

# Disregarding the Suffering of Others: Narrative, Comedy, and Torture

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Eventually one reads into a photograph what it *should* be saying.  
Susan Sontag, *Regarding the Pain of Others*

Underwear is humorous and only the undemocratic mind interrogates humor.

Don DeLillo, *Americana*

## Introduction

In April 2004, photographic evidence of torture at Abu Ghraib was released in the American press, first on CBS's *Sixty Minutes II* and several days later in the *New Yorker*. Approximately six months later, the *New Yorker* ran a cartoon by David Sipress: a grinning, cigar-chomping man in a short-sleeved military outfit and peaked cap, perhaps a member of some Latin American junta, faces a gaunt, bearded man hanging from chains on a wall, a representation of medieval torture. The caption reads, "No more *Hardball*—I'll talk."<sup>1</sup> At the end of a draining, antagonistic presidential campaign marked by unremitting punditry, the idea of watching Chris Matthews on the MSNBC show *Hardball* may have seemed worse to some than being manacled to a wall. But the cartoon expresses more than humor: it stands as an example of how torture is often portrayed as something that happens in another place (under a Latin American junta) and another time (the middle ages); its punch line reifies the popular misconception

that the sole purpose of torture is to procure information and that the end point of torture comes with the words "I'll talk"; and, like much of the American debate leading up to the reelection of George W. Bush, the cartoon willfully elides the role of the United States in the contemporary scene of torture.

In one of the photographs from Abu Ghraib, a man stands naked and spread-eagled next to a bunk bed, his arms pulled hard behind him, his chest thrust forward, a pair of underpants over his head. The caption to this photograph might be: *This is not torture*. In his memo to Counsel to the President Alberto Gonzales, Jay S. Bybee, then the assistant attorney general and now a federal judge on the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit, concludes that for an act to be classified as torture, it must cause physical pain "akin to that which accompanies serious physical injury such as death or organ failure" or "lasting psychological harm, such as seen in mental disorders like posttraumatic stress disorder."<sup>2</sup> Bybee and Gonzales's yardstick for torture is inconsistent with any medical understanding of pain and suffering, even if their definition affects a medical tone and physiologic correlate. Likewise, they create a dubious psychiatric domain, insofar as it is hard to predict who will suffer psychological harm from any given trauma. Furthermore, the assertion that the psychological consequences must be "lasting" prevents anyone from making any immediate claim that torture has occurred. Finally, the memo raises questions as to who exactly is evaluating the victims' pain and psychological suffering, whether this definition explicitly recruits into torture the assessment of the physician, and how any assessments might breach a physician's responsibility.<sup>3</sup>

The definition effectively limits the meaning of torture to vague categories that are both extreme and nonspecific, suggesting that acts of torture are only as meaningful as the permanent damage they inflict, and which preclude calling much of what occurred at Abu Ghraib torture. It is notable that this definition deviates from other definitions of torture, including that of the United Nations Convention against Torture, to which the United States is a signatory, where torture is:

any act by which severe pain or suffering, whether physical or mental, is intentionally inflicted on a person for such purposes as obtaining from him or a third person information or a confession, punishing him for an act he or a third person has committed or is suspected of having committed, or intimidating or coercing him or a third person, or for any reason based on discrimination of any

kind, when such pain or suffering is inflicted by or at the instigation of or with the consent or acquiescence of a public official or other person acting in an official capacity.<sup>4</sup>

When Bybee and Gonzales redefine torture in such a way as to exclude all but the most egregiously murderous or near-murderous acts, they create space for a wide range of vicious and degrading acts to occur, ones that are clearly prohibited by the United Nations definition. Far less overtly violent than the ones Bybee and Gonzales circumscribe as torture, including hooding, humiliation, waterboarding, and prolonged detention with sensory deprivation, can constitute torture; physicians have reported this and testified on this matter in the Senate.<sup>5</sup> To describe what is happening to the men in the photographs from Abu Ghraib as anything but torture is to risk colluding in a convoluted linguistic strategy designed for its tacit permission.

George W. Bush, Donald Rumsfeld, and Alberto Gonzales have all unequivocally condemned and denounced torture in their public responses to Abu Ghraib, but all three have overseen a change in American policy by which the United States has, as Mark Danner puts it, “officially . . . transform[ed] . . . from a nation that did not torture to one that did.”<sup>6</sup> This disparity is reconciled partly by the verbal tactics that have redefined “torture” and partly by the way torture is narrativized. The purpose of this paper is to examine how torture can be placed into a narrative context where it can become justified and thus rendered less controversial as the context facilitates disregarding the suffering of the victims. After situating current use of torture by the United States in the larger narrative context that provided the milieu for the resurgence of torture, I will focus on how the comic dimensions of torture are not only essential for perpetuating the torture but also instrumental within the torture; this argument is supported by the ways in which comedy inflected and influenced the subsequent polemics about Abu Ghraib but was largely ignored in the responses to torture in the medical literature. At each stage, it is imperative to see how the narrative context permits the disregarding of suffering of the victims of torture.

Torture is framed and sustained by linguistic tactics designed to justify its necessity, legitimize its methods, and create a milieu of plausible deniability. At the same time, these tactics can gradually dissipate the focus of critics, the public, and the media; a confused culpability is ascribed to lowly individuals as both perpetrators and scapegoats, and immunity is provided for those at the top of the hierarchy.<sup>7</sup> Such

tactics can take place at the level of the word, most clearly in the rapid deployment of euphemism. For example, the media and government have frequently explained the events at Abu Ghraib as “abuse”—a word that would not initially seem to be euphemistic as it accurately conveys the actions of the perpetrators. But it also intimates that the perpetrators abused their power, their positions, and the responsibility vested in them: if it is torture, it is systemic, organized, and under political authority; as “abuse,” it can be reduced to the sadism of a few renegades and the comic indignation of a few Iraqi prisoners. Such tactics can also take place at the narrative level. How is the story about torture being told? What details are highlighted as important? What tone is affected? How are pictures used to tell a story, and from what other story does this one distract us? How do these narratives shield us from seeing the suffering of the victim? And why is there so much comedy in these stories?

### Narrating Political Violence

Writers, activists, and victims of political violence have foregrounded the importance of telling stories about political violence.<sup>8</sup> Narrative converts information and memory into stories, which have a spatial and temporal consistency and a psychological depth that can flesh out the skeletal facts. Although it is acknowledged that stories risk factual inaccuracy, subjective inflection, and indeterminacy (sometimes by simultaneously demanding a fixed interpretation), they possess an immediacy that arises from the figures and tropes shared by a community of listeners—“negotiating the tensions between universality and particularity through the genre of the *testimonio*”—as well as the legal and social implications of bearing witness.<sup>9</sup> The effects of narrating individual experience of political violence, in tone, voice, methods of description and connection (i.e., how events are linked), personalize what would otherwise be a generic “human rights abuse.” Statistics, or concepts like torture or genocide, are rendered intimate.

To understand political violence one needs not only to bear witness to the testimony of victims but also to listen closely to the narratives justifying the violence. Political violence, when not silent and stealthy, often comes packaged in a narrative, or, when the veiled violence is made apparent, is quickly packaged into a narrative. How that narrative harnesses what is communal and avoids the ambiguous provides insight into those perpetrating the violence and those acquiescing in it.

The factors perceived to be communal (such as “American values” or “the role of the physician”) are what determine the “we” in the story, and the factors that are elided include the dissenting elements that call into question who “we” may be. The constitution of who “we” and “they” are is fundamental to the perception of suffering.

Certain narratives work by specifically invoking this dichotomy. In the 1990s, when the Clinton administration’s circumlocutions around genocide were even more knife-edged than the current avoidance of “torture,” opponents of intervention both in and outside of Rwanda and Bosnia quickly provided the narrative of “ancient ethnic hatreds.”<sup>10</sup> The massacres of 800,000 Tutsis by Hutu militia and civilians and of tens of thousands of Bosnians by Bosnian Serb and Serbian militia (numbers that do not reflect the rapes, injuries, orphaning, displacement, and other horrors these populations suffered) were thus neatly packaged into a narrative of inevitable tribal loyalties mired in longstanding and irrational dispute. The implication was that what goes around, comes around. The dynamics of “us” and “them” in such narratives depend upon who is telling the story and who the expected audience is. When cited by those who sought to avert intervention, “ancient ethnic hatreds” served to unite victims and perpetrators into a single narrative of “us,” insisting that both sides were culpable. For example, Stevan Weine explains how Bosnian Serb leader Radovan Karadzic “played on Western preoccupations with neutrality. He got inside their heads enough that they started to accept his mythological view of the Balkans’ ancient ethnic hatreds, and that those hatreds could not be understood or contained in any other way.”<sup>11</sup>

When used by those outside the locus of conflict, the same tropes create a narrative of “them” as savages mired in tribal warfare. General Lewis Mackenzie, the first United Nations commander in Sarajevo told the U.S. House Committee on Armed Services, “Dealing with Bosnia is a little bit like dealing with three serial killers. One has killed fifteen. One has killed ten. One has killed five. Do we help the one that has killed only five?” Peter Maas, reporting this in his book *Love Thy Neighbor*, goes on:

[Mackenzie’s] opinion carried weight, as is understandable, because very few people had hands-on experience in Bosnia, and few spoke as forcefully or articulately as Mackenzie. He provided politicians with the alibi they sought. Even the U.N. general says the Bosnians commit atrocities. Look, they bomb their own people. They massacre Serbs. We’d be foolish to intervene. Those people are animals, all of them.

We learned later that Mackenzie had gotten it wrong.<sup>12</sup>

Mackenzie could get a lot wrong, but narratives such as his can be very efficacious and can undermine staunch and confident opposition in several ways: first, by appearing to be convincing stories that are weighed against the counternarrative so that a total and unequivocal condemnation is difficult or appears politically “extreme”; second, through one-to-one juxtaposition with counternarratives in the name of “balance,” making both seem equally weighty; third, by flourishing in the so-called marketplace of ideas through uncontested repetition, and so accruing veracity in reiteration; fourth, as dithering justifications for paralysis (“It’s a very complicated issue.”); and finally, if the narrative is appealing enough, by evoking frank sympathy for the perpetrators.

In order to account fully for the resurgence of torture, one has to look at the larger narrative context that has permitted it and how that context is a story in which those who suffer deserve it because “they” have in some way hurt “us.” A central narrative around torture in the United States and the United Kingdom has been the “war on terror.” This “war on terror,” a war on a conceit, cannot be won geographically; it cannot be won ideologically against the “faceless enemy whose hatred of the United States [knows] no limits”; and it cannot be won diplomatically (as was made evident in Dick Cheney’s scoffing dismissal of presidential candidate John Kerry’s admonition for improved diplomacy, “as though Al Qaeda will be impressed with our softer side,” a speech during which he also said that the enemy’s “hatred of us is limitless”).<sup>13</sup> Whether or how it might be won, or what closure can come to such a “war” is beyond the purview of this paper. But under these circumstances, the “war on terror” functions primarily in a narrative context: this is not to say that it is fictitious, or a simulacrum in some post-Baudrillardian fantasy, but that it is a war against an essentially psychological target, based around a series of narratives. And the two fundamental tropes in this “war on terror” are both *de facto* arguments for torture.

The “ticking time bomb” is the central image in this “war on terror,” a chilling specter of potential annihilation, motivating the interminable quest for weapons of mass destruction. The ticking time bomb can always be evoked to justify torture by way of national defense or utilitarian arguments. The scenario is ubiquitous in the news, in debates, even popping up in the embarrassingly cursory ethics appendix to the Schlesinger Report, one of the independent panels assigned to investigate the “abuses” at Abu Ghraib.<sup>14</sup> The argument has been given legitimacy by numerous public figures, and disputed by few.<sup>15</sup>

Regardless of whether or not torture prevents terrorism, or even incites it, the ticking-time-bomb narrative is so intuitively compelling and so difficult to argue against as a thought experiment that it trumps any objections as sophistry.<sup>16</sup> When confronted with “claims by some pundits who say torture almost never works because the subject will inevitably say anything to alleviate the pain,” Alan Dershowitz responds, “We had a case in the Philippines where [local police] tortured somebody and revealed a plot to knock down 11 or 12 commercial airliners flying over the Pacific and a plot to kill the pope.”<sup>17</sup> There you have it. Who wouldn’t torture one person in order to reveal a plot to “knock down” eleven or twelve commercial airliners? By arguing that we are all potential victims (which, with the threat of Islamist violence, may well be true), any cruelty can become reasonable in the name of self-defense. It is comprehensible that one might disregard another’s suffering if that suffering can prevent one’s own.

Even more essential to the validation of torture is the central figure haunting the “war on terror” narrative: the terrorist. The terrorist rarely merits pity or kindness in his or her treatment and must be found out against his or her will, two preconditions for torture. Furthermore, according to the Schlesinger Report, terrorists “do not wear uniforms and are *otherwise indistinguishable* from noncombatants.”<sup>18</sup> Faced with such an enemy, every person can become a potential suspect hiding a terrible secret. That they are “indistinguishable” both necessitates and justifies a massive presumption of guilt, leading to the incarceration of numerous individuals and the subsequent widespread use of torture.<sup>19</sup>

Inherent in the formulation of the “terrorist” are ways of disregarding suffering. The “suspects” are always possibly guilty of a dreadful crime, and this crime is almost always potential (in an age of suicide bombing, the only certain terrorist is a dead one). Being labeled a terrorist ascribes to a person a category that defines his or her being, based not on phenomenological criteria like a particular crime but on the potential to act on who he or she is. Thus, without an identity other than their culpability, such figures evoke little sympathy. The words used to describe terrorists are likewise dehumanizing and depersonalizing. They are *indistinguishable*; they are *faceless*; they are, to use Pat Robertson’s term, *bearded* (an impressive synecdoche for Muslim men and a coded racism not only suggesting hidden faces but also conjuring up images of every bad-guy Arab, while blatantly ignoring that the September 11 hijackers were mostly clean shaven).<sup>20</sup> Morphing the “war on terror” into a “global struggle against violent extremism” does little to change this dynamic with regard to torture:

a “terrorist” is but one type of violent extremist, and drawing distinctions is fraught with semantic difficulty.

As was made tragically clear on September 11, 2001, there is such a thing as a ticking time bomb; there are those who can and will murder as many people as possible to advance fundamentalist political beliefs. This is not in doubt. Nor, under those circumstances, is a response unwarranted. But it is the premise of this paper that as long as the United States espouses a narrative about a “war on terror,” it will continue to engage in torture. Failing to account for this larger narrative, and, in particular, the mechanisms in this narrative that facilitate the disregarding of suffering, many condemnations of torture are doomed to futility and possibly irrelevance.

Creating a story in which “we” must harm “them” to save ourselves is by no means the only way in which a narrative that disregards suffering is constructed. Another fundamental way of achieving this is by using comedy. Comedy can be the inventive connection of the incongruous, resulting in a surprising, delightful disordering and reordering of categories.<sup>21</sup> Placing underwear over somebody’s head is a standard prank that functions in this way, comically mixing up two distinct areas of the body (the most public and the most private, the cleanest and the dirtiest, the location of eating with the location of defecating, the individuality of facial features and the universality of groins and buttocks). Similarly, in the Sipress cartoon, television—innocuous, modern, and American—and *Hardball* are brought together with the foreign and the medieval, producing a synthesis of place and time that is comic through the incongruity of American modernism with torture, while laughingly implying that something can become so annoying that it becomes torture. The incongruity of humor, then, which laughs away any connection between *Hardball* and torture, which laughs at the severity of torture made trivial when reduced to underpants and television shows, bleeds into perceptions of the torture itself: if there is so much laughter, there cannot really be suffering. “We” would not laugh at such suffering.

Another perspective on humor is the role of humiliation, whereby the haughty are brought low with harm only to their vanity. The pleasure derived from observing the humiliation of a defiant enemy reduced to conquered ignominy has its roots in the same comic principles as watching an arrogant man slip on a banana peel. While this dimension of humor is clearly present in the pictures from Abu Ghraib, it is exemplified by another set of photographs published in several newspapers in the United States and the United Kingdom of Saddam Hussein in his



underwear. The photographs were accompanied by comic captions in the form of headline puns: the *Sun* laughed at "Tyrant's in His Pants" and the *New York Post* gloated over "The Butcher of Sagdad."<sup>22</sup> That Hussein merits the epithets "butcher" and "tyrant" is not questioned here; the comic principle illustrated is nevertheless clear.

Both of these elements of humor contribute to a specific tone in the narratives about the torture. If we accept, as many will, that underwear on one's head can be characterized as "harmless" and that headlines in the tabloid press are just so much "fun," then by Bybee and Gonzales's definition, these acts are not torture. Comedy begins to do its work.

### Comedy and Torture

Some of the men and women seem familiar: rosy cheeks, broad and toothy grins, an all-American thumbs-up. The once unfamiliar scene, however, has become frighteningly familiar: a thin man, his arms outstretched in painful parody of a crucifixion, a burlap sack over his head and wires trailing away from his body to some unseen generator; a fleshy pyramid of exposed buttocks; an expressionless face, unzipped from a body bag; one man cringing and another flinching away from a dog held back by a leash.<sup>23</sup> These are some of the photographs from Abu Ghraib.

The pictures contain potent details: the jaunty angle of a cigarette, sterile teal gloves, the recurring motif of the leash. In one picture, the feebleness of a man is manifest in the drooping leash; in another, the power of the dog is kept in check by a taut leash. The photographs juxtapose the powerful and the powerless, the grin and the grimace, the cheerful and the humiliated, the American and the Iraqi.

One might ask, how can the Americans smile in such a situation? It is not so hard to answer: they are not thinking about it; under extreme duress, in hot conditions, with poor training and poor oversight, they are acting in a stupid, cruel way. That is the preferred explanation, and no doubt partly true. Other explanations are also possible. In *The Roots of Evil*, Ervin Staub labels some of the psychological characteristics of torturers: "'Us'-'them' differentiation, the devaluation of the victims, and just-world thinking [where the assumption is that in a 'just' world, the people being tortured must have done *something* wrong] (and other processes of moral exclusion that distance the self from victims), as well as better-world ideology, often characterize torturers."<sup>24</sup>

And so, perhaps they can smile because they have justified the torture to themselves as soldiers preening over their trophies, a victory for “us” over “them.” Perhaps the political rhetoric that designated those who “are not with us are against us” provided a rationale. The superiority theory of humor, formulated by Plato and reaching its theoretic pinnacle in Hobbes, postulates that humor consists of basking in one’s superiority, to the sounds of atavistic laughter, a snarling, barking cackle over the vanquished enemy.<sup>25</sup> Perhaps the vitriol toward Arabs and Muslims in many U.S. presses coupled with the U.S. government’s drumbeat assertion that these people were responsible for the atrocities of September 11 fed into their justifications.<sup>26</sup> And perhaps they were just following orders—an excuse that has been notorious since Nuremberg, but we cannot ignore how torture is a crime of “socialized obedience.”<sup>27</sup> Perhaps this is how they can smile.

The question I would like to ask here, though, is what does the smiling *do*?

It has become a tradition in the West that the subject of a snapshot should smile and is often prompted to do so by the photographer. The genres of photograph in which people are least likely to smile are those where they are not independent subjects expressing their own identities but institutional, political objects, whether by choice or not (for example, passport photos, driver’s licenses, mug shots). The smile in a photograph is directed toward the photographer, inviting the shot; the smile is also directed at the viewers of the photograph, telling them the subject welcomed the shot; the smile is directed at a future self, to remind one of one’s happiness at that time. It makes of the photographed object an active, willingly posing subject.

In the photographs from Abu Ghraib it is the smiling Americans who are the subjects and the dishonored persons around them the objects. The eye is drawn away from the object, toward the smiles. Those smiling enact their presence, agency, and individuality through their smiles at the expense of the massed, anonymous flesh around them. Smiling is a statement of both personality and personhood surrounded by the bestial and degraded. The Iraqis are objectified, unindividuated, part of another group and a “them,” and so their suffering becomes anonymous, bland, abstracted.

It is important to remember that these pictures do not simply record acts of torture. They are the result of a particular act of torture—that is, the taking of the picture itself. Photography is *instrumental*, not incidental, as much a part of the infliction of pain and suffering as the “stressed position.” It lets the victims know that there is docu-

mentation of their humiliation, that the flashbulb has exposed their nakedness, fear, mortification, and absolute vulnerability. Photography itself becomes essential to the process of objectification; the pictures serve as a perpetual continuation of that torture, functioning, in Mark Danner's words, as a "shame multiplier."<sup>28</sup> Evidence of their absolute subjugation can be shown around the world, and even with their faces covered or technologically blurred, many will know who they are.<sup>29</sup>

So the smiles allow these photographs to depict dominant subjects and subservient objects. But the smiles, like the acts of photography, are also *instrumental*. A smile is a signal of welcome and harmony, an expression of warmth; we use smiles to share a moment, friendship, recognition, the promise of peace, a surrender to common humanity; the pursuit of happiness reaches its destination in a smile. A smile is a social covenant.

Elaine Scarry, in her seminal *The Body in Pain: The Making and Unmaking of the World*, describes the ways in which torturers make use of everything that the victim might think of as safe, as domestic, as their own (especially their own bodies), so that the world around them—rooms, refrigerators, voices, the victims' own bodies—becomes incorporated in the torture and the victim's world is "unmade."<sup>30</sup> Her analysis exposes the organization of torture as having far less to do with gleaning so-called actionable intelligence than the enactment of political superiority. But there is an odd lacuna in her chapter "The Structure of Torture." She writes, "Amid [the torturer's] insistent questions and exclamations, his jeers, gibberish, obscenities, his *incomprehensible* laughter, his monosyllables, his grunts . . . there are words, random words, names for torture, names for the prisoner's body, and this idiom continually moves out to the realm of the man-made, the world of technology and artifice" (43, italics added).

But the laughter is far from incomprehensible—it is all too comprehensible. Like the smiles in Abu Ghraib, the laughter of the torturer is a specifically invoked sound of levity and joy, communicating quite clearly that the victim's pain is unrecognized and that the torturer does not care. As Scarry states, "The most radical act of distancing resides in [the torturer's] disclaiming of the other's hurt" (57). Smiling and laughing in the context of torture insistent doubts both the reality and the extent of the other's suffering.

The smiling in the photographs does more than this, though. Scarry notes how the victim's sense of the safety of a room is destroyed when converted into a torture chamber and that such rooms are called "guest rooms" and "safe houses," calling "attention to the generous, civiliz-

ing impulse normally present in the human shelter" (40). Did those who thought of such things not laugh to one another as they decided how to name the rooms? Perhaps not, if they were so convinced of their own righteousness; and yet perhaps the comedy itself permitted another type of obliviousness to the irony and absurdity. Under the sheer, horrible wit and inventiveness, the bloody-minded absurdity of torture, lies the fundamental irony, the sickest of jokes: torture not only produces bad information but also forces its victims to assume—even to know, or adopt—fictitious roles through false confessions.<sup>31</sup> The aim of torture is not to obtain good information but to force somebody to make him- or herself a vehicle for an untruth.

Torturers do not simply smile over their victims' suffering, and so disbelieve the reality of the suffering, but they also smile at that suffering, mocking it. Mockery is the expression of disdain for what another holds valuable and meaningful; one mocks by taking on the symbols or expressions that are held dear and reflecting them back laden with contempt and derision. In unmaking the victim's communal world, the torturers draw happiness and pleasure into the suffering by recruiting the social covenant of the smile—its reciprocity and community—into the torture. The bodily dimensions of a human being—mobility, sleeping, bathing, control over one's bladder and bowels and sexual organs, breathing, being pain-free, existing as both body and person—is controlled, compromised, and devastated in torture; the social dimension is likewise controlled, compromised, and devastated. Throughout torture runs comprehensible laughter to serve this purpose, explicitly and intentionally, whether it is putting underwear over a man's head or making the men, quite literally, into the butt of a joke, as with the perpetrators who laughed at the scatological pyramid of male buttocks, a ziggurat of arses.

Returning to my earlier questions, how and why could the perpetrators smile? If smiling is a social covenant, then the perpetrators are able to engage in this social covenant and so appear to retain their sense of humanity and civility. How perpetrators can smile and what this smiling does become the same thing: they must smile to retain their humanity. The victims, unable to engage in this covenant, are less than human: they are beings who do not smile—*animals*. The ultimate untruth enacted in torture, partly by way of smiles and laughter, is that the victims are less than human. And yet in making use of the smile to retain their humanity at the same time as this smile is effectively denying the humanity of others, the torturers are hollowing out the communion, the reciprocity that makes a smile human—it becomes a

type of shell, or even a mask. Desperately holding on to the conventions of humanity in the face of their “inhumanity,” the perpetrators’ smiles indicate what they are losing, just as they are taking it away from their victims. Thus, George Annas can write that “[t]orture begins by dehumanizing the victim but ends by dehumanizing the torturer.”<sup>32</sup> Each social covenant, from the smile to the civility of a “guest room,” is corrupted, *for all*, by torture.

### The Polemics

In creating comic portraits of their prisoners, the perpetrators both disregard and inflict suffering. The blossoming of narratives around these photographs becomes another way of disregarding that suffering, with the prominent polemics and narratives beginning at the level of the smile. This is partly achieved through minimization: immediately accepting the misleading logic of the perpetrators’ smiles, which indicate that real suffering was not inflicted. On May 4, 2004, a caller to Rush Limbaugh likened the photographs to a college fraternity prank, to which Limbaugh responded:

Exactly. Exactly my point! This is no different than what happens at the Skull and Bones initiation and we’re going to ruin people’s lives over it and we’re going to hamper our military effort, and then we are going to really hammer them because they had a good time. You know, these people are being fired at every day. I’m talking about people having a good time, these people, you ever heard of emotional release? You ever heard of need to blow some steam off?<sup>33</sup>

Note that the people whose lives are going to be “ruined” here are the torturers; Limbaugh has shifted the perspective of suffering from the victims of torture, who make no appearance here, to the perpetrators. Furthermore, their actions are reframed in the context of emotional stress and the catharsis of humor (another dimension of humor that becomes a convenient alibi).

Other commentators reference this expedient narrative of fraternity pranks, including James R. Schlesinger, chairman of the panel that produced the report commonly known as the Schlesinger Report, who described the behavior as “Animal House on the night shift,” as if the perpetrators were just being rowdy and raunchy.<sup>34</sup> Such com-

ments set the tone for the subsequent polemics. A similar perspective was employed by the soldiers, and even became a manner of legal defense. A defense attorney for Spc. Sabrina Harman stated that the photograph of a hooded man balancing on a wooden box illustrates “a joking type of thing”; prosecutors responded that “the picture is no laughing matter and that the Army reservist was abusing the prisoner, who feared he would die.”<sup>35</sup> Apart from the vigilant use of the word “abusing,” we also have a *concession* on the part of prosecutors to humor when, as if scolding naughty school kids, they say this “is no laughing matter.” The use of humor is instantaneously and pervasively turned into exculpation. Early allegations were treated in a “light-hearted manner” according to Brigadier General Janis Karpinski, and testimonies are rife with people “laughing” and soldiers “just having a little fun.”<sup>36</sup> Ann Coulter joked that she “personally [has not] been so singularly disturbed by an atrocity since [she] had to sit through all of ‘The Matrix: Reloaded.’”<sup>37</sup>

Humor can be a way of framing the false and irrelevant, not only because of its levity but also because of its inherent untrustworthiness. And so, responding to Amnesty International’s 2005 report condemning various American practices, Vice President Cheney said, “For Amnesty International to suggest that somehow the United States is a violator of human rights, I frankly just don’t take them seriously,” where “them” presumably refers to Amnesty International and not human rights.<sup>38</sup> President Bush dismissed the report as “absurd.”<sup>39</sup> Both men use the comic—that which is not serious, that which is absurd—to dismiss something as untrue; in this case, mirroring the soldiers who smile over a victim’s suffering, Cheney and Bush reject accusations of torture and human rights violations.

Although, as previously noted, there were stern official responses to the photographs at Abu Ghraib, there was also levity. Seymour Hersch reports that complaints “about the United States’ treatment of prisoners, Rumsfeld said in early 2002, amounted to ‘isolated pockets of international hyperventilation.’”<sup>40</sup> Elsewhere, Rumsfeld has replied to the criticisms of how the war was prosecuted with awesome banalities and almost ecstatically bland pronouncements. Responding to the looting of the Iraqi museum, Rumsfeld said with coy propriety, “Stuff happens.”<sup>41</sup>

The smiles thus permit the minimizing of the victims’ suffering and, by way of conjuring a relationship between perpetrators and a potentially critical audience, narratives oblivious to the victims. The media reproduced these images from Abu Ghraib, and another narra-

tive became apparent; as Roland Barthes notes, "The press photograph is a message."<sup>42</sup> An act of political subjugation, torture has cultural inflections and occurs in a political context with political meanings. In this case, the photographic message is a lengthy joke at the expense of the dignity of Muslim men, where their religion and ethnicity are overdetermined by the smiling Americans at their side.

The increasing number of photographs of torture perpetrated by American agents may not serve the military's or the government's ostensible interest (only because they were published) but they nevertheless contain an all-too-legible message of domination and ruthlessness. The difference in degree and intentionality between these photographs and the transmissions on Al-Jazeera of Western hostages being beheaded tempers any comparison but is partly achieved, to disingenuous effect, by the humor in the photographs—after all, reports have documented that there were clearly deaths as a result of U.S. torture (indeed, one death at Bagram was associated with comedy itself).<sup>43</sup>

Such practices have global ramifications: national and cultural insult, the rage on the "Arab street" (a term Christopher Hitchens has correctly taken to task as a "vanquished cliché").<sup>44</sup> The concerted effort to humiliate based on perceptions of religion and culture became absurdly renarrativized a year later as a problem of journalistic integrity. Imran Khan, a former international cricket star and now a Pakistani politician, held aloft a copy of *Newsweek* and decried a report contained therein describing an act desecrating the Koran; his pronouncement was soon followed by anti-U.S. riots.<sup>45</sup> There were numerous recriminations in the United States, most directed at *Newsweek* itself.<sup>46</sup> The magazine offered a carefully worded retraction, even though acts desecrating the Koran had been and were subsequently described.<sup>47</sup> What Khan and others were responding to was a specific cultural tone of the torture. But instead of confronting the cultural complexities of the situation, based in acts of intentional violence and mockery, the plot of this narrative told another story. When writing about this incident for the *New Yorker*, Hendrik Hertzberg felt it necessary to "point out that the problem is torture and abuse, not dubiously sourced reports of torture and abuse."<sup>48</sup>

One can immediately observe that there are specific cultural inflections to the Abu Ghraib photographs. Many of the pictures contain American women. Responding to the impression—sometimes rooted in evidence and other times generalized thoughtlessly—of some Islamic cultures' frank subjugation of women, of purdah and burqas, these immodestly dressed, powerful women, like their smiles, stake their claim

and their status as the dominant subject. It was a conscious, calculated part of the torture that women should be involved as a culture-specific humiliation of the men, such as making men think that menstrual blood is being smeared on their faces.<sup>49</sup> Alan Dershowitz, hailed in one report as a “noted civil libertarian” and “[t]he top legal thinker,” expressed his endorsement of these tactics: “It’s a good thing to use women interrogators on radical Muslim extremists,” Dershowitz said. “I think it’s a good thing to make them be stripped naked.”<sup>50</sup> He twice uses the word “good,” a profoundly ambiguous term in the context of torture, giving it a veneer of both morality and efficacy. This type of cultural humiliation is often framed as a type of joke, a comedy at the expense of perceived Arab or Muslim norms.

Rush Limbaugh invokes a similar logic as a justification for the torture, which he couches in the semiofficial rhetoric of “softening up” (a vile euphemism for torture) and notably suggests had been “ordered”:

[T]hey’re in a prison where they’re being softened up for interrogation. And we hear that the most humiliating thing you can do is make one Arab male disrobe in front of another . . . and especially if you put a woman in front of them and then spread those pictures around the Arab world. . . . Maybe they’re gonna think we are serious. Maybe they’re gonna think we mean it this time. Maybe they’re gonna think we’re not gonna kowtow to them. Maybe the people who ordered this are pretty smart. . . . Nobody got physically injured. But boy there was a lot of humiliation of people who are trying to kill us—in ways they hold dear. Sounds pretty effective to me if you look at us in the right context.<sup>51</sup>

Limbaugh not only endorses the practice but also comprehends the larger picture in a way that Dershowitz does not. After all, what exactly is “the right context”? Limbaugh provides the answer: as propaganda. The pictures are “spread . . . around the Arab world” with a clear message, that “we are serious . . . we’re not gonna kowtow to them.”

This narrative of cultural humiliation, though, has serious problems of its own. First, it places the victims into a generic group (to which they may or may not actually belong), telling a story not about individual suffering but about a group and that group’s characteristics—quite the opposite, then, of testimony. Second, discussing the use of “culture-specific” forms of humiliation puts all of us into a position of sharing the torturers’ presumptions about the culture of



those being tortured. One does not have to be an Arab or a Muslim, or even, in Dershowitz's terms, a "radical Muslim extremist" to find it vile, degrading, and profoundly disturbing to be forced to undress and masturbate in public, to have menstrual blood smeared on one's face, to lie on a floor and have a boot placed on one's neck. Even if the humiliation, then, is condemned, the pervasive sense of the victims as being part of a "them," and what "we" think of "them," is reified. Accepting this logic, we are implicated.

So, if the smiling allows minimization of the torture and a narrative of cultural humiliation/propaganda, other narratives are constructed around torture in order to shift the perspective away from the suffering victim into contexts amenable to the narrator's agenda, frequently in order to acquit the perpetrator of any legal and moral ramifications of this act of political violence. In the immediate aftermath of the release of the photographs, the emotional tenor of the response—usually disgust and dismay—was fairly universal, although some were less concerned by the photographs than the response, most notoriously James M. Inhofe, Republican senator for Oklahoma, who proclaimed himself "more outraged by the outrage."<sup>52</sup>

Barthes, in looking at how photographs in journalism function, argues that "[t]he totality of the information is thus carried by two different structures (one of which is linguistic)."<sup>53</sup> After the photographs were released, there was a flurry of contextualization, most of which served to shift possible blame, and little of which addressed the role of torture in the larger context of a "war on terror." Those who had the most to gain by disowning the perpetrators promptly did so, by disavowing any narrative context in which they might play a role and by isolating the perpetrators as deviant and nonrepresentative. Like George W. Bush's claim that the Abu Ghraib photographs were the result of "disgraceful conduct by a few American troops, who dishonored our country and disregarded our values," the Jones/Fay Report identifies "a small group of morally corrupt soldiers and civilians," and the Schlesinger Report shakes its head at how "[s]ome individuals seized the opportunity provided by this environment to give vent to latent sadistic urges."<sup>54</sup>

What then have the torturers wrought? Partly because they seemed to be *enjoying* themselves, the perpetrators of torture could have their crime publicly and officially assessed as out of the realm of staid, official directive. They "dishonored our country and disregarded our values" and cannot be representative of either "our" country or "our" values, and so it might properly be said that therefore "we" are the

dishonored victims. They are “morally corrupt” and so are evildoers, just like the ones with whom we are at war. And, in an extraordinarily psychologically oriented construction, they were *already* perverts, prior to their assignment to Abu Ghraib, who nefariously “seized the opportunity” to indulge their previously “latent” perversions. The torturers are thus exiled from “our” country, “our” values, “our” morality, and “our” sexuality. These narratives manage to make the narrators guiltless, arbiters of a strong and true morality and representatives of values inconsistent with such “abuse.”

And so the smiles are also read as frivolous and smirking, as the product of a debased culture. Many critics and commentators took the opportunity to construct around these photographs a set of complaints about American culture, linking these concerns tenuously to the torture and creating a narrative in which groups of other Americans were ultimately responsible. Linda Chavez blamed feminism; some, like Diana West, blamed the media for reveling in its role as messenger.<sup>55</sup> Some saw the roots of Abu Ghraib in MTV and a licentious, violent culture, a theory that brought together Tony Perkins of the Family Research Council and Susan Sontag.<sup>56</sup> The aforementioned Senator Inhofe even managed to decry “humanitarian do-gooders.”<sup>57</sup> Jeff Gannon, the disgraced pseudo-journalist planted in the White House press corps, expostulated that “[s]ome Americans are angry about the overreaction of the ‘Arab street’ and the politicization of the [Abu Ghraib] matter by Democrats.”<sup>58</sup>

The extent to which these polemics actually connect the events of Abu Ghraib with American culture varies; taking a cue from the official narratives, each tends to be a way of blaming the “them” within “us,” laying culpability at the feet of Hollywood, the media, video games, or the Democrats. Most make the connections without any specific evidence (such as whether any of the perpetrators actually watched MTV or played violent video games, and without noting that it did not take gender integration for a military unit to engage in torture). Naomi Klein argues that “[a]s an interrogation tool, torture is a bust. But when it comes to social control, nothing works quite like torture.”<sup>59</sup> What all the polemics achieve—from the official narratives to the pundits’ pieces—is a looking-away—from the suffering of the victims, while placing the authors in a position of righteousness and victimization. As Limbaugh said (of the Iraqis in Abu Ghraib), they are “people who are trying to kill us.”

In doing so, the polemics mirror an essential element of the photographs themselves, something the photographs permit with their

smiles and humor: the refusal to see how disregarding suffering is not only a blindness to suffering but also a means of perpetuating and even rallying it.

### The Medical Response

Attempting to account for the resurgence of torture without understanding the context in which the torture occurs can produce bland, blanket condemnations that, however morally appealing, risk emptiness and inconsequence. Much of that context—the “war on terror,” the use of comedy in torture—can be understood by looking at the narratives excusing, justifying, blaming, and disidentifying the actors in this resurgence. Even though physicians and health-care workers will be bearing witness to and possibly treating the physiologic and psychological consequences of torture, and even though physicians and other health-care workers are directly implicated in the current scene of torture, physicians have not been effective in condemning the American practice of torture at Abu Ghraib, Guantánamo, Bagram Air Base, and elsewhere, much less bringing it to a halt.<sup>60</sup>

It is incumbent upon those whose organizing bodies demand speaking out against torture to protest, and although there has been condemnation, it has tended to be haphazard and inconsistent, especially in regard to the military medical leadership.<sup>61</sup> All physicians are compelled by numerous treaties and ethics rules to speak out against torture, but the editorials are few and far between (and would be almost nonexistent, were it not for the *New England Journal of Medicine* and the *Lancet*). Action by the societies and associations has been limited if not negligible, and always reactive.<sup>62</sup> There have been no proactive efforts: the *Lancet* reports that “[n]o unprompted reports of abuses were initiated by medical personnel before the official investigation into practices at Abu Ghraib.”<sup>63</sup>

Ignoring any larger context, then, the narrative context of much medical condemnation has been on the role of physicians and health-care workers in this torture. In one sense, this is an understandable place to begin the discussion: torture forces everybody to ask who “we” are to do this to “them,” and so those in the medical community must ask who “we” are as physicians and health-care workers. But by framing it only in this context of medical responsibility, and not within the larger narrative context of the torture, the condemnation risks being shallow, local, guild based. It can also work as a type of containment

("we" can only discuss this matter in this manner and context and need not worry about it in other contexts).

Although the American Medical Association (AMA) promotes its strongly worded condemnation of torture, the efficacy and integrity of the AMA's response to the torture of prisoners at Abu Ghraib and elsewhere during the "war on terror" has been forcefully questioned as less than "robust."<sup>64</sup> The AMA has been criticized for producing "statements espousing human rights or decrying medical complicity in torture [but] not uniformly condemn[ing] those who violate their group's principles."<sup>65</sup>

Indeed, in response to the Abu Ghraib scandals, the House of Delegates of the AMA passed a resolution that not only managed to avoid any specific mention of physician involvement but also became an act of praise for the leadership: "[O]ur American Medical Association endorses President Bush's May 10, 2004, condemnation of abuses of Iraqi detainees."<sup>66</sup> One might observe that this statement is a tepid compromise and another example of the sly euphemizing of torture as "abuse," and that its polite nod to Bush sides with the leadership, wrapping it in a gauze of appreciatory blamelessness. That any resolution even passed may have been in doubt as "[d]uring reference committee discussion, delegates from Texas and Nebraska expressed concern that the resolution was more of a political statement than a medical one."<sup>67</sup> It is difficult to understand this as anything but disingenuous given the long list of resolutions passed with specific political tone and content. It is even more difficult to reconcile the convenient discomfort with the "political" nature of torture and the AMA's own condemnation of torture in its code of ethics, or the "wider duty to speak out about the social and political roots of suffering and disease," which is enshrined in such documents as the World Medical Association's Declaration of Tokyo and has been extensively called upon by various human rights organizations, including medically oriented ones like Physicians for Human Rights.<sup>68</sup>

Narratives that selectively frame certain issues as "political" in a pejorative manner, reductionistically proposing that something political cannot also be medical, insist upon disengagement. They rely on the fiction of a neutral, uncompromised medical world populated by objective, disinterested clinicians: this is who "we" are. By adopting this narrative around the stolid physician unresponsive to politics, the physician is ultimately making a political decision to support the status quo, even if the status quo means permitting intimidation, violence, and subjugation. These same characteristics that render physicians

above politics disengage physicians from the larger narrative context and from responding to the actual suffering of the victims.

In June 2005 the American Psychiatric Association announced in a press release that it was “troubled” by reports of the involvement of psychiatrists in “alleged violations of professional medical ethics” at Guantánamo Bay and proclaimed itself “not neutral” on “physician practices.”<sup>69</sup> “[N]ot neutral” is an odd formulation, unequivocally denying equivocation without actually taking any particular position. One might say that it risks being neutrally not neutral. The American Psychological Association (APA) also responded.<sup>70</sup> Just as the AMA promoted its response in a letter in the *New England Journal of Medicine*, so the APA promoted its response in a letter to the *New Yorker*, after the publication of Jane Mayer’s article “The Experiment” (which in part or in whole must have prompted both organizations’ press releases).<sup>71</sup> According to Michael Wilks in the *Lancet*, however, the APA’s report “rehearses conventional ethical principles about care of individual patients, but then does an about-face when it comes to sanctioning input from psychologists and advice on techniques to be used in interrogation. In effect, it becomes acceptable for a health professional to dispense with any ethical responsibilities when their training and expertise is used outside a strictly therapeutic context.”<sup>72</sup> Wilks decries the American Psychiatric Association’s response as “weak” and the APA’s response as a “disgrace”; the two responses are useful to mention in this context because the first broaches neutrality and the second dual loyalties.<sup>73</sup>

The APA’s report and similar debates in the literature conjure up another figure, one who may not be neutral: the double-bodied physician or psychologist embodying dual loyalties.<sup>74</sup> Rather like the medieval king with his regal, divine body as well as his corporeal physicality, these physicians and psychologists can somehow shift between competing and even conflicting professional ethical obligations when stepping into a different role. This imaginary figure with his or her dual loyalties is not an *answer* to the ethical problem posed by conflicting values; it is a way of narrativising the problem and conceiving of the actors. Furthermore, it runs parallel to the danger of “doubling,” where, as explained by Robert J. Lifton, “a prior, humane self can be joined by a ‘professional self’ willing to ally itself with a destructive project, with harming or even killing others.”<sup>75</sup> Indeed, that professional self may be fortified and emboldened by the allegiance of the “prior, humane self” to the strict ethics espoused by these organizations.

To describe these debates as narrative processes with imaginary configurations of the physician is not to disavow the ethical complexity

of the situation. Rather it is to point out that placing these ethically complex processes into narratives carries its own risks. The first is the assumption that simply explaining the narrative configuration solves the ethical challenge. The second is that changing the focus of the argument by virtue of renarrativising the story can distract from the larger narrative context and, crucially, perpetuate a blindness to the suffering of the victims. By focusing on the role of physicians and health-care providers, and the violations committed by physicians, there is the sense that “we” as physicians will recover our sense of ethics from describing how “those” physicians are violating them. In editorials and commentaries, many of which are both forensic in their reasoning and passionate, authors have tended to shy away from the larger cultural and political dimensions of the torture, as well as the silent victims themselves, and focus on “the role of the physician.” In doing so (and reifying the characterization of the stolid, apolitical physician), they are turning away from central narrative elements of the torture, reflecting the tone of the overall response: disregarding suffering and blaming the bad “them” among “us.” It is this very narrative process, however, that in turn permits physicians to look away from suffering caused by colleagues, to fail to speak out against the violence, and to endorse it implicitly.

Islamist violence and violent religious fundamentalism everywhere are of immense public-health importance. Such issues as bioterrorism, the medical and emotional sequelae of warfare, as well as torture have all been explored in the medical literature and reexamined in light of the changing geopolitical landscape since 2001.<sup>76</sup> In his excellent analysis of the legal prohibitions on torture and his engagement with the arguments of Bybee, Gonzales, and Dershowitz, Ben Saul forcefully asserts that “discussion of torture should not be taboo [because] . . . it is vital to constantly explain and reinvigorate the policy rationale underlying the absolute prohibition, to avoid complacency and ward off misguided and ill-conceived attempts to permit torture or other ill-treatment.”<sup>77</sup>

The cautious, often agnostic language of science bestows upon its speakers a credibility and legitimacy unavailable to table-pounding pundits or media-savvy politicians. But the carefully chosen language is still telling stories, however neutral and controlled and placid. And if that language fails to capture the essential moral problem, if the story is told without an ear for the emotions, the laughter, the cries of agony, the narrative risks irrelevance. When those whose expertise is in the suffering body and mind can disregard the suffering of men

and women, and look coolly on at the pictures without seeing their own complicity or their own investment, there will be no advocacy and only the most dangerous of silences.

## NOTES

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1. Sipress, *Cartoon*, 85.
2. Bybee, "Memorandum for Alberto R. Gonzales, Counsel to the President," 155.
3. See Bloche and Marks, "Doctors and Interrogators at Guantánamo Bay."
4. United Nations, "Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment."
5. See Piwowarczyk, Moreno, and Grodin, "Health Care of Torture Survivors"; Mollica, "Surviving Torture," 6; and Keller, "U.S. Senate Staff Briefing on Attorney General Nominee Alberto Gonzales and the Issue of Detention and Torture of Prisoners."
6. Danner, *Truth and Torture*, 22.
7. See *CNN.com*, "Abu Ghraib Judge Declares Mistrial."
8. See Schaffer and Smith, "Conjunctions."
9. Hesford, "Documenting Violations," 105 (Hesford's italics).
10. See Power, *A Problem from Hell*, 298, 359–64; and Uzordima, "Rwanda."
11. Weine, *When History is a Nightmare*, 130.
12. Maas, *Love Thy Neighbour*, 32.
13. Jones and Fay, "The Jones/Fay Report," 420; and Cheney, "Remarks at the Republican National Convention."
14. Schlesinger, "The Schlesinger Report," 401.
15. See Hitchens, "Prison Mutiny."
16. See Hersch, *Chain of Command*, 3.
17. *NewsMax.com*, "Dershowitz."
18. Schlesinger, 377 (italics added).
19. See Hersch, 15; and Danner, 3.
20. See *Media Matters*, "Pat Robertson (Again)"; and Federal Bureau of Investigation, Press Release.
21. See Morreal, *Taking Laughter Seriously*, 15.
22. See *CNN.com*, "Pentagon Vows to Probe Saddam Photos"; and *Voice of America News*, "The US Investigating Source of Unauthorized Saddam Photos."
23. Apparently there was not actually a generator there, but the prisoner was told there was—the torture, then, was a psychological threat of horrible physical violence.
24. Staub, *The Roots of Evil*, 244.
25. See Critchley, *On Humour*, 2.
26. See Hersch, 363.
27. Fiske, Harris, and Cuddy, "Why Ordinary People Torture Enemy Prisoners," 1483.
28. Danner, 19.
29. See Hersch, 38; and Danner, 3.
30. Scarry, *The Body in Pain*, 42. Subsequent references are cited parenthetically in the text.
31. See Hersch, 66; Physicians for Human Rights, "Break Them Down," 18; and numerous others cited in the bibliography, including Sontag, Hitchens, and Klein.

32. Annas, "Unspeakably Cruel," 2131.
33. *Media Matters*, "Limbaugh on Torture of Iraqis."
34. Danner, 28.
35. *CNN.com*, "Second Abu Ghraib Court-Martial Begins."
36. Danner, 11, 4, 13; and Hersch, 12.
37. Coulter, "2004: Highlights and Lowlifes."
38. *CNN.com*, "Cheney Offended by Amnesty Criticism."
39. *CNN.com*, "Bush: Amnesty Report 'Absurd.'"
40. Hersch, 17.
41. Loughlin, "Rumsfeld on Looting in Iraq."
42. Barthes, "The Photographic Message," 194.
43. See Physicians for Human Rights, "Break Them Down," 1; Golden, "In US Report, Brutal Details of 2 Afghan Inmates' Deaths"; and Golden, "Army Faltered in Investigating Detainee Abuse."
44. Hitchens, "The Arab Street."
45. See *BBC News*, "Muslims Denounce 'US Koran Abuse.'"
46. See, for example, Kurtz's report in the *Washington Post*, "Newsweek Apologizes."
47. See *BBC News*, "Inquiry Finds Koran 'Mishandling'"; Simpson, "The Media's Fault?"; and *CNN.com*, "US: Guards, Detainees Mishandled Quran."
48. Hertzberg, "Big News Week," 34.
49. See Davis, "Soldier Lifts Lid on Guantánamo 'Abuse.'"
50. *NewsMax.com*, "Dershowitz."
51. *Media Matters*, "Limbaugh."
52. *Washington Post*, "Transcript."
53. Barthes, 195.
54. Danner, 23; Jones and Fay, 405; and Schlesinger, 344
55. See Chavez, "Sexual Tension in the Military"; and West, "The Media Stampede."
56. See Family Research Council, "FRC Statement on Iraqi Prisoner Abuse Controversy"; and Sontag, "What Have We Done?" Sontag was critiqued by David Aaronovitch for this reason (see Aaronovitch, "The Trouble with Sontag's Story").
57. *Washington Post*, "Transcript."
58. See Goldenberg, "Fake Reporter Unmasked at White House"; and Gannon, "Administration Pressed to Release Pictures from Saddam's Torture Chambers."
59. Klein, "Torture's Dirty Secret."
60. See Mollica, "Surviving Torture," 5; Piwowarczyk, Moreno, and Grodin, "Health Care of Torture Survivors"; Lifton, "Doctors and Torture," 415-16; *Lancet*, Editorial; Annas, "Unspeakably Cruel"; and Mayer, "The Experiment."
61. See Xenakis, "From the Medics."
62. See Summerfield, "Fighting 'Terrorism' with Torture."
63. *Lancet*, Editorial, 637.
64. See American Medical Association, "E-2.067"; and Bloche and Marks, Response to Letters.
65. Sofair and Lurie, "Military Medicine and Human Rights," 1851. "By contrast, the president of the World Medical Association, which maintains the Declaration of Tokyo, has condemned physicians' failure to denounce torture by physicians. The organisation has also released an online course on detainee health (<http://www.wma.net>)" (1851).
66. American Medical Association, "Resolution 12 (A-04)."
67. *Amednews.com*, "AMA Condemns Prisoner Abuse."
68. Summerfield, "Fighting 'Terrorism' with Torture," 774; World Medical Association, "World Medical Association Declaration of Tokyo," (this was officially endorsed by the AMA); and Physicians for Human Rights, "Torture at Abu Ghraib and Guantánamo."



69. American Psychiatric Association, "APA Statement on Psychiatric Practices at Guantánamo Bay."
70. See American Psychological Association, "Report of the Presidential Task Force on Psychological Ethics and National Security."
71. See Levant, "In Guantánamo."
72. Wilks, "A Stain on Medical Ethics," 430.
73. Ibid.
74. Deftly described in Grodin and Annas's review of *Military Medical Ethics*.
75. Lifton, *The Nazi Doctors*, 464.
76. See Annas, "Bioterrorism."
77. Saul, "Torturing Terrorists after September 11," 669.

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