

# Module 6: George W. Bush’s Legacy: The Global War on Terror

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## *Note to Educators*

The Teaching Beyond September 11th curriculum project seeks to capture the events of the two decades (2001-2021) following 9/11 as a means for youth to understand the post-9/11 global order. Developed by a team of educators from the University of Pennsylvania in collaboration with inter-/national scholars, practitioners, and community activist leaders, each stand-alone module is grounded in at least one of six identified themes and is anchored in an event in a particular year following 9/11. The curriculum does not need to be taught sequentially. Lessons within a module may be taught sequentially or individually unless specified.

The curriculum is ideal for advanced high school and early college students. Educators are encouraged to adapt lessons to meet the needs of their classroom and student academic level. The curriculum framework at the end of this document highlights guiding questions for students to grapple with and enduring understandings that we wish for students to glean from these lessons.

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# Module 6: George W. Bush's Legacy: The Global War on Terror

Primary Theme: U.S Foreign Policy

Secondary Theme: Democracy and Rights

Year in focus: **2003, 2004, 2006, 2014**

Grades: 11, 12 and first-year college

Entry points (subject area): **US History, Global History, Government and Politics, International Law, Political Science**

## Module Context

Five years into the Global War on Terror, under the presidency of George W. Bush, US troops were officially engaged in two wars: Afghanistan (since 2001) and Iraq (since 2003). Advisors close to George W. Bush pushed for these wars, which led to two decades of US engagement in Afghanistan and Iraq, and also expanded globally to include covert drone wars in five additional countries; military exercises in 41 countries; and counterterrorism training in 79 countries around the world ([Costs of War](#)). The 9/11 wars are Bush's legacy. Part of that legacy includes the US' use of torture as a defense strategy. In fact, it was false information garnered under torture that was used as evidence to invade Iraq.

In 2004, photos were released documenting the torture and abuse of civilians detained by the US military at Abu Ghraib prison in Iraq. These were not rogue cases; over the next few years, evidence mounted that these acts of torture and abuse were sanctioned by the highest members of the US military and the CIA, in defiance of international law, which prohibits torture and to which the US is party.

While the torture that occurred at Abu Ghraib prison was initially met with significant media attention, it was far from being the only instance of systemic torture sanctioned by the Bush administration (and that, some argue, continues today to some degree). In a [December 2006 hearing](#), the high ranking members of the armed forces responsible for these heinous acts – while acknowledging that torture had occurred under their watch – also claimed they could not be held legally liable for the torture and abuse of civilians. The full investigation of the US' use of torture would go on for another 8 years, culminating in the US Senate Torture Report in 2014.

Prior to and in preparation to the release of the Torture Report, then President Obama admitted in an August 2014 press conference that, "[We tortured some folks.](#)" While he also acknowledged that the US "crossed a line", no US government officials have been held accountable for "creating, authorizing, or implementing the CIA's secret detention and torture programs"; further, the bulk of the report remains

classified even today ([Costs of War Project & Human Rights Watch](#)). Finally, Guantanamo Bay, the infamous prison that was created to hold 9/11 terrorist suspects and where several suspects were held, remains open, over twenty years later.

This module moves between the decade between 2003 and 2014, during which investigations into the use of torture, under the euphemism of “enhanced interrogation techniques” were used as part of the Bush’s Global War on Terror. In doing so, the module delves into the key players behind the wars, the true costs of these wars, and how the US broke international law for its own interests by engaging in torture. While this is a heavy topic and a challenging one to teach, it is imperative to teach about this history.

### **Module Goal**

Students will use their independent learning to understand the key architects of the Global War on Terror and the international law that the US broke when the CIA and military engaged in the torture of civilians. The modules also help students understand how US exceptionalism was used to justify both the War in Iraq and the use of torture.

### **Module Overview**

This module introduces students to the key architects of the 9/11 wars known as the singular Global War on Terror. Many of these individuals believed that these wars had to be fought at all costs - even human rights. The module examines official White House records claiming the wars to be a success with research suggesting otherwise as well as civilian testimony that provides a human face to these wars. The final lesson provides students with a basic understanding of what constitutes torture, how it has been defined by the United Nations and why the US’ actions were in defiance to international law.

#### **Lesson 1 – The Architects of the Global War on Terror**

In this stand-alone lesson, students will learn about the key players involved in the US led Global War on Terror that collectively impacted 85 countries. Students will research the key individuals who shaped the Global War on Terror, paying attention to the language and evidence they used to justify these wars, as well as the ways in which the media reported on these individuals and their actions.

#### **Lesson 2 – The Global War on Terror: At What Cost?**

This stand-alone lesson examines claims made by the George W. Bush presidency (in the White House Archives) against evidence from independent researchers that paint a very different picture showing the extensive financial and human costs of war. Additionally, students will listen to narratives from Iraqi people to gain a deeper understanding of the extent of the Global War on Terror and its impact on people’s lives.

### **Lesson 3 – Torture, International Law, and US Exceptionalism**

In this two-part lesson, students learn about how torture was used in the US Global War on Terror in defiance of international law. Students first learn about what constitutes torture and how it is different from ill treatment and abuse. Next, students are introduced to the UN Convention Against Torture. The lesson engages students in an activity to compare the US definition and UN definition of torture as a way for students to understand how the US has used a particular definition of torture to suit its own interests. Day 2 of the lesson delves into the use of torture under the Bush regime during the Global War on Terror. It introduces students to the 2004 Abu Ghraib Scandal when journalists reported that members of the US Military and CIA engaged in a series of human rights violations against detainees in the Abu Ghraib prison in Iraq. These revelations about the US' engagement in torture led to shock and outrage across the world. Initially, President Bush claimed these were isolated incidents, however, it eventually came to light that the abuse was systemic and widespread, implicating not just the military but also the CIA and US Department of Justice. Building on Day 1, in this lesson, students learn more about the US government's use of torture as part of the Global War on Terror, and importantly, the long-standing impacts of this misuse of power on individuals who were tortured.

### **Curriculum Connections**

Module 1 Afghanistan: The US' Longest War

Module 2 Surveillance of Muslims

Module 3 The 2nd Persian Gulf War

Module 4 Civil Liberties after 9/11

Module 8 Islamophobia and the Oval Office

Module 17 The Muslim and African Ban

# Lesson 1. The Architects of the Global War On Terror

## *Overview, Background Resources and Materials Needed*

In this stand-alone lesson, students will learn about the key players involved in the US led Global War on Terror that collectively impacted 85 countries. Students will research the key individuals who shaped the Global War on Terror, paying attention to the language and evidence they used to justify these wars, as well as the ways in which the media reported on these individuals and their actions.

### **Background reading for educators before Lesson 1**

It would be beneficial for the educators to review:

1. Chronology: The Evolution of the Bush Doctrine. CBS Frontline. <https://www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/shows/iraq/etc/cron.html>
2. David Teather (Mar 26, 2004). Bush jokes about search for WMD, but it's no laughing matter for critics. *The Guardian*. <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2004/mar/26/usa.iraq>
3. How to spot 16 types of Media Bias. *All Sides*. <https://www.allsides.com/media-bias/how-to-spot-types-of-media-bias>

See links provided on student research handouts.

### **Key Terms in Lesson 1**

- **Bush Doctrine:** George W Bush's administration's larger strategy for projecting U.S. power and influence in the post-Cold War world. The Bush administration claimed that the US was locked in a global war; a war of ideology, in which its enemies are bound together by a common ideology and a common hatred of democracy. Two main pillars are identified for the doctrine: 1.) preemptive strikes against potential enemies and 2.) promoting democratic regime change.
- **Black site:** Clandestine jails where prisoners generally are not charged with a crime and have no legal recourse, with no bail or court order.
- **CIA Black site:** Refers to the black sites that are controlled by the CIA and used by the US government in its War on Terror to detain enemy combatants.
- **Media Bias:** Media bias is the bias of journalists and news producers in terms of what events and stories are reported, and how they are covered. Media bias can manifest in many ways, including spin, unsubstantiated claims, opinion presented as facts, sensationalism, bias by omission, word choice etc.

## Teaching Beyond September 11<sup>th</sup>

- **Torture:** Torture is the intentional infliction of severe mental or physical pain or suffering, by or with the approval of state agents, and with a specific intent (e.g., to gain information) [See also Lesson 3 in this module]
- **War Profiteering:** Includes all those who profit financially from war and militarization.

### Materials Needed for Lesson 1

- Lesson 1 Slide Deck
- Lesson 1, Handout 1: Summaries of the Architects of the Global War on Terror (digital handout)
- Lesson 1, Handout 2: Gallery Walk Graphic Organizer (1 per student)
- Poster paper (1 piece per group); alternatively, provide 4 letter size blank sheets per group
- Tape and markers
- Students will need their computers/tablets for research
- [Extension Activity] Video: [Was the War in Iraq All About Profit?](#) VICE TV

# Lesson 1. The Architects of the Global War on Terror

## *Learning Plan*

### Opening – 10 minutes

Explain to students that today's lesson will focus on the Global War on Terror that began in 2001 in response to the 9/11 terrorist attacks.

[Lesson 1, Slide deck, Slide 2] Show students basic timeline of the 9/11 attacks and US invasions of Afghanistan and Iraq. The GWOT began with the invasion of Afghanistan on Oct 7, 2001, with the goal to destroy al-Qaeda, the group behind the terrorist attacks that was being hosted by the Afghan Taliban. Two years later, the US expanded the war by invading Iraq. The reasoning this time was that Iraq had Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD) and therefore was a global threat. **Ask students if they know if the WMDs were ever found?**

[Lesson 1 Slide deck, Slide 3] Show students the clip featuring President George W. Bush joking about the WMDs at the 2004 White House Correspondent's Dinner (a year after the US had invaded Iraq): <https://youtu.be/O1a1XVOnuqo>  
(see *The Guardian* article in resources for more context to this incident: [Bush jokes about search for WMD, but it's no laughing matter for critics.](#))

Inform students that the decision to start the war in Iraq was based on false intelligence garnered under torture by the Egyptian detainee, Ibn al-Sheikh al-Libi in early 2002. Al-Libi later admitted that he had fabricated the account in order to avoid further torture. **However, despite no other evidence suggesting Iraq's leader, Sadaam Hussein, had weapons of mass destruction or that his government was involved with 9/11 in some way, the false information was used to engage in a second devastating war.** Drive home the point that this war is no joking matter.

[Lesson 1 Slide deck, Slides 4] Role of Congress in authorizing military action against Afghanistan and Iraq. Ask students to look out how members of congress voted. Ask students what they notice about the voting patterns. **Point out to students that the decision to invade Iraq was bipartisan.**

[Lesson 1 Slide deck, Slide 5-6] Share with students the human and financial costs of the twenty years of the 9/11 wars:

Financial Costs: an estimated \$8 trillion in current dollars (Source: [Costs of War](#))



Financial Cost of Iraq alone: Financial Costs: an estimated \$1.922 trillion in current dollars (*Source: [Military Times](#)*)

Human Costs: 897,150 – 928,558 direct war deaths (363,939 – 387,072 of whom were civilians) (*Source: [Costs of War](#)*)

When showing the human costs, point out the Iraq civilian figures (approximately 209,000 civilians killed). Highlight for students again that **no evidence was ever found of weapons of mass destruction nor is there any credible evidence of the Iraqi government’s involvement in the 9/11 terrorist attacks and yet, the US attacked Iraq**. Ask students why they think the US invaded Iraq and who was responsible for the invasion.

### Key concepts overview – 5 minutes

[Lesson 1 Slide deck, Slide 7] Explain to students that in this lesson, they will be learning about the key architects of the Global War on Terror that led the US into two overt wars and several more covert wars (refer back to map on opening slide that shows counter terrorism operations across 85 countries). As you show the slide, you may ask students if they know any of the individuals on the slide.

[Lesson 1 Slide deck, Slide 8] Explain that the Bush administration claimed that the US was locked in a global war - a war of ideology, in which its enemies are bound together by a common ideology and a common hatred of democracy and therefore needed to be reigned in. **This came to be known as the Bush Doctrine**. Two main pillars are identified for the doctrine: 1.) preemptive strikes against potential enemies and 2.) promoting democratic regime change.

### Application - 30 minutes

Group Research (20 minutes): [Lesson 1 Slide deck, Slide 9] Inform students that they will now be assigned to research one of the key architects in pairs or small groups. Let them know that they will share their research with their peers through a gallery walk and will then be asked to fill out a graphic organizer about each of the 10 individuals that the class will collectively research.

Divide students into groups and assign each group one individual to research.

- Dick Cheney
- John Bolton
- Gina Haspel
- Colin Powell
- Donald Rumsfeld
- Lewis “Scooter” Libby
- Paul Wolfowitz
- Condoleezza Rice
- Stephen Cambone
- George W. Bush

Provide students with markers and poster paper and the Graphic Organizer [Lesson 1, Handout 2, Graphic Organizer] though they will not be needing it until the gallery walk. Share the digital handout with students with the Architects of the Global War on Terror and ask them to only focus on their assigned individual [Lesson 1, Handout 1, Architects of the GWOT].

Inform students that links are provided on the handout to jumpstart their research and that these links are coded to show the political leanings of the source. While they should pay attention to the political bias of the sources as they research, they should also understand that bias is not necessarily set in stone; further, a left leaning source can publish an opinion of a right-leaning individual. Students need to pay attention not just to the source but in the case of opinion pieces, the leanings of the author.

As they research their assigned individual, ask students to consider the following questions and to summarize key points that they will eventually transfer onto the poster paper:

- **Name/Title/Role:** Who was this individual? What was their role?
- **Stance:** To what extent did this individual support the Global War on Terror?
- **Evidence:** How did they shape public messaging about the war either directly (e.g. public statements) or indirectly (e.g. influence behind the scenes)?
- **Impact:** What was this individual's influence on the Global War on Terror?

After 15 minutes have passed, let students know they have 5 minutes to summarize their research on the poster paper. After students have completed their summaries, ask them to post the responses around the classroom for a Gallery Walk.

Gallery Walk (10 minutes): Invite students to circulate and view the posters. As students view other group's findings, they will complete the graphic organizer.

### Debrief - 5 minutes

[Lesson 1 Slide deck, Slides 10] Bring the students back together to debrief their findings as a whole group, using the following questions as a guide:

As Commander in Chief, the ultimate decision-making authority for the U.S. invasion of Iraq belonged to the President. **Why is it important for us to consider the architects of this invasion – some of whom were working quietly behind-the-scenes?**

1. What were some of the "justifications" that these architects provided for the GWOT?
2. What particular words or language did they use?
3. What do we now know about the evidence they were citing?
4. What did you learn about media bias through your research?

Anticipated responses:

- There are many people involved in these wars and some of their roles extend back many years (e.g. Cheney). Some of them are still in important roles today.
- These individuals misled the American people into believing that military action was necessary and the only solution. None of these individuals have ever been held accountable for these wars.
- Language like "liberation," "freedom" and "democracy" was used as a way to "sell" the war
- No actual evidence was clearly provided.
- Media bias influences how you "read" these individuals accomplishments

Remind students of the devastations caused by these wars.

## Extension Activities

### *Option 1:*

Ask students to continue researching their assigned “architect” of the Global War on Terror and to trace their careers. Note that some of the individuals may no longer be alive.

### *Option 2:*

In this extension activity, students will explore the question: **Who profits from war?** After watching the 4m video: [Was the War in Iraq All About Profit?](#) (Vice News), they will independently research one of the following organizations that gained significant contracts from the Pentagon during the Global War on Terror to understand their role in the war. They should also look for connections between these organizations and the key players of the GWOT (Lesson 1):

- Lockheed Martin
- Boeing
- General Dynamics
- Raytheon
- Northrop Grumman
- Blackwater
- KBR (subsidiary of Halliburton)

Students will be tasked with summarizing their findings and writing a short reflection on who profits from war.

# Lesson 1. The Architects of the Global War on Terror

## *Student Handouts and Supplementary Teaching Materials*

1. Lesson 1 Slide Deck Preview – 10 slides [Please download separate slide deck file]
2. Lesson 2, handout 1: The Architects of the Global War on Terror [Digital Handout]
3. Lesson 2, handout 1: Graphic Organizer

# Lesson 1 Slide Deck [10 slides]

## The Architects of the Global War on Terror

Module 6, Lesson 1

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### Basic Timeline of the 9/11 Overt Wars

- Sept 11, 2001 - Terrorist attacks on US soil
- Oct 7, 2001 - The US invades Afghanistan
- May 19, 2003 - The US begins an air campaign in Iraq, causing troops to enter the next day
- Oct 21, 2011 - Two war vets, US troops, taken by December
- Jun 19, 2014 - The US withdraws troops from Iraq
- Aug 30, 2021 - Final US troop withdrawal from Afghanistan
- Mar 10, 2023 - 2002 US troops return in Iraq, twenty years after the Iraq war

### George W. Bush and the search for the Weapons of Mass Destruction

President George W. Bush addresses the nation from the Oval Office at the White House Wednesday evening, March 19, 2003, announcing the beginning of Operation Iraqi Freedom. White House photo by Paul Morse. Public Domain.

### The Iraq War. H.J. Res. 114 (107th): Authorization for Use of Military Force Against Iraq Resolution of 2002

Oct 10, 2002 at 3:05 pm ET. On Passage of the Bill in the House: 296-133

Oct 11, 2002 at 12:50 am ET. On the Joint Resolution in the Senate: 77-23

### The Human Costs the Global War on Terror

Source: The Costs of War, Watson Institute, Brown University

Category	Estimated	Confirmed	Unconfirmed	Total
U.S. Military	2,107	4,074	100	6,281
U.S. 9/11 Victims*	2,977	2,977	0	5,954
U.S. Civilians**	1,417	40	1,377	2,834
Armed Military and Police†	82,207	8,217	20,315	110,739
Other Allied Troops†	1,384	355	1,029	2,768
Civilians	86,317	32,897	18,411	137,625
Opposition Fighters	52,817	32,897	3,626	89,340
Resistance/NGO Workers*	74	87	262	423
Resistance/NGO Workers*	446	165	87	698
TOTAL	176,286	163,331	386,337	725,954
TOTAL (Excluding 9/11 Victims)	173,309	160,354	386,337	719,999

Human Costs: 897,150 - 928,558 direct war deaths  
363,939 - 287,072 of whom were civilians

### The Financial Costs of the Global War on Terror

Estimate of U.S. Post-9/11 War Spending, in \$ Billions FY2001-FY2022

Financial Cost of Iraq alone: an estimated \$1.922 trillion in current dollars

over \$2.2 trillion in obligations for veterans' care over the next 30 years

**\$8 TRILLION TOTAL**

Source: Watson Institute, Brown University

## The Architects Of The Global War On Terror

Top row, left to right: Dick Cheney, John Bolton, Gina Haspel, Colin Powell, Donald Rumsfeld. Bottom row, left to right: Lewis "Scooter" Libby, Paul Wolfowitz, Condoleezza Rice, Stephen Cambone, George W. Bush

All images are from the public domain.

## Defining Terms: The Bush Doctrine

The Bush administration claimed that the US was locked in a global war; a war of ideology, in which its enemies are bound together by a common ideology and a common hatred of democracy and therefore needed to be reigned in.

**This came to be known as the Bush Doctrine.** Two main pillars are identified for the doctrine:

1. preemptive strikes against potential enemies
2. promoting democratic regime change

Note to President George W. Bush from Condoleezza Rice  
President George W. Bush wrote, "Let Freedom Reign" in response to a note passed to him by Dr. Condoleezza Rice while attending the opening session of a NATO summit June 28, 2004, in Istanbul, Turkey.  
Photo by Eric Draper, Courtesy of the George W. Bush Presidential Library and Museum. Public Domain.

## Small Group Work

Research your assigned individual and summarize findings

**Name/Title/Role:** Who was this individual? What was their role?

**Stance:** To what extent did this individual support the Global War on Terror?

**Evidence:** How did they shape public messaging about the war either directly (e.g. public statements) or indirectly (e.g. influence behind the scenes)?

**Impact:** What was this individuals' influence on the Global War on Terror?

## Lesson Debrief:

As Commander in Chief, the ultimate decision-making authority for the U.S. invasion of Iraq belonged to the President. **Why is it important for us to consider the architects of this invasion – some of whom were working quietly behind-the-scenes?**

1. What were some of the "justifications" that these architects provided for the GWOT?
2. What particular words or language did they use?
3. What do we now know about the evidence they were citing?
4. What did you learn about media bias through your research?

## The Architects of the Global War on Terror

### Directions

In your groups, research the individual below using the following questions as a guide. Summarize your findings on a poster.

- **Name/Title/Role:** Who was this individual? What was their role?
- **Stance:** To what extent did this individual support the Global War on Terror?
- **Evidence:** How did they shape public messaging about the war either directly (e.g. public statements) or indirectly (e.g. influence behind the scenes)?
- **Impact:** What was this individuals' influence on the Global War on Terror?

## Dick Cheney



Dick Cheney was the 46th vice president of the United States from 2001 to 2009 under President George W. Bush. Prior to assuming the role, he had an extensive career in politics, as White House chief of staff from 1975 to 1977, in the U.S. House of Representatives from 1979 to 1989, and as Secretary of Defence during the presidency of George H. W. Bush from 1989 to 1993. He was also the CEO of Halliburton, one of the world's largest oil companies, from 1995 to 2000.

After the September 11th attacks, Cheney played in a key role in the Bush administration's response and in coordinating the Global War on Terror. He advocated for invading Iraq despite evidence that the country had no connection to the attacks and did not possess weapons of mass destruction.<sup>1</sup> During the Iraq War, Cheney was instrumental in the creation of the CIA torture program, the practices of which he continues to defend today.<sup>2</sup>

### Sources and Additional Research

← Left/Left-leaning

■ Center/Moderate

→ Right/right-leaning

← <sup>1</sup> [Remembering Why Americans Loathe Dick Cheney \(The Atlantic\)](#)

■ <sup>2</sup> [Former Vice President Dick Cheney Says CIA Torture Report Is 'Full of Crap' \(ABC News\)](#)

→ [Vice President: George W Bush \(White House Archives\)](#)

← [Cheney/Halliburton Chronology \(Halliburton Watch\)](#)

← [Dick Cheney backs Gina Haspel and banned interrogation practices: 'I'd do it again' \(The Guardian\)](#)

← [Cheney insists 'rectal feeding' was for medical reasons, not torture \(The Guardian\)](#)

→ [The Collapsing Obama Doctrine – OpEd by Dick and Liz Cheney \(Wall Street Journal\)](#)

## The Architects of the Global War on Terror

### Directions

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- **Name/Title/Role:** Who was this individual? What was their role?
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### John Bolton










John Robert Bolton served as the US Assistant Attorney General for President Reagan from 1985 to 1989; was appointed by George W. Bush as the US Ambassador to the United Nations from 2005 to 2006; and was the National Security Advisor for President Trump from 2018 to 2019. He is considered a war hawk and advocated for military action and regime change by the US in Iran, Syria, Libya, Venezuela, Cuba, Yemen, and North Korea. Bolton is viewed as the principal architect of the US-led invasion of Iraq that toppled the regime of Saddam Hussein.

During the Bush presidency, as Under-Secretary of State for Arms Control, he threatened officials who posed obstacles in making the case to go to war with Iraq<sup>1</sup> and pushed the allegation that Saddam Hussein sought uranium in Africa. He continues to defend the invasion in Iraq to this day. Bolton also believes that enhanced interrogations techniques employed by the US post 9/11 “did not violate US statutes or international torture conventions.”<sup>2</sup> As a Fox News commentator and published author, national paper columnist, he uses multiple platforms to critique US foreign policies and call for military action to eliminate threats from the “axis of evil”.<sup>3</sup>

### Sources and Additional Research

 Left/Left-leaning
  Center/Moderate
  Right/right-leaning

-  <sup>1</sup> [John Bolton: the man driving the US towards war ... any war \(The Guardian\)](#)
-  <sup>2</sup> [America After 9/11: John Bolton \(PBS\)](#)
-  <sup>3</sup> [US expands 'axis of evil' \(BBC\)](#)
-  [Factsheet: John Bolton \(The Bridge Initiative, Georgetown University\)](#)
-  [A Short Guide to John Bolton's Government Career \(The Atlantic\)](#)
-  [Biography: John R. Bolton, Permanent Representative to the UN, United Nations \(US DOS\)](#)
-  [Video \(watch from 14:24 to 15:50\): John Bolton In His Own Words: Bush's UN Ambassador Nominee Condemns United Nations \(Democracy Now\)](#)



## The Architects of the Global War on Terror

### Directions

In your groups, research the individual below using the following questions as a guide. Summarize your findings on a poster.

- **Name/Title/Role:** Who was this individual? What was their role?
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### Gina Haspel



Gina Haspel served as Director of the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) from 2018 to 2021 during the Trump administration. She was the first woman to hold the post. Prior to her nomination, she served as Deputy Director from 2017 to 2018. Her career in the CIA has spanned 33 years, much of it in the Directorate of Operations, which oversees clandestine spying efforts. Her nomination for Director of the CIA was highly controversial due to her involvement in the CIA torture program, which was established by the Bush administration in response to the September 11th attacks.<sup>1</sup>

In 2002, Haspel headed a secret CIA prison in Thailand, known as a “black site”. As chief of the site, Haspel personally observed the torture of detainees.<sup>2</sup> She was subsequently involved in the destruction of almost 100 videotapes that contained evidence of torture that occurred at the black site.<sup>1</sup>

### Sources and Additional Research

← Left/Left-leaning

■ Center/Moderate

→ Right/right-leaning

- <sup>1</sup> [Who is Gina Haspel, Trump’s pick to lead the CIA? \(PBS\)](#)
- ← <sup>2</sup> [Gina Haspel Observed Waterboarding at C.I.A. Black Site, Psychologist Testifies](#)
- ← [John Bolton and Gina Haspel Are the Consequences of Our Failure to Reckon With the Bush Years \(Slate\)](#)
- ← [I went to prison for disclosing the CIA’s torture. Gina Haspel helped cover it up. \(The Guardian\)](#)
- [Gina Haspel: What to know about the CIA's first female director \(Fox News\)](#)
- Video: [Gina Haspel vows never to resume CIA interrogation program \(PBS\)](#)

## The Architects of the Global War on Terror

### Directions

In your groups, research the individual below using the following questions as a guide. Summarize your findings on a poster.

- **Name/Title/Role:** Who was this individual? What was their role?
- **Stance:** To what extent did this individual support the Global War on Terror?
- **Evidence:** How did they shape public messaging about the war either directly (e.g. public statements) or indirectly (e.g. influence behind the scenes)?

**Impact:** What was this individuals' influence on the Global War on Terror?

### Colin Powell










Colin Powell served as Secretary of State from 2001 to 2005. He was the first African-American to hold this position. In his 35-year career in the army, Powell rose to the rank of 4-star general, served as Deputy National Security Advisor from 1987 to 1988, National Security Advisor from 1988 to 1989, and Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff from 1989 to 1993. His ideological approach to armed conflict, known as the Powell Doctrine, is that the United States should not engage in military action without precise goals and clear public support - and that if it commits to a conventional war, it should use all its resources to accomplish its objectives.<sup>1</sup> This was at odds with the Bush Doctrine's principles of unilateralism, pre-emptive war, and regime change.

In the lead up to the Iraq War, Powell addressed the U.N. Security Council and presented evidence, later revealed to be false, that Saddam Hussein supposedly possessed weapons of mass destruction.<sup>2</sup> Powell was seen by some as a moderating influence within the Bush Administration, and as such his visible role in furthering the false narrative for the war carried weight.<sup>3</sup>

### Sources and Additional Research

 Left/Left-leaning
  Center/Moderate
  Right/right-leaning

-  <sup>1</sup> [Powell's Doctrine, in Powell's Words \(The Washington Post\)](#)
-  <sup>2</sup> ['It Worked For Me': Life Lessons From Colin Powell \(NPR\)](#)
-  <sup>3</sup> [The Truth About Colin Powell \(Brookings\)](#)
-  [Powell said that backing the war in Iraq was a 'blot' on his record \(Washington Post\)](#)
-  [Biographies of the Secretaries of State: Colin Luther Powell \(1937–2021\) \(US OTH\)](#)
-  ['It wouldn't have worked': Colin Powell balked at telling George W. Bush not to invade Iraq \(The Washington Examiner\)](#)
-  ['He lied': Iraqis still blame Powell for role in Iraq war \(AP\)](#)

## The Architects of the Global War on Terror

### Directions

In your groups, research the individual below using the following questions as a guide. Summarize your findings on a poster.

- **Name/Title/Role:** Who was this individual? What was their role?
- **Stance:** To what extent did this individual support the Global War on Terror?
- **Evidence:** How did they shape public messaging about the war either directly (e.g. public statements) or indirectly (e.g. influence behind the scenes)?

**Impact:** What was this individuals' influence on the Global War on Terror?

### Donald Rumsfeld



Donald Rumsfeld served as secretary of defense (1975–77; 2001–06) in the Republican administrations of Presidents Gerald Ford and George W. Bush. Following the September 11 attacks, Rumsfeld oversaw the U.S.-led attack on Afghanistan that resulted in the overthrow of the Taliban. In March 2003 U.S. forces launched an invasion of Iraq. The regime of Iraqi President Ṣaddām Ḥussein was quickly toppled, and Rumsfeld initially earned praise for his handling of the war. However, as fighting continued, some accused him of deploying an inadequate number of troops.

He faced further criticism in 2004 when photographs of U.S. soldiers abusing Iraqi prisoners at Abu Ghraib prison in Baghdad were published. Following the 2006 midterm elections—in which the Republicans suffered heavy losses, in large part because of the growing opposition to the Iraq War—Rumsfeld announced his resignation. In his memoir, *Known and Unknown* (2011), Rumsfeld defended his handling of the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq.<sup>1</sup>

### Sources and Additional Research

← Left/Left-leaning

■ Center/Moderate

→ Right/right-leaning

- <sup>1</sup> [Biography: Donald Rumsfeld \(Britannica\)](#)
- [Donald H. Rumsfeld, Former Secretary of Defence \(US DOD\)](#)
- ← [Donald Rumsfeld's Legacy \(The Daily Star\)](#)
- [Donald Rumsfeld, The Controversial Architect Of The Iraq War, Has Died \(NPR\)](#)
- ← [History unlikely to forgive Donald Rumsfeld's Iraq warmongering \(The Guardian\)](#)
- [Rumsfeld Defends Iraq War Handling, Guantanamo in Fox News Interview \(Fox News\)](#)

## The Architects of the Global War on Terror

### Directions

In your groups, research the individual below using the following questions as a guide. Summarize your findings on a poster.

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**Impact:** What was this individuals' influence on the Global War on Terror?

### Lewis "Scooter" Libby



Lewis "Scooter" Libby held several offices from 2001 to 2005; most notably, he was the Chief of Staff to the then Vice President, Dick Cheney, and the Assistant to the President, George W. Bush. Scooter attempted to discredit Joseph Wilson, a former diplomat who had cast doubt on the claim that Saddam had sought uranium in Niger<sup>1</sup>, a claim that was repeated by President Bush during the Iraq disarmament crisis that preceded the Iraq war. Scooter tried to invalidate Wilson's efforts, by telling a New York Times reporter that Wilson was married to Valerie Plame, a CIA officer.

In 2007, Libby was convicted of perjury and obstruction of justice, and sentenced to 30 months in prison for leaking a CIA Officer's identity. Despite high-pressure lobbying from Cheney, President Bush commuted Libby's sentence, but did not pardon him. However, President Trump fully pardoned him in 2018.<sup>2</sup> Libby is now the Senior Vice President of the Hudson Institute, a conservative Washington think-tank and lectures frequently on Middle East policy.

### Sources and Additional Research

← Left/Left-leaning

■ Center/Moderate

→ Right/right-leaning

■ <sup>1</sup> [Alongside his boss, Libby shaped Iraq policy \(NBC\)](#)

■ <sup>2</sup> [Trump issues pardon for Lewis 'Scooter' Libby \(Politico\)](#)

← [Who is Scooter Libby? \(Slate\)](#)

← [Libby Was A Driving Force Behind Iraq War \(SFGate\)](#)

→ [Profile: I. Lewis 'Scooter' Libby \(Fox News\)](#)

← Video: [A Timeline of Scooter Libby's Career and Controversies \(The Washington Post\)](#)

## The Architects of the Global War on Terror

### Directions

In your groups, research the individual below using the following questions as a guide. Summarize your findings on a poster.

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**Impact:** What was this individuals' influence on the Global War on Terror?

### Paul Wolfowitz



From 2001 to 2005, Wolfowitz served as the Deputy Defense Secretary for the Bush administration. Long before 9/11, Wolfowitz, in his draft of the “Defence Planning Guidance”, argued that America should not wait to be attacked and rather use its military power to pre-empt and address proliferation of weapons of mass destruction.<sup>1</sup> However, due to its controversial nature, the White House ordered Dick Cheney to re-write it. Following the 9/11 attacks, Wolfowitz signalled and ensured that the US enlarges its campaign against terror to include Iraq. In his words, “it's not just simply a matter of capturing people and holding them accountable, but removing the sanctuaries, removing the support systems, *ending states* who sponsor terrorism.”

The US National Security Strategy released in 2002, which articulates the Bush Doctrine, bears strong resemblance to Wolfowitz’s Defence Planning Guidance Draft from 1992. From 2005, Wolfowitz served as the 10th President of the World Bank. He resigned in 2007 after The Financial Times reported that he directed the bank’s human resources office to offer a pay raise and promotion to a top communications official with whom he was having a romantic relationship.<sup>2</sup>

### Sources and Additional Research

← Left/Left-leaning

■ Center/Moderate

→ Right/right-leaning

■ <sup>1</sup> [Chronology: The Evolution of the Bush Doctrine \(PBS\)](#)

■ <sup>2</sup> [Pressure increases on Wolfowitz to go \(Reuters\)](#)

← [The Believer: Paul Wolfowitz defends his war \(The New Yorker\)](#)

← [Paul Wolfowitz: Godfather of the Iraq War \(CNN\)](#)

→ [Ten Years On, Paul Wolfowitz Admits U.S. Bungled in Iraq \(Real Clear Politics\)](#)

■ Video: [Paul Wolfowitz Says Saddam Hussein was the Bigger Liar \(NBC News\)](#)

## The Architects of the Global War on Terror

### Directions

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**Impact:** What was this individuals' influence on the Global War on Terror?

### Condoleezza Rice



Condoleezza Rice is the first woman and first African American to serve as provost of Stanford University. In 2001, Rice was appointed national security adviser by President George W. Bush, becoming the first African American woman (and woman) to hold the post, and went on to become the first Black woman to serve as U.S. Secretary of State. Rice was a proponent of the 2003 invasion of Iraq. In October 2003, Rice was named to run the Iraq Stabilization Group<sup>1</sup>, to "quell violence in Iraq and Afghanistan and to speed the reconstruction of both countries." By May 2004, The Washington Post reported that the council had become virtually non-existent.<sup>2</sup> The Senate Intelligence Committee reported that Rice played a significant role in authorizing the CIA's use of torture. However, Rice continues to defend her direct involvement.<sup>3</sup>

Rice has numerous achievements to her name, including the U.S. Senator John Heinz Award for Greatest Public Service by an Elected or Appointed Official (2001) and the U.S. Air Force Academy's 2009 Thomas D. White National Defence Award (2010). After leaving office in 2009, Rice returned to Stanford University as a professor and became the director of the school's Hoover institution, a public policy think-tank.

### Sources and Additional Research

← Left/Left-leaning      ■ Center/Moderate      → Right/right-leaning

- ← <sup>1</sup> [White House to Overhaul Iraq and Afghan Missions \(NY Times, archived\)](#)
- ← <sup>2</sup> [Stabilization Is Its Middle Name \(The Washington Post\)](#)
- ← <sup>3</sup> [Rice Defends Enhanced Interrogations \(The Washington Post, archived\)](#)
- [Condoleezza Rice's Retrospect on Iraq: 'We Could Have Done Better' \(ABC News\)](#)
- [Democrat attacks Rice over claims of 'mushroom cloud' \(The Independent\)](#)
- ["The Coalition" an Op-Ed from Dr. Condoleezza Rice \(Wall Street Journal\)](#)
- Video: [Condoleezza Rice: 'Not an option' to put off the war in Iraq \(NBC\)](#)

## The Architects of the Global War on Terror

### Directions

In your groups, research the individual below using the following questions as a guide. Summarize your findings on a poster.

- **Name/Title/Role:** Who was this individual? What was their role?
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**Impact:** What was this individuals' influence on the Global War on Terror?

### Stephen Cambone



Stephen Cambone is a controversial former Pentagon official who has been closely affiliated with hawkish foreign policy factions in U.S. politics.<sup>1</sup> The first-ever undersecretary of defense for intelligence—the “defense intelligence czar”—Cambone worked under Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld to dramatically expand the military’s intelligence-gathering capabilities, including by loosening standards of detainee treatment during interrogations.

Upon leaving the Pentagon in 2007, Cambone took a job as a top executive at a defense contractor, and now teaches at Villanova University. In 2012, at the Aspen Security Forum, he called the decision to invade “one of the great strategic decisions of the first half of the 21st century, if it proves not to be the greatest.”

### Sources and Additional Research

← Left/Left-leaning      ■ Center/Moderate      → Right/right-leaning

- ← <sup>1</sup>[Stephen Cambone \(Militarist Monitor\)](#)
- [Biography - Dr. Stephen A Cambone \(US DOD\)](#)
- ← [Who is Stephen Cambone? \(Center for American Progress\)](#)
- [Rumsfeld's Intel Chief: Iraq War 'Greatest Decision of the Century' \(Wired\)](#)
- ← [Rumsfeld's Power Grab \(CBS News\)](#)
- ← [The Secret World of Stephen Cambone: Rumsfeld's Enforcer \(CorpWatch\)](#)

## The Architects of the Global War on Terror

### Directions

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- **Name/Title/Role:** Who was this individual? What was their role?
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**Impact:** What was this individuals' influence on the Global War on Terror?

### George W. Bush



George W. Bush, the 43rd President of the United States (2001 to 2009), led the country during a time of great challenge and change. At different times, President Bush was both the most popular president and one of the least popular presidents in American history, and his administration sparked both passionate defenders and vehement critics<sup>1</sup>. The 9/11 terrorist attacks, the global war on terror, the war in Iraq, and the economic downturn of 2008 are just some of the major events that Bush had to contend with during his time in office. The Bush presidency began with conservative reform goals, such as lowering taxes, but became better known as the presidency that prosecuted America's war on terror.

His controversial administration established military tribunals for captured terrorists, approved a list of "enhanced-interrogation techniques," and instituted the Terrorist Surveillance Program (TSP) to scour domestic communications. Congress established a new Department of Homeland Security, passed the Patriot Act, and authorized war against all those who orchestrated the 9/11 attacks or who might plan future attacks. The long, hard wars in Afghanistan and Iraq cost thousands of U.S. lives, billions of dollars, and damaged Bush's popularity as President. He ended his time in office with low job approval, and with Republicans losing control of Congress (2006 election) and the White House (2008 election).

### Sources and Additional Research

← Left/Left-leaning

■ Center/Moderate

→ Right/right-leaning

- <sup>1</sup>[George W. Bush: Life In Brief \(Miller Center at UVA\)](#)
- [The White House - President George W. Bush \(The White House Archives\)](#)
- [Address to a Joint Session of Congress and the American People](#)
- [9/11 and Iraq: The Making of A Tragedy \(Brookings\)](#)
- [Chronology: The Evolution of the Bush Doctrine \(PBS\)](#)
- [Understanding the Bush Doctrine \(Thought Co\)](#)
- ← [Twenty years after 9/11, did US win its 'war on terror'? \(Al Jazeera\)](#)



Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Class: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## Architects of the Global War on Terror

Complete the table below as you circulate and view the posters created by the other groups.

Name, Role	Stance	Evidence	Impact

<b>Name, Role</b>	<b>Stance</b>	<b>Evidence</b>	<b>Impact</b>

# Lesson 2. The Global War on Terror: At What Cost?

## *Overview, Background Resources and Materials Needed*

This lesson examines claims made by the George W. Bush presidency (in the White House Archives) against evidence from independent researchers that paint a very different picture showing the extensive financial and human costs of war. Additionally, students will listen to narratives from the Iraqi people to gain a deeper understanding of the extent of the Global War on Terror and its impact on people's lives.

### **Background reading for educators before Lesson 2**

It would be beneficial for the educators to review:

- Website: [The Cost of War: Summary of Findings](#). *Watson Institute, Brown University*
- George W. Bush White House Archives. <https://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/infocus/achievement/chap1-nrn.html>
- Al Jazeera (Sept 11, 2021). [Twenty years after 9/11, did US win its 'war on terror'?](#)
- How to spot 16 types of Media Bias. *All Sides*. <https://www.allsides.com/media-bias/how-to-spot-types-of-media-bias>

See links provided on student research handouts.

### **Key Terms in Lesson 2**

- **Bush Doctrine:** George W Bush's administration's larger strategy for projecting U.S. power and influence in the post-Cold War world. The Bush administration claimed that the US was locked in a global war; a war of ideology, in which its enemies are bound together by a common ideology and a common hatred of democracy. Two main pillars are identified for the doctrine: 1.) preemptive strikes against potential enemies and 2.) promoting democratic regime change.
- **Media Bias:** Media bias is the bias of journalists and news producers in terms of what events and stories are reported, and how they are covered. Media bias can manifest in many ways, including spin, unsubstantiated claims, opinion presented as facts, sensationalism, bias by omission, word choice etc.

### **Materials Needed for Lesson 2**

- Lesson 2 Slide Deck Preview [Please download separate slide deck file]
- Lesson 2, handout 1: George W. Bush Record of Achievement [Digital Handout]
- Lesson 2, handout 1: Graphic Organizer
- Video excerpts: PBS Frontline Documentary. *Once Upon A Time in Iraq*

## Lesson 2. The Global War on Terror: At What Cost?

### *Learning Plan*

In today's class, students will be working in small groups to explore one of three topics. Divide class into 3, 6 or 9 groups (depending on your class size) so that each group is assigned one of the three topics (multiple groups can have the same topic).

#### Opening – 5 minutes

Ask students what they know of the Global War on Terror. If you have completed lesson one, you may ask them about their key takeaways from the lesson.

*Anticipated answers (and possible counter responses):*

- The war was in response to the 9/11 attacks  
*(While this may be true for Afghanistan, this is not the case for Iraq, a country that had little to do with 9/11).*
- The wars were fought in Afghanistan and Iraq  
*(While this is true, it is an incomplete picture of the extent of the 9/11 wars, which included covert drone operations in 7 countries and scores of military activities across the globe).*
- The wars kept the US and the world safe  
*(In fact, the 9/11 wars led to the birth of ISIS in Iraq and the resurgence of the Taliban in Afghanistan)*

Explain to students that in today's class, they will examine how the official record of the Global War on Terror differs from the experiences of civilian populations in the countries targeted, particularly Iraq as a way to offer a more complete picture of the extent and impacts of the Global War on Terror.

#### Key concepts overview - 10 minutes

Inform students that they will be listening to civilian testimony which they will later draw on to contrast with official White House claims.

Show students excerpts of interviews with civilians from the PBS Frontline Documentary: "Once Upon a Time in Iraq" (Full documentary: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=T2L4jcVqo8s>)

*Educator note: We recommend showing at least 2 segments of your choice. Note that Segment 3 is very difficult to watch and therefore you are advised to proceed with caution. Links to the excerpts are provided as well as the time stamps of where they can be found in the full-length documentary.*

Playlist with all four excerpts available on the TBS11 YouTube channel:

<https://www.youtube.com/@teachingbeyondseptember11/playlists>

Segment 1: [A young woman's recollection of the start of the war](#) [15:00 – 17.40]

Segment 2: [A young man compares Baghdad before and after the 2003 invasion](#) [31:16-33:42]

Segment 3: [Reflections of a young woman who was severely injured early in the war](#) [35:37-39:00]

Segment 4: [Reflections of a young man on the destruction of his hometown of Mosul](#) [1:47:33-1:50:28]

Ask students if they have any reactions to the videos before moving forward.

### Application - 25 minutes

Divide students into groups. Distribute an electronic copy of the Lesson 2 handout: White House Achievements (1 handout per group) and a physical copy of the Graphic Organizer (1 per group). The handouts have a list of “achievements” as provided in the White House Archives for the topics below. It also has links to counter claims from research groups such as the Costs of War Project. Each student group will take on one of the following topics:

1. Fighting Global Terrorism
2. The War in Afghanistan
3. The War in Iraq

Explain to students that they will explore how Bush’s legacy is presented in the official White House Archives by comparing the administration’s claims of achievement to sources of counter evidence, as well as narratives of Iraqi people.

As students review the handouts and the websites with counter evidence, they will complete the table in the graphic organizer provided. For each claim, students will decide if it’s true, false, or misleading. Students should pay attention to the political bias of the sources. They will then add information that they think the American people should have for each of these claims to have a more complete picture of the actual situation.

Once the students have completed the graphic organizer, they should discuss the following questions in their small groups:

- What are some of the “accomplishments” that are listed?
- As you consider our discussions about the GWOT, what stands out to you about what is listed here?
- How does media bias influence our understandings of the GWOT?
- Why is it important to listen to first-person narratives from Iraq?

### Debrief – 10 minutes

Bring students together to debrief:

- In what way does the framing of the accomplishments influence how one perceives the outcomes of the Global War on Terror?
- In what ways does the media contribute to these perceptions?
- What are some takeaways regarding your own reading and interpretation of why it matters to pay attention to how issues are reported and whose stories are told?

## Lesson 2. The Global War on Terror: At What Cost?

### *Student Handouts and Supplementary Teaching Materials*

1. Lesson 2, handout 1: George W. Bush Record of Achievement [Digital Handout]
2. Lesson 2, handout 1: Graphic Organizer

There is no slide deck for this lesson.

## George W. Bush Record of Achievement

### Directions

**In your groups:**

- Review the ‘Record of Achievement’ of the Global War on Terror, from the White House archives.
- Research counter evidence that challenge some of the claims. There are links provided which highlight the costs of the war.

**Summarize your findings in the graphic organizer provided.**

*“Great harm has been done to us. We have suffered great loss. And in our grief and anger we have found our mission and our moment. Freedom and fear are at war. The advance of human freedom – the great achievement of our time, and the great hope of every time – now depends on us. Our nation – this generation – will lift a dark threat of violence from our people and our future. We will rally the world to this cause by our efforts, by our courage. We will not tire, we will not falter, and we will not fail.”*

**– President George W. Bush, September 20, 2001**

### Claims: Bush White House Archives - Fighting Global Terrorism

- President Bush launched a *global effort to defeat terrorism and to protect and defend America*. During his term in office, the President has led a steady and systematic campaign against global terrorists and their allies.
- Since the terrorist attacks on September 11th, the United States has waged two of the swiftest and most humane wars in history (in Afghanistan and Iraq). *Fifty million people have been liberated from two of the world’s most brutal and aggressive regimes* – and the terrorists’ foreign operating bases are being taken away.
- *More than three-quarters of al Qaeda’s known leaders and associates have been detained or killed.*
- *Operational and logistical terrorist support cells have been disrupted* in Europe, Saudi Arabia, Yemen, and Southeast Asia.
- *Nearly \$140 million in terrorist assets have been blocked in over 1,400 accounts worldwide.*
- We are working closely with intelligence services all over the globe and have *enhanced our intelligence capabilities* in order to trace dangerous weapons activity.

Source: <https://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/infocus/achievement/chap1.html>

### Costs of War <https://watson.brown.edu/costsofwar>

Human Cost	Economic Cost	Social and Political Cost
<a href="#">Death Toll</a> <a href="#">US Veterans and Families</a> <a href="#">Refugees and Health</a>	<a href="#">Employment Impact</a> <a href="#">Macroeconomic Impact</a> <a href="#">Impact on Public Investment</a>	<a href="#">Global Expansion of Wars</a> <a href="#">Profiteering, “Camo Economy”</a> <a href="#">Racial Profiling, Islamophobia</a> <a href="#">Human Rights</a>

## George W. Bush Record of Achievement

### Directions

**In your groups,**

- Review the ‘Record of Achievement’ of the Global War on Terror, from the White House archives.
- Research counter evidence that challenge some of the claims. There are links provided which highlight the costs of the war.

**Summarize your findings in the graphic organizer provided.**

### Claims: Bush White House Archives - The War to Liberate Afghanistan

- In Operation Enduring Freedom, the United States built a worldwide coalition of 70 countries that destroyed terrorist training camps, dismantled the brutal Taliban regime, denied al Qaeda a safe haven in Afghanistan, and saved a people from starvation.
- Today, Afghanistan has a new president, Hamid Karzai, and a new constitution that gives unprecedented rights and freedoms to all Afghans.
- Historic presidential and parliamentary elections are planned for this fall and the following spring. America will launch an ambitious training program for newly elected Afghan politicians.
- Preliminary figures indicate that nearly nine million Afghan citizens (91 percent of the electorate) have so far registered to vote.
- Three years ago, women in Afghanistan were whipped in the streets, executed in a sports stadium, and beaten for wearing brightly colored shoes. Schooling was denied to girls. Today, the constitution gives women the right to vote and guarantees freedom of expression, assembly, and religion. Young girls are attending school. Two Afghan cabinet ministers are women, and a woman leads the Afghan Independent Human Rights Commission.
- One hundred forty-five health care facilities have been constructed or rehabilitated. The coalition has trained thousands of Afghan health care professionals, treated 700,000 cases of malaria, and inoculated close to 4.5 million children against measles and other childhood diseases.
- *More than 200 schools have been rebuilt; 7,000 teachers have been trained; and 25 million textbooks have been provided to Afghan students.*
- *The coalition is training a modern Afghan national army to defend its borders, root out terrorists, and promote national unity.* There are now close to 25,000 trained Afghan police officers and the Afghan police are on track to achieve their goal of up to 50,000 trained officers by December 2005.

**Source:** <https://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/infocus/achievement/chap1.html>

### Costs of War <https://watson.brown.edu/costsofwar>

Human Cost	Economic Cost	Social and Political Cost
<a href="#">Death Toll</a> <a href="#">US Veterans and Families</a> <a href="#">Afghan Civilians</a> <a href="#">Afghan Refugees</a>	<a href="#">Employment Impact</a> <a href="#">Macroeconomic Impact</a> <a href="#">Impact on Public Investment</a>	<a href="#">Afghanistan – Before and After</a> <a href="#">Detention</a> <a href="#">US Torture</a>



## George W. Bush Record of Achievement

### Directions

**In your groups,**

- Review the ‘Record of Achievement’ of the Global War on Terror, from the White House archives.
- Research counter evidence that challenge some of the claims. There are links provided which highlight the costs of the war.

**Summarize your findings in the graphic organizer provided.**

### Claims: Bush White House Archives - The War to Liberate Iraq

- On March 19, 2003, the United States and its coalition partners launched Operation Iraqi Freedom. Three weeks later, Saddam Hussein’s regime was toppled from power. Today the former dictator is awaiting trial in prison rather than ruling in a palace. A regional threat and state-sponsor of terrorism has been removed. Sovereignty has been transferred to the Iraqi people, and free elections will be held in January 2005.
- The international community has pledged at least \$32 billion to rebuild and improve schools, health care, roads, water, agriculture, electricity, and other elements of Iraq’s infrastructure.
- Schools and clinics have been renovated and reopened, and power plants, hospitals, water and sanitation facilities, and bridges and roads are being rehabilitated. Since the liberation of Iraq, food and electricity are now distributed more equally across the country.
- Iraq’s oil infrastructure is being rebuilt, with production capacity reaching between 2.3 and 2.5 million barrels of oil per day.
- Saddam Hussein’s regime spent \$16 million in 2002 on health care – less than one dollar per Iraqi per year. Iraq’s budget for the Ministry of Health is now \$950 million.
- More and more Iraqi children are attending schools. Attendance in the 2003-2004 school year is as high as, or in some cases higher than, pre-conflict levels. More than eight million new textbooks have been distributed.
- Iraqi university students and scholars are now able to communicate and travel abroad freely, reconnecting Iraqi higher education with the international academic community after decades of isolation.
- Iraqis now have an ever-growing free press, including newspapers, internet, radios, and television networks.
- Small businesses are opening in Iraq, creating new jobs for Iraqis.
- A year and a half ago, Iraq was an enemy of America and the civilized world; today it is an ally of both.

**Source:** <https://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/infocus/achievement/chap1.html>

### Costs of War <https://watson.brown.edu/costsofwar>

Human Cost	Economic Cost	Social and Political Cost
<a href="#">Death Toll</a> <a href="#">US Veterans and Families</a> <a href="#">Iraqi Refugees</a>	<a href="#">Employment Impact</a> <a href="#">Macroeconomic Impact</a> <a href="#">Impact on Public Investment</a>	<a href="#">Higher Education</a> <a href="#">Detention</a> <a href="#">US Torture</a>

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## George W. Bush Record of Achievement Graphic Organizer

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Class: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Using the information you reviewed, complete the table below. For each claim from the White House Archives, add counter claims or the cost of these 'achievements' (sourced from Brown University's "Costs of War" project). Then, decide if the claim is true, false, or misleading. Add information you think the American people should have for each of these claims to have a more complete picture.

Claim (White House)	Counter Claim / At What Cost?	Initial Claim: True, False, or Misleading?

Teaching Beyond September 11<sup>th</sup>

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## Lesson 3. Torture, International Law, and US Exceptionalism

### *Overview, Background Resources and Materials Needed*

In this two-part lesson, students learn about how torture was used in the US Global War on Terror in defiance of international law. Students first learn about what constitutes torture and how it is different from ill treatment and abuse. Next, students are introduced to the UN Convention Against Torture. The lesson engages students in an activity to compare the US definition and UN definition of torture as a way for students to understand how the US has used a particular definition of torture to suit its own interests. Day 2 of the lesson delves into the use of torture under the Bush regime during the War on Terror. It introduces students to the 2004 Abu Ghraib Scandal when journalists reported that members of the US Military and CIA engaged in a series of human rights violations against detainees in the Abu Ghraib prison in Iraq. These revelations about the US' engagement in torture led to shock and outrage across the world. Initially, President Bush claimed these were isolated incidents, however, it eventually came to light that the abuse was systemic and widespread, implicating not just the military but also the CIA and US Department of Justice. Building on Day 1, in this lesson, students learn more about the US government's use of torture as part of the Global War on Terror, and importantly, the long-standing impacts of this misuse of power on individuals who were tortured.

#### **Background resources for educators before Lesson**

It would be beneficial for educators to review the following resources. These resources may also be used as a supplementary resource list for students in higher level courses:

1. Top 10 Things You Wanted to Know About the UNCAT But Were Afraid to Ask:  
<https://www.amnestyusa.org/top-10-things-you-wanted-to-know-about-uncat-but-were-afraid-to-ask/>
2. UNCAT + Torture Memo (*select pages as educators may wish to see the original documents*)  
[https://drive.google.com/file/d/1V5d6aA8WhqusJ4a5SntVXeGSFq\\_i\\_bUR/view?usp=sharing](https://drive.google.com/file/d/1V5d6aA8WhqusJ4a5SntVXeGSFq_i_bUR/view?usp=sharing)

#### News/Magazine articles

1. Apuzzo, M., Fink, S., & Risen, J. (2016, October 8). How US Torture Left a Legacy of Tortured Minds. *The New York Times*. (*first-person accounts of torture victims' experiences for Day 2 activity are based on this article*) <https://www.nytimes.com/2016/10/09/world/cia-torture-guantanamo-bay.html>
2. Horowitz, J. & Cammarano, S. (2013). 20 Extraordinary Facts about CIA Extraordinary Rendition and Secret Detention. Open Society Foundations Justice Initiative.

<https://www.justiceinitiative.org/voices/20-extraordinary-facts-about-cia-extraordinary-rendition-and-secret-detention>

3. CNN (2015/2021 updated). CIA Torture Report Fast Facts. <https://www.cnn.com/2015/01/29/us/cia-torture-report-fast-facts>
4. McClain, K. (2018). Do As I Say, Not As I Do: American Exceptionalism and Post-9/11 Use of Torture. *World Mind Magazine*. <https://www.theworldmind.org/home/2018/7/28/do-as-i-say-not-as-i-do-american-exceptionalism-and-post-911-use-of-torture>

#### Factsheet

- Bridge Initiative Team (2020). *Factsheet: Torture at Guantanamo Bay Detention Camp*. <https://bridge.georgetown.edu/research/factsheet-torture-at-guantanamo-bay-detention-camp>

#### Video

- Democracy Now. (2015). Ex-Bush Official: *U.S. Tortured Prisoners to Produce False Intel that Build Case for Iraq War*. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fgunfQWaLv0>
- Human Rights Watch. (2016, October 3). *US Detainee Describes Unreported CIA Torture*. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gPCER8xSxKc>

**Note, this is very difficult to watch as it describes techniques used by the CIA to torture captives (video length is about 2.5 mins).**

#### Website

- Brook, P. (2010, March 30). *Extraordinary Rendition, Black Sites, Secret CIA Prisons, Trevor Paglen and Telephotography*. Prison Photography. <https://prisonphotography.org/tag/black-site>

#### Key Terms in Lesson 3

- **Torture:** Torture is the intentional infliction of severe mental or physical pain or suffering, by or with the approval of state agents, and with a specific intent (e.g., to gain information) [see also UNCAT definition provided in lesson]
- **Abuse:** Intentional wrong or improper treatment. It can be verbal, psychological, or physical. It differs from torture in that it is not used for specific purposes, nor does it need to be officially sanctioned
- **Mistreatment:** Also known as ill-treatment, cruel or inhuman treatment, like torture, can be either physical or psychological. There is no specific purpose to the ill treatment, and it involves a significant level of suffering or pain.
- **Enhanced interrogation techniques:** A euphemism for the program of systematic torture of detainees by the CIA

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- **Euphemism:** A mild or indirect word or expression substituted for one considered to be too harsh or blunt when referring to something unpleasant or embarrassing
- **Black site:** Clandestine jails where prisoners generally are not charged with a crime and have no legal recourse, with no bail or court order.
- **CIA Black site:** Refers to the black sites that are controlled by the CIA and used by the US government in its War on Terror to detain enemy combatants.
- **War Crime:** A serious violation of the laws or customs of war as defined by international law and treaties.
- **US Exceptionalism:** The presumption that America's values, political system, and history are unique and worthy of universal admiration.
- **Treaty:** A contract in writing between two or more political authorities (such as states) formally signed by representatives duly authorized and usually ratified by the lawmaking authority of the state.
- **Ratify:** Sign or give formal consent to (a treaty, contract, or agreement), making it officially valid.

### Materials Needed for Lesson 3

1. Lesson 3 Slide Deck (Day 1 and 2)

#### **Day 1:**

1. Lesson 3, Handout 1: **Comparison of UNCAT and 2002 US Torture Memo Definitions of Torture** (1 per student)

#### **Day 2:**

2. Lesson 3, Handout 2: **The Torture Timeline and the First Five Years of the US Led "Global War on Terror" [2001-2006]** (1 per student)
3. Lesson 3, Handout 3: **Case Studies of Torture Victims' Experiences** (1 set per student group)
4. Video: [CIA Torture: No More Secrets. \(2014\)](#) Open Society Foundations (to be projected and watched in class)
5. Video: [Discreet Airlift](#) (2018). Field of Vision (provide link to students for optional extension activity)

## Lesson 3. Torture, International Law, and US Exceptionalism

### *Learning Plan*

**Note to educator:** Given the challenge of teaching about torture, this is a two-day lesson. Day 1 introduces students to the definition of torture and to the fact that the US engaged in torture. Day 2 delves more deeply into the US' use of torture as part of the Global War on Terror. It is possible to teach Day 1 without Day 2; however, it is not possible to teach Day 2 without the basic understandings garnered from Day 1.

#### **Day 1:**

##### Opening – 10 minutes

Start by writing the word **torture** on the board. Ask students to write down what treatment/tactics constitute torture.

After 2 minutes, ask students to turn-and-talk to discuss their collective understanding of torture for about 3 minutes. Ask 2-3 pairs to report out.

Possible answers (this is not an exhaustive list):

- waterboarding
- beatings
- sleep deprivation
- electrocution
- sexual assault
- loud noises, lights, etc.
- force feeding
- threats with dogs
- extended solitary confinement
- exposure to extreme temperatures

It is likely that students **will fail to mention** that the legal definition of torture requires that it be sanctioned by state officials and be used for a purpose (e.g., soliciting information). This is something you will eventually clarify if it is not brought up now. Before clarifying, follow up with the question:

**“What makes torture different from mistreatment and/or abuse?”**



Answer key:

- severity
- duration
- lasting harm
- purpose (e.g., to gain information)

**Clarify** for students that the term torture is used in common parlance to mean any sort of mistreatment or abuse as described above but in fact, **torture has a specific, legal definition and must meet four criteria** as per the UN Convention Against Torture (UNCAT), which is an international law [Lesson 3 Slide deck: Day 1, Slide 2].

1. the act must be done with **intent**,
2. there is **extreme** pain and suffering
3. it is done for the **purpose** of eliciting information or other objectives, and
4. it is consented by a person **acting in an official capacity**

**Note** that international humanitarian law differs from these criteria (and hence the UNCAT definition that is the focus of this lesson) in that it does not require the involvement of a person acting in an official capacity as a condition for an act intended to inflict severe pain or suffering to be defined as torture.

### Key concepts overview – 15 minutes

Explain to students that you will be taking a deep dive into understanding what constitutes torture and will need to understand differences among these key concepts: **torture, cruel or inhuman treatment, degrading treatment, ill treatment.**

[Lesson 3 Slide deck: Day 1, Slide 3].

- **Torture** consists of severe pain or suffering, whether physical or mental, inflicted for purposes such as obtaining information or a confession, exerting pressure, intimidation, or humiliation.
- **Cruel or inhuman (synonymous terms) treatment** consists of acts which – like torture - cause serious pain or suffering, whether physical or mental, or which constitute a serious outrage upon individual dignity. **Unlike torture, however, these acts do not need to be committed for a specific purpose.**
- **Humiliating or degrading (synonymous terms) treatment** consists of acts which cause real and serious humiliation or a serious outrage upon human dignity, and whose intensity is such that any reasonable person would feel outraged.
- **Ill-treatment (or mistreatment)** is not a legal term, but it is an umbrella term that covers all the above-mentioned acts. (Source: [International Committee of The Red Cross, 2016](#))

**Stress for students that torture under any circumstance is illegal by international law.**

[Lesson 3 Slide deck: Day 1, Slide 4]. Introduce students to the UN Convention Against Torture.

- The United Nations Convention Against Torture is an instrument of accountability that is meant to enforce an absolute prohibition of torture.
- The Convention was adopted by the UN General Assembly on December 10th, 1984 and entered into force on June 26, 1987.
- 173 countries have ratified the convention.
- The United States signed onto the treaty on April 18, 1988 and ratified the treaty on October 21, 1994.

You may wish to clarify what ratified means (see key terms).

Next, explain the purpose of UNCAT.

[Lesson 3 Slide deck: Day 1, Slide 5]. **What does the UNCAT actually do?**

- Defines what is meant by torture
- Bans the use of torture, cruel and degrading treatment
- Bans refoulement (the extradition of individuals at risk to countries where they may face torture)
- Requires governments to actively prevent torture
- Requires governments to investigate torture allegations
- Requires governments to provide remedy to torture victims
- Establishes an appropriate UN committee to deal with issues of redress, monitoring and investigation

(Time permitting) Ask for a volunteer to read out the UNCAT definition of torture.

[Lesson 3 Slide deck: Day 1, Slide 6].

“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.”

Poll students (show of hands): **“To your knowledge, has the US government engaged in torture programs during the War on Terror, or post 9/11 era?”** . Some students are likely to say yes.

**Follow up by asking if students believe that this has been an anomaly or frequent occurrence.**

[Lesson 3 Slide Deck, Day 1 Slide 7 & 8] Highlight for students that:

- Despite ratifying UNCAT, the US had several conditions including that the Convention was not self-executing, and therefore required domestic implementing legislation to take effect.
- The US developed its own guidelines on what constitutes torture in a 2002 memo disregarding existing laws. Effectively, the US put itself above international law and circumvented any accountability processes.
- In 2005, President Bush stated that the Convention Against Torture did not apply to **overseas secret** prisons operated by the CIA and the military.
- Torture was used by the US in the Global War on Terror despite being in defiance of the Convention Against Torture (UNCAT), which the US is party to.
- Torture has been a systemic practice by the United States - not an anomaly.
- Irrespective of the US' justifications for use of torture, torture is illegal and the use of the practice of torture constitutes a war crime.

Give students a moment to reflect on this knowledge and ask questions.

- As it does with many treaties, the US stipulated that current **US law should be understood to be in compliance with (meet or exceed requirements of) treaty obligations**. Relying on this stipulation, the US has **resisted** international calls for it to codify what constitutes torture and make it actionable under domestic law and policy.
- In addition, the US stipulated that the agreement would **not be binding** precedent in the US court system.
- Further, the US **narrowed the definition of torture** by stating that it would only seek to prevent cruel, inhuman, and degrading treatment or punishment as these terms' definitions were understood in the context of the US Constitution.

[Lesson 3 Slide Deck, Day 1 Slide 9]

Explain the concept **US Exceptionalism**, which is the belief that the US' values, political system, and history are unique and worthy of universal admiration. This belief in American exceptionalism was heightened in the aftermath of 9/11. Many felt that US values were being attacked and had to be protected at all costs - even if this meant taking actions contrary to those values, such as torture. This contradiction makes a mockery of the belief of US exceptionalism (and also breaks international law).

[See Educator Resources article on US exceptionalism by K. McClain]

[Lesson 3 Slide Deck, Day 1 Slide 10]

Again, stress for students: **There is no circumstance in which torture should be acceptable.**

### Application – 15 minutes

Now that students have an understanding of what constitutes torture and that the US used torture as part of the US led War on Terror, explain that they are going to compare and contrast the definitions of torture in the United Nations Convention Against Torture and the US' 2002 "Torture memo" to show how the US has tried to get around the fact it has engaged in torture.

### Distribute **Lesson 3, Handout 1: Comparison of UNCAT and US Torture Memo Definitions of Torture**

Instruct students that you will be doing this activity as a THINK-PAIR-SHARE. As a first step, they should independently read and annotate both definitions [3 minutes]. Next, they should pair up and share what stood out for them and answer the two questions [7 minutes].

After ten minutes, open up discussion and invite students to share their responses. An answer key is provided here to help guide students. [5 minutes]

#### 1. **What is the biggest difference between the UNCAT and the US' 2002 torture memo?**

*Answer Key:*

- The emphasis on severity of harm: the 2002 US memo did not categorically identify any particular behavior as torture, but relied instead on measuring harm caused, physically and psychologically
- The intention of the 2002 memo was to effectively legalize torture, not merely provide a different definition.
- The US memo's standard is (intentionally) vague and overly broad

#### 2. **Why shouldn't the US government have the power and/or leverage to redefine torture in a way that circumvents international law?**

*Answer Key:*

- There is no justification of torture under any circumstances.
- Despite the belief in US exceptionalism, the US is not above international law and should not have the power to redefine torture to suit its interests.

### Debrief – 5 minutes

It is imperative to explain to students that there may be people who think torture is justified. Be sure to **disrupt any notion that torture is justified in certain situations**. Aside from the fact that torture is extremely cruel and barbaric, highlight for students that there is **ample evidence that torture does not work**. In fact, torture often elicits unreliable information or answers that the interrogator wants, even if untrue. For example, the US' decision to start the 2nd Gulf War in Iraq was based on false information gained under torture (more on this in Lesson1, Day 2; see also *Democracy Now* excerpt in resources).

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A second point worth emphasizing is that this is a moral issue as well as one of expedience. The US is a political entity and holds no particularly exalted position when it comes to deciding moral issues (despite the belief in US exceptionalism). Further, if it wants to be considered part of the international community it should respect the obligations it has claimed. By condoning torture in particular circumstances, the US signals to other countries that they may do the same, while also making a mockery of its own values and beliefs.

### Homework (optional)

Assign students to read the following as a summary for today's activities and to prepare them for Day 2.

#### **Top 10 Things You Wanted to Know About the UNCAT But Were Afraid to Ask:**

<https://www.amnestyusa.org/top-10-things-you-wanted-to-know-about-uncat-but-were-afraid-to-ask/>

### Day 2

#### Opening – 5 minutes

Explain to students that today's lesson will look explicitly at **the CIA's rendition, detention, and interrogation program** that began in response to 9/11 (note that the CIA has had a much older [extraordinary rendition](#) program since Bill Clinton's presidency).

Begin the lesson by showing students this 3-minute video about the CIA's torture programs. Note that this video was released in 2014, the year that the Senate's Torture Report came out, 10 years after the news story about the use of torture by the CIA, which will shortly be introduced to students in this lesson:

**Video: (Open Society Foundations) CIA Torture: No More Secrets (~3 minutes):**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=u0e1PTgCtHM&t>

Allow students a minute to process the video. Offer them a few minutes of quiet reflection or to write in their notebooks.

[Lesson 3 Slide Deck, Day 2 Slide 2] Remind students that:

- Torture has been a systemic practice by the United States - not an anomaly
- Torture is illegal and the use of practice of torture constitutes a war crime
- Torture was used by the US in the Global War on Terror despite being in defiance of the Convention Against Torture (UNCAT)

#### Key Concepts - 20 minutes

**Ask students if they know what a black site is.**

[Lesson 3 Slide Deck, Day 2 Slide 3] Provide definition. Explain that a black site is a secret facility used by a country's military as a prison and interrogation center, whose existence is denied by the government. Next, ask students if they can name any black sites.

Anticipated answers:

- Abu Ghraib Prison (Iraq)
- Bagram Air Base (Afghanistan)
- Al Munawara Central Prison (Yemen)
- Guantánamo Bay Prison (Cuba) [Note, only portions of the prison are considered a black site]

[Lesson 3 Slide Deck, Day 2 Slide 4] Explain to students that there are at least 20 known locations of black sites that have been in operation since 2001; some of the locations include: Thailand, Poland, Romania, Lithuania and Kosovo as well as US naval vessels.

If students were able to identify black sites, ask **“How do you know about black sites – what are your sources of knowledge?”**

If students were not able to identify black sites (or did not know what they are), ask **“How do you think we know about these black sites?”**

Anticipated answers:

- The 2014 Senate Torture report
- Survivors/families of those killed
- Investigative journalism (news)
- Social media
- Hollywood films, tv shows, etc.

[Lesson 3 Slide Deck, Day 2 Slide 5] **Next, ask students, what is “enhanced interrogation”?**

**Explain that “enhanced interrogation” is** a euphemism for the program of systematic torture of detainees by the CIA, for example, the use of waterboarding, starvation, sleep deprivation etc.

The use of the term “enhanced interrogation” is used to cover up the brutal, violent, deadly torture perpetrated by US military and intelligence on Muslim men and boys. The term was deliberately used by the Bush administration to create distance from the abuses that had become public.

**[Lesson 3, Handout 2: The Torture Timeline and the First Five Years of the US Led “War on Terror” [2001-2006]]** Distribute the handout and instruct students to silently scan it. They should highlight key moments or note any questions they have about it. Students may bring up the fact that the US invasion of Iraq was based on faulty intelligence gained from torture.

Explain to students that a bipartisan senate investigation into the CIA's torture program started in 2005 based on these events and that it took almost a decade to complete. The Senate Intelligence Committee released their 6,700-page report in 2014. It came to be known as the Senate Torture Report.

[Lesson 3 Slide Deck, Day 2 Slide 6] Key Findings of the 2014 Senate Torture Report:

- The US' engagement with torture was not confined to a handful of aberrational cases or techniques, nor was it the work of rogue CIA agents. **It was an officially sanctioned, worldwide regime of torture involving dozens of countries.**
- The CIA's justification for the use of its enhanced interrogation techniques rested on inaccurate claims of their effectiveness.
- The interrogations of CIA detainees and their conditions of confinement were brutal and far worse than the CIA represented to policymakers and others.
- The senate report established that at least 119 detainees were subject to harsh interrogation at various CIA black sites, of which at least 39 of the men were subjected to "waterboarding," "walling," "rectal feeding" – a form of rape – and other forms of torture. (Independent reports suggest there were probably 200 detainees).
- The report clearly acknowledges that "torture does not work". The so-called "enhanced interrogation techniques" either produced no intelligence, or they "fabricated information, resulting in faulty intelligence."
- The useful intelligence garnered from these prisoners came from traditional non-violent questioning; torture tactics produced nothing further of value.

[Lesson 3 Slide Deck, Day 2 Slide 7]

It is also worth stressing for students that only **525 pages** of the report has been shared with the public; **the bulk of the 6700-page report remains classified** and therefore we do not have the full picture of the US torture program.

Explain to students that one of the bigger issues at stake is that the **US government narratives have consistently argued that national security – in at least some cases – trumps human rights.** For example, the fact that Guantanamo Bay prison is still open today, over two decades since the first prisoners arrived.

Transition to activity where students will read first-person accounts of how this torture impacted individuals, many of whom were at Guantanamo Bay prison.

Application – 15 minutes

**Note to educator:** Prior to distributing the case studies, let students know that the cases may be difficult to read as they describe some of the torture that detainees experienced in US custody. Students

who find the case studies triggering may complete one of the extension activities during this time; we recommend Option 1, with question 3.

**[Lesson 3, Handout 3: Case Studies of Torture Victims' Experiences]** Divide into small groups of 6 and provide a set of six case studies (one case per person in the group). Instruct students to read accounts of torture victims' experiences. Students need only read one account each. Note that some case studies may be more graphic than the others and may be triggering for some students. Therefore, allocate the case studies to student groups carefully.

After silent reading [5 minutes), they should share what they've learned about their respective cases with their group and to consider the following questions (10mins):

[Lesson 3 Slide Deck, Day 2 Slide 8]

- 1. How do these case studies and the torture timeline challenge or enhance your understandings of how the US engaged in the War on Terror?**
- 2. Why is it important to learn about the practice of torture by the CIA and in the War on Terror more generally?**

Debrief – 10 minutes

Bring students back together and ask each group to share one response to each of the two questions:

**How do these case studies and the torture timeline challenge or enhance your understandings of how the US engaged in the War on Terror?** (Answers will vary)

**Why is it important to learn about the practice of torture by the CIA and in the War on Terror more generally?**

*Anticipated answers / key takeaways*

- Torture is illegal and the use of practice of torture constitutes a war crime
- Torture has been used throughout the War on Terror as a tactic of dehumanization and the subjugation of Muslims and other groups implicated in the War on Terror
- There are no circumstances or contexts in which torture should be permissible.
- Torture is ineffective in garnering useful/actionable information; it is ineffective as it is brutal
- The fact that the US used torture amplified previous valid complaints about US hegemony and abuse
- The US claims to uphold certain values of morality (US exceptionalism); engaging in torture makes a mockery of this.
- Condoning torture in particular circumstances signals to other countries that they may do the same

*Time permitting, ask the following question:*

**Why do you think it's important to learn complete accounts of history?**



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### *Anticipated answers:*

- to avoid repeating mistakes
- to understand the complete context behind historical events rather than the spin put on them in hindsight
- to make intelligent and compassionate policy going forward

### **In closing, be sure to highlight:**

- Torture has an extremely destructive impact on survivors - some may not be able to recover or resume any semblance of normalcy.
- The CIA's rendition, detention, and interrogation program that ran from 2002-2009 employed the most brutal tactics against "suspected terrorists," which categorically constituted torture, which is a war crime according to international law.
- **No person has been held accountable for these crimes.**
- **There is no case or justification for torture under any circumstances.**

### **Extension Activities or Homework**

#### *Option 1*

Read the article about the CIA Extraordinary Rendition program:

Horowitz, J. & Cammarano, S. (2013). **20 Extraordinary Facts about CIA Extraordinary Rendition and Secret Detention.** Open Society Foundations Justice Initiative.

<https://www.justiceinitiative.org/voices/20-extraordinary-facts-about-cia-extraordinary-rendition-and-secret-detention>

- How do you think the government's illegal torture program should be addressed?
- What should accountability look like for those who ordered, designed, and/or participated in the torture program?
- How would you address justice for the survivors of torture?

#### *Option 2:*

Create a social media campaign that advocates for the closing of Guantanamo Bay prison and an end to the use of torture by the US government. (Assign Factsheet from background reading section).

#### *Option 3:*

Watch the short film, Discreet Airlift (15 min) which focuses on the residents of a town in North Carolina who demanded answers about the role their state played in the US torture program. It is an example of how citizens can demand accountability. Link to video:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WvnAFawsAT4>

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A starting point to government accountability is citizen pressure. Write to your members of congress to urge them to support the prosecution of individuals involved in torture and other abuses, drawing on what you've learned in these lessons about torture and specifically the US' use of torture.

### *Option 4:*

**Five days after 9/11**, In a Sept. 16, 2001 interview on NBC's Meet the Press, then Vice President Dick Cheney said the government will need to work through the dark side. He continues: *We've got to spend time in the shadows in the intelligence world. A lot of what needs to be done here will have to be done quietly, without any discussion. ...It's going to be vital for us to use any means at our disposal.*

Write an op-ed explaining why such thinking is wrong.

## Lesson 3. Torture, International Law, and US Exceptionalism

### *Student Handouts and Supplementary Teaching Materials*

1. Lesson 3 Slide Deck Preview [Please download separate slide deck file]
2. Lesson 3, Day 1, Handout 1: **Comparison of UNCAT and 2002 US Torture Memo Definitions of Torture** (1 per student)
3. Lesson 3, Day 2, Handout 2: **The Torture Timeline and the First Five Years of the US Led “Global War on Terror” [2001-2006]** (1 per student; can be provided digitally)
4. Lesson 3, Day 2, Handout 3 : **Case Studies of Torture Victims’ Experiences** (1 set per student group; can be provided digitally)

## Lesson 3 Slide deck

### Day 1 – 10 slides

# Torture, International Law, and US Exceptionalism

Module 6, Lesson 3 – Day 1

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## Defining Torture

Torture has a specific, legal definition and must meet four criteria as per the UN Convention Against Torture (UNCAT), which is an international law:

1. the act must be done with **intent**,
2. there is **extreme** pain and suffering
3. it is done for the **purpose** of eliciting information or other objectives, and
4. it is consented by a person **acting in an official capacity**

## Key Concepts

<b>Torture</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• consists of severe pain or suffering, whether physical or mental, inflicted for purposes such as obtaining information or a confession, exerting pressure, intimidation, or humiliation.</li></ul>	<b>Cruel or inhuman (synonymous terms) treatment</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• consists of acts which – like torture – cause serious pain or suffering, whether physical or mental, or which constitute a serious outrage upon individual dignity. Unlike torture, however, these acts do not need to be committed for a specific purpose.</li></ul>	<b>Humiliating or degrading (synonymous terms) treatment</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• consists of acts which cause real and serious humiliation or a serious outrage upon human dignity, and whose intensity is such that any reasonable person would feel outraged.</li></ul>	<b>Mistreatment (or mistreatment)</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• is not a legal term, but it is an umbrella term that covers all the above-mentioned acts.</li><li>• (Source: <a href="#">International Committee of the Red Cross</a>)</li></ul>
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## United Nations Convention Against Torture (UNCAT)

### Background

United Nations Convention Against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (known as UNCAT) is an instrument of accountability that is meant to enforce an absolute prohibition of torture.

The Convention was adopted by the UN General Assembly on December 10th, 1984 and entered into force on June 26, 1987.

The United States signed onto the treaty on April 18, 1988 and ratified the treaty on October 21, 1994 (the United States made some reservations to two articles).

Regardless of these reservations, the crux of the UNCAT's meaning applies to and is binding on the US government.

## What does the UNCAT actually do?

- Defines what is meant by torture
- Bans the use of torture, cruel and degrading treatment
- Bans *refoulement* (the extradition of individuals at risk to countries where they may face torture)
- Requires governments to actively prevent torture
- Requires governments to investigate torture allegations
- Requires governments to provide remedy to torture victims
- Establishes an appropriate UN committee to deal with issues of redress, monitoring and investigation

## United Nations Convention Against Torture

### Definition of Torture

For the purposes of this Convention, the term "torture" means 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. It does not include pain or suffering arising only from, inherent in or incidental to lawful sanctions.

**The US and Torture**

Despite ratifying UNCAT, the US did so conditionally, arguing that it requires domestic implementing legislation to take effect.

The **US developed its own guidelines** on what constitutes torture in a 2002 memo disregarding existing laws.

In 2005, President Bush stated that the Convention Against Torture **did not apply to overseas secret** prisons operated by the CIA and the military.

Torture was used by the US in the Global War on Terror despite being in defiance of the Convention Against Torture (UNCAT), which the US is party to.

**The US and Torture (cont)**

In developing its own guidelines, the US **narrowed the definition of torture** by stating that it would only seek to prevent cruel, inhuman, and degrading treatment or punishment as these terms' definitions were understood *in the context of the US Constitution*.

Irrespective of the US' justifications for use of torture, **torture is illegal and the use of the practice of torture constitutes a war crime.**

**Defining Terms: US Exceptionalism**

The belief that the US' values, political system, and history are unique and worthy of universal admiration.

This belief in American exceptionalism was heightened in the aftermath of 9/11. Many felt that US values were being attacked and had to be protected at all costs - even if this meant taking actions contrary to those values, such as torture. This contradiction makes a mockery of the belief of US exceptionalism (and also breaks international law).

**Under no circumstances is torture legal or acceptable.**

# Lesson 3 Slide deck


## Day 2 – 9 slides

**Torture, International Law, and US Exceptionalism**  
 Module 6, Lesson 3 – Day 2

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**Day 1 Recap:**


- Torture has been a systemic practice by the United States - not an anomaly
- Torture is illegal and the use of practice of torture constitutes a war crime
- Torture was used by the US in the Global War on Terror despite being in defiance of the Convention Against Torture (UNCAT)



**Black Site** A secret facility used by a country's military as a prison and interrogation center, whose existence is denied by the government

Bagram Air Field, Afghanistan, Staff Sgt. Samuel Mosew (Public Domain)

**AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL UNITED STATES SECRET DETENTION FACILITIES**



Country	Number of Facilities	Country	Number of Facilities
AFGHANISTAN	4	GUANTANAMO	1
CHINA	1	IRAN	1
GUANTANAMO	1	IRAQ	1
IRAN	1	ROMANIA	1
IRAQ	1	THAILAND	1
ROMANIA	1	TOTAL	12

FIGURE 10 THE NUMBER LOCATED BY THE U.S. GOVERNMENT AS OF 2012. SOURCE: AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL. AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL HAS IDENTIFIED THE FOLLOWING FACILITIES AS SECRET DETENTION FACILITIES. AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL HAS IDENTIFIED THE FOLLOWING FACILITIES AS SECRET DETENTION FACILITIES. AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL HAS IDENTIFIED THE FOLLOWING FACILITIES AS SECRET DETENTION FACILITIES.

**Defining Terms: Enhanced Interrogation**

**“Enhanced interrogation”** is a euphemism for the program of systematic torture of detainees by the CIA, for example, the use of waterboarding, starvation, sleep deprivation etc.

The use of the term “enhanced interrogation” is used to cover up the brutal, violent, deadly torture perpetrated by US military and intelligence, primarily on Muslim men and boys. The term was deliberately used by the Bush administration to create distance from the abuses that had become public.

**The 2014 Senate Torture Report**

**Key Findings**

The US’ engagement with torture was an **officially sanctioned, worldwide regime of torture involving dozens of countries.** At least 119 detainees were subject to harsh interrogation at various CIA black sites, of which at least 39 of the men were subjected torture.

The report clearly acknowledges that “torture does not work”. Any useful intelligence garnered from these prisoners came from traditional non-violent questioning; torture tactics produced nothing further of value.

The 2014 Senate Torture Report

**Only 525 pages of the report has been shared with the public; the bulk of the 6700 page report remains classified and therefore we do not have the full picture of the US torture program.**

Case Studies Debrief

**How do these case studies and the torture timeline challenge or enhance your understandings of how the US engaged in the War on Terror?**

**Why is it important to learn about the practice of torture by the CIA and in the War on Terror more generally?**

Key Takeaways

Torture has an extremely destructive impact on survivors - some may not be able to recover or resume any semblance of normalcy.

The CIA's rendition, detention, and interrogation program that ran from 2002-2009 employed the most brutal tactics against "suspected terrorists." These acts were unequivocally torture, which is a war crime according to international law.

**No person has been held accountable for these crimes.**

**There is no justification for torture.**

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## Comparison of UNCAT and 2002 US Torture Memo Definitions of Torture

### Directions

In this activity, you will compare and contrast two definitions of torture and then answer some discussion questions for further analysis.

- **Step 1:** THINK independently - read and annotate the definitions; what stands out in both definitions for you?
- **Step 2:** PAIR up and SHARE your thoughts and answer the questions together.

### United Nations Convention Against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (known as UNCAT)

#### Definition of Torture

**Date: December 10, 1984**

For the purposes of this Convention, the term "torture" means 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. It does not include pain or suffering arising only from, inherent in or incidental to lawful sanctions.

### 2002 Definition from the Office of the US Assistant Attorney General, US DOJ, Office of Legal Council

**RE:** Standards of conduct for interrogation

**Date: August 1, 2002**

"For an act to constitute torture [...] it must inflict pain that is difficult to endure. Physical pain amounting to torture must be equivalent in intensity to the pain accompanying serious physical injury, such as organ failure, impairment of bodily function, or even death. For purely mental pain or suffering to amount to torture [...] it must result in significant psychological harm of significant duration e.g. lasting for months or even years. We conclude that the mental harm also must result from one of the predicate acts listed in the statute, namely: threats of imminent death; threats of infliction of the kind of pain that would amount to physical torture; infliction of such physical pain as a means of psychological tortures; use of drugs or other procedures designed to deeply disrupt the sense, or fundamentally alter an individual's personality,; or threatening to do any of these things to a third party. [...] We conclude that the statute, taken as a whole, makes plain that it prohibits only extreme acts.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Class: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**1. What are the biggest differences between the UNCAT and the US 2002 torture memo's definitions of torture?**

**2. Why shouldn't the US government have the power and/or leverage to redefine torture in a way that circumvents international law?**

# The Torture Timeline and the First Five Years of the US Led “Global War on Terror” [2001-2006]

## 2001

- **September 11:** Al Qaeda attacks the United States.
- **September 14:** A congressional resolution authorizes U.S. President George W. Bush to use all necessary and appropriate force to combat the countries and groups behind 9/11. Vice President Dick Cheney promises that the United States will use any means at our disposal to combat terrorism.
- **September 17:** Bush gives the CIA the authority to kill, capture, and detain al Qaeda operatives. **The CIA lays plans for secret overseas prisons and special interrogations.**
- **September 25:** Office of Legal Counsel (OLC) submits a [memo](#) to the White House advising that Bush **may preemptively wage war anywhere in the world, against any country or organization that harbors or supports any terrorist group, linked to the 9/11 attacks or not.**
- **October 7:** The US invades Afghanistan.
- **November 13:** Bush issues an **executive order** declaring that the United States will **try any foreigners** who commit acts of terrorism or harbor terrorists via military commission, under rules written by the executive branch.

## 2002

- **January 11:** The first 20 prisoners picked up in Afghanistan arrive in **Guantanamo Bay, Cuba.**
- **February 7:** Bush issues an **executive order** denying Taliban and al Qaeda detainees the protections afforded under the Geneva Conventions, saying that the United States needs new thinking in the law of war.
- **May:** The CIA asks senior White House officials to consider the possibility of using rough interrogation tactics, such as waterboarding, in interrogations.
- **July 26:** Attorney General John Ashcroft concludes that waterboarding is lawful, allowing the CIA to go ahead and use the technique on detainees.
- **August 1:** In another memo to White House counsel, the OLC concludes that **only acts which result in pain equivalent to organ failure, impairment of bodily function, or even death, constitute torture; all lesser abuse is legal.**

- **October 7:** On the first anniversary of the Afghan war, President Bush gives a **speech** making the case for the link between al Qaeda and Iraq. The information was false, given by a detainee under intense interrogation. In fact, **no such link ever existed.**
- **December 2:** Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld **approves** coercive interrogation techniques, including inducing stress by use of detainee's fears (e.g. dogs), for Guantanamo. He jots on a memo, *"I stand for 8-10 hours a day. Why is standing limited to four hours?"*

## 2003

- **February 5:** Secretary of State Colin Powell **addresses** the United Nations. Unwittingly citing false information coerced from a detainee, he makes the case for war against Iraq.
- **March 20:** The United States invades Iraq.
- **October 9:** The Red Cross -- the only independent organization afforded access to the Guantanamo detainees -- issues a public statement about the deterioration in the psychological health of a large number of detainees there.

## 2004

- **April 28 - May 10:** The New Yorker's Seymour Hersh and CBS News **break the story** of the abuse of prisoners at Abu Ghraib.
  - **April 28:** "60 Minutes II" broadcasts graphic photos of Iraqi detainees being humiliated and tortured (CNN).
  - **April 30:** The New Yorker publishes an article by Seymour Hersh reporting details in the Taguba report on the abuses at Abu Ghraib (CNN)
- **May 7:** US Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld testifies before the Senate and House Armed Services Committees. "These events occurred on my watch...as Secretary of Defense, I am accountable for them and I take full responsibility...there are other photos -- many other photos -- that depict incidents of physical violence towards prisoners, acts that can only be described as blatantly sadistic, cruel and inhuman." (CNN)
- **May 10:** Bush views some of the photos at the Pentagon and announces his firm support for Rumsfeld. (CNN)
- **June 8:** The Washington Post's Dana Priest and Jeffrey Smith **break the story** of the OLC torture memos.
- **August 25:** The Fay-Jones report on the Abu Ghraib scandal finds 44 instances of abuse, some of which amounted to torture. (CNN)

- **December 30:** Daniel Levin, the new acting head of the OLC, issues a [new memo](#) declaring torture illegal. However, a footnote to the 2004 interrogation opinion signed by Mr. Levin (insisted on by the White House and the C.I.A.) said that **despite the shift in legal reasoning, interrogation techniques authorized under previous Justice Department opinions remained legal**. Those techniques included waterboarding.

## 2005

- **May 10:** Two memos are released by the OLC to the CIA. The longer memo authorized a variety of coercive interrogation techniques and argues that even the harshest techniques are not torture. A second, shorter [memo](#) describes the detention process and again stresses that **nothing being done is torture, and therefore is legal**.
- **November 2:** The Washington Post describes the [black site prisons](#). Sometime this month, the CIA [destroys](#) videotapes of the interrogations of high-value detainees.
- **December:** Congress passes the [Detainee Treatment Act](#), which outlaws cruel, inhumane, or degrading treatment of U.S.-held prisoners anywhere in the world. **Members of Congress are unaware of OLC memos categorizing harsh techniques, including waterboarding, as legal**.

## 2006

- **June 29:** The Supreme Court, in *Hamdan v. Rumsfeld*, holds that Common Article 3 of the Geneva Conventions applies to the U.S. conflict with al-Qaeda and that detention at Guantanamo must comply with the Geneva Conventions. (Source: [IRP/FAS](#))
- **October 24:** In an interview for a radio program, Cheney [says](#) waterboarding is a no-brainer. *I think the terrorist threat, for example, with respect to our ability to interrogate high-value detainees like Khalid Sheikh Mohammed, [waterboarding]'s been a very important tool that we've had to be able to secure the nation, he says. Khalid Sheikh Mohammed provided us with enormously valuable information about how many there are, about how they plan, what their training processes are and so forth; we've learned a lot. We need to be able to continue that.*

### Source:

- Largely extracted from article written by Annie Lowrey on April 23, 2009, title "The Torture Timeline" for Foreign Policy Magazine. Full timeline available at:

<https://www.law.uh.edu/faculty/eberman/NSL/ForeignPolicyTheTortureTimeline.pdf>

- Additional data points extracted from **CNN Fast Facts: Iraq Prison Abuse Scandal Fast Facts** (by CNN Editorial Research (Updated March 11, 2022) <https://edition.cnn.com/2013/10/30/world/meast/iraq-prison-abuse-scandal-fast-facts/index.html>)

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## Case Studies of Torture Victims' Experiences

### Directions

Read the short case study of a torture victims' experiences. Consider:

- How might these forms of torture be in defiance of international law?
- Why do you think it is important to learn about these experiences?
- How do these case studies and what you have learned about torture in these lesson challenge or enhance your understanding of how the US engaged in the War on Terror?

### Case 1: Abdullah Saleh al-Asad

Mohammed Abdullah Saleh al-Asad, a businessman in Tanzania, was held in several secret C.I.A. prisons for more than a year. Mr. Asad believed the C.I.A. seized him because he once rented space in a building he owned to Al Haramain Foundation, a Saudi charity later linked to financing terrorism. Interrogators questioned him repeatedly about the charity, he said in legal papers, then released him with no explanation.

While in prison, Mr. Asad was kept in isolation, sexually abused, forced into nudity, aggressive body cavity searched and kept in diapers.

Mr. Asad passed away in May 2016. His widow, Zahra Mohamed, in a statement for the African Commission on Human and People's Rights, wrote that "He was humiliated, and that feeling never went away... Mohammed's personality changed after his detention... Something tiny would happen, and he would blow up -- he would be so angry -- I had never ever seen him like this before. At these times, he would come close to crying, and he would withdraw to be alone...He used to forget things that he would never have forgotten before, for example, he would talk with someone on the phone and later forget to whom he had been talking."

**Source:** Bryan Denton (2016, October), How U.S. Torture Left a Legacy of Damaged Minds. *The New York Times*. <https://www.nytimes.com/2016/10/09/world/cia-torture-quantanamo-bay.html>

## Case Studies of Torture Victims' Experiences

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### Case 2: Omar Khadr

Omar Khadr was a Canadian citizen and an al-Qaeda child soldier. Mr. Khadr had been wounded and captured in a firefight at age 15 (2006) at a suspected terrorist compound in Afghanistan, where he said he had been sent to translate for foreign fighters by his father, an al-Qaeda member. Years later, he would plead guilty to war crimes, including throwing a grenade that killed an Army medic. At the time, though, he was the youngest prisoner at Guantanamo.

Mr. Khadr told his lawyers that the American soldiers had kept him from sleeping, spit in his face and threatened him with rape. In one meeting with the psychiatrist, Mr. Khadr, then 22, began to sweat and fan himself, despite the air-conditioned chill. While being assessed by a former military psychiatrist, General Xenakis, Mr. Khadr started pulling off his shirt. General Xenakis realized that he was witnessing an anxiety attack. When it happened again, Mr. Khadr explained that he had once urinated during an interrogation and soldiers had dragged him through the mess. "This is the room where they used me as a human mop," he said.

General Xenakis had seen such anxiety before, decades earlier, as a young psychiatrist at Letterman Army Medical Center in California. It was often the first stop for American prisoners of war after they left Vietnam. The doctor recalled the men, who had endured horrific abuses, suffering panic attacks, headaches and psychotic episodes.

General Xenakis found that Mr. Khadr had post-traumatic stress disorder, a conclusion the military contested. Many of General Xenakis's diagnoses in other cases remain classified or sealed by court order, but he said he consistently found links between harsh American interrogation methods and psychiatric disorders.

**Source:** Bryan Denton (2016, October), How U.S. Torture Left a Legacy of Damaged Minds. *The New York Times*. <https://www.nytimes.com/2016/10/09/world/cia-torture-quantanamo-bay.html>



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### Case 3: Mohamed Ben Soud

Mohamed Ben Soud was a Libyan who had fled to Pakistan in 1991 and joined an armed Islamist movement aimed at toppling Col. Muammar el-Qaddafi's dictatorship. Pakistani and United States officials stormed his home and arrested him in 2003. Under interrogation, he denied knowing or fighting with Osama bin Laden or two senior al-Qaeda operatives. Again and again, he said, he told the American interrogators that he was not their enemy. Mr. Ben Soud was among the early captives in the C.I.A.'s network of prisons in Afghanistan, Thailand, Poland, Romania and Lithuania. Mr. Ben Soud, in court documents and interviews, described being forced onto a plastic tarp while naked, his hands shackled above his head. Sometimes he was hooded. One C.I.A. official poured buckets of ice water on him as others lifted the tarp's corners, sending water splashing over him and causing a choking or drowning sensation. He said he endured the treatment multiple times. They also kept him shackled in painful contortions, or they locked him in boxes -- one the size of a coffin, the other even smaller, he said in a phone interview from his home in Misurata, Libya. They slammed him against the wall and chained him to the ceiling as the prison echoed with the sounds of rock music.

In 2004, the C.I.A. turned Mr. Ben Soud over to Libya, which imprisoned him until the United States helped topple the Qaddafi government seven years later. In interviews, he and other Libyans said they were treated better by Colonel Qaddafi's jailers than by the C.I.A.

Today, Mr. Ben Soud, 47, is a free man, but said he is in constant fear of tomorrow. He is racked with self-doubt and struggles to make simple decisions. His moods swing dramatically. His children often ask questions like: 'Dad, why did you suddenly get angry?' 'Why did you snap?' 'Did we do anything that made you angry?'

Mr. Ben Soud was one of the men identified in a 2014 Senate Intelligence Committee report as having been subjected to the C.I.A.'s "enhanced interrogation techniques." Condemning the methods as brutal and ineffective in extracting intelligence, the report noted that interrogators also used unapproved tactics such as mock executions, threats to harm prisoners' children or rape their family members, and "rectal feeding," which involved inserting liquid food supplements into the rectum.

Senate investigators did not set out to study the psychological consequences of the harsh treatment, but their unclassified summary revealed several cases of men suffering hallucinations, depression, paranoia and other symptoms. The full 6,000-page classified report offers many more examples, said Daniel Jones, a former F.B.I. analyst who led the Senate investigation.

**Source:** Bryan Denton (2016, October), How U.S. Torture Left a Legacy of Damaged Minds. *The New York Times*. <https://www.nytimes.com/2016/10/09/world/cia-torture-quantanamo-bay.html>

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### Case 4: Younous Chekkouri

Younous Chekkouri was held at Guantanamo for 13 years as a suspected member of a group linked to al Qaeda. Chekkouri, originally from Morocco, was living in Afghanistan in 2001. He is a Sufi, a member of a mystical Islamic sect that has been oppressed by al Qaeda.

Mr. Chekkouri was beaten repeatedly at a United States military jail in Kandahar and was forced to watch soldiers do the same to his younger brother. At Guantanamo, he was kept in isolation. When he asserted his innocence, he said, interrogators threatened to turn him over to the Moroccan authorities, who have a history of torture. The Americans warned that his family in Morocco could be jailed and abused, he said, and showed him execution photos. Interrogators repeatedly made him believe his transfer was imminent, he said.

After he was released last year, the United States gave him a letter saying it no longer stood by information that he was a member of an al Qaeda-linked group in Morocco. Despite diplomatic assurances that he would face no charges, Morocco jailed him for several months late last year and he continues to fight allegations that he thought were behind him. Now, he is under a psychiatrist's care and takes antidepressants and anti-anxiety drugs. He complains of flashbacks, persistent nightmares and panic attacks. He also suffers an embarrassing inability to urinate until it becomes painful. It started, he said, when he was left chained for hours during interrogations and soiled himself. His doctors say there is nothing they can treat. "They tell me everything is normal," he said. "Your brain is playing games. It is something mental. You're still living in Gitmo. It's fear."

Mr. Chekkouri saw psychiatrists at Guantanamo, but he said he did not trust them. He and others believed the doctors shared information about medical problems with interrogators. In one case, a psychiatrist prescribed the antipsychotic medication olanzapine to a prisoner. He then suggested that interrogators exploit a side effect, food cravings, according to another military doctor who later reviewed the records. Normally, such information would be confidential, but Guantanamo's dual missions of caring for prisoners and extracting information created conflicts. Over time, the military created two mental health teams. One, led by psychiatrists, was there to heal. The other, called the Behavioral Science Consultation Team, was led by psychologists with a very different mission.

**Source:** Bryan Denton (2016, October), How U.S. Torture Left a Legacy of Damaged Minds. *The New York Times*. <https://www.nytimes.com/2016/10/09/world/cia-torture-quantanamo-bay.html>

## Case Studies of Torture Victims' Experiences

### Directions

Read these short case study of a torture victims' experiences. Consider:

- How might these forms of torture be in defiance of international law?
- Why do you think it is important to learn about these experiences?
- How do these case studies and what you have learned about torture in these lesson challenge or enhance your understanding of how the US engaged in the War on Terror?

### Case 5: Mohammad Jawad

On Sept. 3, 2003, after a teenager named Mohammed Jawad was seen talking to a poster on the wall, an interrogator called for a consultation with a Behavioral Science Consultation Team (BSCT, pronounced "Biscuit") psychologist. Mohammed's age at the time is in dispute. The military says it captured him at 17; his lawyer says he was more likely 14 or younger. However old, he was pleading for his mother.

When the psychologist arrived, the goal was not to ease the young man's distress but to exploit it. "The detainee comes across as a very immature, dependent individual, claiming to miss his mother and his young siblings, but his demeanour looks like it is a resistance technique," the psychologist wrote, according to notes seen by The Times. "He tries to look as if he is so sad that he is depressed. During today's interrogation, he appeared to be rather frightened, and it looks as if he could easily break.

The psychologist, who was not identified in the notes, recommended that Mr Jawad be kept away from anyone who spoke his language. "Make him as uncomfortable as possible," the psychologist advised. "Work him as hard as possible." The guards placed him in isolation for 30 days. They then subjected him to the "frequent flier program," a method of sleep deprivation. Guards yanked Mr Jawad from cell to cell 112 times, waking him an average of every three hours, day and night, for two weeks straight, according to court records.

After being held for years, Mr Jawad was charged in 2007 with throwing a grenade that wounded American soldiers. But the evidence collapsed. The military prosecutor, Lt. Col. Darrel Vandeveld, withdrew from the case and declared that there was no evidence to justify charges. "There is, however, reliable evidence that he was badly mistreated by U.S. authorities, both in Afghanistan and at Guantanamo, and he has suffered, and continues to suffer, great psychological harm," he wrote in a letter to the court.

Katherine Porterfield, a New York University psychologist, found Mr Jawad to have PTSD after examining him in 2009. Seven years after his capture, she said, he suffered from flashbacks and anxiety attacks. A panel of military doctors disagreed. Medical records from Guantanamo include repeated notes such as "no psych issues at this time," or the prisoner "denied any psych problem."

The military dropped all charges against Mr Jawad, who is now living in Pakistan. He declined to discuss his mental health. But in a series of text messages, he wrote: "They tortured us in jails, gave us severe physical and mental pain, bombarded our villages, cities, mosques, schools." He added, "Of course, we have" flashbacks, panic attacks and nightmares.

**Source:** Bryan Denton (2016, October), How U.S. Torture Left a Legacy of Damaged Minds. *The New York Times*. <https://www.nytimes.com/2016/10/09/world/cia-torture-quantanamo-bay.html>

## Case Studies of Torture Victims' Experiences

### Directions

Read these short cases of torture victims' experiences. Consider:

- How might these forms of torture be in defiance of international law?
- Why do you think it is important to learn about these experiences?
- How do these case studies and what you have learned about torture in these lessons challenge or enhance your understanding of how the US engaged in the War on Terror?

### Case 6: Ahmed Errachidi

Ahmed Errachidi of Tangier Morocco was arrested by the United States military because they thought he trained at an Al Qaeda camp in early 2001, but the human rights group Reprieve later produced pay stubs showing that he had been working at the time as a cook in London. Mr Errachidi spent 5 years in Guantanamo before he was released without charges.

Mr Errachidi had a history of bipolar disorder before arriving at Guantanamo, and after being held in isolation there, he said, he suffered a psychotic breakdown. He told interrogators that he had been Bin Laden's superior officer and warned that a giant snowball would overtake the world.

Today in Tangier, Morocco, Ahmed Errachidi runs two restaurants, has a wife and five children and has been free for nearly a decade. However, Guantanamo still lurks around corners.

Recently, at a market in Tangier, the clink of a chain caused a paralyzing flashback to the prison, where Mr Errachidi was forced into painful stress positions, deprived of sleep and isolated. On chilly nights, when the blanket slips off, he is once again lying naked in a frigid cell, waiting for his next interrogation. "All I can think of is when are they going to take me back," Mr Errachidi said in an interview. He compared his treatment by the Americans to being mugged by a trusted friend. "It is very, very scary when you are tortured by someone who doesn't believe in torture," he said. "You lose faith in everything."

**Source:** Bryan Denton (2016, October), How U.S. Torture Left a Legacy of Damaged Minds. *The New York Times*. <https://www.nytimes.com/2016/10/09/world/cia-torture-quantanamo-bay.html>

# Appendix to Module 6: George W. Bush's Legacy: The Global War on Terror

## *Curriculum Framework*

### **Goal**

Students will use their independent learning to understand the key architects of the Global War on Terror and the international law that the US broke when the CIA and military engaged in the torture of civilians. The modules also help students understand how US exceptionalism was used to justify both the War in Iraq and the use of torture.

### **Essential questions**

1. Why is it important to learn complete accounts of history?
2. Why is it important to consider how a point of view and bias affect evidence, especially when it comes to history?
3. What constitutes torture?
4. Why is it important to comply with international law?
5. Who profits from war?

### **Understandings**

Students will understand that...

1. The scope of the Global War on Terror goes far beyond Afghanistan and Iraq and impacted millions of people globally both as direct victims of the wars and indirectly through the reverberating effects of the wars.
2. The U.S. invaded Iraq in 2003 under the pretense that Iraq had Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMDs), but WMDs were never found.
3. There is no evidence to suggest that Iraq had anything to do with the 9/11 attacks.
4. The Global War on Terror has had devastating human and financial costs.
5. Torture is illegal and the use of the practice of torture constitutes a war crime.
6. There are no circumstances or contexts in which torture is permissible.
7. Torture has been used throughout the War on Terror as a tactic of dehumanization in the name of national security.
8. Torture is ineffective in garnering useful/actionable information; it is as ineffective as it is brutal.
9. The CIA's rendition, detention, and interrogation program that ran from 2002-2007 employed the most brutal tactics against "suspected terrorists," which categorically constituted torture and did not garner useful information.
10. Torture has a long-term, destructive impact on survivors.

## Knowledge

Students will know...

1. The key architects of the Global War on Terror.
2. The number of people who lost their lives directly in the violence of the US 9/11 wars.
3. The importance of first-person accounts when examining history.
4. That media bias influences the ways that we read and understand history.
5. The definition of torture and how it differs from abuse / mistreatment.
6. What a black site is and the role they played in the US' use of torture.

## Skills

Students will be able to...

1. Compare and contrast claims from the White House Archives about the War on Terror with counter claims from sources such as the Costs of War Project.
2. Explore the human and financial costs of the War on Terror.
3. Analyze the Global War on Terror using a variety of sources.
4. Compare and contrast different definitions of torture.
5. Assess the role of US exceptionalism in shaping the interrogation policies sanctioned by the Bush administration.
6. Explore the key findings of the 2014 Senate Torture Report.
7. Examine the lasting impacts of torture on those who experienced it.
8. Advocate for more humane and intelligent policies (extension activities).

## Summary of Performance Tasks (Assessment)

1. **Group poster:** Students will research one of the key architects of the War on Terror and share their findings with the class.
2. **Graphic organizer:** Students will examine claims about the War on Terror as presented in the White House Archives and determine if each claim is true, false, or misleading.
3. **Torture, International Law, and US Exceptionalism: Debriefs and whole-class discussions:** In each lesson, students will apply key concepts in groups or individually, then return to the whole class space to articulate their findings and takeaways.
4. **Comparison: UN and US definitions of torture.** Students will consider how the term “torture” is defined in the United Nations Convention Against Torture compared to the US 2002 memo.
5. [extension] **Research: The Architects of the GWOT.** Students will continue to explore the career trajectories of the key players in the GWOT, many of whom have had long and illustrious careers and have never been held accountable for their roles in these wars.

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6. [extension] **Research: Who profits from war?** Students will explore this question by researching some of the defense contractors that profited from the GWOT.
7. [extension] **Reflection questions:** Students will read an article about extraordinary rendition and secret detention from the Open Society Foundations Justice Initiative and answer reflection questions about how the government’s illegal torture program might be addressed.
8. [extension] **Social media campaign.** Students will create a social media campaign that advocates for the closing of Guantanamo Bay prison and an end to the use of torture by the US government.
9. [extension] **Congressional outreach.** Students will write to their members of congress to urge them to support the prosecution of individuals involved in torture and other abuses.
10. [extension] **Op-Ed.** Students will write an op-ed in response to former Vice President Cheney’s statements that the government will “need to spend time in the shadows in the intelligence world.”

## *Common Core Standards*

### **History/Social Studies 11th and 12th Grade**

#### Key Ideas and Details:

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.11-12.1

Cite specific textual evidence to support analysis of primary and secondary sources, connecting insights gained from specific details to an understanding of the text as a whole.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.11-12.2

Determine the central ideas or information of a primary or secondary source; provide an accurate summary that makes clear the relationships among the key details and ideas.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.11-12.3

Evaluate various explanations for actions or events and determine which explanation best accords with textual evidence, acknowledging where the text leaves matters uncertain.

#### Craft and Structure:

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.11-12.6

Analyze in detail how a complex primary source is structured, including how key sentences, paragraphs, and larger portions of the text contribute to the whole.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.11-12.6

Evaluate authors’ differing points of view on the same historical event or issue by assessing the authors’ claims, reasoning, and evidence.

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### Integration of Knowledge and Ideas:

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.11-12.7

Integrate and evaluate multiple sources of information presented in diverse formats (e.g., visually, quantitatively, as well as in words) in order to address a question or solve a problem.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.11-12.8

Evaluate an author's premises, claims, and evidence by corroborating or challenging them with other information.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.11-12.9

Integrate information from diverse sources, both primary and secondary, into a coherent understanding of an idea or event, noting discrepancies among sources.

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## About the Contributors

### Lesson 1 & 2:

Ameena Ghaffar-Kucher, EdD is a Pakistani-American Muslim researcher focusing on the socialization, academic engagement and civic commitments of migrant children and youth, particularly youth from Muslim immigrant communities. Her practitioner work has been around teacher education and curriculum development both in the US and abroad through local and international NGOs, USAID, and UNESCO. She is a faculty member at the University of Pennsylvania's Graduate School of Education and the team lead and curriculum director of the Teaching Beyond September 11th Curriculum Project.

Special thanks to Maggie Sorby, Andrianna Smela and Aishwarya Shetty from the Teaching Beyond September 11<sup>th</sup> team for their support on this lesson.

### Lesson 3:

**Dr. Maha Hilal** is a Muslim Arab American an expert researcher and writer on institutionalized Islamophobia and author of the book *Innocent Until Proven Muslim: Islamophobia, the War on Terror, and the Muslim Experience Since 9/11*. She is the founding Executive Director of the Muslim Counterpublics Lab, former Co-Director of Justice for Muslims Collective and was previously the inaugural Michael Ratner Middle East Fellow at the Institute for Policy Studies in Washington, D.C. Dr. Hilal is also an organizer with Witness Against Torture. She earned her doctorate in May 2014 from the Department of Justice, Law and Society at American University in Washington, D.C.

**Kris Garrity**, they/them, is a white Muslim who lives in Washington, DC on the unceded Lands of the Nacotchtank, Piscataway, Doeg-Tauxenants and Pamunkey Peoples. Kris is a parent, researcher, writer, and community organizer. They are a Program Associate with Muslim Counterpublics Lab (MCL), and they organize with Serve Your City/Ward 6 Mutual Aid, and the For Us Not Amazon Coalition in the DMV. Their research focuses on surveillance, state violence and whiteness.

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