

MARK WARREN MOODY
(betabilitarian@protonmail.com)

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BY ELECTRONIC MAIL

American Psychiatric Association
Attn.: Petros Levounis, President
800 Maine Avenue
S.W., Suite 900
Washington, DC 20024

apa@apa.org
Petros.Levounis@nyulangone.org

American Psychological Association
Attn.: Cynthia de las Fuentes, President
750 First St. NE
Washington, DC 20002-4242

cdelasfuentes@apaboard.org

Re.: *Questions Regarding*
21st Century American Mental Health.

Dear Doctors Levounis and de las Fuentes:

I am not a psychiatrist or a psychologist, though I have done significant work with the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual (“DSM”) in my twenty-five year career as a Manhattan litigator, and I have done significant personal psychological and (less so) psychiatric work.

I write to you as an American citizen sufficiently terrified of a second Republican (Trump) or Democrat(ic) Biden term that I embarked on a hopefully more than quixotic run for the Presidency of the United States.

First of all, I'd hope that you both believe, and would admit, that we still don't know much about the human brain, the most magnificent of all nature's creations – and certainly not enough to permit Elon Musk (or anyone else) to run human tests of **Neuralink**. The catastrophic possible results pale into insignificance when compared with, say, the catastrophic results of Perdue Pharma's (the Sackler family's) Opioid Massacre. Besides, we don't need Neuralink, we the People have got the world's information in the palms of our hands now. And if you acknowledge that in the first quarter of the 21st century we really don't know much about the human brain, then those who use the phrase Artificial Intelligence or its acronym A.I. should be roundly castigated for not calling it – which I wish I'd come up with myself¹ – **Automated Idiocy**?

What is the American Psychiatric Association's and the American Psychological Association's position on human testing of Neuralink? Why on earth would the Food and Drug Administration permit this without input from, and/or approval by, your organizations? As you well know, mere psychiatric medication remains an only sometimes-successful crapshoot.

Addiction is endemic in 21st century America, no matter whether the addiction is to a substance – nicotine, alcohol, sugar, psychiatric medication, heroin, or cocaine, by way of limited examples, or to a behavior – sex, gambling, violence, or shopping, by way of limited examples. We now know, in the 21st century, that addiction would be much less prevalent if three things were promoted in America.

We now know, from Psychology Professor Bruce Alexander, that cocaine's addictive qualities disappear if an animal (which I'm sure you'd agree human beings are) is given a choice between addictive oblivion and a

¹ I can't remember who said it. If I could I would; but it was almost certainly on one of the shows or some of the writings (less likely because I remember writers' names better) of one of the people or groups listed on *21st Century Common Sense's* Exhibit B (<https://betabiliarian.com/pdfs/21stCCSExhibitB.pdf>).

foreseeable possibility of happiness²
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rat_Park. We also now know, from Harvard University’s largest longitudinal study of human behavior in human history, that better relationships with other human beings (<https://www.adultdevelopmentstudy.org>) will lower addiction levels. Thirdly, we now know that Alcoholics Anonymous is the “most effective path” to recovery from alcohol addiction (<https://med.stanford.edu/news/all-news/2020/03/alcoholics-anonymous-most-effective-path-to-alcohol-abstinence.html>) because it is based on Bill Wilson’s (who Time named one of the 100 most influential thinkers of the 20th century) 12-step program which heavily depends— as Dr. Carl Jung knew – on curing spiritual (some might call it emotional) malaise with, among other things, the fellowship of other human beings. The – fully voluntary and free – 12-step program has been adapted to all kinds of addiction (<https://betabiliarian.com/pdfs/21stCCS3.0.pdf>, pp.52-57).

What is the American Psychiatric Association’s and the American Psychological Association’s position on the endemicity of addiction in 21st century America and a comprehensive solution being comprised of: (i) increasing human beings’ happiness by improving the material conditions of their lives; (ii) improving relationships with other human beings around us; and (iii) attracting those gripped by, or on the verge of, addiction to the voluntary and free 12-step programs? Doesn’t that sound like 21st century common sense?

In the 21st century, wouldn’t you both agree that the most *dangerous* mental illness that humanity has to cure – maybe, hopefully, by carefully weeding it out entirely with educative social norms – is **psychopathy**? The DSM (now 5-TR) “is the standard classification of mental disorders used by mental health professionals in the United States” (<https://www.psychiatry.org/psychiatrists/practice/dsm>) and is written,

² A foreseeable possibility of happiness is akin to being provided with the basic needs of life, per Psychology Professor Abraham Maslow’s (the 10th-most-cited-psychologist of the 20th century) Hierarchy of Needs.

compiled, and published by Doctor Levounis' organization the American Psychiatric Association.

Yet the DSM does not define psychopathy. Many people believe, perhaps usefully and accurately, that psychopathy is sociopathy coupled with violence. If that's not a useful definition of psychopathy, I struggle to understand why there should be two words for the same condition. Pursuant to the DSM, in "simple terms, a sociopath can be defined as someone who consistently disregards the rights and well-being of others. They may manipulate or exploit people for personal gain without feeling any guilt or remorse"; "One of the defining features of sociopathy is a marked absence of empathy towards others"; "Sociopaths are skilled manipulators who excel at using charm and deceit to achieve their goals"; "Sociopaths often exhibit impulsive behavior without considering its long-term effects"; "Many sociopaths possess an uncanny ability to charm and manipulate people through superficial charm and charisma"; "Sociopaths rarely feel remorse or guilt for their actions, regardless of how harmful they may be to others. They are typically indifferent towards the pain they cause and show little concern for the well-being of those affected by their behavior." <https://psychology.tips/sociopath-dsm-5/>

It may seem, to an American citizen, that all of those qualities define most American Presidents of the past sixty years (as well as most Senators of the past sixty years, most House leaders of the past sixty years, and most CEOs and board members of multinational American corporations of the past sixty years). Otherwise, how could Lyndon Johnson have dropped Napalm in Vietnam, Ronald Reagan perpetrated Iran-Contra, Bill Clinton perpetrated the Bosnian War, George W. Bush perpetrated Iraq (where sanctions had already killed 500,000 Iraqi children which, according to Bill Clinton's Secretary of State Madeline Albright was "worth it"³), Barack Obama perpetrated the Libyan War (resulting in Libya now being an open-air slave market and prompting Obama's Secretary of State to cackle joyously, after Moammar Ghaddafi's inhuman slaughter, "We came, We

³ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KP1OAD9jSaI>.

Saw, He died”⁴), Donald Trump happily bombed Syria and assassinated Qaseem Soleimani, and Joe Biden perpetrates genocide (whether by bombs or starvation) in Gaza and intentionally slaughtered 500,000 Ukrainian soldiers in a failed effort to “weaken Russia”. This is to say nothing of their domestic policies which permit and encourage rampant police murder and brutality, the uniquely American pandemic of school shootings, the Opioid Massacre which killed and immiserated millions of Americans while making one family – the Sacklers - Billionaires, and a health care system that is so expensive and inaccessible that at least 50,000 Americans die every year for the crime of not being able to afford healthcare. Certainly, a person (whether a “job creator” or an elected representative) who failed to rail against *any* of the foregoing would qualify as a sociopath. If violence combined with sociopathy is an appropriate definition of psychopathy, then they’d all qualify as psychopaths too.

We know that psychopathy exists in a tiny proportion of the population. “In fact, using the PCL-R, which is currently considered the ‘gold standard’ for the assessment and definition of psychopathy, the prevalence is only 1.2%”

<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC8374040/>. 1.2% roughly characterizes the proportion of the population responsible for funding both the American Psychiatric and Psychological Associations; the rest of us are the 99% (popularized by Occupy Wall Street, The Tea Party, Bernie Sanders, and the anti-genocide student protesters across America today).

Why *doesn't* the DSM define psychopathy then? According to the American Psychological Association, Doctor de las Fuentes’ organization, it’s because some of those studying the disorder “worried that a psychopathy diagnosis would stigmatize people too much, while others were concerned that clinicians would have difficulty in accurately assessing traits like callousness or cruel or indifferent disregard of others.”

<https://www.apa.org/monitor/2022/03/ce-corner-psychopathy>.

⁴ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6DXDU48RHLU>.

Surely common sense and humanity dictate that psychopathy *should* be stigmatized (that's the best way to weed it out), and given that psychopathy is the most dangerous of all mental illnesses (closely followed by sociopathy) every ounce of the American Psychiatric and Psychological Associations' power and influence should be devoted to enabling accurate assessments of it, no matter how "difficult"?

As far as I can tell, no one knows whether sociopathy or psychopathy are learned or innate. Because I, personally, don't believe that human beings are born evil (psychopathy or sociopathy being clinical terms for that condition), my instinct is that psychopathy is learned. If psychopathy is learned, surely it – in the right circumstances – can be unlearned? Constant enabling of sociopathy's opposites might be a good start: teach sociopaths and psychopaths empathy, patience, humility, kindness and love for human beings (whether they come from different cultures or not). If *hate* can be learned and unlearned

(<https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/blog/hearts-and-minds/201703/hate-learning-and-unlearning-it>), is there any scientific basis upon which to conclude that psychopathy and sociopathy can or cannot?

Do you agree, with me, that the findings of Harvard and Yale Psychology Professor Stanley Milgram (the 46th-most-cited psychologist of the 20th century) from his 1960s Behavioral Studies of Obedience experiment that Professor Milgram recounted in his 1974 book *Obedience to Authority* should – largely because Professor Milgram's findings explain how Nazi Germany and the Holocaust were possible – be taught to every American? The results of Milgram's experiment proved (against vast academic prediction) that nearly a full **two-thirds of us** would be willing to take another human being's life just because a gentle authority figure told us that doing so was "part of the experiment" (or words similar thereto).

It is my contention that we should be taught this – to be **more disobedient to authority** (obviously excluding children to parents) – at a relatively early age, so as our elected officials cannot manipulate us to perpetrate atrocities, or to perpetrate atrocities in our name and have us

turn a blind eye to it. As you both know, Hannah Arendt famously characterized this as “the banality of evil.” Do you both agree?

America also currently suffers from an endemic of **brainwashing** (no doubt at least partially enabled by the addiction endemic).

There is a large contingent of Americans whose brains have been washed to clean them of clarity about Donald Trump (largely because of their clarity about Joe Biden) and thus to feverishly support Trump. These people have forgotten that Trump didn’t lock up, or even prosecute, Hilary Clinton, and did not even begin to drain the swamp (John Bolton and Mike Pompeo being quintessential swamp creatures), and *astonishingly* includes a lot of women who dismiss Trump’s odious “grab ‘em by the pussy” comments to Billy Bush while on camera heading towards a bus as “locker room talk”. That may be locker room talk amongst the super-rich who hung around with the likes of Jeffrey Epstein, Bill Clinton, Leon Black, and Harvey Weinstein, but not in most locker rooms in America. And these people have certainly forgotten that Trump made part of his fortune by constantly stiffing people who worked for him and that the other part of his fortune was inherited. The people in this contingent are defamed by Democrats as being deplorable, in a brainwashed cult.

Then there is a large contingent of Americans (though it is shrinking rapidly – which will, in all likelihood give rise to a Trump “mandate” to do whatever he likes) whose brains have been washed to lack clarity about Joe Biden (largely because of their clarity about Donald Trump) and thus to feverishly support Biden. These people have forgotten that Biden ran unsuccessfully for President on 3 earlier occasions and was rejected because he’s detestable. They have forgotten that Biden lied – bigly – about his academic credentials and that Biden is more-than-credibly accused of rape by Tara Reade (who now lives in exile in Russia). They have forgotten that Biden is principally responsible for Clarence Thomas’ ascension (by demeaning Anita Hill) and that Biden bandied about the term super-predator and was one of the principal Senate protagonists for getting the United States into the Iraq War. They have forgotten that Biden is intimately and personally involved (together with his son and brother) in

Ukrainian corruption (and they forget Biden’s Chinese corruption even more easily just because Ivanka and Jared did that too). And *now*, largely because of their fear of Trump, they are willing to forgive Biden for genocide in both Palestine and Ukraine. The people in this contingent are defamed by Republicans as being in a woke brainwashed cult.

Do you fear, as the heads of the United States’ most august mental health institutions, that woke versus deplorable is the groundwork for something akin to civil war? And do you know, as I do, that 99% of both sides are decent Americans?

In a choice between the lesser of two evils (or psychopaths), the choice between Trump and Biden (again!), as Professor Noam Chomsky has hinted, is almost impossible to discern. And if Americans are not sufficiently *disobedient* to authority, the future looks incredibly bleak with happiness minimized.

It seems readily apparent that *neither* of these groups has the full factual record on the tips of their tongues – otherwise they wouldn’t be capable of significant, much less vociferous, support for either Biden or Trump. Psychology Professor Joel E. Dimsdale, in his 2022 book *Dark Persuasion* (at p.209), decried the American Psychological Association’s failure to accept and adopt the recommendations from the report of the Association’s Task Force on Deceptive and Indirect Techniques of Persuasion and Control⁵. The Afterword of Professor Dimsdale’s book concludes:

⁵ The report recommended that: (i) American psychologists should pay profound attention to deceptive and indirect techniques of social influence; (ii) American psychologists should study how to resist and neutralize such techniques; (iii) the American Psychological Association consider revision of its ethical code in light of such techniques; and (iv) American psychologists “ought to direct more attention to educating the public about such techniques”. Why did the American Psychological Association fail to accept and adopt these recommendations Doctor de las Fuentes, or is Professor Dimsdale wrong?

“George Orwell soberly observed, ‘If you want a picture of the future, imagine a boot stamping on a human face – for ever.’ If we ignore the potential developments of brainwashing in the twenty-first century, we will be defenseless against it, and Orwell will have been right. **But I do believe we have a choice.** We need to look back and consider how brainwashing developed in the twentieth century [it’s highest exposition being Nazi Germany] in order to prepare ourselves for the new century. And we need to listen to H. G. Wells, who warned that ‘human history becomes more and more a race between education and catastrophe.’ We are in such a race now. It is up to us to control how dark persuasion shapes our future. [emphasis supplied]”

In conclusion – and while I recognize that achieving society-wide mental health will involve much more – why don’t the American Psychiatric Association (whose *mission* is to “promote universal and equitable access to the highest quality care for all people affected by mental disorders, including substance use disorders”) and the American Psychological Association (whose *mission* is to “promote the advancement, communication, and application of psychological science and knowledge to benefit society and improve lives”): (i) promote a ban on Neuralink testing on human beings for the foreseeable future; (ii) encourage freedom from addiction by improving the material conditions of American life, promoting better relationships with family, friends, colleagues, and neighbors, and encouraging Americans’ use of 12-step programs; (iii) begin the task of identifying and weeding out psychopathy; (iv) explain to the American People the devastating consequences of slavish obedience to authority (excluding children to parents); and (v) explain to the American People how brainwashing occurs, and what the best antidote to brainwashing is (likely mere curious skepticism aided by reading).

It seems to me that if The American Psychiatric Association and The American Psychological Association undertook those five (5) tasks, the American People’s mental health would, quite inexpensively, begin to quickly improve.

One final thing which I wanted to avoid, but couldn't. I assume you're familiar with the Tavistock Clinic? Don't you agree with me that if we don't allow *children* under the age of – whatever – to vote, drive, smoke, drink, or be in the military (for obvious reasons), then as a society we shouldn't allow them to make life-altering decisions for themselves by chemical or surgical self-mutilation while they may be hormonally confused by their sexuality?

Thanks for reading,

s/

Mark Warren Moody

cc: Professor Bruce Alexander (alexande@sfu.ca)
Professor Joel E. Dimsdale (jdimsdale@ucsd.edu)
Professor Carl L. Hart (clh42@columbia.edu)
Physician Gabor Maté (by contact form www.drgabormate.com)
Professor Jordan Peterson (business@jordanpeterson.com;
media@jordanpeterson.com)
Professor Royce Froehlich – and – Donald Ferrell
Co-Presidents, C. J. Jung Institute of New York
(cgjunginstitute.ny@verizon.net; info@cgjungny.org)
Kristene A. Doyle, Ph.D.
Executive Director, Albert Ellis Institute
(SSWOutreach@uconn.edu; info@albertellis.org)

The Internet.