

GHOSTS OF ABU GHRAIB
RESOURCE PAGE ¹

Under Iraqi dictator Saddam Hussein's rule, Abu Ghraib developed a reputation as one of the world's most inhumane prison facilities. Located 20 miles west of Baghdad, Abu Ghraib prison was the site of torture, executions, and countless other human rights violations. After the U.S. led invasion of Iraq in 2003, the prison became a detention facility for coalition forces. Initial concerns of potential misconduct, not meant for public consumption, were documented by Major General Antonio M. Taguba between October and December 2003, and obtained by The New Yorker magazine. General Taguba concluded that Abu Ghraib suffered from individual and institutional failures of monumental proportions. Specifically, soldiers from the 372nd Military Police Company were found to participate in "sadistic, blatant and wanton criminal abuses" at Abu Ghraib.

In April 2004, under U.S. control, Abu Ghraib redefined itself as an international symbol of torture and abuse—horrific images were flashed around the world which became synonymous with the U.S. occupation of Iraq. At this time, 60 Minutes broke a story that originated in The New Yorker that documented chronic instances of torture of Iraqi inmates by U.S. soldiers. The coverage included graphic and sexually explicit photographs of Iraqi prisoners. Among the abuses, reported testimony suggested that some U.S. soldiers had urinated on prisoners, sodomized them with batons, poured acid on open wounds along with countless other disturbing acts. The fallout of the Abu Ghraib scandal included the removal of 17 soldiers and officers from duty by the U.S. Department of Defense. Seven soldiers were charged with dereliction of duty, maltreatment, aggravated assault, and battery, and later convicted in courts martial, sentenced to federal prison time, and dishonorably discharged from service.

Ghosts of Abu Ghraib examines how practices of torture and abuse became accepted within the U.S. military. Despite official explanations to dismiss the actions as unauthorized and isolated, the film posits that they are a logical extension of government policies executed post-9/11. **To learn more please visit the following websites:**

***Ghosts of Abu Ghraib* movie website:**

<http://www.hbo.com/docs/programs/ghostsofabughraib/index.html>

Human Rights Watch: <http://www.hrw.org>

United Nations Convention Against all forms of Torture, Cruel, Inhuman and Degrading Treatment and Punishment (CAT): <http://www.ohchr.org/english/law/cat.htm>

Articles and Current Information:

<http://jurist.law.pitt.edu/currentawareness/abughraib.php>

http://www.newyorker.com/archive/2004/05/10/040510fa_fact

Take Action

Call for oversight and accountability of CIA

http://action.humanrightsfirst.org/campaign/etn_cia?qp_source=ga%5fadv

Human Rights Responsibilities of Government Contractors

<http://www.amnestyusa.org/business/iraq.html>

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