

# The Origins of Torture In Endured Child Abuse

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Many people have claimed to be appalled by the acts of perversion committed by American soldiers on ADULT people, Iraqi prisoners. Amazingly, I have never heard of any such reaction in response to the occasional attempts to expose similar practices committed towards CHILDREN as for instance in British and American schools. There, these practices come under the heading of “education.” But the cruelty is the same. The world appears to be surprized that such brutality should rear its head among the American forces. After all, America presents itself to the international public as the guardian of world peace. There is an explanation for all this, but hardly anyone wants to hear it.

It is definitely a good thing that light has been cast on the situation and that the media have exposed this lie for what it is. Basically it runs as follows: We are a civilized, freedom-loving nation and bring democracy and independence to the whole world. Under this motto the Americans forced their way into Iraq with devastating results and still insist that they are exporting cultural values. But now it turns out that alongside their bombs and missiles the well-drilled, smartly dressed soldiers are carrying a huge arsenal of pent-up rage around with them, invisible on the outside, invisible for themselves, lurking deep down within, but unmistakably dangerous.

Where does this suppressed rage come from, this need to torment, humiliate, mock, and abuse helpless human beings (prisoners and children as well)? What are these outwardly tough soldiers avenging themselves for? And where have they learnt such behavior? First as little children taught obedience by means of physical “correction,” then in school, where they served as the defenseless objects of the sadism of some of their teachers, and finally in their time as recruits, treated like dirt by their superiors so that they could finally acquire the highly dubious ability to take anything meted out to them and qualify as “tough.”

The thirst for vengeance does not come from nowhere. It has a clearly identifiable cause. The thirst for vengeance has its origins in infancy, when children are forced to suffer in silence and put up with the cruelty inflicted on them in the name of upbringing. They learn how to torment others from their parents, and later from their teachers and superiors. It is nothing other than systematic instruction by example on how to destroy others. Yet many people believe that it has no evil consequences. As if a child were a container that can be emptied from time to time. But the human brain is not a container. The things we learn at an early stage stay with us in later life.

In my recent book “Die Revolte des Körpers” (The Body Never Lies) appeared in Germany in March 2004, I pointed out that in 22 American states children and adolescents can be beaten, humiliated, and sometimes exposed to outright sadism without this having any legal consequences. Such treatment is equivalent to genuine torture. But it is not called so. It goes by the name of education, discipline, leadership. These practices are actively supported by most religions. There is no protest against it, except on some Internet websites. But the Internet is also full of advertisements for whips and other devices for punishing small children and making them into God-fearing individuals so that God will approve of them and give them His love. The scandal in Iraq shows what becomes of these children when they reach adulthood. The perverted soldiers are the fruits of an education that actively instills violence, meanness, and perversion into young people.

The media quote psychological experts who contend that the brutality displayed by the American soldiers is a result of the stress caused by war. It is true that war unleashes latent aggression. **BUT TO BE UNLEASHED IT HAS TO BE ALREADY THERE.** It would be impossible for individuals who have not been exposed to violence very early, either at home or at school, to abuse and mock defenseless prisoners. They simply couldn't do it. We know from the history of the last World War that many conscripted soldiers were able to show a human face, even in the stress of war, if they had grown up without being exposed to violence. Many accounts of the war and the conditions in the camps tell us that even such extreme stress will not necessarily turn adults into perverted individuals.

Perversion has a long, obscure history invariably rooted in the childhood of the individual. It is hardly surprising that these histories are usually concealed from the eyes of society. People who have been taught to obey by having violence inflicted on them have very good reasons to avoid being reminded of the sufferings they went through in childhood and prevent the suppressed facts from ever emerging into the light of day. Many prefer to submit to whippings in S/M clubs, which they claim to enjoy, rather than ask themselves why they indulge in such perversions. In our society the cult of the unconscious still holds sway.

It is not true that we all carry in us the “beast,” as some psychological experts claim. Only people who were treated in a perverse way, but deny the fact, will seek scapegoats on whom they can unconsciously take out their rage, telling in interviews they did it only “just for fun” (exactly as their abusing “innocent” parents might have declared). Or they destroy themselves by taking substances to ease the pain. Children, of course, are unable to bear the pain of their victimization or understand that crime is being committed to them. But as adults they can learn to sympathize with the wounded child and, by becoming conscious, they can free themselves (and the world) from the “beast” within.

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