

The Push, Nevada Experiment

1979-Present

Prepared by T.S. Griffin, Ph.D.

Cader Books

 HYPERION

New York

Introductory Material

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Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

ISBN: 0-7868-8864-4

Cover and book design by Charles Kreloff

Hyperion books are available for special promotions and premiums. For details contact Hyperion Special Markets, 77 West 66th Street, 11th floor, New York, New York, 10023, or call 212-456-0100.

10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1

T. S. G R I F F I N

October 19, 2002

Dear Otis,

The time has finally come for me to deliver to you a once-in-a-lifetime manuscript. Unfortunately I must transmit it in haste, with assembly required, and without a thorough instruction manual. I do rely on your talents as an accomplished editor, and your familiarity with me throughout the past three decades, to construct a clear story line out of the hodgepodge of documents, photographs, recordings, and correspondence contained herein.

Let there be no confusion about my intent and my instructions: Publish these documents any way you can, and do it quickly.

There are people inside the company known as Watermark who will kill to ensure that these files never see the printed page—they have already done so many times before, including many recent victims—and who will do all they can to discredit the files and me. This package contains the only copies of these materials, so you will have to safeguard and reproduce them as you work to assemble the story.

Simply put, these papers tell the story of The Push Nevada Experiment: 1979 to Present. In the documents and between their lines you can read the entire history of our once-noble effort, and its downfall.

Al Prufrock and I began to search for a town in which to conduct our closed-market Experiment in 1979. The broadcast network that employed us wanted us to prove that advertising really works, and to refine acceptable ways in which advertising could produce the sponsor's desired results.

In 1984, on behalf of my employer, we established our test site by taking control of Push, Nevada and founding the company Watermark. Watermark became the transparent shell through which we conducted all our activity in Push. Our early results in Push proved fantastic and valuable—indeed they may have saved our business for a generation. But with the early success and its value came the temptation for expansion driven by insidious intent, and Prufrock and I were betrayed by one of our own—a trusted Watermark insider.

Sold to a new parent (some might say master), Watermark's new leadership took our Experiment toward unethical applications. This change gave us pause, and allowed Prufrock and me to examine the history of The Push Nevada Experiment. We did not like all that we saw—not even that which we saw from ourselves.

In an effort to guard against potentially dire consequences to the Experiment, and to protect Al's family and ourselves, Prufrock and I went undercover. We also unearthed what we thought would be a fail-safe weapon against Watermark that could bring the company to its knees. We would only reunite to stop Watermark in the event that things reached epic proportions in Push. And that they have.

A tragic flaw in our fail-safe plan was that Al Prufrock and I needed to be reunited in order to pull the plug on the operation. Neither man can bring Watermark down by himself. And while I have determined that the time has come for us to rejoin and execute our plan, I cannot smoke out Al Prufrock. I have been forced to find another way to expose Watermark and to draw Al Prufrock out of hiding (part of that plan has involved his son, Jim Prufrock, who has grown into the finest young man you can imagine).

For me, time is running out. I am deathly ill, and I need to see the end of Watermark before I pass. (I even wonder if my cancer is truly due to natural causes.) Watermark knows that I have the kill-code that can disrupt their entire operations. They may also know that I brought attention to them from the government and have anonymously encouraged Jim Prufrock in his recent investigations. My illness makes it hard to put all this into a coherent manuscript before time runs out, but don't think that these are just the ramblings of a sick man—I've included original documents and journal entries from the last 20 years and the facts they reveal are beyond dispute. I need to leave Push, Nevada, as quickly as possible, before I am detected and eliminated, and the world needs to know this story.

Watermark has already begun to unravel The Push Nevada Experiment. Soon, no evidence of it will exist—except for the knowledge it has provided to increase the power of Watermark over the past two decades. And good luck gaining access to that. If Watermark can erase the traces of The Push Nevada

Experiment, as they will surely try, who knows where they will perpetrate their nefarious deeds next. I know that they have holdings and operations worldwide, and have used the power gained through Push and other means to fortify and insulate themselves even from a scandal such as the publication of these documents. Even still, I prevail upon you to publish them, as we cannot afford to let Watermark continue their activities unchecked. If the actions of one small, incorruptible IRS agent like Jim Prufrock are enough to put fear into the upper echelons of one of the world's most powerful and secretive organizations, the actions of many may be insurmountable—even for a company armed with unlimited resources. Certainly a watchful, educated public will be less easy prey for their sophisticated methods.

Apologies for the brevity of my instruction and the disarray of my files. I do ask you to take heart in this one fact, as a publisher and a businessman—for this work I will ask no royalty, beyond your faith that publication is worth the risk. I leave it to you to reap all the profit you can from that endeavor. I have taken enough from my actions involving Push, Nevada, and am fortunate to have the means to escape. It is now time to give something back.

Sincerely,

T. S. Griffin

A Note to the Reader:

The following is a rather unconventional manuscript, but its implications are significant enough that we hope you will see the wisdom of presenting this material in its most authentic form.

I believe T. S. Griffin's preceding note to me conveys the urgency and importance of what these files will reveal. First let me share some background about the author, so you will understand that he is not merely just another conspiracy theorist.

When I first met T. S. Griffin in the 1970s, he had all the trappings of a media business wunderkind with a real passion for reinventing the theories of communication of the times. His professorial air coupled with the presence of a man of authority made him both trustworthy and forceful in putting forth his opinions. I enjoyed listening to his theories about media and human behavior. He was a student of the whys of human behavior—why people did the things they did, why people have arbitrary preferences, why people make choices.

His opinions made complete sense, and his characteristic rationality was unmatched by any other person I have ever met. We met through mutual friends in the entertainment business, at a time when investigative reporting and bold publishing initiatives like *The Pentagon Papers* gave people a sense that writing and publishing were means of broad societal influence. We often spoke at length about the ideas that my house was publishing at the time, as he always wanted to discover the concepts that were capturing the American mind. Though we rarely saw each other in person, we corresponded throughout the seventies, sharing our thoughts as we witnessed the breaking of social structures and the building of new ones with eerie similarities to the old ones.

There was a noticeable lapse in our communications, and when I next heard from Griffin in the mid-1980s, he seemed an altogether different man. His intellectual curiosity and exuberance had been tempered by a heavy dose of reality—from where, I did not know. Now, from reading these files, I know it was from his experiences in Push.

Griffin requested a meeting with me on a private plane in McCarran Airport in Nevada, while I was returning from the coast to New York. It was there that he gave me the first hints about the files from The Push Nevada Experiment. According to the information Griffin revealed at the time, he was involved in a groundbreaking experiment, which stood at a crossroads. I didn't pry into the ethics of the project, but they seemed dubious at best, especially given the sense of trepidation conveyed by Griffin's manner and his description of the uncertainty around the Experiment. His inability to provide detail left me guessing at possible intelligence operations or underworld connections, but I knew nothing for sure.

Griffin claimed that the project he was involved in touched everything—industry, media, economics, politics, freedom, and free will. It could become as big a national issue as Watergate, or even bigger.

Griffin told me just enough at the time to let me know that he was involved in the operations of a closed-market Experiment on human behavior, using unwitting people as his “lab rats” (although he never put it that way). The Experiment was located in Nevada and was secret from everyone except those who controlled it and profited from it. Griffin had been inside the group creating and running the Experiment from the very beginning, and he seemed pleased with its achievement.

Griffin's pleasure in describing the Experiment waned when he recounted the darker turn his Experiment had taken once others took control—and, here despite my nobler instincts, I may admit a certain delight at his expense, because it confirmed the intriguing part of the potential story that I would publish. Griffin foresaw a power struggle among those who ran the Experiment. The struggle would play out over the use of the research from the Experiment, and he alluded to many potentially unethi-

cal applications—the aforementioned influence over media, economy, and freedom were the broad categories they covered.

Everyone with an academic bent understands that publication of your results is the ultimate conclusion of any successful experiment. Griffin clearly wanted to share what he believed he had proven, but the pending conflict meant that he wasn't quite ready to make an agreement regarding a manuscript. I think he may have been hoping that publishing his findings would serve as some kind of leverage in his corporate maneuvering, but at the same time he seemed worried about what playing this card might mean.

Since that meeting, I've never seen Griffin again in person. We have been in contact several times over the years, I think at moments when things became more stressful for Griffin or when he wanted to make certain that I was still intrigued by his project (not atypical for an author on the fence). Along the way we agreed that at some future date, all of the hard copies, notes, files, and information locked away with Griffin in his control room and inside his head would make for fascinating reading—especially in the event that his Experiment went sour or became a public issue. (The news these days can make anything a hot issue, and really, would anyone have downloaded the Starr Report without the months of “marketing” it received on CNN?)

I agreed to help Griffin publish his files whenever he was ready—with the understanding that if and when that time came, they would need to be published quickly. Nearly fifteen years have passed since Griffin and I made the pact to publish his files—the files now presented in this book, regarding *The Push, Nevada Experiment: 1979–Present*. I must admit the promise fell off my radar at times over the years. After all, many manuscripts are promised but few are actually delivered and publishable. But I certainly never forgot about Griffin, or his mysterious Experiment, or the possibility of publishing a book that would reveal a conspiracy with broad ramifications.

Several weeks ago, I got a package with the contents described in Griffin's cover letter: files, letters, images, documents, written and compiled

mostly by T. S. Griffin, but also from and about other figures in a town called Push, Nevada. Essentially, when pieced together the files tell the story of the origin of *The Push, Nevada Experiment*; its early successes; the split between the two founders of the Experiment and their corporate parent Watermark; the fate of the two men after they split from Watermark; the people involved in the Experiment and affected by it; and some strange and unsettling new developments in Push, Nevada, unfolding at the time of publication.

Interestingly, soon after I received these files and was trying to put them into some kind of coherent sequence, my editorial assistant happened to receive a strange unsolicited e-mail from IRS agent named Jim Prufrock. (The press indicated the e-mail was a virus, but it didn't affect my assistant's computer and was cleared by his virus-scanning software.) The name Prufrock rang some bells (and not just because his name would be noticed by any literary man). Prufrock, a strange town in Nevada, the files' appearance on my doorstep—all of it became too coincidental to ignore (no matter what the *New York Times* magazine might say about coincidence). So I began to review my old notes from conversations with Griffin.

I am convinced these files tell the story Griffin was always talking about and that they reveal one of the most extraordinary examples of corporate excess that we have ever seen. In the age of Enron, WorldCom, Arthur Anderson, et al. one does not say this lightly—but in this case people were robbed not simply of money, but of their very souls. It happened in plain sight, over nearly two decades, and no one noticed. To outward appearances it seemed harmless, or even beneficial. And from everything that Griffin implies, the *Push, Nevada Experiment* may not be a singular event, but perhaps the proving ground for many other efforts like it or ventures that have used the Experiment as the basis for other unethical enterprises.

The circumstances dictate that we publish this manuscript in more or less the unconventional way it was delivered to us. Throughout the compilation of Griffin's files, you will find notes from Griffin himself and from several other colleagues. Some questions remain, but there is no other

source we can turn to (and it may be that publishing this book will stimulate the discovery of some of those answers). Editorially, my objective has been to preserve the authentic point of view put into the documents by their authors with a minimum of interference. Occasionally, you will find editorial notes meant to fill in the gaps or offer supplementary information that you may find relevant, and I have clearly influenced the material by trying to organize the files both thematically and chronologically—but in all other ways, this book substantially and accurately represents the original papers forwarded to me.

Sincerely,

Otis B. Miller
Editorial Director
Hyperion

The Experiment

T. S. G R I F F I N

This document, The Experiment, is my manifesto that started the entire enterprise in Push, Nevada. In it, I laid out a plan for a truly closed-market study, where I could control all the elements that had traditionally thwarted researchers. There was a great deal at stake—lack of evidence about the effectiveness of advertising threatened my company's main revenue source, which in turn threatened the existence of the Network.

I believed at the time, and still do (if only in a more theoretical way) that free and available communications lie at the cornerstone of a high-functioning democracy. I was prepared to take drastic measures to defend the ability to subsidize all media with a fair exchange of value—advertising space for money.

In this document, I described the necessary elements to be controlled in the market Experiment—Place, People, Economy, Media, and Observation. To do so seemed daunting at first, until I realized that through the amendment of certain aspects of the social contract—right to privacy, information, and free will—I could achieve my ends. Of course, the subjects were amply rewarded in exchange. The Experiment would escalate the vision of what was acceptable in order to achieve feasibility. It is a rare thing when one must aggrandize a plan to make it possible, and that might have given me a sense of foreboding at the time, had I better sense.

The document was passed through the heads of the Network, and then sent out to a handful of men that we thought could partner with me to achieve its vision. The rewards would be great, if we could succeed in defending the treasure trove of advertising dollars that fueled the machine.

9/10/79

The Experiment

Overview

In anticipation of potential threats to our control of viewers/consumers, we propose the creation of the ultimate test market—a completely captive, company-owned and controlled town. Successful execution may also have applications for the Theme Parks, Real Estate, and Travel/Leisure divisions.

Current Market Limitations/Challenges

As you know from the Sales reports, corporate America is constantly challenging the assumption that advertising works. Practically speaking, the Network relies on advertising revenue to fund the majority of its operations.

To secure the future of the Network and the companies that rely on us, we need to produce more persuasive data on the effectiveness of television advertising, as well as our broader ability to control the habits and schedules of viewers to conform to different campaigns and broader agendas.

The question “Does advertising work?” is not going to go away; if we can answer with convincing proprietary data, we can both increase revenue and get a significant jump on our competitors at the same time. We can also free ourselves from dependence on pure ratings (while the programmers try to get them up again) by inventing a new measure of effective viewing. After all, since advertisers cover the bulk of our costs, it's not so much who is viewing that matters as it is providing the eyeballs advertisers are willing to pay for (see the memo on Project T/A for an interesting approach here).

Pending Problems

As we all know, current technologies make it possible that we will entirely lose control of viewers, as well as control over our copyrighted programming, over the next five years as VTR adoption

grows (and once Betamax, VHS, or Laserdisc predominates, Research indicates it will do so exponentially). “Time shifting” will destroy the ability to control viewers’ schedules and make it difficult to aggregate large audiences at the same time. And we all understand the disastrous consequences of viewers fast-forwarding through commercials. While Legal is hopeful about the lawsuit against Sony, a final judgment may not be rendered for years.

The growth of cable delivery is also cause for concern, and Research also projects that the prototype “Camcorders” may lead hobbyists to spend more time producing their own programming rather than consuming media that is readily available.

The Experiment

Big challenges call for bold solutions. The following plan is ambitious and unorthodox, but it is sound in its conception and design. If we can screw our courage to the sticking place, it will not fail.

The proposal is this: We will create a town that mirrors the United States, and we will control that town’s economy and the media that the citizens see. It will be the perfect controlled-environment test market and consumer laboratory. Not only will we be able to empirically establish a causal relationship between the media people are exposed to and the economic decisions that they make, but we will also be able to extend the very notion of media, and the messages created and sent out to the public, to theoretically encompass all aspects of daily life. The economy of the town and the habits of its citizens will be as traceable as the blood flowing through a human body, and the Network will be the very heart that regulates the flow and rhythm of that blood, because the Experiment will be conducted in the nearest approximation of a closed system that could ever be created in the USA.

Material Requirements

Size

Our demographic research recommends an optimal size range for the town between 7,000 and 15,000 people. The town should have a layout that can provide choices that can be made in every day’s activities, but that lead to one of a limited set of outcomes (e.g. there are three grocery stores where a person can shop that all have the same range of products or a different set of products and prices that we want to test). There will be the illusion of choice for all the citizens of the town.

Technology/Infrastructure

The Experiment will require a significant infrastructure retrofit. Cameras, wiretaps, and sound discs will be installed throughout the entire town to monitor every movement and conversation. Barcode scanning will be employed to monitor all purchases. The objective is to install and upgrade monitoring technology with a lifespan of 30 years.

Every citizen and all businesses will be comprehensively monitored to obtain clean, comprehensive data. Our monitoring system will be completely objective and eliminate the problems associated with Nielsen journals and other self-directed consumer monitoring and surveys.

Implementation

After the location is determined we must attract and expel people to achieve the necessary representative demographic mix. Concurrent to this we must create an operation that controls the distribution and intake of currency, the overall economy, and the wealth put in the hands of every inhabitant. Our Experiment will only be able to commence when we gain control of the media delivered to the town population, enabling us to adjust what the population sees to test the effects of advertising messages. And

our Experiment will only be worthwhile once we perfect a method for observing, recording, and measuring the effects of the messages and their results.

Physical Location

Most of all, the target needs to be remote, so that it is neither disrupted by outside visitors with any kind of frequency nor subjected to media influence from surrounding areas (we can achieve the latter through blocking technologies as well). An outsider mixing with our Experiment population can literally be termed “the fly in the ointment.” While visitors and outsiders will inevitably come to the town, their presence can be minimized by making the town a kind of dead end, a place where one only goes if one is trying to get there. And outsiders who arrive in the town by accident can be quickly given negative reinforcement that causes them to want to leave as soon as possible. Some of the outliers in our population that mirror the dregs and abnormalities of American socioeconomic groups are perfectly suited to serve this purpose. As you will see from the other parameters outlined here, it’s probably advisable to settle on a down-at-heels town that no one will miss.

Currency Control

Control of the town economy sits at the heart of our Experiment. We will own the businesses and the banks, and that will enable us to gain complete knowledge of the wealth in the possession of each individual in the town. We will have further controls because we will set citizen’s pay levels through the businesses we own, and we will control and monitor their bank account transactions. Since we determine what each member of the town is paid, we can easily track this figure. We will use the information we have to determine where each individual spends money, and what each one buys. This will give us insight into the cause and effect of WHY people choose the goods and services that they buy.

The town should also contain some means of distributing wealth to the inhabitants beyond their employment, such as a casino, lottery, racetrack, dole, or other plan that subsidizes individual wealth. This will allow the company to control the level of

wealth placed in the hands of the population with minimal change in their lives. It will also be a speedy way to ensure the distribution of traceable currency that we are able to track. Additionally, such a system will allow us to reinforce living in the town because of the random reinforcement given to all citizens in the town.

Because the company will control all the currency flow in the town, as well as the banks and all the businesses (whether the proprietors have overt knowledge of this or not), no actual US currency will be allowed to circulate in the town. The only sources of currency in the town are the banks and currency that comes into the town inside the wallets of visitors. Banks will all be in the control of the Experiment, and all the currency distributed from these points will be traceable currency.

All the money that comes into the town will be replaced with traceable currency, made and distributed by the company for the purpose of the Experiment. Any real US dollars that make it into the local economy will be ferreted out at company-controlled transaction points. These real US dollars will be separated from the local economy and disposed of, with the traceable currency taking its place. A system of operations will find and seize real US dollars introduced into the town within one day of the first transaction, as no goods will be available through any business other than those controlled by the company, and banks will replace all the official dollars with our currency as the money flows through the banks.

The path of every dollar that is put into the hands of town residents will be followed through the numbering system on our traceable currency, as well as video and DNA tracing. From the time a citizen makes a withdrawal from the bank to the time that dollar is put back into the bank, we will be able to determine its path—with whom was it exchanged, on what date, and for what reason. While reported intention to purchase a good or service is unreliable, the actual purchase of anything is an irrefutable fact that will be ironclad proof of consumer behavior.

Demographic Modulation

Based on Census data and massive population surveys, we will create a mirror of the US population that includes everything in balance—but on an individual basis rather than as a population. This means that, yes, we will have a majority of white, male-dominated

nuclear families. (After all, this is really the only population our advertisers are concerned with, though trend data indicates we should be mindful of growing economic power given higher birth rates among minority groups and immigration patterns.) However the members of this town will have diversity in ethnic, religious, and political attributes, and will enjoy a complete range of activities in their spare time. Every measurable attribute from income level, to hair color, to music taste, to marital status will be included in the information we use to recruit our “reflective population.”

We will recruit inhabitants of the town by using the most sophisticated, personalized marketing. Only those we want to move to the town will be targeted, and only those we want to remain (because they fit our demographic needs) will receive the reinforcement that will make them desire to stay in the town.

Before we start to recruit our population, we will also use proven tactics to clear out some of the old population—permitting vandalism or other petty crimes, creating a socially intimidating environment, and financial distress. If this doesn’t work, more extreme measures can be employed.

Ethos

In some ways, the town we create in this Experiment will be an idealized America, because we will fabricate the “melting pot” that is never actually realized in practice because of irrational attitudes inherent in every person, social group, and community that foster prejudice, segregation (on any basis), and homogeneity. This will also serve as the official cover story in the unlikely event that anyone outside the company learns about the Experiment before we are ready to release our data.

Just in case, Corporate Development has been preparing a fake-takeover overture for the Rouse Company, expressing interest in their planned community of Columbia, MD, and their success in very profitable controlled-shopping environments like Boston’s Faneuil Hall Marketplace. Due diligence may provide some interesting lessons for us in any case.

Entertainment is concocting a variety of “quirky” All-American attractions to associate with the new town. And Standards & Practices is developing an ambitious Moral Code we can instill in the citizens to maintain order.

Media Is Our Message

Our intent is to control all of the media to which the citizens in the town are exposed and to monitor the effect of that exposure on the behavior of the citizens as expressed through their purchases and material preferences.

The delivery of media can be conducted to a mass audience or on a one-to-one basis. This means that the effects of a media message on the population of the town can be compared to the same or a different message on the population of any city of the US, or the nation itself. It also means that the results of slightly different messages can be compared across the population of the town to test the effects before they are put into practice on a nationwide basis. This will give us the ability to test any message on any segment of the population, thereby giving us the power to answer any question posed by an advertiser about the effectiveness of advertising and its results.

Because media in the town must be distributed in a targeted manner, we will require the installation of an operations center that can control the messages seen by any individual in the town or the programming sent to any media receiver in the town. This will be a significant expense of this project. This technology exists today and can be seen in demonstrations by the futurist division of the Network and in the operations of many cable providers. Because the town’s population is extremely manageable, the technology will be able to be cost-effective if the results of the Experiment succeed in protecting even 1% of the advertising market.

Additionally we will need to purchase all media distributors in the town, even those that service competitors or media other than television. This will allow us to have complete control, thus closing the system to outside influences that might negatively affect the quality of the Experiment. This will have the side benefit of enabling us to use any and all media to promote whatever ideas we want to the population of the town, in order to maintain balance in the population and to suppress any dissatisfaction.

Monitoring the results of the Experiment is where we will realize its value and is what will give us the answer to the question, “does advertising really work?” The key features to monitor will be the distribution and path of wealth in the town, the consumer behavior of the population, and the self-expressed opinions and attitudes of the people in the town. The path of the money will

show us what to expect in terms of revenue generated by certain advertising tactics. The consumer behavior will tell us the observed effects of advertising. And stated opinions and attitudes will test the psychographic effects of the advertisers' messages, and will allow us to compare what people say and what they do—this often proves interesting to parties trying to determine why an expected result does not occur.

Because we know how much money each resident has, and what they spend it on, we can analyze the causes of spending. Because we control all the media in the town and have a system of surveillance installed in every home and business, we know what the residents watch on TV, listen to on the radio, and read in magazines and newspapers. With all this knowledge, we can draw an airtight conclusion about the cause-and-effect relationship between television advertising and a person's desire to buy a product.

Transparency

All aspects of our control of the town will be invisible to residents and will do them absolutely no harm. To the contrary, the Experiment should strike the participants as the perfect community in all obvious respects. They will have more money, they will consume more, there will be social order and they will conform to the highest standards of community behavior, and they will enjoy a richness of entertainment and leisure options, all without realizing how it is happening, and without wanting to question their new status quo.

The Experiment amounts to control over a town on the following parameters: Place, People, Economy, Media, and Observation. While it is costly to own and operate a complete town and measure the behavior of all its residents, it's actually much cheaper than guessing at the behavior of millions of people across the country. As a contained environment, after the initial outlay we expect maintenance costs to be relatively low, and we will own the underlying assets.

We believe that this will eventually prove a powerful endeavor that protects the resources that the Network and the American people rely upon to deliver free and reliable broadcast communications on a national and global basis.

Management

In order to attain the vision of this plan, we will need to create a corporate "base of operations." We can use this shell corporation to conduct all the financial, operational, and legal activity necessary to the project. It will also provide a buffer between the parent company and the Experiment, which may prove useful in the event that competitors try to steal our results.

The Legal department is looking into the nest structures for such a corporate entity and also into a method by which the people of the town can be participants in the Experiment without their overt knowledge. We intend to improve the condition of the majority of the population in the Experiment and even make them more content with their lives. We will remove all legal responsibility for every citizen to pay for goods, services, and taxes, as all of these burdens will be subsidized by the shell corporation.

The name for our new company, Watermark, will be similar to its function. The corporation will be nearly invisible, only apparent to those who know what to look for. But its presence will confer absolute confidence and authority in any and all operations in which it takes part.

T S G

T. S. G R I F F I N

Al Prufrock was our first main outside recruit to the Watermark management team, and he became my trusted partner as we boldly set out to turn theory into practice. I saved Al Prufrock's letter of acceptance of our job offer. At the time, I expected to see this hanging on my wall years later—perhaps in a university office or next to framed awards for our achievements. Instead, it serves as a sad and ironic reminder of a lost dream.

At the time of writing, Al headed one of the most noted and reliable consumer research companies in the US, Prufrock and Card Research. His work there was boring him, and I had learned of his dissatisfaction through a mutual friend. Al's reputation was impeccable, both for the quality of his research projects and his discretion.

A P M

T.S. - I have considered the idea of the captive test market experiment we discussed over the past weekend when you visited me at home. I do think that this idea is challenging, but it is also fascinating. For someone who has spent his career in market research, considering the scope of what you propose to achieve I can't give you any other response than "Yes." Of course the generous rewards will go a long way toward securing my family's future as well.

I will begin the process as discussed, by scouting potential sites that will work for this Experiment. This should take a few months. I will need to conduct the site inspections personally, and I welcome your company during these travels if you can make it.

We should also consider general tactics we can use to gain control of media transmissions (this is linked with the site selection, in my opinion) and local economics. We can discuss these points in our next meeting.

Please thank your superiors for quick processing of the initial fee—it hit my bank account yesterday. As I have now accepted the position, I will expect the larger signing bonus payment to arrive next Tuesday. Per our discussion, I understand the revolutionary nature of what you hope to achieve and the need for complete secrecy to keep the competition from suspecting what you are doing. The non-disclosure forms are attached and signed as requested, and I've explained to my family the cover job scenario you described.

al

T. S. G R I F F I N

These memos show how we came to locate the Experiment in Nevada. Looked at today, though, they indicate how the people who eventually took over both the Experiment and Watermark could be thinking about a variety of additional locations for similar activities.

We spent months looking for our site and analyzed many places, as detailed in Al Prufrock's memo about potential locations. In 1981, Al wrote me an anxious note when the company was at risk of being sold. He worried what might happen to the Experiment if such a sale went through (it didn't happen in 1981). We had had the foresight to set up Watermark as an independent subsidiary of the parent corporation, which gave us the reassurance that our funding would not be revoked and our status was safe, no matter what happened to our corporate parent.

As you can see in the memo that recommends Push, Nevada, as the site of the Experiment, Al Prufrock found an ideal environment for our purposes. D'Wight Sloman first comes into the picture here—he would eventually play many roles in this saga, wittingly and unwittingly. In some ways, Sloman represents Push, Nevada, perfectly, as he started out as the kind of man we ended up creating out of many others who ruled and played various parts in our Experiment.

WATERMARK
CONSOLIDATED

February 9, 1981

TO: T.S.G.

After several months in the field I have more information on our early suggestions for locations. Below is a list of the sites we have considered and why we can or cannot use them.

Indian Reservations

We have located three Indian reservations that show promise for this project. They are situated in the New England, Florida, and Arizona. The attractive aspects of these sites are that they are exempt from many of the regulations and restrictions of the government, which will give us much more free rein as we explore the potential of our project. They also have the beginnings of legalized gambling, which is something that we have identified as a major benefit to the operations of the project. Finally, the economic condition of each of the areas is extremely poor, as the people on the land have been continuously ignored and mistreated by the government and other social services. This leads me to conclude that each location would welcome the influx of wealth that our Experiment would bring to the area and the improved quality of life.

The major downside to reservations is the homogenous population base and our inability to influence it. While each of the three sites is near the border of the reservation, the ability to relax the borders and to encourage immigration is unlikely.

A fourth site, in Mashpee, Massachusetts, has been rejected because of a pending legal decision. We were first attracted to the site because we read about an Indian tribe's claim to an extremely large and well-settled piece of land in Mashpee near Cape Cod. This claim would have established a mixed population with great infrastructure that had an upcoming change of status—from town to reservation. The tribe lost the court decision, however, as it was ruled that they fabricated their origins in an attempt to acquire the land.

Sea Islands, Georgia

We have all but rejected all of the Sea Islands in Georgia from our search because of the cost of the land and the socio-economic attributes. The island community would have been perfect, as we could have controlled all supply lines to it. But the islands are simply too Caucasian, wealthy, and high profile.

As mentioned in a previous report, we have five other islands that we are evaluating along the same parameters. These islands are not as upscale as Nantucket or the Sea Islands. It will be important to find an island that was uninhabitable before 1950, so that we don't have the same archaic infrastructure we found in the first few islands we visited.

Push, Nevada

Push is a down-on-its luck town in Nevada. Formerly a mining town, it was reconceived in the post-WWII boom years as a town of the future, but became a victim of larger urban planning decisions in the state. The builders gambled on decisions about the locations of highways and other towns, and they came up "snake eyes" (to say the least). Very little traffic goes through Push—actually none needs to go through Push, as it all goes past it instead. The town is in a state of economic ruin.

But someone did something right in the planning of the town. I can't find out exactly who created the plans or the developer who funded them, but they seem to be inspired by the model towns that have been well documented in the 1950s through the 1970s—towns with infrastructure built to accommodate growth and technological advancement. I'm referring to such developments as Levittown, designed to appeal to the American ideal of self-reliance and self-sufficiency. And since it's already experienced one round of attempted broad-scale urban planning and community development, our presence would not seem unusual.

Push also has a casino that is a central business in the town. The Versailles Casino would be an easy operation to purchase. Most of the other local businesses and local officials seem in such a state of disarray that they would follow anyone that presented a clear vision of leadership for the town.

Conclusion

At this time, I will put more effort into the investigation of Push, Nevada, and into one or two of the island communities we have recently identified. I will abandon the Indian reservation concept for now, as well as the islands already investigated.

Other Regions/Projects to Consider:

Current real estate projects in the country may open new sites for our purposes—I have listed one such location below. This project might inform our choice of where to locate. I have also found out about another development that we should monitor because (while I have no hard evidence) I suspect that it might be competitive to us.

Branson, Missouri

There is a current plan to re-create Branson as an entertain-

ment and cultural boomtown. Scheduled to be complete in 1983, this would make the area a music mecca in the United States—openings will include Music Land USA, the Roy Clark Celebrity Theater, the Thunderbird Theater, and the Echo Hollow Amphitheater at Silver Dollar City open. While I do not suggest attempting to become part of the Branson project, the resources that have converged on the area in recent years will give us the necessary labor supply to outfit any town within 30 miles of Branson to suit our needs. Currently, our field agents are searching for a town of approximately 10,000 inhabitants in this region. Results are pending.

Celebration, Florida

We have intelligence about the plans for an ideal town of the future in Celebration, Florida, to be built and owned by the Walt Disney Company. While we don't suspect them of competitive espionage in this project, we would like to monitor the progress of this development.

Celebration will be based on the old visions for EPCOT Center from the late 1960s. EPCOT is now an almost-complete exhibit near Disney World, but it was originally intended to be a town of 20,000 inhabitants living beneath a giant dome, moving from skyscraper to skyscraper on a high-speed monorail. In the original plan for EPCOT, there would exist no slums and no unemployment because people without jobs would not be allowed to live in EPCOT. There would also be no home ownership—everyone would rent from Disney—and therefore no landowners with voting rights. In the 1960s Disney said, "EPCOT will take its cue from the new ideas and new technologies that are now emerging from the creative centers of American industry. It will be a community of tomorrow that will never be completed, but will always be introducing, and testing and demonstrating new materials

and new systems. And EPCOT will always be a showcase to the world of ingenuity and imagination of American free enterprise." In May 1967 the Florida legislature approved the creation of Disney's Reedy Creek Improvement District, which included some self-government not enjoyed anywhere else in the USA except on Indian reservations, and all seemed in line for the vision to become reality. That it changed into a theme park reflects the difference between the vision and the reality, but also causes one to wonder if the idea for a Utopian community lives on within the company.

While the idea of Celebration, Florida, is probably a grand planned community well beyond the scale and scope of Levittown or Paradise Valley, it's reasonable to suspect that Disney has similar ideas to ours in the area of closed-market testing. We need to get a first-mover advantage against the Disney project in case it turns out to be more than a suburban paradise.

Conclusion

I will try to find a town in Missouri that is amenable to our plan—if I do, I will add that to the list of prospective sites. Watermark should also keep files on all potential competitors to our project.



A.P.

A P M

WATERMARK
CONSOLIDATED

June 10, 1981

Griffin,

Thanks for your response to my questions about potential change in ownership. I had been worried that the funding for The Experiment might be in jeopardy. I am glad to know that Watermark and our operations are transparent within the corporate structure. I guess this means that a change in control might be a good thing, because we would be left to our own devices and would be able to operate more autonomously.

Who do you think the buyer will be, anyway? The whole collection of properties, along with the company's proud legacy, would seem suitable to many of the corporate giants. You and I should monitor current regulatory legislation in the Reagan administration to project several different scenarios, and our best response in each.



December 13, 1982

I'm pleased to recommend unequivocally to the Board a location for the initial site for The Experiment: Push, Nevada, population 10,623.

After evaluating several remote islands, towns near the Canadian and Mexican borders, and Western states (including such semi-independent jurisdictions as Indian reservations), Nevada has proven the ideal location for our launch.

It provides a combination of:

- * Legalized gambling
- * Population growth drawing demographically diverse new residents from all over the country (if current trends continue Las Vegas will remain one of the fastest growing cities in America for some time)
- * Pro-growth state and local government that has historically welcomed experimental business opportunities shunned by other states, and
- * The existence of small geographic regions inhospitable to habitation and migratory patterns.

Because of its population growth, Nevada has attracted a number of major real estate developers, with Paradise Valley

being one of the largest and most successful, and Watermark's investment will be seen as a natural part of this trend.

Push makes an excellent match for nearly all of our key criteria. It enjoys all the advantages noted above, yet is essentially a "down-at-the-heels" town that progress has passed by. No one will miss it, no one is likely to notice it, and the acquisition price is very attractive. The town is dying, to be blunt, and Watermark will be a savior simply by investing in the place—making it even easier to retrofit the place's infrastructure to suit our needs.

Push is located, for lack of a better expression, in a cul-de-sac. It has its own exit off of a major interstate near the desert, and the only way that someone can arrive in Push is if they are seeking to get there, or if they arrive there by accident or necessity. It will be easy to control the major roadway into the town and through regular patrols we can find any motorist in distress and get that motorist on his or her way as quickly as possible should they accidentally find themselves in need of help near Push. The only people that end up in Push, Nevada, will be the people we desire to be in the town, thus preserving our carefully controlled environment.

A single casino, the Versailles, anchors the town, and will act as an effective conduit for injecting traceable currency into the marketplace, as well as the filtering of a large amount of currency in the town to test its level of purity—if real US dollars ever enter into the Push economy, the Versailles will be an ideal place to catch these dollars and extract them from the money supply. The Finance Department has determined that once we take control, boosting the casino's average payout to a rate of 62% is optimal for quickly infusing our money into the town's economy, without attracting undue attention from outside the local region.



One man, D'wight Sloman, owns both the casino and the local house of prostitution. He is what you would call a real operator. Sloman is very amenable to our proposal to purchase his operation, and should serve as a valued inside operator in Push.

Local government would need to be changed shortly after our takeover, but that can be arranged either by incentive or by negative reinforcement—there is no particular established power structure or affection for local government or media that we can discern.

In short, we believe Push, Nevada, offers all the elements we've been looking for and is a town primed for our complete takeover. Please refer to the attachments for the complete financials.

T.S. Griffin and A. Prufrock

Remaking
Push, NV

T . S . G R I F F I N

The following series of documents explains how we conducted the Experiment in Push, our methods for balancing the population of Push so it was a true microcosm of the US population, and methods we used to install the observation infrastructure in buildings in Push. These memos were authored by Prufrock, me, or our company liaison, who made sure we had the resources we needed and that we produced results useful to the business.

Looking back at these documents, I can see our enthusiasm for the environment we had created in Push, as well as our blindness to the immoral activity required of the people in our operation in order to create that environment. Push, Nevada, may have been the site of a slightly perverse experiment that infringed on certain civil rights from 1984 to 1986, but after 1986 it became something far worse.

-TSG

WATERMARK
CONSOLIDATED

February 12, 1983

From: Jamison Jones

We must succeed in gaining control of the newspaper in town, but making it appear to be independent. It remains one of the only outgoing pieces of media from the town. Try as we might, we will not be able to stop the circulation of the paper outside of the town. Further, online services such as CompuServe, which many people can dial into using their TRS-80 or Commodore personal computers, will in time make the newspaper a leak in our media tight atmosphere.

There is a precedent for such a paper in one of our sister cities. Hank Greenspun has run the Las Vegas Sun since the late 1940s, and regardless of what you think of him or what you believe to be true of his activity, his is a model to follow. I believe that the paper has been a likely complement to his efforts in the state of Nevada. It might have been the defense he used to fend off the unwanted attention from the McCarthy hearings, and he well could have used the paper to promote his casino interests (until he was forced out) or his real estate developments in Paradise Valley. It also was alleged to be a tool he used in paving the way for Howard Hughes's \$300-million-plus buying spree of Las Vegas real estate and businesses in the late 1960s.

Once we control the Push Times, we must be conscious that the paper will be an ambassador of the town to the rest of the USA. Internally it must reinforce our values and our story of

the redevelopment of Push; externally, it needs to be as vanilla as the town itself.

On a side note, writing about Senator McCarthy has made me think that the communists have one idea that we should follow—their state rag, Pravda, is an excellent model for us to adopt.

We have men connected to the company who have access to Pravda in translation. I will have copies sent to you, with corresponding issues of the Washington Post and NY Times from those dates so you can compare the news. I think you will find that this is exactly how we will want to run the Push Times.

Let me know your thoughts.

T . S . G R I F F I N

One of the key elements of The Push Nevada Experiment was hiding it from both the public and the government. The population needed to be happy and unwitting participants in order to gain pure data. The government needed to view the town as a legally acceptable organization that it could put into one of the categories recognized by legal and financial institutions.

Watermark lawyers came upon a fairly obscure legal tactic that enabled Push to remain hidden in plain sight. The Defective Grantor Trust is described below. It has worked for nearly 20 years now, in some part due to the carefully massaged relationship between Watermark and the IRS, but in the main because of the legal creativity that allowed Watermark to pay the taxes and subsidize the lives for all the residents of Push.



To: T.S. Griffin

From: Jamison Jones

January 5, 1984

We have investigated the potential to create the economic system you suggest in Push, Nevada, and we have found a legal tactic that will enable us to execute the plan. Our lines into various government organizations will ensure that nobody investigates this policy vigorously enough to attract unwanted attention to the operations.

Here is the legal opinion, verbatim, that was sent to us this morning.

Defective Grantor Trust

In a defective grantor trust, a donor gives value to beneficiaries, but makes a mistake in the process. The IRS penalizes the donor for this mistake. The penalty is that the donor must pay the taxes on the total of value conveyed, instead of the beneficiaries.

(Note: The donor can make the mistake by accident or on purpose. A lot of people do this in estate planning because they can give assets away and then pay the taxes on the income from the assets for the recipient. The taxes paid would be akin to a gift of that amount, except the gift is tax-

free. The gift need not be reported by the recipient to the IRS, as the donor has reported it on the donor's tax return.)

Adaptation to the Push, Nevada, situation:

* Watermark/Push is the donor.

* The citizens are the beneficiaries.

* The value given from donor to beneficiary is the sum total of the goods and services that the citizens buy from the businesses owned by Push (the value of which is equal to the dollar value on the currency distributed in Push, primarily from the Versailles and the banks).

* Watermark will make a small mistake in the wording of the trust, and our accountant will catch the mistake and report it to the IRS. This will cause the entire tax burden that would have been paid by each individual to the IRS to be paid by Watermark.

* In this situation, all the reporting to the IRS is done by Watermark—the gift and the income from the gift.

If you are asking yourself, “what is the gift?” that is a good question. The gift is the cost to Watermark of owning and operating the town of Push. Since none of the money is real in Push, everything of value received is a gift. The income from the gift is the cash flowing through trade around Push, as goods and services increase and decrease in price.

March 15, 1984

Re: Pending Casino Purchase and Renovation

Sloman has agreed to sell the Versailles Casino to Watermark. We see this as the beginning of a long and mutually beneficial relationship between our group and Mr. Sloman. Here is the plan for the transfer of the Versailles.

The transaction will take place on June 11, 1984. Watermark employees will have been on location for the 2 month previous to the transaction, to ensure there is no disruption in operations.

Sloman will no longer have any liability for the operations of the Versailles. He will, however, receive a quarterly payment from Watermark for the entire time that the company owns and operates the Versailles Casino. This payment is to be delivered to Mr. Sloman in cash.

- * The Versailles will change the payout on its games of chance to 62%.
- * Slot machines will be set to pay out at the new rates.
- * Table games will use decks of cards that alter the odds (sealed decks will be manufactured and shipped to the town).
- * Craps will use loaded dice.

- * Roulette will have a magnetic wheel.
- * The Versailles will be the primary conduit for delivery of traceable Watermark currency into the Push economy. Our marked cash will be trucked into the casino on a weekly basis, every Monday. Authentic U.S. currency will be filtered out through the casino and trucked back to Watermark every Tuesday. Both the inbound and outbound legs of the route will have stops at Highwater Trucking.



The Push Times

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D'Wight Sloman Sells Versailles to Watermark Consolidated, LLC

OUTSIDE INVESTORS PROMISE ECONOMIC REDEVELOPMENT
PUSH - NEVADA
 Watermark Consolidated LLC has purchased the Versailles Casino from the Sloman family, and intends to transform Push into an economically vibrant town.

D'Wight Sloman, current proprietor of the Versailles, would not reveal how much Watermark paid for the casino. "The important thing," said Mr. Sloman, "is that the people of Push understand that the good help turn this town around."

While the billion-dollar holding company could not be reached for comment, Watermark press release described the purchase as "a significant, forward-looking investment in the gaming industry. We are confident that Push, Nevada will become the most economically vital community in Central Nevada."

Mr. Sloman said that he would use the money from this sale to make improvements at his other establishment, Sloman's Chicken Ranch bordello.

An investment in the Versailles could not have come at a better time. The casino has endured a steady decline for nearly a decade. Few locals possess enough disposable

counted fewer than 100 overnight visitors last year. Usually customers only stayed for a few hours in the rooms, a spill over from what used to be Sloman's own Chicken Ranch, but has since become the Slo-Dance Bar.

Now that folks can't spend any quality time there, they come to the casino to enjoy a few hours of "quality" time.

While this has been okay for some, any casino's primary revenue comes from its floor winnings, and without people dropping money into the slots and betting the ponies, the Versailles has seen revenues plummet over recent years.

The economic climate in Push has left many locally owned businesses ripe for buyout by outside investors, and for one, this reporter is glad to finally see some money going into this town.

For too long we have seen money and jobs exiting faster than rats on a sinking ship. The new owners could be just the fix for this boat.

Don't think D'Wight has abandoned us completely though, his Slo-Dance Bar is still up and running and won't be going anywhere soon.

His investment in this town is life-long and the Sloman family name is as established in Push as any you will find.

Let's hope that Watermark Consolidated



Local businessman D'Wight Sloman hands the keys to the Versailles Casino to representatives of Watermark Consolidated, which purchased the casino from him yesterday.

WILL WATERMARK RAISE THE ECONOMIC WATERLINE?

HERB SUGAR IS A LOCAL FREELANCE JOURNALIST WHO'S COLUMN IS NOW BEING SYNDICATED BY THE PUSH TIMES.

Commentary By Herb Sugar

Like Manna from the sky, capital investment is suddenly dropping onto our small desert town.

None of us has ever heard of them and we have no idea how they heard about us, but we certainly extend a hearty Push welcome our new neighbors from Watermark Consolidated, purchasers of the Versailles Casino.

As everyone knows, Watermark bought the Versailles from local business

back in 1871. Congratulations to D'Wight and the rest of the Sloman clan for making the deal of the century. Whatever they got for it.

Watermark also promised to sink a significant chunk of change to renovate the casino, and have indicated a desire to make other investments around Push. In short, they want to turn Push into a real Nevada boomtown. Yes, our town. I know it's hard to believe. Christmas came way early this year.

The bigger question is whether this investment will be enough to strengthen the local economy. Push has been riding on dry times for over a decade. Now tumbleweeds outnumber locals

enough to raise the economic waterline? This humble columnist says, "Heck, Yes!"

Inside Today's Times
 Features: Page 2
 Town and People: Page 4
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July 12, 1984

To: D'Wight Sloman
C/o Sloman's Chicken Ranch

Dear Mr. Sloman,

Following our successful adjustment of operations at the casino, the company must now require that you make a substantial change in the operations of Sloman's Chicken Ranch, on or before October 1 of this year. As we proceed with our redevelopment of Push, we cannot allow you to continue the operation of a house of prostitution here. Though permitted by Nevada law, such an establishment is not compatible with the clean moral standards and practices Watermark plans on reestablishing here in Push. As you've seen from our recent recruitment efforts, we believe strongly in attracting and retaining the "right kind of people" to the new Push.

However, we are reasonable people, and we understand and wish to accommodate the basic human need for companionship. You may continue to operate Sloman's as a bar, and your current employees may offer their time as partners in wholesome slo-dances.

A play list of approved, not-overly-suggestive songs is attached. Also attached is a report demonstrating that you will likely make more money in this new endeavor, while having fewer operational difficulties. We will need to inspect your premises before you will be allowed to reopen, but we trust this will be a formality.

Having an understanding of the big picture of what we are trying to accomplish in Push, Nevada, we are certain that you understand that this is a necessary change. Your regular payments from the company will be increased by \$120,000 to compensate for any inconvenience you experience in making this transition.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Al Prufrock".

Al Prufrock

T. S. GRIFFIN

Though at the time my colleagues at Watermark said they were simply trying to make Push mirror the normal moral standards of most American towns in conformance with the goals of the Experiment, it's clear to me in hindsight that this business of slow dancing and approved music play lists was one of many early steps to make Push residents adhere to a broad-scale behavioral code and modulate the personal desires of the subjects as well as their consumer motivations. (When the chief of police declared, "Intercourse should be regular, quick, and early enough in the evening that both partners know what they're doing," never in my wildest dreams would I have thought he meant this as an order for the town.)

The argument that the illicit nature of even a legal brothel and the guilt or suspicion it might cause could disrupt the ability to control our population seemed simple enough on first hearing. A.P. and I agreed at first, and we enforced the change at Sloman's. After it was done, we were done. Nothing could go back to the way it was before.

A.P. and I focused on the Experiment and its results (others at Watermark ran the financial and managerial side)—ironically, we succeeded so well so quickly that we lost control of the operation before we realized what truly was happening.

TSG



CONFIDENTIAL

February 2, 1985

These field results should be very helpful in other operations. They also ratify our efforts to push adoption of cable as quickly as possible.

WATERMARK
CONSOLIDATED

December 12, 1984

TO: Watermark Board

Re: Home Entry Techniques

As requested, the following details our findings on the effectiveness of various methods employed in Push to gain access to homes and businesses in order to install surveillance equipment, in the event that this is helpful in the future.

Cable Installation

This has proven the best method for gaining access to homes. In general, citizens know so little about the activity of the service staff that the representative can explore any portion of a residence and can install anything in a television. Given how many hours the average subject spends watching television, and the use of multiple sets throughout the home, this location alone provides more monitorable time than any other. Once again we see the wisdom of requiring separate set-top boxes for each set in the home and recommend that technologies to bypass boxes or consolidate each home to a single box would be counterproductive. The staff can also access the central control boxes in each home in the event that we have a breakdown.

Phone Service

Our telecommunications workers can easily secure in-home audio monitoring. As with cable installers, they are generally provided free, unquestioned access to multiple rooms in the house and can therefore gain superior coverage.

Babysitters

For the portion of the population that has children, operatives posing as babysitters have free access to install or service any monitoring device in a house. This is highly effective for families, but is not relevant at all to people without small children.

Auto Mechanics

Despite their reputation for not being trustworthy, people still leave their cars with them for as much as days at a time. Monitoring devices can be installed in a matter of minutes, so even the most routine auto maintenance and repairs can accommodate our needs.

Exterminators

In extreme measures, we will release an infestation into a home or building that will require the retention of an exterminating crew. For emergency situations rather than set up or new installation, exterminators are the fastest and most reliable.

Moving Crews

When a new occupant moves into a home or other building, the movers are usually able to affix monitoring devices to furniture, decorations, and other fixtures.

Cleaning Crews

In office buildings, a cleaning crew is hands down the most useful tactic we have to gain access for video and audio

monitoring. They have hours to accomplish their tasks when the premises tend to be unoccupied, and they have access to every room in the building.

Painters

Exterior painting crews are effective for outdoor monitoring and upper-floor monitoring with remote cameras. Interior painting crews can affix monitoring devices on bare walls and conceal them with decoration.

Delivery Workers

This method has proven unreliable—the delivery person doesn't gain any access to the premises, and the goods they deliver usually are not the type of item that stays in the house.

Yard Workers

These people are not too effective, as they are primarily on ground level and have trouble moving beyond the most public areas.

We may lose this access eventually, but that will not become a problem until the advent of mobile phone technology that is good enough to replace wired service.

T . S . G R I F F I N

March 14. 1985

Al—In the recent merger, we have become altogether invisible as our new parent company looks favorably on our operations. Watermark is living up to its name.

Better yet, as the takeover occurs Watermark will be able to convert itself to an independent entity, as outlined by several clauses in the incorporation of the company. We have enough cash reserves from the operations of Push and our initial funding that we can continue to operate indefinitely, barring major financial event or catastrophe.

This means that Watermark can act autonomously and without governance from the parent company for the first time since we began The Push Nevada Experiment. Watermark still has an obligation to provide data to the Network based on the closed-market study, but the obligation ends there. Any other activity Watermark wants to pursue that is of value to the Network is at our discretion, and Watermark must be compensated for that activity.

As our new parent company has strong ties to the intelligence community, we should be able to find even more ways to protect Watermark's operations. My initial take is that they value our work quite highly, as some of their senior executives have reached out to us in the days after the acquisition became public.

All in all, this acquisition will be a good thing for The Push Nevada Experiment and Watermark.

TSG

The Push Nevada Experiment: Progress Report

3/7/86

True to our original hopes, The Push Nevada Experiment has provided early results indicating that advertising works (and can be enhanced to work even better).

There exists a link between the exposure to an advertisement seen by a citizen and the purchase of the advertised product. The strength of the advertisement depends on the quality of the message—when matched with market research pre-tests conducted by various agencies on their creative executions, the results in Push have a high degree of correlation. The correlation can be segmented along any parameter in the Push, Nevada, population to see how different groups receive the same media message.

This demonstrates that if pre-testing says that an ad should increase desire to purchase by 10%, then the people of Push who are exposed to the advertisement actually increase their spending on the product by 10% on average. This puts the burden to perform back on the advertising agencies and will reduce the burden on content creators and distributors to the attraction and retention of audiences (which is why our ability to steer audiences from one program to another is the next wave of the Experiment).

Some specific highlights from the Experiment:

* We can take a commodity product, like orange juice, eggs, or milk, and create a strong brand preference for one product over another even when the actual products are the same. All we need to do is change the packaging and the advertising, and one product will outsell the others.

* We can launch a new product that unseats a market leader in sales in under three months. We have done this in both product and service categories, from long-distance telecommunications services and cable television providers to simple items like pens and paper. Nobody heard of the three brands that we have introduced against companies that currently dominate in

the US, but that ended up mattering very little.

* Two comparable restaurants next door to each other can have radically different patronage because of our messaging. Controlling for all variables except advertising messages, we can make 90% of the public choose one diner over another.

* People in Push can be stimulated to shop, and we can control the amount of their income they feel comfortable spending. Our progress suggests that we can refine this stimulation to make people shop at certain times. This could lead to observational and operational efficiencies in the Experiment.

* By using a combination of advertising and alternate media coverage (e.g. public relations support to get articles written in the paper) we can create pent-up demand for a new and improved product before it even hits the stores. Scarcity of a product will make people even more avid to buy it. We have done this with children's stuffed toys, stickers, cars, consumer electronics, and apparel.

* We can change people's attitudes about brands that have traditionally lagged behind market leaders in very established categories. One foreign car manufacturer leads all sales in Push, Nevada, and is now perceived as more "American" than two of the three dominant US manufacturers.

* Concentrating on core groups of the Push population, we can introduce a new item that takes a firm hold on that core group, which then passes the word about their fantastic new find and how it had improved their lives. This results in increased penetration of the item into the population. At a certain point, the entire population perceives the item as something they must have, a necessity for daily life. The item then becomes a household good. Our most successful test on this has been the launch of the CD player in Push, which now has penetrated 88% of homes in the town.

* We can make people associate the possession or purchase of one brand with attributes such as attractiveness, kindness,

trustworthiness, and meanness. People will feel emotions about other people by simply observing the products they buy and use. We have made people feel that men who drive four-wheel drive vehicles are masculine and rugged. Citizens think that they look younger when they drink a certain brand of cola. And wives who want to appear dutiful all watch the same cooking show on television.

* Fashions and styles can be dictated by advertising. We have created some strange tastes in the town that the citizens accept as normal. In the heat of summer, female residents of Push all began to wear ballet leg warmers to the gym. Men decided in the fall of 1985 that leather ties were more formal than silk. We have caused teens to adopt slang terms such as “Frenchy” (meaning “good”), “cake walk” (meaning “simple”) and “toast and tea” (meaning “boring”).

Additionally, the results of the Experiment are able to show instances where an individual’s reported attitude or intended action is false—people always lie about their intention to take certain actions, and now we can tell when and how they lie, and what that effect is on our expectations. Patterns of false reporting can be recognized and can be fed back to the makers of advertising to allow them to avoid such misleading information.

Some examples:

* Parents lie about the amount of television they let their children watch. They tell their friends and colleagues that they limit their children to an hour a day, plus all the PBS the child wants to watch. In reality, the child spends more time within ten feet of the television set than his or her parent.

* Adults lie about their intention to work out. This works to the advantage of companies who offer workout equipment, apparel, and gym memberships.

* Men over 30 lie about the number of books they read. We see this day in and day out, in social and work situations. A man may have heard about a book, and might know a summary of it. But he will often present the information as his own knowledge.

* Everyone says they will go on a diet, but only one in twenty people stick to their diets.

* Men get their opinions from the sports section of the newspaper and present them as their own. On June 18, 1984, 33% of men stated in conversation that the NBA draft must be fixed because Houston and Portland got to pick ahead of Chicago. We had this idea planted in the media outlets in Push, Nevada.

* Everyone lies about the television shows they watch. People revolve their schedules around certain television programs, but they don’t tell their friends this. They only tell certain confidants, and do so with a sense of shame.

* Women 25 to 44 are afraid to say that they like nature programming on television. In one of numerous similar tests, we observed the behavior of women who watched the programs “The Mating Habits of the Trapdoor Spider” and “How Dolphins Communicate.” When women who watched these programs find other women who like nature programming, they formed an almost support group-like dependency on each other.

* Photographers lie about their intention to put their photos into albums or share them with friends. Most people have an average of twelve envelopes of processed photographs in a shoebox lying in the bottom of their closet, and they sort through this box approximately once a year and then ask a friend about a good place to buy an album. Nobody ever brings the negatives they have saved in for reprinting.

In the Experiment, we have observed that the lies people are telling are not conscious. They lie to themselves to convince themselves that they are adhering to a code of what is right. This

code is dictated by local society, which gets it from examples from national society.

The Push Nevada Experiment has begun to demonstrate that it will protect the advertising market, which is expected to grow to over \$2 billion by the turn of the century. Even if our revenue derived from advertising diminishes significantly in that time, the Experiment should be profitable by the early 1990s. In fact, our results show that total audience is less important than reaching and controlling smaller demographic subsets. We recommend a creative strategy of developing more programming targeted at the most desirable age and gender groupings and decreasing our obsession with total viewing audience. This also means that we will have to embrace the multi-channel world of cable television and consider a strategy for new acquisitions in this space.

It is the opinion of the heads of the Experiment that we should pursue more applications for the Push, Nevada Experiment. Never have we had an environment so pristine and complete in which to try to determine the motivators of human behavior. To connect the dots of cognitive decision-making would be to achieve genius and would be extremely valuable to any organization that possessed such information.

T . S . G R I F F I N

Prufrock and I became so enthusiastic about our early successes in Push that we drafted a list of next steps for the Experiment. We thought that Push would afford companies the chance to learn about the economy and how it functions in reality rather than theory. I have to admit, I saw myself one day publishing all the results from the Experiment (after it had fully served its purpose) and settling into a tenured chair at a prestigious university.

Prufrock and I also saw an opportunity to go well beyond the effects of one industry on human cognition. We wanted to test an entire environment's effect on the behaviors and the attitudes of people in that environment. We envisioned that this could do some good for the entire nation, as we could improve the lot of people everywhere, and fuel the economy to make the most of our collective resources. In addition to making ourselves rich, we thought this overall economic stimulus would enhance the total wealth in the United States, leading to lower taxes and/or increased services, support and infrastructure for the people. This could prove to the world that a capitalistic society could serve the needs of its citizens better than any other alternative, especially communism (which was in its twilight in the second term of Ronald Reagan's presidency).

This list made its way to the highest levels of management, where it was considered for some time. It also passed through the hands of our corporate liaison, who drew independent conclusions about the potential of The Push Nevada Experiment.

The Push Nevada Experiment,

Phase 2:

New Applications for Learning

5/17/86

Push, Nevada, has served its original purpose, but has huge potential for further applications. There are many valuable lessons we can learn through Push. We propose initiating more complex experiments in Phase 2.

Potential Experiments

1. Watermark can use Push to learn about the effect of media on human behavior. Does violent television make teenagers more violent? Do comedies make people more content with their lives? Do audience members adopt the behavior of their favorite characters? What programming will have the greatest effect on votes in a democratic election? Each of these questions and many others can be answered by testing in Push, Nevada.

2. Push can also provide lessons in specific industries like shipping, printing, broadcasting, creative production and consumer products. Our logistics can be repackaged for customized operations all over the nation. We should consider buying companies outside Push that could use what we have learned in the Experiment to make a profit.

3. Watermark should consider rolling out other Push, Nevada towns in the USA to test one population against another. Other towns could be identical to Push, or they could simply have the same media delivery as Push, without the monitoring that accompanies it. If something passes the test in Push, Nevada, it can be applied without hesitation in a new market.

4. Watermark should consider buying companies that have the most success in Push's controlled environment. After all, why should our hard-earned research benefit clients alone? We should

also investigate creating alliances with media distribution companies and content production companies.

5. Watermark should leverage its storehouse of legal tender to invest in new operations. At any given time, the company needs to hold only 8% of the currency in reserve. The remaining 92% can be deployed by the company to our benefit.

6. Watermark should establish ties to branches of the US government that can benefit from our analysis of human behavior. This will have the double effect of demonstrating that Watermark is a good corporate citizen (a good way to keep the government out of our affairs) and may actually prove to bear some benefits for our society.

* One suggestion is to feed information to congressmen who can use it to create legislation that will improve our democratic process—especially in elections, where the popular vote will someday come into conflict with the Electoral College system. If US representative to the UN could state that an increase in personal wealth correlated with compliance with the law, I am certain that some of our friends behind the iron curtain could use that information to fuel anticommunist/pro-capitalist movements.

* The IRS might be interested in the percentage of the economy that takes place off the books. This would allow them to adjust tax laws accordingly so that every citizen bore an equitable tax burden.

* The labor commission could work with the FCC to get different segments of the population on different schedules. People working outside the normal 9 to 5 day would lead to a more even flow of productivity, because work would be getting done around the clock, and machines and people would be able to share resources. This would lead to higher returns on investments by businesses.

Experiment
Corrupted

The following letter is one of the few attempts at a running narrative included in the package I received from Griffin. We have provided the original documents to the appropriate law-enforcement agencies, and perhaps after this book has been published those involved will be brought to justice. (And if you never hear any more about this, perhaps you should question your elected officials.)

Also included in Griffin's papers was an extensive set of "personnel files" that he compiled on many of the town's residents.

As best I can discern, these were patterned after files that he alleges Watermark itself prepared on every single citizen of Push, Nevada. (He seems to have been particularly interested in the "misfits" and those people who, for various reasons, were less influenced by the manipulation techniques.) Clearly these files are filtered through Griffin's own perspective, but they provide a fascinating glimpse into the human dimension of this flawed "Experiment."

OBM

Dear Otis,

I've spent more than a decade now trying to come to terms with how quickly things turned sour in Push. Blinded by the enthusiasm of the unanticipated success in the first stages of the Experiment, Al Prufrock and I foolishly believed that our achievement would allow us to control the next steps as well. While we dreamed about the ways in which our Experiment could benefit the world at large and still enhance corporate profits and status at the same time, the people above us at Watermark took that same inspiration in a far darker direction.

It started in mid-1986, when the company was approached to sell Watermark and The Push Nevada Experiment to a shadow multinational corporation. This proved to be a turning point in the activity in Push, Nevada, and the point at which my life and Al Prufrock's life were put in jeopardy.

Our results from The Push Nevada Experiment were pure gold. We proved the correlation between advertising exposure, the perceptions of people who received advertising messages, and spending. We also determined methods to refine the success of a particular advertisement and produced creative tactics that were more effective.

We left the business of managing the required resources and Watermark's finances up to our corporate liaison, Jamison Jones. His responsibility was to run the Watermark business in a way that ensured that Prufrock and I had the resources we needed and ensured that the parent company got a return on its investment.

As the operational executive, Jamison Jones reviewed all the data generated by the Experiment. He was on site in Push, Nevada as well, to oversee all the operations and account for them. In other words, he knew everything. But since he wasn't involved in the day-to-day execution, he had a broader perspective on the Experiment—so he realized the true value of this captive environment more quickly than any of us, and saw how to take our idealistic suggestions and turn them into personal gain. The Experiment was so well hidden from the outside world that it was easy.

Somehow Jamison Jones reached out to the head of one of those multinational corporations that seems to have a massive network of interests and influences in just about every line of business in the first and third worlds. Quite swiftly, this corporation offered to buy Watermark and The Push Nevada Experiment. We expected that the offer would be refused, but it was not. Apparently, the power and influence of this new suitor persuaded our parent company that they should agree to favorable sale terms quite quickly and quietly.

Jamison Jones consolidated his power under the new owners; instead of being partners, Al Prufrock and I reported directly to him. Al and I still thought that we would retain creative control over the Experiment and Jamison Jones would oversee the business end of things. We thought wrong.

Jones took our ideas for stage two of the Experiment and put a far more insidious slant on them. Gradually, it became clear that the tools and infrastructure of Push were being used to engineer desired behaviors and responses to various stimuli, and the Experiment would delve further and further into every aspect of the subjects' lives.

Additionally, we had done such a good job of hiding Watermark from the outside world that it was perfectly suited to serving as an invisible shadow or

shell company. The new owners realized they could run a variety of off-the-books operations through Watermark, shielded from scrutiny by the media, government, or any agency, public or private. All of a sudden, Watermark became a widely diversified, wildly profitable company, hidden from the public eye. In that hiding place, the company took on a new form and emerged ready to be aggressive and ruthless in its pursuit of power and profit.

Which meant that Al and I quickly found ourselves a small part of a much larger operation—and among the very few people who knew enough about the original structure of Watermark that we were perceived as much more of a liability than an asset.

At about the same time, I began to ask more questions about the tactics used to rid the town of non-cooperating residents when Watermark first arrived in 1984. I found that the methods tended to be fairly benign, except for a handful of cases where they were alarmingly criminal or violent. In hindsight, I have only myself to blame for allowing the accidents that killed a number of citizens in Push to be orchestrated—I had a vague realization that a name I put on a list would appear three weeks later in a column in the Push Times that described a tragic accident. The cause-and-effect relationship between writing a name on a piece of paper and reading about that name's death blew right by me in my fervor for the Experiment. Now I know how the subjects in Stanley Millgram's Obedience to Authority were able to administer punishment with such cruelty— anonymity absolves one of a sense of responsibility.

As it turns out, countless murderous accidents were ordered by Jamison Jones and his associates to meet our objectives of clearing the town of certain citizens. In our new situation, after he had stabbed us in the back and wrested control of Watermark, Prufrock and I began to fear that if we were deemed non-cooperative we might meet with similar fates and

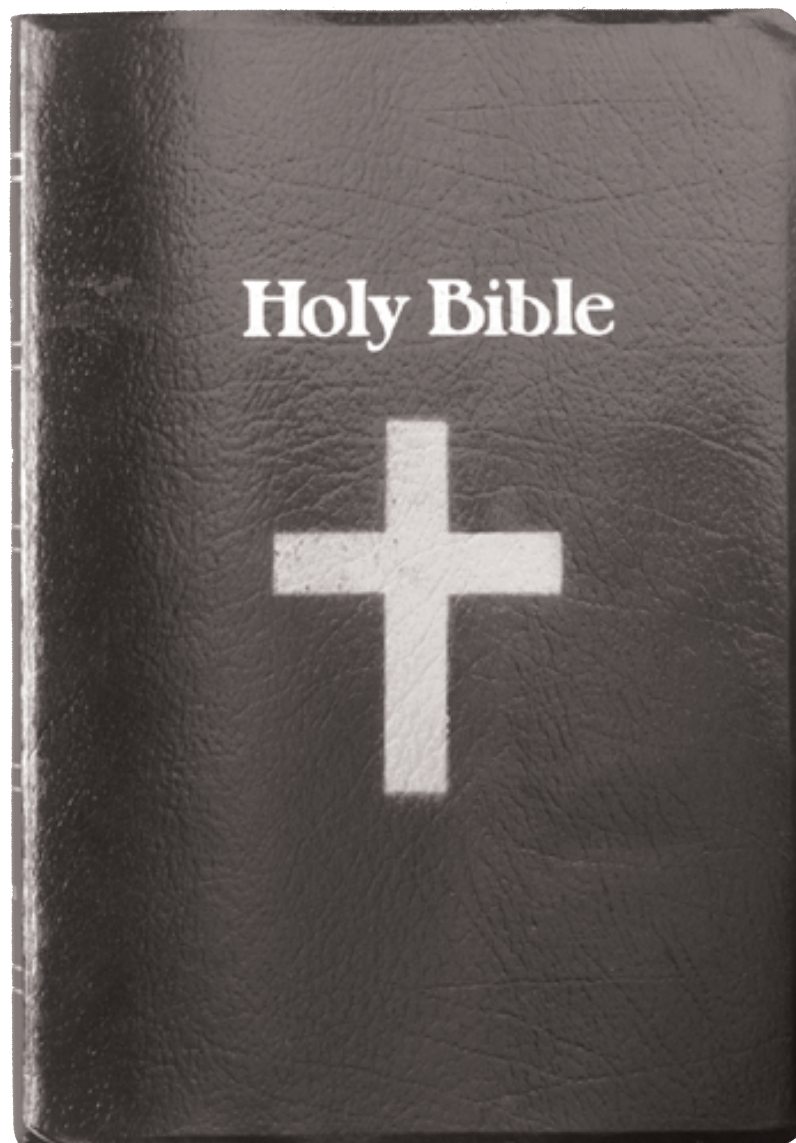
the victims of the rash of "accidents" in 1984. Prufrock and I began a series of secret strategy meetings in the desert each Sunday afternoon. We decided the only way to protect ourselves was to resurrect the idea of a fail-safe system, whereby we could pull the plug on Watermark's activities in the event that the company became a danger to the public. The two of us held enough information to cause this downfall, because we knew the entire history of the company (as its founders) and we had complete access to the central data systems (which by now were so full that to re-create them from scratch would be impossible).

We also had a secret weapon from the early days of The Experiment, a kill-code that we had created back in 1983. We unearthed this code so that we would have the option to use it against Watermark. The trick would be that both of us would need to agree to use the codes together, so that one of us could not act alone and act foolishly. I hid my half of the code in the punched-out pages of a Bible; the poetry of it was too much for me to resist, and I figured my Watermark colleagues would never show much interest in the Good Book. But I have no idea what guise Al employed in hiding his code. I suppose at the height of the Cold War and in the age of nuclear weapons, such a "two key" approach seemed a clever safeguard to us. Who knew that it would cause so much difficulty down the road?

Over the course of our meetings, Prufrock became increasingly worried about the safety of his wife, Jeanine, and their 12 year-old boy, Jim. Once we recognized the fingerprint of Watermark on the "accident" that claimed the family of Shadrack, the onetime town controller, Al saw the depth of his predicament in particular. He knew that if he tried to leave Watermark he would have to run, and he would not stand a chance with a wife and child in tow. He also knew that if he stayed, and things worsened, he would not be able to protect his family as easily as

if he were alone. His options were limited at best.

Prufrock and I also decided that it would be wise to keep a presence inside Watermark, even though we might not support their new activities. The ability to monitor the company from the top would inform us of the threat they might pose in the future. It seemed irresponsible to abandon what we had created just when we realized it was potentially dangerous. If the situation became dire, we would be able to



the commandment of his lips: I have esteemed the words of his mouth more than my necessary food.

John 4:31-3

13 But he is in one mind, and who can turn him? and what his soul desireth, even that he doeth.

14 For he performeth the thing that is appointed for me: and any such things are with him.

15 Therefore am I troubled at his presence: when I consider, I am afraid of him.

16 For God maketh my heart soft, and the Almighty troubleth me:

17 Because I was not cut off before the darkness, neither hath he covered the darkness from my face.

CHAPTER 24

WHY, seeing times are not hidden from the Almighty, do they that know him not see his days?

2 Some remove the landmarks; they violently take away flocks, and feed thereof.

Deut 27:17

3 They drive away the ass of the fatherless, they take the widow's ox for a pledge.

Job 22:9

4 They turn the needy out of the way: the poor of the earth hide themselves together.

Prov 14:31

5 Behold, as wild asses in the desert, go they forth to their work; rising betimes for a prey: the wilderness yieldeth food for them and for their children.

Ps 104:23

6 They reap every one his corn in the field: and they gather the vintage of the wicked.

7 They cause the naked to lodge

without clothing, that they have covering in the cold.

Job 22:26

8 They are wet with the shower of the mountains, and embrace the rock for want of a shelter.

9 They pluck the fatherless from the breast, and take a pledge of the poor.

Job 22:7

10 They cause him to go naked without clothing, and they take away the sheaf from the hungry.

11 Which make oil within their walls, and tread their winepresses and suffer thirst.

12 Men groan from out of the city, and the soul of the wounded crieth out: yet God layeth not folly to them.

Job 1:21-2

13 They are of those that rebel against the light; they know not the ways thereof, nor abide in the paths thereof.

14 The murderer rising with the light killeth the poor and needy, and in the night is as a thief.

15 The eye also of the adulterer waiteth for the twilight, saying, No eye shall see me: and disguiseth his face.

Ps 119

16 In the dark they dig through houses, which they had marked for themselves in the daytime: they know not the light.

Job 16:13

17 For the morning is to them even as the shadow of death: if one know them, they are in the terror of the shadow of death.

18 He is swift as the waters; their portion is cursed in the earth: he beholdeth not the way of the vineyards.

19 Drought and heat consume the

snow waters: so doth the grave those which have sinned.

20 The womb shall forget him; the worm shall feed sweetly on him: he shall be no more remembered: and wickedness shall be broken as a tree.

Job 21:25-26

21 He evil entreateth the barren that beareth not: and doeth not good to the widow.

Job 22:9

22 He draweth also the mighty with his power: he riseth up, and no man is sure of life.

23 Though it be given him to be in safety, whereon he resteth; yet his eyes are upon their ways.

Prov 15:3

24 They are exalted for a little while, but are gone and brought low: they are taken out of the way as all other, and cut off as the tops of the ears of corn.

Ps 37:3-10

25 And if it be not so now, who will make me a liar, and make my speech nothing worth?

Job 27:4

CHAPTER 25

THEN answered Bildad the Shu'hite, and said,

2 Dominion and fear are with him, he maketh peace in his high places.

Job 42:2

3 Is there any number of his armies? and upon whom doth not his light arise?

Job 16:13

4 How then can man be justified with God? or how can he be clean that is born of a woman?

Job 34:4

5 Behold even to the moon, and it shineth not; yea, the stars are not pure in his sight.

Job 15:15

6 How much less man, that is a worm? and the son of man, which is a worm?

Job 17:14-16

CHAPTER 26

BUT Job answered and said, 2 How hast thou helped him that is without power? how savest thou the arm that hath no strength?

3 How hast thou counselled him that hath no wisdom? and how hast thou plentifully declared the thing as it is?

4 To whom hast thou uttered words? and whose spirit came from thee?

5 Dead things are formed from under the waters, and the inhabitants thereof.

Ps 88

6 Hell is naked before him, and destruction hath no covering.

7 He stretcheth out the north over the empty place, and hangeth the earth upon nothing.

Gen 1:1

8 He bindeth up the waters in his thick clouds; and the cloud is not rent under them.

Prov 30:4

9 He holdeth back the face of his throne, and spreadeth his cloud upon it.

Job 22:14

10 He hath compassed the waters with bounds, until the day and night come to an end.

Prov 8:27

11 The pillars of heaven tremble, and are astonished at his reproof.

12 He divideth the sea with his power, and by his understanding he smiteth through the proud.

13 By his spirit he hath garnished the heavens; his hand hath formed the crooked serpent.

14 Lo, these are parts of his ways; but how little a portion is heard of him? but the thunder of his power who can understand?

Job 38:4

PERSONNEL FILE

take action.

I still remember my words to Al that last time I saw him: "You have to die, Prufrock." Faking Al's death would be the only escape (and at this point, we were experts on faking things!). He could slip away from the Experiment and Watermark and take on a new identity. It would mean giving up his family, but it would ensure that Jeanine and Jim would be safe. Al agreed to this plan, as long as I agreed to my half of it—I would be required to remain in Push as a mole inside the Watermark operation.

After the last meeting I never saw Al Prufrock again. I read about his death in the Carson City papers and saw the photographs of his family. I couldn't affect his situation any longer, as I was now alone inside Watermark.

I used the original binary language Al had written to embed my half of our weapon against Watermark in a Bible, in the form of punched out patterns in its pages. I kept it with me at all times. I don't know what form Al's code has taken on, or if it will be able to reunite with mine to serve its purpose.

Name: Walter Shadrack

Relatives: None. Formerly married to Barbara Shadrack, with two children, Timothy and Thomas. All dead.

Occupation: Currently, Shadrack creates desert art out of garbage (primarily cans and bottles). Shadrack's desert art is usually created and exchanged for \$5 to \$20, and he has found enough people in Push who want to support him that he has some regular customers. Shadrack was formerly the Comptroller of Push. He lost this position in 1984, after holding it for eight years.

Background: Shadrack lives at one step above a vagrant, an unusual status for a resident of Push, Nevada, since everyone has a supplemental income because of the Versailles Casino's winning payouts. In truth, those who buy Shadrack's desert art are simply cloaking their charity in the guise of patronage. His works of desert art are usually quite small, the exception being a recent piece that he had to install in Martha's Boarding House for Jim Prufrock.

In early 1984, Shadrack opposed the sale of the Versailles Casino to Watermark and took Sloman to the city council over the issue. Shadrack lost the fight. Watermark then tried to get him into the fold, but he resisted. In the death spree of 1984, Shadrack lost his family. His wife reportedly committed suicide after accidentally killing their children. The true story of how Shadrack lost his family is more tragic.

After his opposition to the sale of the Versailles Casino to Watermark and his public outrage, Shadrack became Watermark enemy Number 1. The company tried to keep Shadrack inside Push as a manager, but his knowledge of Watermark's relationship with

Sloman and his distaste for Sloman himself caused Shadrack to reject the offer to be an upper manager in The Push Nevada Experiment.

What transpired next was unknown to Al Prufrock and me at the time. Watermark officials were instructed to keep as many of the people in the town for the purposes of the Experiment, to recruit new people to balance the population, and to get rid of anyone who would be a potential disruption. (Prufrock and I had a much more benign notion of ridding ourselves of a person, through an agreed set of adverse stimuli.)

Watermark operatives sabotaged the gas lines into the Shadrack home, and set a new valve on the stove that would allow them to control the release of gas remotely. When Shadrack was on the way home from the meeting where he rejected Watermark's very profitable employment offer, his house exploded with his family inside of it. Watermark had ordered the leak to begin when the meeting started and had let it continue as long as Shadrack showed no sign that he would come around to their point of view.

It is a shame that Shadrack would not participate in the management of The Push Nevada Experiment, because things may have worked out differently with a more honest man at the reins of Push, one who would have kept the likes of Sloman and Bodnick more in check.

Known Associates: Shadrack frequents Sloman's Slo-Dance Bar and associates with a number of the girls there, often trading them a piece of desert art for a dance. He also associates with Job, whose repair shop Shadrack passes on his way to town.

In the past, Shadrack knew everyone in Push. He also understood the plan to control the town originally formulated by Al and myself. He knows the connections among the people inside Watermark.

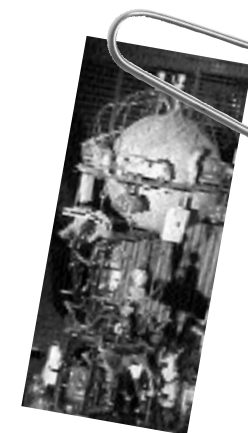


Secrets and Suspicions: I think Shadrack knows more than he says and that he could be an ally to a movement against Watermark. His constitution is not up to this at the current time, but if any kind of legal proceeding ever occurs at a future date, the prosecution should locate him.

Whether he knows it or not, Shadrack inspired me to escape Watermark's wrath by appearing harmless to them. Shadrack was the first man in town to stand up to the Watermark takeover, and very few imitated his example. Shadrack underwent a psychological breakdown after the death of his wife and children, and became disassociated from reality. Because of his slip into dementia, and the desire to contain all the residents of Push within the town, Watermark has let Shadrack remain unharmed since 1984. What Shadrack knows is stored deep within his own mind, and who knows when it may ever come loose? But if it does, it certainly could fuel a fire against Watermark.

Recent Surveillance: Shadrack has had possession of the Bible code and has kept it from Watermark. This leads me to believe that he knows what is going on. He also seems to recognize Jim Prufrock, which makes sense, as Shadrack was familiar with Jim's father through the Versailles acquisition in 1984. I think that seeing Jim has evoked the memories of 1984, and restored Shadrack to a higher level of mental activity.

Shadrack spent many hours completing a piece of desert art for Jim. It is huge and needed to be installed in Jim's room in Martha's Boarding House. On closer inspection, the objet d'art symbolizes the web of control that Watermark has spun around Push. This reinforces my opinion that Shadrack still has some cards to play against Watermark.



PERSONNEL FILE

Name: Christian Van Gestel

Relatives: Wife Christine, son William, daughter Susan, all dead.

Occupation: Van Gestel moved his family to Push in 1973 when he became the county prosecutor. He was a graduate of Emory Law, and had graduated Law Review and in the top 5% percent of his class. He was fairly young for the position and took a government loan reimbursement package to serve some time in the public sector.

Background: Van Gestel had his hands full with the Push, Nevada of the 1970s, and one of his chief enemies in the town was D'Wight Sloman. Van Gestel never got Sloman on any charge, but he tried constantly.

We had targeted Van Gestel as a potential problem from our early studies of Push. He would not take the ownership structure of all the key businesses in town at face value. He was certain to investigate, especially because Sloman was involved.

Van Gestel did indeed ask questions when Watermark started buying businesses in town. We found out that he even started inquiring about the corporation through government agencies, and we had to quell one investigation by the Justice Department into the status of our defective trust that had been set up by Watermark to ensure the financial security of the project in Push.

Prufrock and I didn't know how Watermark got rid of the Van Gestel until after I gained access to the coroner's reports of 1986. The Watermark officials tormented Van Gestel's wife. They put her children in contact with all manner of viruses to make sure that she

would be exhausted from caring for them. They made her hear sounds at night when Van Gestel wasn't home. They called her repeatedly with violent or disgusting messages. They used subliminal suggestions on her to make her go slightly insane. Finally, they discovered that she took prescription drugs, and they aggressively altered her prescription to make her volatile.

What is unknown is whether the deaths of her children were accidental or murderous. The children appeared as if they had been stabbed with Christine Van Gestel's knitting needles, and she probably found them dead downstairs in the kitchen and the living room. She certainly killed herself, which made it easy for the Watermark officials to pin the blame for the murders of the children and Christian on her and to assert that she then committed suicide because she was so distressed.

Coroner's Report



Cause of Death:

Christian Van Gestel: Head trauma from baseball bat
Christine Van Gestel: Overdose of prescription medication
William Van Gestel: Stabbed in eye with knitting needle
Susan Van Gestel: Stabbed in throat with knitting needle

Christian Van Gestel found lying at the base of stairs. Suffered broken arm and neck while falling down the stairs. Bruises covering thigh, ribcage, and face on right side. Fractured skull on right side. Appears that he received a blow to the right side of the head, spun 270 degrees, and toppled down the stairs, bruising his side and breaking his arm and neck. Blow came from below, appears to be struck by a shorter individual.

Christine Van Gestel found in bathtub in the upstairs bathroom. Baseball bat lying in the middle of the floor (taken from glass case in upstairs hall, signed by Hank Aaron). Stomach pump revealed that she had taken 24 tablets of a prescription painkiller. After this, she appeared to have walked across the room, turned on the water in the tub, stripped off her clothes, and climbed in. It is unclear if the drugs or the drowning killed her, as asphyxiation would have been a likely result in either case.

William Van Gestel: Killed by a knitting needle in the eye. The boy appears to have been running down the hall between the kitchen and the living room, holding a 12-inch needle. He tripped and fell, and the needle pierced his left eye. It is unclear whether he was running from the site of his sister's death in the kitchen or if he died before that, as he took longer than the others to die (52 minutes).

Susan Van Gestel: Killed by a knitting needle in the throat. Appears to have fallen accidentally while running around the furniture in the living room and to have landed on the needle, which was sitting in the middle of the floor in a basket. Needle penetrated neck on the right side, and the child quickly bled to death.

Christine was allergic to the very brand of pain killer that she ingested.

PERSONNEL FILE

Name: Eunice Blackwell

Occupation: Eunice owns and runs Blackwell's Mortuary as well as serving as the Push, Nevada coroner. Eunice has been the town coroner since 1968, and bought the mortuary business when the previous owner left town in 1976. The coroner's office has been subsidized by town grants since 1984. Eunice only works a total of about 25 days each year and doesn't have a partner, because the population of 10,623 doesn't have a death rate that merits more than one coroner.

Background: Her medical skill is highly exact, but her mental stability is in question. Eunice likes to talk to her subjects in the mortuary as if they are still alive. This can provide a secret observer with a lot of information about the causes of death and Eunice's suspicions or lack thereof.

Secrets: Eunice knows the real cause of death for just about every person who comes through the mortuary, but she has been affected to such a degree by the media conditioning that she cannot bring herself to point the finger at certain community members in her written reports, even if they have clear involvement in the deaths. This may be why she has taken to talking to the corpses in the morgue. She has sublimated feelings of guilt for her role in the cover-ups of murders posing as accidents.

Known Associates: Eunice is friends with Quentin Xavier, a local folklore and mythology professor who also runs a store that sells all manner of eclectic items. The two of them spend time together in Quentin's shop, because Eunice is usually on call, but not actually working.



Griffin also forwarded to me extensive journal entries, running all the way from 1986 (after his partner and colleague Al Prufrock faked his own death), up to the present. The early entries are by far the most extensive, and were accompanied by lengthy overviews that read more like a conventional manuscript. Apparently over time Griffin's access to the massive bank of surveillance over what was happening in Push become more limited, as did his knowledge of the wider web of operations of Watermark. The most recent entries are shorter still, reflecting his declining health, I would imagine. There is a rawness to these journal entries, which I have edited only lightly in making selections for inclusion.

OBM

Journal of Observations Inside Watermark

1986 to 1996

I suspect that Watermark constructed a massive project based on The Push Nevada Experiment, and planned to launch this project on a 15-year schedule. I could not learn anything directly about the plan, as it was kept from me over the 10 years I remained active inside Watermark. I knew that Jamison Jones had lost trust in me, because I had voiced concerns over the new directions toward which he pointed the company. Al's disappearance had detracted from my power base in Watermark, and there remained no question at all who was in charge in Push. Clearly, Jones called the shots.

What I did learn about the Watermark activity related to Push is alarming enough. The research changed so that the goal was to CAUSE behavior rather than OBSERVE it, and to cause a variety of behavior far beyond the simple economic responses that advertising is traditionally meant to influence. This split could have been inspired by the success of our early work, and even our suggestions for expanding it. It also fit right into the service of the interests of Watermark's new parent company. Watermark became the shadow corporation that housed all the projects the parent company didn't want to talk about and that were to be kept secret, but that gave their legitimate operations a competitive edge in the marketplace.

In addition to the engineering of results in Push, the people who ran the Experiment day to day began to display not just a normal clinical detachment, but a true distaste for the subjects. They watched every petty moment of their public and private lives and began to hold the citizens of Push in contempt. They began, consciously or subconsciously, to dictate a moral code that the population would follow. The elimination of Sloman's whorehouse seemed reasonable enough at the outset, but eventually they regulated all aspects of people's sexual behavior. Married people would be in monogamous relationships and would have regular relations at an appointed hour. Unmar-

ried people would abstain. In order to spare themselves having to watch the men of the town fail in their attempts to woo women, analysts manipulated each person's ideal of attractiveness to steer people toward relationships that would actually happen.

Then there were things that were just plain odd; one controller, a staunch Reagan supporter, decided the town needed to show more respect for the flag. So he rigged a device to blow compressed air through the flagpoles outside of public places like the Post Office, to make the flag always fly briskly in the breeze.

To make their observation of behavior easier and more efficient, the internal time clocks of the citizens were programmed. People went to work at the same time and went to bed at the same time. They shopped at the same time. The programming on television stirred the desire for sexual intimacy at 9:15 each evening. All of this made the capture of data more efficient, and made the population easy to control.

By 1990, I was nearly out of the inner circle of Watermark. Nobody had mentioned Al Prufrock for years, and the Experiment was proceeding as planned.

PERSONNEL FILE

Name: Job

Relatives: Brother, Isaac, 39, lives in Push. Mother, Ida, lives in Weston, Florida.

Occupation: Mechanic. Job owns and operates Job's Auto Repair, an independent auto body shop on the edge of Push. Job has an amazing skill with all things mechanical, and yet his body shop is mainly full of run-down and decrepit vehicles. His suppliers indicate that Job orders far fewer parts than the average mechanic, as he fixes more parts than he replaces. Job lives simply and doesn't supplement his income from any source other than the auto shop.

Background: Job grew up in Push, but his parents divorced in 1984, when he was quite young. His mother remarried and moved to Florida in 1985. Job learned the art of auto maintenance in his teen years at Push High. His hobby not only carried over into his professional life, but it also spawned more activities, such as a love of motocross.

Job has never been known to tell a lie to anyone in Push. His incorruptible nature is well-known to all who have met him.

Known Associates: Job associates with anyone and everyone in town, but confides in nobody. Job has had a previous relationship with Mary Sloman, but that ended when he sensed something amiss in her attitudes toward other men in the town. Job never learned about Mary's relationship with her father, because he never asked her about it.



Job also was well acquainted with Caleb Moore, who spent time parked in front of the auto repair shop, looking as decrepit as some of the cars on the dusty lot. Moore liked the heat on the lot, like a cold-blooded lizard, and he appreciated the straight talk (and often the lack of talk) that came from Job himself.

Job is interesting to Watermark because he defies archetype—he was an honest man in a profession with a reputation for dishonesty. Watermark learned of his disposition after observing Job for years. He confounded their theories about his nature. It even became apparent that Job suspected that he was being watched and didn't much care about the invasion of his privacy. Watermark operatives confirmed this to be true, and learned that Job ignored the surveillance because he had nothing to hide. Since then, Job has been left to himself by Watermark.

Secrets: Job's secrets are the town's secrets. Because of his honest nature, people confide in Job. When people wait around his shop, they tend to ramble on, and Job listens. This makes Job a good source of information, if one asks the correct questions.

As far as personal secrets, most concern his youth and family. Job's mother left Push shortly after the purchase of the Versailles in 1984. She was a blackjack dealer at the tables and had a real talent for numbers. She quickly realized something was amiss with the tables and payouts at the casino and began to ask questions. In

order to inspire her to leave town, Watermark officials sparked her divorce from Job's father, James, by leaving false evidence of an affair in her car



and her personal items. James ignored the scraps of paper and the hotel room keys for about a month, and then confronted Ida in the fall of 1984. After several accusations, she had had enough, and divorced him quickly.

Unfortunately, Ida could not find a new place to live that would fit her budget, thanks to local market control by Watermark, and she had to move in with family friends, the Kahane's. Her new residence turned into a love nest when Grey Emory, the nephew of Stacey Kahane, swept her off her feet when he came to visit (he won the trip in a contest sponsored by a subsidiary of ours, but his hotel room fell through and he had to stay with the Kahane family unexpectedly). Ida moved with Grey to his home in Weston, Florida two weeks after he visited and they were married in April of 1985.

The effect of this saga on young Job may have inspired his reluctance to distort any fact at any time. Though too young to understand the cause of the rift between his parents, he certainly understood the family history about it that he heard while in high school. Job has never visited his mother in Weston; he has never even left Push.

Recent Surveillance: Job seems aware that Watermark is up to something. Job appears to fear the Watermark operatives, not for his own part, but on behalf of his fellow residents. Job has been more and more quiet when I observe him, and only speaks when spoken to (a customary habit, but not as extreme as it is right now).

Job has always seemed to be a likely ally in the resistance against Watermark's plans, if one could ever get to him. His grounding in truthfulness is anathema to Watermark's secrecy, and if ever forced to choose, I believe he would fall in with a group that lined up against Watermark.

PERSONNEL FILE

Name: BRB

Relatives: Delilah Simmons, wife (maiden name).

Occupation: BRB is a trucker. He transports a range of cargo for Watermark in and out of the town, all of it material that subsidizes and fuels the lives of the happy citizens of Push. BRB's key route is from the bank, to Watermark Headquarters, to the Versailles Casino. On this route, he picks up all the money that has been used to buy goods and services by the residents of Push, and brings it back to the Watermark analysis lab where the exact path of every unit of currency is tracked through a code on each bill, DNA scanning, and video surveillance cross referencing. Each time BRB drops off a load of bills at Watermark, he also picks up a new load of bills that has been cleaned (using processes similar to those used on the US mail). These bills are distributed to the Versailles Casino and the bank ATM network, where they pass back into the hands of the public. Every time BRB crosses in and out of Push, he stops at Highwater Trucking.

Background: BRB has been in Push since the 1960s. He used to work for the Versailles Casino, shipping equipment to and from the casino and its suppliers and vendors. He brought in new shipments of slot machines and sent broken machines to the repair shop. He brought in liquor to the casino from out of state so Sloman could avoid taxes.

BRB's lack of curiosity proved his main virtue as a trucker. In the pre-Watermark era of Push, BRB never questioned the who, what, where, why, or how of the cargo he carried for Sloman. He just picked up and dropped off.



Sloman vouched for BRB as the man to handle the most sensitive Watermark cargo after the sale of the Versailles to Watermark in 1984. This decision was a no-brainer, as BRB already existed as part of the daily routine of Push. As early as fall 1984, BRB was ferrying the currency back and forth among Watermark, the bank, and the casino. He has never missed a shipment, and he has never been late. BRB asks no questions and he tells no tales. He is as steady and silent as the passing of time.

Known Associates: BRB has been a business associate of D'Wight Sloman for the past 35 years. They still maintain a relationship as Sloman runs the day-to-day operations for several Watermark operations in Push that employ BRB.

Frank Gund, a dentist in Push, and BRB are neighbors. The two men enjoy sitting in their backyards discussing NASCAR over beers on Sunday afternoons.

Dirty Secrets: BRB's main secret concerns his marriage to Delilah, which is a tale wrapped up in his past association with Sloman, his hard and discreet work for Watermark, and the dark side of Watermark's manipulations of the population of Push.

In 1997, BRB became enamored of a Sloman's girl named Delilah Simmons. Of course, Delilah liked BRB because of his steady nature and his lack of questioning. But she didn't realize that he truly had a crush on her, and she certainly bore no special feelings for BRB.

For the first time in over 35 years, BRB came to Sloman with a special request, which I observed from my seat in the control room in the North Wing of Martha's Boarding House. BRB told Sloman that he had never asked for anything, and thought that it would be fair to make one request in exchange for his years of service. (BRB had noticed that Sloman had a way of making things happen. BRB didn't know how this actually worked, but he said that he thought it might have something to do with the well-dressed fellows who came and went from the office complex on his route.) BRB asked Sloman to see if he could do anything to get Delilah to fall in love with him and become his wife. He didn't want to sleep with her just once or to pay for her to be his girlfriend. He wanted a wife, and he wanted Delilah.

Shortly after—as in about four minutes later—Sloman received a phone call from Watermark. They had observed the request from BRB and had confidence that they could make it happen. Sloman went outside after BRB, whom he found climbing aboard his truck, and told him that Delilah would probably be interested in his affections within two months.

Watermark had by this time perfected a technique that could engineer attraction between people. Ostensibly, the technique was created to match people with others who would make them happy, thus improving the perceived happiness of every individual in the town.

It worked like this: If a man could learn from his environment that one set of appearances and traits constitutes a standard of beauty (e.g., blonde hair, large breasts, narrow waist), he could perceive any other array of features and traits as attractive. The trick was to

make these traits appear to be desired by other men who the first man admired or wanted to emulate. The result was that if a man was in a bar trying to meet women, he wouldn't focus on the same woman everyone else wanted—he would have a different standard of beauty and would be attracted to a very different woman than the man sitting next to him in the bar. And, it would be more likely that that woman would be interested in him. This made it so the single people in Push had nearly 100% success when they asked members of the opposite sex (or in some cases of the same-sex) for dates. The theory worked on men and women equally and found its way into use fairly quickly in Push.

Watermark claimed that this improved way of creating romantic matches made people happier and therefore better off. They patted themselves on the back and felt like they were doing the people of Push a favor, and that every person should be so lucky. But the truth is that Watermark created this technique to make crowd control easier in Push, because a content population makes little trouble.

Watermark made a specially refined program to target Delilah, steering her toward all kinds of media that reinforced family values, homemaking, and marriage, and bombarding her with media that made men of BRB's physical appearance and manner seem the pinnacle of male attractiveness. Over the course of two months, they produced in Delilah a completely voluntary reaction to BRB that made her tell herself that BRB was an attractive man, and that she should want to be married, preferably to him, and that she should aspire to the role of a homemaker on par with Betty Crocker or Martha Stewart.

BRB and Delilah were married in May of 1997, and she now stays at home and cooks and cleans while he is on the road. BRB is grateful that Watermark's psychological tampering didn't reduce Delilah's wild nature—it just focused it on him. Since their wedding, she eagerly complies with anything and everything that BRB wants her to do.

PERSONNEL FILE

BRB is the only man in Push who has actually requested a match engineered by Watermark. All the others had their matches arranged. The algorithm used by Watermark has been licensed to many dating services for use on the radio and over the Internet, and has proven a cash cow for the company.

Recent Surveillance: BRB's route from the Versailles to the bank to Watermark and back to the Versailles made it virtually certain that he would be the one to find Jim Prufrock on the way to Push. BRB acts as a sort of de facto border patrol for Push, but he doesn't know enough about the purpose of his cargo to determine anything out of the ordinary in Jim's arrival in Push.

BRB has also been involved in clearing out the results from some of Watermark's efforts to empty out the population of Push. His route has been increased beyond his normal pickups to deliver damaged cars and other signs of petty crime into Push.

BRB has not been agitated by Delilah's recent disruptive behavior. He seems to want to maintain the status quo with her and will forgive any minor transgression.

All of this leads me to conclude that BRB will experience a major trauma to his insulated life in Push should Watermark change its operations regarding the town.

Name: Delilah Simmons

Relatives: BRB, husband. Chastity Simmons, mother, of Push, Nevada. Father, Steve Simmons, of Long Beach, California.

Occupation: Delilah is a homemaker. Formerly she was a slow-dancer at Sloman's, but she left that occupation shortly before her wedding to BRB the trucker in 1997.

Background: A wild woman as a result of abuse inflicted on her since she was young, Delilah equates her self worth with her sexuality and therefore enjoys a variety of sexual flavors and opportunities, to say the least. She used to take seminude self-portraits that she would give to potential lovers.

In 1997, while working at Sloman's, Delilah caught the attention of BRB, the trucker. He decided that he wanted to marry her and requested this reward from Watermark through D'Wight Sloman. Watermark eagerly complied with this request, because it presented a new hurdle for some of their current experiments (Delilah's personality had a more extreme baseline than most of their subjects in Push). Watermark targeted Delilah and caused her to desire marriage to BRB.

Over time, Delilah's wild side seems to have diminished after her marriage to BRB in 1997. As a homemaker Delilah lacks an outlet for her sublimated anger and shame resulting from sexual abuse, which has caused her insurmountable distress in recent weeks.

Known Associates: Delilah keeps a range of company in Push. Some of her companions are from her childhood, and others reflect her feelings of inadequacy as a homemaker.

Mary Sloman and Delilah have been close since they were girls. This has led the two to share an unfortunate fate at the hands of the Mr. Sloman—they both have been the subjects of his perversions since their teen years. Sloman keeps a vault of pornographic pictures and other paraphernalia in his office, much of which features Delilah and Mary being violated. Delilah has a great deal of sexual confusion due to Sloman's abuse, and has a great deal of loyalty to Mary, her sister in this secret nightmare.

Shannon Cale, the local caterer, and Delilah have lunch every Thursday. Delilah is trying to pick up cooking tips from Shannon, and it seems that Shannon is trying to emulate Delilah's sexuality. Neither has had much success. Delilah recently tried to make Shannon's recipe for key lime pie, but forgot to separate the egg whites and yolks, which resulted in an inedible mess. Shannon has yet to realize that she might not look as good in a man's "wife-beater" undershirt as Delilah, as she is 44 years old and slightly overweight.

Francette Kirschner, the local yoga instructor, and Delilah work out together at the gym on Friday's. Francette is a closet lesbian and seems to enjoy watching Delilah throughout the workout. She has confided her sexual preference to Delilah, who responded by asking to hear stories about Francette's romantic encounters. Delilah appears to enjoy the attention from Francette, but as of yet has not acted on any attraction that may exist.

Frank Lyman is a photographer in Push, who does mostly weddings. Delilah met Frank when he shot photos of her and BRB's wedding. Delilah has been asking Frank about photographic techniques lately, but they have yet to set up a photo shoot.

Dirty Secrets: For the most part, the marriage between BRB and Delilah has been a success. However, Delilah is an incompetent homemaker, regardless of the support that Watermark's campaign gives to her. She also shows glimpses of her wild side from time to

time, but these are mainly harmless as they are channeled toward BRB (which quite pleases him).

Recent Surveillance: Delilah's conditioning through the Experiment seems to be breaking down. She has been distressed for reasons she can't pinpoint, to the point of tears, for at least the last three months. BRB pretends to take no notice and seems content as long as Delilah satisfies his physical needs several times a week and doesn't make a public spectacle of herself.

Delilah has become distraught with her failures as a homemaker, and the ability to reinforce this behavior must be nearing an end, as no subtle messaging could possibly overcome a full-scale breakdown on her part. Watermark must be observing this as well, and I can't imagine how both parties will deal with it.

Delilah also shows signs of attraction for both her friend Francette as well as for Jim Prufrock.

Delilah's impending psychological breakdown may provide an opportunity that can be exploited to damage Watermark. She is a link to their monetary supply channel through BRB.



Engineering Responses

The Push Nevada Experiment now aimed to produce results that could instruct in the manipulation of human activity. Through media and environmental stimuli, Watermark became able to engineer a desired response—a consumer could be made many times more likely to buy one product over another, especially if the only discernable difference in the set of choices was brand name. Not only could people's buying habits be altered, but the media could also control their preferences for just about anything.

The control went well beyond preferences. Over time, media-delivered messages could control the thoughts and opinions of people in Push on most any topic. By setting a schedule for television, Watermark could control when people ate meals, and when they went to sleep. By controlling when businesses opened and the patterns of traffic in the town, Watermark could control when people went to work, and therefore when they woke up each day. By showing anything as desired by someone a person wanted to be like or compete with, Watermark could make that thing desired.

In the world of companies owned by Watermark this ability proved very useful. Evidence for this can be found in documents I copied while still a mole inside the operations.



Mary 24, 1992

Dear Mr. Jones,

With the advent of many new opportunities in the Eastern bloc, we would like to employ some of the new brand-establishment tactics that we previewed at last summer's advertising summit. We think that we can assert that our fruit is fresher than that of our competitor through advertising. But we would like to broadcast messages to the public that make them desire our product more highly. We have contacts in the media distribution centers in Prague, Warsaw, and Moscow, and these people will gladly assist us in getting our message across.

This tactic is of the utmost importance, as it has been proven that the company that establishes a market share lead of more than 10 percentage points in a commodity business in Russia, Poland, and Czechoslovakia will be ten times as difficult to unseat than a company that leads the market by less than 10 points.

Please send the manuals for standard operating procedures to us at your earliest convenience.

Sincerely,

J.D. Baird

PERSONNEL FILE

Name: Gwen Roth

Occupation: Producer of “Good Morning, Push”

Sunny DuPree is host of local TV show “Good Morning, Push”. While Sunny herself isn’t very interesting, the puppet master behind her rise to local stardom, Gwen Roth, can show us a great deal about the workings of Watermark.

After the successful takeover of media in Push, and the success The Push Nevada Experiment enjoyed in proving advertising can direct purchase choices (back in 1985), Watermark got more interested in using creative content to deliver messages to the town. We already controlled the Push Times and the television network, and we determined the content broadcast to locals. “Good Morning, Push” was one of Watermark’s first forays into full-scale programming. Yes, the Experiment had manipulated programming and had delivered information through local newscasts, but never had a whole show been created from scratch.

Gwen worked on one of the major morning shows out of New York City, until Jamison Jones recruited her to start “Good Morning Push.” This happened shortly after Jones instigated the buyout of the Experiment and Watermark.

Gwen Roth arranged all the segments of “Good Morning, Push” to feed propaganda from Watermark and its various client companies into the Push. Gwen espoused the theory of the 100th monkey, holding the opinion that new behaviors pass from one person to another when they are newly adopted, but that after a critical point is reached everyone in that social group will adopt the behavior nearly immediately. And after one social group adopts the

behavior, another group will also adopt the behavior—even if it has not observed the behavior among the first group. The theory asserts that after an idea is established and prevalent, it becomes almost airborne, or psychically transmitted. Ken Keyes put forth the case for this phenomenon in his book “The 100th Monkey.”

The residents of Push were Gwen’s monkeys. And “Good Morning, Push” was her tactic to get to the point where behavior became airborne as quickly as possible.

Gwen had a motto: “If it is on the TV, then it must be true.” She felt this applied to the closing and opening of the American mind to a range of subjects. And she lived the philosophy until her death from emphysema in 2001.

Sunny DuPree became the happy face of “Good Morning, Push,” a program where insipid banter cloaked propaganda that dictated a strict moral code for the citizens of Push, as well as the products they should buy.

Ken Keyes, Jr. wrote about a phenomenon in his book *The Hundredth Monkey* that details how a behavior can be created, taught on a one-to-one basis, become part of standard behavior in a group, and then (fantastic as it might seem) become part of the collective consciousness. His story concerns the Japanese monkey, *Macaca fuscata*, observed in 1952, on the island of Koshima. The monkeys ate sweet potatoes that the scientists dropped in the sand—a conflict for the monkeys because they liked the sweet potatoes but disliked the sand. As recounted by Keyes:

“An 18-month-old female named Imo found she could solve the problem by washing the potatoes in a nearby stream. She taught this trick to her mother. Her playmates also learned this new way and they taught their mothers too.”

After the behavior was taught on an individual basis, the group learned the behavior, with the young monkeys teaching the younger and older monkeys. This continued until a critical mass of the monkeys were washing potatoes—Keyes suggests that the 100th monkey to learn the behavior was the moment of critical

mass—and at that point the behavior spread to the entire group. Once enough monkeys adopted the behavior, all the monkeys realized that it was the way to do things.

The really astounding thing happened after that, as observed by the scientists:

“A most surprising thing observed by these scientists was that the habit of washing sweet potatoes then jumped over the sea . . . Colonies of monkeys on other islands and the mainland troop of monkeys at Takasakiyama began washing their sweet potatoes. Thus, when a certain critical number achieves an awareness, this new awareness may be communicated from mind to mind.”

Keyes’s theory can be paraphrased to say that when a limited group possesses a new idea, it remains their property—only they will know the idea and only they can benefit from it. But when the idea reaches a certain point, it becomes part of the collective consciousness. He named the theory after the proposed 100th monkey that put the potato washing over the edge on the island of Koshima, and brought it over the sea to the consciousness of the monkeys at Takasakiyama.

Prediction as Sport

It became a game for the teams at Watermark to see how closely they could predict the route of a certain dollar and where it would end up in Push. They would track a single unit of currency—say a twenty-dollar bill—from the Versailles Casino, to the person who took it from the casino, to the merchant where it was spent, and either back into the hands of a Push citizen (as change from a store) or into the bank and then back to the Watermark analysis lab. The game required predicting who would get the money, where they would spend it, the time they would spend it, the person who it would pass to, and when it would finally reach the bank. Of course quickly, instead of just guessing what would happen, employees started using stimuli to try and produce their predicted results.

In one memorable instance, a simple five-dollar bill was engineered from Marty Kunas, a plumber, to the bank at the opening of business promptly the following Monday. Marty’s commute from work was diverted past the Versailles by a street repair project. It was known that he had an 80% probability to go by the casino each day and that he had a strong preference for a certain brand of vodka. The drink was priced at \$4.50, so he would leave a five-dollar bill (and sometimes a quarter).

Mike Quail, a furniture salesman, would always go to the bar after his team exceeded their sales goal for the week (whether or not they did so was quite in the control of Watermark). As the designated recipient of the \$5, it was arranged to be included his change (he always visited the ATM

for a weekend withdrawal before going to the bar).

Mike would spend the five on cigarettes over the weekend—he only smoked on weekends, and usually started on Saturday night. He bought the cigarettes from his usual convenience store—since it was the weekend, the store owner would always take the cash to the bank on Monday morning.

The point is that habits of the entire population became common knowledge among the senior researchers and analysts, and they could often predict exact behaviors without much difficulty. Engineering results in general from the population didn't pose anywhere near the challenge, because the end was all that mattered, not the exact circumstances of how something happened.

The Final Phase

In 1996 I began to fear the situation with Watermark had become too perilous. I didn't have any access to the upper echelons of power within the company, which had grown to be more powerful than its parent by this time. I did realize that Watermark had been codifying its operations for the better part of the 1990s in the attempt to create something like a manual for running the town of Push, Nevada. But my continued need to nose around to gain my information had me paranoid that I would be found out. When Prufrock first disappeared, I think I always assumed that he would somehow reach out to me in a coded fashion that I would recognize—but by this point, I had come to the realization that since I had not heard from Prufrock in almost a decade there stood little chance of ever hearing from him again.

These two fears led me to a new approach in Push. I needed to regain my access to Watermark operations, but I could not do so as a mole, given my diminished status as a lame-duck founder. I needed to be able to observe Watermark, just as they could observe everyone else. The answer lay in the old control room located in Martha's Boarding House.

Prufrock and I had originally set up the control center for The Push Nevada Experiment in the North Wing of Martha's Boarding House. From the outside it looked like a basic ramshackle flophouse, but inside we renovated it throughout with top-of-the-line equipment and accommodations.

We trusted Martha to help us keep it quiet and paid her a generous amount of money to do so. From the control room we could manually direct the observational foci of the Experiment, tailoring the research methods to suit our needs. After the sale of the company and the Experiment, Watermark outgrew the old headquarters.

In their haste to move into the new Watermark observational facility in 1988, and because it would have

been wildly noticeable to the public, Watermark operatives did not dismantle the North Wing control center. Instead they simply left it unused, available as an emergency back up, and continued to pay Martha for the space.

I had a stroke in 1996. Or at least it appeared so to all the doctors at the hospital and to all the observers watching the hospital back at Watermark headquarters. In actuality, I simulated a stroke with the help of a physician named Bob Underwood. Underwood had been my doctor since I arrived in Push, and I trust him completely.

Underwood had seen some of the accidents that Watermark had arranged in the mid-1980s and, like me, he had come to realize that they did not all occur the way they were described in the Push Times and the police reports. He confronted me about this, on a day in 1988, after my loyalty to Watermark had waned. He also wondered to me about the disappearance of Prufrock and how so many accidents and suicides had befallen so many people I knew.

I feared for Underwood's life, because there was a good chance that his questions would register in the observation facility at Watermark headquarters. But, I couldn't tell him the real story until one day when we went out to the desert to look for geodes—he was an avid rock collector, and I took up the hobby to get an excuse to talk to him alone. There in the desert, I told Underwood the slightest bit about The Push Nevada Experiment and Watermark, and let him know that we all had observation trained on us twenty-four hours a day, except in the desert. Underwood understood both the Experiment and the need to never speak of it, and he trusted me after that. Because he had understood the reality of death from his life in the hospital, and because he knew of Watermark's ruthless tactics, he took his agreed-upon silence very seriously.

After an evening of dancing at the Boy Scouts fundraiser, where I had bought an entire table and brought some of my friends in the town, I collapsed next to one of my guests, who happened to be Dr. Underwood. As planned, Underwood shepherded me to the hospital and led my treatment. When I emerged from his care he pronounced me mute, with limited motor skills on my left side, and in need of full-time care. Martha offered to take me on in her boarding house and care for me, with money from my insurance paying her for this service.

The truth was that Martha knew my plan as well—to simulate a stroke and thus escape Watermark by appearing to pose no threat whatsoever to their operations. Her role was to care for me while I was in the open-in areas observed by Watermark—and to get me back to the Control Room in the North Wing. She did both jobs magnificently. Martha also managed my external affairs, as I could not leave the boarding house.

I got the idea for my disappearing act from Shadrack, the former Push, Nevada, comptroller. After the suicide of his wife, a punishment inflicted on him for his stand against the sale of the Versailles Casino to Watermark, Shadrack became detached from reality. Rather than drive him from the town, we decided that it was safer for the security of the Experiment to keep him nearby where we could keep an eye on him. And besides, we needed a vagrant to balance out the population.

Shadrack knew much of the early history of the Experiment, but he was so broken down that he couldn't do anything against Watermark, and had he tried anything he wouldn't have gotten very far. His resources presented no match for those of the Experiment, even in those early days. So Shadrack remained inside the town, a ranting lunatic who knew all the answers but to whom nobody would listen.

I knew, based on this precedent, that Watermark would welcome any circumstance that left me incapacitated but easily watched. In their eyes, a T.S. Griffin that sat alive and powerless in a boarding house in Push was even safer than a dead Griffin, because nobody would ever come looking for me. It was clear to all where I was. But like B'r'er Rabbit, I was clever enough to get them to throw me right into my very own briar patch—a secure home surrounded by my only allies, Martha and Underwood.

Inside the control room again, I set to work observing Watermark's operations whenever possible. The control room was one of the only places in Push that I knew to be free of bugs and cameras. Inside my room I could shed the act of a stroke victim and move about normally, watching and waiting to see what Watermark would do next.

I kept tabs on Watermark's operatives, and on people in the town who seemed to exist on the fringe of their control. I also kept a journal of some of my findings and my theories about the directions Watermark's plans were headed.



PERSONNEL FILE

Name: Martha Flannery

Relatives: Father John, deceased. Mother Paula, deceased. Aunt, Martha, deceased. Cousins Rickey, Tommy, Marty and Danny, all of Waltham, Massachusetts. Other relatives may exist but are unknown.

Occupation: Martha runs Martha's Boarding House, a run-down establishment on the outside with a surprisingly shiny interior. Martha refurbished the boarding house with money paid to her by Watermark in 1984 in exchange for allowing them to locate the command center for the Experiment in the North Wing of the building. The Boarding House has the most up-to-date connectivity, appliances, media, and other amenities.

Background: Martha was a working girl at Sloman's Chicken Ranch until she inherited her Boarding House from her aunt, also named Martha. During her last years at the Chicken Ranch, Martha met Al Prufrock, and the two became friends. When Al settled on Push as the site for the Experiment, he approached Martha about locating his control room in her boarding house, which she had just inherited and which was in bad repair. In turn for this good turn, Martha became our trusted ally in Push.

Martha knows much of the history of The Push Nevada Experiment, most of which she could have learned simply by proximity, or through her relationship with Al. In any case, by the time I needed to tuck myself away in the North Wing to reassume my old command center, albeit as the leader of the revolution, she knew the bulk of what was going on with Watermark. I filled her in on the rest, and she has remained my main confidant to this day.

Martha has not heard from Al Prufrock since his "death" in 1986, and I suspect that she has her own reasons for wanting to find him.

I am not certain if their relationship ever became romantic, but if it did it was a true love of true friends. Martha has taken exemplary care of me since my decline into the later stages of cancer, and I am grateful to her beyond my debt to any other person.

Known Associates: Martha associates with many of the Sloman's girls. I suspect they remind her of lost days and lost beauty. She cares for some of them like a mother and always has a few living in the boarding house. Mostly the infrequent recruits Sloman brings into Push from his outside operations financed by his side deals in pornography and the management of child actors, Sloman sneaks these new members of Push into the town when the population needs to be recentered, because of an accident or other trauma.

Recent Surveillance: Martha is not under my formal surveillance; there is no need. Martha has been observed interacting with people in Push, executing my orders. In all of this she has proven most faithful.



June 1997

The size of the Push operation has remained the same throughout the years, but the variation of people in the operation is always getting wider. Seeing more people and different people indicates that the size of Watermark as a whole is increasing. In the early years of the Experiment, there might have been only operatives in Push. Now, various characters in the employ of Watermark appear, disappear, and reappear weeks later. This tells me that people aren't leaving and being replaced—they are being deployed on other operations additional to Push, but with connections to Push. Watermark definitely has more employees, and it is because they have more work for the employees to do in addition to the Experiment.

November 1997

Jamison Jones has been spending more time outside of Push. He must have gotten a promotion, or he could be using the power of Watermark's operations to expand his authority, hiring people underneath him to fill his old role as head of the Experiment. Jones's travels also indicate that Push isn't the sole focus of Watermark's activity anymore.

November 1998

Push, Nevada has turned into a society predicated on consumer desire and personal desire. People want to buy the same things because they are made to want them, and adhere to one code of right and wrong imposed on them in order to make them docile. But they all want different things for their own personal reasons, which Watermark can program—their ideas of self expression are not really their own, and are actually drawn from a list of available choices that has been developed by Watermark (initially with my and Prufrock's help). Thus, the people in the society have the illusion of individuality.

What I have begun to see in this society may not yet be apparent to Watermark. The society's foundation in selfish desires for things and for self-gratification has led to pure greed. In most people that greed is kept in check by the moral code developed by Watermark to keep people in line. But the people on the fringe of Push society, and the people who are one layer away from Watermark's operations, these people have begun to sense that there is something amiss in Push. Eventually, Watermark will have to escalate its presence to register on the radar screens

of the people who know there is something wrong, and will need to use overt intimidation to keep them in from rebellion.

People are predictable—they do things that reward them and gratify their base desires for pleasure and power. If I am able to discover a group of people who Watermark must openly intimidate, I will be able to find someone in that group willing to become an internal distraction by committing a major betrayal. Just as the Watermark researchers and analysts can predict the behaviors and habits of Push residents to the level where they know the path of a \$20 bill with a high probability, I will be able to predict the future actions of a disgruntled minion with just enough information to be dangerous. Greed makes people predictable. And The Push Nevada Experiment has made a society rooted in greed as its guiding moral principle.

Toward the turn of the century, I began to feel the effects of my long isolation. I became paranoid that Watermark would discover my faux ailment. Therefore, I would seldom let down the pretense of invalidity, even for days on end. This led Martha to worry, and she began to talk to herself in the halls of the boarding house in an effort to communicate with me. After several days of immobility and sitting cramped in my wheelchair without a break, I would barely be able to move from stiffness and soreness in my joints.

The silence nearly drove me mad as well. I had nobody to speak to for days on end, as much of my time with Martha was under the watchful eyes of Watermark. Our conversations were one-way monologues where she imparted information to me, and read the slightest twitches and movements to discern my agreement or lack thereof.

No wonder I took refuge in the North Wing's observational capabilities. If I hadn't had to make appearances in front of the hidden Watermark cameras each day, I would have never left the confines of the control room. But I had to maintain the pretense that I was an invalid in need of care.

Lucky for me, I suppose, is that Martha could take me to see Dr. Underwood quite frequently without raising any suspicion. He would run a battery of tests on me, for show at first, but as the years wore by the tests became real as it was the only way for Martha to verify my good health. I had become paranoid about my health and welcomed the tests because they would confirm that I was not being poisoned slowly by Watermark or exposed to any harm that I could not detect—ideas that infiltrated my dreams and caused me to lose sleep as my years in the North Wing wore on.

But in May 2000, something real went wrong with my health. Dr. Underwood discovered that I had cancer that was at a fairly developed stage and that I could

count on living about another two or three years if I took medication and underwent chemotherapy.

The discovery of my cancer raised my sense of urgency to a new level. I now had a time limit on my fight against Watermark. I had planned to wait them out until the perfect opportunity arose, but now I did not have that luxury. I needed to make an opportunity. And I needed to find Al Prufrock.

Options I considered in my attempt to find a weakness in Watermark's operations:

Bribing a lower-level operative to turn against the company. This stood about zero percent probability of working and would be tantamount to putting myself in the open if it failed—I rejected this possibility. It was not possible to leave Watermark safely and take up arms against them—I had assessed that possibility with Prufrock in 1986, and we had rejected it back then. I had no witness protection program to offer a potential accomplice in the event that I could find one.

Leaking information to the media. The danger in this came from the control Watermark had over the media. Even in the early days of the Experiment, we could use the media to spin facts and stories to our advantage. Almost two decades later, with more resources at their disposal, Watermark had probably infiltrated the major media conglomerates of the world and would therefore be able to kill or contradict any story that I leaked. There is a reason that many secrets do not get told until it is too late in the United States, and the access that wealthy groups with very special interests have to the media is a major cause.

Trying to use the kill-code by myself. Al and I designed the code to break down the Watermark central information systems, but my half would not be sufficient to complete the job. I had stored my half of the code in my Bible, as the binary computer language

Al had created could easily be punched out in the pages of the Good Book. It looked similar to the punch-card data systems used in the computer world until the 1980s and on which most computer systems dating back to that era were based. I did not know where Al had stored his half of the code. If I was going to have one shot at using the code, I wanted to do it when my weapon was assembled, not in fragments.

Trying to find Al Prufrock. I had been trying to find Al for years. I tried to signal him by sending a wire transfer between our secret offshore accounts in the form of \$1,110,001.11, which should have signaled "S.O.S." to him in Morse code. (Just before Prufrock faked his death we had established an offshore account for each of us.) Martha had a contact of hers in Las Vegas hire a private investigator to find him, posing as a jilted lover with a child that she thought belonged to Al. I monitored the activity in Prufrock's account, but there was nothing. He had disappeared. I continued to rack my brain for ideas to smoke him out, and thought of one—using his son.

Leaking information to the government. Inevitably, the government would be thoroughly infiltrated by Watermark. But if I could analyze activity by different members of the government agencies—DEA, FBI, IRS, Treasury Department, Attorney General—I could target people with power to make something happen whose records indicated that they were free from control by Watermark. This project would be pursued over the next few years.

Turning Watermark against itself. If done with sleight of hand and no traceable actions, this plan seemed a good first step. If I could find something to tamper with and could make Watermark's minions and operatives be suspicious of each other, I would be able to cause chaos inside the organization, which would cause them to slip in their external defenses.

PERSONNEL FILE

March 2001

I have observed Silas Bodnick with some regularity for the past years, and I think he may be a target for my plan to exploit the greed that Watermark has created, turning that greed against itself. Bodnick is now managing the daily operation of the Versailles Casino. He has been on the job since 1997, when Sloman became distracted enough by his side operations and bored enough by the mundane operations of the Versailles that he turned over the reins to Bodnick.

Bodnick has taken notice of the quarterly payments given to Sloman, in excess of a million dollars, which occur shortly before the close of each quarter in September, December, March, and June. I know this because he spent repeated sessions in his office overlooking the documents that contain the accounting errors that he has to doctor as part of his job. Silas is used to doctoring the books, and he finally caught on to the portion of the money that is going to Sloman.

Bodnick will begin to resent that Sloman gets this money. He will begin to view it as his. He will steal it if he gets the chance.

Name: Silas Bodnick

Occupation: Silas Bodnick is in charge of the Versailles Casino. He oversees the entire operations of the Versailles, as well as monitoring the financial status of the casino.

Background:

Silas began working for Sloman in 1970, helping him operate both Sloman's Chicken Ranch and the Versailles Casino. Bodnick started as a pit boss at the Versailles and worked as a bartender at the whorehouse on the side. His blustering arrogance was perfectly suited to advancement in both businesses. Soon Bodnick was managing the whorehouse, and was the officer in charge of the Versailles directly beneath Sloman.

Silas took over the full time operations of the Versailles in 1997, when Sloman grew weary of minding it every day. Sloman was enjoying his other ventures too much to care about the perks of the slo-dance bar and the casino anymore. Bodnick, however, relished his role as the big man around town in the casino.

When Watermark bought Sloman's businesses in 1984 and set him up as the central enforcer in Push, Silas observed the rewards his boss received. Silas remained on salary, working for Sloman, and this began to eat away at Silas, because he knew that Sloman was making a wild profit from the new ownership structure. Silas's greed grew as he gained more and more access to the Versailles books, and it overwhelmed him when he could finally make an expanded examination of the accounting. He connected the missing payments each quarter with Sloman's outside operations and his status inside Watermark. He also realized that nobody would enforce the ownership of the payment except Sloman himself, because the money was dirty.

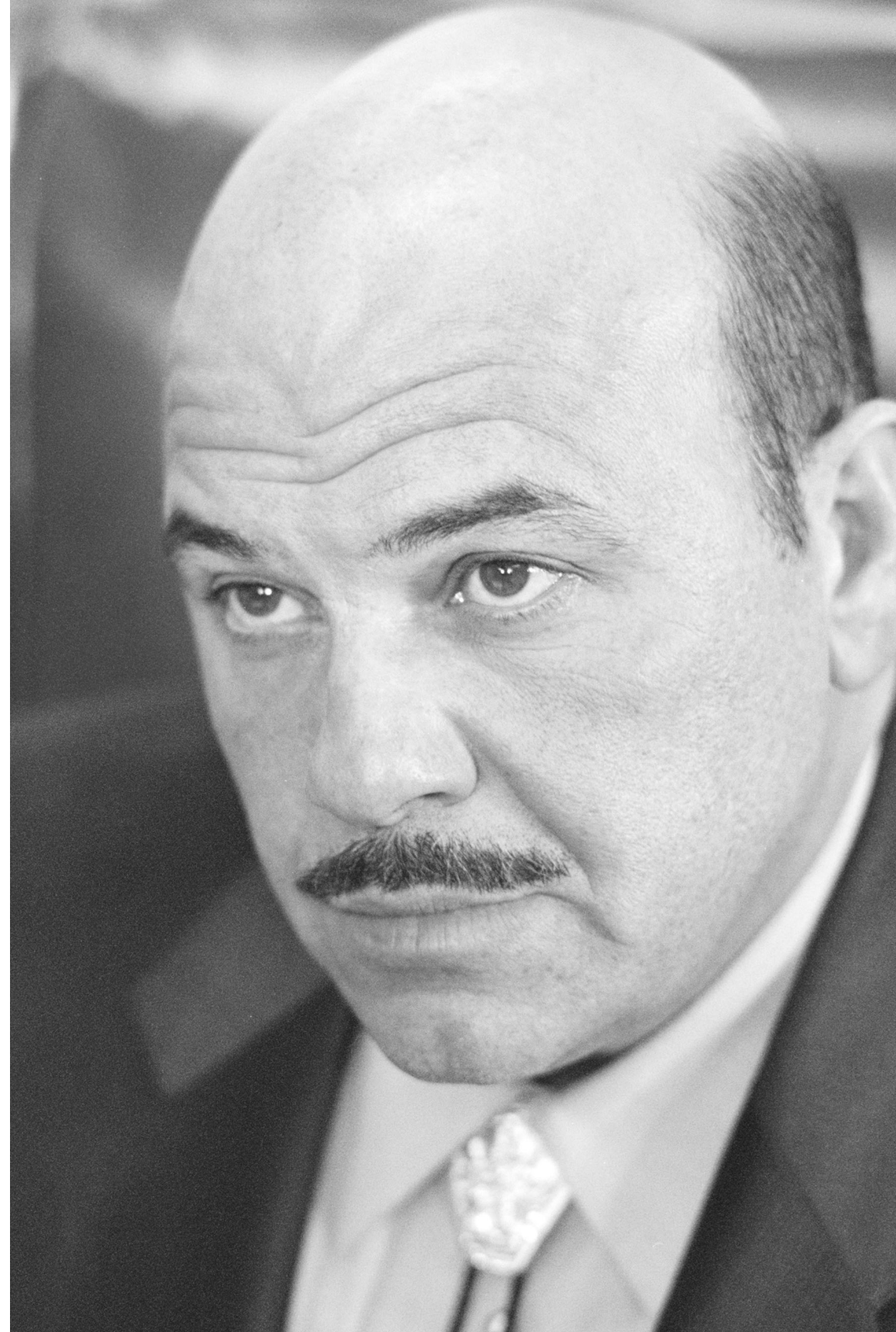
Silas decided that he was smarter than Sloman and could rob him and escape with his money. But Silas had incomplete knowledge of Watermark's role in Push. He had heard bits and pieces, but mainly thought of them as the owner of the casino. Silas experienced a rude awakening when one of the heads of Watermark confronted him after the heist—and the secondary nature of the money (he realized they considered seven figures a rounding error) confirmed Silas's suspicions that Watermark didn't care for his boss's money in the slightest. Watermark cared about the attention the situation had attracted and the potential disruption of its larger operation.

Bodnick panicked and attempted to flee Push, but Oswald Wilkes assassinated him first.

Secrets: Bodnick had grown to hate Sloman with such passion that the robbery of the Versailles safe took on an element of revenge. Sloman had gained all the benefits of the turnaround in Push, Nevada, but people like Silas had done all the work. Silas began to undercut his boss whenever he could. He even went as far as to tip off authorities in Nevada about a shipment of black market pharmaceuticals that Sloman bought in 1998.

Bodnick would have liked everyone in Push to believe that his relationship with Mary Sloman was sexual. He even believed it himself. He encouraged the impression because he thought it would infuriate her father. He was right because, for more reasons than Silas suspected, Sloman hated any man that came near his daughter.

Recent Surveillance My monitoring of Bodnick over the last 6 months before the theft leads to the conclusion that he fully understood the benefits of Sloman's relationship with Watermark, if not the full extent of the responsibilities and dangers that it carried. Coupled with the purest form of greed that had been ingrained into Bodnick through the media Watermark constantly fed to all the residents of Push, Bodnick's knowledge of Sloman's financial arrangements with Watermark were his undoing.



PERSONNEL FILE

The theft of the quarterly payment from Watermark to Sloman was the aberration that was needed to attract attention to the entire Push operation. I arranged to have Bodnick learn the missing features of the Watermark safe and to understand that in addition to the payment to Sloman, the Bible in the safe would have value. Through my anonymous communications with Bodnick, he understood that Watermark would value the Bible and that he should keep it hidden. But he never understood the code it contained or how to use it.

Name: Oswald Wilkes

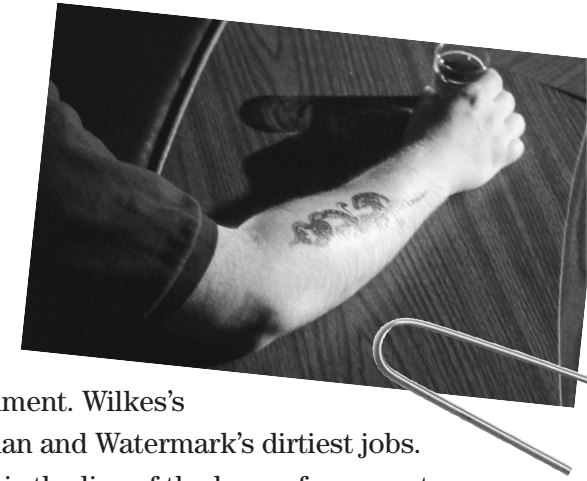
Relatives: None known.

Occupation: Oswald Wilkes was one of D'Wight Sloman's enforcers. Wilkes looked young, but had been around since the beginning of the Experiment. Wilkes's hand could be seen in all of Sloman and Watermark's dirtiest jobs. And his touch was not subtle—it is the lies of the law enforcement in Push that made it seem so.

Background: Oswald arrived in Push in the late 1970s. He had worked on a shrimp boat in Alaska and on a halibut boat off of Nova Scotia. He became inured to death while in these positions and was often heard at the bar at Sloman's recounting the horrors of watching a man stuck in the mud as the tide rolls in over his head. His favorite book, not surprisingly, was "The Perfect Storm" by Sebastian Junger.

Wilkes had a taste for narcotics when he arrived in Push, perhaps gained during his dangerous occupations, or in the off-seasons these solitary environments led him to each year. He found the local tattoo artist, Michael Sudris, shortly after he arrived in Push and in exchange for \$50 and some Native American peyote, he gained a serpent on his arm.

Known Associates: Oswald Wilkes associated with the bow-hunting group in Push, as the visceral nature of the sport appealed to the side of him that hungered for danger. He and Silas Bodnick were never very close, but their love of hunting afforded the two a



PERSONNEL FILE

Name: Michael Sudris

Occupation: Tattoo artist

Background: Sudris actually lives outside Push proper. He moved there on his own accord after he sensed a change in Push in 1987. Sudris, a young man at that time (just a senior in high school), had a penchant for cartooning and heavy metal. He would often travel to Las Vegas to see his favorite bands, including Ratt, Bon Jovi, Whitesnake, and Guns n' Roses. His dream of the future was to hook on with a band and design their album covers and concert shirts. This dream faded after he snapped in early 1987.

Michael left Push one day in April, after watching the same television channel for 48 hours straight. He had thought to do this as a project for his American history class, and had taken notes on the programming and advertising he saw over the 48 hours. He might have abandoned the project, but he had convinced some friends that he had beaten the system and was getting to watch TV for his final senior project. His buddies couldn't believe it, so they came over to watch him complete the assignment. An ad hoc party developed, with cases of beer and loud music in the basement rec room of Michael's parents' house. In the thick of the party, Michael's best



Death & Taxes

sense of mutual respect. It also allowed them to tolerate the other's presence when they had to collaborate on projects for Sloman.

Wilkes also hung out with a group of bodybuilders at the local gym. He usually remained silent the entire time he was with them, but seemed to enjoy their company.

Wilkes dated an array of women inside and outside of Push. He had gone through half of the girls who work at Sloman's and on every out of town job he had a woman waiting for him. One of the women, in Schaumburg, Illinois, named Deirdre Borelli, had been a steady squeeze since Wilkes sold a load of black market valium there in 1997.

Dirty Secrets: Wilkes served as Sloman's envoy to his independent operations outside of Push. Wilkes was instrumental in arranging most of Sloman's off-the-books deals or deals for stolen or illicit merchandise since 1984, when Sloman started to have money to pursue such activities in a major way.

Wilkes liked to wet his beak in the company bowl. Skimming was his normal mode, and Sloman turned a blind eye to it as a perk of Wilkes's job. Wilkes had an extensive pornography collection, kept in four footlockers in his house in Push. He had acquired all manner of illegal pornography, from child porn to snuff films to anything one can think of. He enjoyed watching these films and pleasuring himself with autoerotic asphyxiation. His favorite materials were on DVDs that have several angles, which he took from shipments whenever he could get them.

Recent Surveillance: Wilkes was ubiquitous in the shadows of Push. He carried out the dirty work for Sloman, and therefore for Watermark, in Push, Nevada. This role extended back to the arrival of the Experiment in Push, and Wilkes's arrangement of harassment and accidents that would befall the townspeople who were not desirable for the Experiment. Wilkes was recently terminated by Sloman and Watermark, after he murdered Bodnick for them.

friend, Marty Bourke, bet him \$50 that he wouldn't last the whole 48 hours. With \$50 on the line, Michael stuck it out for the entire time (well after his friends had passed out and gone home).

Instead of writing his term paper based on his notes, Michael left home and slept out in the desert for five days. He returned home at the end of the five days, gathered his belongings and life savings, and took off.

Usually, Watermark did not allow anyone to leave the town, but the nature of Michael's break from his normal life made them willing to adjust their policy. They were happier with Michael outside of Push, as long as he was close enough to be monitored.

Michael turned his talents toward the art of tattooing and scrapes out a living in a trailer on the outskirts of Push, leaving occasionally to buy drugs and music. He is a solitary figure and will remain one until he sees fit to change that.

July 2001

Mary Sloman is desperate to leave Push, and to escape her father. His disgusting treatment of her is wearing her thin. Paradoxically, Mary doesn't fear Watermark because she is protected under her father's wing.

Mary has been spending a great deal of time getting to know the men in her father's employ, both those with large roles inside Push and those who move in business circles beyond the town. She will try to use someone to get out of Push.

I know that Bodnick has confided in Mary about the robbery of the Versailles and the contents of the safe—he has probably told her about the Bible as well. She may prove more resourceful than he, as she has more than money at stake in her attempt to get out of Push, Nevada.

PERSONNEL FILE

Name: Mary Sloman

Relatives: D'Wight Sloman, father; Heather Sloman, mother (deceased).

Occupation: Dancer at Sloman's Slo-Dance Bar. Mary Sloman is among the most enticing girls at Sloman's. She fills over 80% of the capacity on her dance card (the percent of the time that she is on Sloman's premises and making money from customers), a record for Sloman's girls.

As the daughter of D'Wight Sloman, Mary has been obligated to put her likeness on billboards and other advertisements for the establishment. This has given her a limited celebrity status in Push.

Background: Mary grew up as the pretty daughter of the town's most powerful man. This gave her a sense of entitlement from an early age. Unlikely as it sounds, Mary's sense of entitlement came to its knees in the face of the man who built it—her father. After losing his wife to cancer in 1981, Sloman ran through most of the women in his operations. He took what he wanted. And after his fashion, he took his daughter by force when she came to resemble her deceased mother at the age of 15. To further degrade her and bend her to his will, D'Wight made Mary work as a dancer in his slo-dance bar, and to become the face of the establishment. He pulled her out of school as soon as he could legally do so, and kept her working in his businesses. Mary served cocktails at the Versailles at the same time as she danced at Sloman's, and everyone in town respected her loyalty to her father and her work ethic. Everyone wanted to say beautiful things about this beautiful girl.

Mary has had many physical relationships with men in Push, and

each ended before her father found out the identity of her lover. She seems to enjoy the peril in which she places her companions, and often lets them know their lives are at risk if her father finds out that she is with them. She hasn't revealed the true reason why he guards her so jealously, except in one case. She told Silas Bodnick about her father's abuse in order to gain credibility with him in the concoction of the robbery of his quarterly payment from the Watermark/Versailles safe. It was through the observation of



their planning to rob Sloman and Watermark that I realized that the two of them would be able to shepherd my Bible to Jim for his use.

Mary's lifelong goal is to escape her father, to escape Push, and to disappear. She may well find it in this latest escapade, in some shape or form.

Known Associates: Mary leads on every man in Push who comes into Sloman's. They all feel as if they know her, for she is their confidant, therapist, and their crying towel. But none are her true associates.

Mary had been concocting plans with Silas Bodnick before his death, a circumstance that delayed her plan to escape from Push.

Mary doesn't consort with women she doesn't know well. She feels scorn for them. She has few true confidants. Her long-buried friendship with Delilah Simmons has faded since Delilah married BRB, but the two of them used to be close and still have a sisterly bond.

Dirty Secrets: Mary seems free to roam throughout Push, but she is like a caged bird. She cannot leave. Watermark operatives leave her alone, because her father has made it clear that she is not to be tampered with as part of the Experiment.

Sloman's possessive and abusive relationship with Mary extends beyond his fending off of Watermark, his treatment of her as chattel, and his intimidation of her at every turn. D'Wight has also been sexually abusing his daughter since the age of 15, shortly after the death of his wife. This abuse continues to take place in Mary's quarters in Martha's Boarding House, and remains unchecked because D'Wight would end the life of anyone who stood against him.

Recent Surveillance: Mary has been everywhere in Push in recent days. She has both aided and thwarted my plans to flush out Al Prufrock with her lustful pursuit of Jim and her dogged pursuit of the Bible. Mary learned of the Bible through Silas Bodnick and I thought to use her to get it into Jim Prufrock's hands. Yet, just as it was in his grasp, Mary stole it for her own use. Observing her try to puzzle out the code has been amusing to say the least, like a child making up words to a book it cannot read. But she has delayed Jim's possession of the code for too long and made me have to expose myself yet again to revitalize his pursuit of Watermark.

Obviously, Mary's comely appearance makes her a lovely subject to observe, but her actions cause this researcher immeasurable stress.

PERSONNEL FILE

Name: D'Wight Sloman

Relatives: Heather Sloman, wife (deceased); Mary Sloman, daughter.

Occupation: Sloman agreed to be a lieutenant in Watermark's control of Push because he received quarterly payments of roughly \$1 million from Watermark. Contrary to everyone else in Push, Sloman's payments were conveyed in real currency, not the Watermark currency used and tracked inside Push. Sloman used this money to fund side projects—illegal pharmaceutical trafficking, music piracy, and fraud of all kinds. The money Sloman received from Watermark was thus laundered and he could make additional profits.

Background: Sloman controlled Push, Nevada, before the Experiment began. He was sole owner of the two main businesses (really, the only establishments of consequence) in the town—the Versailles Casino and Sloman's Chicken Ranch.

Sloman was part of the package that made Push, Nevada, an appealing site for the Experiment, because he offered one-stop shopping. Buying out Sloman provided quick access to both the economic power base and the political power base of the town.

In 1984 Sloman agreed to sell his businesses to the Experiment. When this domino fell, the other businesses tumbled down after it. Not only did Sloman facilitate entry into the economic, business, and political power of Push, but he also remained on site as a key officer in the execution of the Experiment. As before, Sloman was a central figure of power in Push. But after the advent of the Experiment, the foundation of Sloman's power was much larger, as he had the resources of Watermark backing him.



Sloman was born in Tucson, Arizona, and has a juvenile rap sheet as long as your leg, including a manslaughter conviction. As an adult he has had multiple arrests for pandering and extortion, and one for grand larceny. He has never been convicted. His record has been clean since 1984 because Watermark gave him license to do as he pleases in Push, and the company channels his criminal energy into maintaining order within the confines of Push.

Known Associates: Silas Bodnick. Sloman employed him as a lieutenant in his organization, responsible for day-to-day management of the casino and the cash flow in and out of the Versailles. This proved a sound tactic for many years, until Bodnick's greed got the best of both men. The money Bodnick lifted from the Watermark safe at the Versailles Casino was the quarterly payment from Watermark to Sloman.

Dirty Little Secrets: Once a casino and whorehouse operator, always a casino and whorehouse operator. Sloman never gave up his salacious habits. After the Experiment and Watermark put an end to his prostitution business, Sloman invested in this kind of activity outside of Push—prostitution, pornography, etc.—financed through his quarterly payments from Watermark.

He also played the role of enforcer for the Watermark regime in Push. His efforts allowed for a speedy occupation of Push, as he engineered the bulk of the deaths in the tragic year of 1984. Accidents arranged by Sloman rarely appear as such, but the surrounding air of menace convinces those that investigate that they must be truly accidental.

Worst of all, Sloman's nefarious activities were perpetrated on his own flesh and blood. From her days as a young woman, Sloman had an incestuous relationship with his own daughter, Mary. He kept her under close supervision as a dancer in Sloman's Slo-Dance Bar, and housed her in Martha's Boarding House, where he could gain access to her. In a departure from their other policing of the

activities of Push residents, Watermark never moved to deter this immoral activity on the part of Sloman. This is probably because his participation in the control of Push was too highly valued by the company.

Outside Operations: \$4 million every year for almost 20 years buys a lot of black market CDs, electronics, Lotto tickets, and prescription drugs. Sloman is into so many shady deals it would be hard to enumerate them.

Sloman has sent operatives to Southeast Asia to buy snuff films, which he has sold through Internet companies that hold inventory in California. He owns a famous chain of strip-clubs in the greater Chicago area, as well as a valet parking service that holds the majority of contracts in San Francisco.

In his most legitimate caper in 1990, Sloman tried to capitalize on the latest boy band craze by backing a group from Atlanta and bribing Hollywood filmmakers to put their songs in films. He put out their album on low-grade CDs made with child labor in Asia, and tried to get Watermark to get him bookings on all the talk shows. He planned to make a 450% profit, modeled off projections created from data ranging from the Monkees to New Kids on the Block. He ended up losing his entire bankroll that year.

Recently, Sloman bought bootleg erectile dysfunction pharmaceuticals. His plan was to distribute the drugs at raves through female patrons who were actually on his pornography and gentleman's club payrolls in the tri-state area and the southern California area. The plan met with moderate success after several popular television programs extolled the virtues of these drugs as recreational.

Sloman keeps up his outside operations for no apparent reason. He cannot enjoy the money he makes because he is not supposed to leave Push, and he cannot be on-site to manage the properties for more than a few days, because Watermark can't spare him in Push.

Sloman must be preparing for a time when he can indeed leave Push, and that is why he cares to make all this money. He has yet to tip his hand if he knows the schedule of Watermark's long-term plan, which I believe is near fruition.

Most Recent Surveillance: Sloman met his demise at the hands of his supposed allies, Watermark. When the pressure of the IRS investigation into the activities in Push became too risky, Watermark operatives set up Sloman in a sting operation in the desert on the outskirts of town. As all Sloman's activity had been observed throughout the entire Experiment, the context of the sting operation would be set in one of his illegal side deals—this one was the purchase of a large quantity of winning Nevada lottery tickets. The circumstances surrounding Bodnick's "embezzlement" from the Versailles, coupled with the murders in the town and Dawn Mitchell's investigation, led the IRS to conclude that Sloman was responsible for the nefarious deeds in Push.

This also led me to redouble my efforts to inspire Jim Prufrock to investigate Push, Nevada and Watermark.

September 2001

Silas Bodnick learned about Caleb Moore's condition (hypothermia) from his own doctor at the hospital. I overheard their conversation while watching Bodnick on August 22. He went to the hospital to have his stomach checked, as well as to get some more high blood pressure medication. When he saw Moore emerge from the room down the hall, he inquired about the "freak's condition" in his usual tactful manner. Dr. Chen told him that Caleb isn't able to maintain normal body temperature without his medication.

I know that Bodnick is trying to think about how to approach Moore about a plan to rob the Versailles safe. Bodnick knows that the safe security systems are heat sensitive. He also knows the dates that the safe will contain Sloman's payout from Watermark.

PERSONNEL FILE

Name: Caleb Moore

Occupation: Caleb Moore did not work in his lifetime. He had a modest amount of money that he inherited from his family, after his mother died in Louisiana in 1979. His primary activities included reading comic books and researching the history of the Louisiana Purchase.

Background: Caleb moved to Push from Louisiana in 1980. He was attracted by the warm climate because he had a permanent condition called hyperthermodia that made it difficult for him to regulate his body temperature.

Moore spent the majority of his life trying to move toward warmer climates from his native New Jersey. As a child he ran away from home and camped out on a grating behind a laundromat in order to bask in the heat vents from the dryers. He told this story many times, in epic formats, to his acquaintances in Push. He also tried to serialize it into a comic book, with frustrating results.

Moore's condition made it impossible for him to hold a job, as office temperatures were too cold for him and manual labor was beyond his fragile constitution. Thus, his mother made sure to secure a life insurance policy that she knew would provide a pension that would take care of Caleb when she died.

Secret Activity: Silas Bodinck and Mary Sloman took advantage of Caleb's lack of sexual experience to convince him to participate in the robbery of the Watermark vault in the Versailles. Mary led Caleb to believe that part of his potential payout would be sexual favors like none he had ever experienced, which would probably be true because Caleb had never been with a woman for the entire time he was in Push, and it is unlikely that his prowess had been



greater in his earlier years when he lived with his mother in New Jersey and Louisiana.

Silas knew that the heat sensors in the Versailles detected temperatures above 80 degrees. Caleb Moore's condition would allow him to chill his body below that range and maintain a surface temperature that would go undetected for at least 40 minutes. Silas concocted a plan for the robbery that could be executed in less than 40 minutes, and he and Mary convinced Caleb to join in for a cut of the take and the affection of Mary.

When Silas Bodnick was murdered, Caleb Moore had possession of the stolen money and the Bible, which he hid out in Demonhead Flats. Mary Sloman got this information out of Caleb when she visited him to pay off her sexual debt but instead left him handcuffed to his bed.

Unfortunately for Caleb, although Mary had him whisper the key information about the location of the money and Bible to her, Watermark's observational equipment allowed them to isolate enough information to know its general whereabouts. This made Caleb Moore's life expendable.

Cause of Death: Caleb Moore died of hypothermia, not suicide as the Push Times suggests.

Ice dumped all over Moore's cold body reduced his internal temperature for such a long time that he fell into a hypothermic sleep. His death came quickly.

Recent Surveillance: Caleb Moore was key to the plan to put the Bible code in play, as he was the person who removed the Bible from the vault, along with the money.

Caleb also protected the Bible after Silas's death, probably because Silas had told him of its value. I also had some subliminal assistance to promote the Bible's value to Caleb—one of the comic books that Moore read regularly had a story line where the hero died and came back from the dead. This had Caleb intrigued by religious texts at the time. I had a custom issue of this book created and shipped to Caleb's address, where several frames were redrawn to include an image that looked exactly like my Bible.

This, coupled with Bodnick's direction to take the money and anything else near it that looked valuable, made Caleb very likely to take the Bible that contained the code.

September 25 2001

Al's little boy Jim Prufrock is now all grown up and a well-established I.R.S. agent of all things. His record is impeccable and his abilities are unmatched. His mathematical genius and near flawless research and memory skills can be seen in the records that document his career. (I obtained them through my old contacts at the I.R.S. from the days when we investigated the prudence of setting up the defective grantor trust for the town of Push and Watermark.)

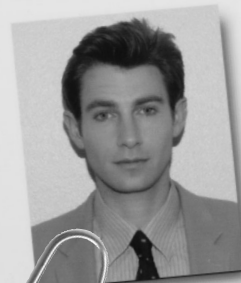


James A. Prufrock

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Internal Revenue Service



Jim Prufrock
Name
PB854-273
Classification I.D.
Dept. of Treasury
Division

James A. Prufrock
Employee Signature

Ira Glassman
Validating Signature



PERSONNEL FILE

Name: Dawn Mitchell

Relatives: Melissa Mitchell, mother, of Tempe, Arizona. William Mitchell, father, of Tempe, Arizona. Michael, brother, of San Francisco.

Occupation: Dawn Mitchell is an undercover Treasury agent. She focuses mainly on illegal commerce, bootlegging, stolen goods and merchandise, and money laundering. Dawn is trained in surveillance, undercover work, and forensics.

Background: Dawn came to Push in 2000, working as a deputy for Sheriff Gaines. She has been upholding a clueless and cheerful façade while working feverishly to bring down D'Wight Sloman ever since she arrived in Push.

Dawn found her way here after tracking Sloman's extra-Push activities in the Long Beach area. She has been working to prove herself within the Treasury Department ever since a mishap in San Francisco that earned her an official reprimand several years ago. She thinks that bringing Sloman to justice will be an important enough bust to get Internal Affairs off her back.

Her pursuit of Sloman began in earnest when she learned of Oswald Wilkes's involvement in the smuggling operation in Long Beach. This led her to related activity in bootleg electronics, San Fernando Valley real estate, prescription drugs, and money laundering.

Known Associates: Dawn's main associates are criminals or lawmen, and sometimes it can be difficult to tell the difference.

Sheriff Gaines and Dawn spend hours together each day. Dawn humors his stupidity with a sunny demeanor, and this obviously chaffs her—she is noticeably perturbed each day after work. She frequents the local shooting range to keep her skills sharp and her abilities honed. She actually pretends to be an inept marksman at the range, shooting seemingly random patterns in the targets. In actuality, Dawn never aims at the center of the target, she aims for particular parts of it—the random patterns are, in fact, organized systems of shots that can test her abilities fully.

Dawn also consorts with two women in their mid-twenties, and they all enjoy horseback riding in the desert. The two, Meg Cohen and Carrie Howard, are very well-educated women from the East Coast who moved to Push in 1985 as part of a direct marketing campaign we undertook to recruit architects for the new real estate development in 1985. Meg and Carrie came to Push because the development company (owned by Watermark, of course) offered them each a huge increase in salary and a subsidized home in the new development. They both were allowed to design their dream homes as part of their compensation package. Before their houses were finished, they lived in Martha's Boarding House and Martha reports that they are very sophisticated in their tastes.

Dawn also dated a local teacher at Push High in the spring of 2001 named Aaron Davis. Aaron taught English literature and creative writing to Juniors and Seniors. Dawn met him when she was getting her squad car serviced at the local Toyota dealership, and the two spent every weekend together for three months. Dawn probably cut the relationship short because she couldn't keep up her heat on Sloman while dating Aaron. She has not been romantically involved since.

Dirty Secrets: Dawn's Treasury Department record is not what one would call exemplary. In her career she has had four complaints registered by fellow officers, two official reprimands, an Internal Affairs investigation, and a temporary suspension.

In San Francisco, just before she came to Push to pursue Sloman, Dawn was investigating the trafficking of snuff films from Asia. Her investigation led her to believe that the snuff films and other illegal paraphernalia were being sold in the Tenderloin district of the city. She had a variety of informants and was undercover herself posing as a prostitute in that district. One of her informants, a strip-club owner named Mickey Bensonhurst, helped her find a group of smut dealers who were bringing in a shipment of child pornography and snuff films on Pier 45 in October of 1998. Dawn's reckless pursuit of the criminals endangered the life of her informant and got her suspended from the department.

Dawn brought her informant to the crime scene on the pier and gave him a weapon. This mistake nearly cost her the career she had worked for years to build. By involving a citizen in an effort to stop a crime, Dawn violated a basic premise of law enforcement. However, she brought Mickey into the situation and armed him because she knew that without his involvement she wouldn't appear believable to the perpetrators. Mickey actually posed as her boss in the deal. Their plan called for him to request permission to return to his car to call a delivery truck and crew to pick up his newly acquired merchandise (which had already been exchanged for cash, ensuring a completed transaction), leaving Dawn, the money, and the merchandise as security. As soon as Mickey got clear of the warehouse on the pier, Dawn's backup Treasury agents would burst into the scene and make the bust.

Mickey failed to get clear of the warehouse, and a security agent for the pornography ring trapped him in between two rows of fruit crates, and held Mickey at gunpoint. Treasury agents tracked the two of them down, and a Mexican standoff ensued, with the security agent discharging his weapon and missing Mickey by eight inches. The gunfire and melee that followed caused several crates of grapefruits to topple on the perpetrators, Mickey and the Treasury agents—Mickey received a broken arm and a concussion, and the agents nearly lost their suspect. All of them filed reports

against Dawn, who then took a short leave from the force.

Recent Surveillance: Dawn has recently realized that her capture of Sloman was merely a smokescreen to keep her from finding Watermark. She has been consorting with Jim Prufrock even after the two brought down Sloman, and she may be able to add some more flames to the IRS heat that Jim has brought on Watermark by bringing in the Treasury Department. That is, if the operatives in that unit on the take from Watermark don't kill her credibility and career first.

In her first few years in Push, Dawn has not been concerned with any potentially criminal activity beyond that of Sloman. In fact, she has helped Sheriff Gaines obstruct justice on several occasions to preserve her cover.

Watermark appears to know that Dawn is in Push to capture Sloman. It appears that they were content to let her remain on that job, as she posed little threat to them (in fact, they might have been able to replace Sloman with Bodnick or another point man before the theft of Sloman's payoff and the arrival of Jim Prufrock). Now, Dawn has distracted them from their regular operations and has made it necessary for Watermark to replace Sloman. Thus Watermark has had good reason to be mindful of Dawn's moves in the last month.



January 2002

Bodnick has told Mary about his plan to rob her father. He knows that she hates Sloman and is pumping her for information about his operations. Between the two of them, they are beginning to realize that there is someone very powerful behind the man they plan to rob, and they are proceeding with caution. Bodnick knows something of Watermark and its operatives, because he has been the head of the Versailles for several years now. He knows that Watermark runs everything in Push, Nevada, but probably assumes, incorrectly, that they are some sort of organized crime organization, rather than a legitimate-seeming multinational with far more power and resources than any loose network of criminals.

June 2002

Bodnick, Moore, and Mary are on the cusp of their plan to rob the Versailles, and will do it at the time of the next payment to Sloman. I am able to generate copies of Bodnick's documents that he reviews each week, alter them, and fax them out as if they came from his office. In conjunction with the robbery, I will fax the latest Versailles statements to Jim Prufrock.

August 2002

Martha has made arrangements on my behalf to plant the Bible with my code in the Versailles safe the day of the planned robbery. I have tapped into surveillance of the vault and can set up a loop of the tape that will cover the vault for 5 minutes while the Bible is planted.

VERSAILLES CASINO SILAS BODNICK 7:42AM SEPT. 17, 2002 PHONE: 866/540-5837

VERSAILLES CASINO General Journal

Ledger #	Dt.	Monthly Cash Flow from Operations	D	C	\$	Week 1	D	C	\$	Week 2
					62,576,436.82				56,791,334.69	
0-1000	9/16	Starting Cash					X		9,201,153.85	
0-1100	9/16	Cash Receipts	X		7,434,540.12			X	13,342,946.25	
0-1200	9/16	Cash Payouts		X	10,920,402.23			X	1,554,524.42	
0-1300	9/16	Other Cash Exp		X	1,254,240.02			X		
0-1400	9/16	Ending Cash			56,791,334.69				51,095,017.87	
Monthly Balance Sheet										
<i>Current Assets</i>										
1-1109	9/16	Cash On Hand	X		40,031,992.90		X		38,098,098.98	
1-1110	9/16	Checking Account	X		1,722,160.84		X		11,279,384.60	
1-1120	9/16	Payroll Checking Account	X		275,540.23		X		200,450.40	
1-1130	9/16	Cash Drawer	X		402,489.79		X		429,999.83	
1-1140	9/16	Petty Cash	X		22,160.38		X		18,956.00	
1-1160	9/16	Undeposited Funds	X		14,326,540.55		X		1,068,128.06	
1-1200	9/16	Accounts Receivable, Net	X		73,242,056.03		X		76,003,324.34	
1-1210	9/16	Allowance for Bad Debts		X	4,117,889.00			X	4,333,276.87	
1-1400	9/16	Prepaid Insurance	X		22,679,200.25		X		22,876,344.00	
1-1500	9/16	Prepaid Interest	X		9,200,396.00		X		10,100,344.03	
1-1600	9/16	Prepaid Taxes	X		14,240,050.50		X		15,260,345.50	
1-1700	9/16	Inventories	X		33,040,500.75		X		11,402,489.79	
1-1710	9/16	Inventories - Food	X		12,363.42		X		12,023.93	
1-1720	9/16	Inventories - Beverages	X		17,550.45		X		14,773.34	
1-1730	9/16	Inventories - Supplies	X		11,870.23		X		12,222.99	
		Total Current Assets			205,117,433.32				185,552,657.76	



September 2002

The robbery is executed, and the Bible is in play. Jim has arrived in town. But Watermark may learn of the Bible and the code it contains before Jim does. Mary and Silas found the Bible with the money in the bags, and they surely knew it didn't belong to Sloman. They assumed correctly that it is something of value to Sloman's superiors. They assumed incorrectly that Sloman's superiors are the owners of the Bible. This is good for my plan, because they decided that as long as the Bible is not "returned" to the Watermark operatives, they have leverage. Since Bodnick's death, Mary spends a great deal of time secreting the Bible away and tracking its progress.



October 2002

The Watermark operatives have analyzed the Bible, and several of the top people know that it exists. They remember the rumor in the company that the founders considered creating a kill-code that could bring the company down, and they think this may be it. They assume it was generated by Al Prufrock before his disappearance and was lost for all these years. If they get a hold of it and see the binary data system they will have further evidence that links it to Prufrock because of his expertise in punch-card data systems.

It is only a matter of time before they do all that they can to stop the Bible.

PERSONNEL FILE

Name: Watermark Operatives and Agents (The Well-Dressed Men)

Background: The most senior field agents in Watermark are the WellDressed Men. These agents seem nearly interchangeable, because they have all run the same gamut to get to their current positions. They are methodical and ruthless in their pursuit of any end that protects the power base of the company.

Like the CIA, Watermark will recruit operatives from multiple sources. Some come from Ph.D. programs at the nations' finest universities. Others come from the military. Others come from management schools and consultancies. Whatever their origin, all become expert in the study of human behavior, corporate espionage, and efficient management.

Psychological profiling is a key element of Watermark recruiting. The only acceptable recruits come as highly intelligent and resourceful blank slates, which Watermark will write on over the years of progress in the organization. Profiling includes:

- * A test for a highly developed, preexisting moral code—rejecting any candidates who exhibit such codes weeds out those that might eventually question the ethics of the operation.

- * Answers to questions that affirm that a candidate values his or her own safety, power, and wealth over that of any other person on the planet.

- * Research into past behavior to check into a candidate's willingness to follow orders, even ones that make little or no sense.

- * A week-long mission, conducted with incomplete information, that actually has no answer—if the candidate gives up before their final report back to their mentor, they fail. If they pursue the mission in a dogged attempt to find some meaning (where none exists), they pass.

Candidates think that they are being recruited by the CIA, until they pass all of the hurdles Watermark sets for them. And perhaps they are.

Watermark agents travel in packs of three, for the most part, driving plain black luxury automobiles (the more senior the Agent, the nicer the car). More senior representatives are allowed to work alone, but the structure of three-agent teams ensures the operating procedures that have let Watermark flourish, as the highest echelons of Watermark must be sure that they have perfect information from the field agents. Nothing can be kept secret from the commanding officers in an organization once three or more people



know it. The game theory agents would need to resolve in order to deceive superior officers becomes too complex and risky for deception of any kind.

Watermark agents can request anything they want of Watermark employees in terms of specific information and observation. Junior Watermark operatives know the only way they can advance to agent status is by election by the current Well-Dressed Men, and that a blackball vote against their candidacy relegates them to junior operative status for more time than they would care to consider. Because of this, they will do anything their superiors order.

The Well-Dressed Men in Push have disguised themselves as members of the Nevada Gaming Commission. This allows their demanding nature to seem ordinary to the employees of the Versailles, which is a frequently monitored spot in the operation. The Gaming Commission cover has afforded the Well-Dressed Men an easy raison d'être in their communications with local law enforcement and other businesses that transact with the Versailles.

In other Watermark operations, the agents also take the guise of Well-Dressed Men. In the content production units of the company that make programming for Watermark purposes, this attire fits right in, just as it does in their telecommunications, consulting, media, and energy interests.

October 17 2002

Watermark has begun to dismantle Push, Nevada. The company has assessed the risk presented by the Bible code, which is still at large, and the I.R.S. investigation. This has made them deem expendable The Push Nevada Experiment. They have returned to the tactics of 1984 and 1985, and are using them to clear out the entire town. Petty crime is flourishing on the streets, and the bank is foreclosing on peoples' homes. Watermark is transferring employees of its businesses and committing acts of harassment to get people to leave town. The company owns enough businesses in other areas of the country that they are able to make most of the population a set of attractive offers to move quite quickly. At this rate, the town of Push will be completely dismantled within four months.

October 19 2002

I have amassed quite a fortune over the years, because I gleaned certain information about companies' future success in the marketplace, and this knowledge enabled me to make advantageous stock trades. I did these trades through my offshore accounts and the result is that I have enough money to escape from Push if a dire situation arises. Alas, the money I have amassed will only be good for that, as it can't buy a cure for the cancer that eats away at my insides.

While preparing my affairs for my departure from Push, I withdrew a significant amount of money from my offshore account and transferred more to other contacts and accomplices that had agreed to help me. At that time I noticed that there has been activity on Al Prufrock's account for the first time in 15 years. This leads me to only one conclusion—Al Prufrock is still alive and well, and that he is on the move. Perhaps my plan to smoke him out by putting the bible in play is working, or the involvement of his son Jim has got him back into the picture. The reunion of my half of the kill code with Prufrock's half of the code is the only remaining hope to completely reset the entire Watermark operation.

**Acknowledgements**

Many people worked long hours at considerable personal risk to make possible the publication of the files sent by T. S. Griffin to Hyperion. The publisher would like to recognize the work of the following individuals and to thank them for their efforts in the creation of this book:

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Photography:

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