

Posted on

04.04.2018

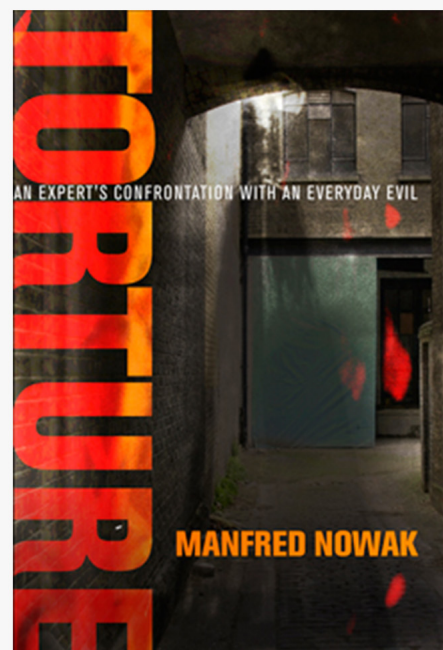
Share on

- [Facebook](#)
- [Twitter](#)
- [LinkedIn](#)
- [Email](#)

Torture An Expert's Confrontation with an Everyday Evil

TORTURE **An Expert's Confrontation** **with an Everyday Evil**

Manfred Nowak



"Manfred Nowak's experience as UN Special Rapporteur on Torture; his long and distinguished career in the human rights field; his keen intelligence, compassion, insight, and humanity; and his talent for telling a good story combine to make this an invaluable and indispensable document for anyone interested in human rights, prisoners' rights, or torture. From the first sentence to the last, Torture is filled with information

and analysis you will not find elsewhere. If you want to understand what causes torture and how to end it, this is the book to read."—Jamie Mayerfeld, University of Washington.

"Torture is a unique book. I do not know of any other UN country or thematic rapporteur that has written about his or her experiences, and his book is most relevant reading for anyone interested in the work of UN human rights organs, particularly the present United Nations Human Rights Council."—Cees Flinterman, former director of the Netherlands Institute for Human Rights

Torture represents a direct attack on the essence of human dignity. Its mere mention evokes a prolific and sordid history: Europe in the Middle Ages, with beds of nails, witch hunts, and burnings; the brutal methods used by military dictatorships against political dissidents in 1970s Latin America; and the gruesome photographs from Abu Ghraib, Guantanamo Bay, and other Bush-era places of detention. While leaders in the West had once hoped that torture would disappear by the end of the twentieth century—and that our children would read about this unfathomable practice in history books and not in the daily papers—research indicates that torture is still routinely used in the majority of twenty-first-century nations.

In his six years as the United Nations Special Rapporteur on Torture, Manfred Nowak was tasked with reviewing thousands of complaints of torture and detention, investigating facts and circumstances surrounding the global practice of torture, and drawing up recommendations aimed at combating torture. Now, in *Torture*, readers can get a firsthand glimpse of how modern-day torture is investigated and understood by those working on the frontlines of researching, addressing, and preventing it.

Nowak recounts his experience visiting countries, reviewing documents, collecting evidence, and conducting interviews with perpetrators, witnesses, and victims of torture. He offers vignettes of the many states he visited, comparing their diverse experiences, and he explores the rise of new twenty-first-century practices of torture, questioning whether capital punishment, corporal punishment, solitary confinement, and contemporary forms of slavery qualify as torture. Ultimately, *Torture* offers vital insights for human-rights scholars and professionals as it tries to make the unfathomable more comprehensible and to clarify the causes and dynamics of torture.

Further information, including a table of contents and some extracts, is available on the publisher website. [PENN PRESS](#)