



12-31-2014

## Orange Is the New Golgotha

Kerry S. Walters  
*Gettysburg College*

Follow this and additional works at: <https://cupola.gettysburg.edu/philfac>

 Part of the [Defense and Security Studies Commons](#), [Ethics and Political Philosophy Commons](#), [Ethics in Religion Commons](#), [Peace and Conflict Studies Commons](#), and the [Politics and Social Change Commons](#)

**Share feedback about the accessibility of this item.**

---

Walters, Kerry. "Orange Is the New Golgotha." Huffington Post- The Blog (December 31, 2014).

This is the publisher's version of the work. This publication appears in Gettysburg College's institutional repository by permission of the copyright owner for personal use, not for redistribution. Cupola permanent link: <https://cupola.gettysburg.edu/philfac/39>

This open access blog post is brought to you by The Cupola: Scholarship at Gettysburg College. It has been accepted for inclusion by an authorized administrator of The Cupola. For more information, please contact [cupola@gettysburg.edu](mailto:cupola@gettysburg.edu).

---

# Orange Is the New Golgotha

## **Abstract**

The Roman soldiers jeered at Jesus, called him "towelhead" and "sand monkey," ripped off his garments and clad him in an orange jumpsuit. Then they pulled a black sack over his head and led him to an interrogation cell, where CIA operatives awaited him. They shackled Jesus's wrists and strung him up so that he dangled from the ceiling. One of them questioned him, and when his responses weren't to their liking, the other beat him. [*excerpt*]

## **Keywords**

Golgotha, torture, waterboarding, prison, Passion of the Christ, Jesus Christ, CIA

## **Disciplines**

Defense and Security Studies | Ethics and Political Philosophy | Ethics in Religion | Peace and Conflict Studies | Philosophy | Politics and Social Change

## **Comments**

This blog post was published as part of Huffington Post's "The Blog," on December 31, 2014.

# THE HUFFINGTON POST

## Orange Is the New Golgotha

By Kerry Walters

Posted: 12/31/2014 10:49 am EST Updated: 12/31/2014 10:59 am EST

The Roman soldiers jeered at Jesus, called him "towelhead" and "sand monkey," ripped off his garments and clad him in an orange jumpsuit. Then they pulled a black sack over his head and led him to an interrogation cell, where CIA operatives awaited him. They shackled Jesus's wrists and strung him up so that he dangled from the ceiling. One of them questioned him, and when his responses weren't to their liking, the other beat him.

Realizing that old-fashioned torture wasn't doing the trick, a couple of [psychologists](#) were enlisted and bountifully rewarded for tips on more effective ways to get information out of Jesus. Then the CIA men set to work in earnest.

They shocked Jesus with electrical wires attached to his fingers, toes and genitals. They threw him against prison walls. They choked him. They kept him awake for nights on end. Under the pretext of feeding and hydrating him, they raped him by thrusting tubes up his rectum. They threatened his life and the lives of his loved ones. They threatened to molest his mother, Mary. They submerged him in ice water. They broke his legs. They beat him so badly that one of his eyes had to be surgically removed. They made him play Russian roulette. They terrified him with mock executions.

And they waterboarded him, again and again and again.

Finally tortured beyond endurance, Jesus cried out in desolation and breathed his last. And the secret prison where he was tortured and where he died was called Golgotha, the place of the skulls.

When the people heard of the torture, some covered their heads, rent their garments and wept in shame. But most of them, including more than a few [priests](#), shouted loudly and often that Jesus's torture was justifiable because it had been done for the good of the nation. As for the Emperor and his lieutenants, they called for basins of water. And when the basins were brought to them, they washed their hands, saying, "We are innocent of this man's blood."

If you're a Christian and are shocked by this re-telling of the Passion story, you shouldn't be. We know, unless we've conveniently chosen to forget, that Jesus, whom we acknowledge as Lord, was a torture victim. Say what you will about Mel Gibson's 2004 film *The Passion of the Christ*, at least it was brutally honest about the horrors that Jesus endured in his final

hours. So we Christians ought to be fully aware of what torture does to a human being. Of all people, we should be the first to condemn it for the vile sin it is.

If we take scripture seriously, we Christians know two other things as well. The first is that we're to love our enemies. This doesn't mean feeling affection for them -- that's probably a psychological impossibility -- but, minimally, that we treat them as we would wish to be treated. The second thing we Christians know is this: whenever we meet another person, we also encounter Christ. It makes no difference if the person is innocent or guilty, good or evil, civilian or warrior, American or foreigner. What we do to him or her, we do to God as well.

So when torturers make a person scream in agony, Christ shrieks too. The Passion gets re-enacted. Christ suffers all over again, because torture is a hideous assault on both humans and God.

You and I have been aware since 2003, when news of the Abu Ghraib interrogations came to light, that our government tortured prisoners. That knowledge was reaffirmed this month by the [Senate Intelligence Committee's Report on Torture](#). The U.S. military and CIA used all the techniques -- and more -- I listed earlier, despite the fact that torture-acquired "intelligence" is notoriously unreliable. They tortured, even though doing so violated the Geneva Convention, the UN's Universal Declaration of Human Rights, American constitutional principles and God's law. Then their bosses sought to hide the wickedness, first by outright denial that the torture occurred, then by cynically re-naming it "enhanced interrogation."

Apparently, we believe them. A [Washington Post/ABC](#) poll taken just last week reveals that 59 percent of Americans believe the torture was justified. As if that isn't bad enough, seventy-five percent of Protestants and 66 percent of Roman Catholics agree.

How can God ever forgive us?

[http://www.huffingtonpost.com/kerry-walters/orange-is-the-new-golgoth\\_b\\_6372182.html](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/kerry-walters/orange-is-the-new-golgoth_b_6372182.html)