

# Psychology's Horrifying Descent Into the Medical-Industrial Complex

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Almost everything wrong with professional psychology shouts out from this simple headline, *Guidelines for Psychological Practice in Health Care Delivery Systems*. This article, from the most recent issue of The American Psychologist (January 2013), mandates how psychologists should comport themselves in medical settings. Joseph Stalin would make room in his inner circle for the officials of the American Psychological Association (APA) who wrote this horrid document, mandating that psychologists comport with the industrialization of medicine and, thereby, treat human beings as organisms, rather than as a seeing, hearing, sensing, touching, feeling persons.

Last Spring, I co-taught a class in British Object Relations Theory at the New Center for Psychoanalysis (NCP). We were discussing the nature of science when a student asked my co-instructor, a psychiatrist, "So, is medicine science?" She answered, "No, it's an industry." Her reply shockingly validates that the vitality of our practice, its humanism, is being fed to the jaws of the medical industrial complex.

In keeping with the medical model, consider this autopsy of the *Guidelines for Psychological Practice in Health Care Delivery Systems*. "*Guidelines*" suggests rules and regulations related to grammar, to government, to the slaughterhouse. *Health Care Delivery Systems* is machine-speak, reminiscent of the way that cluster bombs may be delivered remotely using *MIRVs*, Multiple Independent Re-entry Vehicles.

The document begins, in part I, with: *Distinct Professional Identity Within the Health Care Delivery System*. When did clinical psychologists lose their unique identity and why would psychologists need advice regarding how to find it? If psychologists work in health care settings, they would naturally understand that their scope of practice differs from physicians. The APA Ethics Codes or, God forbid, common sense, would offer sufficient direction for them to explain their services to patients or colleagues in those settings.

Guideline 2 calls for psychologists to *Seek to Understand the Internally and Externally Imposed Expectations and Requirements of the Systems Within Which They Practice*. Nietzsche, Heidegger, and Sartre turn in their graves at the existence of such shameful, institutional propaganda. We must work within "expectations" and have knowledge of the "requirements" related to health care "systems."

Guideline 5 reads, *Psychologists Strive to be Involved in the Development of Institutional Policies Regarding Professional Scope of Practice and Participation in Service Delivery*. Here resides the clarion call for conformity. Above all make sure you get a share of the health care pie so that you can "deliver" your services to some poor medical patient who may need simply someone to talk to about the shame they feel about being sick, or the worry they have regarding the impact of their illness on their loved ones.

The next Guideline, Number 10, reads, *Psychologists are encouraged to offer their special expertise in the administration and management of both psychological and other professional practice within health care*

*delivery systems.* NORA – PLEASE BE A BIT GLIB HERE RE ALL “MEDICINE” NEEDS IS ANOTHER NON-MANAGER TYPE OF PERSON TRYING TO MANAGE AND THEREBY FUCKING THINGS UP.

Psychology can be of most help to humanity by focusing on what led to its separation from philosophy in the first place, an interest in the *psychology* of the human being. As socialized medicine enters the health care system, as it rightfully should, professional psychology should make sure to honor the *psychology* of patients, namely how they feel, how they are treated, and how well they are interpersonally supported. In recalling my post-operative experience at Huntington Hospital, I remember this most: An elderly volunteer visited me with a gorgeous, furry beast, an animal therapy dog. She took a picture that I retain to this day, showing me in my hospital gown, sporting beads from India, smiling next to that wonderful, warm dog. The photograph memorializes the very moment during my hospitalization in which I recovered my humanity and began my full recovery.