

War has a feminine face and a masculine character

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



September 11th 2001 is a day that will forever be ingrained in every American's mind. The attack on the twin towers caused many Americans to fear for their lives and their safety in this country. The American people looked to their government and Commander in Chief for some sort of direction to combat terrorism. President George W. Bush on September 20, 2001 declared the War on Terror against al-Qaeda and other terrorist organizations. This would officially send America to its very costly, indefinite, and difficult war spanning multiple countries in the Middle East. Fighting this war is different than traditional warfare because it is more about fighting an idea than a single country's soldiers or regime. Because of this obscure threat, it complicates the war in many different ways. Some of the key points with the War on Terror include al-Qaeda, extraordinary rendition, torture, Guantanamo Bay, and the Patriot Act. The purpose of the War on Terror was to try to stop the threat of terrorism in America but also other Western powers. The main countries with radical Islamic terrorist groups were Iran, Afghanistan, Iraq, Yemen, and Syria. Within each country, there were individual agendas that needed to be fulfilled. The War in Afghanistan, Iraq, and Iran are the main ones that had the most troops and money involved. It is estimated that over the course of these wars, over 6, 845 Americans have been killed and over 900, 000 have been injured.

The main campaigns with the most casualties were Operation Enduring Freedom in Afghanistan, Operation Freedom's Sentinel in Afghanistan, Operation Iraqi Freedom in Iraq, Operation New Dawn in Afghanistan, and Operation Inherent Resolve on the Syrian-Iraqi border. Hundreds of millions of the taxpayers' money has been spent on this ongoing war, and thousands

of soldiers have died protecting their countries for what they believe to be righteous causes. An endgame does not seem to be close. The War on Terrorism needs to be brought to an end as millions of people are being killed, civil liberties and human rights are being violated, and the costs of the war will continue to rise as there is no endgame in sight. As in any war, the lives lost are a reminder of how many lives were dedicated to the cause worth fighting for. In this one however more civilian lives were lost than military, although marginally. By the numbers up until 2011, at least 227, 000 people have died since 9/11 and 116, 657 have been civilians, but different reports show different numbers. According to the U. S. Department of Defense, U. S. Armed Forces have suffered 4, 487 deaths and 32, 223 were wounded in action as of May 2012. As seen by these studies the people suffering are more so the families of the innocent civilians than those who fought in the conflicts, and a lot of them were not killed by soldiers. As shown by sites like WikiLeaks many civilian deaths are caused by mines or drones. These numbers show the amount of devastation caused by the War on terror and more than ten years later these numbers are still rising. Ultimately there are still over 50, 000 troops in Afghanistan and there are still plans to remain there for a while. al-Qaeda is a household terrorist organization name that almost everyone knows.

Their most recognize for conducting the attacks of September 11, 2001. The attack killed nearly 3, 000 people and injured thousands more. They have already completed numerous attacks both foreign and domestic against United States personnel. The Origins of al-Qaeda can be traced to when the

Soviet Union invaded Afghanistan in the 1980's. This was crucial to defeat the Soviet Union. One vital person came about through this, and his name as Osama Bin Laden. The ' Osama' spelling is deprecated, because there is no letter ' O' in Arabic.

He is the proclaim founder of the group al-Qaeda. Osama believing that the war with the Soviet Union was a holy battle between Islam and the infidel. “ Osama Bin Laden's experiences as a logistical coordinator and financier for the Afghan and Arab resistance to the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan during the 1980s are thought to have provided the backdrop for his belief that Muslims could take effective military action inspired by select Islamic principles”. While Bin Laden was in Saudi Arabia, he was exposure to teachings of conservative Islamist scholars. With his experience in Afghanistan, and knowing of Salafist. He convey a new concept known as “ defensive jihad”. Using this philosophy, Bin Laden encourages each Muslim to take it upon themselves to fight what it perceives as attacks on Muslims across the world. After the Gulf War, he express his resentment for having US and other non-Muslim troops in Saudi Arabia. This enforced his belief of jihad, and promoted violence against the Saudi government and the United States. This violence would lead to one of the most dangerous terrorist groups in history. This danger needed to be stopped by America by any means necessary. Often times, these means were extremely violent and cruel, such as extraordinary rendition. According to ACLU, extraordinary rendition can be defined as “ an intelligence-gathering program involving the transfer of foreign nationals suspected of involvement in terrorism to

detention and interrogation in countries where – in the CIA’s view — federal and international legal safeguards do not apply.”

These suspects are then detained and heavily interrogated using methods that were not federally regulated. Often times the interrogation techniques included torture and psychiatrically breaking down the suspect in order to get information. This all started in the early 1990s under the Clinton administration, but would then transform and expand dramatically under the Bush administration after 9/11. The detainees were held in black sites in different countries where they were held without trial in countries such as Morocco, Poland, and the UK. It is estimated that the United States has used this process to abduct over 3, 000 people to gather information about terrorism. “ If you want a serious interrogation, you send a prisoner to Jordan. If you want them to be tortured, you send them to Syria. If you want someone to disappear never to see them again you send them to Egypt.” Bob Baer, CIA Officer. This commonly used practice would give America a bad reputation when it comes to gathering information. Extraordinary rendition goes hand in hand with another key factor to the War on Terror: torture. Torture is a controversial topic in today’s society. Torture can be defined as, “...the act of inflicting excruciating pain, as punishment or revenge, as a means of getting a confession or information, or for sheer cruelty.” Torture has been deemed as a hate crime but still continues in the United States as well as in other Western countries. However, the question of torture has resurfaced in the context of post 9/11 strategies of gathering information.

Many citizens are torn in regards to how they feel about torture and how its effectiveness protects them on a day to day basis. It all comes down to morality. Within the society of social order, many people would say that torture is a shameful action for those who support it and or participate in agony. Many people are hesitant of torture; however, state that torture is only acceptable under certain scenarios. Some hold that torture is morally permissible under certain distinct situations. Torture is one of the main ways that Americans gathered information about different terrorist organizations. Putting ethical value of the issue away; on one side, it would “ please” the citizens who feel intimidated by possible terrorist attacks and it might provide faster technique to prevent those attacks from happening. On the other side, it would probably have to be obtained as similarly as a warrant – it might not be permitted fast enough which could again lead to the loss of lives. In such case, from fear of not being prompt enough, the interrogators might disobey the law and use the torture anyway without the permission – which does not seem as an advantageous solution and it essentially brings the issue back to the begging. Furthermore, if the torture would be defined by criminal law, there is the presumption of innocence though, where defendant is considered to be innocent until proven otherwise – which cannot be applied to the enhanced interrogation techniques utilization. Besides torture, there are different ways to gather information about terrorist organizations. Even with Osama Bin Laden, he was located throw his brother by offering him a Lamborghini. There are more peaceful and effective ways to get details other than violence. Tony Camerino, former senior military interrogator and author of a book “ How to Break a Terrorist”,

has very clear vision on how proper interrogation should look like. He believes that the most efficient method to get the captive to share the information is firstly to learn something about the suspect's background. Not all the detainees wanted to be sided with terrorist, but some were forced to because of their situation – and interrogator can use all this knowledge to make the prisoner cooperate. Also, knowing about the culture can be helpful. Camerino says that: “ During the World War II, the people we recruited to be interrogator were ethnic Americans.

People that knew the culture and the language of people they were going to interrogate. And Ivy League young men were recruited to supervise them, because we saw it as an intellectual effort, not a brute force effort. This culture knowledge can help to understand some basic mentality of the detainee, but what according to Camerino is also curtail is basic knowledge of psychology for recognizing what motivates human minds, and to educate them about sales – to make them grasp the concept of how to make the best deal with the prisoner. “ They're are their own worst enemies. The person who is most likely to stop the detainee from cooperating is yourself – your lack of knowledge or ignorance about his situation, his motivation, background and culture.” Torture is something that will always be debated and most likely will not end in our lifetime. The reason it keeps going on is that the location where they take place have immunity, one of the biggest locations where this happens is Guantanamo Bay. Guantanamo Bay detention center, the result of America's War on Terror, has sparked several international outcries over the years. Opened January 2002 by the Bush

administration, it is used to hold those suspected of being a terrorist or those with connections to al-Qaeda or the Taliban. It is located in Cuba on land that was leased to the U. S. for coaling and naval stations in 1903 , and remains the only U. S. naval base in a communist country. Barack Obama campaigned for and continued to push Congress for Guantanamo's closure, but his efforts were in vain.

The Bush administration had many good reasons for opening Guantanamo, but Obama recognized that it is an overall detriment to America.

Guantanamo Bay, though started with good intentions, only highlights America's negative side. Marine Major General Michael Lehnert, who played a significant role in the opening of Guantanamo, has drastically changed his opinion and said that it, " Validates every negative perception of the U. S." One example of this occurred in 2006, when President Bush justified the use of " physical coercion" during interrogations. Some of these torture methods include isolation, beatings, sleep deprivation, and general abuse. Other tactics such as disrespect for Islamic symbols or sexual provocation are used to encourage stress in detainees. These immoral methods led to an international outcry. This Cuban territory that we own is often compared to a sort of internment camp or even concentration camp with the rights of the prisoners beings stripped away. The problem is that there is a significant amount of prisoners that are actually innocent and have not been properly tried. Another aspect of Guantanamo that received a strong reaction was the access that interrogators, psychologists, and psychiatrists working at Guantanamo have to detainees' medical files. This allows them to target

detainees individually, and is against medical ethics stated in the Geneva Conventions.

This violation of the Geneva convention is often overlooked because Guantanamo is an immune land. Although this protocol has not been sanctioned by the U. S., it is “ customary international law,” leading to increased opposition. This is a crime against humanity that America can just get away with. This has lead to activism all over the world to free the detainees in Guantanamo. In response to the unethical values at Guantanamo, Abdule Salam Zaeef, an Afghan ambassador who was imprisoned and sent to Guantanamo stated, “ A detainee in Guantanamo, however, is not even a person anymore. He is stripped of his humanity as each day passes”. The methods being used at Guantanamo, both pertaining to medical ethics and interrogations, are unsuitable for any human being to have to go through. This type of treatment is not unlikely and most of the prisoners there are tortured on a very regular basis. Unethical methods, however, are not the only thing that Guantanamo detainees have to deal with. According to Zaeef, they are also unprotected by prisoner of war statutes and are unqualified for the normal legal process. Because they are not fairly tried, this is another violation of their human rights. President Bush tried to explain this by claiming that the base is outside of U. S. territory, therefore exempting the prisoners from the U. S. Constitution. He also stated that “ unlawful enemy combatants,” his name for the detainees, were exempt from the Geneva Conventions. Internationally-accepted laws are being sidestepped or excused, leading nations around the world to feel as if

the U. S. is just a bully, making exceptions solely for its benefit. The biggest piece of legislation that has passed during the post-9/11 era of America is the Patriot Act.

The Patriot Act was passed 45 days after the attack of the twin towers, the “Uniting and Strengthening America by Providing Appropriate Tools Required to Intercept and Obstruct Terrorism” USA PATRIOT act, was signed into law with 98 votes of support in the Senate and 357 votes of support in the house, with 67 votes in descent total. Many Congressmen who signed the bill “now say they did not even read it before voting in favor”. A version of the bill had already gone through committee and was approved by the ACLU, however, that was not the version of the bill presented to Congress. The compromises made were removed when the author of the bill as told, “If you don’t pass the original bill... the next terrorist attack will be on your shoulders”. This type of threatening has allowed the USA Patriot Act to be far too powerful. When the law was passed, the purpose was stated as “to deter and punish terrorist acts in the United States and around the world, to enhance law enforcement investigatory tools, and for other purposes”. The other purposes section of that is incredibly vague, modifying laws concerning money laundering, education, financing, credit reporting, computer fraud, electronic communications, and others . This gave the NSA and other intelligence agencies a broad authority to collect data from corporations. For the agents to collect information, except certain types of information, they had to receive a warrant from a FISA, Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act, court judge. 11 judges have this authority, and only Chief Justice Roberts of

the Supreme Court can allow for new judges to take this power. Though they are required to receive warrants from these judges, over 99% of requests for warrants are approved. In addition, the NSA has ignored its requirements by collecting “ as many as 56, 000 emails” “ from Americans with no connection to terrorism” .

This blanket collection would allow for information and potential blackmail to be revealed to agents on virtually any person. The Patriot Act has caused many Americans to have split decisions about it. Some do not want the invasion of privacy and violation of their rights. Some do not mind giving up their right to privacy in order to guarantee safety. With the War on Terror being a war of information, the NSA gaining this type of accessibility is very critical for preventing future terrorist attacks. The War on Terror has been going on for the last sixteen years. Thousands upon thousands of troops are sent overseas each year to protect America from the threat of terrorism and the collapse of democracy. There has been development of terrorist groups, extraordinary rendition, torture, wrongfully imprisoned suspects, and serious sacrifice of privacy in this time period alone. Americans often times are confused and frustrated by the war and why it still continues. It seems as though this war is unwinnable and feels as though it will never end. Families continue to be torn apart with each deployment and the average American's taxes are being used to fund it. The amount of time, energy, and money used to fuel this ongoing battle is exponential and even ridiculous. The end is not in the foreseeable future with the current administration being power hungry and xenophobic so any foreign threat will be pursued. The average

citizen feels helpless in ending it and often times angry about the fact that we are still involved with foreign affairs as the world police that America is. The best thing for citizens to do is to get educated on the manner, get involved with activism to end it, and stay up to date with all the terrorist happenings occurring all over the world.