

What Prison Psychologists Have Helped Me To Realize

By Troy T. Thomas

The alleged mental and behavioral maladaptiveness of oppressed African peoples **is** a political-economic necessity for the maintenance of white domination and imperialism. Furthermore, the Eurocentric mental health establishment has entered into collusion with the Eurocentric political establishment to oppress and exploit African peoples by officially sanctioning these egregious practices through its misdiagnosing, mislabeling, and mistreating of African peoples' behavioral reactions to their oppression and their efforts to win their freedom and independence.

when we talk about the so-called diagnosing of our people, it involves an analysis not only of the behavior of our people, but

of the behavior of the society as a whole; and we must recognize this fact and face up to it as a people. Diagnosis then is not merely procedural or neutral. It is political to the core: It is a political act!

Through diagnosis, the ruling society applies its ideological measures to the recalcitrant members of that society. It maintains through diagnosis the status quo, and most of all, through diagnosis, the society - where that society is unjust - justifies its repressions. Thus, when an individual is labeled in an unjust and unequal society, and is labeled by the very people who maintain its injustice and inequality, then the very diagnostic process itself, and the very labels attached the victims of that society

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are the very means by which repression is carried out in that system.

Consequently, those in the so-called "helping" professions and in the business of diagnosing other people's behavior must recognize the degree to which they are a part of the repressive mechanism of that system.

Thus, "diagnosis" in this context becomes a part of the problem. It becomes the means by which the establishment denies its own culpability. It becomes a defense mechanism by which the establishment denies its guilt and defends its self-image and prerogatives.

Diagnosis becomes the means by which the establishment projects its criminality and its own insanity onto its victims.

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Diagnosis is in this instance a mechanism of denial, projection, and repression—both psychological and political.

Through diagnosis then, what do we get as a preventive program? More policemen, more retaining of people in the "ghettos", stricter and swifter sentences. They say, "Bring them in today and string them up tomorrow!" "Build more prisons, inject more potent psychotropic drugs, carry weapons to defend yourself, more birth control, more positive images, hold up the Black tokens so that they can learn to mute their behavior while they are striving to make it! More token job training, more government project-housing, more summer camps, more P.A.L.s (Police Athletic Leagues).

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More of every kind of band-aid solution rather than a fundamental restructuring of the sick society itself!

Psychology/Psychiatry And The Repression of Frankenstein

Diagnosis becomes a prerequisite for the legitimization of repression—psychiatric/psychological repression as well as legal and political repression—for the initiation of state-terror. See diagnosis
Serving as a means for establishing
State-terror; as a means for the transformation of sadistic practices into the practices of rehabilitation, correction, psychiatry, psychology and social work. The establishment thus legitimizes its monopoly of the right to incarcerate, torture, harass,

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main and Kill in order to maintain its order through diagnosis, through the correct and bureaucratic execution of procedure. After careful, thoughtful, precise probing, measuring and testing, Dr. Frankenstein, in the name of science and humanity and humanness, labels his own creation a monster, its behavior as monstrous. It possesses no social graces. No, it gets loud on the subway, calls itself by a degrading name for the world to hear, curses, smokes, plays loud music. We see it there, It is brutal, it is dangerous, self-centered, peevish, drinks, smokes a lot, and eats a lot of odd things, just as predicted by the criteria. Its behavior, the conditions of

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its life correlate highly with their expectations.

And therefore "we declare," Dr. Frankenstein declares, if it looks like a monster, if it walks like a monster, if it talks like a monster, then it must be a monster - it fits the monster profile: "our tests are valid." And this is ultimately what diagnosis does: It finds its own creation through the use of Eurocentric diagnostic instruments. Thus we find Dr. Frankenstein creating the monster, diagnosing the monster, then, rehabilitating the monster - and ultimately destroying the monster (death penalty). But who diagnoses Dr. Frankenstein? Is not the madness of the creature a reflection of the madness of the creator? Who will rehabilitate Dr. Frankenstein? Who will stop his fiendish experiments?

Conclusion

Every Eurocentric social institution conspires ~~with~~ to handcuff and incarcerate African consciousness, to justify and facilitate the subordination and exploitation of African peoples. This is the role of the Eurocentric "mental health" establishment.

A product and functionary of European imperialism this establishment promulgates explanatory systems, diagnostic techniques, labeling and treatment regimes which obscure the true origins of African mental disorders and maladaptiveness — the effects and aftereffects of white supremacy. By these means this establishment makes its most important contribution; ~~to the~~ to the falsification and misdirection of African consciousness and behavior.

In the context of a racist social system, psychological diagnosis, labeling and treatment of the behavior of politically/socially oppressed persons are political acts performed to attain political ends.

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For oppression begins as a psychological fact and is in good part a psychological state. If oppression is to operate with maximum efficiency, it must become and remain a psychological condition achieving self-perpetuating motion by its own internal dynamics and by its own inertial momentum.

The Eurocentric mental health establishment, a beneficiary of the white domination of African peoples (and other folks of color), is a very important cog in this self-perpetuating machine. Its reason for being is to nurture and sanction the imperialist and racist regime which fettered it. Thus its explanatory systems and its treatment approaches ultimately must be exposed as political ideology and oppressive political governance parading as empirically validated principles of psychological and medical science, and as "objective" -

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psychotherapeutic and psychiatric practices.
(Please note the term psychotherapist
Psycho-the-rapist and what
does psycho the rapist do? Rape
Your mind!) The Eurocentric mental
health establishment consequently cannot
provide adequate explanations, rationales,
preventative and remedial practices
for African peoples whose psychology
is derivative of a singularly unique
history and cultural experience
and of a necessarily revolutionary
drive to achieve liberation from
subordination (Slavery).

Just Some Food For
Thought!