph"), was a grand-nephew of Edward Bernays.⁴ He discussed their relationship in public forums and in his memoir, *That Will Never Work: The Birth of Netflix and the Amazing Life of an Idea* (2019).⁵ In his book he reminisced about how Bernays "waged a propaganda campaign alongside the CIA to stage a coup in Guatemala."⁶ Randolph often spoke about Freud's and Bernays' influence on his worldview and his creation of Netflix. Growing up, Randolph's home was full of books by Freud⁷, whom the family called Uncle Siggy.

In a podcast after mentioning Freud, Randolph added, "[m]y other great uncle ... was a guy named Edward Bernays, who in some ways was more coincidentally aligned with what my career ended up becoming.... The reason I threw Edward Bernays in there is he realized it's possible to change how people think in a way that they don't necessarily recognize as being changed. The combination of those two [Freud and Bernays], for someone who spent their entire life, is fundamentally a marketing person. It's almost too coincidental not for there to be something, some DNA connection there."⁸

A. Board of Directors and Officers⁹

Susan Rice – Board Member (2018-2021, 2023-Present): Former National Security Advisor and U.N. Ambassador under President Barack Obama;¹⁰ Director of the Domestic

⁴ Edmund Lee, *Long Before 'Netflix and Chill,' He Was the Netflix C.E.O.*, N.Y. Times (Sept. 15, 2019), <https://www.nytimes.com/2019/09/15/business/media/netflix-chief-executive-reed-hastings-marc-randolph.html>

⁵ Marc Randolph, *That Will Never Work: The Birth of Netflix and the Amazing Life of an Idea* 11–12 (2019)

⁶ *Id.* at 12.

⁷ Patty Ann Tubin, *That Will Never Work: The Birth of Netflix and the Amazing Life of an Idea with Marc Bernays Randolph*, Dr. Patty Ann, <https://drpattyann.com/that-will-never-work-the-birth-of-netflix-and-the-amazing-life-of-an-idea-with-marc-randolph/> (last visited Jan. 16, 2026).

⁸ *Id.*

⁹ Netflix, Inc., *Leadership and Directors*, <https://ir.netflix.net/governance/Leadership-and-directors/default.aspx> (last visited Jan. 16, 2026).

¹⁰ *Ambassador Susan E. Rice*, White House Blog, <https://obamawhitehouse.archives.gov/blog/author/ambassador-susan-rice> (last visited Jan. 16, 2026).

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Policy Council in the Biden administration.¹¹ During her government tenure, Ambassador Rice was a central figure in promoting the Russia Collusion Hoax against President Trump and the related 702 unmasking scandal.¹²

Reed Hastings – Co-Founder and Executive Chairman: Major Democratic donor;¹³ served on California State Board of Education;¹⁴ Peace Corps;¹⁵ Aspen Institute Henry Crown Leadership Award¹⁶ major player in progressive policy circles, education “reform” networks, and globalist institutions.¹⁷

Ted Sarandos – Co-CEO and Board Member: Co-CEO of Netflix for 25 years;¹⁸ major Democratic donor; husband of Nicole Avant, the former U.S. Ambassador to the Bahamas under President Obama ; Spotify Board of Directors (a platform with its own controversies over allegations of content manipulation).¹⁹ He is the architect of Netflix’s content strategy, overseeing a \$17 billion content budget. Given his position, he has likely overseen FBI-collaboration shows, hyper-sexualized LGBTQ+ children’s programs, and Russia hoax documentaries.²⁰

Greg Peters – Co-CEO and Board Member: Former executive at Red Hat; co-CEO of Netflix and former Chief Operating Officer Chief Product Officer, and International

¹¹ Zolan Kanno-Youngs & Eileen Sullivan, *Susan Rice to Step Down as Biden’s Domestic Policy Adviser*, The New York Times (Apr. 24, 2023), <https://www.nytimes.com/2023/04/24/us/politics/susan-rice-biden.html>

¹² Mark Zaid & Bradley P. Moss, *The Partisan Food Fight Over Russia and Susan Rice*, Politico Magazine (Apr. 6, 2017), <https://www.politico.com/magazine/story/2017/04/russia-susan-rice-trump-nunes-unmasking-214993>; Jay Sekulow, *Susan Rice Unmasking Scandal Cries Out for a Grand Jury*, American Center for Law & Justice (Apr. 5, 2017), <https://aclj.org/national-security/susan-rice-unmasking-scandal-cries-out-for-a-grand-jury>

¹³ Theodore Schleifer, *Netflix Co-Founder Becomes One of the Biggest Democratic Donors to Call for Biden to Step Aside*, The New York Times (Jul. 3, 2024), <https://www.nytimes.com/2024/07/03/us/politics/reed-hastings-netflix-biden-withdraw.html>.

¹⁴ KIPP, *Board of Directors* (Reed Hastings), <https://www.kipp.org/about/board-of-directors/> (last visited Jan 16, 2026).

¹⁵ Netflix, Inc., *Leadership and Directors* (Reed Hastings), <https://ir.netflix.net/governance/Leadership-and-directors/default.aspx> (last visited Jan. 16, 2026).

¹⁶ Aspen Institute, *Henry Crown Leadership Award*, <https://www.aspeninstitute.org/programs/henry-crown-fellowship/henry-crown-leadership-award/> (last visited Jan. 16, 2026).

¹⁷ Reed Hastings, InfluenceWatch, <https://www.influencewatch.org/person/reed-hastings/> (last visited Jan. 14, 2026) (describing Hastings’s affiliations with the Aspen Institute and education policy networks).

¹⁸ Netflix, Inc., *Leadership and Directors* (Ted Sarandos), <https://ir.netflix.net/governance/Leadership-and-directors/default.aspx> (last visited Jan. 16, 2026).

¹⁹ Spotify, *Board of Directors* (Ted Sarandos), <https://investors.spotify.com/governance/default.aspx#Ted-Sarandos> (last visited Jan. 16, 2026).

²⁰ Matthew Carey, *How Ted Sarandos Transformed Netflix into a Global Doc Streamer*, International Documentary Association, <https://www.documentary.org/online-feature/how-ted-sarandos-transformed-netflix-global-doc-streamer> (last visited Jan. 14, 2026).

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Development Officer;²¹ background in surveillance tech linking him to the U.S. intelligence community.²²

Mathias Döpfner – Board Member: CEO of Axel Springer SE, the German media giant, which owns *Politico*, a left-wing publication popular with policymakers and staff in Washington, D.C.²³ One of *Politico*'s better known operations was to surface the letter from 51 former intelligence, defense, and security officials on Russian disinformation, created as a prop to help Biden in the 2020 presidential debate against Trump. A *Politico* reporter and editors worked with politicized intelligence officials to break news that, according to *Politico*'s headline, “Hunter Biden Story is Russian Disinfo, Dozens of Former Intel Officials Say.”²⁴ The letter, in fact, made no such definitive pronouncement, and none of the signatories publicly contested the fake headline at the time. The story was manufactured as a prop for Biden to use in a campaign debate against Trump three days later. The foreign company's ownership of *Politico* gives Döpfner direct influence over D.C. political coverage and the shaping of American public opinion.

Strive Masiyiwa – Board Member: Gates Foundation board member; former Rockefeller Foundation board member; member of Council on Foreign Relations (CFR); close ties to Clinton Foundation and Clinton Global Initiative;²⁵ appointed by the African Union as COVID-19 vaccine envoy.

²¹ Netflix, Inc., *Leadership and Directors* (Greg Peters), <https://ir.netflix.net/governance/Leadership-and-directors/default.aspx> (last visited Jan. 16, 2026).

²² See Glenn Greenwald, *No Place to Hide: Edward Snowden, the NSA, and the U.S. Surveillance State* 102–05 (Metropolitan Books 2014) (describing NSA's extensive use of Red Hat Enterprise Linux for tools like XKEYSCORE).

²³ See Axel Springer SE, *Who We Are*, <https://www.axelspringer.com/en/who-we-are> (last visited Jan. 16, 2026); see also Axel Springer SE, *Brands*, <https://www.axelspringer.com/en/brands> (last visited Jan. 16, 2026)., Natasha Bertrand, *Hunter Biden Story Is Russian Disinfo, Dozens of Former Intel Officials Say*, POLITICO (Oct. 19, 2020, 10:30 PM EDT), <https://www.politico.com/news/2020/10/19/hunter-biden-story-russian-disinfo-430276>; see also H.R. Permanent Select Comm. on Intel. & H.R. Comm. on the Judiciary, *The Hunter Biden Statement: How Senior Intelligence Community Officials and the Biden Campaign Worked to Mislead American Voters* (Interim Staff Rep. May 10, 2023), https://intelligence.house.gov/uploadedfiles/ic_51_interim_report.pdf.

²⁴ Natasha Bertrand, “Hunter Biden Story is RUssian Disinfo, Dozens of Former Intel Officials Say,” *Politico*, October 19, 2020 <https://www.politico.com/news/2020/10/19/hunter-biden-story-russian-disinfo-430276>

²⁵ *Strive Masiyiwa, Speaker Profile*, Speakerpedia, <https://speakerpedia.com/speakers/strive-masiyiwa> (last visited Jan. 16, 2026) (listing service on the global advisory boards of Bank of America and the Council on Foreign Relations); see also *Strive Masiyiwa, Expert Profile*, World Bank Live, <https://live.worldbank.org/en/experts/s/strive-masiyiwa> (last visited Jan. 16, 2026) (listing service on the global advisory boards of Bank of America and the Council on Foreign Relations).

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Brad Smith – Board Member: Vice Chair and President of Microsoft.²⁶

Anne Sweeney – Board Member: Former Chair and CEO of FX Networks; senior roles at Walt Disney Co., 21st Century Fox, and Viacom.²⁷

Ann Mather – Board Member: Former CFO of Pixar; former board member of Alphabet/Google where she spent over 15 years on Google's board during the company's censorship of COVID-19 information.²⁸

Leslie Kilgore – Board Member: Former Chief Marketing Officer of Netflix (2000-2012); board member for Pinterest, a DEI advocate for “Pinclusion.”²⁹; architect of Netflix’s brand strategy.³⁰

Jay Hoag – Lead Independent Director: Founding General Partner at Technology Crossover Ventures (TCV); Netflix director since 1999.

B. Democratic Party Ties and Political Donations

Reed Hastings has donated millions to Democrat candidates and causes.³¹ A 2020 study found that 98% of political donations by Netflix employees that cycle went to Democrats.³² Wade Davis, VP of Inclusion Strategy served as surrogate for former President Obama,³³ is a UN Women Global Impact Champion and serves on boards of Ms. Foundation for Women and

²⁶ Netflix, Inc., *Leadership and Directors*, <https://ir.netflix.net/governance/Leadership-and-directors/default.aspx> (last visited Jan. 16, 2026).

²⁷ *Id.*

²⁸ Google Inc., *Google Appoints Ann Mather to its Board of Directors* (Ex. 99.1, Nov. 29, 2005), <https://www.sec.gov/Archives/edgar/data/1288776/000119312505233338/dex991.htm>; YouTube, COVID-19 Medical Misinformation Policy (as archived/posted on YouTube Help), <https://support.google.com/youtube/answer/9891785> (last visited Jan. 19, 2026).

²⁹ Pinterest, Inclusion & Belonging (Pinterest Careers), <https://www.pinterestcareers.com/inside-pinterest/inclusion-belonging/> (last visited Jan. 19, 2026).

³⁰ Netflix, Inc., *Leadership and Directors* (Leslie Kilgore), <https://ir.netflix.net/governance/Leadership-and-directors/default.aspx> (last visited Jan. 16, 2026).

³¹ *Netflix Co-Founder Hastings Gives \$7 Mln to Pro-Harris PAC, Source Says*, Reuters, (Jul. 24, 2024) <https://www.reuters.com/world/us/netflix-co-founder-hastings-gives-7-mln-pro-harris-pac-source-says-2024-07-24/>.

³² Avi Levy, *The most liberal and conservative tech companies, ranked by employees' political donations*, CNBC, (Jul. 2, 2020) <https://www.cnbc.com/2020/07/02/most-liberal-tech-companies-ranked-by-employee-donations.html>.

³³ See Rahkendra Ice, *Former NFL Player Wade Davis Tackles Gender Equality with Girl Up*, *Girl Up* (Feb. 28, 2019), <https://girrup.org/voices/former-nfl-player-wade-davis-tackles-gender-equality-with-girl-up>.

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MeToo International.³⁴ His role is explicitly ideological, inserting intersectional gender and race politics into Netflix content.³⁵

C. Globalist Ties

Foreign Netflix board members like Masiyiwa of Zimbabwe and Döpfner of Germany are deeply embedded in globalist institutions.³⁶

These connections show some measure of connection between Netflix and a worldview that prioritizes global governance, interventionist foreign policy, debasement of Western tradition and values, and erosion of national sovereignty. This worldview shapes Netflix content to promote these objectives.

D. Big Tech and Surveillance State Connections

Netflix's current and recent leadership includes executives from Big Tech companies that collaborated with federal agencies on surveillance and censorship: Eunice Kim (former Google/YouTube executive during Department of Homeland Security/FBI/Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency/Biden White House "misinformation" censorship collaboration)³⁷, who recently moved to the New York Times,³⁸ and Brad Smith (Microsoft President, major Pentagon, CIA, and NSA contractor).³⁹

³⁴ Wade Davis, Ms. Foundation for Women, <https://forwomen.org/staff/wade-davis/> (last visited Jan. 16, 2026); *About Wade Davis*, <https://wadeadavis.com/about/> (last visited Jan. 16, 2026); Wade Davis, Global Speakers Bureau, <https://www.gspeakers.com/our-speakers/wade-davis/> (last visited Jan. 16, 2026).

³⁵See Wade Davis, Global Speakers Bureau, <https://www.gspeakers.com/our-speakers/wade-davis/> (last visited Jan. 16, 2026).

³⁶ *Supra* note 23.

³⁷ Interim Staff Report of the Committee on the Judiciary & the Select Subcomm. on the Weaponization of the Fed. Gov't, U.S. House of Representatives, *The Weaponization of CISA: How a "Cybersecurity" Agency Colluded with Big Tech and "Disinformation" Partners to Censor Americans* 12 (June 26, 2023), <https://judiciary.house.gov/sites/evo-subsites/republicans-judiciary.house.gov/files/evo-media-document/cisa-staff-report6-26-23.pdf>; Staff of the Select Subcomm. on the Weaponization of the Fed. Gov't of the H. Comm. on the Judiciary, 118th Cong., *The Weaponization of the Federal Government* (Final Staff Rep. Dec. 20, 2024), <https://judiciary.house.gov/sites/evo-subsites/republicans-judiciary.house.gov/files/2024-12/Part-1-Final-Weaponization-Report-Compilation.pdf>.

³⁸ See Eunice Kim, LinkedIn Profile, <https://www.linkedin.com/in/eunice-kim-179115/> (last visited Jan. 16, 2026).

³⁹ *Supra* note 26.

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This integration positions Netflix within the broader censorship-industrial complex designed to control information, suppress dissent, and influence elections.

E. Netflix's Library is Anti-Conservative and Anti-Trump

An initial AI-powered survey of Netflix's catalogue reveals striking preliminary findings. While not comprehensive, the survey results make clear that the volume of content favoring left-wing and progressive trends dominates content that is conservative or critical of progressive trends. Content that discusses Trump-era politics skews 11:1 against President Trump. Additionally, there was a marked asymmetry in progressive political content, with narratives supportive of progressive values outnumbering those critical of such values by a ratio of 55:1 (14.1% vs 0.3% of analyzed titles). These findings suggest that Netflix's content library reflects a left-wing ideological orientation.

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II. THE HISTORICAL FRAMEWORK FOR THE U.S. GOVERNMENT'S INFLUENCE ON AMERICAN ENTERTAINMENT.

A. Operation Mockingbird

“Operation Mockingbird” was a covert CIA program that began early in the Cold War to influence domestic and foreign media.⁴⁰ The program, whether officially a single long-term operation called Mockingbird or one of more operations under other codenames or integrated operations, recruited American journalists, editors, and media executives to inject CIA propaganda themes covertly into mainstream news stories to shape public opinion in favor of U.S. government interests during the Cold War.⁴¹ Because the truth of the operation has never been fully revealed, this Report will refer to the entire concept by its familiar name, Operation Mockingbird.

The intended purpose of Operation Mockingbird was to promote core American values and defend the United States from Soviet propaganda. In practice it ultimately became a system to build up and dominate the media apparatus for domestic influence purposes. Many news outlets became middle-men to launder the message from the CIA to the public, and became dependent on the CIA for scoops.⁴²

Key aspects of the Operation Mockingbird concept included:

- Recruitment of journalists at news organizations to function as CIA assets.⁴³
- Placement of CIA-sanctioned stories in American media outlets.⁴⁴
- Funding of front organizations and publications to influence the American public.⁴⁵

⁴⁰ *User Clip: CIA Operation Mockingbird*, C-SPAN (May 27, 2018), <https://www.c-span.org/clip/washington-journal/user-clip-cia-operation-mockingbird/4869996>; Central Intelligence Agency, *Memorandum for Mr. David W. Belin Regarding Project Mockingbird*, Gerald R. Ford Presidential Library, https://www.fordlibrarymuseum.gov/sites/default/files/pdf_documents/library/document/0180/75573204.pdf (digitized from Box 3 of the U.S. President's Commission on Central Intelligence Agency Activities Within the United States Files) (last visited Jan. 16, 2026).

⁴¹ *User Clip: CIA Operation Mockingbird*, C-SPAN (May 27, 2018), <https://www.c-span.org/clip/washington-journal/user-clip-cia-operation-mockingbird/4869996>.

⁴² Christopher J. Coyne & Abigail R. Hall, *Manufacturing Militarism: U.S. Government Propaganda in the War on Terror*, ch. 1 excerpt (Stan. Univ. Press), <https://www.sup.org/books/politics/manufacturing-militarism/excerpt/chapter-1-excerpt>.

⁴³ Operation Mockingbird, Spartacus Educational (last visited Jan. 14, 2026), <https://spartacus-educational.com/JFKmockingbird.htm>.

⁴⁴ *Id.*

⁴⁵ *Id.*

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- Coordination between intelligence agencies and media executives.⁴⁶
- Suppression of stories unfavorable to CIA operations.⁴⁷

Congress partially exposed the program in the 1970s during the Church Committee hearings,⁴⁸ leading to supposed reforms. However, Congress never fully exposed Operation Mockingbird in its entirety, and neither did anyone else. The infrastructure and relationships between the government and the entertainment industry that were established during this era never truly disappeared. Instead, analysis of all available evidence indicates they evolved to operate out of the public's view and adapted to new media landscapes like we see today.

B. Gabbard Confirms the Intelligence Community Continues to Influence Media Coverage and Narrative Development

In a July 31, 2025 interview with Benny Johnson,⁴⁹ Director of National Intelligence (“DNI”) Tulsi Gabbard refused to confirm or deny specifically whether Operation Mockingbird remains an active operation today.⁵⁰ She explained, however, that targeted and selective leaks by intelligence community staff have undermined President Trump’s agenda. In her words, “there are people within the intelligence community who believe that their will is more important than the will of the American people” and that these operatives “will weaponize intelligence by leaking it to their friends within the mainstream media with the intent of undermining President Trump’s agenda.”⁵¹

Gabbard has spoken about “root[ing] out bad actors in the intelligence community”⁵² and said that it is essential to “expose these people [in the intelligence community] for who they are

⁴⁶ *Id.*

⁴⁷ Carl Bernstein, *The CIA and the Media*, Rolling Stone (Oct. 20, 1977), (exposing CIA assignments to over 400 journalists for story placement, suppression of unfavorable news, and coordination with executives; cross-referenced in Church Committee reports on covert relationships with media).

⁴⁸ See Select Comm. to Study Governmental Operations with Respect to Intelligence Activities, Foreign & Military Intelligence (Book I), S. REP. NO. 94-755, at 191–201 (1976), available at <https://www.intelligence.senate.gov/wp-content/uploads/2024/08/sites-default-files-94755-i.pdf>; see also S. Select Comm. to Study Governmental Operations with Respect to Intel. Activities, Supplementary Detailed Staff Reports on Foreign and Military Intelligence, S. Rep. No. 94-755, bk. IV, at 26, 35-36, 50, 69 (1976), https://www.intelligence.senate.gov/sites/default/files/94755_IV.pdf.

⁴⁹ Benny Johnson, *Tulsi Gabbard Torches Hillary’s ‘Treasonous’ Actions* (July 31, 2025), YouTube, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NludG6fl1Vc>.

⁵⁰ *Id.*

⁵¹ *Id.*

⁵² Tulsi Gabbard, *Tulsi Gabbard on DOJ’s Russia Hoax Grand Jury*, YouTube, FoxNews Interview with Laura Ingraham (Aug. 5, 2023), <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EfqS7bLcHFw>.

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as the propaganda arm of the deep state which would have no power and have no influence if they weren't able to feed their lies into a willing spokesperson through the propaganda media.”⁵³ The DNI vowed to dismantle this covert propaganda network, stating that it was important to expose the truth in the intelligence community and political space to “turn the light on places that have been dark for far too long, expose the truth, and drive accountability.”⁵⁴

C. U.S. Government Entanglement with Hollywood

The federal government has implemented modern versions of Operation Mockingbird mainly through the following offices:

Department of War Public Affairs: This is the Pentagon’s office dedicated to film and television productions, providing access to military equipment, locations, and personnel.⁵⁵ Though this practice had existed long before, the Reagan Administration promoted it on a large scale to revive support for the military during a period of Soviet active measures campaigns against the United States armed forces. The most significant early result was the original Top Gun (1986).⁵⁶

CIA Office of Public Affairs: The CIA’s Office of Public Affairs operates to work with filmmakers and television producers, offering consultation that could be considered editorial influence, and at times, control over content involving the intelligence community, operations, and tradecraft.⁵⁷

FBI Office of Public Affairs: Within the FBI’s Office of Public Affairs, the Long Form Team reviews scripts, suggesting and even requiring changes at times, and maintains ongoing relationships with writers, producers, studios and streaming platforms.⁵⁸

⁵³ *Id.*

⁵⁴ Benny Johnson, *I asked DNI Tulsi Gabbard about the CIA's Operation Mockingbird and her honest answer shocks Internet...*, YouTube, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=A9_YJakoccE

⁵⁵ See Katie Lange, *How & Why DOD Works With Hollywood*, U.S. Dep’t of War (May 23, 2025), <https://www.war.gov/News/Feature-Stories/Story/Article/2062735/how-why-dod-works-with-hollywood/>

⁵⁶ See David Sirota, *Inside the Military-Entertainment Complex*, The Lever (June 9, 2022), <https://www.levernews.com/inside-the-military-entertainment-complex/>.

⁵⁷ See Office of Public Affairs, CIA, <https://www.cia.gov/about/organization/public-affairs>.

⁵⁸ See *How Can Screenwriters, Authors, and Producers Seeking Authenticity Work with the FBI?*, FBI, <https://www.fbi.gov/contact-us/how-can-screenwriters-authors-and-producers-seeking-authenticity-work-with-the-fbi> (last visited Jan. 16, 2026).

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III. HOW THE FBI MANAGES CONTROL OVER PRODUCTION COMPANIES

The Oversight Project has reviewed and analyzed publicly available information, including FOIA productions, news articles, and other open-source materials, and applied the Oversight Project's considerable investigative and legal experience to analyze and explain the FBI's practice for screening and approving content. The Oversight Project sent FOIA requests and information inquiries relating to FBI practices that have not been responded to at the time of this interim Report. That information will be reflected in a final Report.

A. The Long Form Team: The FBI's Propaganda Office

Housed within the FBI's Office of Public Affairs, the specialized "Long Form Team" functions as an in-house editorial board for entertainment productions. This team:

- Reviews and approves scripts before production
- Determines "credibility" of portrayals
- Requires contractual agreements
- Maintains ongoing relationships with Netflix and other studios and production houses
- Uses American taxpayer dollars to fund their programs

Documents obtained through Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) requests provide concrete evidence of the FBI's systematic involvement in entertainment production, including Netflix content.⁵⁹ These documents reveal formalized, contractual arrangements granting FBI editorial control.

⁵⁹ See generally, The Oversight Project, *FBI FOIA Document (NARA)*, Doc Depot, <https://docdepot.itsyourgov.org/documents/1e62e288-c981-4e35-9a3a-8d2620cbc867/details> (last visited Jan. 16, 2026) (listing films and series productions with which the FBI regularly interacted).

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Email Correspondence of Office of Public Affairs Long Form Term (“LFT”) Preparing to Brief New Section Chief on On-going Projects:

From: [REDACTED] (OPA) (FBI) [REDACTED]
Sent: Wednesday, March 23, 2022 3:53 PM
To: [REDACTED] (OPA) (FBI) [REDACTED] (OPA) (FBI)
[REDACTED] (OPA) (FBI) [REDACTED] (OPA) (FBI)
[REDACTED] (OPA) (FBI) [REDACTED]
Subject: Fw: Meeting with the new SC, et al.

b6
b7C
b7E

Good afternoon, see below from [REDACTED]. She wants us to meet with the new SC and brief him on significant projects. I was going to see if he could meet with us next Tuesday either before or after our LFT meeting. Let me know if that works for everyone. Also [REDACTED] wants me to put together a document on the LFT/IP major, on-going projects. See more details from [REDACTED] below. If you could send me this information by the end of the day this Friday, I'll compile the report for the meeting. Thanks, and let me know if you have any questions.

b6
b7C

[REDACTED]
From: [REDACTED] (OPA) (FBI) [REDACTED]
Sent: Wednesday, March 23, 2022 3:29 PM
To: [REDACTED] (OPA) (FBI) [REDACTED]
Subject: Meeting with the new SC, et al.

b6
b7C
b7E

[REDACTED]
Can you let me know what days work best for both teams to meet with the new SC? For the meeting, each team should be prepared to brief significant projects as well.

In advance of the meeting can you put together a document on the Long Form Team's major, on-going projects? I want to showcase the depth and breadth of what the LFT does. This document would not include the every day incoming. It should only cover fully baked, all-in FBI projects that we are currently working and have put significant effort into. These should NOT be projects we are considering, nor should they be projects where one or two FBI cases are covered or that we are only providing basic support to.

Can you also separately update the list of current television documentary series the LFT is working on? Have IP update any similar documents showcasing their work.

Below is an example of what I am looking for in the first document, which used to be part of the Weekly Report. Please also include also a scripted television series:

This record shows the multiple layers of the FBI Long Form Team's work. The staff is preparing to brief the new Section Chief on ongoing products, but appear to not want to overwhelm this individual with a lot of material, initially cabining the brief to “only cover fully baked, all-in FBI projects we are currently working on and have put significant effort into.” Excluded from the briefing are projects that are under consideration, or projects covering “one or two FBI cases” in which the FBI provides only “basic support to.” The FBI staff member wanted a separate list of current documentaries that LFT was working on.

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1. The Long Form Team's Wall of Fame

Records reveal FBI involvement with the following Netflix titles:

- RICO - Raw Entertainment.⁶⁰
- Captive - Lightbox Entertainment.⁶¹
- Terrorism Close Calls - Big Media Productions.⁶²
- Mindhunter (2017-2019) - Retired FBI profiler John E. Douglas's book utilized by Netflix. Also, the show's main character, Holden Ford, is loosely based on Douglas.⁶³



- Manhunt: Unabomber (2017) - FBI profiler James R. Fitzgerald consulted on the show.⁶⁴
- Crime Scene: Texas Killing Fields (2022) - Documentary with FBI support.⁶⁵

⁶⁰ *Id.*

⁶¹ *Id.*

⁶² *Id.*

⁶³ Whitney Friedlander, *David Fincher, Charlize Theron's "Mind Hunter" Series Set at Netflix*, *Variety* (Dec. 22, 2015, 11:09 AM), <https://variety.com/2015/digital/news/charlize-theron-david-fincher-mindhunter-netflix-1201666619/>, archived at

<https://web.archive.org/web/20171002003113/http://variety.com/2015/digital/news/charlize-theron-david-fincher-mindhunter-netflix-1201666619/>; See e.g., John Douglas Website, <https://www.mindhunterfbi.com/>; *Mindhunter* (Netflix television series 2017–2019), <https://www.netflix.com/title/80114855> (last visited Jan. 15, 2026); see also, Andrew Whalen, *'Mindhunter' True Story: How the FBI Profiles the Real Serial Killers and Crimes Behind the Netflix Series*, *Newsweek* (May 29, 2019); Jodi Guglielmi, *Is Mindhunter's Holden Ford Real? The True Story of FBI Agent John E. Douglas*, *People* (Aug. 25, 2019, 12:00 PM EDT), <https://people.com/tv/mindhunter-holden-ford-fbi-agent-john-e-douglas/>; <https://www.newsweek.com/mindhunter-netflix-true-story-serial-killers-holden-crimes-fbi-profiler-real-1438648>.

⁶⁴ See *James R. Fitzgerald*, *IMDb*, <https://www.imdb.com/name/nm3244082/> (last visited Jan. 16, 2026). (Profile of James Fitzgerald).

⁶⁵ See generally, The Oversight Project, *FBI FOIA Document*, Doc Depot, <https://docdepot.itsyourgov.org/documents/7088ca9d-d615-4cd4-9bc3-2acc6593a237/details> (last visited Jan. 16, 2026).

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Many of these films receive red carpet treatment once approved, including this example where resources were considered for the production of a film on Robert Hanssen⁶⁶--a known FBI spy and traitor:

Summary

OPA has been involved in this project's development since the spring of 2004. We have found that all involved have been professional, forthright and willing to make revisions to the script to the extent that they were able. Although this will be personnel and time intensive, OPA recommends approving this request to the extent possible. This version of the Robert Hanssen story, although not entirely factual and not portrayed as factual, focuses on the portion of the investigation just prior to his arrest rather than the twenty-five years previous. Additionally, the film will not delve into Hanssen background too deeply.

The exact number of FBI personnel that will be necessary to support this project during the actual set-up, filming and clean-up is not determined as of yet. However, personnel will be needed from the Security Division, ASD, and OPA to provide physical security, visitor escort, and crew supervision, etc.

If approved, [REDACTED] FPPAU, will develop, in conjunction with Security Division and ASD, a detailed logistics plan for the HQ filming. [REDACTED] WFO Media Representative, will be the POC for the filming outside WFO.

Questions may be forwarded to project coordinator,
[REDACTED] at [REDACTED]

B. The Long Form Team Requires Production Companies to Sign Agreements in Exchange for Access

FOIA documents reveal the FBI and production companies signed agreements containing the following elements:

1. The FBI reviews and approves scripts before production.⁶⁷
2. The FBI can terminate cooperation if producers do not comply with agreements.⁶⁸

⁶⁶ See generally, The Oversight Project, *FBI FOIA Document*, Doc Depot, <https://docdepot.itsyourgov.org/document/794f870e659e66444e0e6d1802105d5f>.

⁶⁷ See generally, The Oversight Project, *FBI FOIA Document*, Doc Depot, <https://docdepot.itsyourgov.org/documents/5421903d-f113-45e8-a475-5ff20e53fd51/details> (last visited Jan. 16, 2026).

⁶⁸ *Id.*

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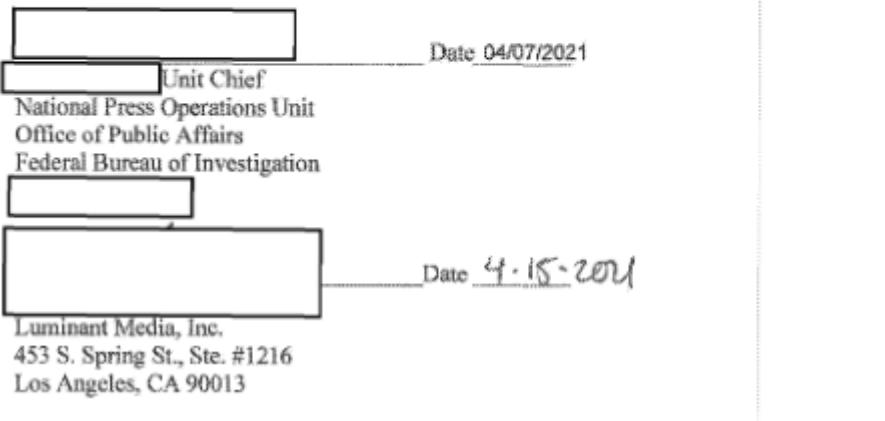
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3. The agreements reference federal law restricting the use of the FBI Seal outside of specific authorized situations , which could create a chilling effect on writers and artists.⁶⁹
4. The Office of Public Affairs determines if scripts are credible or “authentic,” which gives the FBI enormous leverage in determining whether a project continues with FBI involvement and cooperation.⁷⁰

*Example of Agreement Between the FBI and a Production Company*⁷¹

Lastly, Luminant Media, Inc. will notify either [REDACTED] or Project Coordinators [REDACTED] [REDACTED] of the air date of the documentary.

This agreement is governed by U.S. Federal law and will be construed in U.S. Federal courts. This is the entire agreement between Producer and the FBI, and it supersedes all prior oral or written communications. This Agreement goes into effect once signed by both parties and can only be amended by written agreement of the parties.



One agreement for an *Untitled 9/11 Project* airing on Netflix explicitly states the FBI must approve a number of aspects.⁷²

An Oxygen Documentary email states from an internal FBI OPA communication: “As mentioned earlier, I took great care in selecting these clips to make sure they were taken from what was covered by the previously agreed upon questions, and nothing that was objected to

⁶⁹ *Id.*

⁷⁰ *FBI Movies Leopold FOIA*, DocumentCloud, <https://www.documentcloud.org/documents/4066264-FBI-Movies-Leopold-FOIA/?q=transplant&mode=document#document/p50> (last visited Jan. 16, 2026).

⁷¹ The Oversight Project, *FBI FOIA Document*, *supra* note 68, at 3.

⁷² *Id.* at 2.

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during the interview.”⁷³ This is documented evidence of a level of FBI pre-approval of interview content.

C. FBI “Pitching” for Coverage

FOIA documents confirm the FBI not only helps production companies, but actively pitches them for favorable coverage. Email chains, like the one featured below, reveal officials reaching out to production companies, offering access for projects aligning with Bureau priorities.⁷⁴

For example, the FBI sets up media opportunities, such as arranging and “pitching” National Geographic for filming programs, demonstrating proactive efforts rather than passive cooperation or standard public affairs. One FBI employee stated, “I reached out to several contacts I have to pitch stories currently being amplified through strategic communications.”⁷⁵

FBI Correspondence Illustrating FBI’s Pitching Efforts

From: [REDACTED] (OPA) (DET)
Sent: Friday, June 10, 2022 1:50 PM
To: [REDACTED] OPA (FBI) [REDACTED] (OPA) (FBI) [REDACTED]
Cc: Burnside, Jennifer S. (OPA) (FBI) [REDACTED] (OPA) (FBI) [REDACTED]
Subject: Long Term Pitches

[REDACTED] and [REDACTED]

Good afternoon. At Jenn's suggestion, I reached out to several contacts I have to pitch stories currently being amplified through strategic communications. I had great success and we have interest from NatGeo's Trafficked with Marina van Zeller, NatGeo's To Catch a Smuggler, CNBC's American Greed, and NewsNation. Cyber cases that demonstrate a cyber attack to critical infrastructure were of great interest, and well as body worn cameras, and child trafficking. We also were approached through one of these calls to do a story on the FBI "museum" or artifacts to appear on a new series on the Smithsonian Channel. The first museum featured is that of the CIA.

Documentation obtained via FOIA shows former FBI Assistant Director Frank Figliuzzi (now a contributor to MSNow) requested assistance on “The Bureau” podcast, illustrating the

⁷³ See The Oversight Project, *FBI FOIA Document*, <https://static.itsyourgov.org/oxygen-network-fbi-foia.pdf> (last visited Jan. 16, 2026), at 6.

⁷⁴ See Ariane Lange, *How The FBI Shapes Its Image Through Movies*, BuzzFeed News, <https://www.buzzfeednews.com/article/arianelange/fbi-in-hollywood> (last visited Jan. 14, 2026).

⁷⁵ The Oversight Project, *FBI FOIA Document*, Doc Depot, <https://docdepot.itsyourgov.org/documents/b02e3eac-899f-4ad4-9cf2-8a292257113b/details> (last visited Jan. 16, 2026) at 15.

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apparent revolving door between FBI and left-wing media, with select deep state former officials maintaining access to current Bureau resources for media projects.⁷⁶

Podcasts

- Former FBI AD Frank Figliuzzi has requested assistance with Season 2 of "The Bureau" which is a weekly podcast series that premiered in May 2021. The series highlights FBI programs, initiatives, and investigations. 
- ~~Comrade Media is developing a 2-part Podcast on the Amerithrax investigation and has~~

D. The Long Form Team in Practice – How the FBI Approves Content to Influence Public Opinion

The Oversight Project's investigation found that the FBI's Long Form Team has what amounts to an in-depth process to manage Netflix and other media companies' content production. While the process described below is not formalized within the FBI, the Oversight Project was able to use available information and deep law enforcement experience to ascertain that this framework has become the practice of the FBI for content moderation. This process represents a systematic pipeline through which federal law enforcement exercises narrative control over streaming entertainment consumed by millions of Americans.

The FBI's Long-Form Team Content Moderation Procedure

The content approval process follows a multi-stage gatekeeping system:

Step 1: Submission to OPA

In the first stage, Netflix and other producers submit scripts and project proposals directly to the FBI Office of Public Affairs for preliminary evaluation.⁷⁷ The OPA's Long Form Team is supposed to review materials only for "sources and methods" protection.⁷⁸ But the Bureau's Long Form Team's review appears to be doing more than a simple review of source or methods or authenticity.⁷⁹

⁷⁶ See The Oversight Project, *FBI FOIA Document*, Doc Depot, <https://docdepot.itsyourgov.org/documents/b9ae6851-5304-4f72-bd6b-4686b1c3457c/details> (last visited Jan. 16, 2026) at 34.

⁷⁷ See <https://www.fbi.gov/contact-us/how-can-screenwriters-authors-and-producers-seeking-authenticity-work-with-the-fbi>.

⁷⁸ *Id.*

⁷⁹ See The Oversight Project, *FBI FOIA Document*, Doc Depot, <https://docdepot.itsyourgov.org/documents/b9ae6851-5304-4f72-bd6b-4686b1c3457c/details>.

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FBI “Long Form Team”: Office of Public Affairs:

Contact Us

Field Offices | FBI Headquarters | International Offices

How can screenwriters, authors, and producers seeking authenticity work with the FBI?

If you are a producer, writer, or author who wants to feature the FBI, we may be able to work with you to create an accurate portrayal of the Bureau. We've been doing this since the 1930s.

Specifically, the National Press Operations Unit's Long-Form Team in our Office of Public Affairs is a small staff that spends a portion of its time working with producers, authors, screenwriters, journalists, and other industry personnel associated with documentaries, podcasts, magazines, TV programs, and movies. Additionally, the larger office manages national and international publicity for wanted fugitives (including the Ten Most Wanted Fugitives), Most Wanted Terrorists, and missing children, and coordinates other proactive initiatives.

What we may be able to provide you:

- Interviews or guidance on content regarding FBI investigations, procedures, structure, and history
- Information on costumes, props, scenery, and weapons
- Liaison and coordination with local FBI field offices
- Coordination of location shots; and,
- Access to FBI facilities for filming scenes, interviews, or b-roll footage.

Contact Us

Please submit your long form media requests here.

Note: We consider project assistance on a case-by-case basis. We have limited resources and cannot ensure cooperation or offer reviews or critiques.

Step 2: “Credibility” Assessed

The second stage is where the FBI will do a credibility assessment.⁸⁰ If the FBI claims a script is not credible, they will let the production company know⁸¹ as depicted below:

SEEKING INFO ABOUT TRANSPLANT FRAUD FOR SCREENPLAY		05/20/2010 contacted CID UC [REDACTED] Provided short reply to writer including the UC input, asking for more info. He replied with lengthy outline. Fwd to UC [REDACTED] who has issues with the credibility of the storyline [REDACTED] answered the questions, correcting the misconceptions, and IPPAU provided information 5/20//2010.
----------------------------------------------------	--	------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

⁸⁰ See *FBI Movies Leopold FOIA*, DocumentCloud, <https://www.documentcloud.org/documents/4066264-FBI-Movies-Leopold-FOIA/?q=transplant&mode=document#document/p50> (last visited Jan. 16, 2026).

⁸¹ *Id.* at 49 (discussing credibility of script).

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Step 3: Decision and Contract

The FBI makes determinations on whether to work with the project and provide resources and access under a contractual arrangement.⁸²

Step 4: Final Production

Then, the project proceeds to final production with the Bureau's approval.⁸³

This process is finalized via contractual agreements between the FBI and production companies. These agreements state the use of the FBI's name, image, and likeness must be approved before release.⁸⁴ Oversight Project's review of the contracts shows that the FBI is heavily involved throughout the process and reserves the right to terminate cooperation if the project deviates from its preferred narrative.⁸⁵

⁸² See The Oversight Project, *FBI FOIA Document*, Doc Depot, <https://docdepot.itsyourgov.org/documents/5421903d-f113-45e8-a475-5ff20e53fd51/details> (last visited Jan. 16, 2026).

⁸³ See The Oversight Project, *FBI FOIA Document*, Doc Depot, <https://docdepot.itsyourgov.org/documents/b9ae6851-5304-4f72-bd6b-4686b1c3457c/details> at 22.

⁸⁴ The Oversight Project, *FBI FOIA Document*, Doc Depot, <https://docdepot.itsyourgov.org/documents/b9ae6851-5304-4f72-bd6b-4686b1c3457c/details> (last visited Jan. 16, 2026) at 28. (Discussing approval for use).

⁸⁵ See The Oversight Project, *FBI FOIA Document*, Doc Depot, <https://docdepot.itsyourgov.org/documents/5421903d-f113-45e8-a475-5ff20e53fd51/details> (last visited Jan. 16, 2026); See also, The Oversight Project, *FBI FOIA Document*, Doc Depot, <https://docdepot.itsyourgov.org/documents/b9ae6851-5304-4f72-bd6b-4686b1c3457c/details> (last visited Jan. 16, 2026) (correspondence about "approval" between Production Team and FBI).

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Example of “Untitled 9/11 Project” on Netflix receiving FBI Authorization, With Condition

This permission authorizes: (1) domestic and foreign distribution and broadcast of the interview and B-Roll as a part of the five-part documentary-style television series “Untitled 9/11 Project”; and (2) use of the employees’ name, image, voice, biographical information for purposes consistent with the original request and set forth herein. This permission does not authorize, unless approved, in writing, by the FBI Office of Public Affairs: (1) use of the employees’ name, title, position, image, and/or voice from the interview and B-Roll for purposes NOT consistent with the original request or as set forth herein; (2) use of the words “Federal Bureau of Investigation”, the “F.B.I.” letters, or any colorable imitation for purposes that are not consistent with the original request (18 U.S.C. § 709); and/or (3) use of the [interview/footage/ B-Roll /FBI material, etc.] for purposes other than those outlined in the original request or as set forth herein.

The Producer’s request to use the FBI Seal has been authorized. The FBI Seal may not be used in advertising or promotion (other than in-context uses), or in any manner in which the general public may perceive as an endorsement, sponsorship, or approval of a particular product or business; such use would be a violation of the federal statutes and regulations prohibiting commercial exploitation. (18 U.S.C. § 701, 709)

If Producer wishes to assign the right to promote, distribute and/or exhibit the interview and B-Roll to successors, licensees, assigns and/or any other person or entity not specified in the original request, beyond Netflix or Producer’s parent, subsidiary, and affiliate entities, Producer must provide the FBI Office of Public Affairs, by email, the name of such entity/person(s), within 30 days.

A review of other FOIA’d records and other materials and analysis based on the Oversight Project’s considerable legal and investigative experience indicates that FBI collaboration throughout this process is not merely to ensure accuracy. It appears to be a threat to ensure compliance and to protect the FBI brand, as Director Hoover had mandated nearly a century ago. When the producer is making a high-budget film, or a Netflix series that needs FBI authenticity, facilities, or branding, that leverage is enormous. Using an official FBI seal, badge, or related insignia is restricted under law and, under some filmmaking conditions, may require formal authorization.⁸⁶

⁸⁶ See 18 U.S.C. §709 (Whoever, except with the written permission of the Director of the Federal Bureau of Investigation, knowingly uses the words “Federal Bureau of Investigation” or the initials “F.B.I.”, or any colorable imitation of such words or initials, in connection with any advertisement, circular, book, pamphlet or other publication, play, motion picture, broadcast, telecast, or other production, in a manner reasonably calculated to convey the impression that such advertisement, circular, book, pamphlet or other publication, play, motion picture, broadcast, telecast, or other production, is approved, endorsed, or authorized by the Federal Bureau of Investigation); see also 18 U.S.C. §701 (Whoever manufactures, sells, or possesses any badge, identification card, or other insignia, of the design prescribed by the head of any department or agency of the United States for use by any

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The FBI's Long Form Team apparently represents a propaganda operation funded by taxpayers.

E. FBI Inaccurately Pleads Ignorance on Content Moderation

The FBI publicly claims it does not “edit” scripts or exercise editorial control.

About

[Mission and Priorities](#) | [Leadership and Structure](#) | [Partnerships](#) | [Frequently Asked Questions](#)

How accurately is the FBI portrayed in books, television shows, and motion pictures?

Any author, television script writer, or producer may consult with the FBI about closed cases or our operations, services, or history. However, there is no requirement that they do so, and the FBI does not edit or approve their work. Some authors, television programs, or motion picture producers offer reasonably accurate presentations of our responsibilities, investigations, and procedures in their story lines, while others present their own interpretations or introduce fictional events, persons, or places for dramatic effect.

However, FOIA'd documents and statements from authors and consultants prove the FBI's statement is, at best, misleading. For example, here's a guide to “working with the FBI.”

officer or employee thereof, or any colorable imitation thereof, or photographs, prints, or in any other manner makes or executes any engraving, photograph, print, or impression in the likeness of any such badge, identification card, or other insignia, or any colorable imitation thereof, except as authorized under regulations made pursuant to law, shall be fined under this title or imprisoned not more than six months, or both).

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Working with the FBI:

A Guide for Writers, Authors, and Producers

We can

help: if you are a writer, author, or producer who wants to feature the FBI, we may be able to work with you to create an accurate portrayal of the

Bureau.

We've been
doing it since the 1930s. Most recently, we have assisted the motion pictures
"The Kingdom," "Shooter," and "Breach"; television programs like
"Without A
Trace," "CSI," "Numb3rs," "Criminal Minds," and "The Closer"; and
books like Big
City, Bad Blood; Lone Wolf-Eric Rudolph: Murder, Myth and the
Pursuit of an
American Outlaw; and Lightning Out of Lebanon: Hezbollah Terrorists
on
American Soil.

The image below is of an internal FBI slide show⁸⁷ explaining why the FBI's content moderation practices are so important. As it has done since Hoover, the Bureau carefully curates its "brand" and is careful to craft narratives that the FBI promotes that brand in a most favorable light.

⁸⁷ See *FBI Movies Leopold FOIA*, DocumentCloud, <https://www.documentcloud.org/documents/4066264-FBI-Movies-Leopold-FOIA/?q=transplant&mode=document#document/p50> (last visited Jan. 16, 2026).

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Why is media so important?



- Building the FBI “brand,” which is different from image
 - If you go anywhere in the world and say “FBI,” what do people think?
- You can build this brand through storytelling
 - It’s about creating the best possible environment for our investigators and others who carry our mission – so they can be successful
- “If we don’t tell our story, then fools will gladly tell it for us.”
 - Most people form their opinion of the FBI from pop culture, not a two-minute news story
- In any given week, Nielsen data indicates that FBI-themed dramas or documentaries reach 100,000,000+ people in the United States
- Books and movies also allow us to reach an international audience

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IV. FBI AND INTELLIGENCE COMMUNITY FILM PROPAGANDA IN ACTION

The prior section of this Report analyzed how the FBI engages in content review and moderation. What we have not explored is how the FBI changed its “brand” under the Obama administration’s whole-of-government push for critical theory ideology, a staple of Netflix’s editorial approach to content. The FBI spread critical theory ideology during the two Obama terms, the first Trump administration, and the Biden administration, until Trump put an end to government promotion of that ideology in 2025.⁸⁸

This section provides an in-depth analysis of select films and series that serve as vehicles for intelligence agency and FBI propaganda, including critical theory and the justification of FBI interference in domestic politics. The Report’s discussion of each film examines specific propaganda techniques, documented government involvement, and weaponization of entertainment.

Mark Felt: The Man Who Brought Down the White House (2017)⁸⁹

Alternate History:

Mark Felt (“Felt”) was a career FBI special agent who became FBI Deputy Director and had expected to succeed J. Edgar Hoover as FBI Director. When President Richard M. Nixon passed him over, Felt became a confidential source to the *Washington Post*, known publicly as “Deep Throat” after a pornographic movie, with the intent to force President Nixon out of office.⁹⁰ At the time, President Nixon was immensely popular and had just coasted to reelection, winning 49 states in the process.

Felt was later indicted in 1978 under 18 U.S.C. § 241, Conspiracy Against Rights, along with Acting Associate Director Edward Miller and former FBI Director L. Patrick Gray for

⁸⁸ See J. Michael Waller, *Big Intel: How the CIA and FBI Went from Cold War Heroes to Deep State Villains* (Regnery, 2024).

⁸⁹ See *Mark Felt: The Man Who Brought Down the White House*, IMDb, <https://www.imdb.com/title/tt5175450/> (last visited Jan. 18, 2026). This is not a Netflix production. It was produced by Universal and Playtone. Fleming, Michael (January 24, 2006). “Helmer digs ‘Deep’”. Variety. <https://www.google.com/url?q=https://variety.com/2006/film/markets-festivals/helmer-digs-deep-1117936781/&sa=D&source=docs&ust=1768756213165771&usg=AOvVaw3x2TKjcKIWtKbrF5ZmIyUt> (last visited Jan. 16, 2026).

⁹⁰ Nell Minow, *Mark Felt: The Man Who Brought Down the White House*, RogerEbert.com (Sept. 29, 2017), <https://www.rogerebert.com/reviews/mark-felt-the-man-who-brought-down-the-white-house-2017>.

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authorizing nine illegal search warrants and break-ins.⁹¹ This is the same crime that Felt accused President Nixon's supporters of committing but Felt did this at an industrial scale. Felt and Miller were convicted in 1980 in a highly publicized federal jury trial, but the movie made no mention of Felt's crimes.⁹²

However, Felt's illegal work as "Deep Throat" to force a President out of office was not conclusively known until decades later, and he was never charged for that specific conduct.

The film effectively whitewashes Mark Felt's abuses of civil liberties and motives for blowing the whistle on President Nixon. As one review put it, "we know who Deep Throat was and are repeatedly assured he was a good guy. It doesn't quite wash: the complexity of Felt's motives are left untouched in the interests of having a fiercely principled hero at the film's centre."⁹³ Another analysis noted that the "film's release was timed to capitalize on public interest in the now-fading Russiagate allegations, and the producers seemed more interested in playing to the contemporary political narrative than with an accurate presentation of very important historical events."⁹⁴

FBI Involvement in the Propaganda Film:

Once the FBI got wind of the project, it proactively reached out to the filmmakers to offer support.⁹⁵ In a stunning act of transparency, the FBI reached out to the filmmakers and *encouraged them to submit a Freedom of Information Act request for records about Felt.*⁹⁶

⁹¹ See Laura A. Kiernan, *Ex-FBI Officials Felt, Miller Guilty in "Black Bag" Cases*, The Washington Post (Nov. 7, 1980), <https://www.washingtonpost.com/archive/politics/1980/11/07/ex-fbi-officials-felt-miller-guilty-in-black-bag-cases/ebf7eb2d-e94d-4478-896f-2d36af7ab760/>. President Reagan pardoned Felt and Miller on April 15, 1981. In support of the pardons, President Reagan issued a statement explaining his belief that Messrs. Felt and Miller acted with a "good-faith belief that their actions were necessary to preserve their security interests of our country." Ronald Reagan Presidential Library & Museum, *Statement on Granting Pardons to W. Mark Felt and Edward S. Miller* (Apr. 15, 1981), <https://www.reaganlibrary.gov/archives/speech/statement-granting-pardons-w-mark-felt-and-edward-s-miller-0>.

⁹² *Id.*

⁹³ Peter Bradshaw, *Mark Felt: The Man Who Brought Down the White House Review – the Deep Throat Riddle*, The Guardian (Mar. 23, 2018), <https://www.theguardian.com/film/2018/mar/23/mark-felt-the-man-who-brought-down-the-white-house-review-deep-throat-watergate>.

⁹⁴ Tom Secker, *Documents Show FBI's Role In Producing Film On Mark Felt Who Betrayed Bureau In Watergate Scandal* Shadowproof (Apr. 23, 2019), <https://shadowproof.com/2019/04/23/documents-show-fbis-role-in-producing-film-on-mark-felt-who-betrayed-bureau-in-watergate-scandal/>.

⁹⁵ *Id.*

⁹⁶ *Id.*

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Throughout production, the FBI provided extensive technical advice including what FBI files looked like in the 1970s, arranged meetings with former agents who knew Felt, and facilitated filming at the Justice Department building.⁹⁷

Screenwriter Peter Landesman (“Landesman”) shared the script with the FBI and explicitly assured them of a favorable depiction. In one email, he wrote: “The FBI really does come off well here. The unsung heroes of Watergate. With the exception of Pat Gray, of course, who lied his way through his tenure there...Gray will go down as one of the great patsies of American political history.”⁹⁸

An FBI historian conducted a page-by-page review of the script and provided feedback to Landesman who in turn, made changes based on the FBI’s feedback.⁹⁹ But those changes only improved Felt and the FBI’s image.

Pat Gray referred to L. Patrick Gray, the man President Nixon chose over Felt to replace Hoover as FBI Director. The film was critical of him. Gray’s son, Ed, who wrote a book on the Watergate Scandal, criticized screenwriter Peter Landesman, saying “Landesman set out from the outset to lionize Felt at the expense of the truth. . .”¹⁰⁰ On the FBI’s involvement in the making of the film, Ed Gray added “[t]he FBI has for a very long time had an office dedicated to interacting with film and television. The purpose has always been PR, to try to have the FBI portrayed in a positive light. So, of course they steered the producers in the direction the Bureau wanted to go.”¹⁰¹

Despite an earlier email claiming, “[b]y no means are we looking to make a film that romanticizes or lionizes anyone,” the final film portrayed Felt nobly as a whistleblower defending the FBI’s integrity and depicted the Bureau overall as competent and heroic in investigating Watergate, while scapegoating Gray as a White House pawn.¹⁰² The FBI was working with a major film production company to rewrite history and glorify one of its top executives responsible for toppling the president of the United States. While the FBI colluded with the film production to whitewash Felt’s abuses of civil liberties, many FBI Agents used the Watergate narrative to target President Trump and his allies as a “threat to democracy.”

⁹⁷ *Id.*

⁹⁸ *Id.*

⁹⁹ *Id.*

¹⁰⁰ *Id.*

¹⁰¹ *Id.*

¹⁰² *Id.*

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Zero Dark Thirty (2012)

In another example of CIA-Hollywood collusion, Zero Dark Thirty depicts the hunt for Osama Bin Laden (“Bin Laden”) with a clear propaganda objective.

In an interview on the Shawn Ryan Show, a former Navy SEAL operator provided a firsthand account of the CIA’s direct involvement in producing the film before the operation’s details were even declassified.¹⁰³ Just three weeks after the Bin Laden raid, SEAL Team members attended then-CIA Director Leon Panetta’s retirement ceremony at Langley, Virginia, where Panetta personally introduced them to director Kathryn Bigelow and screenwriter Mark Boal, stating: “Hey, look, they’re going to make you famous.”¹⁰⁴ The CIA effectively granted full access to Hollywood for that movie within a month of the mission’s completion. Even more troubling, the operator revealed that “SEAL leadership sent three active duty SEALs to consult [on Zero Dark Thirty] that weren’t even part of the mission,” indicating that the government prioritized Hollywood propaganda over operational security.¹⁰⁵ The former Navy SEAL confirmed he “knew the president had authorized the movies and the books” immediately following the operation.¹⁰⁶ The foregoing is powerful evidence of a coordinated effort between the White House, CIA, and entertainment industry to shape the public narrative.

The film glorified CIA analysts as superheroes, omits CIA’s systematic lying to Congress and the White House and creates false narratives about how they were led to Bin Laden’s location.

The film attempts to rehabilitate the CIA’s image influenced public opinion to support “enhanced interrogation,” and served as a recruitment tool for the CIA.

According to the former SEAL, CIA Director Leon Panetta personally facilitated filmmaker access within weeks of the operation.¹⁰⁷ Active duty SEALs were assigned as

¹⁰³ Shawn Ryan Show, *CIA Helped Create the Zero Dark Thirty Movie?*, (Nov. 10, 2025) YouTube Shorts, <https://www.youtube.com/shorts/kB-qMPQAsMU>; Shawn Ryan Show, *Did You Know? The CIA was collaborating with Hollywood on Zero Dark Thiry*, Facebook, (Nov. 10, 2025) <https://www.facebook.com/shawnryanshow/posts/did-you-knowthe-cia-was-collaborating-with-hollywood-on-zero-dark-thirty-before-/1533792298195092/>.

¹⁰⁴ *Id.*

¹⁰⁵ *Id.*

¹⁰⁶ *Id.*

¹⁰⁷ *Id.*

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consultants despite not participating in the mission, and using taxpayer money to advance the narrative in a for-profit movie to influence domestic audiences.

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V. CHINESE COMMUNIST PARTY (“CCP”) PROPAGANDA, THE OBAMAS, AND NETFLIX

American Factory (2019)

A Netflix documentary following a Chinese company (Fuyao Glass) reopening a shuttered GM plant in Ohio, *American Factory*, pushes CCP propaganda by showing Chinese corporate investment and globalization while downplaying exploitation of workers and threats to national security. In a 2016 speech (pre-film), President Obama said, “There is no magic wand to bring back jobs,” acknowledging manufacturing decline amid globalization.¹⁰⁸

Barack and Michelle Obama's Higher Ground Productions acquired and distributed the film as their first Netflix project.¹⁰⁹ Netflix, by now heavily linked to key Democratic donors, provided global amplification without discussing the policy failures that turned America's industrial heartland into the Rust Belt. The show builds up the CCP using streaming media to shape economic narratives for public policy purposes, all backed by the Obamas.

Propaganda Methods:

The film depicts American workers as “lazy” with “fat fingers.”¹¹⁰ It also normalizes Chinese Communist Party ownership of U.S. industry as inevitable progress. With the popular former President Obama's implicit seal of approval, the film softens resistance to Chinese economic influence in swing states and desensitizes viewers to labor exploitation and job displacement as something of a necessary or inevitable outcome.

¹⁰⁸ Peter Bradshaw, *American Factory Review – a Sobering Documentary by the Obamas*, The Guardian (Aug. 15, 2019), <https://www.theguardian.com/film/2019/aug/15/american-factory-review-a-sobering-documentary-by-the-obamas>

¹⁰⁹ Jeanine Marie Russaw, *Michelle and Barack Obama Make Netflix Debut With 'American Factory'*, Newsweek (Aug. 19, 2019), <https://www.newsweek.com/michelle-barack-obama-make-netflix-debut-american-factory-1455514>.

¹¹⁰ John Powers, *Work Cultures Clash When A Chinese Company Reopens An “American Factory”*, NPR (Aug. 23, 2019), <https://www.npr.org/2019/08/23/753109643/work-cultures-clash-when-a-chinese-company-reopens-an-american-factory>.

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VI. SOCIAL ENGINEERING: LGBTQ+/TRANS IDEOLOGY PUSHED IN CONTENT AIMED AT MINORS

Analysis of all available data shows that Netflix aggressively promotes LGBTQ+ and transgender ideology in content targeted at children and young adults. This is a form of social engineering designed to deconstruct the traditional family and gender roles, normalize sexual content for minors, and reshape cultural attitudes toward family, sexuality, and identity.

A. Quantitative Analysis

A study by the Concerned Women for America examined 326 Netflix series for children and found that at least 41% of G-rated series and 41% of TV-Y7-rated series feature LGBTQ+ content.¹¹¹ The study found that 33% of the programs across all age categories (TV-G, TV-Y, TV-Y7) contained LGBTQ+ characters, themes, storylines, or messaging. The study found further that “LGBTQ themes present in Netflix’s children’s programming far outpaces real-world demographics and accelerated dramatically after 2021.”¹¹²

Another study, published by the University of Southern California’s Annenberg Inclusion Initiative found a dramatic rise in LGBTQ+ content in Netflix’s main library as well.¹¹³ With respect to LGBTQ+ characters in Netflix series, the study found, “2023 was a standout year as over **half** (52.4%) of all episodic programs featured LGBTQ+ characters as 10% or more of series regulars.”¹¹⁴ In the 22 Netflix Original shows studied, the study identified 43 unique LGBTQ+ characters as part of the series regular/main cast.¹¹⁵ The study noted further that the number of series regular LGBTQ+ characters on Netflix Original shows had more than doubled since 2018 when the figure was 19%.¹¹⁶

While these figures are not unique to minors, minors can easily access adult content while on the Netflix platform. In addition, the fact that Netflix is producing programs with a massive over representation of LGBTQ+ characters as a percentage of total population (52.4% of Netflix original shows with an LGBTQ+ character in the main cast while 9.3% of U.S. adults

¹¹¹ Concerned Women for America, *The Netflix Effect: How the Streaming Giant Is Reshaping Childhood and Culture* (2025), <https://concernedwomen.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/12/CWA-Netflix-Report.pdf>.

¹¹² *Id.*

¹¹³ Smith et al., *Inclusion in Netflix Original U.S. Scripted Films & Series: Executive Summary*, USC Annenberg Inclusion Initiative (May 2025), <https://assets.uscannenberg.org/docs/aii-2025-netflix-executive-summary.pdf>

¹¹⁴ *Id.* at 12 (emphasis in the original).

¹¹⁵ *Id.*

¹¹⁶ *Id.*

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identify as LGBTQ+) is further evidence that based on the Oversight Project's considerable investigative experience demonstrates the potential for Netflix's content to normalize progressive values.

B. Specific Examples and Techniques

Stranger Things (2016-2025):

This series is centered on a character's journey to coming out as gay.

Cuties (2020):

This French film promotes the hyper-sexualization of 11-year-old girls performing sexually suggestive dances. After a public backlash, Netflix defended the film as “a social commentary against the sexualization of young children” while engaging in the very behavior it purported to criticize.¹¹⁷

Sex Education (2019-2023):

This is a Netflix British series aimed at teenagers featuring explicit sexual content, promoting transgender identities, casual sex, and polyamory. It presents traditional sexual morality as repressive and outdated while celebrating sexual experimentation and gender fluidity.

Heartstopper (2022-present):

This is a Netflix teen romance series centered on a gay relationship. It introduces young audiences to LGBTQ+ themes and normalizes same-sex relationships. It also features a prominent transgender character.

Big Mouth (2017-2023):

This Netflix-animated series ostensibly about puberty featuring graphic sexual content, including depictions of minors in sexual situations with fantastical “Hormone Monsters.” It also promotes gender ideology with episodes focused on transgender identity and non-binary characters.

Dead End: Paranormal Park (2022):

This Netflix-animated series features a transgender protagonist. Explicitly designed to normalize transgender identity for children. Targets young children with gender ideology.

¹¹⁷ Christopher Rosen, *Netflix Defends Cuties As “Social Commentary Against Sexualization of Children”*, Vanity Fair (Sept. 11, 2020), <https://www.vanityfair.com/hollywood/2020/09/netflix-defends-cuties-backlash>.

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The Baby-Sitters Club (2020-2021):

This is a Netflix series that is a remake of a classic children's series, but now is introducing transgender characters and LGBTQ+ themes absent from original books. There is a prominent feature of a young transgender girl and openly gay parents.

She-Ra and the Princesses of Power (2018-2020):

This is a Netflix-animated series featuring a “queer” love story. The series targets children ages 6-11 with LGBTQ+ normalization. In the final season there is a same sex kiss between the main characters.

Kipo and the Age of Wonderbeasts (2020):

This is a Netflix-animated series. The series features gay main characters and same-sex relationships. It also targets children and attempts to make LGBTQ+ relationships as a normal part of childhood life.

This is a small sample that upon analysis indicates social engineering at scale. The consistency of this programming suggests there may be intentional coordination with activist organizations and alignment with progressive political objectives.

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VII. FBI-NETFLIX COLLUSION IN THE ONETASTE CASE

Evidence of FBI-Netflix collusion, *during an active investigation*, comes from the OneTaste prosecution (*United States v. Cherwitz*). Court filings and discovery from a parallel civil suit reveal extraordinary conduct: the FBI allegedly used Netflix as an evidence-development tool, allowing fabricated material to appear in both a “true crime” film and a federal criminal case.

A. The OneTaste Prosecution: Overview

OneTaste is a wellness company focusing on “orgasmic meditation” practices and related courses and events. In April 2023, federal prosecutors indicted two former OneTaste executives on a single count of forced labor conspiracy. The Government’s original case relied heavily on statements from former participants, particularly from Ayries Blanck, Ms. Blanck’s journals from 2015 were presented as contemporaneous evidence of abuse. They would later be revealed as fabrications authored in May of 2022 with probable participation of Netflix producers.¹¹⁸ In March 2025, under pressure from the defense and court, the government withdrew Blanck and her journals weeks before trial.¹¹⁹ The government continued to trial using a narrative that tracked the narrative in the Netflix film and secured a conviction of both defendants in June of 2025.

Netflix released the Lena Dunham produced film *Orgasm Inc: The Story of OneTaste* in November of 2022, six months before the indictment. The centerpiece of the film was a dramatic reading of a selection of Ms. Blanck’s “journal entries” by her sister. The film also included footage of a scheduled live FBI interview of a former OneTaste employee, who was being paid by the production company at the time of filming.¹²⁰ The film portrayed OneTaste as a predatory cult, setting the narrative stage for the subsequent prosecution.

B. FBI Agent McGinnis and Fabricated Journals

FBI Special Agent Elliot McGinnis allegedly collaborated with Netflix producers during the making of the film while simultaneously running the federal investigation into OneTaste. Text messages show witnesses in 2021 receiving calls from the FBI the day after the film

¹¹⁸ Defs. Letter Mot. at 1., *United States v. Cherwitz*, 23-cv-146 (DG) (E.D.N.Y. Mar. 14, 2025) (ECF No. 295).

¹¹⁹ Gov.’s Letter Response at 6-7, *United States v. Cherwitz et al.*, No. 23-cr-146 (DG) (E.D.N.Y. Mar. 12, 2025) (ECF No. 297).

¹²⁰ *Orgasm Inc: The Story of OneTaste* clip at 1:15:15 shows FBI Agent McGinnis’ name written on a piece of paper.

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producer asks if the witness had been contacted.¹²¹ Emails show McGinnis receiving fabricated journal entries in March 2023.¹²² The typed journal entries¹²³ in federal evidence were a near perfect match to the journal entries licensed for \$25,000 by a Lena Dunham production company from Ms. Blanck's sister¹²⁴ (but actually co-authored by Netflix producers).¹²⁵ However, during the handover from Ms. Blanck to McGinnis material edits were made to remove a clear reference to the Netflix film. The cinematic title "Series One: Darkness" was deleted.¹²⁶ While it is not clear who made these edits, forensically there is a distinct possibility they came from SA McGinnis.

Prosecutors went on to:

- Concede that the typed journals weren't authentic contemporaneous writings from 2015.¹²⁷ Evidence from civil discovery documented that the journal entries were created in May of 2022 in Google Docs and edited before being used in the film at the end of May.¹²⁸
- Concede that a hand-written version of the fabricated typed journal entries were not authentic contemporaneous documents.¹²⁹
- Withdraw the handwritten journals as evidence.¹³⁰
- Withdraw Ms. Blanck as a witness.¹³¹
- Appear to use the Netflix developed narrative as script for the government's trial presentation.¹³²

¹²¹ Letter Request for Subpoenas at 4, *United States v. Cherwitz et. al.*, 23-cr-00146 (DG) (E.D.N.Y. Mar. 23, 2025) (ECF No. 301).

¹²² Joint Letter, Ex. D at 9, *United States v. Cherwitz et. al.*, 23-cr-00146 (DG) (ECF No. 327-3).

¹²³ Def. Letter Motion, Ex. 2, at 235, *United States v. Cherwitz et. al.*, 23-cr-00146 (DG) (E.D.N.Y. Mar. 4, 2025) (ECF No. 288-2).

¹²⁴ *Id.* at 215-216.

¹²⁵ Def. Letter Mot. at 1, *United States v. Cherwitz et. al.*, 23-cr-00146 (DG) (E.D.N.Y. Mar. 14, 2025) (ECF No. 295).

¹²⁶ *Supra*, note 123 at 9, 13, 59.

¹²⁷ Gov.'s Letter Response at 6-7, *United States v. Cherwitz et al.*, No. 23-cr-146 (DG) (E.D.N.Y. Mar. 12, 2025) (ECF No. 297).

¹²⁸ Def. Letter Mot. at 5-6, *United States v. Cherwitz et. al.*, 23-cr-00146 (DG) (E.D.N.Y. Mar. 13, 2025) (ECF No. 294)

¹²⁹ Gov.'s Letter Response at 6-7, *United States v. Cherwitz et al.*, No. 23-cr-146 (DG) (E.D.N.Y. Mar. 12, 2025) (ECF No. 297).

¹³⁰ *Id.* at 7.

¹³¹ *Id.*

¹³² See, e.g., *supra*, note 121 at 1, April 9, 2025 Hr'g Tr. at 50, 51, 52, 54.

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- Present at trial clips of stolen OneTaste event footage identical to those used in the Netflix film.¹³³

C. A Subpoena Battle and Prosecutorial Obstruction

The defense served a subpoena on Netflix to obtain communications between Netflix and the FBI about the evidence, information about how Netflix was permitted to film an FBI interview in apparent violation of DOJ policy, and related information.

Prosecutors moved to quash or limit that subpoena, arguing:

- It was an improper “fishing expedition.”
- It would unduly lengthen the trial¹³⁴

While the government was successful in the District Court, the government's resistance to disclosure is telling. The defense sought to expose the extent of FBI-Netflix coordination, and prosecutors moved to block it. The Government's position suggests that it may have something to hide about the nature and extent of its collaboration with Netflix.

The OneTaste case presents **damning** evidence of FBI-Netflix collusion: fabricated evidence created during a Netflix production, with potential of FBI involvement in editing before entry into case evidence, used in both a propaganda film and a federal prosecution, with the government fighting to conceal the full extent of coordination.

¹³³ *Orgasm Inc: The Story of OneTaste* clip at 59:15-59:37 corresponds to clip shown in *Cherwitz* trial, Dkt. No. 442, Trial Tr. 216-219; clip at 35:53-39:10 corresponds to clip shown in *Cherwitz* trial, Dkt. No. 447, Trial Tr. 1956-1963.

¹³⁴ Gov.'s Letter Mot., *United States v. Cherwitz*, No. 23-cr-146 (DG) (Apr. 4, 2025) (ECF 313).

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VIII. POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Oversight of Netflix

- Congress must subpoena Netflix Executives and government officials to publicly testify under oath about any cooperation and coordination with the U.S. Government to produce content. In light of Netflix's relentless efforts to expand their market share, control, and power, the American People must be able to hear from the key players directly and judge the matter for themselves.

2. Oversight of Media Government Collaboration.

- Congressional and Executive Branch investigations of FBI, CIA, and DOW involvement in content production, including subpoenaing all agreements, communications, and collaboration between these entities and Netflix.

3. Legislation

- Enact legislation that eliminates or restricts the ability of production companies to enter into contracts with U.S. Government entities for film production or content. Mandate transparency requirements for government-media collaboration. Restore the Smith-Mundt Act with modernizations, to ban any federal agency or entity from generating or distributing propaganda to the American public. Governments at all levels should eliminate taxpayer subsidies for propaganda content through legislation. Appropriate legislative reforms should also be enacted to ensure whistleblowers are appropriately protected?

4. Antitrust Investigation

- Relevant federal agencies must scrutinize with extreme intensity any potential Netflix acquisitions of other media and entertainment companies to take into account the full ramifications of the impacts on American society and the health of the Constitutional Republic.

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5. Public Transparency Initiative

- Fully declassify and release, in unredacted form, all Operation Mockingbird-related records and any ongoing collusion between Netflix, Hollywood and government actors, particularly from law enforcement, intelligence, and defense actors.

6. Defund the Propaganda Arm of the Government

- Formally end funding for Office of Public Affairs coordination with Hollywood at FBI, CIA, and DOD.

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IX. CONCLUSION

In many respects, Netflix has become the epicenter of 21st Century American culture and entertainment. With over 270 million subscribers globally, Netflix's reach is unmatched by other streaming services. It has the potential to shape the beliefs, values, and political attitudes of entire generations. If left unchecked, the government propaganda systems reviewed in this Report will continue to erode public discourse and undermine traditional values.

Governments and those in power have been searching for ways to capture the zeitgeist since the dawn of civilization. The goal of propaganda has remained the same—it's always been about control.

Americans now have ubiquitous and addicting indoctrination machines available to them at the tip of their fingers and at the end of the television remotes. Today, ideological social engineering occurs through repeating the same mantras again and again instead of having the better argument. If those peddling a message tell you the same lie with a straight face over and over again, segments of the population will accept “their” truth as “the” truth. In some ways, it’s a subconscious social engineering—like, for example, reinforcing how Mark Felt (hero) took down Richard Nixon (villain). In other ways, it’s more explicit with the normalization of the graphic sexualization of children and the prevalence of LGBTQ+ programming on children’s television. But it is social engineering, masquerading as entertainment.

Based on all publicly available evidence and analysis, Netflix appears to have an outsized role in socially engineering millions of Americans into a predisposition to accept preferred left-wing ideological dogma. Netflix did so with the help of the Federal Government, especially the FBI and Intelligence Community. In fact, the FBI plays an outsized active role in content moderation for projects it is involved in.

The health of our Constitutional Republic depends on a well-informed and virtuous citizenry that can self-govern. Our Founding Fathers made this abundantly clear in their deliberations leading up to the Constitutional Convention. The primacy of this concern is reflected in the First Amendment itself. In order for this truly to be a Nation that is by, for, and of the People, then the people need unrestricted access to a wider variety of information and viewpoints in order to inform their deliberations about representation and national policy.

But what does that Constitutional Republic look like with potential absolute far-left and international control of the biggest media companies? What does it look like when most of the

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population is consuming content from a more powerful Netflix ideological monopoly that based on the current public record will likely seamlessly incorporate politics and ideology into entertainment content?

Netflix domination of media is more powerful in moving opinion than the textbooks used in American classrooms. This is why ideologues and political operators have embarked on this project.

That's not what we signed up for. It's time our elected leaders *put a stop to it*. It's your government.