

Concerned Clinicians and Researchers Network  
Draft Founding Statement / February 25, 2015 Iteration

Paradigmatic and Value Orientation: We work in direct practice and applied research that strives to improve veterans' mental wellbeing, but we also recognize and abhor militarism. We believe that militarist ideology in the United States today hampers our understanding of veterans' psychological distress and thus limits the range of effective interventions that we can devise.

We also believe that a commitment to principles of social justice can guide our priorities in research and practice, leading to more favorable outcomes. Veterans' problems and the difficulty of solving them reside in larger social dysfunctions in the United States, among them unemployment, polarization in wealth, violence, and a fractured, chaotic health care system.

Our orientation encourages interdisciplinary cooperation among social and behavioral scientists, working with direct practice providers. We will mobilize skills and knowledge across a broad array of specialties to augment clinical psychology, among such specialties the academic social sciences and history, public health, and journalism. Social work can play a critical role by providing insights from direct practice. Social-epidemiological studies conducted on a 'macro' or aggregate level offer insights about causal factors that we can then apply to specific populations and individual cases.

Discourse in clinical and research circles concerning military PTS does not take place in a political vacuum. For example, a resident psychiatrist at the American Enterprise Institute, an influential conservative battle think tank, has weighed in on veterans' psychological problems from a right wing perspective, and there are surely other statements in the media as well that have originated in organizations that promote a view of PTSD influenced by a conservative agenda. We believe that researchers can prevail against their resulting distortions by rigorously applying fact and logic for an audience composed of those who truly care about veterans' well-being, regardless of their political orientation.

Membership: We encourage participation by all clinicians and academic researchers who are concerned about the psychological wellbeing of veterans. To maximize our effectiveness and optimize public profile and credibility, we will orient our activities and resources primarily to credentialed professionals. Our organization will strive to avoid elitism and professional sclerosis, however, by encouraging constant dialogue with activists and the population of affected veterans and their loved ones.

## Functions and Activities. We will:

- evaluate and disseminate research results, along with teaching and counseling materials.
- exchange insights and advice regarding interventions for veterans' psychological problems.
- provide our perspective to the media, via informed professional journalists who observe the highest standards of their profession.
- encourage the formation of sections and working groups in established professional societies for those who share our paradigm.
- cultivate collegial relationships and collaboration across academic and other professional specialties.
- identify competitively awarded grants and contracts from nonprofit sources for member projects.
- promote cooperation with colleagues in other countries.

*We will conduct all of these activities informed by a perspective undistorted by militarist ideology.*

*We will accomplish our goals through lively peer dialogue and evaluation using the highest standards of demonstrable authority and expertise.*

*We aim to earn professional recognition and credit that redounds to the careers of our contributing members.*

## First Steps in Organizational Formation

The first phase of organizational formation will consist of consultations among a core group of specialists, along with affiliation with appropriate professional organizations. This core group can communicate via currently conventional means (e.g. a listserv) with a view to using more sophisticated social media as appropriate. If the scale of participation warrants, the primary organizer(s) will seek funding for operational expenses. We shall seek endorsements from prominent specialists who recognize the value of our paradigm.

## About the Initiator

Sam Coleman teaches and conducts research at California State University, Long Beach, as a Lecturer in the Department of Asian & Asian-American Studies. He also serves as the recently chosen Coordinator for the Veterans for Peace PTSD Working Group. His specialties are Cultural Anthropology (including Medical Anthropology) and Social Work. He is also a Japan specialist who has published his extensive field research in Japan. His current research focuses on Asian-American veterans. He holds a PhD in Cultural Anthropology from Columbia University (1978) and a Masters in Social Work (Older Adults and Families Concentration) from California State University, Long Beach (2000).