

continuous, COORDINATED, and carefully selected PROGRAM of surreptitious coercion, as found in a comprehensive program of "coercive persuasion."

**Truly peaceful religious persuasion practices would never attempt to force, compel and dominate the free wills or minds of its members through coercive behavioral techniques or covert hypnotism.** They would have no difficulty coexisting peacefully with U.S. laws meant to protect the public from such practices.

Looking like peaceful persuasion is precisely what makes coercive persuasion less likely to attract attention or to mobilize opposition. It is also part of what makes it such a devastating control technology. Victims of coercive persuasion have: no signs of physical abuse, convincing rationalizations for the radical or abrupt changes in their behavior, a convincing "sincerity, and they have been changed so gradually that they don't oppose it because they usually aren't even aware of it.

Deciding if coercive persuasion was used requires case-by-case careful analysis of all the influence techniques used and how they were applied. By focusing on the medium of delivery and process used, not the message, and on the critical differences, not the coincidental similarities, which system was used becomes clear. The Influence Continuum helps make the difference between peaceful persuasion and coercive persuasion easier to distinguish.

#### VARIABLES

Not all tactics used in a coercive persuasion type environment will always be coercive. Some tactics of an innocuous or cloaking nature will be mixed in.

Not all individuals exposed to coercive persuasion or thought reform programs are effectively coerced into becoming participants.

How individual suggestibility, psychological and physiological strengths, weakness, and differences react with the degree of severity, continuity, and comprehensiveness in which the various tactics and content of a coercive persuasion program are applied, determine the program's effectiveness and/or the degree of severity of damage caused to its victims.

For example, in *United States v. Lee* 455 U.S. 252, 257-258 (1982), the California Supreme Court found that

"when a person is subjected to coercive persuasion without his knowledge or consent... [he may] develop serious and sometimes irreversible physical and psychiatric disorders, up to and including schizophrenia, self-mutilation, and suicide."

#### WHAT ARE THE CRITERIA OF A COERCIVE PERSUASION PROGRAM?

A). Determine if the subject individual held enough knowledge and volitional capacity to make the decision to change his or her ideas or beliefs.

B). Determine whether that individual did, in fact, adopt, affirm, or reject those ideas or beliefs on his own.

C). Then, if necessary, all that should be examined is the behavioral processes used, not ideological content. One needs to examine only the behavioral processes used in their "conversion." Each alleged coercive persuasion situation should be reviewed on a case-by-case basis. The characteristics of coercive persuasion programs are severe, well-understood, and they are not accidental.

#### COERCIVE PERSUASION IS NOT VOLUNTARY, PEACEFUL, RELIGIOUS PRACTICE OR CENTRAL TO ANY BONA FIDE RELIGION.

Coercive persuasion is not a religious practice, it is a control technology. It is not a belief or ideology, it is a technological process.

As a PROCESS, it can be examined by experts on its technology COMPLETELY SEPARATE from any idea or belief content, similar to examining the technical process of hypnotic induction distinct from the meaning or value of the post-hypnotic suggestions.

Examining PROCESSES in this manner can not violate First Amendment religious protections.

Coercive persuasion is antithetical to the First Amendment. It is the unfair manipulation of other's biological and psychological weaknesses and susceptibilities. It is a psychological FORCE technology, not of a free society, but of a criminal or totalitarian society. It is certainly not a spiritual or religious technology.

Any organization using coercive persuasion on its members as a CENTRAL practice that also claims to be a religion is turning the SANCTUARY of the First Amendment into a fortress for psychological assault. It is a contradiction of terms and should be "disestablished."

Coercive persuasion is a subtle, compelling psychological force which attacks an even more fundamental and important freedom than our "freedom of religion." ITS REPREHENSIBILITY AND DANGER IS THAT IT ATTACKS OUR SELF-DETERMINISM AND FREE WILL, OUR MOST FUNDAMENTAL CONSTITUTIONAL FREEDOMS.

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Pamphlet 223

## How does mind control work?: A technical overview of mind control tactics

Dr. Margaret T. Singer

Terminology note: Today Mind control or brainwashing in academia is commonly referred to as coercive persuasion, coercive psychological systems or coercive influence. The short description below comes from Dr. Margaret Singer professor emeritus at the University of California at Berkeley the acknowledged leading authority in the world on mind control and cults. This document, in substance, was presented to the U.S. Supreme Court as an educational Appendix on coercive psychological systems in the case *Wollersheim v. Church of Scientology* 89-1367 and 89-1361. The *Wollersheim* case was being considered related to issues involving abuse in this area.

Coercion is defined as, "to restrain or constrain by force..." Legally it often implies the use of PHYSICAL FORCE or physical or legal threat. This traditional concept of coercion is far better understood than the technological concepts of "coercive persuasion" which are effective restraining, impairing, or compelling through the gradual application of PSYCHOLOGICAL FORCES.

**A coercive persuasion program is a behavioral change technology applied to cause the "learning" and "adoption" of a set of behaviors or an ideology under certain conditions.** It is distinguished from other forms of benign social learning or peaceful persuasion by the conditions under which it is conducted and by the techniques of environmental and interpersonal manipulation employed to suppress particular behaviors and to train others. Over time, coercive persuasion, a psychological force akin in some ways to our legal concepts of undue influence, can be even MORE effective than pain, torture, drugs, and use of physical force and legal threats.

The Korean War "Manchurian Candidate" misconception of the need for suggestibility-increasing drugs, and physical pain and torture, to effect thought reform, is generally associated with the old concepts and models of brainwashing. Today, they are not necessary for a coercive persuasion program to be effective. With drugs, physical pain, torture, or even a physically coercive threat, you can often temporarily make someone do something against their will. You can even make them do something they hate or they really did not like or want to do at the time. They do it, but their attitude is not changed.

This is much different and far less devastating than that which you are able to achieve with the improvements of coercive persuasion. With coercive persuasion you can change

people's attitudes without their knowledge and volition. You can create new "attitudes" where they will do things willingly which they formerly may have detested, things which previously only torture, physical pain, or drugs could have coerced them to do.

The advances in the extreme anxiety and emotional stress production technologies found in coercive persuasion supersede old style coercion that focuses on pain, torture, drugs, or threat in that these older systems do not change attitude so that subjects follow orders "willingly." Coercive persuasion changes both attitude AND behavior, not JUST behavior.

## **THE PURPOSES AND TACTICS OF COERCIVE PERSUASION**

Coercive persuasion or thought reform as it is sometimes known, is best understood as a coordinated system of graduated coercive influence and behavior control designed to deceptively and surreptitiously manipulate and influence individuals, usually in a group setting, in order for the originators of the program to profit in some way, normally financially or politically.

The essential strategy used by those operating such programs is to systematically select, sequence and coordinate numerous coercive persuasion tactics over CONTINUOUS PERIODS OF TIME. There are seven main tactic types found in various combinations in a coercive persuasion program. A coercive persuasion program can still be quite effective without the presence of ALL seven of these tactic types.

**TACTIC 1. The individual is prepared for thought reform through increased suggestibility and/or "softening up,"** specifically through hypnotic or other suggestibility-increasing techniques such as: A. Extended audio, visual, verbal, or tactile fixation drills; B. Excessive exact repetition of routine activities; C. Decreased sleep; D. Nutritional restriction.

**TACTIC 2. Using rewards and punishments, efforts are made to establish considerable control over a person's social environment, time, and sources of social support.** Social isolation is promoted. Contact with family and friends is abridged, as is contact with persons who do not share group-approved attitudes. Economic and other dependence on the group is fostered. (In the forerunner to coercive persuasion, brainwashing, this was rather easy to achieve through simple imprisonment.)

**TACTIC 3. Disconfirming information and nonsupporting opinions are prohibited in group communication.** Rules exist about permissible topics to discuss with outsiders. Communication is highly controlled. An "in-group" language is usually constructed.

**TACTIC 4. Frequent and intense attempts are made to cause a person to re-evaluate the most central aspects of his**

**or her experience of self and prior conduct in negative ways.** Efforts are designed to destabilize and undermine the subject's basic consciousness, reality awareness, world view, emotional control, and defense mechanisms as well as getting them to reinterpret their life's history, and adopt a new version of causality.

**TACTIC 5. Intense and frequent attempts are made to undermine a person's confidence in himself and his judgment, creating a sense of powerlessness.**

**TACTIC 6. Nonphysical punishments are used** such as intense humiliation, loss of privilege, social isolation, social status changes, intense guilt, anxiety, manipulation and other techniques for creating strong aversive emotional arousals, etc.

**TACTIC 7. Certain secular psychological threats [force] are used or are present:** That failure to adopt the approved attitude, belief, or consequent behavior will lead to severe punishment or dire consequence, (e.g. physical or mental illness, the reappearance of a prior physical illness, drug dependence, economic collapse, social failure, divorce, disintegration, failure to find a mate, etc.). Another set of criteria has to do with defining other common elements of mind control systems. If most of Robert Jay Lifton's eight point model of thought reform is being used in a cultic organization, it is most likely a dangerous and destructive cult. These eight points follow:

### **Robert Jay Lifton's Eight Point Model of Thought Reform**

1. **ENVIRONMENT CONTROL.** Limitation of many/all forms of communication with those outside the group. Books, magazines, letters and visits with friends and family are taboo. "Come out and be separate!"

2. **MYSTICAL MANIPULATION.** The potential convert to the group becomes convinced of the higher purpose and special calling of the group through a profound encounter / experience, for example, through an alleged miracle or prophetic word of those in the group.

3. **DEMAND FOR PURITY.** An explicit goal of the group is to bring about some kind of change, whether it be on a global, social, or personal level. "Perfection is possible if one stays with the group and is committed."

4. **CULT OF CONFESSION.** The unhealthy practice of self disclosure to members in the group. Often in the context of a public gathering in the group, admitting past sins and imperfections, even doubts about the group and critical thoughts about the integrity of the leaders.

5. **SACRED SCIENCE.** The group's perspective is absolutely true and completely adequate to explain EVERYTHING. The doctrine is not subject to

amendments or question. ABSOLUTE conformity to the doctrine is required.

6. **LOADED LANGUAGE.** A new vocabulary emerges within the context of the group. Group members "think" within the very abstract and narrow parameters of the group's doctrine. The terminology sufficiently stops members from thinking critically by reinforcing a "black and white" mentality. Loaded terms and clichés prejudice thinking.

7. **DOCTRINE OVER PERSON.** Pre-group experience and group experience are narrowly and decisively interpreted through the absolute doctrine, even when experience contradicts the doctrine.

8. **DISPENSING OF EXISTENCE.** Salvation is possible only in the group. Those who leave the group are doomed.

### **COERCIVE PERSUASION IS NOT PEACEFUL PERSUASION**

Programs identified with the above-listed seven tactics have in common the elements of attempting to greatly modify a person's self-concept, perceptions of reality, and interpersonal relations. When successful in inducing these changes, coercive thought reform programs also, among other things, create the potential forces necessary for exercising undue influence over a person's independent decision-making ability, and even for turning the individual into a deployable agent for the organization's benefit without the individual's meaningful knowledge or consent.

Coercive persuasion programs are effective because individuals experiencing the deliberately planned severe stresses they generate can only reduce the pressures by accepting the system or adopting the behaviors being promulgated by the purveyors of the coercion program. The relationship between the person and the coercive persuasion tactics are DYNAMIC in that while the force of the pressures, rewards, and punishments brought to bear on the person are considerable, they do not lead to a stable, meaningfully SELF-CHOSEN reorganization of beliefs or attitudes. Rather, they lead to a sort of coerced compliance and a situationally required elaborate rationalization, for the new conduct.

Once again, in order to maintain the new attitudes or "decisions," sustain the rationalization, and continue to unduly influence a person's behavior over time, coercive tactics must be more or less CONTINUOUSLY applied. A fiery, "hell and damnation" guilt-ridden sermon from the pulpit or several hours with a high-pressure salesman or other single instances of the so-called peaceful persuasions do not constitute the "necessary chords and orchestration" of a SEQUENCED,