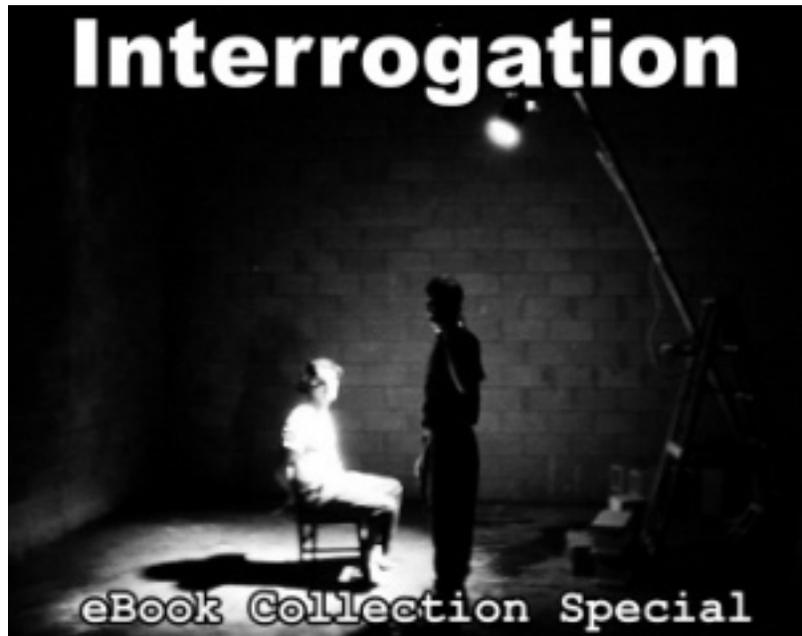


www.all-about-forensic-psychology.com



Presents

U.S. Experience and Research in Educing Information:

A Brief History

Robert A. Fein, Ph.D.

Originally Published In:

Educing Information - Interrogation: Science and Art (2006)

MIS-Y Program

In World War II, the United States military developed a secret "offensive" program, called MIS-Y, designed to obtain intelligence from captured adversaries. This "educing information" program (though it was not described as such at the time) was designed to obtain intelligence from senior German officials, officers, and scientists in U.S. custody. The prisoners were taken to a facility at Fort Hunt, VA, specially developed for educing information. Each internee was carefully screened to ensure that he was likely to have information critical to national security before being sent to Fort Hunt.

Each Fort Hunt internee was paired with a trained interrogator, selected because of his language ability, knowledge of subject matter, and perceived ability to relate to the source. Rooms where detainees ate, slept, washed, recreated, and talked were wired for sound. In addition, collaborators were placed in the prison population. The German officers, scientists, and officials were monitored on a 24-hour basis; information was also collected from them while they were in formal interrogation sessions, while they conversed with their roommates and "colleagues," and at other times. The information was analyzed on an ongoing basis, with dossiers of the internees updated regularly. Intelligence was developed and disseminated to military commands and organizations. The MIS-Y program ended with the conclusion of WWII.

Research on Interrogation Techniques

World events in the post-war period shifted U.S. government attention to the techniques that other countries might apply against U.S. personnel. The rise of the Soviet Union as a world power and the birth of the People's Republic of China led to widespread concern about Soviet and Chinese interrogation capacities. These concerns were highlighted by a number of Communist show trials and the public confessions of a few captured U.S. servicemen during the Korean War.

A national debate ensued at the conclusion of hostilities in Korea. How could one understand U.S. servicemen who "confessed" to dropping bombs filled with germs on civilian populations (events that did not occur)? Were these men traitors or had they been "brainwashed" (a term popularized by Edward Hunter in 1951)? The general U.S. public and researchers alike wondered whether the Russians and/or the Chinese (possibly building on behavioral conditioning techniques developed by scientists such as Ivan Pavlov) had developed scientific technologies for interrogation. What kinds of "mind control" techniques were being employed behind the Iron and Bamboo Curtains?

Concerns about communist interrogation methods led to substantial U.S. government research programs in the 1950s into the nature of practices utilized by the Soviets and the Chinese. These studies were essentially "defensive" in nature. Their goal was to learn about the interrogation behaviors of adversaries in order to equip U.S. servicemen with needed defensive capacities.

Noted social scientists and physicians who were affiliated with the military and the intelligence community (including Arthur Biderman, Robert J. Lifton, Edgar Schein, Lawrence Hinkle, Jr., and Harold Wolff) conducted studies of servicemen who had been prisoners of the Communist Chinese and examined the experience of persons subjected to Soviet interrogations. Respected professional organizations such as the Group for the Advancement of Psychiatry sponsored scientific meetings at which topics relating to interrogation were explored and discussed. Articles in distinguished professional journals (such as the American Medical Association's Archives of Neurology and Psychiatry) described Soviet and Chinese interrogation methods and techniques in detail. Several scholarly books were published on interrogation, such as *The Manipulation of Human Behavior* (a series of essays that explored scientific knowledge about interrogation) and *Coercive Persuasion* (a study of servicemen captured by the Chinese).

The overwhelming conclusion of these studies was that the Soviets and the Chinese were using traditional police-state methods of extracting information from their prisoners. Hinkle and Wolff noted in 1957:

In no case is there reliable evidence that neurologists, psychiatrists, psychologists or other scientifically trained personnel have designed or participated in these police procedures. There is no evidence that drugs, hypnosis or other devices play any significant role in them. The effects produced are understandable in terms of the methods used. There is no reason to dignify these methods by surrounding them with an aura of scientific mystery, or to denote them by terms such as "menticide" or "brain washing" which imply that they are scientifically organized techniques of predictable effectiveness.

Efforts to Improve Interrogation Practices

At the same time as researchers and scientists were studying interrogation from a defensive perspective, officials in the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) began a series of explorations about “offensive” interrogation. Throughout the 1950s and into the 1960s, the CIA sponsored studies designed to explore how drugs (LSD, for example), sensory deprivation, and hypnosis might be used as techniques to elicit information. Some of this work was used in developing the KUBARK Counterintelligence Interrogation Manual, written in 1963 and publicly released in the late 1990s. The CIA research, much of it conducted through the MKULTRA program, became the subject of concern within the CIA, the Intelligence Community, the Congress, and the public. Although most documents concerning the program’s work reportedly were destroyed in 1972, Congressional hearings in 1977 put a spotlight on the research and led to widespread criticism.

Publicity and concerns about the MKULTRA program cast a pall on efforts to conduct systematic inquiry in areas of human intelligence gathering, including interrogation, during the 1970s, 1980s, and 1990s. Most interrogation training in that period, including that provided by the military, was designed to equip soldiers (primarily young enlisted men) with a rudimentary set of skills and techniques that would permit them to gather basic tactical information from captured Soviet soldiers on and about the battlefield. The techniques for interrogation were promulgated in Army Field Manuals, such as FM 34-52. The seventeen or so authorized techniques in the Army

manuals are believed to have been developed in the period immediately following World War II.

Although the U.S. government later engaged in interrogation activities to a limited extent in the first Gulf War and in Bosnia, there was little government supported research in these areas. Additionally, there was little opportunity for U.S. interrogators to practice and hone their skills. For example, soldiers who were trained and certified as interrogators might complete their military service without ever conducting an interrogation.

With the attacks of 11 September 2001, and the initiation of the Global War on Terrorism, the Intelligence Community plunged into activities that, of necessity, involved efforts to obtain information from persons in U.S. custody who at least initially appeared uncooperative. At holding facilities in Afghanistan, Cuba, Iraq, and perhaps other sites, active duty military personnel, reservists, intelligence officers, law enforcement agents, contracted interrogators, and others worked to glean information and create intelligence that might help prevent terrorist attacks and contribute to national security. Since there had been little or no development of sustained capacity for interrogation practice, training, or research within intelligence or military communities in the post-Soviet period, many interrogators were forced to “make it up” on the fly. This shortfall in advanced, research-based interrogation methods at a time of intense pressure from operational commanders to produce actionable intelligence from high-value targets may have contributed significantly to the unfortunate cases of abuse that have recently come to light. Perhaps in the future, educating information professionals and researchers can develop knowledge that

will inform and improve both practice and policy in these critical areas of national security.

THE END

You can read and download more forensic psychology eBooks for free via the following link.

<http://www.all-about-forensic-psychology.com/forensic-psychology-ebook.html>

ALL ABOUT FORENSIC PSYCHOLOGY



The All About Forensic Psychology website is designed to help anybody looking for informed and detailed information. Forensic psychology definitions, history, topic areas, theory and practice, careers, debates, degree and study options are all covered in detail here.

www.all-about-forensic-psychology.com/



I will be using Twitter to keep people up-to-date with all the latest developments on the All About Forensic Psychology Website, including when new forensic psychology eBooks are made available for free download.

<http://twitter.com/psych101>

Interested In Forensic Science?



Very popular website that provides a free & comprehensive guide to the world of forensic science.

www.all-about-forensic-science.com/

Written and regularly updated by a lecturer in psychology, this website is designed to help anybody looking for informed and detailed information on psychology.

www.all-about-psychology.com