

# Center for Justice and Accountability

## Torture, Former Combatants, Political Prisoners, Terror Suspects, & Terrorists

<https://cja.org/what-we-do/litigation/reisner-v-leso/perpetrators/>

## Campaign and Advocacy

**Dr. Leso** co-authored, implemented, and monitored abusive interrogation techniques at the U.S. Naval Base at Guantanamo Bay, Cuba. His techniques incorporated illegal methods of torture which the Chinese and North Korean governments had used against U.S. prisoners of war.

John Francis Leso graduated from Johns Hopkins University in 1988. While at Johns Hopkins, he entered ROTC and was commissioned as Second Lieutenant from that program. Dr. Leso received a Ph.D. in psychology from SUNY Albany in 1995. He completed his doctoral training with a residency at Bellevue Hospital in New York City.

Dr. Leso entered the military after completing his doctoral training and was subsequently promoted to the rank of major. He was then assigned to the Department of Psychology at Walter Reed Army Medical Center in Washington, D.C. where he served as chief of the clinical psychology service. In anticipation of his tour at Guantanamo, Dr. Leso was promoted to director of training for the Department of Psychology at Walter Reed in June 2002, a position he would fill upon his return.

Dr. Leso led the first Behavioral Science Consultation Team (BSCT) at the United States Naval Station at Guantanamo Bay, Cuba (Guantanamo) from June 2002 to January 2003. While at Guantanamo, Dr. Leso co-authored an interrogation policy memorandum that incorporated illegal techniques adapted from methods used by the Chinese and North Korean governments against U.S. prisoners of war. He recommended a series of increasingly psychologically and physically abusive interrogation techniques to be applied against detainees held by the United States. Many of the techniques and conditions that Dr. Leso helped put in place were applied to suspected al-Qaeda member Mohammed al Qahtani under Dr. Lesos direct supervision, as well as to other men and boys held at Guantanamo. Eventually, similar techniques were also used on prisoners held in U.S. custody in Iraq and Afghanistan.

Dr. John Francis Leso is a licensed psychologist practicing under the authority of the State of New York, License number 013492. Issued in 1998, his license is valid through the last day of July 2012. He is also a member of the American Psychological Association.

To date, Dr. Leso has not been reprimanded for his conduct at Guantanamo by the military, the American Psychological Association, or the state of New York.



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# GERALD GRAY LEGACY CIRCLE

GERALD GRAY FOUNDED CJA IN 1998 AND CONTINUES  
WORKING TO HELP TORTURE SURVIVORS TODAY.

## Join the Gerald Gray Legacy Circle

To join, please let us know that you have included CJA in your estate plans, insurance policy, or planned giving instrument by contacting us at [center4justice@cja.org](mailto:center4justice@cja.org). We will ensure your gift supports CJA's mission and welcome you to the Gerald Gray Legacy Circle.

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***“We will never catch all the torturers—but we will always catch some,  
and none of them will ever know who is next.”***