

# [Killing torture idealism: logos in intuition and pathos in counter-aesthetics of ...](https://assignbuster.com/killing-torture-idealism-logos-in-intuition-and-pathos-in-counter-aesthetics-of-torture/)

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﻿Killing Torture Idealism: Logos in “ Intuition” and Pathos in “ Counter-Aesthetics of Torture”
Many people want to be seen as humane, however, Brent J. Steele asserts in “ The Insecurity of America: The Curious Case of Torture’s Escalating Popularity” that the same people may also believe in torture idealism. Torture idealism refers to beliefs that romanticize torture because of the perception that it can attain “ accurate information” and that it relieves anxiety over the imagined “ ticking time bomb” (Lafayette presentation, April 23, 2015). Steele provides four micro political tactics that challenge the torture logic. The most effective way of contesting torture idealism would be combining pathos and logos appeals through the “ Ancient Empiric” and “ The Counter-Aesthetics of Torture” because they can show that torture is ineffective in generating truthful confessions, and that it is dehumanizing, not only to the tortured and torturers, but to the general public who condones it.
The “ Ancient Empiric” or “ Intuition” of Tortured Confession is effective because it appeals to human logic regarding the ineffectiveness of torture in generating valid confessions. It asserts that torture may get the fastest confession from tortured individuals, but this confession may not necessarily be true or accurate. “ Intuition” means that people will say anything to stop the torture. Indeed, if surveyed people themselves experience torture, what would they do? Their intuitive response is to agree to anything they are accused of doing to stop the pain and save their lives (Lafayette presentation, April 23, 2015). Jesse Ventura, a political Independent, gives an example: “ You give me a waterboard, one hour and Dick Cheney, and I will have him confess to the Sharon Tate murders” (Steele 2013: 186). If torture does not produce truthful confessions, then it is not a valid way of getting the truth. Torture idealism opposes the empirical reality that torture does not produce relevant results (Steele 2013: 185). Logos, however, may not completely convince people in challenging torture logic, so a pathos appeal remains necessary.
“ The Counter-Aesthetics of Torture” appeals to the imagination of the public regarding the dehumanizing process and outcomes of torture. It asserts that, if people only saw and heard what torture actually looks like; they will realize its immorality and ineffectiveness. The government does not release photos of torture and did not punish Jose Rodriguez, the CIA agent who destroyed the 92 tapes of interrogations of terrorist suspects Abu Zubaydah and Abd al-Rahim al-Nashiri, because they will reveal how horrific torture is (Lafayette presentation, April 23, 2015). These images will counter the image of torture as something acceptable because it will divulge the “ blunt description of the reality of the torture chamber itself, and the (in)validity and (un)reliability of the confessions such torture produces” (Steele 2013: 189). People learn to accept torture from watching 24 and a decades-old program that aims to avert soldiers from providing false confessions, if ever they were interrogated, because they produce “ image interdependence,” which happens when people become more sensitive and vulnerable to insecurity due to re-presentations of violence that constantly bombard them in the media (Lafayette presentation, April 23, 2015). If these images are so powerful in creating torture idealism, images of “ The Counter-Aesthetics of Torture” can effectively undermine it. These images will horrify people and shake them into saying “ no” to torture because they do not want it to represent who they are.
Others might assert that torture idealism has been embedded too deeply already into American politics and the public imagination that it cannot be easily challenged. They forget that this idealism lacks logic because it contains more pathos than logos and it portrays trust in politicians’ ethos. If the public and politicians will know how illogical and immoral torture is, they will increasingly change their torture-approving mindset. They shall come to develop a new understanding- that torture is so inhumane that it challenges the personal and collective identities of those who see and hear what it is and how it happens. Hence, the “ Ancient Empiric” and “ The Counter-Aesthetics of Torture” can be effective means of killing torture idealism because it weakens image interdependence and strengthens the logic and pathos against torture.