

Indefinite Detention Is Torture

Habeas corpus, or the Great Writ, is the legal procedure that keeps the government from holding you indefinitely without showing cause. "The serious physical and psychological harm that results from such detention can constitute cruel, inhuman and degrading treatment," charges The Center for Victims of Torture. "These effects are amplified in detainees who have been tortured or experienced trauma prior to commencement of indefinite detention."

A *California Law Review* debate about the rights of detainees during wartime will likely include discussion of the torture at Guantanamo Bay Prison, where 800 years of Habeas Corpus law -- the right to know why you are being held captive by the State -- came undone.

The "Symposium on Habeas Corpus in Wartime" will take place at UC Berkeley Law School in Booth Auditorium on April 6, 2018 from 9:00am to 4:00pm, with a reception to follow. For event details, visit bit.ly/habeaswartime#HabeasWartime.



Should constitutional law be applied to U.S. wars of aggression? What happens when you don't deal with the crime of unlawful incarceration? University of Texas panelist Stephen Vladeck advocates closing Guantanamo (good) but he, and others, are prepared to subject "Forever Prisoners" to Obama-era Periodic Review Boards. True "closure" of the detention camp can only be accomplished with a determination to charge or release *all* inmates.

"Closing Guantánamo the right way requires ending indefinite detention without charge or trial; transferring detainees who have been cleared for transfer; and trying detainees for whom there is evidence of wrong-doing in our federal criminal courts here in the U.S.," asserts the ACLU. "If a prosecutor cannot put together a case against a detainee, there is no reason that person should continue to be imprisoned."

"The degree of civilization in a society can be judged by entering its prisons," wrote Russian novelist Fyodor Dostoevsky in *The House of the Dead*. The cruel, inhumane, and degrading treatment -- torture -- inflicted on disfranchised subjects, from Pelican Bay in California to Bagram, Afghanistan, must not only end; the presumption of American immunity to international law must be repudiated.

Dismantling of U.S. torture camps can't wait. It's up to people living in the United States to mobilize against agents of denial and neglect. It's up to us.

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