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Chapter Two: *The Complicity of Psychology in the Security State*[1]

David Harper

Indeed, a search for the roots of Abu Ghraib in the development and propagation of a distinctive American form of torture will, in some way, implicate almost all of our society – the brilliant scholars who did the psychological research, the distinguished professors who advocated its use, the great universities that hosted them, the august legislators who voted funds, and the good Americans who acquiesced, by their silence, whenever media or congressional critics risked their careers for exposés that found little citizen support, allowing the process to continue (McCoy, 2006, p.6).

Introduction[2]

In this chapter I focus on how knowledge gathered by British and American mental health professionals and social scientists (especially psychologists), has been used by the military, intelligence and security communities over the last fifty years. In particular, I will focus on the evolution of psychological torture (i.e. coercive and aversive psychological interrogation techniques) based on this knowledge but I will also examine the spread of this knowledge into related areas such as surveillance.

When I was a psychology undergraduate in Liverpool in the mid 1980s, I remember a lecture on the psychology of stress. The lecturer reported a study conducted on US soldiers in Vietnam, concerning their levels of stress. I didn't really question the ethics of such research or its military application. However, in my third year I undertook a course on the history and philosophy of psychology. The theme behind many of the lectures was the need to view psychology's history in its context

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1 Parts of this chapter originally appeared in Harper (2004).
2 There is some overlap with Nimisha Patel's chapter (3) in this volume. However, I have focused more on the psychological research underlying the coercive ways in which psychological knowledge has been applied. Human rights aspects, trauma to detainees, rehabilitation and preventative aspects are covered more fully in Nimisha's chapter.

and to question many of our taken-for-granted assumptions about the discipline. For this course, I wrote a long essay on the politics of psychology and read up on the use of psychology by the military – especially Ackroyd et al. (1977) and Watson (1978). I was shocked by what I came across. I hadn't realised that the same sensory deprivation experiments that had informed our views on perception were actually largely used to understand 'brainwashing'. Psychologists are often ignorant about this side of the discipline. Indeed, one can sound like a conspiracy theorist just by discussing this research although it is thoroughly established in the public record as a result of UK and US government inquiries, court cases and Freedom of Information requests in the US. For example, at a recent seminar where I was discussing secret funding of psychological research by the Human Ecology Fund (a body which covertly channelled CIA funds to researchers) at Cornell University, another attendant at the seminar told me that though she had been at Cornell, she had never heard of this. To some extent, this is understandable, since this kind of research receives virtually no coverage in psychology textbooks.

There are, therefore, three reasons for focussing on these topics. Firstly, the discipline of psychology positions itself as a science, but there is often scant discussion of the ethics and politics concerning the use of this knowledge. Secondly, psychologists, show a remarkable ignorance about the history of their discipline, particularly the application of psychological knowledge by the military and security agencies. Thirdly, because of this ignorance, the discipline runs the risk of repeating previous mistakes. The aim of this chapter is to provide a critical counter-balance to the received view of psychology's history. It is important that we continually revisit this history, and do not forget our complicity in its abuses. My aim, therefore, is to keep this memory alive.

The History of Psychological Research into Torture and Interrogation

Alfred McCoy (2006) describes the CIA's research into psychological warfare and interrogation between 1950-1962 as 'a veritable Manhattan Project of the mind' (p.7). In part the interest in this area grew from anxieties regarding reports of American PoWs in the Korean war giving information to interrogators as a result of

techniques described as 'brain-washing' - from the Chinese *xĭ năo: 'wash brain'* – (Hinkle and Wolff, 1956; Lifton, 1967; Schein et al., 1961)[3]. McCoy points to the significance of a secret meeting in Canada in June 1951 between Henry Tizard (the UK Ministry of Defence's senior scientist) with the chairman of the Canadian Defense Research Board (CDRB), senior CIA researcher Cyril Haskins and other Canadian scientists, including the Canadian psychologist Donald Hebb. McCoy describes how they agreed on a joint behavioural research programme aimed at developing new interrogation techniques.

Sensory Deprivation

McCoy (2006) notes that, between 1951-1954, Donald Hebb received a small grant from the CDRB to study the effects of sensory deprivation. Twenty-two paid student volunteers at McGill University lay in a cubicle with sensory modalities reduced by soundproofing and low constant noise, wearing thick gloves and goggles to diffuse the light. The results were reported in the *Canadian Journal of Psychology* and the *American Psychologist* though a fuller account was given at a secret CDRB symposium. The study found that, after continuous isolation and sensory deprivation, the participants began to experience hallucinations and a degraded ability to think clearly. Most students quit the study after 2-3 days.

Project MKUltra

In 1953, the CIA gathered together the wide range of psychological research into a programme entitled MKUltra under the control of Dr Sidney Gottlieb of the CIA's Technical Services Division (McCoy, 2006). MKUltra has become widely known as a result of the Rockefeller Commission (Rockefeller et al., 1975) and the Church Committee (US Congress, 1976). Between 1953-1963 MKUltra and allied projects dispensed $25 million for human experiments by 185 nongovernmental researchers at 80 institutions, including 44 universities and 12 hospitals – six per cent

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3 Interestingly, Anthony (1990) argues that the notion of brainwashing was promulgated by the CIA as a propaganda strategy to undercut Communist claims that American PoWs in Korean War Communist prison camps had voluntarily expressed sympathy for Communism and had admitted that they had engaged in war crimes against the Chinese and North Korean forces. He asserts that the brainwashing theory was propagated to the general public though the books of Edward Hunter (e.g. Hunter, 1956), who was a secret CIA 'psychological warfare specialist' with a cover identity as a journalist.

of the research funding was provided on a non-contractual basis since many academic researchers feared for their reputations if their work for the CIA became widely known (McCoy, 2006). Lee and Shlain (1992) and Stevens (1987) provide a fascinating account of these bizarre studies and their social, political and cultural context. McCoy provides a pithy summary of their unethical nature:

> *"Seeking unwitting subjects, the CIA injected not only North Korean prisoners, but also spiked drinks at a New York City party house, paid prostitutes to slip LSD to their customers for agency cameras at a San Francisco safe house, pumped hallucinogens into children at summer camp, attempted behaviour modification on inmates at California's Vacaville Prison" (McCoy, 2006, p.29).*

Similar research was going on in the UK. For example in the 1950s servicemen took part in a study conducted by scientists working for the Secret Intelligence Service (MI6) at Porton Down, the Chemical Warfare establishment. Told that the purpose of the study was to find a cure for the common cold, they were asked to drink a clear liquid, which in fact caused frightening hallucinations. Recently it was discovered that the liquid contained LSD and, in February 2006, three of the servicemen received out-of-court settlements for the distress caused (BBC News online, 2006a).

More frighteningly, the CIA conducted 'terminal' studies where dubious defectors or double agents in Europe were experimented on at an Anglo-American facility near Frankfurt until they died (McCoy, 2006). Despite initial claims of the promises of LSD and hypnosis to enhance interrogation, most of the research came to nought[4]. McCoy (2006) notes that the emphasis then shifted to a Psychological Sciences research programme where $7-$13 million were allocated annually for behavioural studies at major universities 'by channelling funds through private foundations, some legitimate and others fronts – including the Ford and Rockefeller foundations' (p.31).

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4 Lee and Shlain (1992), for example, note that the US Army's Chemical Corps dispensed with LSD as a battlefield incapacitant when they developed a drug called BZ (Quinuclidinyl Benzilate), capable of knocking out troops for three days. By the 1960s it was the army's standard incapacitating agent and was deployable via grenade and a 750-pound cluster bomb.

Perhaps the most brutal experiments on civilians were conducted by psychiatrists Ewen Cameron and Lloyd Cotter. In 1957, Cameron, at Allan Memorial Institute (McGill University's psychiatric treatment facility), had applied for CIA funds through the Society for the Investigation of Human Ecology. His plan was to use unwitting and non-consenting psychiatric patients to test a three-stage method for what he termed 'depatterning':

> *"First, drug-induced coma for up to eighty-six days; next, electroshock treatment three times daily for thirty days; and, finally, a football helmet clamped to the head for up to twenty-one days with a looped tape repeating, up to half a million times, messages like 'my mother hates me'. In contrast to Hebb's six-day maximum for voluntary isolation, Cameron confined one patient, known only as Mary C., in his 'box' for an unimaginable thirty-five days of total sensory deprivation"* (McCoy, 2006, p.44).

Cameron was regarded by Hebb as 'criminally stupid' (McCoy, 2006, p.44) but he had been a member of the Nuremberg medical tribunal (the 'doctors' trial) and went on to become not only the first Chairman of the World Psychiatric Association but also president of both the American and Canadian Psychiatric Associations. Cameron's brutal research was further developed by Californian doctor Lloyd H. Cotter who was sent by the CIA, together with two CIA psychiatrists, to Bien Hoa Mental Hospital north of Saigon. The idea, according to McCoy, was to test under field conditions, whether Cameron's depatterning techniques would work. Cotter's work was published in 1967 in the *American Journal of Psychiatry* (under the cover of an experiment in operant conditioning) and was re-published in the *Control of Human Behavior* series edited by Ulrich et al. (Cotter, 1970).

According to the article, within a short time of arriving at the hospital, Cotter instituted a mass operant conditioning treatment. Patients who wanted to leave the hospital were told they had to work for three months 'to prove their capability' (1970, p.101). This work involved tending crops for American Special Forces troops in Viet Cong territory (1970, p.104). Those who refused to work (120 out of 130 patients) received unmodified ECT (i.e. ECT without tranquillisers or muscle relaxants). ECT

continued at the rate of three times a week until there was 'evident improvement in the behavior of the patients, the appearance of the ward, and the number of patients volunteering for work' (1970, p. 102). Cotter noted that 'ECT served as a negative reinforcement for the response of work for those patients who chose to work rather than to continue receiving ECT' (1970, p.102). When a similar procedure failed on the second ward – after seven weeks - food was withdrawn until, after three days, all 130 women 'volunteered' for work. In Cotter's words:

> *"As has been repeatedly demonstrated, when the subject is hungry food is one of the strongest and most powerful of positive reinforcements" (Cotter, 1970, p.102).*

One of the duties for 'recovered' patients was working in US Special Forces A camps prone to Viet Cong attack.

The Society for the Investigation of Human Ecology

Both Watson (1978) and Greenfield (1977) have documented military funding of psychological research. In her *APA Monitor* article, Greenfield (1977) describes how the Society for the Investigation of Human Ecology (later called the Human Ecology Fund) was set up and financed by the CIA in the late 1950s. Originally organised to finance research into 'brainwashing' at Cornell Medical School, by 1957, Carl Rogers was on the board of the organisation receiving grants for his work on psychotherapy. He has commented:

> *"It's impossible ... to realize what it was like in the 1950s. It seemed as though Russia was a very potential enemy and as though the United States was very wise to get whatever information it could about things that the Russians might try to do, such as brainwashing people" (Greenfield, 1977, p.10).*

Others in receipt of Human Ecology Fund grants included the psychologist Edgar Schein, the anthropologist Edward T. Hall (proxemics theorist), psychiatrist Martin Orne (researcher into demand characteristics and hypnosis) and sociologist Jay Schulman (who was one of only two of Greenfield's interviewees to have received CIA funds unwittingly). Shallice (1984) also includes Erving Goffman in this list. At

the end of this period of CIA co-ordinated research, McCoy (2006) argues that three key behavioural components of psychological torture could now be clarified:

- Sensory deprivation (drawing on the work of Donald Hebb).
- Self-inflicted pain (drawing on the work of Albert Biderman, Irving L. Janis, Harold Wolff and Lawrence Hinkle).
- Obedience to authority (drawing on the work of Stanley Milgram)[5].

These research insights were codified in the CIA's 1963 *Kubark Counterintelligence Interrogation6* handbook. In the UK, they were to form the basis of new interrogation procedures.

Psychological Torture in Northern Ireland

In the UK and Europe some commentators have argued that the reported abuses of human rights as part of the 'War on Terror' are a result of American exceptionalism - i.e. the view that human rights standards only apply to 'foreign' countries (e.g. Ignatieff, 2004). Indeed, even Alfred McCoy refers to psychological torture as a 'distinctive American form of torture' (2006, p.6). However, this again serves to demonstrate how short our memories are, for most of these psychological torture techniques were carried out by the British army and security agencies in Northern Ireland in the early 1970s. Only after much debate, press comment, two official inquiries and a case at the European Court of Human Rights were these practices reported to have ended.

According to Meek (2005), Britain set up an 'intelligence research unit' at Maresfield in Sussex in 1957. By 1962 SAS and paratroop units were being trained to cope with capture. However:

> "In April 1971, in conditions of great secrecy, a course in sensory deprivation was
>
> held at Maresfield for members of the Royal Ulster Constabulary. In the early

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5 Milgram's studies of obedience were funded by the National Science Foundation after some consultation with the Office of Naval Research. Though there is no evidence that Milgram received funding from the CIA or military, McCoy (2006) thinks the timing suspicious.
6 'Kubark' was, apparently, a CIA cryptonym for the agency itself.

> *morning of August 9 that year, the British army began its mass internment*
> *programme, arresting and imprisoning, without charges or courts, hundreds of*
> *suspected members of the IRA. Hidden within the mass internments was another*
> *programme, involving 14 prisoners, to test the new interrogation techniques" (Meek,*
> *2005).*

Following the mass arrest by Ulster security forces in 1971, this small group out of the 342 arrested men were subjected to several techniques which appeared to serve as pre-interrogation procedures. This included placing a black bag over their heads ("hooding"); being made to stand against a wall with their hands held high above their heads and legs apart for up to 16 hours at a stretch (i.e. in 'stress positions' inducing self-inflicted pain) and being deprived of sleep for the first two or three days. In addition, the men were made to wear boiler suits (perhaps to reduce tactile stimulation) and exposed to continual "white noise". It was also alleged that the men's diets were restricted to occasional administrations of dry bread and cups of water (Shallice, 1972, p. 388; British Medical Association, 1986, pp. 15-16). The British Army termed this 'interrogation in depth' and the methods used (hooding, noise bombardment, food deprivation, sleep deprivation and forced standing positions) were known collectively as the 'five techniques' (Hogg, 2003). At the time, the UK government stated that these procedures were necessary in order to "provide security for detainees and guards", an "atmosphere of discipline" and to prevent inter-prisoner communication (BMA, 1986, pp. 15-16). Defence Minister Lord Carrington said the only people subjected to these techniques were 'thugs and murderers' (Hogg, 2003). Commenting on the Northern Irish interrogations, Anthony Storr, however, wrote:

> *"The hooding and the continuous noise were designed not to isolate the men from*
> *each other but as a deliberate method of producing mental disorientation and*
> *confusion" (BMA, 1986, p. 16).*

The Compton report – a government report - gave justifications for the techniques. Following further outcry, a three person privy counsellors' inquiry was

instituted. Brownlie (1972) notes that the majority report, written by Lord Parker and Mr Boyd-Carpenter, concluded that:

> "There is no reason to rule out these techniques on moral grounds and that it is possible to operate them in a manner consistent with the highest standards of our society" (Brownlie, 1972, p.505).

In a dissenting minority report, Lord Gardiner noted that the 'five techniques' were originally used by the KGB in the 1930s (Hogg, 2003). Brownlie quotes the final paragraph of his report:

> "The blame for this sorry story, if blame there be, must lie with those who, many years ago, decided that in emergency conditions in Colonial-type situations, we should abandon our legal, well-tried and highly successful wartime interrogation methods and replace them by procedures which were secret, illegal, not morally justifiable and alien to the traditions of what I believe still to be the greatest democracy in the world" (Brownlie, 1972, p.507).

Prime Minister Edward Heath accepted Lord Gardiner's minority report damning them (BMA, 1986, p. 18). This may have been related to the fact that the Irish government was in the process of taking the British government to the European Commission of Human Rights (Hogg, 2003). The Commission reported in 1976 and, in 1977, the Attorney General gave an undertaking that the 'five techniques' would not be used as an aid to interrogation again (McCoy, 2006).

The BMA (1986), McCoy (2006), Shallice (1972, 1984) and Watson (1978) all note that these techniques appeared to have been designed in the early 1960s in the midst of burgeoning sensory deprivation research. Both Watson and Shallice make a direct link between this research and the interrogation techniques. Shallice observes that 'not surprisingly, psychologists by investigating the nature of brainwashing have improved it' (1972, p. 387). Indeed, Shallice (1972) has argued that psychologists have a special responsibility for some British interrogation techniques that appear to have been produced by the "conscious use of available scientific knowledge" (1972, p. 387).

Current Involvement of Psychologists, Psychiatrists and Other Health Professionals in Psychological Torture

It would be comforting to report that past abuses of psychological knowledge had now ended, but this would be both inaccurate and complacent. There is evidence of psychiatrists and psychologists' involvement in interrogations at Abu Ghraib, Guantánamo Bay and other detention centres (Bloche and Marks, 2005a, 2005b; Lewis, 2004a, 2004b; Lifton, 2004; Miles, 2004; Physicians for Human Rights (PHR), 2005) and evidence of enhancements to the psychological torture paradigm, for example the use of strobe lighting, loud music and repeated playing of bizarre music and sound effects (Ronson, 2004). McCoy (2006) reports that the CIA were allowed to use ten 'enhanced' interrogation methods designed by Agency psychologists for their detainees. One of these is 'waterboarding' where the detainee is tied to a board with the head lower than the feet so that he or she is unable to move. A piece of cloth is held tightly over the face, and water is poured onto the cloth. Breathing is extremely difficult and the detainee will fear imminent death by asphyxiation. Its use is expressly prohibited in the US Army Field Manual 34-52 on interrogation but the CIA is exempt from this. Mayer (2006) notes that soldiers in earlier conflicts have been court-martialled for using this technique.

Behavioral Science Consultation Teams

Following official inquiries into abuse of detainees at Abu Ghraib and elsewhere, the involvement of psychologists, psychiatrists and other health professionals came to light (Bloche and Marks, 2005a, 2005b; Lewis, 2004a, 2004b; Physicians for Human Rights, 2005). According to McCoy (2006), after Major General Geoffrey D. Miller took over as base commander at Guantánamo, he authorised the creation of 'Behavioral Science Consultation Teams' (BSCT), which included a psychiatrist and psychologist and which were granted permission to use 16 techniques for 'priority' detainees beyond those in FM 34-52 because of claims that the detainees were resisting interrogation. These enhanced techniques included: stress positions; isolation up to 30 days; light and sound deprivation; hooding; 20 hour interrogations; and in a possible reference to waterboarding, 'wet towel and dripping

water to induce misperception of suffocation' (McCoy, 2006, p.127). Similar teams were in evidence at Abu Ghraib.

According to one former interrogator 'their purpose was to help us break them' (Lewis, 2005a). Bloche and Marks (2005b) noted that psychiatrists and psychologists conveyed information, including that gained from medical records, to military and other US personnel (e.g. CIA operatives) including areas of psychological vulnerability, for example phobias.

> *"BSCT consultants prepared psychological profiles for use by interrogators; they also sat in on some interrogations, observed others from behind one-way mirrors, and offered feedback to interrogators" (Bloche and Marks, 2005b, p.7).*

Indeed, Major John Leso, whose previous job was assessing aviators' fitness to fly, became the first BSCT psychologist and attended part of the interrogation of Mohammed al-Qahtani, the so-called 20th hijacker (Bloche and Marks, 2005b). McCoy (2006) concludes that 'Guantánamo's integration of psychologists into routine interrogation perfected the CIA's paradigm, moving beyond a broad-spectrum attack on human senses, sight and sound, to a customized assault on individual phobias or cultural norms, sexual and religious' (p.187).

Evidence about the involvement of British psychologists and psychiatrists is sketchy. Leigh (2004) reports that psychologists are present during Resistance to Interrogation (R2I) training for British special-forces soldiers. Indeed, Leigh argues that the hiring of ex-special forces soldiers as private security contractors may be responsible for the propagation of psychological torture methods in Iraq.

The American Psychological Association's *Presidential Taskforce on Psychological Ethics and National Security*

In response to public criticism of the role of psychologists in BSCTs, the American Psychological Association launched a Presidential Task Force (American Psychological Association, 2005). Nimisha Patel' outlines some of the issues surrounding this report in the next chapter so I will avoid unnecessary detail here.

However, of note is that it reports that the taskforce engaged in 'vigorous discussion and debate and did not reach consensus on several issues' (p.9). These issues included whether psychologists should abide by international human rights law. This is significant because previous definitions of torture developed by the Bush administration regarded only practices leading to organ failure or death as torture. That is why US officials could claim that they did not engage in torture because their definition was much narrower than international human rights standards.

Taskforce members also disagreed about 'the degree to which psychologists may ethically disguise or ethically dissemble the nature and purpose of their work from individuals whom they engage directly' (p.9). In other words, some members felt that lying to detainees was ethical. This is not just a technical point – a book by a US Military Intelligence interrogator who served in Afghanistan shows that this tactic was often used (Mackey and Miller, 2004). For example, on one occasion Mackey presented himself to British detainees as a British officer. On another occasion, an interrogator pretended to be from an Arab State that practised torture with the threat that detainees were to be sent to this country. At other times, detainees were warned that if they were spies they could face a death penalty – an opportunity to threaten detainees with death indirectly.

Other Professional Association's Policies

In contrast to the American Psychological Association, the American Psychiatric Association published a position statement in which it was stated 'no psychiatrist should participate directly in the interrogation of persons held in custody by military or civilian investigative or law enforcement authorities, whether in the United States or elsewhere' (American Psychiatric Association, 2006, p.10). It is unclear from this statement whether this would cover CIA interrogations.

As a result, the US Department of Defense announced 'that from here on they would seek the help of psychologists, but not psychiatrists, when they want advice on how to elicit information from detainees in Guantánamo Bay, Cuba, and other places where prisoner interrogations take place' (Hausman, 2006, p.4). The American Medical Association also produced a position statement which was broadly similar to

that of the American Psychiatric Association although it allowed physicians to 'participate in developing effective interrogation strategies for general training purposes' but that these 'must not threaten or cause physical injury or mental suffering and must be humane and respect the rights of individuals' (American Medical Association, 2006). However, the AMA's statement specifically included interrogations conducted as part of national security intelligence gathering as falling within the ambit of the policy.

In July 2006, at the Royal College of Psychiatrists annual meeting in Glasgow, a resolution was passed condemning psychiatric participation in the interrogation of detainees. This resolution welcomed statements in a policy letter from the Defence Medical Service's Surgeon General on medical support to persons detained by UK forces whilst on operations. This stated that health personnel were not to apply their 'knowledge and skills in order to assist in the interrogation of prisoners and detainees in a manner that may adversely affect their physical or mental health' or to 'question detainees about matters unless they are relevant to their medical care' (Royal College of Psychiatrists, 2006).

The APA's Response to Criticism

The taskforce report received considerable criticism. Shinn (2006) provides a summary of the concerns – noting that six out of the ten taskforce members had ties to the Department of Defense. One of the critics was Mike Wessells who had resigned from the taskforce (Shinn, 2006). Following the publication of the taskforce report, Leonard Rubenstein (Executive Director of Physicians for Human Rights) wrote to Ronald Levant (President of the APA) and Stephen Benke (APA Director of Ethics). He made three specific criticisms of the report (Rubenstein, 2005):

- That it did not take account of, or issue prohibitions against, participation in highly coercive interrogation.
- That it did not require psychologists to adhere to international human rights law.
- That it did not adequately protect confidentiality with respect to detainee health information.

In the February 2006 issue of *APA Monitor*, Gerald Koocher, APA President responded to the criticisms defensively:

> *"A number of opportunistic commentators masquerading as scholars have continued to report on alleged abuses by mental health professionals" (Koocher, 2006, p.5).*

However, he argued that no clear evidence had been presented of these abuses. In August 2006 the APA 'adopted as policy long-standing international human rights standards for the prevention of torture and other cruel, inhuman and degrading treatment or punishment' (Foster, 2006). However, it maintained its previous taskforce guidelines. Leonard Rubenstein was critical:

> *"The ultimate question is, should psychologists participate in national security interrogations, and the answer is no … it's a question that other medical groups have addressed and the APA has not" (Foster, 2006).*

The Evolution of Torture Policy

There are, no doubt, many contextual influences that create the conditions for torture to take place. Brutalisation of soldiers and dehumanisation of the enemy can create the conditions for abuse (Grossman, 1996). No doubt emotions like fear, anger and frustration and a wish for revenge may also play a role. However, one of the most significant influences in the current development of psychological torture, is official government sanction by the Bush administration and ambiguous policies (see also McCoy, 2006; Mayer, 2006; Rose, 2004). Cofer Black, a previous director of the CIA's counterterrorist unit, stated to Congress in early 2002 that 'after 9/11 the gloves came off' (Barry et al., 2006). Indeed, soon after the September 11th attacks, Vice President Dick Cheney said 'we also have to work, through, sort of the dark side, if you will. We've got to spend time in the shadows in the intelligence world'. He went on:

> *"It is a mean, nasty, dangerous dirty business out there, and we have to operate in that arena. I'm convinced we can do it; we can do it successfully. But we need to make*

certain that we have not tied the hands, if you will, of our intelligence communities in terms of accomplishing their mission"(Cheney, 2006)

One strategy which has become more frequently used after 9/11 is 'extraordinary rendition' where people are kidnapped and transported to countries where torture is commonplace – a form of sub-contracted or outsourced torture (Mayer, 2005). In September 2006, an official Canadian government commission reported on the extraordinary rendition of Maher Arar, a Canadian citizen of Syrian descent. In 2002, returning from a holiday in Tunisia, Maher Arar was arrested at Kennedy airport whilst in Transit. He was flown to Jordan in a US government plane where he was transferred to Syria and tortured. The reason for the rendition? He happened to have an acquaintance who was the subject of a terrorism investigation. It was a year before Syrian officials concluded he had no connection with terrorism and returned him to Canada (Austen, 2006). Similarly, Italian prosecutors are seeking the extradition of 22 suspected CIA agents wanted in relation to the kidnapping of Egyptian Muslim cleric Osama Mustafa Hassan in Milan in 2003 (BBC news online, 2005a).

Despite initial doubts about the existence of this programme, the evidence has been mounting and, in June 2006, Rapporteur Dick Marty produced a report for the Council of Europe which documents what he terms a 'spider's web' of secret sites and planes owned by 'shell companies' – front companies for the CIA (*Report of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe on "Alleged Secret Detentions and Unlawful Inter-State Transfers of Detainees Involving Council of Europe Member States"*) – see Figure 1.

FIGURE 1 ABOUT HERE

McCoy (2006) cites a 2004 *Observer* estimate that 3,000 terror suspects were being held at secret CIA sites and allied prisons in the Middle East. It also estimated that there had been 150 extraordinary renditions of Al -Qaeda suspects who were subsequently sent to Egypt, Jordan, Morocco, Saudi Arabia, Syria and Pakistan. As

one US official put it 'we don't kick the shit out of them. We send them to other countries so they can kick the shit out of them' (Priest and Gellman, 2002).

The British government claims it does not use torture and has provided unconvincing arguments that it is not aware of rendition flights though many have transited through Prestwick airport near Glasgow (Corera, 2005). However, a witness told the Special Immigration Appeals Court in 2003 that the Security Service (MI5) 'would use information extracted from tortured prisoners as evidence in court' (Gillan, 2003). However, the Law Lords rejected this argument in December 2005 (BBC news online, 2005b). Moreover, the recent movement to Guantánamo Bay of 14 'high value detainees' from secret CIA prisons across the world has finally proven the existence of these prison sites (BBC news online 2006b). Information from interrogations of some of these detainees featured in the 9/11 Commission report (National Commission on Terrorist Acts Upon the United States, 2004). The dehumanisation of detainees that such policies inculcate has significant consequences:

> *"14,000 Iraqi 'security detainees' subjected to harsh interrogation, often with torture; 1,100 'high value' prisoners interrogated, with systematic torture, at Guantanamo and Bagram; 150 extraordinary, extralegal renditions of terror suspects to nations notorious for brutality; 68 detainees dead under suspicious circumstances; some 36 top Al Qaeda detainees held for years of sustained CIA torture; and 26 detainees murdered under questioning, at least 4 of them by the CIA" (McCoy, 2006, pp.124-125).*

Indeed, at Guantánamo Bay, attempted suicides in 2003 were regarded as 'manipulative self injurious behavior' (Rose, 2004, p.65). By June 2006, Rear Admiral Harry Harris, Camp commander, termed the suicides by three detainees 'an act of asymmetric warfare waged against us' (BBC news online, 2006c). These attitudes seem to display a total lack of understanding of the stress of indefinite detention. An illustration of this can be seen in the first person account of Moazzam Begg (Begg and Brittain, 2006) and in psychological and psychiatric reports on detainees in the British high security prison HMP Belmarsh (Robbins et al., 2005) who are now subject to house arrest or 'control orders'. Rose has also reported on the

brutal actions of the Extreme Reaction Force (now termed Force Cell Extraction Teams) at Guantánamo where several guards in riot gear assault detainees regarded as breaching camp discipline, bizarrely whilst a video record is made so senior officers can review whether disproportionate force has been used. According to Rose the Pentagon told Associated Press in 2004 'that 'only' 32 hours of tape showed the ERF using excessive force' (Rose, 2004, p.74).

This level of official sanction permeated through the reaches of the US military and security apparatus (McCoy, 2006; Rose, 2004). It is not surprising, therefore, that this approach, combined with the argument that the Geneva Convention does not apply to detainees captured in Afghanistan and elsewhere led to consequences at the frontline for military interrogators:

> *"By the time we left Afghanistan, we had come to embrace methods we would not have countenanced at the beginning of the war. And while those who followed us at Bagram dismissed much of the so-called wisdom we sought to pass on, they took to monstering[7] with alacrity. Indeed, as we left, it was clear they did not regard this as a method of last resort but as a primary option in the interrogation playbook. What was an ending point for us was a starting point for them" (Mackey and Miller, 2004, p.476).*

The Assumptions Underlying Torture

> *"It is incredible what people say under the compulsion of torture, and how many lies they will tell about themselves and about others; in the end whatever the torturers want to be true, is true" (Spee, 1631, quoted in Rose, 2004).*

So wrote the Jesuit academic Friedrich Spee in *Cautio Criminalis,* his 1631 polemic against the European witch hunts of the middle ages (Rose, 2004). However, it seems his lesson needs to be re-learned in the 21st century. The post-9/11 debate about torture has been replete with macho posturing. For example, McCoy (2006) quotes Jane Harman, ranking democrat on the House Intelligence Committee:

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7 'Monstering' referred to an interrogation strategy in which an interrogator did not allow sleep breaks

> *"If you're serious about trying to get information in advance of an attack interrogation has to be one of the main tools. I'm O.K. with it not being pretty" (p.179).*

A similar line is pursued by the ex-Military Intelligence interrogator Greg Mackey:

> *"If a prisoner will say anything to stop the pain, my guess is he will start with the truth. Our experience in Afghanistan showed that the harsher methods we used ... the better the information we got and the sooner we got it" (Mackey and Miller, 2004, p.477).*

According to McCoy (2006) an ABC News/Washington Post poll conducted two months after the release of images of abuse at Abu Ghraib, reported that 35% of Americans felt torture was acceptable in some circumstances. This is hardly surprising given the promotion of physical and psychological torture in popular culture, for example in the American TV series *24* where FBI Counter-Terrorism agent Jack Bauer regularly tortures suspects (who are always guilty), always producing reliable, timely and useful intelligence (Žižek, 2006).

There has been considerable academic debate about the ethics of torture with the American law professor Alan Dershowitz arguing for the creation of torture warrants. The 'ticking bomb' scenario is regularly used as an argument in such cases. As McCoy (2006) notes, however, real-life examples of this scenario are hard to come by. For example, many cite the interrogation of Abdul Hakim Murad in the Philippines who was linked to Ramzi Yousef the maker of the 1993 World Trade Centre bomb. However, McCoy (2006) reports that most of the useful intelligence was gathered in the first few minutes of Murad's arrest and Meek (2005) comments that Yousef was arrested as a result of evidence (e.g. the address of his dentist where he was subsequently arrested) found at an apartment in the Philippines. Although the Israeli security services have claimed many examples of torture leading to important information, McCoy (2006) reports that, after considerable investigation, there seemed to be only one case – that of a Hamas organiser.

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and the interrogation continued 'as long as the interrogator could hold up' (Mackey and Miller, 2004).

Rosa Brooks, a law professor at the University of Virginia law school comments 'the so-called ticking bomb scenario has proved remarkably effective as a rhetorical tactic for defusing opposition to controversial interrogation techniques' (Brooks, 2005). If you acknowledge that you might turn to torture under certain extreme circumstances (e.g. stopping a nuclear bomb) then where does one draw the line? Brooks also identifies a flawed assumption with torture – that the person you are torturing is guilty. This is an assumption shot through Greg Mackey's account where the default assumption appears to be that detainees are guilty until proven otherwise (Mackey and Miller, 2004). However, what if the person tortured is innocent? How can they establish their innocence? For many, they appear caught up in a Kafkaesque world where they have to confess to things they have not done. For example, Shafiq Rasul a British detainee in Guantánamo Bay gave a false confession after months of coercive interrogation and psychological torture. He said that he had met Osama bin Laden and Mohammed Atta (one of the September 11th hijackers) in Afghanistan in 2000 and appeared in a video with them. He was only cleared of this when the Security Service (MI5) produced evidence that he was actually working at a branch of Curry's electrical stores in the West Midlands at the time (BBC news online, 2004d).

McCoy (2006) identifies other flawed assumptions with the ticking bomb scenario:

- That the person captured has key information.
- That those arresting know when the bomb is going to go off.
- That the person is captured just before.
- That the interrogators know a lot about the plot but are missing a few crucial details
- That the interrogators know this person has the information.
- That the interrogators will be able to verify the information.

As McCoy argues, such a confluence of factors is unlikely in the extreme. He quotes Georgetown University law professor David Cole: 'You can't know whether a person knows where the bomb is or even if they're telling the truth. Because of this,

you end up going down a slippery slope and sanctioning torture in general' (McCoy, 2006, p.195). Koppl (2005) has identified logical problems with torture – the interrogator needs to know whether information gained is accurate and needs to be able to credibly promise that the torture will stop if the information is accurate otherwise there would be no incentive to give the information – again, he notes that such conditions are extremely unlikely.

Arrigo (2004) identifies other problems with torture, from a utilitarian point of view. She identifies four models of interrogation: (1) the animal instinct model (based on the idea that the subject will tell the truth in order to stop the pain); (2) the cognitive failure model (where the subject tells the truth because the stress of torture interferes with the ability to deceive); (3) the data processing model (where mass arrests are required); and (4) the rogue interrogation services model (where torture is an established part of a brutal intelligence service like Saddam Hussein's security service). Arrigo finds problems with each of these models: The animal model fails since bodily injury might impair the ability to convey the truth, the subject might die and the torturer cannot control the subject's interpretation of pain. The cognitive failure model fails because interrogators cannot distinguish true from false statements and lengthy interrogation might reduce the value of the information. The data processing model fails because analysts become overwhelmed with data and the mass arrests are likely to motivate more opposition from the population. Finally the rogue interrogation model fails because the motives of the torturers bias the information and is likely to empower opposition groups.

Indeed, McCoy (2006) notes that although the French won the battle of Algiers, they lost the war because their extensive use of torture delegitimised their case for the war. Why then, do interrogators continue to turn to torture? McCoy cites Hinkle and Wolff's Cold War report:

> "When feelings of insecurity develop within those holding power, they become
> increasingly suspicious and put great pressures upon the secret police to obtain
> arrests and confessions. At such times police officials are inclined to condone

> *anything which produces a speedy 'confession' and brutality may become*
> *widespread" (Hinkle and Wolff, 1956, p.135).*

<u>Conflicting Models of Interrogation</u>

Amidst press reports and official inquiries about psychological involvement in interrogations one clear area of debate concerns the model driving interrogations (Bloche and Marks, 2005b; McCoy, 2006). Law enforcement agencies like the police and FBI prefer a rapport-based model of interrogation, rather than a coercive one based on inducing fear and anxiety. This is because of widespread evidence of unreliable evidence as a result of coercive interrogation. A major factor in this unreliability is that, under certain conditions, people can be suggestible and confess to things they have not done (Gudjonsson, 2003; Kassin and Gudjonsson, 2003). In the UK, for example, the 1984 Police and Criminal Evidence Act prevented coercive interrogation techniques and introduced a number of safeguards including the audio-taping of interviews, following the experience of wrongful convictions - as a result of forced confessions - like the Birmingham six and the Guildford four. Gisli Gudjonsson has been conducting research into suggestibility for twenty years and yet there is no mention of suggestibility as an important factor in either Greg Mackey's account of his work as an interrogator (Mackey and Miller, 2004) or in the APA taskforce report.

Physicians for Human Rights (2005) quote from heavily redacted emails between FBI agents concerning the interrogations at Guantánamo, released following a Freedom of Information Act request:

> *"...in a series of emails about Guantánamo, an FBI agent wrote that 'Our Behavioral*
> *Assessment Unit (BAU)[8] disagreed with the use of specific techniques in the case of*
> *[redacted] as they opined that the techniques would not be successful and they could*
> *produce unreliable results' (Physicians for Human Rights, 2005, p.99).*

Similarly Savage (2005) interviewed Dr Michael Gelles, the head psychologist for the Navy Criminal Investigative service:

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8 The correct title is actually the Behavioral Analysis Unit.

> *"The strategy behind a coercive approach, he said, is to try 'vacuum up all the information you can and figure out later' what is true and what is not. This method, he argued, clogs the system with false and misleading data. He compared it to 'coercive tactics leading to false confessions' by suspects in police custody".*

Gelles noted that his scepticism was shared by 'fellow psychologists, intelligence analysts, linguists, and interrogators'. In addition, he stated:

> *"We do not believe -- not just myself, but others who have to remain unnamed -- that coercive methods with this adversary are... effective...If the goal is to get information, then using coercive techniques may be effective. But if the goal is to get reliable and accurate information, looking at this adversary, rapport-building is the best approach".*

Savage (2005) also reports on the publication of a memo that described how FBI agents tried to persuade military commanders that coercive techniques were unreliable and recounted:

> *"A 'heated' video teleconference in which the FBI showed the military that certain intelligence produced by coercive techniques 'was nothing more' than what the FBI got with traditional tactics: '[The Defense Department] finally admitted the information was the same the Bureau obtained. It still did not prevent them from continuing [their own] methods'"*

Johnston (2006) reports how FBI interrogators were withdrawn from interrogating Abu Zubaydah so CIA interrogators could use more aggressive tactics. Of course, gathering information in this manner could mean that courts refuse to accept the evidence and thus the chances of successfully prosecuting people is much diminished. Johnston notes that, in late 2001 and early 2002 senior CIA officials drew up a list of aggressive interrogation procedures that might be used. As part of this process they 'consulted agency psychiatrists and foreign governments to identify effective techniques beyond standard interview practices'.

Rapport-based interrogation can have significant outcomes. For example, a recent BBC programme by reporter Peter Taylor described how the Malaysian Jihadi Nasir Abbas (who had been head of the military division of Jemaah Islamiya) eventually ended up co-operating with the police, giving evidence in prosecutions against his former comrades. He had been a trainer in Afghanistan in the early 1990s. His view of Jihad was that it was:

> *"…acceptable to fight and kill foreign forces occupying Muslim countries like the Soviets in Afghanistan, the Americans in Iraq or the Philippine army occupying ancestral Muslim lands in Mindanao, but killing innocent civilians - men, women and children - is forbidden" (Taylor, 2006).*

However, when he discovered that some of his former students in Afghanistan were responsible for the 2002 Bali bombings he was deeply shocked:

> *"'I feel sorry, I feel sin,' he said, 'because they used the knowledge to kill civilians, to kill innocent people'" (Taylor, 2006).*

Interestingly, rapport-based interrogation disrupted his assumptions about the security forces:

> *"As he was taken off for interrogation, he feared the worst. 'I believed that the police were very cruel and used torture to get their answers,' he said. But Mr Abbas was in for a surprise. He was treated with civility and Muslim respect (Taylor, 2006)*

This is a good example of how a coercive approach would have been counter-productive, as it would simply have fulfilled Nasir Abbas' expectations and made it unlikely that he would have willingly co-operated in the way that he has – resulting in successful prosecutions. McCoy (2006) gives other examples of how empathy and an understanding of language and culture can be effective in rapport-based interrogation.

Unfortunately, the development of psychological torture techniques is not the only way in which psychologists and other social scientists and health professionals are contributing to worrying forms of knowledge as part of the 'War on Terror'. In the next section I examine the wide array of new technologies of political control.

The 'Manhattan Project of the Mind' Rolls On: New Technologies of Political Control

A considerable amount of research funding in the UK and elsewhere comes from military and security agencies. Langley (2005) notes that the UK's defence Research and Development spending is 33% of total government Research and Development, the highest in the EU. He also notes, "With ESRC funding several research teams are also teasing apart the psychological and societal aspects of terrorism, with a total budget of less than £750,000" (Langley, 2005, p.65).

Anecdotal evidence suggests that military and security agencies regularly attend academic conferences and approach researchers. I give several examples here from my own experience. I was at a Discourse Analysis workshop where an academic was approached (unsuccessfully) for help by researchers working at the Defence Evaluation and Research Agency. I heard an academic specialising in risk analysis mention, during a presentation at a conference, about giving a talk to Secret Intelligence Service (MI6) operatives. I was emailed out of the blue by the Director of Terrorism Studies at the U.S. Military Academy to contribute to a book, presumably on the basis of an article I had previously written (Harper, 2004). Nimisha Patel (see chapter 3 in this volume) also reports on how a conference on torture was attended by a military physician from a country where torture was practised.

In the wake of the September 11th attacks the APA sought to offer consultation to a range of intelligence and security agencies. For example an APA Public Policy Office (PPO) report to the APA's Board of Scientific Affairs outlined a number of initiatives (American Psychological Association, undated) including:

- A meeting in June 2002 between two senior staff members in the National Security Council's Office of Combating Terrorism and APA President Philip Zimbardo, Senior Scientist Susan Brandon and PPO's Heather Kelly.
- In December 2002, APA Senior Scientist Susan Brandon and Science Policy Director Geoff Mumford arranged for Robert Sternberg, PhD, President-Elect

of APA, to provide a presentation, hosted by the CIA, on intelligence and cognitive assessment to a group of psychologists from the Intelligence Community who are directly involved in operations.

- Combating Terrorism: Responses From the Behavioral Sciences, 24 one page summaries of how psychological research could address particular problemshttp://www.apa.org/ppo/issues/svignetteterror2.html

- The production of a report (APA/FBI, 2002) on applying psychology to counter-terrorism with a preface written by Dr Anthony Pinizzotto (FBI Behavioral Science Unit), Dr Susan Brandon (Senior Scientist, APA), Dr Geoffrey Mumford (Director of Science policy, APA). Scenarios discussed included 'a trustworthy local businessman reports suspicious activity by an apparently Middle Eastern neighbour' and 'a woman contacts her therapist about a friend of her son's 'martyrdom mission''.

Although it is understandable for psychologists to want to put their knowledge at the service of the public, it is vital to think through the implications of our work, particularly given the history of psychology's involvement with military and security agencies.

Arming Big Brother

Hayes (2006) has reported on the European Security Research Programme. He notes that its proposed budget of one billion euros per year, is almost treble that being made available by the EU for research into the environment, including climate change, and the equivalent of 10% of the entire EU research budget.

Wright (1998, 2002) has reported on a new generation of 'technologies of political control' and 'non-lethal' or 'less than lethal weapons' (see also Ackroyd et al., 1977; Bunker, 1997; Ronson, 2004). This includes: new surveillance technologies (of which more below); innovations in crowd control weapons; new methods of prison control in the private sector; and new interrogation and torture technologies. For example:

> *"The US Army has identified a range of technologies used to facilitate such options which include anti-traction devices (e.g. liquid ball bearings being researched by South West Research Institute in Texas), acoustic weapons (including Vortex ring Guns being researched by ICT in Germany), entanglements and nets (produced by Foster-Miller in Mass), malodorous munitions (produced the Monell Chemical Senses Center in Philadelphia), obscurant and sticky foams, directed energy systems, isotropic radiators and radio frequency weapons (such as the vehicle mounted $40 million VMAD system which uses high power microwaves to heat up a human target to induce an artificial fever), expected to be in the field by 2009"* (Wright, 2002, p.4).

Wright also discusses worrying research into developing 'bio-weapons for racially selective mass control' (2002, p.6). His discussion of prison control methods was prescient in that Gordon (2006) has argued that the abuse in Abu Ghraib was, in many ways the outcome of 'practices, amounting to a condition of permanent imprisonment … pioneered by the US in its super-maximum civilian prisons' (p.42) especially when many of the abusive Abu Ghraib military police were prison guards reservists.

Wright comments:

> *"With proper accountability and regulation, some of the technologies discussed above do have a legitimate law enforcement function; without such democratic controls they provide powerful tools of oppression. The unchecked vertical and horizontal proliferation of the technologies of political control described in this report, present a powerful threat to civil liberties in Europe"* (1997, p.59).

<u>Surveillance Technologies</u>

Sherrard (1991) investigated why there was so much psychological research on face recognition and concluded that this was because it was applicable to electronic surveillance techniques. In particular it is directly applicable to Closed Circuit Television surveillance – the UK has the highest density of CCTV cameras in the world. London's Newham Borough Council was one of the first authorities to employ a sophisticated CCTV system called Mandrake whereby the 140 CCTV cameras are linked to software that can identify faces and compare it to a database of individuals

considered to be 'of interest'. In the probability of an individual project receiving funding, face recognition and "man-machine interface" (80%) were surpassed by no other research areas according to Sherrard, based on the 1987 edition of Current Research in Britain/Social Sciences. In addition, the US military are extremely interested in visual cognition, having spent 32% of the 1980s 'Star Wars' Strategic Defense Initiative funding on 'Surveillance, Acquisition, Tracking and Kill Assessment' using parallel distributed processing modelling - another area of research which was mainly supported by military funding (Bowers, 1990, p. 136).

Hayes (2006) reports that one of the aims of the EU Security Research Programme is 'situation awareness' which, he argues is shorthand for surveillance and intelligence gathering. Ten of the first 24 projects funded under this programme concern general surveillance technologies that are in no way limited to counter-terrorism. Three of the projects concern EU border controls. Projects here include: surveillance from space platforms (including Europe's new *Galileo* GPS system); biometrics and RFID identification systems (a tiny computer chip which can be 'read' by radio-waves); and border Surveillance by Unmanned Aerial Vehicles. Wright (1998, 2002) details a number of new surveillance technologies including vehicle number plate recognition systems and extensively networked CCTV systems. The reach of computerised information can be seen in the fact that the police are regularly using this information. For example, a recent report indicated that the Metropolitan police in London had made 243 requests to access people's Oyster card records – these smart cards, used by five million Londoners, record details of each bus, tube or train journey made by the holder over the previous eight weeks. Of these 243 requests, 229 were granted (BBC news online, 2006d).

Wright (2005) describes the ECHELON surveillance system developed by the USA, UK, Australia and New Zealand (see also European Parliament, 2001). According to some reports, ECHELON can capture radio and satellite communications, telephone calls, faxes, emails and other data streams nearly anywhere in the world and includes computer automated analysis and sorting of intercepts. According to Halpin and Wright (2002), the organisation Statewatch concluded "it is the interface of the ECHELON system and its potential development

on phone calls combined with the standardisation of 'tappable' communications centres and equipment being sponsored by the EU and the USA which presents a truly global threat over which there are no legal or democratic controls" (p.11).

The Office of Surveillance Commissioners (2006) report details the large scale of surveillance conducted. During 2005-2006 there were: 435 intrusive surveillance authorisations; 2310 property interference authorisations; 23,628 directed surveillance authorisations; and 4,559 Covert Human Intelligence Sources were recruited by law enforcement agencies. It needs to be borne in mind that this does not cover surveillance by the security or intelligence services. A report by the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) (2004) details other worrying developments in surveillance technology, particularly the increasing crossover of private data into government databases. Of particular concern there is the increasing use of data-mining.

Data-Mining

The ACLU report notes that:

> *"The idea behind data mining is to tap into the ever-growing number of databases containing details on individuals' behavior, aggregate that data to form rich pictures of individuals' activities and then use computer models to scrutinize them en masse for suspicious behavior" (2004, p.23).*

One of the most worrying new technologies is that devised by the Information Awareness Office at the Defence Advanced Research Projects Agency (ARDA) in the US Department of Defense. Originally called Total Information Awareness it has gone through a number of politically-induced name changes. Next it was called Terrorism Information Awareness and then the program was supposedly cancelled although ARDA's new Novel Intelligence from Massive Data (NIMD) program seems to be a replacement. Goldenberg (2002) notes that the purpose of TIA is to trawl through huge amounts of data on US citizens in order to "predict potential terrorists by tracking a lifetime of seemingly innocuous movements through electronic paper trails" for example "academic transcripts, prescription drugs, telephone calls, driving licences, airline tickets, parking permits, mortgage payments, banking records, emails,

website visits and credit card slips". It was run by Admiral John Poindexter who played a central role in illegally channelling funds from Iranian arms sales to Contra guerrillas in Nicaragua and was convicted of lying to Congress. Poindexter was forced to resign in August 2003 over another IAO project and Congress has cut the funds allocated to TIA and banned it from focusing on US citizens without congressional oversight (Borger, 2003). Given that previous attempts to block this project have foundered it is likely that it will continue under its new title: NIMD. Of course, the attempted prediction of behaviour through statistical modelling and computation has a long history in psychology and it is, again, likely that this project will be drawing on psychological knowledge. Of course, it is interesting that research in both surveillance and TIA/NIMD technologies is largely conducted by businesses under contracts to government agencies since this decreases the amount of direct accountability for their work.

The ACLU report notes that another US programme intended to aggregate and analyse vast amounts of private-sector information on the activities of Americans is the MATRIX (Multi-State Antiterrorism Information Exchange). Like TIA, it is based on bringing together vast amounts of information to detect terrorism and other crimes. It "combines government databases from participating states with a private database that claims to have 20+ billion records from 100's of sources" (2004, p.24).

Following Operation Overt in the UK in August 2006 when an alleged plot to blow up transatlantic airliners was disrupted, reports discussing passenger profiling began to appear in the press at the same time as an informal meeting of EU Justice and Home Affairs ministers in London (BBC news online, 2006e). Criteria mentioned included "People behaving suspiciously or with an unusual travel pattern could be selected but racial or religious factors may also form part of the criteria" (BBC news online, 2006e). Mathur (2006) describes the effects of such ethnic profiling, where, after 9/11, there was a "dragnet" arrest approach where "thousands of Muslim, South Asian and Middle Eastern men were detained by the FBI, police and immigration officers and held in various prisons in New York and New Jersey" (p.31).

Goldston (2006) describes the ambitious German profiling operation - *rasterfahndung* - carried out from the end of 2001 until early 2003. In this massive exercise, he reports, German police reportedly collected sensitive personal data from public and private databases pertaining to approximately 8.3 million persons. The profile was based on characteristics of members of the 'Hamburg cell' around Mohammed Atta, one of the 9/11 hijackers. Criteria established at national level included the following:

- 18 - 40 years old
- Male
- Current or former student
- Resident in the regional state (Land) where the data is collected
- Muslim
- Legal residency in Germany
- Nationality or country of birth from a list of 26 countries with predominantly Muslim population / or stateless person / or nationality 'undefined' or 'unknown'

In the end, apparently not a single terrorist suspect was identified.

What has this to do with psychology? Well, as we shall see in the next section on network theory, rather a lot

Network Theory

Milgram's (1967) 'small world' article reported that two Americans could be linked by six other people (or 'six degrees of separation'). Keefe (2006) describes how this insight has been mobilised to understand affiliations between jihadis. He discusses the work of social network analysis consultant Valdis Krebs who plotted the network of the September 11th hijackers using publicly available information (Krebs 2002-2006). Krebs found that a disproportionate number of links centred on Mohammed Atta. Keefe reports how:

> *"Analysts start with a suspect and 'spider-web' outward, looking at everyone he*
> *contacts, and everyone those people contact, until the list includes thousands of*

> *names. Officials familiar with the program have said that before individuals are*
> *actually wiretapped, computers sort through flows of metadata—information about*
> *who is contacting whom by phone or e-mail".*

However, a practical obstacle is the sheer number of links detected:

> *"The National Counterterrorism Center's database of suspected terrorists contains*
> *325,000 names; the Congressional Research Service recently found that the N.S.A. is*
> *at risk of being drowned in information" (Keefe, 2006).*

Sageman (2004ab) has adopted a different approach to social network analysis by compiling biographies of 400 individuals considered terrorists. He found that they did not experience significant mental health problems. Sageman argues that most of the people he investigated were not very religious when they joined jihad, only becoming religious later – often whilst living in another country from where they grew up. Most were, in some way, totally excluded from the society they lived in. Eighty eight per cent had friendship or family bonds to the jihad. Sixty per cent were associated with twelve mosques and institutions across the world. He notes that there is no profile just similar trajectories to joining the jihad and that most of these men were upwardly and geographically mobile. They came from moderately religious, caring, middle-class families, are skilled in computer technology and speak a number of languages.

Following the attacks on Al-Qaeda bases in Afghanistan, he argues that the network is now self-organized from the bottom up, is very decentralized and grows organically, like the Internet. There are no 'recruiters'. Instead "spontaneous groups of friends, as in Madrid and Casablanca, who have few links to any central leadership, are generating sometimes very dangerous terrorist operations, notwithstanding their frequent errors and poor training" (Sageman, 2004a).

McFate (2005) describes the long history of the use of anthropology in counter-insurgency. However, perhaps the most bizarre application of ideas has been

described by Eyal Weizman, an architect based in Tel Aviv and London, who has conducted research on behalf of the human rights organization B'tselem on the planning aspects of the Israeli occupation of the West Bank. Weizman (2006) reports that, via an Operational Theory Research Institute set up in 1996, the Israeli Defence Forces have been heavily influenced by the writings of Gilles Deleuze, Félix Guattari and Guy Debord, as well as more contemporary writings on urbanism, psychology, cybernetics, post-colonial and post-structuralist theory.

Weizman argues that the IDF attack on the city of Nablus in April 2002 was a classic example, described by its commander, Brigadier-General Aviv Kokhavi, as 'inverse geometry', which he explained as "the reorganization of the urban syntax by means of a series of micro-tactical actions".

Weizman notes that:

> *"During the battle soldiers moved within the city across hundreds of metres of 'overground tunnels' carved out through a dense and contiguous urban structure…Furthermore, they used none of the city's streets, roads, alleys or courtyards, or any of the external doors, internal stairwells and windows, but moved horizontally through walls and vertically through holes blasted in ceilings and floors. This form of movement, described by the military as 'infestation', seeks to redefine inside as outside, and domestic interiors as thoroughfares".*

However, he warns that this "seductive use of theoretical and technological discourse seeks to portray war as remote, quick and intellectual, exciting – and even economically viable".

Psychology's Vulnerability To Being Misused

Why is it that psychological research has been so implicated in the development of methods of psychological torture and of political control? I would argue that there are four reasons. Firstly, psychologists are often keen to see their work applied but are not always thoughtful about the consequences. Secondly, psychologists are just as vulnerable to the anxieties that citizens experience – for

example much of the research in the 1950s was conducted by researchers who knew full well how their work was to be applied but these psychologists wanted to help their country in the face of what they saw as a Communist threat from China and Russia. We see the same now as we experience a fear of terrorism. Thirdly, as McCoy (2006) notes, psychologists are not restrained by the invocation to 'first, do no harm' – for example, they do not swear a Hippocratic oath. Finally, as McCoy argues, this makes psychologists "more flexible in their service to the state, its military, and clandestine agencies" (2006, p.32).

The social sciences have been involved in military, security and intelligence work for many years. Indeed, as McFate (2005) notes, Darling (1966), writing in the CIA's house journal, *Studies in Intelligence*, reports how Gregory Bateson – a British anthropologist whose research was a major influence on the early development of family therapy - served in the US Office of Strategic Services (the forerunner of the CIA) during World War II. Darling observes that Bateson was one of the first people to call for the creation of a post-war clandestine service. McCoy (2006) goes so far as to suggest that, because hundreds of US psychologists had served in the military or conducted contract research for the Pentagon, psychology was "the most militarized among the social or biological sciences" and thus it "already had a professional mind-set that made it a natural CIA ally in the search for new interrogation techniques" (p.32). The links between psychology and the Intelligence Community continue today – the CIA even advertises for social and clinical psychologist posts on its website.

Of course, it is not inevitable that psychologists become complicit in abusive practice. We have already seen how Dr Michael Gelles spoke out against coercive interrogation tactics, at considerable risk to his career. Indeed, Pumla Gobodo-Madikizela who is a South African clinical psychologist who served on the Truth and Reconciliation Commission has published a brave and insightful analysis of Eugene de Kock, commanding officer of Apartheid death squads, based on 46 hours of interviews (Gobodo-Madikizela, 2003).

Psychological Warfare: Information and Perception Warriors

There is another use of psychological knowledge by the security state: psychological operations. These are used in both overt and covert ways. Overtly, the British Army maintains a psychological warfare unit: the 15 (UK) Information Support Group - its name changed from 15 (UK) PSYOPS Group in order to distance its work from so-called 'black' and 'grey' propaganda operations which it is claimed are "not practiced today" (Jolly, 2001). It has a permanent staff of eight drawn from three services and a reservist group of 28 people drawn from the media, broadcasting and publishing. It is mainly involved in designing leaflets dropped to enemy troops and setting up radio stations. In March 2003 BBC News online reported that it had set up a radio station in Basra, run by Lt Col Mason, deputy chairman of Choice FM in London. The use of psychological operations by the US military is far more substantial than its British counterparts.

However, alongside these overt and openly reported operations it is clear that there are other more covert uses of psychological operations: propaganda for the citizens of countries sending forces abroad. In *Weapons of Mass Deception* (Rampton and Stauber, 2003) the authors detail a number of these. Remember the story about Iraqi soldiers removing babies from incubators in Kuwait in October 1990? One of the witnesses to the US Congressional Human Rights caucus, Nayirah a 15 year old Kuwaiti girl, gave tearful evidence about this but what was not reported at the time was that she was the daughter of the Kuwaiti Ambassador to the US and her evidence had been coached by Lauri Fitz-Pegado, the Vice President of Hill and Knowlton, one of the world's largest PR firms. This company had set up a front organization. This is known in PR circles as 'astro-turfing' -- a common PR strategy well-known to those observing how pharmaceutical companies set up apparently grass-roots 'patient's groups' to campaign for a particular company's products. In this case the front organization was Citizens for a Free Kuwait - to which the Kuwaiti government channelled $11.9 million in six months (Rampton and Stauber, 2003). PR consultant, John W. Rendon has worked on extensive Iraq-related activities under contract to the Pentagon and the CIA including distributing American flags and the flags of other coalition countries to Kuwaiti residents to welcome coalition troops in Kuwait during the first Gulf War. He has described himself as an "information warrior" and a "perception manager". The Pentagon defines perception management as the

combination of "truth projection, operations security, cover and deception" (Rampton and Stauber, 2003). Bamford (2005) describes Rendon's Pentagon-funded role in laying the ground for the Iraq war and how he not only gathered together disparate groups to form the 'Iraqi National Congress' but even gave them their name.

One key technique in targeting the general public is to get the media to focus on particular stories and to ignore others. John Pilger has noted how, in the run-up to the current Gulf War the media had been distracted by reports of Iraqi Weapons of Mass Destruction and thus failed to recall statements like those made by both Colin Powell in February 2001 and Condoleeza Rice in April 2001 that Saddam Hussein had been contained and did not pose an immediate threat (Pilger, 2003b). However, alongside the publication of official reports it is clear that a more covert PR war has been waged using psychological operations techniques. One example was the February 2003 dossier presented to some journalists in private briefings written by the UK government's Coalition Information Centre headed by Alistair Campbell, then the Head of Communications Strategy at No10 Downing Street. This dossier, which used decade-old research from an uncited PhD thesis obtained off the World Wide Web, strengthened the language to exaggerate the threat and merged it with information from the Intelligence Community. The aim of this was clearly to present 'new evidence' to make the case for stopping the UN inspections conducted by Hans Blix and to enable preparations for War against Iraq. David Cornwell, writing under his pseudonym of John le Carré, notes how successful this campaign was:

> *"How Bush and his junta succeeded in deflecting America's anger from bin Laden to Saddam Hussein is one of the great public relations conjuring tricks of history. But they swung it. A recent poll tells us that one in two Americans now believe Saddam was responsible for the attack on the World Trade Centre" (le Carré, 2003, p.20.)*

It is also clear that the security services regularly hold unattributable briefings with selected journalists about the current threat posed by terrorists. These reports are then cited by intelligence sources as proof that the arrests made under current terrorism legislation are necessary (Bright, 2002; Cohen, 2002). Following a Law

Lords ruling that indefinite detention of foreigners was illegal under the Human Rights Act, Control Orders – a form of house arrest - were introduced. Control orders "can impose restrictions including electronic tagging, 18-hour curfews, bans on using mobile phones and the Internet, and limits on who they can meet and allow into their homes" (BBC news online, 2006f). At the time of writing, there were 14 control orders in force, five of them on Britons.

It is interesting that many psychological operations at home are conducted by PR agencies. Whilst these may employ psychologists we can see that the use of psychological knowledge is more subtle – it may be drawn on to construct more effective messages in order to have psychological effects (e.g. to support military operations) but be used by anyone. In this context what, as psychologists, can we do? I think we should begin by taking techniques seriously, analysing them within their political and cultural context, understanding their functions and effects and resisting them either by co-opting them or by exposing them.

Resisting Psychological Operations I: Cultural and Political Analysis of Fear of the Other

In his analysis of Cold War rhetoric, Kovel (1986) argued that projecting hostile intent onto other nations helped sustain the military-industrial complex and the nuclear state. This effect can be seen more generally, thus, in his history of MI5, Bernard Porter (1992) noted that accounts of IRA bombing campaigns seemed to "justify the role of MI5 and the Special Branch" (p. 200). Indeed, with the demise of the USSR as a threat to national security, terrorism has become the officially-recognised priority of British security services (Norton-Taylor, 1993; Rimmington, 1994). Post-September 11th the Security State has grown massively. For example the number of UK Special Branch officers (police officers with responsibility for security, intelligence, subversion and terrorism) had gone up from 1,638 in 1978 to 2,220 at the beginning of the 1990s to at least 4,247 by February 2003 (Statewatch, 2003). Kirkup (2005) reports that, in December 2004, the Chancellor of the Exchequer told MPs that overall spending on domestic security would rise from £1.5 billion in 2004-5 to £2.1 billion by 2007-8. He noted that the

security budget had more than doubled since 11th September 2001 and that the Security Service (MI5) had seen a massive increase in its budget, which is believed to be rising towards £300 million. Kirkup (2005) noted that the service planned to open eight branch offices around the UK whilst the Security Service website notes "we plan to increase our staff numbers to around 3,200 people by 2008" (http://www.mi5.gov.uk). A recent BBC TV (2002) series *True Spies* revealed how many of the stories previously seen as paranoid (e.g. surveillance of trade unionists and peace campaigners) have turned out to be more accurate than previously supposed.

Fear-generating processes also have consequences at a more domestic level. Lopez (1991) has described how the cultivation of fear has led to the militarization of everyday life, with increasing emphasis on personal security and safety leading to political conservatism.   Such a context can lead to the dominance of a 'text of fear' which then organises the experience of life with people increasingly retreating to the private space of home, guarded by the technology of the security industry (Lopez, 1991). This has a number of effects, which are both economic (witness the growth in personal and home security alarm systems) and cultural (with society becoming dominated by suspicion and observation - the development of *Neighbourhood Watch* schemes in the UK is symptomatic of this). Noam Chomsky has made a similar point in a comment on the US international War on Drugs policy:

> *"The more you can increase fear of drugs and crime and welfare mothers and immigrants and aliens and all sorts of things, the more you control people. Make them hate each other, be frightened of each other and think that the other is stealing from them. If you can do that you can control the people" (Noam Chomsky in López et al., 1996, p.14).*

Some of the most insightful analyses of the current state of affairs have been conducted through documentary films. Adam Curtis'[9] excellent 2002 BBC2 series *The Century of the Self* illustrated the extent of co-operation between big business and

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9 Somewhat bizarrely, Aitkenhead reports that Curtis serves as one of a small number of associate editors for the emailed celebrity and music gossip newsletter *Popbitch*.

the new profession of Public Relations – founded in the US by Sigmund Freud's American nephew Edward Bernays, drawing on many of his uncle's insights. Curtis' thesis was that in an affluent West people no longer consumed out of need – instead corporations decided to sell by capitalising on people's desires. Consequently we saw clever PR practitioners linking images of smoking with liberation: for example, cigarettes became 'torches of freedom' for women. Of course, this can also work by playing on people's fears. In his 2002 film, *Bowling for Columbine*, Michael Moore pushed this further by arguing that there was a link between the promotion of fear and consumer Capitalism. In other words, fear sells.

If fear-generating techniques are used in times of relative peace, they become much more overt in times of conflict - we have only to look at the kind of language used. Thus Billig (2001) has noted how the language of war was quickly mobilised in the US immediately after the World Trade Centre attacks as a way of attempting to categorise the incomprehensibility of the events. Curtis picked up this theme in his 2004 series *The Power of Nightmares*. In this documentary he argued that, during the 20th Century, politicians had lost the power to inspire the masses, and that the optimistic visions and ideologies they offered were perceived to have failed. Politicians consequently had to seek a new role that would restore their power and authority. In his introductory narration, Curtis, stated that "instead of delivering dreams, politicians now promise to protect us: from nightmares". He made a persuasive case, arguing that, in many ways, the rise of both the American neoconservatives and radical Islamists were related. For example, each group believed they were responsible for the exit of the Soviets from Afghanistan and, thus for the ending of the Cold War. He argued that though the threat from Islamic jihadis was real, it was grossly exaggerated (See Chapter 10).

Resisting Psychological Operations II: Action Strategies

Having developed an analysis of the context and effects of psychological operations what positive action can be taken? In one interview Sheldon Rampton has suggested a number of effective counter-strategies: to understand how propaganda works; to seek information from a wide variety of sources (and not just a narrow diet of mainstream media); and not to simply be passive recipients of the media but to

actively engage in the real world and in active means of communication like debate and dialogue (Rampton, 2003). To Rampton's list one might add the need to reveal and question the implicit assumptions underlying political discourse. It is also important to delineate the networks of power and interests at work influencing governmental policy (see, for example the work of the Oxford Research Group) and to organize education and action campaigns against those networks. Within the discipline of psychology we can seek to influence journal editorial policies so that authors are required to state any interests or funding involved in their studies. Most importantly, we need to keep the abusive past of our discipline in mind so we do not repeat the mistakes of the past.

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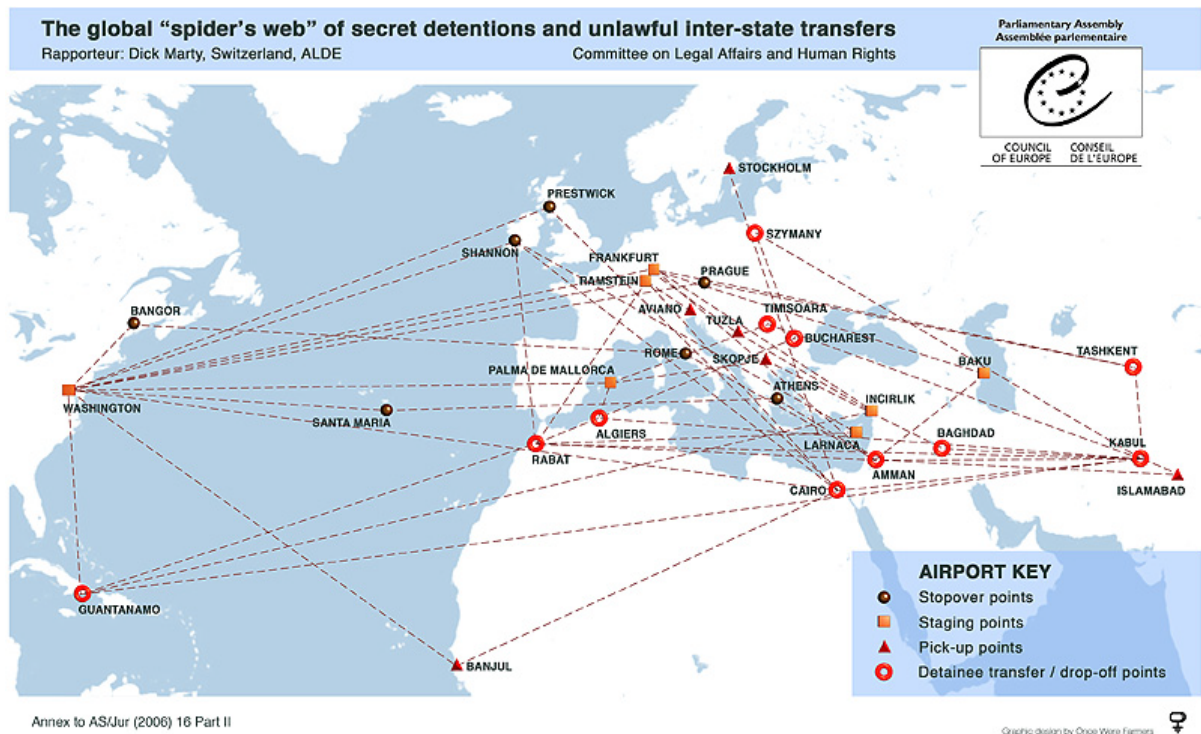**Figure 1.** **Extraordinary Rendition: The Global Spiders Web**

Image from annex of: *Report of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe on "Alleged secret detentions and unlawful inter-state transfers of detainees involving Council of Europe member states"* (Resolution 1507 (2006), Recommendation 1754 (2006), Doc 10957 + Addendum, Rapporteur: Mr Dick Marty). Available at: http://assembly.coe.int//main.asp?link=http://assembly.coe.int/Documents/WorkingDocs/doc06/edoc10957.htm?link=/Documents/WorkingDocs/Doc06/EDOC10957.htm, accessed 30 January 2007.