

# Enhanced interrogation (torture) argumentative essay

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



Terrorism in the United States, and all over the world, is sadly very common. Although there is no one universal definition for terrorist acts, the FBI does define it as “ the unlawful use of force and violence against persons or property to intimidate or coerce a government, the civilian population, or any segment thereof, in furtherance of political or social objectives” (Qtd. Allen, 2007). There are some events that may or may not fall under this definition, but a collective group of people still refer to them as acts of terrorism. There are some experts who believe that the events during the Boston Marathon are not exactly considered as terrorist attacks, while the public believes that this is one of the biggest and most memorable terrorist attacks this year. The definition of terrorism is not yet universal and many people have a different take on it. However, it is believed that something must be done in order to stop any future attacks. Since the 9/11 attacks in 2001, the United States has been on high alert for such violent terrorist acts. The Bush Administration employed something called “ Enhanced Interrogation” in order to retrieve information from suspects who were detained for terrorism (Huang, Martinez-Ferrando & Cole, 2010). The two groups involved in this effort can be identified as the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) as well as the Department Of Defense (DoD). There are controversial debates over the legality or the ethics surrounding such techniques (Allen, 2007). They are criticized for violating American as well as International Humanitarian laws. However immoral or illegal people might find these alternatives techniques for interrogation, it can be said that Enhanced Interrogation is needed, especially in the United States. As more and more people have access to deadly weapons, and acts of terrorism are at an all time high, to keep

citizens away from harm, these techniques need to be employed. This paper will discuss why and how Enhanced Interrogation of terrorists keeps the United States Citizens safe.

One of the few things people don't know about terrorist attacks is that they have actually become less frequent in the United States since the 1970s. Although this might be true, statistically, the impact or the gravity of more recent attacks has affected more people than ever. The attacks during September 11 in Pennsylvania, Arlington and New York are actually considered as four separate attacks, but these events have more fatalities than all the attacks since the year 1970. It is not surprising that during the year 2001, the administration of President Bush proposed the alternative methods of interrogation (Huang, Martinez-Ferrando & Cole, 2010). This was during the year of most attacks. Although the attacks have gone down since 2001, the fatalities have risen. This means that efforts to thwart these terrorist attacks need to be made.

Studies show that law enforcement officials are getting better at stopping terrorist attacks. However, not all of these can be stopped or predicted. The cases involving terrorism that are highly publicized are the ones that include a high rate of fatality. However, there are actually hundreds of terrorist attacks that involve a number of injured victims that the public does not know about. Whether or not these acts of terrorism involve deaths or critically injured civilians, each event should be treated with the same amount of attention. The year 2001 was the year when the most attacks occurred (Huang, Martinez-Ferrando & Cole, 2010). However, since the United States was already on its toes because of the September 11 attacks,

most of the attempts were unsuccessful. There were numerous reports of failed bombs that were discovered before they were detonated, there were also reports of terrorist meetings of those conspiring attacks.

The Enhanced Interrogation Techniques include certain torture methods. These are stress positions, hypothermia, waterboarding and other methods used by the CIA and DoD. The history of the use of these methods go back to the black sites and secret prisons during the War On Terror after the September 11 attacks.

Following Abu Zubaydah's capture, the head of CIA, Jose Rodriguez asked his superiors if his men could use what he called an "alternative set of interrogation procedures" (Allen, 2007). The top government officials in the United States discussed at length the things that the CIA could do in order to get information from Abu Zubaydah. However, they took into consideration the moral and legal procedures. According to Condoleeza Rice, The military underwent training in terms of interrogation, they learned new methods which involved physical and psychological techniques that were considered legal and ethical. Between the years 2002 and 2003, a number of Democratic congressional leaders were briefed on the new interrogation techniques that would help them bring the prisoners in these black sites in order.

These methods of interrogation stuck controversy in the eyes of the public, and were in discussion until the year 2008 (Huang, Martinez-Ferrando & Cole, 2010). The senior members of the Bush Administration discussed at length how the high-value suspects of the al Qaeda can be interrogated by the CIA. The people who were part of this debate included Vice President

Cheney, Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld, CIA Director George Tenet, Secretary of State Colin Powell, Former National Security Advisor Condoleezza Rice and Attorney General Josh Ashcroft.

Does America really need such extreme interrogation methods? Over the years, people have tried to figure out as much as they could regarding safety risks (Jensen, 2002). This is through figures and probabilities for people to have a bit of an idea of the outcomes when an action is done, sometimes no action is done and it is something that just happens. There are basic methods of analysis for risks, and these methods include the classic fault-tree analysis and software reliability on topics such as expert opinions and risk management and regulations (Dickson, 2005). In order for the United States Government to protect its people, certain organizations need to take a look at the past and what happened during the terrorist attacks. There are valuable suspects in the hands of the CIA who hold important information which could determine the line between a greater security risk and the safety of the American Citizens.

Problems which occur in real life that include decision making, in particular those which are related to high-risk events which rarely occur can be a very complex area of study. This is because data on such events are very limited, and this makes statistical methods unusable (Dickson, 2005). The reason for this is because risk analysis depends on statistics and probability. Risks are based on what occurred previously, meaning, since the terrorist attacks were committed by a certain group, it is likely that a similar event can happen if certain measures are not taken.

The basic philosophy of risk analysis asks the question of “ what is

uncertainty". This question discusses risk analysis in itself; there is no certainty in risk analysis. It is logical connections made with information, data and statistics gathered from previous events. It is the conclusion which is made based on what past events predict to be most likely. There are of course adverse outcomes, and these are weighed out by the probability of them least likely to happen. However, it does not mean that these events are never going to happen. The United States Government simply wants to eliminate the risk of another large-scale act of terrorism by applying these new methods of interrogation.

According to the Department of Justice, they have no higher priority than protecting people from terrorism. The Obama Administration as well as the Administrations before it have used every tool they have in order to protect the citizens of America from terrorist attacks, that is why they have come up with different methods in order to safeguard the people while keeping and protecting civil liberties.

Terrorism not only affects the physical safety of people, it also impacts the economic security of the entire nation. This can be calculated using a variety of perspectives. A lot of the economic costs of terrorism have been interpreted by using the September 11 2001 attacks as an example. Defense and homeland security are not only spending billions of dollars because of the attack, citizens who were rebuilding their homes and preparing for a like-event are certainly financially affected.

According to CIA agents who have witnessed these forms of interrogation first hand, people have the wrong impression on the new methods (Ross & Esposito, 2005). A lot of people might think that these methods go against

any humanitarian laws. However, the detention program as well as the methods of interrogation was nothing but a human library. Although this is not a term often used by the CIA, it accurately describes the situation that they were talking about. This was to keep detainees for monitoring and for interrogation purposes.

They do not only keep the prisoners there in order to get information from them directly, they aim to break their will to resist (Ross & Esposito, 2005). It is acknowledged that prisoners or detainees will say anything in order to stop their suffering. That is why they never interrogated anyone who they knew did not know the answers. This was to prevent inaccuracy or wrong information. The point of this process is to create a godlike or omniscient image for the prisoners so that they would not want to infer anything falsely. By creating a zone where the prisoners have no control, they will be able to submit and therefore cooperate.

Enhanced interrogation is part of the process which leads to will-breaking. This involved the human library where they kept prisoners in opaque confinement (Ross & Esposito, 2005). Once they have accepted their fate, interrogators will have leverage and detainees will resist less. Rodriguez, the head of the CIA says that the methods of enhanced interrogation were used on Americans. This means that if procedures can be applied to their own servicemen, including tens of thousands of soldiers, that would mean it is safe and moral to use on their enemies.

Terrorism is not something that anyone can predict. Every day, billions of people are at risk of being victimized by a terrorist attack (Huang, Martinez-Ferrando & Cole, 2010). This means that the United States Government

should do anything in its power to protect the people of America from such attacks. Enhanced Interrogation Techniques are only one way of reducing these threats. In order to protect the citizens of the United States, these alternative methods of interrogation must be put into play.

## **Works Cited**

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