

# Books

John Sinclair

1969

INFORMED SOURCES, a novel by Willard Bain: Doubleday, 1969, 144 pp., \$2.95.

“Power is the ability to define phenomena and make them act in a desired manner.”

—Huey P. Newton, Minister of Defense, Black Panther Party

Willard Bain's book was originally printed by the Communications Company in San Francisco the summer of 1967 and given away free in the streets. *Informed Sources* is the first post-Burroughsian novel I'd say, post-McLuhan also, and in its intentions and design strictly contemporary. Bain (who has the same initials as Burroughs—WSB—strangely enough) has gotten down to the simple major questions of control and power and what language has to do with it.

Huey P. Newton's definition of power is not widely understood. What is meant here is that the man or men who have the ability or means to define a situation can control those people who are caught up in that situation. People can only act on the information available to them, and if you control the information flow you control their possible action too.

In our culture people ask you “what is 2 and 2?” You would say “four” without thinking, that is, habitually, unconsciously, because you have been given the terms of the proposition and have had no choice but to accept them. Any sane, i.e. conscious, person would say “2 what? motherfucker!” because he's hip to the medium and knows that its message is control.

Can you dig this? Because it's the most important thing for people to know right now. If we get hip to their language we can break their hold on us, because we can then refuse to accept their language as valid and force them to deal with us on our own terms. That means our own language, which is a pure and accurate expression of our cultural scene.

The master language, what they call “English,” is a control system meant to lock people into capitalism, competition, confusion, separation and death. It has evolved as a function of Western capitalism and means to preserve that system by limiting the flow of information to the people so that they can only find out about what the people in control want them to know, which is damn little, because the more you know the less you want to be kept a slave.

INFORMATION is the thing that will set people free. *Informed Sources*. Language is the primary control device in Western culture. You believe what you hear and see, but if you are given access to only a small fragment of the whole spectrum of information, your possibilities are extremely limited. If you are brought up on television and the daily press and the attendant honkie media (including the church and the American educational system) you will be given to believe, until you get the chance to find out by yourself by going out into the world, that everyone lives like a honkie in America except the crooks, commies, filthy scum dope fiend rock & roll student demonstrators, black power advocates, and other deviates, and these people are all your (and America's) enemies.

It's only when you start to become one of these types that you find out how the media have been brainwashing you. You read about yourself or your friends in the papers and you can see just how much the honkie media will manipulate information in order to keep people under control.

American television is a precise control device. The American educational system is a precise control device. The American press is a precise control device. What is news is what the news media promote as the news. Everything is happening all the time, but what you get is the story the power structure wants you to get so it can retain control over you.

The power structure is in power because it can effectively DEFINE phenomena and make them ACT in a desired manner. It will control your life until you seize the means of defining yourself and begin to develop a new definition of reality. Everything defines itself, in reality. What is, IS. INFORMED SOURCES (I.S.).

We define ourselves through our actions and the context we create for our actions, that gives our actions an organic structure we can constantly relate to in order to give our work maximum effectiveness.

The purpose of the American media as they exist now is to keep people chained to capitalism and to consumer consciousness. Everything reinforces everything else, and none of it is done by accident. Any system that is functional must create a context in which everything that happens within the system reinforces everything else that happens.

It's no accident that the honkie press only reports death, crime, war, asshole opinions by honkie higher-ups, and the other shit it represents—the power structure that controls the press needs to have you believe that's all that's going down in the world. If you found out that the world didn't have to be so awful they'd have a hard time keeping you in line doing all the awful shit they tell you have to do.

When people find out they don't have to get up every fucking morning at 6 o'clock to be at some horrible robot job at 7, eat lunch when they tell you, pee when they tell you, go home when they let you, live in your jive-ass house as long as you pay the rent they tell you to pay, eat the shit food they put before you like it's the only way to eat, get drunk, watch television or go bowling or play golf or bridge or listen to Frank Sinatra for your entertainment after going through all this shit all day all week all year—whew! Then it'll be hard to keep you toeing that line. How you gonna keep 'em down on the farm, like they used to say.

Can you dig it? That's why they're so down on the revolutionary media, because we're letting people know through our alternative information/communications network that there's a whole new way to do things that they've never been given to see on TV or anywhere else in the honkie culture because 1) the honkies don't understand it and 2) if they did understand it, and as they start to understand it, they react against it and try to stomp us out as they realize what a threat we represent to their decadent culture.

What they don't know yet, because they can't know yet, is that the revolution we're talking about is going to solve all their problems as well as our own.

Elsewise it's just bullshit, and anybody who talks to you about a program that doesn't account for all the people when the revolution is accomplished is just as full of shit as the honkies. All Power to All the People.

The revolutionary media is developing an alternate communications complex that will enable us to function most effectively with the honkie capitalist culture while working full time at the business of transforming the capitalist state into a totally free state by projecting an image of the free state through our own media and the honkie media we infiltrate and destroy, or transform.

Actually, nothing in the universe can be destroyed because everything is energy in its various forms, and the forms can only be transformed. To talk of destroying the media is not even to the point—the communications media are just an energy form that can be transformed by revolutionary content into revolutionary media. The message is the media, as well as vice versa.

I don't think McLuhan understands that but William Burroughs does, for one, and I feel Willard S. Bain has a better grasp of it than McLuhan, although he's still hung up on the idea of "unmanning" the media, which he describes (like Newsreel does) as the "fascist pig."

The pig is the pig, you dig, and the pig media is the pig media because it carries the message of the PIG. When the people control the media, not control it but get free use of the media, the message is the people's message and the media becomes the people's media. Dig it. The media is only there, a form, to be USED. and it will take on the shape of the content when it is allowed to function in a free and unified context.

When you hit somebody with your hand in a stupid move you don't cut your hand off, you purify your purpose, i.e., that which directs the hand in its uses. When Sun Ra makes a record there's not a goddamn thing wrong with the recorded media. When you can see an hour full of liberated freaks on TV directing their own program and

projecting an image of the possibility of a free life-style, so people can absorb the information and act on it and free themselves, or have a further possibility of freeing themselves thereby, then television is being put to human use, for the people, as it should be all day and night.

But we have to quit bullshitting and get our shit together, people in the media. We have to organize ourselves as extensively and as effectively as the Viet Cong organize an is effective in their terrain. Their needs are the same as ours: self-determination and total freedom for their people.

The face of the American enemy we have to fight is the system that conditions people to submit to conscription and be shipped to Vietnam to fight their brothers. We don't have to fight those soldiers yet, and I don't feel that we will ever have to fight them IF WE CAN GET TO THEM WITH THE INFORMATION THAT WE ARE THEIR BROTHERS AND WANT THE SAME WORLD THEY WANT.

The soldiers are prisoners, our brothers who were ripped out of our culture and forced into murderous slavery by the pig power structure, to serve the dead ends of honkie culture in its last desperate attempt to perpetuate itself against overwhelming odds.

The way we can end this shit is to develop our own language, our own media, our own total culture, CONSCIOUSLY AND PRECISELY, and get the information to the people who are being controlled by the pig culture through its language media.

We have to stop accepting their definitions of the world and force them to deal with us on our own terms. It's being done all the time, but not enough people are hip to it yet because our media isn't doing its job yet. Each newspaper, each band, each film, each radio or television program we do, each medium must broadcast the message of total freedom, total energy release, total revolution RIGHT NOW!

There are millions of straight people out there who are dying to find out about our culture and how it might affect them, and we have to study their media and their life-styles and relate our message to them in ways they can understand and relate to. If they can't relate to it you might as well talk to a wall.

When the pigs tell you you broke the law, tell them their laws are not valid and use their media to beat them in court. When they tell you your language is obscene and disgusting, you tell them their language is criminal in intent and practice. Because our language is precise and pure and means to set people free, while their language is simply a control device meant to keep people slaves.

When they tell you about drugs and all that shit you tell them you're ingesting the divine sacrament in a pure religious purification ceremony and that they're the ones who are hooked on coffee, cigarettes, alcohol, barbiturates, speed, television and control.

When they tell you about their schools you point out to them that they have no schools but only youth discipline and training centers where their children are conditioned to the honkie culture and forced into its service through strict control of the information available to them. When they tell you this:

SAN ANTONIO, NOW (IS)—A COMMUNIST BEATNIK DOPE FIEND KILLED AND MUTILATED A 3-YEAR-OLD BOY TODAY AS THE LAD WAS KNEELING IN PRAYER IN A JUST-DEDICATED METHODIST CHURCH.

THE MOTHER OF THE VICTIM WATCHED IN HORROR AS THE DIRTY BEARDED ABOMINATION SEIZED THE YOUNGSTER, BEAT HIS SKULL AGAINST A FONT, AND THEN SLASHED REPEATEDLY AT THE BOY'S GENITALS WITH A SINISTER KNIFE, SHOUTING LEFT WING SLOGANS THROUGHOUT THE CRIME.

Then, you tell them this, you see:

WINDOW ROCK, NOW (IS)—MEMBERS OF RACIAL MINORITIES SHOULD NOT BE BARRED FROM ADVANCEMENT BUT, TO BE FRANK, MOST ARE, IT WAS CONCLUDED TODAY.

"WHITE MEN FOR INSTANCE," SAID ONE LOCAL SHAMAN, "THEY CAN SMELL THE WIND BUT THEY CANNOT FEEL THE TREE. THEY LOOK UPON THE SEA BUT THEY CANNOT HEAR THE RIVER. THEY STAND ON THE SAND BUT THEY DO NOT SIT UNDER THE CLOUDS, THEY SMILE IN THE MORNING BUT...WHAT?"

And besides, if you check them out and follow their stories along the line, you find out that they'll tell you anything the way they want you to believe it. If you didn't follow the story you'd've missed this ending to the beatnik dope fiend story:

SHE DESCRIBED THE INCIDENT AS THE MOST TERRIFYING EXPERIENCE OF HER LIFE BUT SAID IT CONFIRMED EVERYTHING SHE HAD SUSPECTED.

SHE WAS TAKEN TO A LOCAL HOSPITAL FOR OBSERVATION.

THE BOY, WHO SURVIVED THE ORDEAL IN GOOD SPIRITS, WAS SENT TO LIVE WITH RELATIVES.

You might remember the story of the dude in Pennsylvania, a doctor of some sort at a college in that state, reported that a number of students had been blinded while looking into the sun on an LSD trip. Millions of people read that story and believed it as truth. The next day the follow-up was that the doctor had been made to reveal that he made the story up, and he was taken away to a mental institution.

But you'll still hear people talking about LSD and blindness, because the pigs want them—need them—to believe that lie, and they read the lie first. Because if they were exposed to acid and grass properly they'd flash right out of the pig's grasp, and somehow that pig knows that. They don't bust people for grass because it hurts anybody, they do it as an instrument of cultural repression, just like the obscenity ruse, the loud music ruse and the scum ruse, i.e., that we are pigs and they're the pure ones Bullshit.

*Informed Sources* is a handbook on media, especially the so-called "news" media. Bain worked for some time as an AP staffer in the Associated Press San Francisco Bureau, and the book is released in wire services dispatches, with a number of different stories developing simultaneously throughout.

*Informed Sources* is the information network of Peripheral Underground Movement (PUM), a sort of dumb version of Liberation News Service. The IS form follows the form of the AP, using the same language. Like *Rolling Stone*, *Informed Sources'* stories are just as inaccurate as the AP's and are made worse by the smugness of their imagined position, i.e., as the "underground press" It doesn't make them any less stupid.

Because *Informed Sources* is really only perpetuating the decadent form of the established media, it can be overthrown by purer forces, called "Green Dreams" by Bain in the book here. Just as *Informed Sources* infiltrated the AP territory and took over much of it, Green Dreams infiltrated the IS offices and stations and then overthrew IS, because overthrow rather than perpetuation was their purpose.

But in a mass society without mass communications the people are thrown into darkness—we need the media for educational programs and high-energy entertainment forms, and we can take them over and turn them into revolutionary media only when we are bent on the revolution as a total way of life, only when revolution is our message, only when we know we have to free the media for the use of all the people.

John Coltrane spoke of "the cleansed purpose" the cosmic connection with the universal energy force that flows through us as we cleanse ourselves. All Power to the People as they are charged with the power of pure energy charging through their bodies. Cleansed. Because the cleansed purpose—the lust for total revolution—the need for freedom for all the people—has manifested itself through the media the people can relate to, and they are changed and cleansed by the free force as they are given access to it. As we all are.

If you are interested in any of this I've been talking about you'd like to read *Informed Sources*, the book by Willard S. Bain. Doubleday says they want \$2.95 for it but you can easily slip it under your jacket and walk away with it. Maybe someone will reprint a free edition and give it away again, so the people who need it can get it without going through all those weird changes. But you should get it anyway you can, and read it along with Burroughs' *Naked Lunch*, Nova Express/Soft Machine and *Revolution for the Hell of It* and *Soul on Ice* and the new Eldridge Cleaver book and record.

Read the *Black Panther* newspaper to experience the revolutionary print media. Newsreel's films. The Fugs and the MC5. The Kokaine Karma show. The UAW/Motherfucker documents. Sun Ra and Pharoah Sanders. The Hog Farm. Living Theatre. Our culture is getting enormous! All Power to the People!

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