

# [Modern that it is ethical to subject](https://assignbuster.com/modern-that-it-is-ethical-to-subject/)

Modern day torture constitutes an interrogation technique that entails inflicting suffering to the suspect with the aim of obtaining information or a confession. The methods utilized here also include waterboarding, shock treatment and denial of food as well as application of thumbscrews. Torture therefore ensures that the victim is in extreme anguish with the torturer having total control over the body of the victim (Stanford Encyclopedia Of Philosophy, 2011). The concept that underlies torture has been the subject of debate from various angles. These include moral and utilitarian as well as political perspectives.

The controversy has further been fuelled by the increased cases of terrorism around the globe. Groups that argue in favor of torture have their support based on the fact that torture involves inflicting pain on a defenseless person. These have seen to the formation of policies such as the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman and Degrading Treatment or Punishment (Stanford Encyclopedia Of Philosophy, 2011). This was adopted by the United Nations in 1984.

In addition, the arguments are consequential in nature. This implies that the issues raised are directed at the impact of failing to use torture in interrogation of suspects of terrorism. These include suspects that may hold information that is vital to intelligence officials such as planned attacks (Casebeer, n. d).

On the other hand, arguments in favour of torture, are grounded on the fact that it becomes a case of human rights violation. This is especially the case when the information witheld is inconsequential.

## Arguments in favour

The ticking bomb scenario presents one of the major instances that are argued to justify the use of torture as an interrogation technique. In this case, it is considered ethical to inflict pain when psychological suffering fails to bring a suspect to a confession on the location of a ticking time bomb.

For example, if a timed explosive device is planted in London and the police have the suspect (Stanford Encyclopedia Of Philosophy, 2011). The scenario further emphasizes that it is ethical to subject one person to torture in order to save thousands others. In addition, the argument that torture can be converted into a habit that may become entrenched into the justice system is heavily overwhelmed (Vaknin, 2007). This is due to the fact that other interrogation techniques have been noted to be equally misused. For instance, the use of guns and knives are equally susceptible to similar levels of abuse. Torture is also ethical in that it constitutes an ordinary method interrogation rather than a punishment to suspects. It should instead be regarded as an ordinary procedure used before trial in the same level with detention and oral interrogation. This is due to the fact that other interrogation techniques are also bound to inflict equal levels of punishment to a suspect before they are cleared of any wrong doing.

This contravenes the argument put forward by St Augustine on basis of the negative moral impact of torture. To add to that, the use of torture facilitates the administration of justice as criminals have been observed to deny committing the crimes. It thus aids in finding the crime perpetrators and serving justice to their victims. From another perspective, torture is arguably justified by the fact that in times of war and instances of terrorism collateral damage is likely to occur. This refers to the sacrifice of the lives of a few people to save a country or many other lives. This implies that to maintain justice, governments and society have the right to expose suspects to torture for the greater good (Harris, 2005). For example, using torture to interrogate a terrorist group leader like Osama Bin Laden so as to salvage the lives of many innocents would be considered morally right.

In recent times, it has additionally been noted that abstinence from torture by many countries is done because it constitutes being politically correct. This means that most governments have adopted the anti-torture policies at the expense of their citizens. The governments are limited in terms of law enforcement capacity so as to obtain foreign aid or military backing from other nations. Additionally, such measures are a disadvantage in times of instability or war that threaten the livelihood of the innocent. In such cases, it is only right to use torture from the moral or ethical and formal as well as utilitarian perspectives.

## Arguments against

On the other side, torture has been heavily opposed by various interest groups on different grounds.

The moral perspective for instance, views the practice as a violation. This is due to the fact that the victim is denied the right to act on their own rationale. Additionally, it lowers the moral level of the suspect under interrogation. According to Henry Shue, torture should be disallowed as it is not justified by the simple wrong or right standards. This implies that the act should not be judged by the amount of good or evil that it brings forth (Ghraib, 2004). He adds that it is wrong to use torture as the torturer has no way of verifying that the suspect has the information that they need.

Another perspective argues against the ticking bomb scenario. It emphasizes that in some instances, intelligence personnel may capture suspects that turn out to be innocent. Further, the concept behind the ticking bomb scenario works under the premises that result in intellectual fraud. From a liberal point of view, the event is created as an emergency so that inhumane treatment is justified. The liberal perspective argues that torture denies the suspect their rights (Luban, 2005).

Torture is regarded as an act that aims at obtaining a confession, punishing and terrifying the suspect while deriving pleasure at the practice. Moreover, it is difficult to verify the information given by a suspect under such conditions. For example, the suspect may give false information to stop the pain. The use of torture interrogation techniques has also been noted to dilute the strength of international laws and policies. For instance, disregard for international law has been associated with increased use of torture on prisoners of America and other countries. Furthermore, civilization asserts that nations adhere to amicable ways of obtaining intelligence. Torture is additionally opposed on grounds that other interrogation techniques can be used instead. Interrogation may opt to use other techniques such as verbal confrontation or psychological control methods that afflict less or no pain.

Further research also indicates that torture lacks in terms of efficiency as a modern interrogation technique. It has been noted that the information obtained under such circumstances may be misleading or wrong. In the long-term, the inclusion of torture in systems such as justice would result in greater costs rather than benefits. For instance, it undermines the value of evidence so that information obtained may be inconsequential in a court of law. The integration of torture interrogation techniques into the systems of rule has also been linked to other inefficiencies.

These may affect institutions such as the military or judiciary as they rely on the initial moral of rationale (Arrigo, 2004). It is apparent that modern day torture interrogation techniques are comprise an infringement of the rights of the person under interrogation. It undermines the moral level of the suspect. It has also been noted to be inefficient despite the pain subjected to the culprits. Moreover, the practice of torture has been found to contravene international law and morality. Therefore, torture interrogation techniques should only be applied in extreme cases whereby there is a degree of confidence that the suspect is the culprit.

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