Three Explanatory Essays Giving Context and Analysis to Submitted Evidence

Part 1: Cambridge Analytica, the Artificial Enemy and Trump's 'Big Lie'

By Emma L. Briant, University of Essex

Last week, whistleblowers, including former Cambridge Analytica research director Chris Wylie, exposed much of the hidden workings behind the Cambridge Analytica digital strategy funded by the Mercers which empowered the US far right and their Republican apologists, and revealed CA's involvement in the "Brexit" campaign in the UK. Amid Cambridge Analytica CEO Alexander Nix's gaslighting and deflection after Trump's election victory, few questions about this powerful company have been answered.

As a propaganda scholar, I have spent a decade researching SCL Group, a conglomerate of companies including Cambridge Analytica who did work for the Trump campaign. Following the US election, I used the substantial contacts I had developed to research an upcoming book. What I discovered was alarming. In this and two other linked explanatory essays, I discuss my findings concerning the involvement of these parties in Brexit (See Part 2) and Cambridge Analytica's grossly unethical conduct enacted for profit (See Part 3). I draw on my exclusive interviews conducted for my upcoming book *What's Wrong with the Democrats? Media Bias, Inequality and the rise of Donald Trump* (co-authored with George Washington University professor Robert M. Entman) and academic publications on the EU referendum, and my counter-terrorism research.

Due to my expertise on this topic, I was compelled by the UK Electoral Commission, Information Commissioners Office and the Chair of the Digital, Culture, Media and Sport Committee's Fake News Inquiry Damian Collins MP to submit information and research relating to campaigns by SCL, Cambridge Analytica and other actors. Statements from my research interviews with staff at Cambridge Analytica (CA), SCL personnel or otherwise related to their campaigns were submitted in evidence to the Inquiry. It is essential therefore that I comment on and contextualize what are academic research interviews. I discuss the evidence I submitted here in three accessible explanatory texts.

The interviews submitted in evidence address key questions and illustrate the unethical nature of this company's practices. Cambridge Analytica promotes itself as a "data-driven" company and there has been much debate over how data was obtained and used in the US election, including use of personality tests and 'psychographic targeting'. Regarding this, the Director of Business Development Brittany Kaiser said, "What they used certain campaigns and what they didn't, it's hard to say, but *all* of our data, you

know, that [...] was used for *everything*, whether or not we actually did psychographic groupings or not, it doesn't change the fact that we undertook to those quant surveys and that was put into our data set. And then some of those, some of those, uh, variables were used in our models. So in general you would say everything was used in everything but [...] not to the extent that I think some people had prophesized." (Interview: Kaiser/Briant, 4th March 2018). We now know from Chris Wylie that data they used was harvested in unethical ways and hoarded to analyse, 'microtarget', and change audience behaviour, all enabled by Facebook's business model. CA Chief data officer Alex Tayler has explained that psychological analysis is used for "not just dividing up an audience along the lines of gender or what you've bought, but along the lines of the disposition – the psychological profile of those audiences." Regulation is failing to keep up with the rapid progression of coordinated data-driven propaganda powered by AI and augmented with insights from neuroscience and psychology, this should raise alarm for us all.

Use of Data and Psychological Tests

CEO Alexander Nix first claimed CA deployed personality-driven 'psychographic' techniques for Trump, but later denied this saying the methods were used only for Ted Cruz and foreign and commercial campaigns. I asked Vice President of Global Media at CA Molly Schweikert about this and she denied they used OCEAN tests for the US election, reported elsewhere (an acronym for openness, conscientiousness, extraversion, agreeableness, neuroticism) (Interview: Schweikert/Briant, 17th November 2017). Data scientist Alexander Kogan worked with Cambridge Analytica and pulled data on Facebook users using personality tests. When I asked how they research people's values, Kaiser told me their psychological research on US citizens goes beyond OCEAN which has been discussed widely elsewhere. She said they deploy "a combination of different tests that, that were designed by a psychologist. So obviously the ocean [...] tests, which I'm, you know, plenty about, but there were different surveys that we were undertaking in order to understand like emotionality attachments and values and all of this stuff where, you know, instead of, instead of just asking, um, you know, ocean survey based questions, you know, they'd be things like, you get along well with children to believe in the importance of art. Do you see yourself as a leader in the community? So you'd like to, you know, give back to charity, like stuff like that where you can start to probe different psychological traits that aren't just personality." (Interview: Kaiser/Briant, 4th March 2018). Some of these tests analysed 'the dark triad': psychopathy, narcissism and machiavellianism. In the 2016 election, Cambridge Analytica produced messages engineered to maximise emotional and psychological impact, utilizing divisive rhetoric and lies where they could be most electorally effective.

Kaiser told me the company emerged at the right time to provide a new service for the Republican Party:

> "when I first went [...] with Alexander to the US. [...] The Republicans, almost everyone I went to see had never seen technology like *this*. If they did, they had bought like a basic license of I360 or had used some Datatrust data, which was great, but they never had like this full, like N10 integrated solution. They had never used data to inform the creative. [...] They would use it segment people and then they would decide themselves what those segments wanted to hear. So... it was never. It never used models that informed what the message should be, which is the whole point of having psychographic models, understanding what different groups of people want to hear. Otherwise, they were using models to be like, OK, well if somebody is, you know, young and cares about the environment, then they must obviously like this type of messaging or if they're older and they care about gun rights and they've never voted before, then maybe this is good for them. But it's guesswork. It's not science." (Interview: Kaiser/Briant, 4th March 2018).

There has been comparatively less revealed so far of other related companies and the parent company, SCL Group Ltd. The CEO and founder of SCL, Nigel Oakes, set up SCL Elections and CA with, and to be led by, his close SCL business partner Alexander Nix (Wendy Siegelman and Ann Marlowe have illustrated the company structures here). Oakes is an 'old school' PR man and a bit dismissive of the new big data techniques that Nix's side of the business sells for political campaigns. He sees them as 'very powerful' but still in their 'infancy' and for him the real value comes from a social science framework that underpins the work of all the companies. In defence and politics alike, SCL Group sought to put a pseudo-academic spin on their work as they expanded in a highly competitive industry a facade that obscured dirty tactics.

Having 'the balls' to Target the Innocent

The Channel 4 expose reveals Cambridge Analytica derived their power from a willingness to abuse it, targeting the vulnerable, hacking, and entrapping opponents. In the US election Oakes told me, with a tone of admiration, that they recognized the power in Trump's message, "…when we explain in the two-minute lift pitch what happened with Trump… you can forget all the micro-targeting and micro-data whatever and come back to some very very simple things which is: Trump had the balls, *really* the balls to say what people wanted to hear." (Interview: Oakes/Briant, 24th November 2017).

CA's political campaigns hinged on lies, and Oakes recognized this and understood it was not without victims. Indeed Oakes knew the kind of false messaging they were deploying has had victims before. He told me,

> "sometimes to attack the 'other' group, and know that you're gonna lose them, is going to reinforce or resonate *your* group, which is why, Hitler... I've got to be very careful about saying so... you must never say this... off the record, but... of course, Hitler attacked the *Jews* because... he didn't have a problem with the Jews at *all*. But *the people* didn't like the Jews... so if *the people* thought... [...] He could just use them to say... so he just leveraged an artificial enemy, well it's exactly what Trump did. He leveraged a Muslim- I mean, you know, it's... it *was* a real enemy... ISIS or whatever... but how big a threat is ISIS really to America? I mean, really? I mean, we're still talking about 9-11, well 9-11 is a long time ago.' (Interview: Oakes/Briant, 24th November 2017 Original Emphasis - this interview excerpt has been published in parliamentary evidence).

While, of course, ISIS and their terrorism posed a very real threat within Iraq and Syria and have been responsible for a massive humanitarian crisis, a report by the US Government Accountability Office shows that from Sept. 12, 2001, to Dec. 31, 2016, there were 85 deadly attacks by homegrown violent extremists of which 62 were by far right extremists.

Rhetoric of a 'Muslim threat' to Western countries has been used repeatedly by politicians to argue for immigration controls, increased defense spending for counter-terrorism abroad, and for domestic programs deployed to 'counter' oft-exaggerated threats. Oakes joked about Trump manipulating and reinforcing Americans' false belief that Muslim migrants are a threat to their country, a myth propagated extensively on the right of American politics:

> NO: '[Trump] also said *ridiculous* things like, we're going to ban Muslims from coming into the country because I'm *sick* of people taking machine guns and pointing them at *schools*... and our children... and our children are the most important thing... Well there's never *been* a Muslim, *ever* that's put a gun on an American school, but it seems to-'
> EB: it's the perception
> NO: '-yeh, *that's* terrorism, and they *must* be Muslims, and there've been a lot of shootings... They're all Americans doing the shootings! And people go 'Yeah, fuck, it's our children! [...] And so you've got Hillary Clinton going 'We're going to increase the fiduciary financial spending and four percent growth in our area.....' and people go 'well, you know, good luck with that... I wanna build a wall..." (Interview: Oakes/Briant, 24th November 2017).

While, according to Oakes, “all the micro-targeting and micro-data whatever” helped the messaging reach the right people, he also shows cynical awareness that what CA was disseminating, Trump’s statements about Muslims, were calculated and harmful lies. In Oakes' statements, truth is for those who don’t have ‘the balls’ to lie in order to win — citizens are reduced to levers and tools, and value is placed only in fetishizing the levers of power. The most extreme manipulations are admired for their Machiavellian ruthlessness with no empathy for the victims.

Prior to establishing SCL, Oakes was quoted in a 1992 interview about marketing saying that, ‘We use the same techniques as Aristotle and Hitler’ in appealing to emotions. Oakes’ belief that Hitler “didn’t have a problem with the Jews” and his shocking enthusiasm for what he considers comparable techniques in Trump’s deployment of a propaganda strategy built on religious persecution against another group *he recognizes* as innocent, offers insight into both his character and this approach to political campaigns.

Oakes evokes in his comments, Hitler's ”big lie” conspiracy theory from Mein Kampf; Hitler’s lie presented Germany as “innocent, besieged” and under attack by the artificial enemy he created — an international Jewish conspiracy, an idea then repeated in Nazi propaganda as they carried out the holocaust (Herf, 2005). Oakes understands the significance of comparing the messaging CA put out for Trump to Hitler's disinformation. He told me that Trump secured political control by manipulating an artificial fear of an innocent “other” — his messaging then propagated by CA and supposedly ‘independent’ but coordinated groups. Their methods may seem extreme, but the propaganda themes only resonated because they echoed false beliefs and simplistic explanations for inequality and global insecurity that have been widely disseminated, especially by Republicans, in US politics and ideological media.

Propaganda, fear mongering and dog whistles to racism are not new in American politics. The “othering” Oakes refers to has not suddenly emerged since 9/11. Islamophobic sentiment has increased as a byproduct of political and media rhetoric emphasising “threat” to justify the intractable “war on terror,” the politically unpopular Iraq War, domestic mass surveillance, and countless other incursions on civil liberties and human rights deployed in the name of “security.”

A sustained, politically motivated campaign of media coverage in both the U.S. and Britain has blamed refugee victims of these wars for the violence inflicted upon their citizens by terrorists. It portrays them as a threat, as criminal and as economically

motivated and deceitful (see my co-authored book Bad News for Refugees for example).

The 'War on Terror' conflicts which fueled public fears and fed this "othering" rhetoric also provided crucial early contracts on which Oakes built SCL's business. Oakes set up the Behavioural Dynamics Institute, a research facility which both SCL and CA would later draw on (Interview: Oakes/Briant, 24th November 2017) to help develop their influence techniques. I discuss SCL and BDI's "War on Terrorism" role more fully in my last book, Propaganda and Counter-terrorism.

CA's violations of ethical conduct and use of potentially illegal activities (revealed by award-winning journalist Carole Cadwalladr, with The Guardian and Channel 4) to bring Trump to power represent an onslaught on democracy and against ordinary Americans' civil rights. This "othering" strategy deployed against artificial enemies and often targeting people's deepest fears, was accompanied by a surge in anti-Muslim attacks recorded by the FBI, activist groups, and journalism organizations during Trump's campaign.

African Americans and Mexicans were also easy targets for Trump. Oakes, mocked the simplicity of the message compared to the Democrats' dry miscommunications:

> 'We all thought it was a joke every time he said it. He says that we're going to put up a wall… for the Mexicans… and we were all 'you can't say that!' you know, that's *loony*!' And then we're gonna get the Mexicans to pay for it, and the Mexican President's going 'I'm not bloody paying for *any* of it!' But it didn't matter because in the Rust States the guys were saying 'look, I've got people, the Mexicans coming across illegally, not paying any tax [...] And [...] he didn't say 'we're going to redress the…' he said 'we're gonna build a wall and keep these fuckers *out*!' (Interview: Oakes/Briant, 24th November 2017 original emphasis).

Using CA's media strategy, Trump's false racist and Islamophobic comments, resentment and fear were deployed where they would be most effective — mobilizing swing state audiences, using voters' personal data to monitor them, and using psychological profiling to manipulate their emotional responses en masse. There is little to enforce ethical conduct on digital propaganda strategies now emerging.

Hacking and Propaganda

Accompanying prolific lying and the explosion of "computational propaganda" used by the Trump campaign and Cambridge Analytica, they also aimed to exploit the series of exposed emails from the DNC (Clinton campaign chairman John Podesta was hacked on March 19, 2016) and the ongoing investigation into Hillary Clinton's private email

server. While the DNC hack was attributed by US intelligence agencies to Russia, which the Russian Government denied (US National Intelligence Council, 2017). Importantly, Brittany Kaiser was involved in establishing CA's relationships with Black Cube hackers who hacked emails for the Nigerian elections, a campaign which also used content where people were being dismembered and apparently murdered to terrify and intimidate voters.

CA sought cooperation with Wikileaks to aid distribution of the leaked DNC emails. Nix publicly stated they approached Assange in early June 2016 but recently insisted at the UK Fake News Inquiry for which I submit this evidence that he has "never spoken to them." This is unlikely as Nigel Oakes, told me that, "Alexander, if he got the release… of the Hillary Clinton emails it would have *dramatically* pushed her down in the polls. But there's nothing wrong with that… that's perfectly legitimate, Julian Assange was releasing things every day and Alexander rang up and said, you know, 'Any chance we can help you release the Hillary Clinton things?'" (Interview: Oakes/Briant, 24th November 2017).

Testimony by Glenn Simpson to the House Intelligence Committee indicated Nigel Farage may have provided Assange with the original USB stick. In his testimony Simpson claims WikiLeaks was part of a "somewhat unacknowledged relationship" between the Trump team and the "UKIP people." The FBI investigation has been scrutinizing CA's interactions with Wikileaks, Russian ties, and whether CA knew more.

Assange tweeted in 2017 confirming "an approach by Cambridge Analytica [prior to November last year] and can confirm that it was rejected by WikiLeaks." When asked about the wisdom in attempting to help Assange given the leaks may have come from Russian sources, Oakes said "At the time, at the time, you didn't know there was an- … that anyone's ever going to mention the Russians." He continued defending the decision to approach Assange saying the Russians weren't yet in the media, "In hindsight … remember, this is 18 months before … and it was a year before the election. No-one had *been* in the press." (Interview: Oakes/Briant, 24th November 2017).

Oakes' claims their contact with Assange may have been 12 –18 months before the November 2016 election, far earlier than Nix stated and before they were working on the campaign, raises questions of a longer term relationship with Assange. The dates he claims would mean that CA was in contact before Assange released the archive in March 2016. Now indicted by the FBI, Gen. Flynn, who formerly held an advisory role at Cambridge Analytica, also may have tried to facilitate this.

Nigel Oakes told me how SCL began working with Flynn, the connection made by "The chief executive of SCL group US [...] a guy called Josh Veseche. He's actually Sri Lankan. He worked for six years for Flynn and […] we've done a lot of work with Flynn, with JIEDDO' a Pentagon programme started in 2006 to tackle the problem of IEDs." He continued, "We presented to, uh, the head of the strategic — he was called up in the Pentagon. He was the right hand man to their chief of staff and [...] this guy said you need to meet Flynn, and I was prepped to get onto the aeroplane that night to fly to the Bagram air base and actually to let JEIDDO back in, and so I said can I come back tomorrow, and the guy said, I've already briefed Flynn. Your contract starts tomorrow with JIEDDO, and we didn't even meet--the first contract with Flynn we didn't even meet to do." (Interview: Oakes/Briant, 24th November 2017).

Recent discussions of fake news have focused on content and spread — and solutions to manage it include censorship, blacklists, *countering* the content with government propaganda, and a confusing multiplicity of fact checking sites. Some of these proposed solutions challenge free speech and media freedom, complicating the issue for the public.

Media responses largely ignore the powerful elites responsible for turning media flows into an unsettling slurry of propaganda and making a mockery of democracy, as a problem that's too hard to address. And it is not just foreign elites' propaganda that threaten elections, it can be uncomfortable to interrogate power at home. It may not surprise us to learn today that unethical campaigns were deployed by unethical people, but the reporting on dark innards of the Trump-Mercer Republican machine has been the most vital journalism we have seen since the start of this fetid campaign — accountability matters.

Didn't Obama do this too?

Nix claims at the Fake News Inquiry that "big data and predictive analytics in political campaigns was something that was really championed by Obama's campaign in 2008" and "in 2012, the Democrats pioneered the use of addressable advertising technology in order to improve the way that they use this data to target people as individuals" to justify CA's actions. While true, Nix also emphasised CA's advancements and now can't have it both ways. He may be drawing false equivalence.

Chris Wylie worked on the Obama campaign, a campaign known for transforming data-driven targeting that also laid the groundwork for manipulative techniques with which campaign contractors are now experimenting. Yet Brittany Kaiser, CA's director of business development who worked on data for the 2008 Obama campaign is friends with the data scientists who worked for Clinton and told me their campaign data

operations were very basic by comparison. Indeed, this is what attracted her to take the post at CA (Interview: Kaiser/Briant, 4th March 2018). She emphasised the extent of their use of data compared to the Democratic campaigns throughout the interview, including the scale of their surveys of ”millions of people in the United States” and “Instead of considering, you know, thousands and thousands of data points and buying in licensing, commercial and lifestyle data from *every* source and even having people go down to getting like, you know, church group lists and everything for extra data points. I mean what we were doing was *as far as you could possibly go...* on their [Democrat] side [...] they were really relying upon, [...] past voting history [...] people's election data, more than other things. At least that's what they say. So I don't know if they would say that if it wasn't true, that'd be really strange.” (Interview: Kaiser/Briant, 4th March 2018).

Kaiser explained that the parties used data differently, and Democrats did not exploit personality and values to the same degree. “It doesn't really make any sense when the reason why Trump won was because of the first time voters and disaffected voters, people who had not voted in a long time that were moved to come out. So if you're spending all your time on people that have voted before and judging what they're going to do based on their past political engagement then that's just not right. It doesn't make any sense.” (Interview: Kaiser/Briant, 4th March 2018).

Such methods and algorithms as CA deployed are ”black-boxed” and difficult to prove. The CA press officer claimed the company ran a “traditional” campaign comparable to the Democrats — CA has been backpedaling publicly, but Kaiser recently stressed to me that the types and extent of data that CA uses are quite different.

Extensive evidence on unethically sourced data was presented by Wylie to the Guardian, and even some skeptics about the uniqueness of CA's technology, Jay Pinho for example, recognize the powerful significance of CA's use of misleading and manipulative, grossly unethical tactics as setting them apart from Obama's campaign. Fetishizing their specific technology will only promote its power. The point is how they abused data (and people) for profit, the political impact of their campaign, and the implications of rapid development in this area for the future for all our democracies.

CA played a fundamental role and helped the Trump campaign win the presidential election, lift far-right views to heightened prominence, and give those views legitimacy. Trump was aided by the Republican Party, and the blindness and complacency of elite Democrats too distant to see the urgent need to address deepening inequality and mount an effective response to mounting tensions. Democrats must recognize the need to propose *real* solutions for inequality (Hacker & Pierson, 2016; Frank, 2016) — not race for this new tech themselves.

Americans must strengthen regulatory and oversight systems from this experience to ensure that their upcoming elections are transparent and ethically and democratically deployed. We must prepare for a very different future and investigate further the potential threat of commercial and political exploitation of our communication environment and the emotions we reveal within it poses. Our data can reveal more about us than we wish to think about; the potentials for harm in some capabilities cannot be understated — machine learning can successfully identify markers of depression from our Instagram photos for instance (Reece and Danforth, 2017) — as many declare #metoo, post-Weinstein, it is not unlikely that future campaigns could seek to combine these and similar data to exploit psychological wounds and trigger emotional responses.

We've mostly heard about Trump and Cruz, but CA also did work for John Bolton and Ben Carson, and Sam Patten told me he worked for CA on three races in Oregon, part of a 'trial run' they did of several other campaigns before working for Cruz and Trump (Interview: Patten/Briant, 23rd July 2017). He said matter-of-factly, "I've worked for Ukraine, Iraq, I've worked in deeply corrupt countries, and our system, isn't very different" (Interview: Patten/Briant, 23rd July 2017). The extent of CA's work in US politics is unclear but I asked Brittany Kaiser:

> EB: How many did you work on in total then, with the small races?
>
> BK: Oh my God, I can't - It's hard to even say, to be honest because, I mean I must have pitched ...*hundreds* of campaigns. The amount that we actually ended up working on is kind of hard to *tell* because sometimes when we would work for like a, a super pac or a state GOP, where *technically* our data and our work was going into like, you know, *all* of the campaigns in the state, but we weren't actually individually working for all those campaigns. You're just supporting them with our data, our models our creative strategy. So it's kind of difficult to measure individual clients versus the actual races that we were supporting in that kind of way. (Interview: Kaiser/Briant, 4th March 2018).

CAs research then informed the Trump campaign: "We basically built and experimented on so many different things because we had [...] the, the caucuses and state by state primaries [...] allowed us to really zone in on, [...] all of these different states and undertake very state specific research... and really have a good understanding of the different audiences and every state for those primaries. So I think it prepared us really well for him hitting the ground running in the Trump campaign." (Interview: Kaiser/Briant, 4th March 2018).

In December 2017 Alexander Nix stated that CA was moving away from US politics. Yet, Molly Schweikert, global head of digital at CA, told me shortly before the

statements that CA still had current US political campaigns, it is unlikely they would abandon existing commitments: “We have some engagements that we’re currently working with, they’re current so I can’t speak directly to them…” (Interview: Schweikert/Briant 17th November 2017).

The US and other democracies must urgently demand stronger protections for how data is used. Modern data-driven propaganda is evolving rapidly and poses a real threat in the hands of those who aim to exploit the vulnerable or crush their voices, while they climb to power and wealth by deeply unethical means.

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Part 2: Cambridge Analytica: Backbone of Brexit
By Emma L. Briant, University of Essex

See also my previous essay ***Cambridge Analytica, the Artificial Enemy and Trump's 'Big Lie'*** *that exposes the cynical deployment of a racist and Islamophobic strategy by then Candidate Donald Trump and Cambridge Analytica (CA), the Mercer-funded digital operation, and how it helped manipulate fear through smearing innocent people in order to seize his presidency.*

This essay focuses on Cambridge Analytica's relationship to Brexit, specifically Leave.EU. My findings reveal that Leave.EU deployed its cynical and calculating strategies using borrowed methods of Cambridge Analytica (CA), to win *at all costs* despite violence unfolding before their eyes. Leave.EU sought to create an impression of 'democracy' and a campaign channeling public will, while creating deliberately 'provocative' communications to subvert it and win by channelling hateful propaganda.

I conducted interviews with key leaders and employees of CA and Leave.EU in 2017 and 2018 as part of my primary research as an academic with specialism in research on migration and media narratives (See my co-authored book Bad News for Refugees). Findings of my interviews confirm that work was performed by CA for Leave.EU, and while the interviews were inconsistent on how far CA was involved in Leave.EU, they are illuminating in the light of questions raised by ongoing investigations of both.

Some of the key questions regarding CA's relationship with Leave.EU that I explored in my research interviews included:

1. What was CA's level of involvement in the Leave.EU campaign?
2. Did CA work on any of the Leave.EU campaign data and were CA methods used (even if this was prior to the campaign)?
3. What data was used in the Leave.EU campaign and how?
4. What parallels or cooperation existed with the Trump Campaign?
5. What methods were deployed in the Leave.EU campaign, how and by whom?

Cambridge Analytica's level of Involvement:

I interviewed Gerry Gunster, an American strategist who worked for Leave.EU, and questioned him on CA's involvement and role with Leave.EU as follows:

> GG: 'And then Cambridge Analytica, although they were involved early on, they they sort of gave a bit of a backbone on how to do behavioral targeting and micro-targeting… um, they didn't actually do the execution, though, that was done…'
>
> EB: So they didn't do this like psychographic stuff that keeps being claimed?

> GG: 'No. They did not, no. I mean, they provided some backbone for *how* to do it and then a lot of it was just kind of handed over to the campaign staff.' (Interview: Gunster/Briant, 4th October 2017).

Gunster confirms that CA provided Leave.EU with a 'backbone' and if this involved communicating ‘how to do it’ as Gunster says, CA gave instruction on behavioural targeting and micro-targeting, but he did not firmly say how Leave.EU actually used the methods, and could not comment on whether this guided their messaging. Gunster, later hints at the kinds of activities CA may have provided including analytics, behavioural targeting and optimization:

> EB: You know, um, who was coming up with the actual messaging? Was that Cambridge Analytica?
> GG: 'That was all of us.'
> EB: That was all of you all together.
> GG: 'That was us. That was me working with Aaron [Banks] and Andy [Wigmore] and everybody coming up with the messaging. I mean, Cambridge Analytica - They're nothing more than analytics. They're not messaging people… They're not *campaign managers*.'
> EB: Yeah. Okay. I guess so. I guess so. So they just figure out the response. What did you call it?
> GG: 'Yeh...behavioral targeting. And the optimization.'
> (Interview: Gunster/Briant, 4th October 2017).

Gunster’s interview suggests that CA may have provided Leave.EU modelling or strategies they used to deploy the algorithms but did not participate in developing the messages used in the Leave.EU campaign. Gunster directed me to talk to Andy Wigmore the Communications Director for Leave.EU. and/or Arron Banks co-founder of the Leave.EU campaign.

I interviewed Andy Wigmore with Leave.EU in October 2017, and he shared, 'they [Cambridge Analytica] didn’t give us a little box of toys and say, there you are, have a go. They just said look, if-- you gotta prepare for this because if we come in, this is what we need and what we want -- we want to do it' (Interview: Wigmore/Briant, 4th October 2017).

Wigmore’s statements regarding CA have been inconsistent in public and within in his interview with me. At times, he claimed their product wasn't very good, played down its significance to Leave.EU (they 'weren't necessary, almost') and yet praised them ('they had an incredibly clever product') but he said that their methods for targeting were useful to Leave.EU. On two different occasions Wigmore stressed that they copied CA:

'if we got designated then yes they would have been but what we - they *did* tell us they were going to do was, probably yes - it probably was useful because *we copied it*. We didn't use them because we couldn't and they didn't - believe me they're commercial. They wouldn't do nothing for nothing, it would've cost us about six million quid if we was to hire them…' (Interview: Wigmore, 4th October 2017).

Wigmore also explains how they [Leave.EU] used CA's method and how it was put into play by Arron Banks' company, Eldon Insurance, actuaries directing the crucial CA inspired targeting for the campaign:

> '"So, some of the things they [Cambridge Analytica] did tell us, which were-- which were-- we did copy. And no question about that, is about, you know, these small clusters, this you need to find out in the - where these people are and what matters to them. And what we were able to deduce from that, and remember, um, ah, and as an insurance company you have actuaries that work for you. Actuaries are brilliant, they're mathematicians. So if you give them a problem and you say right we want to look, here's, here's some stuff. What do you think of the probabilities. They will-- came up with the probabilities of the areas that were most concerned about the EU and we got that from our own actuaries. We had - we have four actuaries which we said right, tell us what this looks like from our data and they're the ones that pinpointed the twelve areas in the United Kingdom that we needed to send Nigel Farage to.' (Interview: Wigmore/Briant, 4th October 2017).

<u>CA's contribution to data use and campaign methods used by Leave.EU</u>

Brittany Kaiser did the pitch for Leave.EU; in an American example, she told me the process for pitching involved examining data, telling them where they need to focus and that it included producing a plan:

> 'it would be more like working with the heads of the Superpac to understand what data they had access to, what they wanted to achieve, what, what states [...] they thought they were going to concentrate on and if they didn't know, *then we could look at our data and tell them where they needed to concentrate*, know where, where their funding sources coming in and they're like, what was the budget that we would be able to- to use for digital, tv or whatever it was going to be. Then you could say, you know, based off of your internal capacity and the funding sources that you have in the data you already have access to, these are how many, you know, members of my team, you're going to need [...] this is how much you're going to spend on analytics on digital on television based on the budget you have. *It's kind of like building out the plan so that you can write the proposal and contract and get a job*.' (Interview: Kaiser/Briant, 4th March 2018 -

> emphasis added). She said, ' I mean I was involved in that for, for almost everything we did besides Cruz' (Interview: Kaiser/Briant, 4th March 2018).

Kaiser expressed to me that CA promotes itself as a “data-driven” company using data that they collect to understand, model and change the behaviour of an audience; they certainly do ‘do messaging.’ In discussing the U.S., Brittany Kaiser told me 'the whole point of all of our research was to really seek to produce sets of models that could inform what you needed to say to people' (Interview: Kaiser/Briant, 4th March 2018). Though Cambridge Analytica and Leave.EU continued to deny they worked together, Kaiser has now publicly spoken out saying that their claims of no work being done are not true.

The Leave.EU 'backbone' on how to target may have come from proof of method work they did for the Leave.EU team before they lost the official designation bid. When a company demonstrates these kinds of campaign tools work and how effective their campaign would be, they *have* to do this by actually analysing data and building models. They would need to use data from that country - otherwise it may work in another country with a very different population but be entirely culturally inappropriate and ineffective for the new audience. Methods cannot be proven any other way.

I interviewed Nigel Oakes, the CEO of SCL Group (CA is part of the SCL Group, a conglomerate of companies), and asked about CA’s role in Brexit. In particular, I explored this question of preparatory work done involving Leave.EU's data while CA was competing for the contract. In the exchange detailed below Oakes states that while they did not get paid to work on the Leave.EU campaign, CA demonstrated their method for them, and he shared that they 'had to do the *work*' and were 'fully engaged' before Leave.EU lost the official designation:

> NO: There were two campaigns… there were four campaigns, two for the ‘for’… and two for ‘against’… and they had to fight internally to see who gets the money. And they were given equal money to try and make it as fair as possible. We were with the campaign that lost - that’s all it was. So we were fully engaged. And if we were going to work on it we would’ve worked on it and been paid by that campaign and that was all lined up and whatever but the truth was we lost. And we were not on the winning bid. So there was no contract and no money...
> EB: Yeh, but there was also preparatory work I think…
> NO: But that’s not work…
> EB: I was told that you guys did analytics…

> NO: What we did was we had to *prove* to the team, our bidding team… and we had to do the *work* so that our bidding team could present and to show that the quality of what they then had got.
> EB: You had to prove your method…
> NO: Yes. But there was no work that was done… so when Alexander Nix says we did not work on the campaign it's absolutely the truth. There was no work we done on the cam- because none of this group [Vote Leave] used anything from the lost bid work…They didn't say can we take all the work that you've done…and use it themselves because they hated each other. So… the press twist these things round into the most extraordinary machinations. (Interview: Nigel Oakes/Briant, 24th November 2017).

Here Oakes completely avoids the question of whether Leave.EU used the lost bid work, CA's algorithms and modelling, for their media campaign. He corrects himself mid-sentence and specifies that the campaign who got the official designation, Vote Leave, hated Leave.eu and so did not use CA's modelling, but does not say if Leave.eu used it which would be more logical if the models were developed for them. 'Importantly, CA have a relationship to the Canadian company who assisted Vote Leave, Aggregate IQ, coordination between the campaigns is prohibited. Andy Wigmore, interestingly referred to AIQ in interview as 'SCL Canada', a nod to that link (Interview: Oakes/Briant, 4th October 2017). Work conducted on the data, even if before the campaign, might conflict with campaign funding restrictions in the UK, and should have been declared. It might also be problematic if the work were funded by foreign donor, such as the Mercers who fund Cambridge Analytica. Also, given that they had done the proof of method for Leave.EU, it would be interesting to confirm whether they used their analytics and what data was worked on to give the campaign its 'backbone' as per Gunster's comments.

Recently, Wigmore has openly admitted that Cambridge Analytica offered to break the law for them "...they said look, you give us a million pounds and we'll get this campaign going and it will generate you six million pounds. So that was the scenario they suggested...they were convinced you could do it. But it was clearly illegal. Not only our lawyers said it but when the rules came out you could see you couldn't accept foreign donations. So we dismissed it." In the same interview "Wigmore" gives contrasting explanations for why "Leave.EU" chose to send Nigel Farage where they did, and he doesn't admit they copied CA. When J. J. Patrick asked him about the parallels between the Leave.EU approach and the CA methods, he sought to present himself as 'naive' - something he is not, having met him - 'I pointed out this is exactly the same method Nix employs. "It is. But we found out by accident," Wigmore said.

Following The Trump Doctrine

It is clear that Leave.EU and the Trump campaigns deployed parallel strategies; with centrality of Facebook for Leave.EU and Twitter for Trump and obvious ideological parallels. Trump channelled resentment and fear on immigrant scapegoats as 'Drug dealers, criminals, rapists' and leveraged a Muslim 'artificial enemy' (Interview: Oakes/Briant, 24th November 2017 - this interview excerpt has been published in parliamentary evidence) in a manner that SCL CEO Nigel Oakes compared coldly to Hitler's propaganda against Jews. Interestingly, Leave.EU's Communications Director Andy Wigmore also mentioned the Nazis, and how Goebbels' propaganda strategy has value in a 'pure marketing sense' - if you can forget about the horrible killing they did:

> 'You'd've studied this, you know, the propaganda machine of the the Nazis for instance, if you take away all the hideous horror, all that kind of stuff, it was very clever, the way they managed to do what they did. In its pure marketing sense you -oh ok! You can see the logic of how they presented things and the imagery, everything from that and think oh ok! And that is propaganda - ISIS… interestingly… uhhhh... (Interview: Wigmore/Briant, 4th October 2017)

Wigmore continues, drawing a parallel to the Brexit campaign:

> 'I know- and well you know this of course you do- but looking at that in hindsight now having been at the sharp end of this campaign you think Crikey, this is not new. And it's using the tools you have at the time… I think 2016 was unique, I don't think you could ever repeat it. And I don't think you could repeat the techniques you used in 2016, it was of its time. Twitter and Facebook...' (Interview: Wigmore/Briant, 4th October 2017).

Although Trump's campaign concluded after the Brexit vote, Andy Wigmore told me that as the Leave.UK campaign progressed they were copying the Trump campaign's strategy to drive publicity by being provocative, a strategy that emerged in the U.S. as the 'Trump Doctrine.' :

> AW: The only way we were going to get - make a noise, was to follow the Trump Doctrine which was, the more outrageous we are, the more attention we get and the more attention we get, the more outrageous we'll be. And that's exactly what we did. So our tiles were provocative and they were designed to be provocative and they got the attention. The amount of bollockings that *we* got.
> EB: So you were copying Trump campaign?
> AW: Completely, completely, completely. (Interview: Wigmore/Briant, 4th October 2017).

Andy Wigmore explained that the Leave.EU team could see their strategy was having a negative impact and 'created a wave of hatred and um, racism and all this right movement, empowering all those things', then Jo Cox MP was stabbed by a Britain First terrorist. He saw it as paralleled by the spread of emboldened racism in the US:

> AW: So [Nigel Farage] said, Right, if we keep immigration at the top of the debate, his "instinct said we would win. And the reason why we polled so much because we were so unsure constantly if we were doing the right thing, particularly when you have horrific incidents like Jo Cox. And you think wahhh that's too much. And then the blame from the media: immigration, you've created a ... wave of hatred and um, racism and all this right movement, empowering -- all those things, which, you know, Trump's experienced as well. We were very wahhh, maybe we *have* gone too far. (Interview: Wigmore/Briant, 4th October 2017)

However, this question did not, for them, become a question of ethics and morality, personal responsibility, or indeed national security:

> AW: 'The only thing we can do to test that is take a look how, what the reaction... The London here is a very different country to the rest of the country. So, out there in the places where, where, you know, people were- had different ...reasons to the London - the Jo Cox thing was sad, dreadful, but it didn't change their views. There was no shift on the dial as they call it. [...] So everything was going well up to that point. Even Nigel thought that was it, we've lost. And, um. The breaking point poster which remember we cooked up, he put up. Again, everything we did was tested.' (Interview: Wigmore/Briant, 4th October 2017).

Wigmore's response echoes Oakes' focus on levers of power, having 'the balls' to do what would win at all costs. The impact in this case was evaluated only on whether it was affecting *their popularity with their supporters* and whether the message was 'working' with the audience they were seeking to sway . If it 'worked' in exciting supporters then they would continue, regardless of believing they were having a negative impact on the country's domestic security by emboldening racists and the far right and stirring up tensions. Importantly, the engineers and strategists who created both the Trump and Brexit campaign propaganda had designed the propaganda to engage very specific emotions, with the most provocative content and manipulative methods they could harness. They have then, an interest in making the emotions they created seem spontaneous and pre-existing in the population. An interest in deflecting away from the actions they took to create and excite those emotions to a level where suppressed racism and implicit bias turned into explicit and expressed racism and even violent actions. In this narrative which arose several times in interviews, the will of the people existed already, public desire was simply channelled... the brexiteers, and

indeed Trump just gave voters what they already wanted. This framing allows them to create and reinforce despite their manipulative methods, the illusion of consent, and a fairly won campaign embodying democratic will.

Part 3: Cashing in on Dirty Tricks: Leave.EU, and SCL Group
By Emma L. Briant, University of Essex

See also my previous two essays. The first, **Cambridge Analytica, the Artificial Enemy and Trump's 'Big Lie'** *exposes the cynical deployment of a racist and Islamophobic strategy by then Candidate Donald Trump and the Mercer-funded digital operation by Cambridge Analytica who helped to knowingly smear innocent people in order to seize his presidency at all costs; and the second,* ***Cambridge Analytica: Backbone of Brexit,*** *focuses on Cambridge Analytica's relationship to Leave.EU during the 'brexit' campaign.*

In this third essay I examine findings revealing the relationship between the companies, examine business tactics for boosting profits across the linked SCL Group businesses, illuminating a network of companies who promoted their campaigns in the West, while hiding the unethical business deals in the developing world that this reputation helped secure, all to drive up profits *across* the SCL Group. I also look at how Leave.EU, who borrowed from Cambridge Analytica's methodology then exploited the 'Brexit' campaign Artificial Intelligence methods for profit in the Insurance Industry. I then look at the future of influence and behavioural change; a propaganda industry few knew existed which is flourishing and profiting from conflicts and corruption worldwide.

From Brexit there was money to be made, directly and indirectly. The Leave.EU campaign was bankrolled by wealthy investors who tried to profit from Britain's post-Referendum decline and instability. Among these Arron Banks shot onto the Rich-List in 2017, with estimated £250M net worth thanks to his company Eldon Insurance recording £16.7million underlying profits in the first six months of 2017. What Banks used to propel himself there was the Artificial Intelligence techniques they developed during the Brexit propaganda campaign. Importantly, Andy Wigmore, former Communications Director of Leave.EU, stated if they had won the designation, 'we would've been given data, not by Cambridge Analytica, by the Government, electoral roll data which you can then use [...] Because Cambridge Analytica artificial intelligence requires data - if you don't have it, you can't do it. So if we'd won the designation we would have absolutely used them. But because um… we didn't, we didn't.' - this implied that they couldn't do CA's artificial intelligence because they didn't have enough data (Interview: Wigmore/Briant, 4th October 2017). Applied to insurance risk Banks has said AI developed during the Leave.EU campaign meant they could 'profile the people we want, and also the people we don't want.' Wigmore, having said they couldn't do CA's AI method as they didn't have the data, excitedly explained to me how they developed AI and used it for profit.

In Part 2 I explained that Leave.EU had Eldon Insurance employees deploy what they learned from Cambridge Analytica (CA), four actuaries, two marketers and a graphics team running (and learning from) the campaign all out of the same address, Lysander House in Bristol, Leave.EU audited everything to then learn from it (Interview: Wigmore/Briant, 4th October 2017). I was given evidence that revealed how little effort was made to distinguish Eldon Insurance and Leave.EU. This document shows a 'profitability overview' using Leave.EU's data to illustrate how their insurance can profit from the racially charged digital communication strategy of the Leave.EU campaign. Another document shows how they used Leave.EU's outputs for Eldon's own purposes; even the branding is identical (see second Leave.eu document).

Wigmore told me 'the referendum's just finished. What we discovered, we were actually quite bloody good at artificial intelligence. And we've applied what we learned in the referendum to our business model for insurance. [...] So we've started an operation in Ole Miss University in Mississippi which is the centre for artificial intelligence in the world' (Interview: Wigmore/Briant, 4th October 2017). Eldon's AI methods apparently were developed from what they did on the Leave.EU campaign but it is hard to imagine how they would do this without using the same data (Interview: Wigmore/Briant, 4th October 2017) He explained, 'So you have a lot of data when you're an insurer. And that data is, it's, there's layers and layers and layers. You know, you have, [...] lifestyle data, of course you do. You have, um, credit check data which of course you do. All that data you put that together, the way you can actually then make risk against an individual is incredibly strong.' (Interview: Wigmore/Briant, 4th October 2017). It raises the question of how they were able to apply the algorithms from their Leave.EU data -- which Wigmore claimed was quite limited (Interview: Wigmore/Briant, 4th October 2017) -- and apply this to their insurance data. It begs the question of whether they used the Eldon Insurance data for Leave.EU?

Wigmore shared that he had been working on this new venture for some time with a data scientist in Mississippi, and eagerly told how powerful and lucrative it was: 'So that in artificial intelligence terms is the holy grail in insurance. So that was a byproduct of what we discovered, brilliantly. And that's all about data. That is all about data. So um, that was - that was the upshot. So we've set this up in Mississippi. It's been going for nine months, we've been testing for twelve months now, testing all the insurance against it and it's extraordinary.' (Interview: Wigmore/Briant, 4th October 2017).

Wigmore shared that the profits from applying the AI modelling drawn from their EU Referendum experimentation was huge 'Massive. Massive. Our loss ratios have dropped by about 13 - 14%. And in - in insurance terms that's millions of pounds. Millions. Because what happens, for every pound of insurance you give someone, you

have to put two pounds into like an escrow account to cover just in case that person ever makes a claim. It's called solvency. Very dull, very boring. But, so if you imagine now actually I only need to put a pound in against two pounds because we're confident that person isn't going to make a claim…' (Interview: Wigmore/Briant, 4th October 2017). Use of data and the relationship to UKIP, Eldon's involvement in Banks' investments in the campaign and 'dark money', possibly from Russia are all under investigation by the Electoral Commission.

As I detailed in Part 2 "Cambridge Analytica: Backbone of Brexit", these campaign methodologies were at least influenced in their targeting by what Leave.EU learned from Cambridge Analytica before the campaign began. If, as they claim, they weren't paid for their work, what did Cambridge Analytica and SCL themselves get out of what seems a generous gift to the campaign? Often with groups of companies they absorb costs and losses from one company which will overall benefit the group. Brexit generated heightened brand recognition which was lucrative for CA and SCL Group overall. This was aided by the reputational boost by media attention which often focused on the tools and their effectiveness rather than the ethics and abuses of power. While they did do the preparatory work, and apparently Leave.EU did borrow or learn from this, Alexander Nix then exaggerated CA's role in Brexit to drive up notoriety that helped drive business. Profits shot up between 2015 and 2016 for related companies invested in Cambridge Analytica. As Nigel Oakes stated 'Alexander Nix has one down side, which I don't agree with [...] He believes that all press is good press. And if he can keep the journalists saying 'did they, didn't they?'' - the company remains in the news boosting their global status. He recognised this wasn't a safe strategy, 'Yeh, and instead of saying 'we did not do brexit, we were on the losing side' he goes 'well you know we were flirting with them and…' and then everybody gets more interested… And then of course, you then have the Trump card at the end, cause it goes… of course we didn't work with them… but he's got 6 months of press out of it. And this is what has encouraged people to still come to us. (Interview: Nigel Oakes/Briant, 24th November 2017 - this interview excerpt is now published as parliamentary evidence). According to Wigmore and Gunster's accounts in Essay 2 of my series, Leave.EU staff actually use some of what they had been shown by CA. The Mercers pulled CA in to work on Trump's campaign in June 2016 shortly before the UK referendum went to Leave. Nix claimed recently at the Fake News Inquiry that "we don't involve ourselves in the UK as a rule of thumb." but Alex Tayler, CA's Chief Data Officer and now acting CEO was happy to confirm to me they were working in the UK, particularly in Commercial and had plans to expand in Political (Interview: Alex Tayler/Briant, 3rd November 2018).

Driving Unethical Business Deals

Who was Nix trying to attract with what seems like very negative press about their role in Brexit? SCL Group, in which he is invested, have diversified their business with many contracts under their defence, commercial and political arms, internationally. I asked Oakes if the money had meant the company he started had been rebalanced away from its roots in defence and towards commercial and political work and his response confirmed 'Yes, it has…' (Interview: Nigel Oakes/Briant, 24th November 2017). But we shouldn't worry of course because Nix assures the Inquiry that 'we only work in free and fair democracies'. This I found surprising, since Oakes mentioned to me in one breath the advantages for defence, then next for political:

> NO: 'I've got a Swedish contingent, business unit coming on Tuesday. They're bringing 37 representatives to come and talk to us about… well we just wouldn't be on the radar if we hadn't been in the thing…. And you can imagine on the politics side, when people say 'oh well these guys they got some pretty unethical ways of achieving their result', well for the average President, they go 'well that's what we need! We're going to lose another election'. So, you know, we have to play a very delicate line as well. About - You know, people are coming to us are not ethical… they are not saying we want to do this in the most - you know, Kenyatta and whatever… he's saying that - I mean *frequently* people come to us and say 'we've got so many dirty tricks against *us*, we need to know the dirty tricks to go *back*. Or we need to know how to *counter* the dirty tricks. And you guys seem to know how to do it!'
> EB: Well what's being talked about will sell…
> NO: Well exactly, I mean, no company's whiter than white but…' (Interview: Nigel Oakes/Briant, 24th November 2017 - this interview excerpt is now published as parliamentary evidence).

This shows how clearly the SCL/CA businesses, arrogantly risked deeper investigation to the feed each others' profits and expansion. Exaggeration and inconsistent statements about what they did were Nix's deliberate strategy to use CA to drive up revenue for CA and other apparently 'unrelated' companies across the SCL Group.

Brittany Kaiser claims to be committed to humanitarian concerns yet played a key role in many of SCL's unethical international political campaigns, she said 'I had been paying attention very much to what they were building for the Cruz campaign. And I had to learn about all of that data, all of that because it was part of when I would be presenting to international clients that wanted us to work in, you know, Lithuania or Nigeria or wherever it was' (Interview: Kaiser/Briant, 4th March 2018). Oakes' acknowledgement that their campaign was deployed unethically in Kenya is of note considering Cambridge

Analytica have been accused of exploiting divisions in a sensitive election that was marred by violence.

It is important to note Oakes' frequent and repeated use of 'we' to discuss apparently separate people and SCL Group companies he and Nix are connected to including CA. Tayler said 'that high-profile political work does... us a lot of good in terms of generating commercial interests, so it all feeds into each other' (Interview: Taylor/Briant, 3rd November 2018). Tayler -- who also features in the Channel 4 expose film which led to Nix stepping down -- has just stepped into Nix's shoes as acting CEO.

I first interviewed Nigel Oakes and his colleagues about SCL's defence work for my book 'Propaganda and Counter-terrorism: Strategies for Global Change' and I continue to write on this topic. Behavioural Dynamics Institute (BDI) is a research center of the SCL Group, Oakes serves as its Chairman and described its work as providing 'the magic'. BDI methods developed through work with academics and with DARPA, particularly during the Arab Spring 'we've been working with DARPA for some time because they like all of this fronted experimental stuff' and all SCL companies including CA draw on BDI for their methods (Interview: Nigel Oakes/Briant, 24th November 2017). Oakes told me that 'The BD methodology is now being taught right away across NATO. In fact, we've got a huge contract with what's going on in Holland. [...] they're *literally* setting up [...] commands to understand strategic communication and staffing them with people who understand social media and persuasion because in their view, this is going to be the new way of warfare [...] the Dutch and the Singaporeans are way ahead of everyone else on this' (Interview: Oakes/Briant, 3rd November 2018).

SCL were engaged in training for Britain's 15th PSYOPS Group, and I submitted evidence also that prompts questions of whether work may have been done for JTRIG, Britain's so-called digital 'deception unit'. For another upcoming publication I interviewed Lee Rowland at the Behavioural Dynamics Institute (BDI) in 2013 about counter-terrorism, Lee Rowland's specialism is the scientific advances in that area of influence, and on future directions he said that in, "20, 30 and 50 years' time there's a lot we will be able to do ... this is where you should be looking, 2020 and 2030. Because some of the technology that's coming along is going to be incredible. You're going to be able to remotely derive and implement influence and behavioural campaigns... now I don't ethically approve of this, I just want to sketch out the possibilities... but... while I don't ethically approve of it... it IS going to happen… and we have seen some evidence of that with the recent Edward Snowden NSA case… What I'm writing about at the moment is the technological advances that are going to massively change the way that people are... influenced and the data we collect about people, often covertly." He clarified that he meant, "That you would be able to remotely... You must've heard of

brain imaging and ... fMRI and those kinds of technologies? Well they're developing new technologies now that mean you won't have to put people in huge scanners ... in order to measure changes in their brain. Now that's a long way off before they can do that with any degree of sophistication... or spatial or temporal resolution but it's not far off before they will be able to notice changes in people's brains remotely... It's very science fiction, but it's really happening. They are developing the technology to do this, and even if they're not developing the technology... for bad means... there's no bad or good technology per se, it's the way it could be used" (Interview: Lee Rowland/Briant, 5th July 2013). Rowland's account illuminates developments he anticipates, with concern, in the rapidly developing field of influence, which have alarming potential for abuse in the wrong hands.

In the light of all of this there should be a transparent investigation to determine that SCL's taxpayer funded defence work does not raise similar concerns to its international political work.

Relationship between SCL and Cambridge Analytica

In May 2017 journalists began to raise questions about whether CA might be deploying their experience and techniques that were developed through SCL's work in military information operations in conflict zones within election campaigns. Carole Cadwalladr cited a former employee who discussed them using "'the same methods the military use to effect mass sentiment change. It's what they mean by winning 'hearts and minds'. We were just doing it to win elections in the kind of developing countries that don't have many rules." That article was subject to legal challenges and Cambridge Analytica began to emphasise the 'separateness' of SCL as a company but CA's website (CA, 2018) still states 'The CA advantage' that 'We are the global leader in data-driven campaigning with over 25 years of experience, supporting *more than 100 campaigns across five continents'*. SCL Elections and CA, were both just established recently since 2013. Prior to that SCL was a military contractor only. Cambridge Analytica stresses that 25 years of experience (of SCL who worked on conflict propaganda during this time) is also CA's experiential advantage. Kaiser commented that 'just because we've undertaken psychographic research and we created psychographic models in some of those models are variables in some of our other models. That doesn't mean that we're using weapons grade technology, we're just using really advanced science in order to understand how to talk to people.' (Interview: Kaiser/Briant, 4th March 2018). CA draw on the same BDI methodological base and insights although their methods are adapted to be effective in the context in which they are deployed, as in any campaign, and CA adapted the methods more for social media to capitalise within a U.S. political market, and then SCL sold them back to the world.

Oakes spoke of Nix like a close business partner, Oakes leads on the defence work, Nix on elections, despite stressing separateness there is much discussion, as between any business partners. SCL have worked as a contractor both for the U.K. and U.S. Governments including counter-terrorism work, which they are currently doing for the State Department (Briant, 2015; Interview: Nigel Oakes/Briant, 24th November 2017). British and American taxpayers have helped make SCL rich, our political representatives should, be aware how deeply unethical this company is, how they are seeking out shady business building their reputation for 'dirty tricks'. Asked about his relationship to CA, Oakes said he had worked on elections 'in the past. I set up the company [Cambridge Analytica] but *now*, I'm totally defence and I've gotta *be* totally defence'. He said, 'the defence people can't be seen to be getting involved in politics, and the State Department, they get very *upset*-' so Oakes stated that they imposed 'strong lines' between the companies (Interview: Nigel Oakes/Briant, 24th November 2017). Certainly there is 'siloing' where some staff within the companies seem genuinely unaware of what other parts of the company, or group, are doing. It is a large network and they are sometimes just focused on fulfilling their own role within it.

Brittany Kaiser's account of her work at CA however, conveyed ease of drift between working in international politics and defence then U.S. politics. As a Democrat, Kaiser initially was reluctant to get involved in Republican politics but told Nix, 'I'd love to work between your international elections and defense.' Yet Kaiser was unable to go as far as she liked in the African business deals probably due to all the shady practises exposed by Channel 4 on 19th March 2018, including Nix securing the deal by offering to supply prostitutes for blackmail. She started 'working on, you know, elections in Africa and Eastern Europe and working on winning that business and helping manage that business' (Interview: Kaiser/Briant, 4th March 2018) and apparently this has included bringing in hackers to supply personal emails. After six months Kaiser asked Nix if she could move into working on US Republican campaigns, and cited limitations on how involved she could be in the African deals: as a '26 year old like young American girl. I'm going in and pitching like African billionaires [...] there's only so far that I'm going to get without having to call you [Nix] to fly in [to] close the deal or something because they're going to need to see ...an older man in some of these countries.' (Interview: Kaiser/Briant, 4th March 2018). It makes sense that knowledge of the most unethical or controversial practises would be on a need-to-know basis, it is unclear how much she knew.

Some of the people they hire do not seem to care about ethics or legality, this isn't even contemplated in the following example where Sam Patten told me in 2017 about a recent opportunity working for SCL:

SP: ‘when they contacted me they said they had a short fuse sort of thing in Kosovo, and they didn’t really get into details and they said could you be ready one day if this happens? I said yes without even… I assumed it was the dirty bad guys, the mafia guys? You know, the gangsters?’
EB: ‘Yeh’
SP: ‘Well the Clinton’s have had those for years. Kosovo is the last country on earth that still believes it owes its existence to the Clintons. Therefore, as everyone gets tired of all these [unclear] and CGI people and Noone’s hiring them anymore… at least the gangsters in Kosovo will still continue to. Because they have a statue of the guy. They believe that the Clintons created their country.
EB: ‘Wow.’
SP: ‘Anyway, the irony was… because it was SCL I assumed it was the bad guys, but it wasn’t! It was the old liberal professors who were the clients. So… it was an interesting, yeah, one of these three week campaigns.’ (Interview: Sam Patten/Briant, 23rd July 2017).

Behavioural Integration and the U.S. Election

So how close are SCL and Cambridge Analytica? Oakes also told me that 'the two companies [Cambridge Analytica and SCL] at one stage sort of literally went apart...'

EB: And they came back together?
NO: ‘Yes, exactly. It was a sort of personality clash, not necessarily of personality but of corporate personalities.’
EB: The method as well? Could you tell me a bit about that.
NO: ‘Yes, it’s it’s that… it’s very simple. It’s that, Alexander Nix said the future of behavioral changes is going to be in big data. So big data is going to be used to predict things and whatever. And I said No, the future of behavioral change is going to be in basically Humint.'

Oakes told me how the U.S. election 'is the way the companies came back together again because it does have to be both. You have to have the human element and you have to have the big data element. You got to merge them so this is what we now have. We now have behavioral integration. So we’ve got the big data, so we got 5,000 data points on every American or whatever, which is very very cold and [that includes data like] how old they are, how many children they have, not very impressive data, but once you start adding in the profiles, the behavioral stuff, the models of what these people are likely to do if you segment them in this way, you now start getting into something that’s very very powerful and this is now what we’re doing so so I think Alexander Nix is right. It is big data, but we were also right. It is Humint, so we don’t--it’s not like we have to fight about it anymore.' (Interview: Oakes/Briant, 4th March 2018). It is interesting he refers to 'Humint' Human Intelligence, a defence and

intelligence term, he's using in relation to political campaigns. Oakes and Nix are close business partners, Oakes stressed his closeness to Nix and importance in the intellectual work on which CA rely:

> NO: 'where Alexander Nix has been very clever. [...] He's turned it into a very successful commercial entity… Whereas he would say exactly the same about me… he'd say I'm too academic … and the analogy in a tiny, tiny, lot more arrogant scale is that… if he's the Steve Jobs, I'm the Steve Wozniak. I'm sort of the guy who wants to get the engineering right and he's the guy who wants to sell the flashy box. And he's very good at it. And I admire him enormously for doing it. But I'm the guy who say, yeh, but without *this* you couldn't do any of that!' (Interview: Nigel Oakes/Briant, 24th November 2017).

The Future of Influence?

It seems the 'flashy box' that Nix is selling, is fashioned from the exploitation of vulnerable Eastern European prostitutes (see the explosive Channel 4 reporting, the smearing of a Muslim 'Artificial Enemy' in Part 1, invasive psychological profiling of US citizens, and Brexit's plunder of British democracy in Part 2). If we lose the EU, Britain may become more dependent on other markets. CA and SCL Group are one high profile case but this exposes what seems to be an industry flourishing off the spoils of conflicts and corruption worldwide . As Britain's outrage is rightly ignited, we make calls for our political representatives to act to protect our democracies. But we must recall also these industries' most vulnerable victims. It is Britain's shame that these industries have been allowed to grow fat off 'approved' Western conflicts tearing the developing world apart, then still fatter off feeding Western addiction to consumerist distractions, and again still fatter off Western political elites' artificial enemies – so as we seek our own protections we must *not* ignore the deeply unethical and deeply unequal impacts of the global propaganda industry's expansion. When we sure up our domestic systems, an inquiry must properly consider how to stop them returning to gorging themselves on the spoils of human suffering abroad, Nix and others like him cannot be permitted to continue selling their 'flashy' pandora's box in which human rights abusers can hide their own, and British, and America's shame.

Sadly, new GDPR 'transparency' and data protection legislation provides no reassurance - CA's Chief Data Officer Alex Tayler said Facebook was the last big opportunity, next it was GDPR legislation being rolled out to 'protect' us: '15 years ago, who would've thought that Facebook was going to be such a powerful tool for advertising and communicating with such incredibly personalized way? [...] coming up--the big opportunities that we see [...] the first is [...] what we'd call, data portability or data sovereignty. I don't know if you're familiar with GDPR?' (Interview: Alex Tayler/Briant, 3rd November 2018). He told me 'it's a huge opportunity' CA are looking

forward to taking advantage of GDPR which they see as making things easier for them to deploy their method in Europe where legally access to data is currently more limited than the US (Interview: Tayler/Briant, 3rd November 2017).

GDPR will allow companies to take advantage of ordinary people's data naiveté. It places responsibility at the consumer level of choice, allowing companies like CA to financially incentivise consent for sharing and use of data - which explains their expansion into crypto-currencies and blockchain (Interview: Tayler/Briant, 3rd November 2017). It is not only CA. Others will do the same. A likely consequence we must act now to prevent is the spiralling competition between companies' efforts to 'out-do' each other's manipulative methods and find loopholes to exploit our data, which are becoming more accessible and vulnerable, as the battle for our minds becomes more desperate. Just as for governments 'every act of transparency is actually an act of concealment meant to obscure' mass accumulation and concealment of information, private companies learn to hide behind the belief in greater transparency and privacy while seeking to profit from extensive hoarding of data and people's ignorance of what is being given up. Anyone worried about their Facebook data can check out this useful article from the Guardian on how to secure themselves. The investigations that are ongoing, by for example the Electoral Commission and ICO, each respond to specific questions that fall within those specific bodies' remit, they are under-resourced and better coordination is needed to come close to grappling with the subterranean corruption of the brexit campaign. Given the complexity, international dimensions, and far reaching implications for the future of Britain, a proper investigation requires resources and reach - the British public must demand an official Inquiry into Cambridge Analytica and Facebook's use of data as well as what appears to be grossly unethical, corrupt and apparently illegal practises during the EU Referendum, which appear to have severely compromised British democracy and could be repeated if we do not act now.

Briant, Emma L (2015) Propaganda and Counter-terrorism: Strategies for Global Change, Manchester: Manchester University Press.