

CIA Interrogation Techniques Revealed

Book review

Bill Blank

1998

A review of:

In TERRORgation: The CIA's Secret Manual on Coercive Questioning, edited by Jon Elliston and Charles Overbeck, illustrated, Parascope, 1430 Willamette, #329, Eugene, OR 97401, 56 pp., \$5.95 or www.parascope.com

One anniversary you may have missed in 1997 was the 50-year anniversary of the birth of the Central Intelligence Agency, the secret government organization principally devoted to waging covert state terrorism. To put the spotlight on this repressive legacy, Parascope, a small publisher, has released the previously classified 1963 KUBARK Counterintelligence Interrogation. (KUBARK is the CIA's code name.) Thanks is due to Elliston and Overbeck for helping make available this chilling manual used in the agency's long-hidden crimes.

Although certain sentences remained blacked out in the name of CIA (in)security, there's plenty of terrifying technical instruction stated clearly in deadpan prose for anyone wondering about the mentality within this darkest of agencies. The manual lists, in chillingly detached bureaucratic language how to extract desired information through the use of sensory deprivation, pain, electric shock, hypnosis and drugs.

It would be a mistake to dismiss this publication as just a tragic Vietnam footnote or an institutionalized storybook for curious sadists.

In a section titled, "Coercive Counterintelligence Interrogation of Resistant Sources" (uncooperative types), the description of the methodical use of force in getting difficult information is quite disturbing.

There are also lengthier sections detailing considerable information on non-coercive methods of interrogation now favored by modern law enforcement agencies throughout the world.

Although the manual was designed primarily for search and destroy missions during foreign wars, if one simply replaces the prisoner-of-war terminology of "interrogatee" with "detainee" or "suspect," then the non-physical techniques listed are easily transferable to more common run-ins with local law enforcement.

The following instruction from the manual could be used at the neighborhood precinct no less than half a world away: "The non-coercive interrogation is not conducted without pressure. On the contrary, the goal is to generate maximum pressure, or at least as much as is needed to induce compliance. The difference is that the pressure is generated inside the interrogatee. His resistance is sapped, his urge to yield is fortified, until in the end he defeats himself."

Although it's well known that interrogation is part of the job description for police, seldom has its brutality been presented so frankly for public scrutiny. Digest this information for those dreaded encounters you hope you'll never have. ParaScope's CIA Interrogation manual is the next best thing to having a lawyer present (or a get-out-of-jail free pass).

fifth Estate

Bill Blank
CIA Interrogation Techniques Revealed
Book review
1998

<https://www.fifthestate.org/archive/351-summer-1998/cia-interrogation-techniques-revealed>
Fifth Estate #351, Summer 1998

[fifthestate.anarchistlibraries.net](https://www.fifthestate.org)