While the abuse of power comes as no surprise, authority’s use of power always seems to catch us off guard. Taught that history is a chain of events punctuated by conquest and decline, we often fail to see the cumulative effects that allow the powerful to learn from their predecessors in a manner that outpaces social perception. In much the same way that four thousand year-old magic tricks continue to dupe audiences today, the highly-developed tactics and strategies of those in power contend with basic social forces and effects that have evolved little over the millennia. With vast resources available, the ruling elite has a relatively easy time drawing from the successes and failures of empires past. It is for this reason that military field manuals, marketing primers, and magic manuscripts (whether stage magic or occult practice) echo each other so profoundly. Notions of illusion, misdirection, and manipulation meander snake-like across multiple stages of a greater “theatre of operations.” These “magical” systems, principles, and methods are absorbed into the matrix of power – not because they are secretly acquired and passed on, but because they have proven effective and useful in maintaining control. The military, governments, and corporations that dictate so much of our day-to-day affairs will do whatever it takes to stay on top. This is not conspiracy theory; this is the brutal reality of political survival.

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MAGIC FACT: From 1978 to 1995 the U.S. military spent over $20 million for research and development of psychic spying or “Remote Viewing.”

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