

Citizens Commission on Human Rights Says American Psychiatric Association Apology for Supporting Racism is Incomplete

Excerpt from CCHR article: "American Psychiatric Association Apology Fails To Fully Admit Psychiatry's Racial Human Rights Abuses and Role In Creating Racism"

WASHINGTON, DC, USA, January 28, 2021 /EINPresswire.com/ -- The American Psychiatric Association's (APA) recent apology for its support of structural racism understates psychiatry's racial human rights abuses and its long history of instigating racism by providing "rationales" that justified and perpetuated it.

Over the last 50 years, the Citizens Commission on Human Rights (CCHR) has exposed that [sordid history](#) and intensified its efforts last June by forming the Task Force Against Psychiatric Racism and Modern Day Eugenics.



The APA's apology, [issued January 18](#), states: "The APA apologizes for our contributions to the structural racism in our nation...."

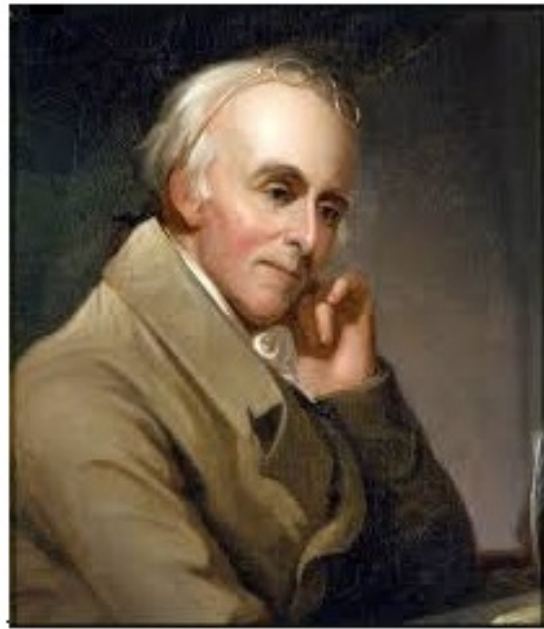
The APA further admits: "These appalling past actions, as well as their harmful effects, are ingrained in the structure of psychiatric practice...."

But the APA glosses over "those appalling past actions" by merely admitting that psychiatric "practitioners have at times subjected persons of African descent and Indigenous people who suffered from mental illness to abusive treatment, experimentation, victimization in the name of 'scientific evidence,' along with racialized theories that attempted to confirm their deficit status."

That bare-bones admission fails to adequately portray the magnitude of psychiatrists' role as prime instigators of "scientific racism," creating and promoting the false theories of racial inferiority that have been widely used to "justify" the oppression, segregation, and population control of Black Americans.

It is noteworthy that in the late 1700s, psychiatry's own "Father of American Psychiatry," Dr. Benjamin Rush, a slave owner, created a medical justification for racism by claiming Blacks suffered from a disease called "negritude," supposedly a form of leprosy, and recommended their segregation to prevent them from "infecting" others.

A logo with the image of Benjamin Rush is still used for APA ceremonial purposes and internal documents. The APA still gives a Benjamin Rush Award.



"Father of American Psychiatry" Benjamin Rush was a slave owner

Psychiatrists in the American mental health movement later latched onto and promoted the false science of eugenics (from the Greek word eugenes, meaning "good stock"), which claims some humans are inferior to others and should not have children.

Pushed by mental health practitioners, the eugenics idea of racial inferiority became ingrained in the U.S. and led to efforts such as Planned Parenthood founder Margaret Sanger's plan to reduce the Black population through sterilization and the Ku Klux Klan's white supremacist activities.

Further, the APA's brief confession of "experimentation [and] victimization" of people of color "who suffered from mental illness" not only downplays the barbaric psychosurgery and psychiatric experiments conducted on African Americans, but also fails to honestly admit that many subjects in these experiments were perfectly healthy. Those experiments include:

- In 1951, psychiatrist Walter Freeman experimented with lobotomies on Black patients at the Veterans Administration hospital in Tuskegee, Alabama, describing the procedure as "a surgically induced childhood." (A lobotomy is psychiatry's surgical procedure of cutting into the brain to try to alter behavior.)
- In the 1950s, Black prisoners in New Orleans were used by psychiatrists Robert Heath and Harry Bailey for psychosurgery experiments that implanted electrodes into their brains. Bailey

later boasted it was “cheaper to use [Blacks*] than cats because they were everywhere and cheap experimental animals.” [*Bailey’s racial slur is omitted here]

- Psychiatrist Robert Heath conducted CIA-funded secret drug experiments on Black prisoners at the Louisiana State Penitentiary using LSD and the drug bulbocapnine, which can produce severe stupor, to see if the drug would cause “loss of speech, loss of sensitivity to pain, loss of memory, [and] loss of will power....”

- In the mid-1950s at the National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH), drug-addicted African Americans were given LSD in an experiment that kept many hallucinating for 77 consecutive days. In the 1960s, NIMH again used Black men as test subjects for an experimental hallucinogen, the chemical warfare drug BZ, which was many times more powerful than LSD. In the 1970s, following riots in a predominantly black section of Los Angeles, NIMH experimented on African Americans, including children as young as five, to see if they had a violence gene that could be controlled by psychiatric drugs.

The APA has not admitted practitioners’ role in creating the present-day mental health system of psychiatric labeling, forced psychiatric drugs and treatment, and incarceration in psychiatric facilities that enabled racist treatment.

African Americans are disproportionately diagnosed with mental illness and disproportionately committed to psychiatric facilities. They are more likely to be labeled with conduct disorder and psychotic disorders, especially schizophrenia, and overly prescribed antipsychotic drugs. Black men are more likely to be prescribed excessive doses of these psychiatric drugs. Black children are overly labeled with ADD/ADHD.

The APA is correct, therefore, in stating, “The APA is beginning the process of making amends....” There is much, much further to go in publicly taking responsibility for psychiatrists’ essential role in instigating and perpetuating racism and for the human rights violations of its experiments and treatments.

Until it does so, its incomplete apology may be viewed as political pandering and an attempt to whitewash history to pave the way for the psychiatric-pharmaceutical industry to expand – very profitably – into the African American community.

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The Citizens Commission on Human Rights International traveling exhibit has been displayed in Washington, DC, at the Congressional Black Caucus Foundation Annual Legislative Caucus, as well as other locations. The exhibit has toured more than 441 major cities around the world and has educated over 800,000 people on the history and contemporary practices of psychiatry which are still rampant with abuse.

Excerpted from an article on Citizens Commission on Human Rights Colorado's website

[www.psychiatricfraud.org](http://www.psychiatricfraud.org).

For more information on the Citizens Commission on Human Rights, go to [www.cchr.org](http://www.cchr.org) and [www.cchrint.org](http://www.cchrint.org).

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