

# Example of torture and interrogation essay

[Society](#), [Terrorism](#)



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## Introduction

Torture is one of most intense human violence forms that result into both psychological and physical consequences. People use it in prisons as a manner of extracting useful information from terrorists and other detainees. Its use has been in existence for thousands of years, and it is still rife all across the globe. Research shows that torture has enduring negative effects at times on both the perpetrators and survivors (Miller, 2012). In addition, it is ineffective for obtaining reliable and substantial information during interrogation. Although many international codes and laws have undergone establishment in order to prohibit torture, it has become rife and its use perpetuates as an internal conflict part within nations cum in international conflicts. The torture issue has stirred debate recently about interrogation practices used by the Americans. This paper will run an examination on whether torture should or should not be used when it comes to extracting useful information from suspected terrorists.

In the third century, in the time of the Roman Jurist, Ulpian noticed that the kind of information extracted through torture is not trustworthy. This is because some people are susceptible to pain that they may end up telling lies to evade the suffering and excruciating pain of torture. The warning of unreliability of information deduced by means of torture has echoed all across the centuries. As one of the CIAs who had participated in terrorist torture in the Vietnam War once said that, some of the people were more than willing to confess concerning anything if only they would not be subjected to torture. The Army Field Manual explicated that strategically useful information is that whose deduction is from humanely treated detainees. He added that information derived through torture produces faulty intelligence.

It is vital to acknowledge that torture may at times result into the disclosure of very accurate information. It is undeniable that people are different and thus may react differently when subjected to pain and suffering. When some prisoners receive torture mechanisms, they quickly disclose what they know. However, many torture survivors report that the truthful information that they revealed was incomplete intentionally or mixed with some false information. Their mission was to appease their torturer and not to tell the truth necessarily. They were even happier because their interrogators were not omniscient to discern the true and false information. Misreading their victims, interrogators and torturers were not able to recognize the truth and perpetuated to inflict pain (Reiley & Vega, 2012). Victims continued disclosing fabricated information with the aim of stopping the pain.

## **Political Justification of Torture**

Scholars have evaluated the defensive response elements common to most governments when the press exposes their use of torture. Many analysis aspects are consistent with the American government's response to revelations that they use torture in the interrogation process. Initially, majority of governments would be in denial but currently it has become a common thing that anyone admits to very freely. However, once the simple denial tactic becomes untenable, it is regular for the governments to proclaim that their actions do not meet the torture definition. A government's torture use may be diminished as in-depth, enhanced or vigorous interrogation that does not lead to lasting injuries. For instance, in memoranda series issued from the year 2001 to 2004, the U. S. Justice and Defense Departments argued on what qualified as torture (Miller, 2012). They stated that the interrogation techniques inflict pain that equalizes to that which accompanies crucial physical injury, like bodily function impairment, organ failure or even death. In addition, they asserted that the Geneva provisions were not applicable to unlawful combatants' interrogation. Such attempts that aim at narrowing the torture definition receive the accompaniment of attacks on those that expose the abuses with the inclusion of the press. They also proceed to claim that those who expose information of that type to the public are guilty of encouraging the enemy.

## **The Effectiveness of Torture**

An advocate of torture would often refer to the hypothetical situation of the ticking time-bomb scenario. This used rhetorical justification for torture during interrogation as a tactic for a government that holds a terrorist in

custody, who knows the location of a hidden time bomb. That bomb will explode and kill millions of innocent people in just a matter of a short time. Once the torture advocates lay out the scenario one sees the need of the interrogator using torture to obtain information that will prevent the impending massacre.

The inconceivable ticking time-bomb scenario lays on numerous questionable assumptions. These include the fact that a certain piece of information may be used to avert the bloody scenario or that the interrogators are completely certain that the terrorist suspect holds certain information on the bomb's location. In such a case torture is the only way to extract actionable and useful information in a short time period. Part of the scenario appeal is that it portrays the torturer as a heroic and principled figure that reluctantly uses torture to save people's lives. This forced-choice and carefully rigged scenario pits an evil person's temporary pain against millions of innocent people's deaths. Once people have acknowledged the fact that there are possible situations whereby torture yields life-saving, precious information, it will be a great step in concluding that we should sometimes oblige morally to use torture (Gordon & Fleisher 2011). While this scenario provides a useful discussion stimulus in college ethics courses, or a thrilling television drama plot device it seems probable in a realistic viewpoint.

## **Mental Health Consequences of Torture**

Despite potential confounding variables that include related stressors and comorbid conditions like depression and physical injury, torture links directly to posttraumatic stress disorder and other disabilities and symptoms. Many

studies reveal that refugees are vulnerable to torture since they face more exposure to war situations. Moreover, they lack typical government protection because they shift from one country to another frequently. Comprehensive reviews concerning tortures psychological effects have evaluated research among torture survivors systematically, examining the extraordinary consequences that associate closely to torture and the interaction of justice and social related issues. The most common reported effects were psychological symptoms that include emotional liability, social withdrawal and aggressiveness, cognitive symptoms like disorientation, impaired concentration and memory and neurovegetative symptoms such as sexual dysfunction, nightmares and insomnia (Dr. Reyes, 2007). Torture effects usually extend throughout a survivor's life thus affecting their economic, familial and psychological functioning.

## **Conclusion**

Governments that allow torture use during terrorists' interrogation argue typically that its use is in a precise and strict controlled manner. However, scholars find that when one authorizes the use of torture it becomes difficult to contain. They conclude that once torture embarks it appears to spread uncontrollably especially in times of crisis. For instance, in the year 1987 the Israel Landau Commission authorized its interrogators to use only moderate physical pressure like placing the suspects in painful positions for long time periods. The condition for this was if it was necessary to extract information that might avert terrorist attacks. Unfortunately, human rights organizational reports in the 1990s unraveled that an estimated 85% of Palestinian detainees were victims of physical abuse (McCoy, 2006). This led to the

Israeli Supreme Court to ban the physical pressure practice in 1999.

Although torture does not necessarily produce substantial and reliable information, it may linger since it satisfies one's psychological needs in times of stress. Specifically, it counters a desperation sense, reassures interrogators on their control factor and bestows an empowerment feeling in the confined world of the interrogation room. As a scholar, once propounded that even though torture is not rational or effective it lingers through its intense psychological appeal, to the powerless and powerful alike, in crisis times (McCoy, 2006). Specifically, in a horrible attack's aftermath, such as that which occurred in November 2011, torture may seem to be appealing emotionally. However, it is worth deeming whether torture use is the result of motivation of the desire of gaining valuable information, or the desire of overcoming a powerless sense and restore control.

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