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Abstract

Recent revelations – from government documents and investigative reports – have brought renewed attention to the disturbing involvement of U.S. psychologists in the abuse and torture of “war on terror” detainees. In light of these revelations, this commentary examines the American Psychological Association's inexplicable decision to close – without any sanction – an ethics complaint filed against psychologist John Leso for role in the abusive treatment of prisoners at the Guantanamo Bay detention facility. This essay reviews key components of the case: the relevant background and context, Leso's documented actions at Guantanamo, the APA's ethical standards, the ethics complaint rules and procedures, the justifications invoked by the APA leadership to defend the no-sanction decision, and recommendations for what should be done now.

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