

APA: denunciation and accommodation of abusive interrogations: a lesson for world Psychology

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Abstract: In the wake of the air attacks on the United States in September 2001, counterterrorism policy in the George W. Bush Administration involved psychologists in design and implementation of abusive interrogations of foreign detainees. The American Psychological Association (APA) has firmly declared psychologist involvement in torture unethical, while simultaneously creating loopholes to accommodate psychologists' involvement. We explain this contradiction in terms of the historic rise of United States psychology in military settings and the resulting institutional entanglements. We close with a recommendation for an ethical and instrumental contribution of psychological expertise to national security interrogations. We appeal to international readers to take a lesson for world psychology from the tragedy of APA facilitation of abusive interrogations.

Keywords: American Psychological Association; interrogation; ethics; torture; history of psychology.

APA: DENÚNCIA E ACOMODAÇÃO DE INTERROGATÓRIOS ABUSIVOS: UMA LIÇÃO PARA O MUNDO DA PSICOLOGIA

Resumo: Na turbulência dos ataques aos Estados Unidos em setembro de 2001, a política contra-terrorista na administração de George W. Bush envolveu psicólogos no desenho e implementação de interrogatórios abusivos em detidos estrangeiros. A Associação Americana de Psicologia (APA - American Psychological Association) declarou firmemente que o envolvimento de psicólogos na tortura é anti-ético, enquanto simultaneamente criou exceções para acomodar o envolvimento de psicólogos. Nós explicamos esta contradição em termos do crescimento histórico da psicologia dos Estados Unidos em ambiente militar e as complicações institucionais resultantes. Nós fechamos com uma recomendação para uma contribuição ética e instrumental da experiência psicológica aos interrogatórios de segurança nacional e com um apelo aos leitores internacionais para aprenderem com a lição para a psicologia mundial devida à tragédia da facilitação de interrogatórios abusivos pela APA.

Palavras-chave: Associação Americana de psicologia; interrogação; ética; história da Psicologia

APA: DENUNCIAY ACOMODACIÓN DE INTERROGATORIOS ABUSIVOS: UNA LECCIÓN PARA EL MUNDO DE LA PSICOLOGIA

Resumen: En la turbulencia de los ataques a los Estados Unidos en septiembre de 2001, la política contra-terrorista en la administración de George W. Bush envolvió psicólogos en el diseño e implementación de interrogatorios abusivos en detenidos extranjeros. La Asociación Americana de Psicologia (APA - American Psychological Association) declaró firmemente que o envolvimento de psicólogos na tortura é anti-ético, enquanto simultaneamente criou exceções para acomodar o envolvimento de psicólogos. Nós explicamos esta contradição em termos do crescimento histórico da psicologia dos Estados Unidos em ambiente militar e as complicações institucionais resultantes. Nós fechamos com uma recomendação para uma contribuição ética e instrumental da experiência psicológica aos interrogatórios de segurança nacional e com um apelo aos leitores internacionais para aprenderem com a lição para a psicologia mundial devida à tragédia da facilitação de interrogatórios abusivos pela APA.

Palabras clave: Asociación Americana de Psicología; interrogación; ética; historia de la Psicología

Overview: In partial response to the September 2001 air attacks on New York and Washington, DC, the George W. Bush Administration developed policies on detention and interrogation of foreign terrorist suspects that fostered systematic abuse and torture. Revelations of abusive interrogation protocols at Abu Ghraib prison in Iraq, at Guantanamo Bay detention center in Cuba, and at CIA “black sites” abroad have raised ethical concerns about the use of psychology and the role of psychologists in national security-related interrogations and research. We describe key elements of the involvement of psychologists and the failures of the American Psychological Association (APA) in what we have called the “Abusive Turn” of United States policy toward foreign detainees. Although this story is specific to the United States and its largest psychological association, we anticipate it can provide lessons for psychologists around the world who may likewise be confronted — or courted — with unethical demands on their expertise in national security programs.

U.S. Psychologist involvement in detainee abuse

We are grieved to report that psychologists were substantially involved in implementing the Abusive Turn, at least in regard to interrogations. Psychologists designed and consulted on interrogation techniques (EBAN, 2007) and advised on “softening up” tactics, such as sensory deprivation, stress positions, isolation, and dependency on interrogators. Particularly distressing were the reports of psychologists’ identification of individual prisoners’ fears and phobias, obtained during “clinical” interviews, which were then used to individualize the threats and actions made (EBAN, 2007). The most dramatic abuses perpetrated on foreign detainees were the work of senior officers, some of them psychologists, from programs designed to train U.S. airmen, special forces, spies, and other knowledgeable personnel vulnerable to hostile capture, in Survival, Evasion, Resistance, and Escape (SERE) techniques. That is, through effective simulations, personnel are trained in psychological resistance to deprivation, pain, and torture. Drowning, for instance, may be simulated by water boarding. After 2001, senior trainers and graduates of the SERE program became leaders of the Behavioral Science Consultation Teams (BSCTs) that sought to break down personality and resistance in detainees.

A mystery to many psychologists and other clinical professionals was why the American Psychological Association, committed by its charter to promote the highest professional ethics for its members, did not act effectively against psychologists’ involvement in abusive interrogations. Below we document our thesis that APA policy on psychologists and interrogations has been shaped by the dependence of psychology on the U.S. Department of Defense (DoD), both for funding of the behavioral sciences and for career opportunities (CAPSHEW, 1999), and that the historic rise of psychology in the military context is key to understanding this dependence.

The rise of U.S. psychology in the military context

In World War I, U.S. psychologists entered the limelight through intelligence testing of military recruits. In World War II, psychologists optimized team performances, boost-

ed troop morale, devised enemy propaganda programs, developed psychological operations against enemies, trained spies, and generally applied the behavioral sciences to military goals with notable success. During the Cold War, the U.S. Department of Defense (DoD) became the major institutional sponsor of psychological research. Psychologists have continued to conduct research and design methods to improve the efficiency of military activities, including killing, in various settings (GROSSMAN, 1995). They are also employed in a wide range of clinical and psychosocial positions to support military life. Indeed, the Department of Defense is the largest single provider of grants for graduate school training in psychology, for psychology internships, and for early career employment of psychologists in the U.S. (HERMAN, 1995). Unsurprisingly, the American Psychological Association, founded in 1892 and with a current membership of 148,000 (APA, 2008), became institutionally intertwined with the DoD.

The eminent behavioral psychologist Harry Harlow served as Chief of the Human Resources Section of Research and Development for the U.S. Army from 1950 to 1952. During this period, psychologist Meredith P. Crawford founded the Human Resources Research Office at George Washington University (HumRRO) (RABASCA, 2000), “which would have primary responsibility for conducting research in the areas of training methods, motivation and morale, and psychological warfare techniques” for the U.S. military (CRAWFORD, 1984, p. 1268). Crawford also served as APA treasurer for two five-year terms, from 1958 to 1968 (BENJAMIN et al., 2002), and is widely hailed as “the architect of APA’s financial foundation” through visionary real estate investments (RABASCA, 2000).

HumRRO, especially later as an independent nonprofit corporation, learned “to develop the procedures by which to find operational problems for research,” that is, to take the lead in initiating military research projects to ensure a steady flow of funds (CRAWFORD, 1984, p. 1.268). APA itself followed the HumRRO path of entrepreneurial initiation of military research projects, as regularly announced in the APA on-line newsletter *Science Policy Insider News (SPIN)*. For example (SPIN, 2004):

On October 19th, [APA] Science Policy staffers Geoff Mumford and Heather Kelly held an initial meeting with high-ranking psychologists within the Department of Defense (DoD) Counterintelligence Field Activity (CIFA) to discuss possible areas of collaboration. CIFA is designed to serve as a defense-wide coordinator of counterintelligence activities, resource allocation, budget planning, and policy implementation [...] APA members are remarkably well-positioned within CIFA to bring operational and research expertise to bear on counterintelligence activities. Scott Shumate directs the Behavioral Sciences Directorate, and [...] will continue to talk with [APA] Science PPO [Public Policy Office] about collaborative opportunities such as advisory panels, fellowships, and training programs.

The heavily ideological foundation of the “War on Terror” naturally intensifies the relationship between psychology and the military.

Fierce guild competition between psychology and psychiatry has also intensified the relationship. Psychiatry began with the advantages of medical prestige and accessibility to biological interventions such as psychoactive drugs. But psychology’s broad range of roles outside of clinical practice secured the military as its close ally and has enabled psy-

chology to compete in turf wars with psychiatry. For example, the DoD sponsored the first project to allow psychologists to prescribe psychoactive drugs, which led to widespread initiatives for prescription privileges in individual states (DITTMAN, 2003). The American Medical Association (2006) and American Psychiatric Association (2006) have forbidden their members to assist in national security interrogations, thereby providing unique opportunities for the APA and for DoD and CIA psychologists.

In sum, psychology and the military are highly interdependent in the United States. Psychology applies the science of behavior to warfare and legitimizes some problematic operations, such as coercive interrogation. The military provides enormous funding, research and career opportunities for psychologists, and institutional support for such ventures as prescriptive authority. The APA mediates this exchange, with many high-level officials circulating between APA and DoD/CIA roles. The key issue at this time is APA authorization of psychologists' participation in interrogations.

The APA presidential task force on psychological ethics and national security

APA public policy on psychologists' involvement in interrogations in national security settings was first developed in 2005 under the leadership of then President-Elect Gerald Koocher, following his ten years of service as APA Treasurer. He stated his position on the confidential listserv of the ten-person task force appointed to formulate APA guidelines for Psychological Ethics and National Security (PENS). Drawing the analogy to a school psychologist, who "must hold paramount the welfare of the most vulnerable party (i.e., usually the child)", Koocher wrote (2005):

The government-employed psychologist has a similar chain of responsibility and accountability. In many of the circumstances we will discuss when we meet the psychologist's role may bear on people who are not "clients" in the traditional sense. Example, the psychologist employed by the CIA, Secret Service, FBI, etc., who helps formulate profiles for risk prevention, negotiation strategy, destabilization, etc., or the psychologist asked to assist interrogators in eliciting data or detecting dissimulation with the intent of preventing harm to many other people. In this case the client is the agency, government, and ultimately the people of the nation (at risk). The goal of such psychologists' work will ultimately be the protection of others (i.e., innocents) by contributing to the incarceration, debilitation, or even death of the potential perpetrator, who will often remain unaware of the psychologists' involvement.

Six of the ten PENS task force members appointed through then APA President Ronald Levant were high-level DoD or CIA employees or contractors. At times, their national security roles have appeared to trump their commitments to psychological ethics. In a later interview with task force member Capt. Bryce Lefever, a navy psychologist and former SERE school instructor, the *Christian Science Monitor* reported (RICHEY, 2007): "Captain Lefever says it is unfair to compare US antiterror interrogations with Soviet interrogation techniques. 'Their abuse was a systematic practice to conceal the truth,' he says. 'If [alleged al Qaeda operative Jose] Padilla was abused, then it was for a righteous purpose – to reveal the truth.'" The Associated Press quoted task force member Col.

Larry James, twice commander of the Behavioral Science Consultation Teams (BSCTs) at Guantanamo Bay, as saying:

I learned a long, long time ago, if I'm going to be successful in the intel community, I'm meticulously — in a very, very dedicated way — going to stay in my lane [...]. So if I don't have a specific need to know about something, I don't want to know about it. I don't ask about it (SELSKY, 2008).

The six national security task force members could not stray far from Bush Administration policy on interrogations without risking negative effects on their careers, in spite of the obvious mental reservations of some (ARRIGO, 2006a). All task force members were pledged to confidentiality on the proceedings (APA), and APA did not publicly announce the names of the task force members for a year, until a reporter disclosed the names.

One of us (ARRIGO) who had served as a task force member broke the confidentiality agreement in August 2006, revealing to human rights researchers that several so-called "observers" who attended the task force meeting had never been acknowledged by the APA. Among these "observers" were Geoff Mumford and Heather Kelley, named above in the October 2004 *SPIN* announcement as APA grant seekers at the Counterintelligence Field Activity agency (CIFA). Task force member Scott Shumate then headed CIFA's Behavioral Sciences Directorate. Other "observers" included Susan Brandon, Assistant Director of Social, Behavioral, and Educational Sciences for the White House Office of Science & Technology Policy; Steven Breckler, Executive Director for APA Science Policy; and Mel Gravitz, Former NSA Psychologist and Former Director, Navy Internship Program (ARRIGO, 2006b). All had stakes in APA accommodation of DoD interrogation policy and, therefore, conflicts of interest with the February 15-16, 2005, mandate from the APA Board of Directors to the PENS task force (2005, February 16 & 17):

- What appropriate limits does the principle "Do no harm" place on psychologists' involvement in investigations related to national security?
- To the extent it can be determined, given the classified nature of many of these activities: What roles are psychologists asked to take in investigations related to national security?
- What are criteria to differentiate ethically appropriate from ethically inappropriate roles that psychologists may take?
- How is psychology likely to be used in investigations related to national security?
- What role does informed consent have in investigations related to national security?
- What does current research tell us about the efficacy and effectiveness of various investigative techniques?
- Would the efficacy and effectiveness of various investigative techniques, if demonstrated, affect our ethics?
- Has APA responded strongly enough to media accounts of activities that have occurred at Abu Ghraib and Guantanamo Bay?

These are excellent questions and could well serve as guidelines for psychologists in different nations working on security issues. Given what later transpired, however, these words also serve to demonstrate how breaches of ethics can be covered by inquiries that sound earnest but lead nowhere.

Another unmentioned “observer,” Russ Newman, Director of the APA Practice Directorate, took a lead role in the task force meeting. Newman’s wife, Lt. Col. Debra Duniwin, was an active-duty SERE-trained psychologist (HOLLOWAY, 2004). At the June 2005 PENS task force meeting, Newman prevailed with these principles: that the task force mission was to put out the fires of controversy right away; that all present would keep the proceedings confidential so as not to feed the fire; that the PENS report must express unity; and that only a couple of people would speak for the task force. The commitment to haste had strong consequences. For one, the *PENS Report* (APA, 2005, June) had to be derived entirely from the principles of the APA Ethics Code then current, because any new ethical principles would require a year-long APA review. For another, the Director of the APA Ethics Office inscribed the entire PENS Report, through five drafts, so as to produce a final version 24 hours after the three-day meeting closed (APA, 2005, June 24-26).

The June 2005 PENS Report endorsed psychologists’ assistance in national security interrogations but rejected torture: “Psychologists do not engage in, direct, support, facilitate, or offer training in torture or other cruel, inhuman, or degrading treatment” (APA, 2005). Immediately upon release the PENS Report evoked strong condemnation from critics. Criticism focused on three points: the presumption that psychologists may ethically provide direct assistance in interrogations; allowance for psychologists to follow permissive U.S. law regarding interrogations rather than stricter international human rights law; and tacit permission for psychologists to support interrogations in detention centers that violate international human rights laws and standards. *The PENS Report*, in spite of its high principles, accommodated in practice the approach Koocher (2005) had depicted: “The goal of such psychologists’ work will ultimately be the protection of others (i.e., innocents) by contributing to the incarceration, debilitation, or even death of the potential perpetrator [...]”

We have covered this section in some detail because professional organizations are places where ethical professionals in different political systems may have an opportunity, not available in other areas of society, to oppose or abet unethical government policies.

Criticism of APA policy on interrogations and further APA resolutions

Under heavy pressure from critics inside and outside the organization, the APA in August 2007 passed a Resolution by the Council of Representatives denouncing specific, *physically* aversive, interrogation techniques, such as water-boarding. *Psychologically* aversive techniques, such as sleep deprivation and prolonged isolation, were forbidden only in certain circumstances. Additional pressure on the APA leadership resulted in a February 2008 Modification denouncing all techniques rejected under international human rights law (APA, 2008).

These concessions, however, did not mollify APA critics, who pointed to: a) the continuing APA legitimization of psychologists at detention sites where human rights standards are not observed and b) the impossibility of monitoring the conduct of these psychologists or protecting whistleblowers (ARRIGO; DEBATTO, 2008; OLSON, SOLDZ, DAVIS, 2008). That is, the policy “just say no to torture,” in a practical sense, continues to accommodate Bush Administration policy on interrogations. Violations of APA Ethics Code in civilian settings, in contrast, may be reported by victims or witnesses; and remedies are supported by the clinics, hospitals, schools, universities, and other institutions that embed civilian psychological practices.

The U.S. critics include Psychologists for Social Responsibility, the APA Divisions for Social Justice, six college psychology departments that have formally protested APA policy, the American Medical Association, the American Psychiatric Association, and numerous human rights organizations, with Physicians for Human Rights foremost. Prominent psychologists have resigned from APA, and over 300 members are withholding their dues in protest. From abroad, the Australian Psychological Society and the Norwegian Psychological Association, among others, have registered their opposition to APA interrogation policy. As of this writing, one of the five APA candidates for the President-Elect (i.e., President the following year) is campaigning on a platform to reject psychologists’ presence in U.S. detention centers where international human rights law is not upheld (KAYE, 2008).

Some intelligence professionals have also been critical of APA policy. David DeBatto, a counterintelligence operative with much experience in Iraq, characterized the APA PENS task force episode as a “typical legitimization process for a decision made at a higher level in the Department of Defense.” Because of the hierarchical structure of the DoD, he said, it was impossible that the DoD members of the task force participated as *individuals* bringing their expertise and judgment to the policy issue at hand. They were certainly there as representatives of the decision maker. And because the decision maker’s position had to prevail, a quorum of DoD/CIA affiliates was necessary, rather than one or two to express DoD/CIA concerns to the task force. The presence of the APA Science Policy “observers” DeBatto said, was a standard intimidation tactic to ensure the DoD task force affiliates, some of whom had mixed sympathies, stayed in line. As funding lobbyists and recipients, they were strictly beholden to DoD interests. In effect, they out-ranked the DoD task force members because of their DoD and Congressional connections. The reason for the several task force observers, DeBatto said, would be to represent to the decision maker the perspectives of various government agencies connected to the different observers, so as to broadly legitimize the predetermined decision. Former counterintelligence officer Lawrence Rockwood, independently made the same assessment of PENS process (ARRIGO, 2007).

APA policy continues to ignore the institutional context of psychologists in detention centers. Rather, it construes psychologists in national security settings as morally autonomous agents serving as independent consultants. This view conforms to the military “virtue ethic” of officership, that is, the belief that individual character is the basis of conduct. The virtue ethic is inspirational for officer training and as an individual guide

to conduct. But military ethicists themselves have warned that, "The focus on character may prevent leaders from taking a critical look at the institutions they lead and thereby ensure that morally corrupting rules, structures, and systems remain" (ROBINSON, 2007, p. 31). In any case, the APA model of the morally autonomous psychologist, absolutely prohibited from knowingly planning, designing, participating in or assisting in the use of all condemned techniques, as stated in the February 2008 Modification, defies the classic empirical social psychological studies on conformity and obedience (ZIMBARDO, 2007), as well as recent findings on limits to self-control in demanding situations (BAUMEISTER, 2008).

In further disregard of psychological realism, APA policymakers have not inquired into the opinions of senior interrogators regarding abusive interrogations and the contributions of psychologists to interrogations.

Perspectives of professional military interrogators

Many professional military interrogators were unhappy with the Abusive Turn in interrogation policy. In 2006, 20 former US Army interrogators and interrogation technicians sent this open letter the Senate Armed Services Committee (MARQUIS et al., 2006), you will find that trained and experienced interrogators refute the assertion that so-called "coercive interrogation techniques" and torture are necessary to win the "War on Terror." Trained and experienced interrogators can, in fact, accomplish the intelligence gathering mission using only those techniques, developed and proven effective over decades, found in the Army Field Manual 34-52 (1992). You will also see that experienced interrogators find prisoner/detainee abuse and torture to be counter-productive to the intelligence gathering mission.

Two senior U.S. Army interrogators independently stated during their presentations to the 2007 APA Convention that they do not need or want the assistance of psychologists in interrogations (KLEINMAN, 2007; BENNETT, 2007). Nor do psychologists serve to raise the moral level of interrogations overall. According to interrogators whom we consulted in the *Psychologists for Social Responsibility Seminar for Psychologists and Interrogators on Rethinking the Psychology of Torture* (ARRIGO; WAGNER, 2006), psychologists' efforts are misplaced in "softening up" detainees for novice interrogators and for extralegal, untrained amateurs. Instead, psychologists should direct their efforts toward selection of interrogation trainees and preparation of novice interrogators for superior, nonabusive, methods of interrogation. These methods require social perception, tolerance, cultural sensitivity, cognitive complexity, flexible thinking, situational awareness, and self-control (McCAULEY, 2007; ARRIGO; BENNETT, 2007). The proper mentor for a novice interrogator is not a psychologist but a senior interrogator. A senior interrogator needing consultation will ordinarily prefer another senior interrogator, as a psychotherapist will prefer consultation with another psychotherapist. Moreover, psychologists easily interfere with the dynamics of the interrogator-source relationship (BENNETT, 2007).

Most psychological work in the army is conducted by young career psychologists carrying out their obligations in return for the substantial financial help for their training.

At the top, however, are seasoned psychologists, such as those who operationalized the change from the SERE to the BSCT teams. The actual power structure related to interrogations is quite complicated. The great majority of psychologists in contact with detainees must obey the orders of field commanders, whom they may technically outrank, while some senior psychologists, as staff officers with the ear of a commander, indirectly have power over interrogators and interrogation protocols (ARRIGO; DEBATTO, 2008).

Under the Bush Administration, the expert counsel of senior interrogators has easily been ignored due to the very low ceiling on interrogator rank in a strictly hierarchical institution, penalties for dissent, disastrous understaffing of senior interrogators in a context of high demand, and, especially, unwarranted exemptions for abusive interrogations (ARRIGO; BENNETT, 2007).

A positive role for military psychologists in interrogations

The APA leadership has served to protect military psychologists from accusations of illegal and unethical behavior rather than to speak out against the cruelties of the Abusive Turn in U.S. treatment of detainees. By accommodating Bush Administration interrogation policy, the APA misses the opportunity to support genuine psychological contributions to interrogations.

Military psychologists could contribute ethically to the effectiveness of interrogation by taking the “expert-performance approach” articulated by cognitive psychologists. The same training requirements detailed by senior interrogators (McCAULEY, 2007; ARRIGO; BENNETT, 2007) are found in many other domains of measurable expertise, such as chess competitions and musicianship (ERICSSON; WARD, 2007, p. 346, 349): “10 years of intense preparation — even for the most ‘talented’, [...] training situations with immediate valid feedback, [...] deliberate practice [...] in maintaining expertise,” and so on. Recent cognitive research (BAUMEISTER; VOHS; TICE, 2007) also shows how various forms of self-control and initiative that are essential to effective interrogation — decision making, choice, creative problem solving, management of emotions, etc.— are quickly depleted in high stress situations. Indeed, “there are levels of depletion beyond which people may be unable to control themselves effectively, regardless of what is at stake” (BAUMEISTER; VOHS; TICE, 2007, p. 353). A senior interrogator gave this example: “In the high-adrenaline raid of a terrorist safe house, the direct interrogation approach of Special Forces may be to kick the captive in the head and then ask his name” (ARRIGO; BENNETT, 2007, p. 418). Scientific psychologists could research and promote the expert-performance approach to interrogation deemed effective by senior interrogators (McCAULEY, 2007). They could assist interrogators in establishing the necessary training programs and in securing resources (ARRIGO; BENNETT, 2007). Where is the APA opposition to the use of 18-year-old interrogators with 16 weeks of training and no professional mentorship?

The principal obstacle to such a response on the part of APA, we believe, has been hidden financial interests. The APA's effective refusal to assist and legitimize abusive interrogations under the Bush Administration would jeopardize the APA's vigorous lobbying efforts for Department of Defense funding (see APA Science Policy Insider News, 2002-

2007). These financial interests were represented by the participation of unacknowledged, high-level APA fund seekers in the original APA PENS Report (ARRIGO, 2007).

A lesson for world psychology

We have attempted here to set out a tragic episode for the United States, the American Psychological Association, and psychologists in the United States. We have left unattended the first act of this tragedy, namely, the long, tangled, hostile, and unresolved relationship between current U.S. policies and militant sectors of contemporary Islam that led up to the air attacks on the U.S. in 2001. Picking up the story after the attacks and U.S. invasion of Afghanistan, and later, though irrationally, invasion of Iraq, we noted the Abusive Turn in U.S. policies toward foreign detainees under the George W. Bush Administration.

We then followed our own professional dimension of the tragedy in the considerable involvement of psychologists with torture and abuse through the DoD and CIA. We focused most on the role of the APA, whose mission includes the commitment to maintain the highest level of ethics among psychologists. During the years of the Abusive Turn in government policy, the APA has been found to enable, more than to regulate, psychologists' involvement with abuses, as demonstrated in the PENS task force process.

The long history of APA and DoD interdependence was sketched to indicate how institutional entanglements have prevented the APA from acting as an ethical leader for psychologists involved in interrogations. Assessments from non-psychologist, military intelligence representatives revealed conflicts within the military concerning abusive interrogations and psychologists, and they pointed to the difficulty of psychologists upholding their ethical standards where an overall directive for abusive treatment exist. We outlined the appropriate role for psychologists as supporters of an expert-performance approach to nonabusive, social skills methods of interrogation. Admittedly the voices that are missing here are those from within the APA leadership itself, some of whom undoubtedly dissent from official APA policies and pronouncements.

For psychologists across nations, we believe that similarly structured tragedies frequently unfold and perplex, even though the details are quite different. We hope that each part of this story can aid our colleagues elsewhere to anticipate and recognize unethical government demands on their psychological expertise, and to develop ethical responses with less tragic outcomes.

Acknowledgments

We are indebted to Fathali Moghaddam, Anthony Marsella and the International Network of Psychologists for Social Responsibility for alerting us to the significance of APA policy to world psychology. Brad Olson contributed to the section on APA entanglements with the DoD. Stephen Soldz and Steven Reisner provided data and analysis of U.S. and APA policies toward foreign detainees over recent years. Most of the important documents of this history can be found at Stephen Soldz' archive/blog *Psyche Science and Society*. The text draws some passages from unpublished articles by the first author that have circulated electronically.

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Tramitação

Recebido em março de 2008
Aceito em junho de 2008