



Campaign Finance Reform

Blast #22 – 12 April 2018



"Not being heard is no reason for silence" –
Victor Hugo, Les Misérables, 1862

Anti-Democracy

Cambridge Analytica in Colorado

We urge you to read an in-depth article about Colorado's oil and gas industry's complicity in the Cambridge Analytica (CA) scandal:

["Anti-Democracy"](#)

Oil and gas industry complicity in Colorado's Cambridge Analytica scandal should raise grave concerns about ongoing efforts to manipulate voters' opinions on fracking

By Joel Dyer, Boulder Weekly, 29 March 2018.

Some information provided by the article follows:

Cambridge Analytica In Recent News

CA is a political consulting firm, owned mostly by Robert Mercer. It is accused of illegally obtaining the Facebook data of more than 50 million users. The company claims to be able to psychographically target each person and expose individuals to propaganda based on their psychological profile.

Dyer sums up the reach of data mining efforts like this:

Thanks to Facebook, anyone who built an app on the platform in the early days or has enough money to buy the data can now know who your friends are, what you like, what you watch and what websites you visit. They can know your race, sexual orientation, how you vote, if you vote and, in some instances, who you voted for. They can know your fears and your secret desires. Thanks to GPS tracking, these companies even know where you go, where you shop, whose house you visit, what hotel room you stay in and for how long, and where and what you like to eat. And worse, thanks to recent disclosures by Facebook, we now know that for the 80 percent of Facebook users who use an Android phone, they also know every person and phone number you have called or texted in the past several years.

Cambridge Analytica In Colorado's 2014-2015 Elections

"The company was hired by GOP political operatives in 2014-2015 to target a select few races to flip control of the State Senate from Democrats to Republicans." The Senate Minority Leader Bill Cadman chose four Senate races that CA felt it could impact using its data and micro targeted messaging.

Denver7 and the *Denver Post* have reported that CA received \$444,000 in 2014-15 from Concerned Citizens and an additional \$16,500 from Centennial Coalition. Centennial's money appears to have originally come from Concerned Citizens, which also gave an additional \$10,000 to SCL Group, CA's parent company.

Oil & Gas Money Funding

The money trail, according to sources such as the *International Business Times* and *Boulder Weekly*, leads to major oil and gas businesses, especially Nobel Oil and Anadarko Petroleum.

Dyer points out:

The 2014-15 time frame was a crucial turning point for the oil and gas industry in Colorado. Cities up and down the Front Range had voted in moratoriums and bans on fracking and other extraction activities. More than enough citizens, over a quarter million, had signed petitions to place two initiatives on the November ballot. The industry was on its heels and knew it. But what could it do?

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A new group, Protect Colorado's Environment, Economy and Energy Independence (Protect Colorado), was formed to (according to filing documents at the Secretary of State's office) 'support state and local ballot initiatives promoting responsible oil and gas development and oppose state and local ballot initiatives attempting to limit or ban oil and gas development, including any ban or restriction on hydraulic fracturing.' Between 2014 and 2016, Anadarko funded Protect Colorado with close to eleven million dollars and Noble added about ten million dollars in the same period.

Colorado Data Used in Municipal Elections

Dyer's article describes a July 2016 *Boulder Weekly* article titled "Behind closed doors," a recording of a panel presentation by Mark Truax, a consultant to Pac/West Communications serving at the time as director of operations and coalitions for CRED, was made at the annual Interstate Oil and Gas Compact Commission meeting in Oklahoma City in September 2015.

Truax reported that 3.9 million Coloradans are in the CA databases and described how his organization targeted ads and information to voters in Loveland, Windsor, Fort Collins, and Denver:

"... broadcast, TV and radio in early September, continuing to do heavy outreach. We do about 150 events a year, we have a very aggressive events staff at booths and fairs and festivals ... Also through door-to-door canvassing, we will knock on about 400,000 doors total this year, and then broad coalition building adding to that ... network."

According to Truax: "(His group has) been able to keep municipal ballots and municipal ballot measures off in every city and county across Colorado..."

Read More, Learn More

Boulder Weekly, March 29, 2018, Anti-Democracy, by Joel Dyer <http://www.boulderweekly.com/news/cambridge-analytica-oil-industry-fracking>

Boulder Weekly, July 28, 2016, Behind Closed Doors, by Joel Dyer <http://www.boulderweekly.com/news/behind-closed-doors-2/>

New York Times, April 8, 2018, 'You Are the Product': Targeted by Cambridge Analytica on Facebook, by Matthew Rosenberg and Gabriel J.X. Dance