

Media Ruled by Robust PsyOp Alliance

Analysis by [Dr. Joseph Mercola](#)

November 20, 2023

STORY AT-A-GLANCE

- › Investigative journalist Michael Shellenberger has exposed Renée DiResta, research director for the Stanford Internet Observatory (SIO), as one of the key architects behind the censorship industrial complex
- › DiResta is connected to the CIA, and a member of the Council on Foreign Relations (CFR), which seeks to implement a One World Government
- › Before DiResta became research director for the SIO, she was the research director for a small Democrat donor-funded political consulting firm called New Knowledge LLC that created thousands of fake “Russian bots” and used other disinformation tactics to alter the outcome of a local election
- › DiResta’s reputation was not destroyed by this revelation. Instead, she’s been elevated to more prominent “disinformation expert” positions
- › The U.S. Department of Homeland Security created the EIP and outsourced what would otherwise be illegal and unconstitutional censorship to it. In 2021, the EIP was rebranded as the Virality Project, at which point the information being censored shifted from elections to that of COVID-related matters, including factual information about the COVID jabs and their potential dangers

In an April 3, 2023, Substack article,¹ investigative journalist Michael Shellenberger exposes Renée DiResta as one of the key architects behind the censorship industrial complex (a term coined by Shellenberger himself).

In it, he draws many of the same conclusions I did a year ago, when I dissected [DiResta's "Shooting Starlings" essay](#).² In my December 7, 2022, article, I pointed out that DiResta appears to be a key player in the censorship of Americans, and that behind her public persona hides direct connections to the globalist deep state.

Why Did DiResta Hide Her CIA Connection?

DiResta is the research director for the Stanford Internet Observatory, founded in June 2019 to promote internet censorship policies and conduct real-time social media narrative monitoring. As I pointed out in December 2022, she's also connected to the CIA, and a member of the Council on Foreign Relations (CFR).³

DiResta's CIA connection was revealed by her supervisor, Alex Stamos, during a presentation (video above). Had it not been for this casual mention that DiResta "worked for the CIA," this connection might never have surfaced. In his April 3 article, Shellenberger writes:⁴

"We now know ... that the Censorship Industrial Complex is violating the First Amendment by coordinating with government agencies and receiving government funding to pressure and help social media companies to both censor information, including accurate information, while spreading disinformation, including conspiracy theories ...

One of the most intelligent, influential, and fascinating public-facing leaders of the Censorship Industrial Complex is Renee DiResta ... DiResta has, more than anyone else, made the public case for greater government-led and government-funded censorship ...

In 2021, DiResta advocated for creating a government censorship center ... within the federal government ... Did the Department of Homeland Security act on DiResta's proposal to create a censorship center? It did ... DHS ... called it a 'Disinformation Governance Board,' which the agency announced publicly in April 2022.

DiResta's rise to the highest levels of the U.S. intelligence community struck me back in December of last year as improbably meteoric. DiResta had repeatedly described her involvement in fighting disinformation as having started in 2013 when she became a new mom and grew concerned about spreading anti-vaccine information online ...

Two years later she was helping to fight ISIS online and by 2018 she was testifying before the U.S. Senate Intelligence Committee. While these suspicions nagged at me, I waved them away ...

[G]iven the historical dominance of high tech by founders in their 20s and 30s, and the challenges of older people to understand social media, I convinced myself that a person with DiResta's limited experience battling disinformation online might leapfrog over the hundreds if not thousands of researchers, analysts, and intelligence experts who conduct research and combat foreign disinformation for the U.S. government and government-funded think tanks and academic institutions. But then I learned that DiResta had worked for the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA)."

Censorship Industrial Complex Is Loaded With Former CIA Officials

According to DiResta, her "purported secret-agent double life was an undergraduate student fellowship at CIA, ending in 2004," and that she'd "had no affiliation since."

"But DiResta's acknowledgment of her connection to the CIA is significant, if only because she hid it for so long," Shellenberger writes. "And, notably, the CIA describes its fellowships as covering precisely the issues in which DiResta is an expert ...

Is DiResta telling the truth when she claims she's had 'no affiliation since'? Perhaps. But one of the things I have heard from multiple people, including

people within the intelligence community, is, 'Nobody ever retires from the intelligence community.'

Such a claim is, no doubt, exaggerated. But there is truth to it. Moreover, one of the main characteristics of spycraft is the deployment of agents and assets not publicly affiliated with the CIA or other intelligence agencies."

Shellenberger also points out that former CIA officials in general feature heavily in the censorship industrial complex.

No fewer than seven former CIA directors are on the board of the Atlantic Council, which is partnered with the Stanford Internet Observatory's Election Integrity Partnership and Virality Project that DiResta is directly involved in. The chief strategy officer and the director of federal programs at Graphika — another Stanford Internet Observatory partner — are also former CIA officials.

Why Did DiResta Become the Face of the Censorship Industrial Complex?

According to Shellenberger, DiResta "is without question one of the most, if not THE most, influential leaders within the network of for-profit and nonprofit organizations and government agencies that comprise the Censorship-Industrial Complex," having led both the 2020 Stanford Internet Observatory's Election Integrity Project and its 2021 Virality Project, the latter of which was aimed at taking down vaccine misinformation.

"The question now is why," Shellenberger says. "Who is Renee DiResta, and why is she, and not somebody else, the public-facing leader of the censorship industry and a trusted advisor to Democrats in Congress?"

Why is she doing it? And what will it take to defund the Stanford Internet Observatory, dismantle the censorship industry, and disempower DiResta?"

To answer those questions, we first need to understand how DiResta got away with and was even rewarded for participating in one of the most outrageous and

likely ILLEGAL, election disinformation campaigns in recent history."

DiResta Is a Disinformation Agent

Before DiResta became research director for the Stanford disinformation lab, she was the research director for a small Democrat donor-funded political consulting firm called New Knowledge LLC.

In 2017, New Knowledge received a \$100,000 donation from LinkedIn founder Reid Hoffman to help Alabama Democratic U.S. Senate candidate Doug Jones defeat Republican Roy Moore in a special election.

The following year, it was revealed that New Knowledge had created and subscribed thousands of fake "Russian bots" to Moore's social media campaign. The fake bots were created by generating user accounts using a virtual private network (VPN) to simulate Russian IP addresses.

Moore narrowly lost the election after mainstream media reported that he was "backed by Russia." Alas, Moore's "Russian backers" were merely bots created by New Knowledge.⁵ As reported by Shellenberger:⁶

"A 12-page New Knowledge memo dated Dec. 15, 2017 described the operation. 'We orchestrated an elaborate 'false flag' operation that planted the idea that the Moore campaign was amplified on social media by a Russian botnet' ...

The memo claimed that the work of New Knowledge had shifted enough votes for Jones to win the election, which had been decided by fewer than 22,000 voters.

How? Through the use of disinformation to 'radicalize Democrats, suppress unpersuadable Republicans ('hard Rs') and faction moderate Republicans by advocating for write-in candidates,' said the memo.

New Knowledge also 'planted the idea that a Russian botnet amplified the Moore campaign on social media. We then tied that botnet to the Moore campaign digital director, making it appear that he had purchased the accounts.'"

We Must Make Ourselves More Resilient to Propaganda

Somehow, DiResta survived this scandal, and continues to be a leading spokesperson AGAINST disinformation and FOR election integrity, even though New Knowledge was caught red-handed using disinformation to interfere in a U.S. election. Shellenberger continues:

"Why, in the end, is it Renee DiResta, and not somebody else, the leader of the Censorship Industrial Complex? A big part of the reason is because she is the intellectual architect, and most articulate public advocate, of government funding of, and cooperation with, non-governmental actors, such as Stanford Internet Observatory, to increase social media censorship of disfavored views and disfavored users.

But there is another, deeper reason. Like other American elites, DiResta believes that it is the role of people like her to control what information the public is allowed to consume, lest they elect a populist ogre like Donald Trump, decide not to get vaccinated, or don't accept whatever happens to be mainstream liberal opinion on everything from climate change to transgenderism to the business dealings of the presidents family ...

While we must defund and dismantle the Censorship Industrial Complex, the greatest change must happen within ourselves. We must be suspicious of those who raise the alarm about 'foreign election influence' and 'disinformation' and demand greater 'content moderation' by social media platforms. As such, we should take a page from our would-be censors and make ourselves more resilient to their disinformation."

A New World Order Propagandist

Another aspect of DiResta that Shellenberger does not address is that she's also a member of the Council on Foreign Relations (CFR),⁷ and you don't get into that club without some serious connections. You also don't get in unless you are able to contribute to CFR's work.⁸

CFR is financed in part by the Gates,⁹ Rockefeller, Ford and Carnegie foundations,¹⁰ and has influenced U.S. foreign policy ever since its inception 95 years ago. Almost all U.S. secretaries of defense have been lifetime members, as have most CIA directors. This is of crucial importance, considering the CFR's goal, from the start, has been to bring about a totalitarian one world government, a New World Order (NWO) with global top-down rule.

“ [The CFR's goal is] submergence of U.S. sovereignty and national independence into an all-powerful one-world government ... In the entire CFR lexicon, there is no term of revulsion carrying a meaning so deep as 'America First.' ~ CFR member Admiral Chester Ward, 1975 ”

In 1950, the son of one of the CFR's founders, James Warburg, said to the Senate Foreign Relations Committee: "We shall have world government whether or not you like it — by conquest or consent."¹¹ Similarly, in 1975 CFR insider Admiral Chester Ward wrote that the goal of the CFR was "submergence of U.S. sovereignty and national independence into an all-powerful one-world government."¹²

According to Ward, the desire to "surrender the sovereignty and independence of the United States is pervasive throughout most of its membership," and "In the entire CFR lexicon, there is no term of revulsion carrying a meaning so deep as 'America First.'"

With Ward's last comment in mind, published in 1975, it's interesting to contemplate who has opposed President Trump's America First agenda, and why. Many Americans, even if they don't like or support Trump personally, agree that taking care of America and Americans' interests first is a rational decision for any leadership, and they've been hard-pressed to rationalize how an anti-America First policy can be good for the nation.

Well, Ward gives us the answer. Those who oppose America First policies do so because they're working on behalf of a network that seeks to eliminate nationalism in favor of a one-world government, and DiResta is part of that club.

The Weaponization of 'Disinfo' Pseudo-Experts

As explained by [Mike Benz](#), executive director for the Foundation for Freedom Online, in the short video above, the Election Integrity Partnership (EIP) was specifically set up to do the censorship that the U.S. government could not legally do itself.

In 2021, the EIP was rebranded as the Virality Project, at which point the information being censored shifted from elections to that of COVID-related matters, including factual information about the COVID jabs and their potential dangers.

Not surprisingly, the Stanford Internet Observatory (SIO) insists it "did not censor or ask social media platforms to remove any social media content regarding coronavirus vaccine side effects."¹³ Alas, this is provably false. As reported by Alex Gutentag and Andrew Lowenthal in a November 10, 2023, Substack article:¹⁴

"... Twitter Files published by Matt Taibbi in March ... revealed that SIO's so-called 'Virality Project' had pushed platforms¹⁵ to treat user concerns about vaccine mandates and passports as 'disinformation' and to consider 'stories of true vaccine side effects' to be actionable content on social media.

The Virality Project was an initiative undertaken jointly by Big Tech, universities, and NGOs to combat 'anti-vaccine misinformation.' SIO responded to Taibbi's

Twitter Files by claiming that his findings were 'inaccurate and based on distortions of email exchanges in the Twitter Files.'

But new evidence shows that Stanford lied about the scope of the Virality Project and that its censorship efforts were undertaken on behalf of the US government.

As Public reported¹⁶ on Tuesday, new documents¹⁷ shared by the House Judiciary Committee revealed that the Department of Homeland Security (DHS), created the Virality Project's predecessor, the Election Integrity Partnership (EIP), to censor protected speech.

Explains the committee, 'EIP reconstituted as the Virality Project' and continued working with the federal government. The Twitter Files also found that the Project partnered 'with several government agencies,' including the Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency (CISA), the Office of the Surgeon General, and the Centers for Disease Control (CDC).

Still, Stanford and the mainstream media insist that 'disinformation' experts were merely conducting research, and not involved in actual censorship. Now, an investigation by Public has uncovered clear evidence that the Project was directly and deliberately involved in successful censorship efforts.

Public analyzed a trove of newly released Jira system tickets,¹⁸ the Virality Project's tipline to social media companies. These tickets overwhelmingly contradict Stanford's assertion that it did not try to get content censored.

The Virality Project, acting as a cut-out for DHS and CISA, worked directly with employees at Facebook, Google, YouTube, TikTok, and more, who were all signed up to their Jira system. Those companies regularly assured the Project that they were addressing the content it flagged ...

According to Stanford, the Virality Project's work 'centered on identification and analysis of social media commentary relating to the COVID-19 vaccine,

including emerging rumors about the vaccine where the truth of the issue discussed could not yet be determined.'

Yet in its Jira system, the Virality Project expressed absolute certainty about the vaccine, called doubters 'anti-vax,' and targeted individuals ... who challenged CDC advice.

The Project clearly aimed to control the vaccine narrative and prohibit questions about vaccine safety and efficacy. The Virality Project also flagged swathes of content related to general concepts like medical freedom and protests in opposition to government mandates."

Jira Tickets Prove Mass Censorship of Vaccine Information

In their article, Gutentag and Lowenthal reviews a long list of "egregious instances" in which the Virality Project "intentionally and knowingly worked to silence and deplatform social media users." For example:

- *"After Krispy Kreme announced it would give free donuts to people who got vaccinated, the Virality Project alerted platforms about 'criticism against Krispy Kreme's vaccine for donut promo' and labeled such criticism as 'general anti-vaccination.'*
- *The Virality Project flagged a PDF of consolidated data from the Vaccine Adverse Event Reporting System (VAERS) ... The Project noted that Google had removed the content after its report.*
- *The Project flagged an Israeli pre-print that found natural immunity to be as protective as vaccination ...*
- *The Virality Project flagged a Lancet research article about the absolute risk reduction of COVID vaccines, calling it an 'alleged authoritative source.' Facebook then labeled the article.*
- *In one highly troubling instance, the Project flagged someone's Google Drive. 'See the following Google Drive links being used to compile testimonies about*

vaccine shedding, videos showing side effects, and PDFs detailing conspiracy theories,' the Virality Project wrote ... The Project noted that Google removed the content.

- *... the Virality Project repeatedly reported testimonials of vaccine injuries to Twitter and Facebook, including testimonials from healthcare workers. Accounts of vaccine injuries, the Project wrote to platforms, could 'fuel vaccine hesitancy.'*
- *In June 2021, the Virality Project flagged accurate claims that the World Health Organization (WHO) did not recommend vaccinating children ..."*

The Virality project also flagged a number of Twitter posts made by yours truly, including one that linked to an SEC filing admitting that the COVID shot is considered a "gene therapy product."



Dr. Joseph Mercola 

@mercola

...

Moderna's SEC registration statement: "Currently, mRNA is considered a gene therapy product by the FDA."

sec.gov/Archives/edgar...

2:25 PM · Mar 29, 2021

Currently, mRNA is considered a **gene therapy** product by the FDA. Unlike certain gene therapies that irreversibly alter cell DNA and could act as a source of side effects, mRNA based medicines are designed to not irreversibly change cell DNA; however, side effects observed in **gene therapy** could negatively impact the perception of mRNA medicines despite the differences in mechanism. In addition, because no product in which mRNA is the primary active ingredient has been approved, the regulatory pathway for approval is uncertain. The number and design of the clinical and preclinical studies required for the approval of these types of medicines have not been established, may be different from those required for **gene therapy** products or may require safety testing like **gene therapy** products. Moreover, the length of time necessary to complete clinical trials and to submit an application for marketing approval for a final decision by a regulatory authority varies significantly from one pharmaceutical product to the next, and may be difficult to predict.

That tweet was entirely factual. Bayer president Stefan Oelrich in 2021 (video below) also admitted that the COVID shots were an example of "cell and gene therapy." Yet the Virality Project flagged it as misinformation.

As noted by Gutentag and Lowenthal:¹⁹

"Jira tickets such as these prove that it clearly made considerations about content removal ... Evidence of illegal DHS and CISA involvement in censorship is a likely factor behind Stanford's attempts to characterize its activities as innocent research ...

That SIO now feels the need to deny key elements of its work on the Virality Project, and even attempt to evade subpoenas from the House Judiciary Committee, shows that the censors are much weaker now than they were in 2021. Two years ago, the Virality Project could operate both in plain sight and with impunity. Now, its architects are trying to cover their tracks."

Good News, Bad News

Indeed, the good news is that more and more information is coming out about the U.S. government's illegal outsourcing of censorship, and with it, legal challenges that throw up blocks against this circumvention of the Constitution.

We've also had other victories. In August 2022, the DHS was forced to terminate the Disinformation Governance Board due to public backlash. CISA has also deleted information about domestic censorship work from its website, and has dismantled its Misinformation, Disinformation, and Malinformation (MDM) subcommittee.

The Select Subcommittee on the Weaponization of the Federal Government is also continuing its search for truth, and will (hopefully) use whatever power at its disposal to rein in the abuse. Its most recent report, "The Weaponization of 'Disinformation' Pseudo-Experts and Bureaucrats: How the Federal Government Partnered with Universities to Censor Americans' Political Speech"²⁰ was published November 6, 2023.

Unfortunately, we also have a global effort underway to not only normalize but also legalize this kind of third-party censorship. In an August 1, 2023, video (below), Mike Benz²¹ explained this strategy.

In short, they're trying to restructure the censorship industry "away from a top-down government-driven model" to a "competitive middleware model" where "content curation" (read censorship) is simply outsourced to third-party organizations.

This way, a "legal" disinformation compliance market is created while government can claim it has nothing to do with the control of information. Basically, what we're looking at is the emergence of organized corporate censorship. Artificial intelligence is also being employed to "identify and slow the spread of false and harmful content."²²

There's no clear solution to this threat, other than to continue pushing back against any and all efforts to legalize, standardize and normalize censorship. To vocally object, to refuse using middleware like [NewsGuard](#), and to boycott any company or organization that uses middleware or engages in censorship of any kind.

Sources and References

- ^{1, 4, 6} [Substack Public April 3, 2023](#)
- ² [Noema Magazine November 3, 2022](#)
- ^{3, 7, 11, 12} [Wakeup-World August 31, 2016](#)
- ⁵ [Foundation for Freedom Online November 9, 2022](#)
- ⁸ [CFR.org](#)
- ⁹ [Gates Foundation Grants to CFR](#)
- ¹⁰ [CFR Funding](#)
- ^{13, 14, 19} [Substack Public November 10, 2023](#)
- ¹⁵ [Twitter Matt Taibbi March 17, 2023](#)
- ¹⁶ [Substack Public November 7, 2023](#)
- ^{17, 20} [The Weaponization of "Disinformation" Pseudo-Experts and Bureaucrats, Interim Staff Report, November 6, 2023](#)
- ¹⁸ [Jira System Tickets](#)
- ²¹ [Twitter Mike Benz August 1, 2023](#)
- ²² [Twitter Mike Benz October 19, 2023](#)