The Psychological Ethic and the Spirit of Containment

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The Korean War destroyed over four million lives, devastated rice fields and cities, and left in its wake the world's most militarized peninsula. By the end of the war in 1953, however, the horrors of napalm, millions of refugees, and physically maimed veterans receded before another question. The American media were suddenly awash in stories and commentaries about the scandal of U.S. POWs who had made common cause with the enemy, confessing to war crimes, signing peace petitions, and breaking rank. Debate soon centered around whether these men had been targeted by the psychological weaponry of "brainwashing," a term invented and launched in the American media two years earlier by CIA employee-under-journalist-cover, Edward Hunter. The debate that ensued says much about the making of popular consciousness in this period—about the militarizing of subjectivity and the psychologizing of the social and political in the early years of the Cold War, otherwise known as the era of Permanent War, the Nuclear Age, or the Imaginary War.

There have been burgeoning efforts to understand the Cold War since its putative end in 1989. Much of that new work centers on questions of culture, and attempts to characterize the period in terms of favored narrative styles, privileged

affects, and emerging epistemologies.[1] All of this work also at least implicitly speaks to the changing subject produced or projected by the period's politics. My aim here is to add to this work by focusing on the discursive production of a specifically "psychological" subjectivity, some of it purchased from psychological experts. In this way, I would argue, we can go beyond the cultural thematics or political history that dominates this literature to integrate the latter with a political economy of that subjectivity. This essay also puts institutional analysis more at the center, attempting to understand the relationship between political and military institutional change (especially the establishment of the national security state) and discourses of self. And it takes seriously the conflicts that arose between the varying audiences or markets—some public and some secret, some popular and some academic—for psychological ideas produced in these militarized contexts. My goal then is not to take up the interesting problem of "the fear of Communism" as a possible psychodynamic displacement of other fears (of the mother or of the social, for example). Rather, it is to suggest how a certain expertise of self was manufactured within a military-scientific-media complex. And finally I treat this process as part and parcel of a militarization process that precedes and continues apace since the Cold War.

With new plans for covert warfare and nuclear deterrence, military strategists commissioned a new self from the discipline of psychology. I begin by tracing these new military projects and the funding of the discipline to help configure a more vigilant self, a self not so much explicitly disciplined as suspicious of itself. What I discuss as an "epistemology of the bunker" was shaped by the fact that there were now to be public and secret governments, overt and covert psychological sciences, and open and subversive selves. And finally, we turn to the POW scandal for a concrete example of how money, institutions, and discourses shaped what the subject could be, at least in public.

The Doubled State and the Subversive Self

While psychology has had a history of cooperation with the military that extends back to the well known mass IQ testing of World War I army recruits, one can argue that professional and popular psychological discourses have bloomed with the emergence of the national security state. I am drawing on Sidney Lens's per-

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1. See, for example, William Chaloupka, *Knowing Nukes: The Politics and Culture of the Atom* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1993) and Alan Nadel, *Containment Culture: American Narratives, Postmodernism, and the Atomic Age* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1995), as well as notes 2, 8, 10 below.

suasive thesis that 1945 marks the beginning of "permanent war." This comes about through the institution of a second, secret government via the National Security Act and a variety of executive orders.[2] Institutionally, it was constituted by the National Security Council, National Security Agency, the Central Intelligence Agency, and a newly imperial presidency. But in late 1945 there was resistance to a global U.S. military role in peacetime, both in the populace and in sectoral interests not served by orientation towards overseas markets.[3] The international investment banking interests represented in the Truman administration won out, however, promoting a sharp reversal of the initial post-World War II demobilization. Not the Soviet A-bomb or Chinese military operations in Korea but the domestic political victors' ability to redefine "the national interest" prompted the growth of the military and, with it, military psychology.[4] Within two years of the end of the war, a military definition of the situation had gained discursive legitimacy as well as institutional and financial support, and a large peacetime standing army had been normalized.[5] This unending state of emergency would require new forms of mental preparedness.

As many theorists of the post-war era have noted, nuclear weapons massively unmade the already fragile boundary between military and civilian targets and risks. As a technological secret, they provided ideological justification for the establishment of the national security state. This state was distinguished by

2. Sidney Lens, *Permanent War: The Militarization of America* (New York: Schoken, 1987). The radical shifts in military-society relationships after 1945 have been theorized in a variety of ways, but Lens's "depth" model of the postwar sociopolitical formation clearly relates to the cultures of both secrecy and Freudianism. For other explorations of the implications for the "psychological" of permanent war's remaking of cultural geography, see John D'Emilio, *Sexual Politics, Sexual Communities: The Making of a Homosexual Minority in the United States, 1940–1970* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1983), p. 49; Sam Marullo, *Ending the Cold War at Home: From Militarism to a More Peaceful World Order* (New York: Lexington Books, 1993); Anne Markusen et al., *The Rise of the Gun Belt: The Military Remapping of Industrial America* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1991); Elaine Tyler May, *Homeward Bound: American Families in the Cold War Era* (New York: Basic Books, 1988); Ellen Herman, *The Romance of Psychology: Political Culture in the Age of Experts* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1995).

3. Paul Boyer, *By the Bomb's Early Light: American Thought and Culture at the Dawn of the Atomic Age* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1985); Benjamin Fordham, *Building the Cold War Consensus: The Political Economy of U.S. National Security Policy, 1949–51* (Ann Arbor: University Microfilms International, 1994).

4. Fordham, *Building the Cold War Consensus.* See also Alan Wolfe, *America's Impasse: The Rise and Fall of the Politics of Growth* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1981) on "the growth consensus," and Mary Kaldor, *The Imaginary War: Understanding the East-West Conflict* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1990) for her argument that the Cold War was primarily fueled by domestic politics in both the U.S. and the USSR, with social divisions created and managed through its discourse.

5. C. Wright Mills, *The Power Elite* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1956).

radical erosion of the rule of law; national security interests, secretly defined, took precedence, and helped substitute the government of acts with the government of beliefs.[6] Nothing had more impact on cultural definitions of the person and citizenship than this growing sense that it was disloyal *feelings* rather than seditious *acts* that required direct state monitoring. Government public opinion campaigns argued that the goal of "the underground operating directorate of world communism" was to weaken American civil society rather than to attack directly and militarily; officially generated fears consequently centered on spies, double agents, and internal subversion. It became imperative but more difficult to know if a neighbor was a real American or a duplicitous fake, a defense asset or a security risk. In the process, boundaries between "us" and "them" were both made and washed away.[7]

A liberal consensus emerged that made dissent suspect or even criminal, and that made individual change seem to offer, even more than in previous periods, the only solution to social crisis. Much anti-Communist rhetoric hinged on this newly politicized "individual"—positing him/her as perhaps the key marker of difference between U.S. and Soviet societies. The American favored psychological analysis, popular discourse had it, while the Reds used a debased social analysis. So the judge who sentenced the Rosenbergs could say they had committed a crime "worse than murder [which is] denial of the sanctity of the individual."[8] In this context, psychology could only ascend to a more hegemonic position.

Even as the fortunes of the notion of "psychology" generally rose in the culture at large and within the secret councils of the state, they took many turns as the concept was tossed about at the center of several intra-governmental struggles. Those include conflicts between the Department of State and the CIA, and particularly between advocates of the containment and the rollback positions on world Communism. Psychology's proponents argued, among other things, that such strategies for the Cold War were equivalent to political strategies rather than simply one technique among many for confronting the Communists. In the process, they could draw on contemporary associations of psychological science and

6. Lens, *Permanent War*, p. 133. Related to this process, a longer-standing U.S. nationalism has created an indivisible "we" of the state and the person ("we invaded Iraq"), which itself allows the construction of political difference from the state as nefarious or pathological secret self.

7. Federick M. Dolan, *Allegories of America: Narratives, Metaphysics, Politics* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1994).

8. Cited in Stephen J. Whitfield, *The Culture of the Cold War* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1991), p. 31.

modernity with virility and American exceptionalism, as did one member of the National Security Agency's Psychological Strategy Board in claiming that

the 'psychological' approach to the world struggle is not so much the mental approach, or the sociological approach—though it is usually something of both—or the covert approach, as it is the unorthodox and the revolutionary approach. . . . [It is] a bolder, more vigorous more imaginative and more revolutionary use of all instrumentalities of national power.[9]

As Eisenhower himself remarked in 1952, "our aim in the 'cold war' is not conquering of territory or subjugation by force. Our aim is more subtle, more pervasive, more complete. We are trying to get the world, by peaceful means, to believe the truth. . . . The means we shall employ to spread this truth are often called 'psychological.'" And he went on to neutralize possible class conflict over this new approach by claiming much was at stake: "Don't be afraid of that term just because it's a five-dollar, five-syllable word. 'Psychological warfare' is the struggle for the minds and wills of men."[10]

Cleaning the Psyche Politic with Laundered Money

The psychological ethos, then, did not arise spontaneously. Help came from social science, especially psychological and communication studies, with substantial military funding. Although military support for psychological research did not grow as rapidly as funding from the Department of Health, Education and Welfare, by one estimate, it doubled in the six year period from 1953–1958.[11] Another study estimates that 5% of the American Psychological Association (APA) worked full-time for the military in 1957, a similar percentage for the Veterans Administration, and many more on contract research at universities and in private defense industry.[12] Another doubling of funds for psychology occurred in the early 1960s with the strategic policy turn to counterinsurgency war-

9. Edmond L. Taylor, letter to Psychological Strategies Board Steering Group, 30 December 1952, Declassified Documents Reference System 1990, 3557.

10. Cited in Scott Lucas, "Campaigns of truth: The Psychological Strategy Board and American ideology, 1951–1953," *International History Review* 18 (1996): 253–304, who provides one of the few accounts of this board of the National Security Council.

11. Marguerite L. Young and Henry S. Odbert, "Government support of psychological research—fiscal year 1958," *American Psychologist* 14 (1959): 497–500.

12. Arthur W. Melton, "Military psychology in the United States of America," *American Psychologist* 12 (1957): 740–46.

fare.[13] These and other published figures, however, clearly represent only publicly avowed funding.

Psychological research funded by the military occurred under several auspices after the war: "in-house" with the Department of Defense or one of the services (e.g., the Human Factors Division of the Naval Electronics Lab); in military industrial firms (e.g., the Missile Systems Division at Lockheed Aircraft Corporation); on contracts to individual professors and university centers (e.g., Hadley Cantril at Princeton's Institute for International Social Research); and at a variety of psychological and social contract research centers established by the military at this time, including the very influential RAND Corporation and the Human Resources Research Office (HUMMRO), founded in 1951 by the future treasurer of the APA, Meredith Crawford. Much of this work was hidden from both public and professional review. An example is CIA funding at the University of Maryland on the psychology of prisoner "interrogation" in the 1950s which produced numerous studies of psychological and other forms of coercion, including Louis Gottschalk's *The Use of Drugs in Information-Seeking Interviews* (1958) and Albert Biderman's "Social-psychological needs and 'involuntary' behavior as illustrated by compliance in interrogation" (1960).[14] Another two cases that strongly appear to have involved CIA money and research goals were $1 million through the Rockefeller Foundation to Hadley Cantril at Princeton for research into foreign and domestic public opinion, and $875,000 laundered through the Ford Foundation to set up the Center for International Studies (CENIS) at MIT, from which a number of psychologists were to work on brainwashing and propaganda issues.[15] Extensive graduate student training in psychology came through research contracts from the Office of Naval Research; in 1952, the Group Psychology

13. Charles Windle and T. R. Vallance, "The future of military psychology: Paramilitary psychology," *American Psychologist* 19 (1964):119–29.

14. The former was published as BSSR Report 322, December 1958, the latter in *Sociometry* 23, 2 (June 1960): 120–47. See John Marks, *The Search for the "Manchurian Candidate": The CIA and Mind Control* (New York: Times Books, 1979) on the related secret military work of University of Rochester Psychology Department Chair G. Richard Wendt, whose grant covers claimed that he was working on motion sickness. Racial dimensions in this work included the frequent use of African American prison inmates in the United States to test, for example, the effects of various drugs on interrogation.

15. Christopher Simpson, *Science of Coercion: Communication Research and Psychological Warfare, 1945–1960* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1994), p. 82. The national security interests in the struggle to establishing CENIS, which funded work by several prominent academic psychologists, have been researched in Allan A. Needell, "'Truth is our weapon': Project TROY, Political warfare, and government-academic relations in the national security state," *Diplomatic History* 17 (1993): 399–420. The figure of $875,000 is given in the *New York Times*, August 9, 1953, 61.

Branch alone had contracts funding 158 graduate students (135 men and 23 women) and directing their work, sometimes permanently, towards areas of interest to the military.[16]

This money, and the culture and political economy of permanent war more generally, shaped scientific and popular psychology in at least three ways—the subject matter defined as worthy of study, the epistemology of the subject that it strengthened, and its normalization of a militarized civilian subjectivity. I take up the first two aspects in overview, and the third in relationship to the brainwashing controversy.

The Militarization of Psychology's Subject Matter

Psychologists did not just discover psychic processes for use by the military; they were also "tasked" with contributing to particular military goals that could require or obviate certain research questions or answers. This had both specific effects (for example, an efflorescence of work on hypnosis and social isolation) and more general effects (for example, an emphasis on mechanistic and top-down models of learning, an increasing conflation of education with training to pass competency tests) on psychological thought. Whether or not research was explicitly done in service to the military, discourse on a certain psychological topic was often started in that context, legitimated as general or scientific psychology through publication in academic journals, and followed by nonmilitary psychologists' subsequent experimentation.

Psychological discourse responded to President Harry Truman's decision to focus on nuclear deterrence and technological superiority rather than on diplomacy or a continued mass industrial army model.[17] These policy decisions prompted early and heavy defense use of emerging computer technologies that generated many analogically mechanistic metaphors for human thought. Truman's policy also created concerns with both secrecy (to prevent transfer of technical and psychological advances to foreign or domestic enemies) and the soldier's limited cognitive capacity to run sophisticated equipment (which might instead be thought of as the lower educational levels of those recruited to the military in this period). "Engineering psychology" and artificial intelligence developed continually as the perceived need to make humans more "machine-friendly"

16. John Darley, "Psychology and the Office of Naval Research: A decade of development," *American Psychologist* 12 (1957): 317–18.
17. Marullo, *Ending the Cold War.*

grew.[18] This paradigm was "an effort to theorize humans as component parts of weapons systems. Cognitive science may be read both metaphorically and literally as a theory of technological worker-soldiers."[19] While obviously facilitated by technological developments outside the military, this paradigm would not have developed its degree of importance had these military policies not been pursued.

The post-World War II army was basically nonprofessional, with large numbers of often nearly illiterate soldiers and high turnover rates. This, combined with the rapid technological change that placed a premium on training soldiers for constantly changing tasks, boosted the stock of learning theory. Military training emphasized efficient (time-limited) problem solving and self-disciplined learners who were able to relieve the chain of command of moment-to-moment monitoring of subordinates. It featured "task-specific performance, avoiding both 'undertraining' and 'overtraining'; . . . and instructional systems design, to ensure the compatibility of training to ongoing changes in mission and in weapons systems technology."[20] Resulting educational technologies and accompanying learning models conceived of the human as a complex information-processing system, and aimed for what one military psychologist described as "new methods of programming the learning experience" based on "precise derivation of objectives."[21]

Managing a permanent work force of millions, the army also had the problem of marketing its jobs to young civilians, and of personnel management and retention. It also set to work retaining its budget. The psychology of propaganda and public opinion was fertilized by the desire to mobilize a reluctant public to higher levels of military spending and international involvement and to protect expanding American markets overseas in the late 1940s. Such research could construct public opinion (through the researchers' question frames, for example) rather than simply discover it. Public opinion research in fact helped create a new definition of law and democratic process, as when study of public attitudes towards various kinds of wartime events was conducted in order to anticipate public resistance to a range of extreme measures. Alongside this project of control, the person was constituted as an autonomous "opinion generator."

18. Chris Hables Gray, *Computers as Weapons and Metaphors: The U.S. Military, 1940–1990 and Postmodern War.* Working Paper no. 1, Cultural Studies of Science and Technology Research Group (University of California at Santa Cruz, 1991); David Noble, *The Classroom Arsenal: Military Research, Information Technology, and Public Education* (London: Falmer Press, 1991), p. 23; Nikolas Rose, *Governing the Soul: The Shaping of the Private Self* (London: Routledge, 1990).

19. Edwards in Noble, *Classroom Arsenal*, p. 43.

20. Noble, *Classroom Arsenal*, p. 17.

21. Meredith P. Crawford, "Military psychology and general psychology," *American Psychologist* 25 (1970): 329.

Guarding what were posed as new fronts within civil society and at the boundary of the mind, the military funded studies of hypnosis, interpersonal influence, and communications modes and impacts. Christopher Simpson's recent study shows how communication studies was virtually constituted by defense interests and funding.[22] Drawing on psychology and social psychology, the field's leading practitioners developed an especially quantitative, coercive view of interpersonal communication. They studied "communication" between prisoners and captors, the characteristics of those best at keeping secrets, and projected community information flow after nuclear weapons use.

Counterinsurgency doctrine made the shaping of civilian populations a more central military goal. Newly relevant social psychology was mechanically placed within a cultural engineering frame: "unstable" societies needed "the military (social) mechanic [who] simply gets out his psychological tool-kit and tightens up a few nuts and bolts here and there."[23] The many Department of Defense funded "psychological profiles" of individual countries, some conducted by psychological anthropologists like Margaret Mead and Clyde Kluckhohn, helped create a compendium of information on vulnerabilities and cultural patterns for use in counterinsurgency, a kind of cultural Bomber's Encyclopedia.[24] Some of the more striking examples in the 1950s include studies of culture-specific aversions for use in developing "smell bombs"; propitious days for bombing in each society for maximum effect; and cultural information that could be used to manufacture social dissension when needed.[25]

Psychology's subject matter has also been turned towards the face of battle itself, coming to focus on stress, vigilance, and other battle-relevant capacities more than a psychology that developed in a less militarized society would have.[26] Researchers looked, for example, at the psychology of men at the ends versus the center of a firing line, with an eye to reducing the "wild" ammunition use by the more vulnerable end men; the development of behavior modification techniques to make soldiers less averse to killing; and a spate of work on sensory

22. Simpson, *Science of Coercion.*
23. Peter Watson, *War on the Mind* (London: Hutchinson, 1978), p. 40.
24. See Denise Riley, *War in the Nursery: Theories of the Child and Mother* (London: Virago, 1983); Simpson, *Science of Coercion.* This kind of work, of course, has deeper origins in the rise of Freudian thinking in interwar anthropology, and was used significantly in World War II. An impulse for Japanese national character studies, for example, was the hope that postwar psychoanalytically influenced education could modify totalitarian patterns.
25. Watson, *War on the Mind.*
26. Robert Kugelmann, *Stress: The Nature and History of Engineered Grief* (Westport, CT: Praeger, 1992).

deprivation and social isolation to train those who would be either POWs or captors.[27] So, too, psychiatry's focus on the repair of damage done by trauma was the outcome of dealing with the large number of neuropsychiatric patients left after World War II, and the Veterans Administration's (VA) clinical training program that brought many young psychologists into contact with a militarily defined and damaged psyche.

Epistemology of the Nuclear Bunker

> If ignorance is not—as it evidently is not—a single Manichaean, aboriginal maw of darkness from which the heroics of human cognition can occasionally wrestle facts, insights, freedoms, progress, perhaps there exists instead a plethora of *ignorances*, and we may begin to ask questions about the labor, erotics, and economics of their human production and distribution. Insofar as ignorance is ignorance *of* a knowledge . . . these ignorances, far from being pieces of the originary dark, are produced by and correspond to particular knowledges and circulate as part of particular regimes of truth.[28]

At mid-century, Strategic Air Command headquarters were dug deep under the Nebraska soil, nuclear bomb shelters bloomed beneath suburban yards, and journalists were excluded from the secret councils of the National Security Agency. The bunker, and the culture of secrecy prompted by the national security state, then came to constitute a unique new form of ignorance, where the state's regulation of death more than sexuality (though along with it) is the central motive. This has played out and been amplified by the national security state in many ways. Deterrence theory in particular provided people with an incentive to rethink the relations between appearance, representation, and the unseen or unspeakable, as did new forms of disinformation, noninformation, and antidisinformation. By 1966, these had developed into language use of the kind an Air Force Information Officer performed after four nuclear weapons were accidentally

27. See Marks, *The Search for the "Manchurian Candidate."*
28. Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick, *Epistemology of the Closet* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1990), p. 8. Sedgwick weaves a stunning narrative of the relationship between sexuality, knowledge, ignorance and speech. In it, the closet becomes not simply a location of hidden identities, but a historically specific, invented image that has remade the relation between the known and the unknown. While knowledge remains power, performances of ignorance both make and unmake forms of knowledge, with "ignorance effects" often "harnessed, licensed, and regulated on a mass scale for striking enforcements" (p. 5).

scattered near the Spanish coast. When asked: "Where can we get information [about the risk of radiation], Colonel?" he responded, "From me. I have no comment to make about anything, and I cannot comment on why I have to say no comment." The question whether ignorance is feigned in this and innumerable other instances becomes irrelevant; its power exists, as Sedgwick shows, in its performance. Moreover, as we will see, there are *kinds* of ignorance in these matters, the most important being those of civilians versus military/security elites. Ignorance becomes a virtue here, as much or more than in the realm of sexuality. Antifoundational epistemologies can become more convincing.[29] Even more importantly, antidemocratic and thanatocratic knowledges are better constructed through them.[30]

In discussing the historically recent closeting of homosexuality, Judith Butler argues further that it has helped create the very idea that people have gendered, internal identities; "invisibility," she says, produces "the effect of a structuring inner space."[31] The secrecy imperative of the national security state can be said to have done something similar, with the psychological becoming not just a discourse around war but a mode of warfare itself. The Cold War's distinction was that everyone, not simply the enemy, went into hiding, and so significant social relations became invisible. As they did, ghostly inner spaces were hypothesized to take their place, and the psyche was remade as a newly significant structuring principle.

The connection between epistemologies of the closet and the bunker are more than theoretical and more than uncanny given that experts and politicians drew the categories "Communist" and "homosexual" together in the 1950s. Both figures were painted primarily as psychological defectives more than as ideologues or criminals or, of course, simply different ways of being in the world. As D'Emilio has eloquently pointed out, both "bore no identifying physical characteristics [and could] disguise their true selves."[32] Psychoanalytic "insights" were used in 1950 Senate hearings to suggest that a closeted homosexual was as much a security

29. Dolan, *Allegories.*

30. The notion of a "thanatocratic" culture is brilliantly developed in relation to the death penalty in Peter Linebaugh, "Gruesome Gertie at the Buckle of the Bible Belt," *New Left Review* 209 (1995):15–30.

31. Judith Butler, "Gender trouble, feminist theory, and psychoanalytic discourse," in *Feminism/ Postmodernism*, ed. Linda Nicholson (New York: Routledge, 1990); Judith Butler, "Imitation and gender insubordination," in *Inside/Out: Lesbian Theories, Gay Theories*, ed. Diana Fuss (New York: Routledge, 1991).

32. D'Emilio, *Sexual Politics*, p. 49.

risk as an out and obvious one.[33] Suspected homosexuals in government were fired as security risks at dramatically higher rates in the later 1940s and 1950s, something many observers relate to the 1948 Kinsey report which gave the sense that gay men were more common and less detectable than had been thought.

The policy documents NSC 4 and NSC 4-A, approved by the National Security Council on December 7, 1947, provide a central starting point. Together, they claim to establish the state's right to conduct covert warfare. NSC 4 established a coordinated and overt propaganda campaign, described as a truth campaign to combat anti-U.S. propaganda, and its contents were coded "confidential." This classification allowed documents to be discussed but not shown to the public, and was applied so that NSC 4's contents could be leaked to the press. NSC 4-A, approving covert psychological warfare, was passed moments later. It was illegal to reveal the existence of "top secret" documents; this made it "deniable." With deep resonances of Freud, NSC 4-A contained the repressed content of NSC 4, which it contradicted, and produced layers of hidden work within the government. And, like Freud, the national security state saw "denial" as a defense mechanism in service to a higher state. Conscious/public democratic ideals overlaid the preconscious/"confidential" artifacts, which mediated relations between the conscious/public and the unconscious/"top secret" documents and actions.

The national security apparatus created "inside" spaces where security experts generated both knowledge and national safety. Civilians became "outsiders," defined as "naive" to the inverse extent that military-political elites claimed the secret space of knowledge and the doctrinal position of "realism."[34] The civilian was both critiqued and valorized for his/her ignorance, however, because no one but the authorized should know what or even if something was happening behind the curtain of secrecy. Certain dilemmas of the oxymoronic "secret knowledge" were evident in the mutual interest of the CIA and academic psychologists from prestigious universities in each other.[35] Scholars who would be spies could

33. Those Senate Appropriation Committee hearings helped establish that "if the government could not expel 'passing' lesbians and gay men on the basis of their behavior, it could on the basis of their psychological profile. Indeed, their very 'normalcy' was a sign that they were disturbed." See Robert J. Corber, *In the Name of National Security: Hitchcock, Homophobia, and the Political Construction of Gender in Postwar America* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1993), p. 63.

34. Hugh Gusterson, "Realism and the international order after the cold war," *Social Research* 60 (Summer 1993): 279–301.

35. They are also evident in a psychological warfare treatise that raised the possibility of changing U.S. laws to allow "pro-American secret activities to be launched" by private citizens "without permitting anti-American activities of the same kind" (Paul M.A. Linebarger, *Psychological Warfare* [Washington: Combat Forces Press, 1954], p. 298). This raises the conundrum of a government that tries to keep secrets from itself while remaining efficacious.

acquire knowledge made more valuable by definition of its secrecy and its association with the highest goals and powers of the state; spies who would be scholars could acquire the symbolic capital associated with the arena of public knowledge forbidden to those sworn to underground work. Neither public nor private knowledge was sufficient.

"Ignorance effects" reverberated over time. For example, the possibility was soon raised that a person might be unaware of his or her own indoctrination by Communist agents. This was particularly so because key points of Communist infiltration were thought to be ordinary organizations like the Parent Teachers' Association, the National Council of Churches, and labor unions. While these groups were considered most American because they were most voluntaristic and democratic, that is, while they were, as Dolan remarks, "nothing less than the manifold voluntary associations that constitute a liberal democratic society," they were now all potentially suspect as most un-American.[36] Where an earlier century's goal was to prove spiritual election, the new goal was to prove that one's depths were American and to self-critique national neuroses. The perils of psychological subversion joined those of spiritual temptation. Becoming a permanent front, the mind was now a dangerous thing; knowing secrets, it could reveal them; it might turn against itself, against its own will; in short, it might be colonized.

Both secrecy and the exponential growth of militarized technological complexity drove an intensified search for certainty. They each contributed to an ideology of total defense that "assumes the possibility . . . of complete and consistent surveillance and comprehension of inherently unstable and dangerous situations."[37] And so the era gave additional impetus to new forms of testing. The CIA began to make extensive use of polygraph tests to ferret out double agents and security risks. The invention of a noninvasive lie detector test (a voice stress analyzer) was prompted in the counterinsurgency environment of Vietnam, where two military officers, Charles McQuiston and Allan Bell, found they needed a more portable means for interrogating prisoners.

Tests could also create an inner space for militarized vocational desire, that is, for coming to see oneself as in need of a career identity and, in the process, acquiring loyalty to the social institution that provides it.[38] The military's Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery (ASVAB) became the most widely

36. Dolan, *Allegories*, p. 72.
37. Edwards cited in Noble, *Classroom Arsenal*, p. 33.
38. See F. Allan Hanson, *Testing Testing: Social Consequences of the Examined Life* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1993) on this process, which he calls "vocationalization."

given vocational test in American schools (because it was and still is provided free by the Department of Defense). This testing promised to reveal the person's inherent interests and capabilities to him or her. It also opens the individual both to recruiters, who offer to interpret the test and suggest an appropriate career, and to the notion of the individual as a stable bundle of traits, vocational desires, and abilities. Here again psychology did more than simply offer its technical expertise in a social context that helped determine its uses; rather, the psychotechnical knowledge reflected that social context in its very form.

The doubled security state could prompt contradictory motives—not only the will to ignorance, but also to further scientific digging, particularly into the mind, where the new subjectivism implied that truth and freedom lay. A discourse emerged in which plumbing psychological depths (the search for either the mother's unhealthy effect or the secret Communist self) was heroic or patriotic. Unearthing psychological problems became a matter of national security, with Free World spies as well as military and industrial psychology working to extend their ability to identify and eliminate troubled/troublemaking individuals. So a contemporary trade magazine article, "Psychology Sifts Out Misfits" (1955), touted psychology as "a technique that lifts the 'iron curtain' that humans often hide behind."[39] The patriot had a transparent self, and psychology had the tools to identify that self accurately. Using them, it rooted out undesirable categories of people—the Communist, the misfit, the homosexual, the egghead, the dupe.[40]

Public concern with other invasions of the mind, lobotomies and advertising being the chief among them, was also heightened in this period.[41] Without denying the ample justification for these latter two concerns, we can ask about their surplus shaping by the notions of political subversion. First, and at the most obvious level, the language of critique bears the mark of the bunker. So, for example, in his best-selling book, *The Hidden Persuaders* (1957), Vance Packard took advertisers to task for using mass psychoanalysis to dip into the unconscious for "our hidden weaknesses and frailties." Referring to Madison Avenuers as the "depth boys" and chiding them for their "subterranean operations," Packard could evoke (and critique) American militarists, Russian double agents, or Chinese brainwashers. Moreover, where a turn-of-the-century critique of advertising had focused on the problems of materialism and inauthenticity, the Cold War turned

39. Cited in Vance Packard, *The Hidden Persuaders* (New York: David McKay, 1957), p. 206.
40. The egghead joins this group because knowledge becomes more suspect in the culture of secrecy, especially outside the national security establishment.
41. Media articles on the lobotomy are especially frequent in the period from 1950–1954, and they tend to focus on the dangers of the method.

materialism into both the sign of the superiority of the American system over the Soviet and potentially the slippery slope to the former's softness and downfall.[42] A long-standing and potentially powerful critique of the corporation and of its advertising might have been both solidified by these fears of subversion (even if of socialism) but also swallowed whole by the discourse of anti-Communism, an ideology that seemed to require that all things American be defended in order to avoid further erosion of the autonomous self.

The absorption of critique is also evident in the contradictory nature of the emerging sense that those who go beneath "the surface" of American life were legitimately an object of public concern. More than privacy was at stake here; it was the possibilities this afforded for a person's manipulation, thereby jeopardizing both the status of "will" or psychological freedom and the future of the individual's "long struggle to become a rational and self-guiding being."[43] This was an even more significant crisis when what can be called a "hypodermic model of influence" was at work in understanding all forms of indoctrination. Exemplified most literally by the truth serums slipped to people in the spy stories ubiquitous during the era, this model's automatic quality was Janus-faced—it promised innocence of responsibility for those caught in its snare, but it also threatened a sudden and terrifying lack of self-control and authenticity.[44]

This duality erupts particularly strongly for the spy and the psychoanalyst, and, even more sharply, for their marriage. These two figures engaged in professional practices that eroded widespread belief in the value of personal transparency; they blurred distinctions between surface and depth, truth and lie through the assumption that secret agents and civilian psyches were always potentially double. Spying and psychoanalysis also blurred the sense of where responsibility should be located, as when democratic organizations might be dupes of the Communists and adults likely be the damaged products of their mothers' upbringing. Moreover, the underground world that both spy and analyst entered put dirt on their hands and obscured their view of the horizons of truth and responsibility they, in a earlier but still operative discourse, dipped "below."

42. Jackson Lears, "The ad man and the grand inquisitor: Intimacy, publicity and the managed self in America, 1880–1940," in *Constructions of the Self*, ed. George Levine (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 1992), p. 111. On the Cold War and materialism, see May, *Homeward Bound*.

43. Packard, *Hidden Persuaders*, p. 6. The effects could be automatic. As one marketing professor said of the psychology of advertising in 1925, once the consumer's attention is captured, "His will is dead" (in Lears, "The ad man," p. 118). The effects of television, also discussed in the psychological idiom, raised this same fear: John Steinbeck lamented the packaging of Republican politicians in 1956 television campaign spots, for example, which found "millions of people in a will-less, helpless state, unable to resist any suggestion offered" (cited in Packard, p. 194).

44. This is Victor Braitberg's discerning insight.

Brainwashing and the Invasion of the Enemy Self

Popular media and scientific debates about the Communist brainwashing of American POWs during and after the Korean War provide a key illustration of this psychological discourse of subversive knowledges and patriotic denial, this new entangling of selves and militaries. As the POWs were released, twenty-three American men refused repatriation and the prison camp behavior of many more came under intense scrutiny.[45] The specter of brainwashing appeared in a flood of media pieces trying to account for the POWs' actions. And many observers articulated the situation as did Air Force intelligence officer Stephen Pease: "We were very unprepared for an enemy that would take our sons and use them against us so easily."[46]

The central questions were psychological: had the Communists used an advanced psychological science? Did brainwashing simply use the techniques of Pavlovian psychology (already discredited in the media and science journals as a materialist psychology, debasing man by treating him as a conditioned animal)?[47] Had it been psychologically possible to resist the brainwashing? Some preferred or mixed in moral language: did the soldiers have their will and so their personal responsibility dissolved by this technique? Those who answered "no" to

45. Only twenty-one eventually stayed in North Korea. The other two men changed their minds, and were court-martialed on their return. Of the 7000 Americans captured, approximately a third died in captivity. A commonly cited estimate was that one in three survivors collaborated in some way. Media coverage of North Korean and Chinese POWs in UN camps was quite different. Starvation, overcrowding, and officially sanctioned intragroup violence at the Koje Island camp and elsewhere, which had resulted in at least 6600 POW deaths, were only alluded to in an official military history; moreover, these were described as problems "aggravated by . . . the difficulties of approach to prisoners who were both communists and Orientals" (Logistics in the Korean Operations. IV volumes, HQ U.S. Army Forces, Far East and 8th U.S. Army [rear]. Military History Section. LKO. Camp Zama, Japan. Dec. 1955. Vol. I, Chapter 3, p. 58). This same history notes that when "mass rioting increased on Koje-do, the need increased for greater quantities of chemical irritants" (p. 58); hundreds of POWs were killed in those incidents. See Jon Haliday and Bruce Cumings, *Korea: The Unknown War* (New York: Viking, 1988). There was also a sense that the nonrepatriation of these POWs did not require explanation.

46. Stephen E. Pease, *Psywar: Psychological Warfare in Korea, 1950–1953* (Harrisburg, PA: Stackpole Books, 1992), p. xiii.

47. The psychologist Raymond Bauer, working at Harvard's Russian Research Project—jointly funded by Carnegie Corporation, the U.S. Air Force and the CIA—wrote frequently about the flaws and social uses of Pavlovianism in this period. One of his most influential works was a 1954 psychological warfare study for the Air Force, "Strategic Psychological and Sociological Strengths and Vulnerabilities of the Soviet Social System" which minus four pages of suggestions and with a laundered title (*How the Soviet System Works: Cultural, Psychological and Social Themes*, 1956) became a widely used university text (Simpson, *Science of Coercion*, p. 186).

these questions often made sharp distinctions between body and mind, seeing physical torture as necessary for loss of will. Their consequent criticism was often biting, and accompanied by visual reproach as well; one widely circulated magazine published a photo that showed the released POW collaborators sitting together in bathrobed slouchy leisure, while next to it, another picture showed the resisters in their military uniforms, smoking and looking more masculine.[48]

Most accounts focused on some combination of Communist savagery and American nonvigilance. Their debates hinged on the paradox of evil and power and thus of the nature of the Communist other's threat: was his evil brilliant or more primitive? Did the Russians have a kind of neuron bomb or a dud? But given the view of Communism as evil itself, the Soviets' behavior needed less explanatory work than did that of "turncoat" Americans. Nonrepatriating North Korean POWs were simply freedom-seeking and the brutal behavior of the Communist captors was essential to their barbarism.[49] More elaborate accounts were made of American misbehavior: the POWs had been "mentally softened up" first by their own country and then by brainwashing. The American cultural degeneration argument was often made by contrasting the survival and defection rates of the small group of Turks and the U.S. POWs. Soldiers' "softness" was often attributed to women's influence both in the home and in Korea where United Nations broadcast propagandists used female voices for their "extra psychological impact."[50] One psychologist with much exposure in the popular press argued that indoctrination in American homes mirrored that behind the Iron Curtain, where "Dominating parents can prepare their children at an early age for continual mental submission by imprinting on them the pattern of conformity."[51]

Although other commentators were more sympathetic to the soldiers, several

48. "The GIs who fell for the Reds," *Saturday Evening Post*, March 6, 1954, 17–19.

49. Although their freedom to choose sides was manifestly absent, it was nonetheless assumed in these documents and the press. In this context, it is important to note that by 1952, U.S. desertions were five times higher than earlier in the war, and that self-inflicted wounds accounted for ninety percent of all hospitalized British soldiers (Haliday and Cumings, *Korea*).

50. See Edward Hunter, *Brainwashing: From Pavlov to Powers* (New York: The Bookmailer, 1956 [1960]), p. 314; Michael Rogin, *"Ronald Reagan," The Movie and Other Episodes in Political Demonology* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1987). The observation about female voices in propaganda is from Pease, *Psywar*, p. 114.

51. Psychologist Joost Meerloo, once head of the Netherlands Forces psychology department, had become an American citizen by 1950; *New York Times*, May 9, 1954, 33. In a related vein, the *Times* reported on April tenth of that same year on the psychological research of Dr. Helen Beier of the Russian Research Center who found Russians less introspective than Americans.

POWs were tried for their camp behavior.[52] And in August 1955, President Eisenhower signed a new Code of Conduct for the Armed Forces that set the limits of POW behavior very narrowly, requiring that the soldier "never surrender of [his] own free will . . . never forget [he is] responsible for [his] actions" and that he is bound to give only name, rank, service number and birthdate.[53] This Code, distributed to all service members in pamphlet form, included photos of POWs engaged in derelict behavior in Korean prison camps (Figure 1). The black bars over their eyes suggest that the reader and the soldier both engaged in prurient, illicit looking. The attempt is to cover not only their identities, but also their gaze at the forbidden word. But the bars make an ambivalent judgment of criminality (the convicted and guilty criminal must look the public in the eye). That ambivalence is perhaps produced by the fact that psychologists had been at work with the military on this issue, and that work was only partially buried by the Code's use of the characterological (and nonpsychological) language of military discipline.

Brainwashing was a sometimes different kind of concern to the military, the populace, and the professional psychologists, and negotiations over its meaning were intense both within and across these categories of actors. Interservice rivalries and ideological differences over proper military discipline, for example, made the brainwashing case a key test of the validity of postwar changes in the military's disciplinary practices.[54] Veterans and other groups had made efforts to reduce the power of officers to capriciously enforce discipline, with the goal of democratizing the services and "improving

Figure 1. The seen and the unseen: POWs read Communist propaganda in the Department of the Army's indoctrination pamphlet, "Communist Interrogation, Indoctrination, and Exploitation of prisoners of War." (Pamphlet 30-101, May 15, 1956)

52. According to Albert Biderman, (*March to Calumny: The Story of American POW's in the Korean War* [New York: Macmillan, 1963]), of the hundreds of soldiers who were initially placed under suspicion only eleven were convicted. But concern was so high that, as the trials were pending, the Defense Department withdrew its once lavish support for the just released fictional film, *Prisoners of War*. Department lawyers apparently worried about its plot: a soldier is intentionally captured and falsely confesses to war crimes in order to report on conditions in the camps, suggesting there were circumstances that warranted surrender and collaboration (*New York Times*, March 20, 1954).

53. Department of Army Pamphlet No. 30–101, *Communist Interrogation, Indoctrination, and Exploitation of Prisoners of War* (Washington, D.C., May 15, 1956), p. 2.

54. The Code was seen as a victory for the Army's vision of proper conduct (*New York Times*, August 18, 1955).

morale." These efforts led to the 1946 passage of a new Uniform Code of Military Justice (some provisions of which were not in place until mid-1950). This hotly contested code emerged at the same time that the services were engaged in both extensive rivalry with one another and disputes over the changing social composition of the services. After World War II, recruits were poorer, younger, less schooled, and racially more diverse. The behavior of the POWs and the proposals for training soldiers to cope psychologically with new enemy tactics implicated all of these issues. Was collaboration the result of the power of the enemy's psychological weaponry, of relaxed discipline, of the class and race background of the soldiers, of the weakness of the Army in comparison with the Air Force?

A debate in psychological terms had the advantage of seeming to depoliticize the issue, making it a matter of individual psychological makeup rather than of social relations of class, race or sexuality. It also depoliticized the matter of brainwashing by turning the question over from political debate between social segments to seemingly technical debate among experts. Each service, however, hired its own experts: access to the POWs or their dossiers went to Julius Segal (with the Army's HUMMRO, previously with the Air Force's Human Relations Research Laboratory), Edgar H. Schein (Walter Reed Army Institute, and then to MIT), Albert Biderman (Air University, Maxwell Air Force Base), Harry Harlow (with I.E. Farber and Louis Jolyon West for the Air Force), and Raymond Bauer (Harvard, MIT, including its CIA connected CENIS).[55] And the variation between their positions and findings was minimal.

Major William Mayer, an Army psychiatrist who studied 1000 of the POWs, concluded in a *U.S. News and World Report* article that the U.S. soldier was deficient in "character and self-discipline" and in general education, particularly about democracy.[56] Equally hard-hitting and even more widely read was a *New*

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55. Julius Segal, "Correlates of collaboration and resistance behavior among U.S. Army POWs in Korea," *Journal of Social Issues* 13 (September 1957): 31–40. Like several others, Segal's writing on this topic took three forms: an initial, often confidential military report, an academic journal article, and a popular magazine article (Julius Segal, "Were they really brainwashed?" *Look*, vol. 20, June 1956). Biderman's later related work was funded by the CIA through its conduit, the Society for the Investigation of Human Ecology (later the Human Ecology Fund). This work was conducted with Ecology Fund members Lawrence E. Hinkle and Harold G. Wolff, who wrote "Communist interrogation and indoctrination of 'enemies of the state,'" *Archives of Neurology and Psychiatry* 76 (1956): 115–74. Prior to being hired to study the POWs at John Foster Dulles's invitation, the Cornell neurologist Wolff had been treating Dulles's son, who, in bitter irony, had been shot in the head during the Korean War (Marks, *Manchurian Candidate*, p. 127).

56. William Mayer, "Why did so many GI captives cave in?" *U.S. News and World Report*, February 24, 1956, 56–62; Kinkead's article was eventually published as a book, *In Every War But One* (New York: Norton, 1959).

Yorker piece by Eugene Kinkead, based on select Army informants. The Dutch émigré psychologist, Joost Meerloo, on the other hand, claimed that "no man could resist" brainwashing's combination of Pavlovian conditioning and its exploitation of the "fear of freedom," and he dramatized brainwashing further as "menticide." Bauer argued that it was group conformity, not simple Pavlovian conditioning at work, while Segal found more psychological similarities between those POWs who actively resisted and those who collaborated: both resisters and collaborators were more outgoing and "deviant" than the largest group of more passive "Middle Men." Segal saw these results as demonstrating that "most men behaved primarily out of emotion and self-interest."[57]

When Biderman took the strongest stance against unreasonable expectations of POW resistance to brainwashing, his position reflected that of the Air Force. That service had split from the Army, Navy and Marine Corps in seeking to allow airmen to give more information to the enemy.[58] Biderman drew on the widely shared psychologists' ethos of faith in the perfectibility of humans through their science, and saw his work as a criticism of "the traditional view" that men are motivated only by fear of punishment.[59] He explicitly criticized the strict Code of Conduct, which he thought destined to produce guilt in soldiers who would all predictably fail to some degree to live up to its unrealistic psychological expectations. So, too, James Miller argued that the Code did not face up to the technological advances in such things as the psychology of interrogation, all of which would put the Code in "the T.N.T. age of brainwashing rather than a future possible atomic age" of psychological warfare.[60] One proposed solution was intensified security and document classification procedures to further limit the secrets any person possesses: all GIs and citizens "know too much," an admiral-columnist observed in the *Saturday Evening Post*, but secrets one doesn't know cannot be betrayed. Widely discussed was this admiral's suggestion that American soldiers be allowed to give any information they wish to the enemy, but this only after the President proclaimed that Americans would do this to withdraw the need for coercion because their words would have no validity or propaganda value.[61]

57. Segal, "Correlates of collaboration," p. 37.
58. *New York Times*, August 18, 1955.
59. Biderman, *March to Calumny*, p. 67.
60. James G. Miller, "Brainwashing: Present and Future," *Journal of Social Issues* 13 (1957): 48–55, p. 52.
61. Rear Admiral D.V. Gallery, "We can baffle the brainwashers," *Saturday Evening Post*, January 22, 1955.

These conflicts between service branches affected the questions psychologists were tasked with: were there higher rates of collaboration in infantry or pilot POWs, for example? Was psychological torture equivalent to physical torture, meriting POW post-service benefits or not? The military was also interested in preventing propaganda coups by the enemy or loss of morale within the military ranks. They had to worry about the impact of disciplinary action or censure of POW "weakness" on the psychology of service members and on future recruiting in services already experiencing manpower "quality" decline, and on public support of high postwar military budgets.

The POWs presented psychologists with other dilemmas. Debates over licensing and other aspects of professionalization in the immediate postwar period were heated, particularly given the meteoric rise in the demand for psychological services together with insufficient training opportunities and certification procedures. The public debate about brainwashing provided an opportunity for asserting professional claims. Evoking psychologists' earlier struggles with spiritualism, this episode presented their expertise as the key to uncovering and controlling the brainwashers.[62] The widely circulating notion that the POWs simply needed more "will" to resist successfully was obliquely or directly attacked: as one psychologist noted in a professional journal, "it is questionable whether it is wise for scientists in serious discourse to oppose spiritual power and conditioned reflexes [to psychological torture]."[63] Psychologists' legitimacy required, however, that they provide authoritative answers to the question of brainwashing within the bounds of a moral, that is, appropriately anti-Communist science.

Popular commentators took a variety of more flamboyant tacks. Two of the most widely read were Edward Hunter's *Brainwashing* (1956) and Virginia Pasley's *21 Stayed* (1955), as well as a host of articles in major newspapers and magazines.[64] Hunter opened his book with an evocation of common social evolutionary thinking; he distinguished brainwashing from education or persuasion, the former being "more like witchcraft, with its incantations, trances, poisons, and potions, with a strange flair of science about it all, like a devil dancer in a tuxedo, carrying his magic brew in a test tube."[65] The Russian or Chinese psychologist occupied the space between primitivity and civilization, which is

62. See Deborah J. Coon, "Testing the limits of sense and science: American experimental psychologists combat spiritualism, 1880–1920," *American Psychologist* 47 (1992): 143–51.

63. Miller, "Brainwashing," p. 50.

64. Virginia Pasley, *21 Stayed: The Story of the American GI's Who Chose Communist China—Who They Were and Why They Stayed* (New York: Farrar, Straus and Cuhady, 1955).

65. Hunter, *Brainwashing*, pp. 3–4.

barbarism, the space between the irrational and the rational, which is efficacious evil. The proof could be found in the fact that were it a truly scientific psychology, the psychological abnormality of Communist investigators would become self-evident, resulting in their "de-Communiz[ing] themselves in the very act of seeking better psychological weapons for Communism."[66] With a mix of moral and psychological language, Hunter posits a deterioration of character, loss of American stamina and discipline, and, the emergence of a "moral gap" between us and them.[67]

Pasley's Pulitzer Prize-winning book, *21 Stayed*, was lavishly praised for revealing "one of the greatest mysteries of our time — the problems of 21 families hit by tragedy harder to bear and understand than death itself."[68] A journalist, Pasley searched the childhoods of the unrepatriated soldiers for the source of their otherwise inexplicable behavior. A common thread of their boyhoods, she found, was that many of them "felt unloved or unwanted by fathers or stepfathers," were beaten by them, and/or lost them through death or divorce. Their mothers had in many cases died or were separated from them early on, had drinking problems, worked away from home, or were "unusually strict." The men's IQ is consistently noted, and, although by her figures they fall exactly around the mean, Pasley summarizes thus: "16 [of the 21] were average or below in I.Q." Most grew up in poverty, were socially "withdrawn, lone wolves," and virtually all "had never heard of Communism except as a dirty word," and did not know why they were fighting in Korea. Newspaper reports of the "secret Army study" of these men also refer to them as "'lone wolves who took little part in group activities at home" and as coming in many cases from "broken or unhappy homes."[69]

So, too, a major piece in the *New York Times*, "The War for the P.O.W.s Mind" (1953), described susceptibility to Communism as the result of personality alone; the collaborator is

> the man with no strong focus in his life. He is likely to be a late
> adolescent, with no career started, no knowledge of world affairs, no
> real knowledge of his own country and its ways, no great convictions or
> at least no articulate support for them. Maybe he has a background of
> family instability or poor school experience. He is likely to be heavily

66. Linebarger, *Psychological Warfare*, p. 296.
67. Hunter, *Brainwashing*, p. 324, obviously from the book's second edition, playing as it does on "the missile gap" debate of the 1960 Presidential elections.
68. *Chicago Sunday Tribune*, June 26, 1955.
69. *New York Times*, January 29, 1954.

reliant on others for leadership in thought and action. [The resistor has] strong religion, success in life and a happy family figuring in his make-up (any single one of these may be enough; it doesn't take all of them).[70]

In both popular and professional discussions of the POWs, the diagnosis was *psychological*, and the psychologist hailed to provide both cures and prophylactic measures as an ally of the state.[71] If the diagnosis was poor childrearing, the cure was developmental and educational. The imminent physicality of the combat soldier's danger, on the other hand, had been leading psychiatrists to treat combat "mental disorder" as a matter of "any man's breaking point"; much discussion of the POW remained less universalizing and more purely psychological than psychophysiological, focusing on the changeable disposition of a few.[72] Battlefield "cowardice," it seems, could be remade as stress disorder more readily than prison camp "collaboration" to the extent that a physical instinct would be drawn into the former's explanation: the psychological was not completely triumphant. And, too, from the perspective of some in the military, moral language retained its value and fervor. So when the Defense Department committee that developed the Code of Conduct summarized their assessment of the twenty-one men who stayed, it was in purely moral terms. "Few of these twenty-one were 'sincere' converts to communism. Expediencey [sic], opportunism, and fear of reprisal" were main influences.[73]

In the shadow of the psychological, moreover, was a class-based conflict over character and social background. At the trial of one of the collaborators, Corporal Edward Dickenson, the defense psychiatrist testified that Dickenson was "emotionally unstable" and so "might be an easy prey for Communist bullies," that he had a "passive-aggressive personality," with a background of "insecurity, deprivation, and a feeling that nobody really cared for him." These personality factors made capitulation more likely. When further described in the *New York Times* as a mountain boy, readers could add regional and class stereotyping to family-based notions of where weak minds and weak links in national security were

70. *New York Times Magazine*, September 13, 1953, p. 39.
71. The mass media picked up other research circling around this explanatory problem as well: research, for example, linked psychological health with the ability to survive disasters (*New York Times*, September 8, 1955) and with political moderation (*New York Times*, September 3, 1955), quoting one Yale social scientist on his findings that "an unsatisfactory private life is a necessary basis for intense political interests."
72. Herman, *Romance of Psychology.*
73. *New York Times*, August 18, 1955.

likely to be found. There was much concern through the early Cold War with manipulation of the dull by the Communist, something presumably more likely in the undereducated. On the other hand, Biderman attacks the "soft living," "tut-tutting" readers of Kinkead's criticism of the POWs, flanked as it was by the "effetely materialistic advertising" in the *New Yorker*.[74] Similarly, the more middlebrow *Saturday Evening Post* editorialized that working-class GIs outshone the professional eggheads in universities and government, who had already demonstrated themselves liable to serve as dupes of the Communists. Playing the middle against the ends, the editor argues that the highly educated, who have never experienced torture, should not expect "Private Zilch" of "no particular background" to do so.[75]

Public discussion of brainwashing declined by the late 1950s but emerged again during the 1960 Moscow trial of Francis Gary Powers. Reissuing *Brain-washing* with a new final chapter of psychological diagnosis of the American international dilemma, Edward Hunter cited neuropsychiatrist Dr. Leon Freedom who had identified a "national neurosis" created "by communism for purposes of subversion and conquest."[76] The primary symptom of this neurosis was loss of the sense of indignation over outrages foreign (the Communist invasion of Hungary) and domestic ("teenage murders on city streets"). Signaling the psychological's further entrenchment as well as the continuing sense of the need for a bunkered mind was the popular film, *The Manchurian Candidate* (1962). Unlike the traditional western, whose male lead's violent acts are sufficient to right wrongs and establish his character, this film focused on the inner life of its American hero, and showed "what can go wrong with [American] ideals when the inner life is made unsound or is invaded by political virus."[77]

After the Korean War, the term "brainwashing" migrated widely, most strikingly to segregationist discourses about the ascendant civil rights movement. A University of Alabama student's father accused a psychology professor of "brainwashing" his daughter into a belief in integration, and Governor Orval Faubus

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74. Biderman, *March to Calumny*, pp. 153, 154. So, too, Tennessee Senator Estes Kefauver complained of the Code that its principles "are excellent and highly beneficial for club conditions. . . . But what I would like to know is whether we as a nation are playing square with some of the boys . . . from rural communities . . . who had but a few years of education," *New York Times*, August 21, 1955.

75. "G.I.s outshine eggheads in resisting Reds," *Saturday Evening Post*, October 31, 1953, 10–12.

76. Hunter, *Brainwashing*, p. 324.

77. Fred Inglis, *The Cruel Peace: Everyday Life in the Cold War* (New York: Basic Books, 1991), p. 99; Richard Slotkin, *Gunfighter Nation: The Myth of the Frontier in Twentieth Century America* (New York: Harper Perennial, 1992).

charged that antisegregationist Presbyterian ministers had been brainwashed by "left-wingers and Communists."[78] By the 1960s, the term frequently described the techniques of expanding religious sects, or any instance where undue or inexplicable persuasions on the once and ideally unitary American mind were seen at work.

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When the national security state arrived on the scene, some social segments were already deeply conversant in the language of psychology. But the nuclear age and anti-communism allowed those discourses to colonize new areas of social relations (such as the military itself) and in new ways, as when the dangers of indirect homefront attack and cultural erosion were mapped onto psychological notions of emotional vulnerability. Psychologists themselves helped invent mass concerns with hidden, politically subversive interiorities, mental weakness and suggestibility to Communist blandishments. And new forms of warfare—defined as psychological—were made to seem both modern and humane through association with this most "human" and cutting-edge science. The needs of the self and the state were produced or redefined in this context, now teeming with soldiers, psychologists, and militarized subjects.

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78. *New York Times*, May 30, 1955; *New York Times*, September 17, 1958.