

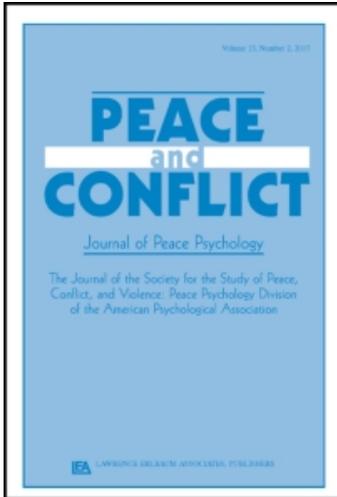
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Endorsement by the Seminar Military Interrogators

Ray Bennett

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Endorsement by the Seminar Military Interrogators

Ray Bennett
Washington, DC

The issue of torture as an interrogation tool is a hot-button topic, from barrooms to the highest seats of power in the U.S. government. What has largely been missing from the discussion is the voice of seasoned professionals trained in interrogation. That is who we are; that is what we hope to contribute to the conversation.

We are all retired military interrogators, with a combined service experience of over 100 years and deployments including Vietnam, Grenada, Desert Storm, Bosnia, and the current Operation Iraqi Freedom.

As professionals, we want to produce the most accurate and complete information possible, and we are always striving to perfect our questioning skills. Our perspective is that, beyond being morally reprehensible, torture does not satisfy the professional interrogator's need for a reliable technique that produces a verifiable truth. Much like a gambler who only needs 1 win in 1,000 to believe he has worked out a system, a person who coerces information through torture will believe that it is an effective interrogation technique. We hold that those advocating torture are not competent interrogators, and those serving as interrogators who resort to torture were never properly trained in interrogation, but are amateurs engaging in the worst behavior our profession has exhibited.

We seized the opportunity to work with psychologists for multiple reasons. One, certainly, is that we frequently observed commentary on interrogation in the media, without the commentator having spoken with a person trained in interrogation. We sought to rectify this and strengthen the workgroup by making ourselves available to the participating psychologists. The other reason was to get our voices—the voices of trained, experienced interrogators—into the discussion among professionals seeking to end the use of torture as an interrogation tool.

We were amazed, we were gratified, and, most of all, we were thankful for the opportunity to participate in the workshop with these psychologists. We stand by our convictions, and we endorse this study.

Psychologists and Military Interrogators Rethink the Psychology of Torture

Jean Maria Arrigo

Project on Ethics and Art in Testimony

Richard V. Wagner

Bates College

Torture interrogation does not yield reliable information. The popular belief that “torture works” conflicts with effective non-abusive methodologies of interrogation and with fundamental tenets of psychology. These were the conclusions reached at a meeting of recently retired, senior U.S. Army interrogators and research psychologists who met to rethink the psychology of torture. This article introduces the military interrogators, the psychologists, and the themes explored. In the process, this article explains why competent interrogators do not require a definition of torture, discredits the “ticking bomb scenario,” and outlines the studies that comprise the meeting report, *Torture is for Amateurs*.

The popular belief that “torture works” conflicts with effective non-abusive methodologies of interrogation and with fundamental tenets of psychology. These were the conclusions of four recently retired, senior U.S. Army interrogators and seven research psychologists who met in November 2006 for the Seminar for Psychologists and Interrogators on Rethinking the Psychology of Torture, under the auspices of Psychologists for Social Responsibility and the Department of Psychology, Georgetown University.

THE INTERROGATORS AND THE PSYCHOLOGISTS

One of the seminar interrogators initiated the project at hand through an anonymous audiotaped invitation to psychologists at the 2006 Convention of the

American Psychological Association (Bennett, 2006). He and his colleagues anticipated that a psychological formulation of their knowledge of non-abusive interrogation protocols would better communicate with the general public and government authorities who have failed to seek the counsel of senior interrogators. In July 2006, just prior to the convention, 20 other military interrogators had sent a similar message to the U.S. House Committee on the Armed Services (Bauer, 2006):

[T]rained 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.

The seminar interrogators were veterans of the first Gulf War and the current war in Iraq, as well as of wars in Vietnam, Grenada, Bosnia, and Kosovo. For example, one said that during the Gulf War he would screen hundreds of prisoners from among the 4,000 or so processed daily. All of the seminar interrogators had extensive backgrounds as trainers of interrogators and directors of interrogation training programs. One had also helped to develop the U.S. Army Survival, Evasion, Resistance, and Escape (SERE) program, which trains select military personnel to resist torture interrogation if captured. The identities of the seminar interrogators are archived with seminar materials in the *Intelligence Ethics Collection*, Hoover Institution Archives, Stanford University (Arrigo, 2007).

The seven participating psychologists came from the fields of social, cognitive, forensic, cultural, political, and peace psychology. Two concerns motivated the seminar psychologists. First, there is a scarcity of pertinent psychological knowledge to inform the public debate on the ethics of torture interrogation of terrorist suspects. Research psychologists can contribute relevant data collection, analysis, and theory. The qualitative data on hostile interrogations provided by the seminar interrogators were among the best psychological data available to outsiders, given the constraints of military secrecy and research ethics. Second, American psychology, as the major national influence in world psychology, bears an obligation to evaluate torture interrogation, which American foreign policy has brought to the fore. Seminar psychologists understood evaluation to include individual beliefs about torture interrogation, organizational supports, and social dynamics, in addition to the interaction between interrogator and interrogatee.

DEFINITION OF INTERROGATION AND NON-DEFINITION OF TORTURE

The seminar interrogators wholly agreed on the definition of *interrogation* as “the manner of extracting a maximum amount of accurate information from a detainee in a minimum amount of time, using legal means” (Arrigo, 2007). If the source is present by choice and is willing to talk, then the event is a *debriefing*, not an interrogation. The difference is in the relationship between the interrogator and source, and the interrogation environment.

Coercion was variously characterized as (a) the implication that “if you don’t cooperate something bad will happen to you”; (b) “active efforts to influence or manipulate you,” whether through persuasion, trickery, or force; and (c) “forcing you to do something against your will (Arrigo, 2007). Hostile interrogations are necessarily coercive to some extent, whether or not abusive, because detainees are held against their will.

One interrogator defined *torture* as an extreme degree of coercion, at the point where the interrogator’s intervention damages the detainee’s physical or physiological processes, as in sleep deprivation. In a press conference after the seminar, when challenged by a journalist for a sharp definition of torture, another interrogator explained that a sharp definition was unimportant to him: “All these environmental pressures on the detainee—I don’t need them for a successful interrogation. So why even have the argument?” (Arrigo, 2007).

The seminar psychologists similarly do not pursue the definition of torture in the articles that follow but use the terms *coercion*, *abuse*, and *torture* loosely.

THE ALTERNATIVE TO ABUSIVE INTERROGATIONS

A common argument for torture is the “ticking time-bomb” scenario in which a terrorist who knows the location of a time-bomb is tortured in a race to save a multitude of innocents. The seminar interrogators stated that this scenario is based on a misunderstanding of the nature of terrorist investigations. It is highly unlikely that investigators would have all the pieces of the puzzle except the location of the bomb. In their combined experience, the seminar interrogators had never encountered a true ticking bomb scenario. In any case, the terrorist in the scenario as premised knows that he only has to keep his secret for the short time period until the bomb detonates. Moreover, torture interrogation offers the terrorist a prime opportunity to deceive interrogators by falsely naming bomb locations of difficult access. In a high-stakes, bad-bet situation of this sort, they would resort to their best, deeply relational interrogation techniques, not squander the fragile opportunity through torture.

However, what is the alternative to abusive interrogations? Over a period of 3 days, the seminar interrogators presented a recent history of military interrogation; an overview of the major training program for interrogators, the standard non-abusive approaches to interrogation, which exclude torture; and individual examples of interrogations. As one psychologist exclaimed in a moment of insight, "It's all just social psychology!"—persuasion, conformity, social modeling, etc.—dressed in military terminology, of course (see McCauley, this issue). The catch is that the non-abusive techniques require linguistic expertise, cultural sensitivity, situational awareness, flexible thinking, self-mastery, and capacity to empathize with foreigners and enemies. These skills—the product of high aptitude, much training, and long mentorship—contrast with the ignorance, bigotry, and lack of emotional control that can accompany abusive techniques.

OUTLINE OF THE ARTICLES CONSTITUTING THE SEMINAR REPORT

The seminar report published here opens with two articles that summarize and interpret narrative data presented by the seminar interrogators. Clark McCauley leads off with a review of psychological theory and research embodied in the non-abusive techniques described by seminar interrogators. His review focuses especially on the interrogator–source relationship. He applies group dynamics and social comparison theory in his analysis of that relationship and of the interrogation techniques described in the U.S. Army Field Manual 2-22.3 for Human Intelligence Collector Operations. McCauley concludes with an application of French and Raven's (1960) bases of social power and Fiske's (1991) theory of social models.

Shifting to the organizational level, Jean Maria Arrigo and Ray Bennett (one of the seminar interrogators) examine structural and procedural supports for abusive interrogations in the U.S. military. Their analysis points to non-obvious organizational changes needed for support of non-abusive interrogations.

Allison Redlich then distinguishes military intelligence interrogation from police interrogation and summarizes common problems in obtaining accurate information through abusive interrogation techniques.

The next two articles address the societal context. Ronnie Janoff-Bulman endeavors to explain the folk psychology of popular belief in the effectiveness of torture interrogation, despite contrary evidence. In her analysis, she draws principally on social cognitive biases that can sustain policies supportive of abusive interrogation and attempts to discredit those practices. Fathali Moghaddam describes how intergroup conflict and political opportunism can drive a public policy of torture interrogation. He further calls on American psychology to recognize and take responsibility for its major influence on the position of international psychology with respect to torture interrogation.

For a comprehensive view, Robin Vallacher integrates individual, group, and societal aspects of torture interrogation in a dynamical systems model. His model indicates how we might reverse the proliferating harms of torture interrogation in a “high temperature” society at war.

Finally, Richard Wagner assesses the extent to which the psychologists have promoted the interrogators’ goal of convincing authorities that abusive interrogation must cease, and draws implications for the field of psychology, its theory, research, and practice.

BIOGRAPHICAL NOTES

Jean Maria Arrigo, is a social psychologist and oral historian. She established the *Ethics of Intelligence and Weapons Development Oral History Collection* at Bancroft Library, University of California at Berkeley and the *Intelligence Ethics Collection* at Hoover Institution Archives, Stanford University. In collaboration with theater directors and performers she has brought these materials to broader audiences.

Richard Wagner is editor of *Peace and Conflict: Journal of Peace Psychology*, a retired professor of psychology at Bates College, and from 2006 through 2008 a legislator in the Maine House of Representatives. He is co-editor (with Daniel J. Christie and Deborah DuNann Winter) of *Peace, Conflict, and Violence: Peace Psychology for the 21st Century*.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

We are grateful to the David and Carol Myers Foundation for funding the seminar. Interrogator Ray Bennett recruited the interrogators. Richard Wagner recruited the research psychologists and served as program co-chair. Jean Maria Arrigo served as the liaison between interrogators and psychologists and as program co-chair. Colleen Cordes, Executive Director of Psychologists for Social Responsibility, administered the event. Fathali Moghaddam hosted the seminar at the Department of Psychology, Georgetown University, Washington, DC.

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Toward a Social Psychology of Professional Military Interrogation

Clark McCauley
Bryn Mawr College

The essence of successful interrogation is the relationship between interrogator and source. This relationship does not need to be friendly, but it does need to provide something of value for both interrogator and source. This article reviews elements of theory and research in social psychology that can illuminate the nature of the exchange, including the human costs to the interrogator in developing and using an intense human connection.

To a hammer, everything looks like a nail; to a psychologist, every kind of human activity looks like psychology. Thus, I aim here to unpack some of the psychological issues involved in the practice of military interrogations. For access to these issues, I thank the participants in the conference of psychologists and interrogators that was sponsored by Psychologists for Social Responsibility at Georgetown University, November 10 through 12, 2006.

SUCCESSFUL INTERROGATION: THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN INTERROGATOR AND SOURCE

The key importance of the relationship with the source is evident in many of the comments made by interrogators. “The headway we make just by acknowledging them as a human being takes us far!” “The source wants to talk; it’s my job to become the person he wants to talk to.” “Don’t mirror the body posture of the source unless you want to put him at ease.” Related is the recognition that, if an interpreter is needed, the interpreter may be better placed behind the source, so that the attention of the source is not distracted from the interrogator.

Correspondence should be addressed to Clark McCauley, Psychology Department, Bryn Mawr College, Bryn Mawr, PA 19010. E-mail: cmccaule@brynmawr.edu

A new U.S. Army Field Manual for Human Intelligence Collection (FM 2-22.3) was issued September 6, 2006. Chapter 8, "Approach Techniques and Termination Strategies," begins as follows:

Regardless of the type of operation, the initial impression that the HUMINT [human intelligence] collector makes on the source and the approach he takes to gain the source's cooperation will have a lasting effect on the continuing relationship and the degree of success in collecting information. (p. 8-1)

The foundation of this relationship is indicated in section 8.6:

People tend to want to talk when they are under stress and respond to kindness and understanding during trying circumstances. For example, enemy soldiers who have just been captured have experienced a significant stress-producing episode. The natural inclination is for people to want to talk about this sort of experience. If the Enemy Prisoner of War [EPW] has been properly segregated and silenced, the HUMINT collector will be the first person the EPW has a chance to talk to. This is a powerful tool for the collector to use to get the subject talking. (p. 8-2)

The stress of capture and incarceration includes the stress of separation from familiar sources of social support: organization and orders, friends and family. Major change, especially traumatic change, is a source of uncertainty. Old ways are inadequate; new ways not yet found. In the attitude-change literature, major life change is often cited as "unfreezing" beliefs and values.

Strong uncertainties can be the occasion of strong emotions. There is fear about what will happen next to one's self, or what will happen to comrades and loved ones. For a soldier or militant there is also the shame of having been captured. For some prisoners there may be anger toward those perceived as responsible for their current predicament: anger toward their regime, their organization and its leaders, even toward comrades who failed them. The interrogator aims to uncover these emotions and use them to get the source to talk and keep talking; in this dialogue, the interrogator aims to become the reliable source for answering the interogatee's uncertainties.

OPINIONS AND EMOTIONS ANCHORED IN SOCIAL RELATIONSHIPS

These same ideas are prominent in social psychological theory and research. Beginning with applied research on persuasion in World War II, Kurt Lewin and his students came to the conclusion that opinions are anchored in groups and that suc-

cessful persuasion targets relationships rather than individuals. Only a brief introduction to this research can be presented here.

Group Dynamics Theory

In Leon Festinger's (1950) group dynamics theory, the social reality value of the group is the value of consensus about questions of value. What is beautiful and what is ugly? What is right and what is wrong? What is worth living for or dying for? Who am I, and what does my life mean? How is my life any different from the life of that squirrel I passed this morning, dead by the side of the road? What does it mean that I am going to die? These are central human concerns for which science and engineering have no answer. Consensus is the only antidote to uncertainty, and the interrogator aims to use and answer the uncertainties of a prisoner removed from his normal social supports. According to the interrogators, this is also a factor that leads to abuse on the part of the interrogator when moral leadership is lacking.

Festinger's (1954) social comparison theory went further in exploring the human need to validate opinions and evaluate abilities in comparison with others. Festinger's (1954) principle of comparison is *similarity*: We want to compare most with those who are similar to us, especially those slightly better than we. Interrogators use this principle in positive approaches that emphasize similarity: joining in anger against those who wronged the source, joining in pride about the virtues and accomplishments of the source, joining in concern for the well-being of the source's family and comrades.

Social comparison of emotion. The similarity principle emerges again in extensions of social comparison theory to validation of emotional experience. Schachter (1959) threatened individuals with electric shock, and showed that they sought the company of similar others—facing the same shock—to reduce uncertainty about whether their feelings were appropriate. Results also indicated that the company of similar others produced a significant reduction in fear. The latter result is familiar to any sergeant who has tried to keep soldiers from bunching under fire (e.g., “Spread out! One grenade will get you all!”).

Schachter and Singer (1962) went on to argue that cues from others can even determine what emotion we experience, as when unexplained arousal is interpreted as anger in the presence of an angry person. Interrogators aim to provide such cues when they encourage and join in emotions that will forward rapport and cooperation.

In short, the key insight of successful interrogation—interrogation as relationship—is echoed in social psychological theory and research. From this insight flows the need for communication. Relationships are established via communication, and the first principle of interrogation is to open communication.

RELATIONSHIP APPROACHES IN INTERROGATION

The interrogator avoids questions that can be answered “yes” or “no.” It is important to get the source talking and to get the communication flowing. A psychologist might say that it is difficult to shape the behavior of a non-behaving organism. The source has to begin to talk for an interrogator to shape the talk in useful directions.

FM 2-22.3 (Field Manual, 2006) offers brief descriptions of 18 approach techniques. Each is a path toward developing rapport and control to facilitate information collection. Each implies a different kind of relationship between interrogator and source. Only the most common approaches are referenced here.

The new manual is explicit that an interrogator cannot present himself as a medic, Red Cross representative, chaplain, journalist, or member of the U.S. Congress. However, interrogators often misrepresent themselves in other ways. “I’m the administrative officer, I’m here to process your forms and get you moved on to a regular POW camp.” The interrogator begins with simple and easy questions to establish in the source the habit of response to questions. This leads naturally into the *direct approach*.

Direct Approach

The direct approach is to assume the right to ask questions, begin with easy and unthreatening questions, and then move to questions of more military significance. It is important to ask some questions with already known answers to check the truthfulness of the source. It is also important not to give away what important pieces of information are *not* already known to the interrogator.

Interrogators are advised to begin with the direct approach and to continue with it unless the source refuses to continue. In previous conflicts, the direct approach was found to be sufficient for about 90% of sources. For Islamic militants, however, the direct approach is much less useful. Potential sources with a commitment to Islam are likely to see themselves already as potential martyrs who can be defiled by contact with infidels. This is not a perspective conducive to answering questions from a military interrogator.

Beyond the direct approach, a few forms comprise 90% of other approaches to interrogation: *incentive, emotion up or down, pride and ego up or down, and futility*. Other approaches, such as *false flag* and the TV-favored *good cop, bad cop*, are rarely practiced.

Incentive Approaches

The incentive approach is to trade something the source wants for information. The incentive can be as blatant as cash or as subtle as positive regard, a smile, or a cigarette. It can include the removal of a perceived or real punishment as well as

presentation of something positive. Entitlements cannot be denied but can be treated as rewards: “Here, sit down and write your mother a letter.”

Research in the psychology of learning has developed a four-way categorization of incentives: presenting or taking away a negative stimulus and presenting or taking away a positive stimulus. This categorization could be useful in anticipating the psychological impact of different forms of incentives. In general, the use of punishment is associated with less control of behavior because punishment often leads to avoidance or freezing, and these behaviors may interfere with the desired response.

Fear-Down and Emotional Love Approaches

Expressing emotions is good for talking, and so good for the interrogation. Reassuring the source that he is safe—will not be tortured, is in humane hands—can make the interrogator a positive figure, even a father or mother figure. Concern for comrades can be turned to helping them surrender. Concern for family can be turned to helping end the conflict as soon as possible by giving information that will end the conflict.

Pride and Ego-Up, Ego-Down, and Emotional Hate Approaches

Raising the status of the timid and humiliating the proud are alike in offering opportunities for the interrogator to encourage talk and develop rapport. Rapport is two-way communication. It does not have to be positive in tone to be effective. Expressing pride can lead to talk about individual and unit strengths and accomplishments. Even expressing hate for the interrogator can be put to work if the source talks out his hate.

Futility Approach

In this approach, the interrogator aims to convince the source that his cause is hopeless; there is no sense prolonging the pain and suffering of the conflict. The futility approach can often be used as an opening gambit. “Your side is losing. Proof? You’re captive in my camp, I’m not captive in your camp.”

When a cause is lost, further suffering in the conflict is only a horrific waste. Why let others, especially your comrades, suffer further? If the source can help bring the conflict more quickly to its inevitable end, this is the decent choice, the humane choice, the rational choice. The source should join the interrogator in trying to save others, especially comrades, from unnecessary pain and death.

We Know All and File and Dossier Approaches

In the *we know all* approach, the interrogator aims to give the impression that he and his side already know almost everything the source knows that could be worth knowing. This requires that the interrogator keep the initial conversation along lines about which much *is* in fact already known—the identity of the source's unit, its leadership and personnel, its tactics, its previous successes and failures. When the source talks down one of these lines, the interrogator can bring him up short with corrections or amplifications that convey a sense of omniscience. The interrogator can look bored; he is going through the motions with a worthless source.

Sometimes the source can be motivated to one-up the interrogator by finding something the interrogator does not already know. More often the source can be demoralized with a special form of futility: Why bother to try to keep anything back from someone who already knows everything? Why get in trouble for lying when the lie is sure to be detected?

Closely related to the *we know all* approach is the *file and dossier* approach, which requires an interrogator to invest in considerable homework. The investigator must be able to show that he already knows a great deal about the source: his family, his friends, his enemies, his colleagues, his activities, his history, and his experience. The investigator may pause occasionally to consult a thick document that seems to offer unlimited detail about the source.

The file and dossier approach is basically a *we know all* approach directed specifically against the source as an individual. The goal is the same: to develop a sense of futility that undermines resistance to the interrogator. File and dossier is limited in practice by the time and effort required to amass personal details; but, for long-term or high-value sources, the effort may be justified. Westerners subjected to thought reform in Chinese prison cells, for instance, report interviews with “judges” who refer to thick files that seem to contain information about their every movement and contact before their arrest (Lifton, 1961, pp. 21, 49).

RELATIONSHIP PSYCHOLOGY AND APPROACHES TO INTERROGATION

Each of the approaches described earlier implies a different quality of relationship between interrogator and source. The direct approach is the most business-like—a continuation of the command authority of the EPW, but with the interrogator now in command. Incentive approaches can range from impersonal and commercial to personal and emotional, depending on the value exchanged (better living conditions vs. personal warmth). Fear-down and emotional love approaches imply a warm and supportive relationship. Emotional pride and ego-up approaches call for

respect; ego-down approaches call for contempt. We know all and file and dossier put the interrogator into a position of detached superiority.

The importance of the relationship between interrogator and source is particularly evident when the relationship fails. If a negative approach (fear up, ego down) does not work, it is often necessary to change interrogators. The same interrogator who threatened or humiliated a source usually cannot recover the relationship enough to change to a more positive approach. Even a new interrogator will face special difficulties in developing rapport with a source after the source has experienced a failed negative approach.

PSYCHOLOGY OF RELATIONSHIPS—SIX BASES OF SOCIAL POWER

Another way to think about different approaches to interrogation is to consider how they draw on different bases of social power. In its simplest version, French and Raven's (1960) theory of social power distinguishes six bases of interpersonal influence:

1. and 2. *Reward power* and *punishment power* are obvious and understood by interrogators as incentives.

3. *Expert power* is influence based on special skills or knowledge, and interrogators employ this kind of influence in the various forms of the futility approach.

4. *Legitimate power* is based on organizational or normative superiority such that one person is acknowledged by another as having the right to lead or direct. Interrogators assume this superiority in the direct approach; a source who answers the first few questions is accepting the direction of the interrogator. Reciprocity is a special form of legitimate power; the interrogator has the right to something in return for the cigarette accepted by the source.

5. *Referent power* is based on personal attachment; we are more likely to do something for someone we like. Interrogators are aiming for referent power when they aim to become a friend or father or mother figure for their sources.

6. Finally, *information power* is based on offering new perceptions, a different worldview, or a new identity. Interrogators may not often have the time required to work on information power, which aims for the deepest kind of influence. According to French and Raven, only information power produces truly internalized persuasion; the other bases of social power all depend on the maintenance of a relationship between the one influencing and the one influenced.

One interrogator at the conference suggested that information power is the type of power that is most effective with hard-core Islamists and other ideology-based extremists. A source with strong ideological commitment is not easily moved by

direct authority, incentives, emotional manipulations, or futility arguments. Faced with such a source, an amateur is likely to turn to torture. A professional interrogator will turn to information power.

Sometimes it is possible to use the source's ideology against him. This requires some background knowledge, as when trying to cite Marx against a Communist. With an Islamic militant, a line of questioning might go as follows: "Do you believe there is no God but Allah?" "Do you believe that nothing happens without the will of Allah?" "Then Allah wills that you are here talking with me today? Then you should work with me." Although FM 2-22.3 (Field Manual, 2006) includes ideological values under emotional approaches, it seems likely that religion is a combination of internalized belief and emotional commitment that will not yield to purely emotional approaches.

Understanding interrogation in relation to application of different forms of social power yet leaves an anomaly. Sometimes an interrogator will cede power for information. This occurs in the pride and ego-up approach in which the interrogator makes himself look inferior to the source to get the source talking and keep him talking. In the next section, a different theory of social relationships offers some help with this anomaly.

PSYCHOLOGY OF RELATIONSHIPS—FISKE'S (1991) FOUR MODELS

Conceptually, the different approaches to interrogation—direct, incentive, fear down, and so forth—are not directly associated with the nature of the relationship the interrogator seeks with his source. Is use of material incentive consistent with a friendly relationship with the source, for instance? Or does use of material incentive undermine the power of more psychological incentives such as respect and friendliness?

Fiske's (1991) theory of social models may be useful in this regard. According to Fiske, at any given moment any social interaction can be described in terms of one of four models:

1. In the *community-sharing* model, no one keeps track of contributions or inputs but all in the model can take what they need. Families and good friendships operate, in many moments, according to the community-sharing model.

2. In the *equality-matching* model, strict reciprocity of contributions or inputs is maintained. Contributions have to be of the same kind so that equivalence can be determined by inspection. Turn-taking in dinner invitations, borrowing, and labor exchange often operate in the equality-matching model.

3. In the *authority-ranking* model, inferiors owe respect and support to superiors and, what is less often realized, superiors owe assistance and protection to infe-

riors. Parents in relation to children and clan leaders in relation to clan members often operate in the authority-ranking model. Here is where pride and ego-up approaches may get a foothold; the source made to feel superior can feel an obligation to help the inferior interrogator. This is a special form of reciprocity in which contributions or inputs are not equivalent but complementary. Respect directed upward is returned by help directed downward.

4. Finally, in the *market-pricing* model, exchanges are denominated in ratios such as provided by money or time. The cigarette offered to the source is worth its money value among prisoners, which might be considerable. The same cigarette might signal a friendly relation between interrogator and source in the community-sharing model, a favor to be reciprocated in the equality-matching model, or a benefice from superior to inferior in the authority-ranking model. The models are subjective, not determined by the observables of exchange.

The strong assumption in Fiske's (1991) theory is that any human relationship is operating on only one of these models at any given time. It might be useful to think about how this assumption plays out in the relationship of interrogator and source. Similarly, the four models might be useful in categorizing the 18 approaches to interrogation detailed in FM 2-22.3 (Field Manual, 2006). As already noted, each approach implies a different relationship between interrogator and source and a different quality of emotional connection between interrogator and source. The direct approach, for instance, seems to depend on instantiating a model in which the interrogator is the superior side of an authority-ranking relation.

CHARACTERISTICS OF SUCCESSFUL INTERROGATORS

The experienced interrogators in the seminar were notably attractive and congenial individuals. They appeared outgoing, relaxed, and straightforward. They displayed high verbal skills; they told stories, and told them with verve. They seemed to like people and to like meeting new people. They showed little difficulty in meeting and interacting with a very different kind of crowd than their own—a collection of PhD psychologists who might be more at home with books than with soldiers.

I have been careful to characterize the interrogators in terms of appearance and action, rather than at the trait levels that would be conveyed by describing them as high IQ, or extroverts, or low on anxiety. The successful interrogator is a chameleon who can select a persona and stay watchful and unmoved within that persona, even when acting out emotions ranging from love and respect to cold contempt, anger, and even hate. To be a successful interrogator is to be a salesperson, selling not just one self but as many selves as may be needed:

I am no man's slave, but I have made myself a slave to all, in order to win the more for Christ. To the Jews I have made myself as a Jew, in order to win Jews; to those who live under the law I have come as one under the law, in order to win those who are under the law—not that I myself am under the law. To those who live without the law I have come as one without the law, in order to win those who are without the law—not that I am really under no law in relation to God, for I am bound by the law of Christ. To those who are weak I have made myself weak, so as to win the weak; in fact, I have become all things to all people, in order that, one way or another, I may rescue some of them. But I do it all for the sake of the gospel, so that I may share its blessings with others. (1 Cor. 9:19–23)

Substituting “U. S. Army” for “Christ” and “Gospel,” St. Paul describes a successful interrogator.

For individuals who are not saints, the interrogator's skills can have a downside. The interior costs of pretending but withholding empathy can be considerable. It is possible to lose the feeling of authenticity in feeling and expressing empathy in relationships outside of work. Should an interrogator turn his skills toward improving what can be gotten from colleagues, friends, spouses, or children? All interrogators feel this tension; each draws his or her own line to separate life and work. Some interrogators cannot turn off the analysis stage and can only commit to not using the emotional openings that come their way from friends and family.

Another aspect of the empathy problem is the danger of identifying with the source in a way that interferes with full exploitation of the source. As therapists must deal with transference and counter-transference, interrogators must deal with the attachment of the source to the interrogator and the human tendency to reciprocate this attachment. The difference is that the therapist has the luxury of aiming for the best interest of the client, whereas the interrogator is required to aim for the best interest of the military he serves.

Thus, the interrogator must find a space between empathy and exploitation, between feeling empathy and using empathy. The interrogator cannot be a psychopath or sociopath—someone defective in empathy, who sees other human beings only as means to his own ends. Rather, the interrogator must be an artist of empathy while maintaining at least some of the distancing of a sociopath. The challenge for the interrogator is to maintain a distance that does not lose sight of the humanity of the source.

Inversely, according to one participant, the interrogator can be seduced into “falling in love with the source.” This comes about when the interrogator begins seeing the source as a friend as a result of the rapport-building; the relationship distorts judgment. The interrogator then believes the source completely and is easily fooled.

There is reason to believe that normal human beings find it difficult to find and keep the ideal medium distance. Zimbardo's (1971) “prison experiment” famously

showed that individuals assigned the task of monitoring and controlling others were, in just a few days, lost in their new roles. Many “guards” slid down the slippery slope from control to sadistic misuse of their power over individuals who had been assigned the role of “prisoners.”

Interrogators must walk the edge of this slippery slope with every source. Individuals who can maintain this kind of self-control are unlikely to make good spit-and-polish soldiers, or to find enthusiasm for superiors who do not understand the demands of their work. The Army understands the physical risks of being shot at better than the psychological risks of being an interrogator.

CONCLUSION

Interrogation is an applied science, more akin to engineering than to physics. Good engineering embodies physical principles in a combination that is efficient and esthetic. Similarly, good interrogation employs psychological principles in an artful combination that builds on the unique personalities of interrogator and source. Psychologists can make some of the relevant principles more explicit, but can no more prescribe their application than a physicist can build a bridge.

BIOGRAPHICAL NOTE

Clark McCauley is a professor of psychology at Bryn Mawr College and a co-director of the National Consortium for Study of Terrorism and Responses to Terrorism (START). He is a social psychologist interested in stereotypes, group dynamics, and intergroup conflict. His recent research has focused on political radicalization, terrorism, and genocide.

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Organizational Supports for Abusive Interrogations in the “War on Terror”

Jean Maria Arrigo

Project on Ethics and Art in Testimony

Ray Bennett

Washington, DC

This article addresses the following conundrum: *How* do abusive interrogations persist in the “War on Terror” over the practical objections of senior interrogators? Although the behavior of interrogator and interrogatee and the conditions of detention occupy the limelight in public controversies, every defense-related interrogation is deeply embedded in a web of organizational precedents and procedures. This article examines three major elements, providing organizational and psychological insights: (a) interrogation experts are positioned too low in the military hierarchy to govern interrogation protocols; (b) with the invasion of Iraq in 2003, sudden demand for interrogators exceeded the supply, resulting in low standards for selection, training, and placement of new interrogators; and (c) political and military authorities have promoted unwarranted exemptions to successful non-abusive interrogation protocols.

We address the following conundrum: *How* do abusive interrogations persist in the “War on Terror” over the practical objections of senior interrogators? Although the behavior of interrogator and interrogatee and the conditions of detention occupy the limelight in public controversies, every defense-related interrogation is deeply embedded in a web of organizational precedents and procedures. Decades of social psychological research have confirmed the power of organizational process generally to prevail over individual autonomy and shape behavior, and thus to set the stage for the potential use of abusive techniques in interrogation.

To illuminate the web of precedents and procedures that support abusive interrogations, we examine three major organizational factors:

1. Interrogation experts are positioned too low in the military hierarchy to govern interrogation protocols.
2. With the invasion of Iraq in 2003, sudden demand for interrogators exceeded the supply, resulting in low standards for selection, training, and placement of new interrogators.
3. Political and military authorities have created, encouraged, and tolerated unwarranted exemptions to successful non-abusive interrogation protocols (see Moghaddam, this issue, for political motives).

Unreferenced assertions derive from presentations by four retired, senior U.S. Army interrogators, including Ray Bennett, who attended the November 10 through 12, 2006, seminar on Rethinking the Psychology of Torture, held at Georgetown University, Washington, DC (Arrigo, 2007).

THE POSITION OF INTERROGATION EXPERTS IN THE MILITARY HIERARCHY

Interrogation has traditionally been the responsibility of the U.S. Army, rather than the Navy or Air Force, because the Army holds the great majority of prisoners of war. The Army hierarchy descends from the general officer ranks (general, colonel, major, captain, lieutenant) to warrant officers to the enlisted ranks (sergeant, corporal, private). A warrant officer is an advanced technical specialist, such as a helicopter pilot or the supervisory mechanic in a motor pool. Until the early 1980s, Army interrogation officers could rise to the rank of colonel. Then, interrogation officers were reassigned as military intelligence generalists. There remained two occupational specialties for Army interrogators: 96C (now 97E) for enlisted personnel and 351E (now 351H) for warrant officers. (The Marine Corps, which functions as the infantry for the Navy and therefore holds prisoners, has equivalent occupational specialties for interrogators.) Army officers could pursue a career track in human intelligence (HUMINT), but received only a formal introduction to interrogation with no practical application.

Marginalization of Interrogators

As a result of the strict military hierarchy and relegation of interrogators to lower ranks, officers who make strategic or tactical decisions concerning interrogations rarely have any knowledge of interrogation. The Joint Chiefs of Staff has high-level advisors for infantry, artillery, aviation, and so on, but no such advisors for interrogation. At present, many military and civilian authorities deliberate from an uninformed folk psychological belief in the efficacy of torture interrogation (elucidated by Janoff-Bulman, this issue). In a 2005 professional ethics survey of

HUMINT collectors at the rank of sergeant, conducted by Rebecca Bolton at the Joint Military Intelligence College, respondents spontaneously remarked on the problem of authorities' ignorance of interrogation (Bolton, 2007):

Col. XXXXX was allowed to do such [torture] in XXXXX, and look what happened there. Just follow the pattern. Ignorant people using their rank to do what they want leads to problems. And for some reason, because they do things that average people consider "interrogations," real interrogators are raked over the coals for it. (p. 152)

One of the seminar interrogators added (W. Martin, personal communication, June 24, 2007):

In 1987, the two-hour Interrogation Asset Overview class in the Counterintelligence Officers Track Course was deleted because they thought they did not need it. Reason given was they had already received a four-hour platform presentation class on interrogation and did not need any further classes. I unsuccessfully argued that not only should it not be deleted but should be lengthened. My reasoning was that ... I did not need an ignorant boss who could not effectively employ or represent our discipline. The rest is history.

The problems presented by the disconnection between rank and expertise can be understood in terms of French and Raven's (1960) theory of social power. The *expert power* of trained and experienced interrogators is profoundly subordinate to the *legitimate power*, signified by rank, of their superior officers, who also wield considerable *reward power* through favorable assessments and assignments and *punishment power* through court martial and unfavorable assessments and assignments.

The history of the U.S. military chaplaincy illustrates the significance of rank in a specialty based on cooperative human relationships rather than authority. Chaplains were not able to perform their mission effectively in the military until they were granted officer ranks by Congress and unified under a Chief of Chaplains (Budd, 2002). In the strict hierarchy of military command, only legitimate power in the form of officer rank would enable senior interrogators to prevail with their expertise on interrogation strategy and protocol.

Expert Interrogators in Short Supply

In the late 1980s, the Department of Defense deemphasized and reduced HUMINT collection (such as espionage, interrogation, and debriefing) in favor of imagery intelligence (such as satellite photography) and signals intelligence collection (such as interception of communications). Development and deployment of the large weapons systems characteristic of the Cold War left traces in mining, manu-

ufacture, transport, and communications, which modern imagery and signals intelligence could detect. In the perennial competition for prestige and funding, interrogators and linguists were reassigned, released, or simply not replaced. Terrorist activities, however, are much less detectable by technical methods. The lapse of HUMINT systems has put heavy demands on interrogation as a collection method.

At the peak of HUMINT, in the early 1980s, there were about 1,100 Army interrogators. Fifteen to 20 interrogators would be assigned to an Army division of 14,000 soldiers, in accord with the Army Military Intelligence Structure established in World War II. The role of the interrogators was to provide “24/7” service in screening and interrogating detainees and in reviewing and translating intercepted documents.

Revision of the Army Military Intelligence Structure to reduce costs in 1984 resulted in assignment of a single five-member “interrogation team” to a heavy (i.e., armored and motorized) division, decreasing the number of active duty interrogators to about 525. Although interrogation is usually conducted as an individual rather than a team task, the “new team” was equipped with one jeep, one radio, and one tent, which thwarted simultaneous work at separate sites. Yet, interrogation at separate sites is essential. Commanders of smaller units require immediate tactical intelligence from captives, such as location of enemy mines and combat strength; commanders of larger units often require strategic intelligence, such as identification of the political allies of the enemy. The budgetary restructuring, therefore, compromised the intelligence mission even beyond the cut in personnel. The protests of senior interrogators were disregarded due to their low ranks (W. Martin, personal communication, June 24, 2007).

Inadequate Training of Interrogators

Currently, there is one Army interrogation training program, at Fort Huachuca, Arizona. The Marines initiated their own interrogation training program in Dam Neck, Virginia, around 1988. The Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) has no acknowledged training program, and the public record of their interrogations suggests to senior Army interrogators there is no formal CIA training as understood by military interrogators.

Since the U.S. invasion of Iraq in 2003, almost 1,000 soldiers per year have passed through the 16-week Army HUMINT course at the Fort Huachuca U.S. Army Intelligence Center and School. To keep the military force structure “slim,” as envisioned by the civilian leadership of the military, the Army has combined interrogation and counterintelligence in one military occupational specialty, Human Intelligence Collector (HIC; 97E). The current Army goal is 3,000 soldiers in this combined specialty.

How adequate is the training provided for new military interrogators? The training schedule shown in Table 1 indicates the wide range of skills required of these

TABLE 1
 Fort Huachuca Schedule of Training
 for Human Intelligence Specialties, 2006

<i>No. of Weeks</i>	<i>Description</i>
1	Administrative/initial entry training, including military customs and courtesy, rape and suicide prevention, and so forth.
1	Elicitation techniques, rapport building, interrogation approaches.
2	Techniques of questioning.
1	Map reading and land navigation.
1	General military topics (e.g., how a tank works).
1	Intelligence topics including cultural awareness, geography, Geneva Convention, FM27–10 Law of Land Warfare, and Standard North Atlantic Treaty Organization Agreement 2033/2044.
1	Planning and preparation: approval of novice's interrogation plan by a superior, consultation with a behavioral science expert, medical clearance of source, legal review of the interrogation plan, and approval by a lieutenant colonel or colonel in the interrogator's chain of command.
2	Report writing.
4	Military source operations including debriefing for liaison duties, document exploitation, liaison with allies, and establishment of cooperative security relationships with authorities in villages, refugee camps, or nongovernmental organizations.
2	Final training exercise in the field on "patrols" and screening of sources.

personnel, the short time period for mastery of skills, the proportion of the training specifically devoted to interrogation, and the safeguards on performance. The typical student is a 19-year-old high school graduate with little military experience beyond basic training.

Lowered Standards for Interrogators

Contrast the training program outlined in Table 1 with prior training. In the late 1980s, aspiring interrogators were selected for intelligence and language ability, with above-average scores on the Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery and a passing score on the Defense Language Aptitude Battery. Recent Fort Huachuca instructors have noticed a drop in the quality of incoming students, exacerbated by a policy of graduating almost all. In 1984, the drop-out/flush-out rate from interrogation training was 30% to 50%; now it is around 5%. Formerly, graduates were supervised and mentored for several years by senior interrogators. Modeling themselves on their mentors, they would develop the self-mastery and situational awareness so crucial to successful interrogation. Now, graduates may be placed as interrogators without regard to their course performance and without supervision by senior interrogators. (This contrasts with the 1,200 hours of supervised work of

newly graduated psychotherapists.) Although the novice interrogator always risked the possibility of face-to-face confrontation with the equivalent of a 40-year-old *jihadist*, now he typically lacks the assistance of senior interrogators.

Junior interrogators need mentors for dealing with their superior officers as well as for dealing with savvy interrogatees. Another respondent to Bolton's (2007) professional ethics survey of U.S. Army interrogators gave this example:

HICs are trained very well in doing our job. HICs are not trained in telling senior commanders, "no." Worse, senior commanders do not fully comprehend our job. They don't need to fully understand it, they do however, need to accept the fact that we provide "X" to them. That is all. When they want "Y," they need to understand that they are not going to get it. Only "X." (p. 145)

The former language requirement for interrogators (97E Qualified Personnel) has been suspended indefinitely on the premise that interrogators will operate with interpreters. Only after attaining an E5 or E6 rank (corresponding to about 3–4 and 5–7 years of service, respectively) does language school now become an *option* for interrogators. The language requirement had also served as the only screening tool for the psychological make-up of aspiring interrogators. The language school exposed the trainee to another culture in a learning environment before exposure in an interrogation situation.

Successful interrogators tend to be open-minded, tolerant, imaginative, curious, and unregimented. These qualities are at odds with traditional military doctrine, discipline, and criteria for promotion. Trainers find that bright, conscientious recruits who are introverts or mentally rigid do not become successful interrogators. They should be assigned instead to technical intelligence collection, but there is no provision for such differentiation by individual traits. Trainers seek extroverts with a cognitive style that psychologists have named *conceptual/integrative complexity*; that is, the ability to differentiate and integrate conflicting perspectives in an overarching framework (Suedfeld, Tetlock, & Streufert, 1992). Interrogators should be able to accommodate the worldview of a hostile detainee from a foreign culture and interact meaningfully, which presumes maturity.

Most new graduates are "underage," so to speak. A seminar interrogator and trainer remarked, "The Army is training people too young. At 19, their hormones are still raging. The Army should train somebody 30 to 35 years old. The Army's measure of a soldier is physical fitness, shoe shining" This comment is supported by lifespan studies of the development of the prefrontal cortex that show continuing gains in executive function, impulse control, and psychosocial skills, such as resistance to peer pressure, through adolescence and into the mid-20s (Steinberg, 2007). Indeed, young, inexperienced, and unsupervised interrogators are most likely to turn to the fear-up approach; it is by now textbook knowledge that "[a]fter people reach age 25, their testosterone levels and rates of violent crime

decrease together” (Myers, 2007, p. 273). By different methods, senior interrogators and neuropsychologists reached essentially the same conclusion about the appropriate minimum age for interrogators, not 19 or 20 but around 30.

From a military perspective, the training of interrogators is “manpower intensive” in both execution and maintenance. Techniques of questioning and language fluency are very perishable and demand frequent practice. Furthermore, practice removes soldiers from military training. Commanders, however, have to exhibit quantifiable successes, so they are apt to send an interrogator to the motor pool to work on trucks instead of to language school. Both tasks are quantifiable, but vehicle repair is cheaper and language acquisition is a “personal” improvement that does not benefit the unit once the soldier leaves it. A seminar interrogation trainer remarked, “Fort Huachuca is not mission-oriented but bureaucratic. We don’t need numbers of interrogators; we need quality”

Lowered Standards for Interrogation Trainers and Supervisors

There are about 120 instructors at Fort Huachuca, of whom about 95% are contractors, some with little military experience. The instructors typically have 4 to 8 years of interrogation experience, which senior interrogators consider minimally adequate. Because of the rapid operational tempo for current military interrogators, many have gained experience well beyond older interrogators. However, the rapid tempo can create “false experience due to poor mentorship and bad habits in the [interrogation] booth” (J. DuForest, personal communication, June 24, 2007). The earlier cutbacks on HUMINT severely diminished the pool of senior interrogators available for training new interrogators, and mandatory retirement dates for those who remained contribute to the shortage.

Another source of poor supervision has been the forced transfer of warrant officers into HUMINT from unrelated fields. They attend the basic training course in interrogation and then command lower ranking interrogators who may have much more experience. In the worst case, warrant officers with meager interrogation experience are put in charge of newly graduated interrogators—“a recipe for disaster waiting to happen,” said one of the seminar interrogators, especially “when demand for information is high from a senior officer” (W. Martin, personal communication, July 11, 2007).

Bureaucratic Dysfunction and Mission

There is nothing sinister in the preceding list of organizational obstacles to the training, deployment, and supervision of competent interrogators. Indeed, classical sociological theory describes such “bureaucratic dysfunctions” as virtually inevitable in the quest for “precision, reliability, and efficiency” (Merton, 1949, p.

154). Centralized control overrides local needs and expertise, adherence to rules substitutes for achievement of organizational goals, the organization loses its capacity to adapt to reality, and so on. What *do* merit attention are the need for specific changes and the resistance of bureaucracies to interventions. Any realistic commitment by policymakers to productive, non-abusive interrogations must entail appropriate selection, training, mentorship, and deployment of interrogators.

UNWARRANTED EXEMPTIONS TO INTERROGATION PROTOCOLS

Interrogation occurs in *tactical environments* such as tents, Humvees, and the holding areas of small field units, and in *strategic environments* such as fixed detention centers distant from combat areas. In either case, the Geneva Conventions, the U.S. Law of Land Warfare, and successful protocols for hostile interrogations all forbid abusive interrogations for collection of intelligence.

In tactical environments, field units should defer to trained interrogators for dispassionate intelligence collection from captives. The combat readiness and high emotions of field units work against rapport with their captives. Yet, there are many combatants who nevertheless perform or influence interrogations. A combat commander who does not know intelligence practices, much less interrogation, cannot be overruled by a 19-year-old enlisted interrogator assigned to his unit. Another respondent to Bolton's (2006) survey gave this example:

[I was ordered to] leave a 20-year-old [interrogation] specialist with a unit commander that did not listen to the young HUMINTer's advice and allowed the abuse of prisoners under his command. (p. 6)

Special Operations Forces—Army Rangers, Navy Seals, Army Special Forces (Green Berets), and the Army counterterrorist Delta Force—are trained for self-confidence and aggression. In a 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. Cognitive psychologists have explored the difficulties in sudden switching of tasks under stress. Because stress depletes cognitive resources, simplified models are used for the new task (Steinhauser, Maier, & Hübner, 2007). Special Forces are graduates of the U.S. Army Special Warfare Center and School Survival, Evasion, Resistance, and Escape training program. There they experienced capture by torturers so as to practice counter-interrogation techniques. Water boarding, prolonged sleep deprivation, and other physical and psychological tortures, therefore, commonly constitute their model of interrogation, which is entirely expected under social modeling theory (Bandura, 1973). As isolated and insulated units, Special Forces are quite secretive; so much of “what

happens there stays there” (in military jargon). Interrogation norms not brought to bear at point of capture or in initial holding facilities may go unreported.

In strategic environments, contract interrogators—often former counter-intelligence practitioners with 4 hours of interrogation training—and military police—often with training only in criminal interrogation—may easily succumb to the folly of the fear-up approach. Army interrogators who halt abuse of captives in U.S. military facilities may not be invited back.

The CIA, which operates in many contexts, has created the most serious violations of non-abusive interrogation protocols through the Presidential Signing Statement that allows the executive branch to exempt them from torture restrictions under the Detainee Treatment Act of 2005. Trained Army interrogators have mentioned CIA interrogators taking over their interrogatees in other countries, abusing the interrogatees and getting no information, then returning them to the Army interrogators who obtain useable information. CIA officials have also asked malleable young Army interrogators and contract interrogators to carry out abusive procedures and then abandoned them to face the consequences alone.

Combat commanders are, in effect, exempt from antitorture legislation because there is an understanding under the current U.S. administration that they will not be prosecuted. Current permissiveness toward abusive interrogation has offered opportunities for advancement and self-aggrandizement to personnel deficient in one of the most basic military virtues, *competence* (Shay, 2002, p. 224), as well as in the traditional military virtues of self-discipline, respect, and honor. Thus, many problems of unwarranted exemptions to legitimate and effective interrogation protocols arise. (For comparison, psychologists might envision the problems that would arise from untrained persons acting in the roles of clinicians or school psychologists.)

CONCLUSION

We opened with this question: *How* do abusive interrogations persist in the “War on Terror” over the practical objections of senior interrogators? Despite the popular image of the grandiose interrogator with power of life and death over the interrogatee, senior U.S. Army interrogators occupying relatively low positions in a starkly hierarchical organization are easily overridden by their superiors’ ignorance of interrogation protocols, folk beliefs in the efficacy of torture interrogation, retaliatory attitudes toward suspected enemies, political opportunism, or obedience to yet higher authorities. The reduction of HUMINT personnel in the mid-1980s, the sudden high demand for interrogators in 2001 without a corresponding commitment of resources, and the failure of the military to adapt structure to task in preparing interrogators, have resulted in a scarcity of competent in-

terrogators. Further, implicit and explicit interrogation policies under the current administration have created exemptions to U.S. Army interrogation protocols.

Organizational researchers question the capacity of complex organizations to function as responsible agents. The heart of the matter is “the problem of many hands”: So many functionaries at different levels of hierarchy contribute to organizational outcomes in different ways that it is difficult to trace responsibility (Bovens, 1998). Long chains of small administrative and technical steps between policy and execution may mask the meaning of action for the functionaries themselves. Technical language, such as “sensory deprivation,” and outright euphemisms, such as “softening up the detainee,” also obscure meaning (Adams & Balfour, 1998). In national security settings, secrecy obviously exacerbates the problem of tracing causal relations and responsibility.

Many reasons have been advanced for the elimination of abusive interrogations: to improve intelligence collection, to uphold military ethics, to protect allied soldiers from torture upon capture, to comply with international law, to maintain moral legitimacy as a nation, and to protect the human rights of detainees. In practice, the elimination would require not only a policy change but attenuation of the organizational supports for abusive interrogation and the creation of new organizational supports for non-abusive interrogation.

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Military Versus Police Interrogations: Similarities and Differences

Allison D. Redlich
Policy Research Associates, Delmar, NY

In this article, the shared and non-shared aspects of military- and police-based interrogations are described. Current events, such as the war in Iraq and the increasing number of identified false confessions, warrant the empirical comparison of these two interrogation forms. In regard to shared characteristics, both military and police interrogations utilize psychologically oriented techniques. In regard to non-shared characteristics, the types of interrogation diverge in their main purpose (intelligence gathering vs. confession/self-incrimination), the people they question, the degree of training interrogators receive, the use of direct questions, and the permissible use of torture. Implications for innocents in military and police interrogation settings are addressed.

The focus of this article is the comparison of military- and police-based interrogations. For both forms, there are significant current events that make the psychological study, and creation, of public policies imperative. In regard to military interrogations, the highly controversial war in Iraq has generated heated discussions about intelligence gathering during war, particularly on the use of torture (e.g., “Bush’s Interrogation Bill”; Costanzo, Gerrity, & Lykes, 2007). Scandals such as the ones at Abu Ghraib and Guantanamo Bay, although instrumental in shining a bright light on the questioning of detained enemy combatants, actually have little to do with interrogation. Rather, they are more representative of abuses associated with the detainment of prisoners, not the collection of human intelligence (HUMINT). Nevertheless, the topic of “educing intelligence” has received much attention of late, including a conference sponsored by the Office of Analytic Integrity and Standards (Office of the Director of National Intelligence) and a newly is-

sued compendium from the Intelligence Science Board (*Educating Information*, 2006).

In regard to police interrogations, the advancement of DNA technology and the concomitant uncovering of hundreds of innocents wrongfully arrested and convicted has also done much to further interest and empirical research on how the police question suspects. In the past decade, the knowledge base on police interrogations and false confessions has grown tremendously (Kassin & Gudjonsson, 2004).

In Department of Defense terms, interrogation is referred to as HUMINT. Recently (September 6, 2006), the U.S. Army disseminated Field Manual 2-22.3, *Human Intelligence Collector Operations*. This 384-page manual serves as the primary source of information for this article. (See also McCauley, this issue.) In addition, information is drawn from personal communications between the author of the present article and four retired senior military interrogators, who have experience with direct intelligence gathering during wartime (Vietnam through Iraq), and with the formal training of interrogator recruits.

For the military, interrogation is defined as the manner of extracting the maximum amount of accurate information in the least amount of time using legal means (Field Manual, 2006). For the police, interrogation is defined as an accusatory monologue with the goals of eliciting the truth and obtaining court-admissible confessions (see <http://www.reid.com>). A main distinction between the two forms is in their purpose: to gather intelligence or to gain a confession. Gathering intelligence, although sometimes producing self-incriminating statements, is primarily focused on future events rather than on the adjudication of past events.

A second distinction between military and police interrogations relates to the persons being questioned. Police interrogations, by definition, are intended for guilty suspects (see Inbau, Reid, Buckley, & Jayne, 2001; Meissner & Kassin, 2004)—that is, only after determining an individual is deceptive (and therefore guilty) during the *interview* phase, will police conduct the *interrogation*. In contrast, military interrogators often question persons in the community tangentially or unrelated to the war, as well as suspected enemy terrorists.

A third difference between the two forms of interrogations relates to training and requirements to become interrogators. Although it is unclear how much training police interrogators receive or are required to receive, the well-known (within police circles) Reid-technique training on interviewing and interrogation is a 3- to 4-day course. Military interrogators undergo 16 weeks of training in which they learn how to plan and prepare, question, terminate interrogations, and write reports. Further, prior to the current conflict in Iraq, military interrogators had to meet a high threshold score on a standardized aptitude test (top 15%) and were required to be proficient in a second language. Today, because of need, the requirements are less stringent (see Arrigo & Bennett, this issue).

TACTICAL SIMILARITIES

Similarities between military and police interrogations can be found in the techniques, with two exceptions, which are discussed later. Both interrogations rely heavily on psychologically oriented tactics. Akin to police interrogations, military interrogations have a *developing rapport* phase and an *approach* phase. In the rapport phase, the main purpose is to gain a future willingness to cooperate on the part of the source; a friendly relationship is only one of several ways to proceed, depending on the HUMINT collector's interpretation of the situation. In addition, the HUMINT collector is allowed to "use the ruses of war" to build rapport, including posing as someone other than himself or herself. However, the collector is constrained in that she or he cannot pose as (a) medical personnel, (b) a member of the International Committee of the Red Cross or its affiliates, (c) a chaplain or clergyman, (d) a journalist, or (e) a member of the U.S. Congress. To be sure, these constraints are placed to protect the reputations of the professions listed and not to protect the rights of the source or even to guard against obtaining false information.

For the approach phase, the FM 2-22.3 (Field Manual, 2006) lists 18 techniques available for use (see McCauley, this issue). However, the first approach to be utilized is the *direct approach*, which is often referred to "as no approach at all" (FM 34-52). It is simply the use of direct questions such as who, what, when, and how. According to FM 2-22.3, this direct approach has been effective in eliciting intelligence 90% to 95% of the time from World War II through Desert Storm.

DIVERGING TACTICS

The first exception, or where police and military interrogation tactics diverge, is the use of the direct approach. Because criminal justice interrogations are by definition guilt-presumptive and adversarial, direct, non-leading questions are not advocated. However, empirical studies have demonstrated that the presumption of guilt can lead to confirmation bias (Kassin, Goldstein, & Savitsky, 2003; Meissner & Kassin, 2004) in that information that is inconsistent with the presumed guilt is discounted or even ignored, and information that is consistent is overweighed. Of importance, when interrogated suspects are innocent, this presumption of guilt-confirmatory bias combination increases the risk of false confession. In the United Kingdom, where false confessions have also been problematic, criminal justice interrogators now utilize more of a direct question technique. The ethos and intent of suspect questioning has changed from obtaining a confession to that of seeking information. Indeed, the recently adopted PEACE model, which stands for Planning/preparation, Engaging of and explaining to the suspect, Account from the suspect, Closure, and Evaluation (Bull & Milne, 2004), is quite similar to the

military approach described in FM 2-22.3 (Field Manual, 2006) and elaborated by the four military interrogators.

After the direct approach, the remaining military interrogation techniques include the *incentive approach* (reciprocity; Cialdini, 2001), *emotional approaches* (of which there are 7 variations such as emotional pride, ego up, and emotional hate), *Mutt and Jeff* (i.e., good cop/bad cop), the *we know all approach*, *rapid fire* (of questions), and others. The rapid-fire approach, for example, is based on principles that (a) everyone likes to be heard when they speak, and (b) it is confusing to be interrupted in midsentence with an unrelated question (p. 8–16).

These approaches are quite similar to the techniques used by police interrogators in criminal investigations. Many of the “themes” advocated by Reid and associates (Inbau et al., 2001) are quite similar to these approaches. For example, commonly used police interrogation techniques are to interrupt and disallow denials and to speak in monologues, which is similar to the rapid-fire approach (see Kassin & Gudjonsson, 2004). The four senior military interrogators all agreed that after the direct approach, the incentive and emotional pride and ego-up approaches are sufficient to successfully obtain information 90% of the time; all others are specialized and rarely used.

The second manner in which police and military interrogations diverge is in the controversial use of torture and other harsh methods. Of course, as highlighted in these articles and in our meeting with the military interrogators, the perceived effectiveness of torture is a heated debate, and many military interrogators find it immoral, unethical, and ineffective. In police interrogations, the use of physical force or even the threat of physical force invalidate confessions. For more than 100 years, the U.S. court system has explicitly recognized that confessions produced from coercion—physical or psychological—are unreliable and unconstitutional (e.g., *Bram v. United States*, 1897). As such, coerced confessions (which may or may not be false) are inadmissible against defendants. In the watershed case, *Brown v. State of Mississippi* (1936), three poor Black men in the American South were beaten repeatedly (e.g., tied to trees and whipped) until they confessed to the murder of a White man. In their original trial, which occurred less than 1 week after the murder, the three men were found guilty and sentenced to death. The U.S. Supreme Court agreed to hear the case and overturned their convictions in 1936, stating, “It would be difficult to conceive of methods more revolting to the sense of justice than those taken to procure the confessions of these petitioners, and the use of the confessions thus obtained as the basis for conviction and sentence was a clear denial of due process” (p. 286).

Despite the *Brown* ruling and other early legal decisions that confessions must be procured free from coercion, the “third degree” was a common interrogation practice in the 19th and early part of the 20th centuries. In brief, the third degree includes (a) physical force and abuse (e.g., beatings with brass knuckles, rubber hoses) and (b) psychological abuse and duress (e.g., prolonged isolation, deprived

of basic needs [sleep, food, water], and threats of harm; see Leo, 2004). However, in the 1930s, the third degree became “a national scandal” (Leo, 2004, p. 40); from the 1940s through the 1960s, the process of police interrogation was transformed from one of brutality and force to one of psychological orchestration. Today, although occasional stories of rogue cops using physical force emerge, the overwhelming majority of police interrogations are conducted using the modern-day techniques previously described.

Throughout the 20th century, the courts have placed further restrictions on interrogations, such as the famous *Miranda v. Arizona* decision in 1966. In this decision, the U.S. Supreme Court remarked on the inherent coerciveness of police interrogations and required that all custodial suspects be informed of their Constitutional rights to (free) counsel and against self-incrimination. Confessions obtained from suspects who were not apprised of these rights, or from suspects who did not voluntarily, knowingly, and intelligently waive these rights, are excluded.

An implicit reason behind requiring confessions to be made voluntarily and informed is the risk of innocent suspects falsely confessing. Scientists who study police-induced false confessions are generally not concerned with the influence of torture on the likelihood of false confessions because, as just discussed, torture techniques in criminal interrogations are legally impermissible and rarely used. Rather, they focus on psychological techniques that, although not defined as abuse or torture, are recognized as sufficient to produce false confessions. For example, lying to suspects (e.g., claiming there is an eyewitness or that their fingerprints have been found on the weapon) and implied promises of leniency (e.g., “you can go home after confessing”) are common themes in identified false confession cases (Kassin & Gudjonsson, 2004). In essence, it is a “given” that torture and other harsh interrogation tactics can lead innocent suspects to confess to extricate themselves from an egregious situation. Indeed, this extrication from egregious situations is how many coerced false confessions that do not involve torture, but rather involve psychological manipulation, are explained.

CONCLUSION

Military and police interrogations share a basis in psychologically oriented techniques to extract information. There are also important differences between the two forms, which include the aim of questioning, the training of questioners, and the use of direct questions. Another important difference concerns the perceived efficacy of torture as an interrogation tactic. Put simply, the highest U.S. courts and scientists alike do not view torture and other forms of physical and psychological coercion as effective means of producing accurate, meaningful statements. A more complete examination of these differences may prove helpful in preventing false

confessions and the wrongful detainment of innocent persons. Scientific studies of interrogations and confessions have greatly advanced our insight into these processes. A profitable next step would be to apply what has been learned in regard to criminal justice interrogations to military intelligence, and vice versa.

BIOGRAPHICAL NOTE

Allison Redlich is a Senior Research Associate II at Policy Research Associates. Her current research focuses on two areas of psychology and law: police interrogations and false confessions, and mental health courts. She is on the Executive Committee of the American Psychology–Law Society and on the editorial boards of *Terrorism Research and Psychology*, *Public Policy*, and *Law*.

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Erroneous Assumptions: Popular Belief in the Effectiveness of Torture Interrogation

Ronnie Janoff-Bulman

University of Massachusetts, Amherst

People generally believe that torture is effective despite strong counterclaims by experienced military interrogators and intelligence experts. This article challenges us to reexamine some of our basic assumptions about torture by presenting four psychological factors—primarily errors and biases in human judgment—that help account for this mistaken popular belief.

In the public's mind, torture is perceived as an undesirable yet essential tool in confronting our enemies. Despite concerns about human rights, endangering our troops, and international moral standing, the majority of Americans believe torture is at least sometimes justified when interrogating suspected terrorists (e.g., Harris Poll, 2005), and this support is based on a popular belief in its effectiveness. Yet, experienced military interrogators and intelligence experts claim otherwise. They attest to the ineffectiveness of torture and the utility of far more acceptable interrogation techniques. There is a dramatic discrepancy between our popular conceptions of torture and the reality of intelligence collection through interrogation.

What accounts for the popular belief in the effectiveness of torture in intelligence work? Some may argue that because torture is used, it must work; yet, instead it seems likely that one reason torture is used is because people *think* it works. As Arrigo and Bennett (this issue) noted, civilian authorities and military officers who make the strategic decisions about torture interrogation are rarely knowledgeable about interrogation, and those with the greatest knowledge—the experienced interrogators—are ranked too low in the military hierarchy to have a significant impact on decisions. In recent years, social psychologists have laid bare

the pervasiveness of errors and biases in human judgment (for reviews, see Dawes, 1998; Nisbett & Ross, 1980), forcing a reexamination of our seemingly automatic beliefs in a variety of domains. This research challenges us to examine the assumptions and (mis)conceptions underlying our social judgments. With this goal in mind, this article identifies and explores four factors that are likely to contribute to the unjustified popular belief in the effectiveness of torture interrogation.

COMPLIANCE VERSUS ACCURACY: MISPERCEIVING THE GOALS OF INTERROGATION

We have an implicit understanding that extreme coercion is likely to produce its desired *behavioral* effect. From the bully to the batterer, force can be very effective in generating behavioral responses consistent with the demands of the abuser. Fear and self-protection engender compliance, which involves immediate, visible behavior—doing what the coercer requires to avoid direct, adverse consequences. Yet, the aim of intelligence interrogation is to obtain accurate, reliable information. A successful technique is not one that produces a precise, prespecified act of submission, but rather one that elicits useful information previously unknown to the interrogator. Effectiveness in intelligence collection is not measured by readily available indices of behavioral compliance, but by the accuracy and reliability of information provided.

The long, bleak history of torture attests to its success in terrorizing populations (Ross, 2005)—in getting people to make specific confessions, with a goal not of truth, but as a system of control. From the Inquisition and the great witch hunts of Europe to horrors perpetrated in Stalinist Russia, Nazi Germany, and more recently by the Khmer Rouge in Cambodia, torture has been used against “heretics” and opponents of the state to instill terror and stifle opposition in the name of security (see Ross, 2005). The elicitation of accurate information (not to mention truthful confessions) has clearly not been the goal of these torturers. When such accuracy is the goal of interrogation, as it is in intelligence collection, the coercive power of torture is likely to result in proffered misinformation, misdirection, and lies—ineffective outcomes by any measure.

Perhaps it is not surprising, then, that experienced military interrogators believe that torture and abuse should unquestionably be avoided. In the words of one senior Army interrogator, “Beyond the moral imperative, the competent interrogator avoids torture because it is counter-productive and unreliable In my two decades of experience as an interrogator, I know of no competent interrogator that would resort to torture. Not one” (Bennett, 2006). In their recent *Statement on Interrogation Practices* (Bauer, 2006), 20 Army interrogators and interrogation technicians, representing over 200 years of interrogation service and experience (from Vietnam to Afghanistan, Guantanamo Bay, and Iraq), unequivocally contradicted

the proposition that torture is necessary to win the “War on Terror.” Recently released Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) reports make it clear that the FBI, too (in contrast to the Central Intelligence Agency), objected to the use of torture and regarded it as an unreliable and ineffective interrogation method (Dratel, 2006; also see Suskind, 2006).

SOCIAL INFLUENCE FOR “HUMANS” AND TORTURE FOR THE “DEHUMANIZED”

Successful interrogators are skilled applied social psychologists, for effective intelligence-gathering is based on the creation of an interrogator–interrogatee relationship and the application of “ordinary” processes of social influence. The Army Field Manual for Human Intelligence Collection (Field Manual 2-22.3; 2006) provides a long list and discussion of approach techniques, all of which are based on the establishment of rapport between the interrogator and the source. These are powerful techniques, and social psychology attests to their success (see Cialdini, 2001; also see McCauley, this issue). Successful interrogation is based on understanding the motives, needs, and self-perceptions of the other in the service of developing an effective strategy for eliciting intelligence information. Effective interrogation relies on persuasion strategies used in everyday life, but produced with greater forethought, applied with greater deliberation, and maintained in the context of objectivity and social control. (For recent accounts of successful interrogations in the “War on Terror” using these social influence techniques, see Bowden, 2007 and Suskind, 2006.)

Yet, somehow in the popular imagination these relationship-based techniques do not seem appropriate for terrorists. In part, this may be attributable to the scenario most likely to pop into people’s minds when imagining torture—that of the ticking time bomb. This involves an impending catastrophe and the necessity of obtaining information immediately so as to prevent it. In this situation, time pressure precludes the establishment of rapport, relationship, or any real understanding of the detainee. It also seems to particularly preclude success via torture, given that all the detainee need do is buy some time (i.e., provide no information, misinformation, or misdirection), and presumably very little time, given the ticking bomb. Most important, this is a scenario that is virtually nonexistent outside of TV and movies, yet it seems to fundamentally define how we think about and react to torture interrogation. Real intelligence collection instead is a time-consuming, effortful process.

Yet again, beyond the ticking time-bomb scenario, people are likely to question the appropriateness of rapport-based strategies, regarding them as too mundane and “soft” to be useful in intelligence interrogation. After all, this is the realm of “evil others,” of enemies we typically dehumanize and regard as out-

side the scope of morality and justice (Opatow, 1990), lacking the same human motives and needs as our own. Techniques based on everyday social influence processes are apt to be perceived as ineffectual with hardened enemies; something far harsher seems required. Such assumptions largely reflect a human bias in judging cause and effect, for we typically rely on a “resemblance criterion” (see Nisbett & Ross, 1980), a crude form of the representativeness heuristic (Kahneman & Tversky, 1973), whereby we believe causes and effects are similar. We assume economic events have economic causes, and big events have big causes. The latter cause–effect resemblance largely accounts for the popularity of conspiracy theories. As Nisbett and Wilson (1977) noted, “It is outrageous that a single, pathetic, weak figure like Lee Harvey Oswald should alter world history. When confronted with large effects, it is to comparably large causes that we turn for explanations” (p. 252).

Similarly, people may erroneously assume that information from cruel, bad, harsh enemies can only be produced by similarly cruel, bad, harsh techniques. Relationship-based persuasion strategies assume motives and needs we can identify with in terms of common humanity. In derogating our enemies, we deny them their humanity, and in doing so maintain that they would be most responsive to inhuman treatment.

People thereby conclude that social influence techniques based on rapport are effective and appropriate in social relationships and interactions with “good” people, but not with cruel enemy-others, who require cruel techniques. Our everyday persuasion techniques are neither big enough nor bad enough. Yet, these persuasion strategies are effective precisely because our enemies, too, are human—with needs, motives, weaknesses, and desires that can be understood and used by wise interrogators in their efforts to elicit reliable intelligence.

THE LIMITS OF PREDICTION AND SELF-REFLECTION: UNDERESTIMATING RESISTENCE

In making predictions and forecasting probabilities, people overvalue the causal role of salient, prominent stimuli and events (see Kahneman & Tversky, 1973, on the “availability heuristic,” and Wilson & Gilbert, 2003, on “focalism”). In making predictions about torture, including the effectiveness of torture, we also focus on its most salient feature—extreme physical pain—and thereby expect detainees to “break”; focusing on the pain, people assume they themselves would readily give in to the torturer’s demands. Yet, we fail to take into account other possibilities—less obvious factors—that may contribute to resistance rather than submission, to imparting no information or misinformation. Resistance in the face of torture is not at all uncommon (see Arrigo, 2004). Two factors that may help us

better understand such resistance are human dissociative processes and attributions of meaning and purpose.

Dissociative processes often occur during extreme events such as torture and involve detachment, constricted consciousness, and the minimization of pain perception (Herman, 1992). Dissociation provides protection via psychological escape. A part of our ongoing experience is “dissociated” from consciousness; in this way, a torture victim may minimize the experience of pain and maximize the possibility of resistance. Similarly, pain becomes increasingly bearable as meaning is attributed to the suffering (e.g., see Dimsdale, 1980). Thus, if people are specifically asked to consider if there is something for which they would bear torture, they begin to understand that they too might resist—to protect loved ones, a worldview, or a way of life. Strong devotion to a cause is likely to be associated with psychological strength in the face of torture. This may account for why the Gestapo failed to get any information from the German Resistance in World War II despite its use of all forms of torture (Hoffman, 1977). In the context of intelligence interrogation, those detainees who hold the most valuable information are likely to be those most capable of resisting, not only because of greater training, but also because of greater commitment to a cause. In such instances no information—or malicious, unreliable information—is apt to be the fruitless product of torture.

EFFICACY AS VENGEANCE

The more destructive the enemy, the more likely the aim of obtaining reliable information will be seriously tainted by a different goal—that of revenge and punishment for past misdeeds. Efficacy measured in terms of intelligence collected may increasingly play a subordinate role to the desire for vengeance and aggression. People want to harm those who have harmed them and humiliate those who have made them feel vulnerable. Torture not only aims to terrorize, but to humiliate as well, and it serves to reassure torturers of their own power and dominance.

Although for many this may satisfy some deep sense of retributive justice (e.g., see Hogan & Emler, 1981), it will surely get in the way of effective interrogation, which requires clear-minded consideration of optimally persuasive techniques. Yet, the greater the perceived threat, the greater the possibility that people will increasingly judge the efficacy of interrogation not in terms of the nature of information obtained, but in terms of “deserved” punishment and harm imposed on the suspected enemy. Success is then measured by how much we can hurt enemy detainees, rather than how much truthful, useful information we can obtain.

CONCLUSION

Those who argue for the use of torture can all too readily rely on people's virtually automatic belief in its effectiveness. Given torture's inordinate threat to moral standing, respect, and rights within and across institutions and cultures, we should feel obligated to reexamine our beliefs and subject our assumptions to greater scrutiny. The experience of senior military interrogators and years of research attest to the effectiveness of traditional social influence techniques in intelligence work; in contrast, belief in the effectiveness of torture derives largely from our collective false assumptions.

BIOGRAPHICAL NOTE

Ronnie Janoff-Bulman is a professor of psychology at the University of Massachusetts, Amherst. She is a social psychologist whose work has focused on trauma and victimization. Her current research interests lie in the psychology of morality and justice.

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Interrogation Policy and American Psychology in the Global Context

Fathali M. Moghaddam
Georgetown University

Rather than the ethics or efficacy of torture interrogation, this article explores the wider sociopolitical context in which torture takes place, with particular focus on the global role of American psychology. Psychological research, such as on displacement of aggression, suggests that torture might be undertaken for reasons other than information gathering. American psychologists enjoy relatively greater freedom to explore the wider psycho-political role of torture interrogation associated with group and intergroup dynamics. Because of their “first” world status as the sole superpower of psychology in the post-World War II era, American psychologists can, in important ways, influence psychologists in the “second” and “third” worlds of psychology through the position they adopt on torture interrogation.

Discussions of interrogation policy in general, and torture in particular, have largely focused on two issues: first, the efficacy of torture as an information gathering tool; second, the ethics of using torture under various conditions, including the so-called “ticking bomb” scenario (for a range of discussions and positions, see Greenberg, 2005; Levinson, 2006). Although these are highly important and much needed lines of inquiry, the focus of this brief discussion is a vital gap in ongoing discussions: the larger psycho-political global context in which decisions about torture interrogation are made, and particularly the role of American psychologists in influencing the positions taken by psychologists around the world on the issue of torture.

My starting position is that political decisions to allow or even to encourage the use of torture interrogation can be, and often are, independent of the issue of efficacy, but directly related to power dynamics within and between groups. I elaborate on this point later, arguing that the use of torture interrogation can be better un-

derstood in relation to psychological processes related to power and attempts by groups representing competing interests to dominate in the political sphere. Then, I continue with the theme of power and intergroup relations, but this time different groups of psychologists around the world are treated as power groups. I argue that American psychologists are the dominant and most influential group in the global context, constituting the “first” world of psychology. The position taken by American psychologists on the issue of torture interrogation has tremendous influence on how psychologists around the world position themselves on this controversial issue. For this reason, debates about torture interrogation among American psychologists take on global importance.

TORTURE INTERROGATION IN PSYCHO-POLITICAL CONTEXTS

Irrespective of how effective torture is as a method for gathering information, and even when it is demonstrably ineffective, there are psycho-political factors that might lead to the use of torture. A long line of experimental research, from the 1930s (Dollard, Doob, Miller, Mowrer, & Sears, 1939) to the 21st century (e.g., Miller, Pederson, Earlywine, & Pollock, 2003), supports the idea that groups experiencing frustration, such as the U.S.-led forces after the 2003 invasion of Iraq, might resort to displacing aggression onto others, particularly dissimilar out-group members. Displacement of aggression is an irrationalist strategy (Taylor & Moghaddam, 1994, Ch. 2): Groups adopting torture might justify the use of this strategy through reference to “national security,” “good ends justifying unethical means,” and the like (see Janoff-Bulman, this issue), but such groups might be unaware of the real reasons they are using torture—reasons more to do with attempts to harm particular targets and instill fear, both outside and inside the in-group. The use of torture, and interrogation policy in general, is best understood in the larger context of intergroup and intragroup dynamics. Torture does not arise out of a political vacuum; it is both a reaction to perceived external threat at the intergroup level and an attempt to strengthen and legitimize the power of centralized authority at the intragroup level.

There is evidence from both classic social psychological studies (e.g., see Taylor & Moghaddam, 1994, Ch. 3) and contemporary research (e.g., Echebarria-Echabe & Fernández-Guede, 2006; Hastings & Shaffer, 2005) suggesting that external threat leads to greater support for authoritarian policies. In the classic summer camp studies of Sherif, Harvey, White, Hood, and Sherif (1961), external threat led to greater support for aggressive group leaders. Later research has shown that the mere presence of an out-group can lead to bias favoring the in-group (Taylor & Moghaddam, 1994, Ch. 4). In a recent experimental study, Hastings and Shaffer found that among more authoritarian participants,

the presence of a terrorist threat increased support for military aggression. In a field study, Echebarria-Echabe and Fernández-Guede found that right-wing authoritarianism, as well as attachment to traditional conservative values, increased after the deadly March 11, 2004 terrorist attacks on passenger trains in Madrid. Thus, when a group sees itself under attack, group members not only “circle the wagons” but also support more aggressive leadership and conservative policies inside the circle.

At the intragroup level, terrorism has been associated with increased intolerance toward selected “threatening” minorities and greater tolerance for the trampling of civil liberties. In the United States, prejudice against Arabs is now stronger than against African Americans (Oswald, 2006; Persson, Musher, & Dara, 2006). A review of major opinion polls shows that following the tragic terrorist attacks of 9/11, there was increased public willingness to abdicate civil liberties (Huddy, Khatib, & Capelos, 2002), with the implication of tolerance for harsher interrogation techniques. Thus, as the in-group members circle the wagons, they also become harsher toward those whose loyalties are for one reason or another suspect.

The previous discussion suggests that at times of intergroup conflict and perceived external threat, political leaders can gain popularity by positioning themselves as being “tough on terror” and willing to endorse harsh interrogation techniques. However, by taking this route, political leaders are also likely to both gain greater support among those higher on authoritarianism (Altemeyer, 1996) and to strengthen authoritarian tendencies in the public.

AMERICAN PSYCHOLOGY AND TORTURE INTERROGATION IN THE GLOBAL CONTEXT

Why is the position adopted by American psychologists on the issue of torture interrogation important in the global context? One reason is that psychologists in many societies have access to little information about the efficacy of torture interrogation, and they have few opportunities to critically discuss the use of torture by their governments. American psychologists enjoy relatively greater access to information, to military personnel and veterans (such freedom allowed for the extraordinary 2006 meetings involving psychologists and military interrogators, reported by Arrigo & Wagner, this issue), as well as freedom of expression, and should use this freedom effectively in the global context. Furthermore, the influence of American psychology, in general, on psychology around the world is extraordinarily high and even higher than the military dominance of the United States would suggest. Because of this unique leadership position, and because the American Psychological Association is taken as a model by national and regional psychological associations around the world, the position adopted by American psy-

chologists on the issue of torture interrogation has extraordinarily high global importance.

PSYCHOLOGY IN THE THREE WORLDS

According to the Cold War thesis of rival powers in psychology, the United States and the Soviet Union were neck-and-neck competitors in influencing psychology around the world, and it was only after the collapse of Communism that the United States moved ahead. This thesis assumes that American psychology became supremely dominant on the world stage and the sole superpower only after the collapse of the Soviet Empire in 1989. However, evidence suggests that this Cold War view is wrong as far as psychology around the world is concerned.

The United States has been the dominant force in world psychology throughout most of the 20th century (Moghaddam, 1987). Even from before the collapse of the Soviet Union, the three worlds of psychology have consisted of "World One," occupied exclusively by the United States as the only superpower of psychology; "World Two," consisting of the industrialized nations of Europe and Russia; and "World Three," made up of developing countries, both those in the sphere of influence of Russia (e.g., Cuba) and those more in the Western sphere of influence (e.g., Nigeria).

The trade in psychological knowledge among the three worlds has been, and continues to be, extremely unbalanced. The level of exports from the second world to the United States was very high in the 19th and the start of the 20th century because many of the pioneers of modern psychology (e.g., Freud, Wundt, Pavlov, Fechner, Binet, Ebbinghaus) were European, but this exportation has declined considerably since the World War II. Psychological knowledge is exported from the first world (the United States) to the second and third worlds, but very little is exported from the third world either to the United States or to the second world. The third world is used almost exclusively as "raw material" to provide participants the opportunity to test research instruments and hypotheses developed in the first and second worlds (Moghaddam, Erneling, Montero, & Lee, 2007). The recent attempts to develop indigenous third-world psychology have not reversed this trade imbalance in psychological knowledge. The result of this imbalance is that American psychology dominates world psychology (Moghaddam & Taylor, 1985, 1986), and experts trained in American psychology are leaders in the second and third worlds of psychology (Moghaddam, 1990, 1997).

Just as American Psychological Association (APA) style is now the standard for psychology journals published around the world and English is the language of international psychology conferences (including in Europe and Asia), psychology departments around the world have adopted an American model and use American

texts (often in translation). This is taking place even in countries that are politically antagonistic toward the United States. In practice, the political slogans in a country might say “Down with America,” but the psychology departments of the same country are still using American texts.

I had a rather painful reminder of this situation when I returned from my studies in England to work as an academic psychologist in post-revolution Iran. To address the need for a social psychology text that reflects local cultural characteristics and is written in Farsi, I put forward a proposal to write such a text. Unfortunately, I failed to get the necessary official blessing for the project. Two decades later, I returned to Iran for a family reunion and discovered to my surprise and deep disappointment that they were teaching a very traditional American text (of course, it was a translation of an out-of-date edition). The booksellers told me that they could guarantee high sales for translations of American texts: Would I be interested in translating an American text?

More recently, during a teaching stint in Venezuela, I experienced exactly the same paradox. The political rhetoric of the national leadership in Venezuela is anti-American, but it is American psychology that dominates the major Venezuelan psychology research centers.

Why is it that even in Iran and Venezuela, American psychology texts are preferred? The reason is that despite the ongoing critical discussions about what constitutes a truly universal psychology (Moghaddam et al., 2007; Moghaddam & Lee, 2006), in practice, for better or worse, the rest of the world is taking its lead from American psychology, and national and regional associations are taking their lead from the APA. Even in the countries and regions of the second world, the model used is that of American psychology. Henri Tajfel and others who pioneered the main journals of European psychology from the early 1970s (the *European Journal of Social Psychology*, the *European Journal of Personality*, etc.) were trying to set up the infrastructure that would serve as an alternative to the APA system, but at the same time they were using the APA system as a guide.

Returning to our theme of torture interrogation, the supreme international dominance of American psychology and the global leadership position of the APA brings with it vitally important duties. American psychologists, and the APA in particular, should use available resources and freedoms to more fully explore and expose the psycho-political sources and purposes of torture interrogation. Psychologists around the world expect this from American psychologists, and national psychological associations around the world are implicitly and explicitly influenced by the stand taken by the APA. Again, I point to the perhaps ironic situation that in Iran and Venezuela, where the political leadership send daily verbal missiles against the United States, my experiences suggest that leading psychologists quietly take careful note of APA considerations of interrogation techniques.

CONCLUSION

Torture interrogation is used for a variety of reasons, some of which are unrelated to the efficacy of torture as an information-gathering strategy. Psychological research suggests that torture might be endorsed as a mechanism for displacement of aggression and achieving greater in-group cohesion. Psychologists need to give far more attention to the various reasons why torture interrogation might be used, with particular focus on group and intergroup dynamics. Unfortunately, psychologists in many non-democratic countries do not have access to information about the efficacy of torture interrogation, or the freedom to critically discuss the role of psychologists in prisoner interrogation generally. American psychologists do enjoy relatively greater access to information and freedom to debate such issues. It is imperative, therefore, that American psychologists critically re-evaluate their leadership role in the global context, particularly on the issue of torture interrogation.

BIOGRAPHICAL NOTE

Fathali M. Moghaddam is a professor of psychology at Georgetown University. His most recent book is *Multiculturalism and Intergroup Relations: Psychological Implications for Democracy in Global Context*, published by the APA Press in 2007.

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Local Acts, Global Consequences: A Dynamic Systems Perspective on Torture

Robin R. Vallacher
Florida Atlantic University

The consequences of extreme forms of interrogation are considered from the perspective of dynamical systems. Because of the self-organizing tendency of systems, a change in a single element of mind or society (e.g., a new belief, course of action, or government policy) holds potential for transforming the larger mental or social system in which the element is embedded. The emergence of new mental and social states is especially likely when factors such as external threat and the necessity for unequivocal action strengthen the positive feedback loops among elements, making them highly responsive to each other. Because torture occurs under such “high-temperature” conditions, it can trigger a series of changes in other elements (thoughts, actions), thereby promoting fundamental changes in individual minds, societal values, and government policies. To halt or reverse this scenario, negative feedback loops among the elements must be introduced so that a change in 1 element is compensated rather than reinforced by changes in other elements. This redirection of the self-organizing tendency of mind and society is difficult but might be accomplished by an effective leader whose policies emphasize humanity, justice, and morality.

Actions, even those behind closed doors, do not exist in isolation. They may be launched as self-contained episodes without consideration of their connections to other actions later in time, but they, in fact, are linked in various ways with the fabric of action possibilities defining the actor and the society in which these possibilities are embedded. A careless lane change on a freeway can produce a chain reaction of automobile crashes, each of which has effects that ripple through the network of friends, relatives, and lawyers of the people involved. An

uncensored comment caught on an open microphone can dash a front-runner's political career and subsequently change the political landscape of a society. An act of abuse perpetrated on an infant can permanently alter the victim's behavior throughout life and the behavior of others with whom he or she comes into contact.

Because of the interconnectedness of human action, there is reason to be concerned about the consequences of drastic forms of interrogation—even when such acts occur behind closed doors and in a remote part of the world. The consequences of torture are felt immediately by those being interrogated, of course, although not in a manner that benefits the interrogators or the public they represent. As documented by others in this special issue, torture is largely ineffective in eliciting accurate information. More often than not, a torture recipient's primary concern is to end the torture—a goal that can be served in a variety of ways that do not require divulging accurate information relevant to the interrogators' concerns. However, the consequences of torture are not limited to the pain and private motives of the recipient, or to the questionable validity and relevance of any information extracted by this approach to interrogation. Indeed, acts of torture can have pernicious effects that ripple through layers of social reality, with profound and unintended implications for social interaction, public policy, cultural values, and international relations.

The link between local acts and global consequences is readily understandable from the perspective of dynamical systems (cf. Nowak & Vallacher, 1998; Vallacher & Nowak, 2007). The dynamical perspective conceptualizes psychological phenomena as systems consisting of elements that interact, often in unpredictable and seemingly chaotic fashion, to produce higher order properties and processes. The elements comprising a system take on specific meanings for different levels of human experience. At the level of the brain, the elements are neurons that interact to produce sensation and cognition (e.g., Tononi & Edelman, 1998). At the level of the mind, the elements are thoughts and feelings that interact over time to produce beliefs and social judgments (e.g., Vallacher, Nowak, & Kaufman, 1994). At the level of groups and social systems, the elements are individuals whose interactions with one another forge a shared reality in the form of public opinion, fads, and political ideology (e.g., Nowak, Szamrej, & Latané, 1990). At each level of experience, local influences among the interacting elements—neurons, thoughts, individuals—promote the emergence of new phenomena that do not reside in the elements themselves (e.g., Holland, 1995; Johnson, 2001).

Research within the dynamical perspective has revealed that change in a single element can promote wholesale change in the larger system as the elements interact to re-establish a coherent collective state. A new piece of relevant information can launch a trajectory of thoughts that ultimately prompts a dramatic change in a person's political attitude, a new person in a group can transform the dynamics of social interaction and promote the emergence of new group norms, and a new gov-

ernment policy can have cascading effects that alter the fundamental attitudes and values defining the society. Because systems at different levels of experience are linked to one another, moreover, a change in an element at any level can promote unintended consequences at all the other levels. Changes in the mental states of interacting individuals, for example, can transform beliefs and practices at the societal level (Nowak & Vallacher, 2001); such transformations, in turn, can impinge on the society's relations with other societies (Coleman, Vallacher, Nowak, & Bui-Wrzosinska, 2007).

The potential for such cross-level effects is especially likely when the *temperature* of the embedded systems is high. In human systems, temperature refers to the overall energy, threat, or stress experienced by individuals, groups, and societies. During times of war or political turmoil, for example, the feedback loops among individuals and groups are strengthened so that each person or group is highly responsive to the actions of other people and groups. With strong connections (mutual feedback) among elements, the overall system is likely to display sudden and dramatic (nonlinear) changes in response to seemingly self-contained events (Nowak & Vallacher, 2001). A new social policy or practice that might have limited impact in times of normalcy can trigger a series of changes that ripple through the entire society when the society's temperature is high.

It is against this backdrop that one should consider the short- and long-term implications of a practice that is linked to fundamental beliefs and values. The use of torture to extract confessions from enemy combatants is a case in point. This practice is perceived by many to be an effective means of gaining useful information that could not be obtained through non-coercive means (see Janoff-Bulman, this issue). Aside from abundant evidence that this lay assumption is wrong—indeed, torture is demonstrably *less* effective than other means (see Arrigo & Bennett, this issue; Arrigo & Wagner, this issue; McCauley, this issue)—the acceptance of torture as a necessary evil can have effects that ripple through other facets of society and undermine relations with other nations.

In particular, because this practice is linked to issues of morality, human dignity, legitimate responses to undesirable behavior, and modes of social influence, it can effectively “reset” a society's orientation in these areas, particularly during high-temperature times (such as war) that amplify the feedback loops among individuals, groups, and issues. When torture is practiced by interrogators and condoned by the larger society, it signals that immoral and inhumane behavior can be justified, that aggression from a person or group in a position of power is a legitimate response to undesirable behavior, and that there are no limits to the social influence strategies that can be employed to achieve a goal. In effect, the use and acceptance of torture signifies that “the end justifies the means,” thereby relinquishing the moral high ground in conflict with those who employ means (e.g., terrorism, suicide bombing, random killing of citizens) deemed repugnant and immoral.

These shifts in values have been demonstrated with respect to the perpetrators of harsh treatment of detainees. In a mock prison setting at Stanford University, for example, Zimbardo (1970) found that well-adjusted college students assigned to the role of prison guard quickly resorted to highly questionable means of controlling students assigned to the role of inmate; more important, they adjusted their attitudes concerning such behavior to make it consistent with their actions. In real-world contexts that endure for extended periods of time, the adjustment of values to match one's behavior could have a pervasive impact not only on the perpetrator, but also on those with whom the perpetrator comes into contact because of the feedback that occurs in social interaction (Nowak et al., 1990).

However, the corrosive impact of extreme forms of interrogation is not confined to the perpetrators and the people with whom they interact. When such behavior is condoned—or passively accepted—by members of the larger society, their system of thoughts, feelings, and beliefs might also be altered to make these mental states compatible with the behavior. Although not directly involved in the administration of torture, a citizen's acceptance of this practice can, because of mutual feedback with other thoughts and feelings, promote dramatic changes in his or her way of thinking about legitimate means of social influence and common humanity. This effect is likely to be strengthened, moreover, by the feedback among individuals in their social interactions. As the altered values percolate through the social system, they create a cultural climate in which yet other measures that heretofore had been considered immoral and illegitimate become accepted and normative. In short, the mutual feedback across levels, from the actions of a few individuals to large-scale social institutions, can transform a society in ways that undermine the very values that separate the society from its enemies.

Systems also have the potential for self-correction. This occurs when positive feedback loops are reversed, functioning instead to promote *negative* feedback among system elements. Rather than amplifying the effects of a particular element, negative feedback serves to dampen an element's impact. A hostile act toward someone, for example, may promote compensatory behavior toward the person (e.g., an apology) on a subsequent occasion rather than another round of hostility. The reversal of feedback loops to contain the ripple effects of a new practice, however, is unlikely to occur under conditions of high temperature because such conditions enhance personal and collective concerns with subjective coherence and certainty. Rather than pushing back against new practices of questionable morality or effectiveness (negative feedback), people and groups in societies under high temperature demonstrate a collapse of complexity and nuance in favor of a single-minded approach to deal with their enemies ("by whatever means necessary"). This approach promotes and, in turn, is reinforced by a global and undifferentiated view of the enemy ("evil").

The use of torture as a means of interrogation exacerbates this process because of its positive feedback loop with societal temperature. Torture may arise as an op-

tion because of high temperature in a society, but once employed, it can promote further increases in the temperature of a system. Indeed, there is reason to believe that torture plays into the hands of terrorists for precisely this reason. Terrorists cannot win a war on the battlefield, but they can achieve a semblance of victory by undermining and transforming the social fabric of the societies they fear and despise. Progress toward this goal is achieved when democratic societies “take the bait” and engage in practices that not only reflect frustration and anger, but also serve to enhance this collective mindset. Ironically, then, the very feature that promotes torture in the first place—high stress and turmoil in a society—is likely to be enhanced rather than reduced by this interrogation strategy.

For negative feedback to contain or reverse the spread of beliefs and values that justify immoral behavior (“might makes right”), the society’s temperature needs to be reduced. This can prove difficult during times of terror and war, but it is not impossible. Systems change from the top-down as well as from the bottom-up. An effective leader, in particular, can introduce new elements—statements and policies that emphasize humanity, justice, and morality—and thereby influence people to rethink their positions concerning these matters. One can hope that this happens sooner rather than later.

BIOGRAPHICAL NOTE

Robin R. Vallacher is a professor of psychology at Florida Atlantic University and a research affiliate at the Center for Complex Systems, Warsaw University. His research spans a wide variety of topics in social psychology, from basic principles of social judgment and self-concept to issues in social justice and conflict. In recent years, his work has centered on identifying the invariant dynamic properties underlying these otherwise diverse phenomena.

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Military Interrogation: What Did We Learn?

Richard V. Wagner
Bates College

This concluding statement reflects on the November 2006 meeting of four senior military interrogators and seven research psychologists. This article discusses (a) the extent to which the psychologists provide analyses that further the interrogators' goal of convincing authorities that abusive interrogation must cease; and (b) a series of implications for the field of psychology as well as its theory, research, and practice.

If you have read one or more of the articles in this themed issue of *Peace and Conflict: Journal of Peace Psychology*, you know that in November 2006, four retired, senior U.S. Army interrogators met with seven research psychologists from varied backgrounds to examine the military interrogation process. The interrogators' goal was to describe their experience as "data" that would allow the psychologists to prepare analyses to support the contention that the abusive techniques in use elsewhere (e.g., Abu Ghraib, Guantánamo, and various foreign sites) are not only morally and ethically indefensible but, in fact, do not work and are often counterproductive. We were convinced, but the question is still open as to whether the analyses will help in their efforts to convince the powers that be that abusive interrogation must cease. In this issue of *Peace and Conflict*, we have presented the psychologists' analyses that have, in many respects, broadened the analysis beyond the interrogation techniques themselves to include their social contexts.

What did we psychologists expect to gain from the gathering? A good feeling for helping the military interrogators make their case via our expert analyses? Maybe. An insight into the interrogation process? That was a major attraction to the seminar weekend for all of us. An opportunity to promote a political agenda aimed at eliminating the use of physical and psychological abuse—and especially torture—by any U.S. personnel in any U.S.-supported site in any part of the world?

This, too, was a goal for at least some of the participants. However, now that the seminar has concluded and the reports written, it appears to me that the greatest relevance of the weekend is to the field of psychology itself, in three different respects: theory, research, and professional policy and practice.

In the first instance, the psychological experts in this issue *Peace and Conflict* have shown that successful, non-coercive interrogation, as described by our retired military experts (a) conforms to many well-known social psychological principles of interpersonal relations, persuasion, social power, attribution biases, and comparison theory (see Janoff-Bulman, this issue; McCauley, this issue); and (b) is extensively affected by situational pressures, such as the military hierarchical structure and national and international political conditions that are well understood by organizational and systems theorists (see Arrigo & Bennett, this issue; Vallacher, this issue). As a result, we can begin to evaluate the relevance and generalizability of psychological concepts in the context of behavior that is usually inaccessible and more extreme than we normally study.

In the second instance, there has been valuable research on (a) the effects of detention and torture on victims' well-being (see Gurr & Quiroga, 2001; Kira et al., 2006; Rasmussen, 1992) and (b) the professional identities and training of torturers and even the effects on the torturers (see Gibson, 1990; Huggins, Haritos-Fatouros, & Zimbardo, 2002; Smidt-Nielsen, 1998; Suedfeld, 1990). There is very little on the validity and reliability of information obtained under torture. Clearly, we need to know much, much more about this phenomenon that has burst onto to the U.S. domestic scene in the past 6 years. There has been substantial research on police interrogation, which could be a guide to explorations of military interrogation. However, as Redlich (this issue) notes, there are differences in the goals of the two types of interrogation, in the types of people interrogated, and in the training of those engaging in the process. Comparative research would be valuable.

Finally, the seminar revealed a number of respects in which psychology as a profession has an impact on and is impacted by military interrogation.¹ Psychologists can play three different roles vis-à-vis military interrogation: They can train interrogators, they can observe interrogation to monitor and prevent abusive practices, and they can treat those who suffer from the effects of intense interrogation. (The psychologist could also be a participant or instructor in the use of abusive interrogation techniques, but the profession would condemn anyone who served in this capacity.)

The 2007 American Psychological Association (APA) annual convention featured a number of programs, formal and informal, concerning the issue of psychologists' involvement in the interrogations that have taken place in various military and Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) detention centers. There was a series of

¹From this point forward, I use the term "military interrogation" to refer to interrogation not only in the armed services but in the national security arena (e.g., the Central Intelligence Agency) as well.

eight 2-hour sessions on “Ethics and Interrogations: Confronting the Challenge,” sponsored by the 10 Divisions of Social Justice as well as the APA Board of Directors, Board of Scientific Affairs, and Ethics Committee. Among the topics was the role of psychologists in U.S. military detention centers, the ethical dilemmas facing psychologists in those centers, the evolution of APA policy on ethics and interrogation, the effects of psychological torture and abuse, and the research on interrogation (none of which, I gather, was conducted in military settings). There were also deliberations within the APA Council of Representatives about the language of a proposed moratorium on psychologists’ involvement in detention centers, a protest rally, and other program events related to psychologists’ involvement in interrogations. Clearly, the topic is at the forefront of the profession’s concerns.

What did the seminar contribute to this professional debate? First, we learned that the procedures used by U.S. military interrogators and “other” (e.g., CIA) interrogators differ in certain important respects—notably, the oversight, the secretiveness of the process, and the training of the interrogators. It is possible (and has been claimed), for example, that psychologists have taught the SERE (Survival, Evasion, Resistance, Escape)² techniques to interrogators. Those techniques, intended to train military personnel at risk of capture how to handle torture used by their captors, subject the trainees to the very techniques (e.g., stress positions, altered environments) they might encounter. If there is no official, public oversight of interrogation procedures and if abuse occurs, are not the psychologist-trainers complicit in the illegal, unethical, abusive activities? This is an important point for the profession to consider.

Second, psychologists could serve to protect detainees from abuse, a role often cited by those advocating psychologists’ continuing presence at detention centers. However, can they really provide such well-meaning protection? The Stanford Prison Experiment (Haney & Zimbardo, 1977) suggested not. As most psychologists know, in the Stanford Prison Experiment, young men merely playing the role of guards without such outside pressure engaged in psychologically abusive acts toward others playing the role of prisoners, to such an extent that the experiment had to be terminated. Even the experimenter was sucked into the process: It apparently took an outside party visiting the experimental setting to alert the investigator to the deleterious effects of the process on all involved. If such a seemingly benign setting can blind observers to the distress produced by detention and interrogation, how can we expect well-meaning persons to remain objective and protect detainees in the face of the inevitable pressures to conform, to go along, especially if the psychologist is in the military and accustomed to obeying orders, even ones that contradict APA ethical guidelines? It is not only that they are used to obeying orders, but there are severe career and even legal penalties if they do not. If the pro-

²For information about the SERE techniques, see http://www.training.sfhq.com/survival_training.htm

fession does not provide clear, unequivocal guidelines to shield its practitioners from such circumstances, is it not derelict in its responsibilities to society? This is a second important point for the profession to consider.

Third, psychologists as practitioners can provide valuable service in treating those who have been traumatized by detention and intense interrogation. This is what they are trained to do, although that training is unlikely to include experience with people who have been subjected to the alleged conditions of some U.S. detention centers. Furthermore, in the course of treatment, the practitioner may learn about inappropriate, even illegal, measures used in the detention. Will he or she be free to report those conditions? Given the secrecy of the process, will the practitioner be able to discriminate between the client's reports of his or her experience and the objective reality of that experience? This is a third important point for the profession to consider.

Finally, as Moghaddam (this issue) wisely notes, we must recognize that what the profession does and says here in the United States can have powerful effects on the practice of psychology worldwide. We have a responsibility to provide a constructive, humane, just model for addressing issues of detention and coercive interrogation. Does the profession, in fact, consciously and deliberately accept that responsibility?

Psychology is a powerful tool. It can, as we know, be used for good or ill. We can analyze the process of military and other governmental interrogation with the concepts already well developed in the discipline; we can conduct research that furthers our knowledge and evaluates the effects of interrogation in these heretofore little-known settings; and we can help evaluate and develop policy, both within the profession and in the greater society, that will promote the values of not only "doing no harm" but, more beneficially, doing only good. The four military interrogators who participated with us at Georgetown University last November have shown us how much more we need to know and do if we are to accomplish those objectives.

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COMMENTARY

Moral Exclusion and Torture: The Ticking Bomb Scenario and the Slippery Ethical Slope

Susan Opotow

*John Jay College of Criminal Justice
City University of New York*

Psychologists' involvement in torture at Guantanamo and other sites raises important ethical questions. This paper argues, first, that the eclipse of human rights by a culture of security fosters the moral exclusion of detainees. Second, the Ticking Time Bomb scenario, often invoked to support security-justified torture, can separate people from deeply held ethical values, effecting exclusionary attitudinal change in individuals and societies. Third, state-sponsored extralegal detention and torture are not passing events; instead, they can stain the nation and the profession of psychology and remain in the public consciousness over time.

Debate about and opposition to the American Psychological Association's position on psychologists' involvement in detention, interrogations, and torture at Guantánamo and elsewhere has opened up important ethical and moral issues in our society. A series of panels at the American Psychological Association meeting in 2007 provided a space for psychologists and allied behavioral scientists to think critically about the role that we play in American society and the world. These

Correspondence should be addressed to Susan Opotow, Sociology Department, John Jay College of Criminal Justice, 899 Tenth Avenue, New York, NY 10019. E-mail: sopotow@jjay.cuny.edu

comments were presented in a series of panels, “Ethics and Interrogations: Confronting the Challenge,” held from 17-20 August 2007 in San Francisco.

As a justice researcher, I study how we come to see others as outside the scope of justice, morally excluded, and as eligible targets of various forms of harm, from exploitation to human rights abuses and genocide (Opotow, 1990). For those who are outside the scope of justice the Golden Rule does not apply. Instead, injustice is rendered acceptable and normal—as the way things are and ought to be. My work examines attitudes, justifications, and contexts that give rise to moral exclusion as well as the more positive processes of moral inclusion that extend social justice to marginalized groups (e.g., Opotow, 2001).

Moral exclusion is evident in hatred toward America expressed in the 9/11 terrorist attacks and hatred expressed by Americans in its aftermath as well as in between-group sectarian violence in Iraq. In these examples, some people see others as outside their scope of justice. I find it particularly important to understand the psychological origins and dynamics of moral exclusion that allow it to become influential, widespread, and severe.

This brief paper focuses on three points about psychologists’ involvement in torture. First, we are seeing increased moral exclusion and the eclipse of human rights by a culture of security. Second, the ticking time bomb scenario, repeatedly invoked in security-based arguments to support torture, can separate people from their deeply held values, effecting exclusionary attitudinal change in individuals and societies. Third, the effect of “only-this-here-now” state-sponsored violence of extralegal detention, torture, and extraordinary rendition are exclusionary acts that will remain in public consciousness over time.

HUMAN RIGHTS VERSUS SECURITY

Stephen Toope (2002) describes the rise of a culture of human rights after World War II. The 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights was a response to “barbarous acts which have outraged the conscience of mankind” (Universal Declaration of Human Rights, 1948). Although human rights advanced with the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989 and the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991, the attainment of human rights envisioned by the Declaration was never fully achieved. In many contexts worldwide, human rights have been undermined by military dictatorships and totalitarian states.

Since 9/11 we have seen the ascendance of a culture of security in the United States of America. This culture of security has allowed internationally-proscribed, state-sponsored violations of human rights in Guantánamo and elsewhere. *New York Times* describes Guantánamo as an affront to our fundamental values because prisoners lack the right to legally defend themselves and are subject to torture “that can be repeated until it produces the answer the Pentagon wants” (6/6/07). It de-

scribes American secret prisons, kangaroo courts, and indefinite detention of prisoners without charges as a “national disgrace” (7/15/07). Security now pervades everyday life in many ways for many people, including sporadic orange alerts, heavily armed national guards at airports and public transportation hubs, passport logjams, and visa denials and delays. The culture of security and the culture of human rights are the political and legal counterparts of the psychological constructs, moral exclusion and moral inclusion.

THE TICKING TIME BOMB

To understand how moral exclusion becomes influential, widespread, and severe, it is important to understand how people become separated from their fundamental principles, including a basic principle of democracy that values liberty and justice for all. How can a country that stands for freedom (as Fredrick Douglass asked in 1865) act in ways we deplore? In the past we have abhorred the torture of concentration camp inmates by Nazis doctors in World War II (Lifton, 1986) and the psychiatric abuse of political dissidents in the Soviet Union in the 1980s (Stover & Nightingale, 1985). I answer this question by describing the ticking bomb hypothetical scenario, often mentioned by supporters and apologists for U.S. government policies on detention and torture.

The scenario states that a time bomb is located in a major city. A suspect in custody knows where the bomb is located, but will not talk. Would you support torturing the suspect to obtain information that would save many lives? This offers an argument (i.e., the ends justify the means) that was used in the Algerian War to justify French torture of Algerian separatists.

David Luban (2005), an expert on justice and ethics, describes the ticking bomb hypothetical as sleight-of-hand reductionism “built on a set of assumptions that amounts to intellectual fraud.” It is designed to reconfigure liberal reverence for human rights and “construct a liberal ideology of torture, by which liberals reassure themselves that essential interrogational torture is detached from its illiberal roots.” It ends, he warns, “by constructing a torture culture” (all quotations p. 1427).

Those who support the institutionalization of violence and impunity in Guantánamo and other open and secret U.S. prisons throughout the world would rather talk about ticking bombs justifying torture than discuss torture as an organized social practice. Psychologists studying violence know that harm-doing is a slippery slope. As a result of a variety of social and institutional influences, increasing escalation is more likely than restraint. The hypothetical, designed to lessen restraint and ease deviation from moral principles, deflects discussion about torture. It deftly shifts the topic from values and ethics to security and technicalities. As Luban describes,

The liberal ideology of torture, which assumes that torture can be neatly confined to exceptional ticking-bomb cases and surgically severed from cruelty and tyranny, represents a dangerous delusion. It becomes more dangerous still coupled with an endless war on terror, a permanent emergency in which the White House eagerly insists that its emergency powers rise above the limiting power of statutes and treaties. Claims to long-term emergency powers that entail the power to torture should send chills through liberals of the right as well as the left, and no one should still think that liberal torture has nothing to do with tyranny. (p. 1461)

In sum, the ticking bomb and related security-based scenarios pry people from their values. Security crises, however inaccurate, can override values and, in doing so, loosen restraints on harm-doing.

TAKING THE LONGER VIEW

Violations of human rights do not neatly disappear from public conscience over time. Instead, they remain as indelible stains. John Le Carré (1990) captures the way that methods ultimately change people and, in the context of Guantanamo and other sites of torture, professional organizations:

Don't imagine you'll be unscathed by the methods you use. The end may justify the means.... But there's a price to pay, and the price does tend to be oneself. (p. 10)

A half century ago during Second World War, the culture of security justified the internment of Japanese-American citizens. This is now widely understood to have been wrong, short-sighted, and an affront to deeply held American values of liberty and justice. Like Guantánamo, it undermined human rights and was justified by a culture of security. This suggests that violating human rights and side-stepping international and national laws and professional ethics will be remembered as wrong in the harsher light of time.

To conclude, I want to point out that the tension between the culture of security and the culture of human rights is not a clash between civilizations. It is a tension within this nation and, as indicated in controversy over the American Psychological Association's stance on psychologists' involvement at Guantanamo—within our professional association.

In a 2007 address to the American Sociology Association, Ricardo Lagos, who helped transform Chile from a dictatorship characterized by torture, impunity, and terror to a stable democracy, told an audience of social scientists that the United States is now the number one country in the world and, therefore, now is the time to make the world the place you will want to live in when you are no longer the world superpower.

The debate within the profession of psychology and within the United States of America about the role psychologists should play is important. It critically examines what involvement in torture means and how we, as citizens and psychologists, can make the world more just and better than it is now.

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REVIEW

The Lucifer Effect: Understanding How Good People Turn Evil, Philip Zimbardo, 2007. New York: Random House.

The Sociogenesis of Evil

M. Brewster Smith

University of California at Santa Cruz

This unusual and important book is the culmination of Philip Zimbardo's eminent career as a psychological researcher, teacher, author of excellent textbooks, and proponent of justice. Zimbardo came to the forefront of psychological and media attention with his Stanford Prison Experiment (SPE) conducted in the summer of 1971. He had arranged a mock-up prison in which he randomly assigned normal Stanford undergraduates as inmates or guards, to test his expectation that the situation of incarceration would induce behavioral consequences similar to what he saw as dysfunctional features of the American prison system. Although physical punishment was not allowed, the students assigned as guards found many ways to make their charges miserable. Those assigned as prisoners were unable to cooperatively cope with their intolerable situation and showed increasing emotional disturbance. The effects on the experimental inmates were so severe that he discontinued the experiment after only 5 days of the intended 2 weeks. The "failed" experiment has been a focus of attention ever since.

The emergence of public concern with abuse and torture by the American military, prompted by events at Abu Ghraib in Iraq and Guantanamo Bay in Cuba, makes the SPE especially relevant today. The claim by responsible authorities that

the apparently gleeful torture of prisoners at Abu Ghraib was the product of a few “bad apples” in the barrel led Zimbardo to serve as a defense witness for Sgt. Ivan Frederick, one of the accused guards, in his military trial in which he had pleaded guilty of abusive behavior. The book is organized around the detailed presentation and analysis of SPE in the first half and the presentation and discussion of all we can know about torture in Iraq in the latter half. Along the way the reader gets an expert summary of what social psychologists have learned about obedience and conformity, deindividuation and dehumanization in the instigation or release of evil behavior, and about the potential evil of inaction. Zimbardo’s essential point is that people, in general, are capable of both good and evil, and that the evil they do is best understood in terms of situational and system pressures. Such an understanding of evil is not to pardon it, but is essential to rational efforts to avoid it and to cope with its results. Hannah Arendt’s conception of “the banality of evil” in her treatment of the Eichmann case is a good fit.

Zimbardo uses his excellent writing and teaching skills to tell a fascinating and persuasive story. This is the first full published account of SPE, which has heavy impact on the reader because of its narrative detail (excellent reporting of qualitative research) and because Zimbardo tells of the impact on himself of directing the pseudo-prison. He involved himself so fully in supervising the maintenance of order among the prisoners that it took the tactful intervention of his wife, Christina Maslach, to wake him to the urgent need to terminate the experiment. His account of subsequent related developments in social psychological research in which he was a major participant is appropriately also written in his own first-person voice.

His critical descriptive treatment of the events at Abu Ghraib is the fullest possible: He extracts and evaluates the contents of the many formal reports, much investigative journalism, and his own interviews. He then engages in what he labels as his own role of prosecutor, putting the higher members of the chain of command and the military system that they control on the figurative dock.

The book ends on a positive note with a chapter proposing ways in which people can resist pernicious situational influences, and discussing the nature of heroism, with a provisional conceptual scheme and concrete examples of modern heroes. The former effort at helping readers resist the instigators and releasers of evil behavior seems like good sense social psychologically and is backed up with a fuller version available on the Internet. (Internet supplementation is offered at a number of places throughout the book.) The treatment of heroism is certainly a novelty in contemporary social psychology. In all, I see this final chapter mainly as an attempt at balance in a book otherwise focused on people’s vulnerability to evil behavior, not as a major contribution in its own right.

The reader will have sensed that I find Zimbardo’s treatment of the extreme evil of Abu Ghraib and prison abuse, and of genocide at Rwanda and in the Holocaust, powerful and persuasive. In making his case, he draws heavily on “situationist” research that had been presented as supporting the view that any attention to person-

ality dispositions is to be dismissed as Lee Ross's "fundamental attribution error." In the last decade or so, personality research has solidly refuted the extreme situationist case. As we have come to see, the complex interplay of person and situation in cultural and historical context has plenty of room for the influence of personal dispositions, including morally relevant ones. However, the cases on which Zimbardo has focused are special in the primacy of situational influence.

Personality dispositions that are particularly relevant to evil behavior are right-wing authoritarianism and social dominance, as effectively studied by Bob Altemeyer. By fortunate coincidence, Altemeyer has just published, on the Internet, a reader friendly summary and integration of his career-long research: www.theauthoritarians.com. Reading it provides a good corrective to Zimbardo's over-generalized situationism. For me, Altemeyer's personality-centered findings link to and help us understand the system and situation influences that are highlighted by Zimbardo.

In passing, Zimbardo makes another point that bears on the strategic importance of a situational approach, in comparing public health versus medical approaches to disease. The medical view of disease in terms of physiology and microbial agents is entirely appropriate, but the public health approach of attending to sanitation, water supply, and so forth, has been far more effective in reducing the impact of many diseases than the individual treatments of medicine. Similarly, if we want to reduce harmful behavior and personal misery, it may be appropriate to give initial primary attention to the system features that engender it. As George Albee would have said, psychotherapy is nice for those who can afford it, but reduction of poverty and of the increasing gap between socioeconomic classes might be much more effective in reducing mental disease.

Zimbardo's book calls for a broad readership beyond the specialists in social psychology whom are familiar with its issues. Most readers will be caught by the fascinating story, but some may find the necessarily full exposition of SPE and of the events at Abu Ghraib tedious. The impatient reader can skim.

BIOGRAPHICAL NOTE

M. Brewster Smith is Professor of Psychology Emeritus at the University of California, Santa Cruz. He received his PhD from Harvard in 1947. He is co-author of *The American Soldier* (Vol. 2, 1949) and *Opinions and Personality* (1956), and author of *For a Significant Social Psychology* (2003). He has served as president of the Society for the Psychological Study of Social Issues and the American Psychological Association.