

Staged Reading
**Guantánamo: 'Honor Bound to Defend
Freedom'**
Directed by Eduard Martens

Wednesday, July 25, 2007
Theatersaal, Alte Universität Freiburg (8 PM)

Jamal Al-Harith -	Julien Farlin
Wahab Al-Rawi -	Ildiko Preszly
Moazzam Begg -	Michael Helten
Marine solider -	Matthias Schrewe

Gareth Peirce/ Clive Stafford Smith -	Kimberly Brown
Donald Rumsfeld -	Lars Franßen
Mrs. Begg -	Christine Wender
Tom Clark -	Bernhard Marx
Major Dan Mori -	Eduard Martens
Lord Justice Steyn -	Greta Olson

Reporter No.1 -	Mark Kessler
Reporter No.2 -	Andrea Müller
Reporter No.3 -	Patricia Landvogt
Reporter No.4 -	Sophia Schröder
Reporter No.5 -	Verena Landerer

Lights -	Bernhard Marx
Costumes -	Verena Landerer

Victoria Brittain and Gillian Slovo's *Guantánamo: 'Honor Bound to Defend Freedom'* (2004) was commissioned by Nicolas Kent, the politically minded artistic director of London's Tricycle Theatre. The theater has made a reputation for producing a number of tribunal plays, that is, plays based solely on the transcripts of controversial trials. *Guantánamo* has been called a "verbatim" or "documentary" play. Part of the "theater of testimony," the play is based solely on "spoken evidence." Playwrights Brittain, a journalist, and Slovo, a novelist, interviewed detainees, their families and lawyers and based their text on these individuals' statements and letters as well as on public statements made by officials such as Donald Rumsfeld and Lord Justice Steyn. 'Honor bound to Defend Freedom,' the play's ironic subtitle refers to the motto of the guards at Guantánamo and is intended to remind them of the aim of their project.

First performed at the Tricycle, *Guantánamo* has also been performed in the English Houses of Parliament and read in the foyer of a US Congress building on Capitol Hill. It provides an effective comment on the continued infringement of human rights and disregard for the Geneva conventions that is occurring in this US prison and elsewhere. This performance was directed by Eduard Martens and was performed by members of the ManiActs and students in Greta Olson's course "The Drama of Injustice."

Guantánamo Bay—Timeline

7 October 2001 British and American forces invade Afghanistan.

12 January 2002 The first al-Qaeda prisoners are moved from detention centers in Afghanistan to the Guantánamo Bay US naval base, Cuba. The camp's location is significant, because earlier US court rulings on people held there determined them to be outside of the realm of American sovereignty and thus "outside the system of national and international laws that normally govern the treatment of prisoners in U.S. custody" (Mayer 60).

28 January 2002 President Bush refuses to grant prisoner of war status to the detainees being held in Guantánamo. He says that the detainees "will not be treated as prisoners of war." The president suggests that the debate over their classification is moot, insisting the 158 detainees at Camp X-Ray – whom he calls "killers" – are being treated humanely (Bush says no POW).

7 February 2002 Presidential memo determines detainees to be "enemy / illegal combatants" (dt.: feindliche oder ungesetzliche Kämpfer) in "war against terrorism." This renders the detainees outside of the protection of the Geneva conventions as they are understood to be neither prisoners of war nor civil persons. ("President Bush on Humane").

1 August 2002 A memo to Alberto Gonzales, who is now Attorney General, called "Re: Standards of Conduct for Interrogation under 18 U.S.C. 2340-2340A" is written at the behest of the CIA requesting advice concerning "interrogations outside of the United States." The meaning of "torture" is redefined in contradistinction to the 1984 UN Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment. Torture is limited to the following definition: "The victim must experience intense pain and suffering of the kind that is equivalent to the pain that would be associated with serious physical injury so severe that death, organ failure, or permanent damage resulting in a loss of significant body function will likely result." Moreover, the memorandum states that laws against torture do not apply, because the President, as Commander in Chief, isn't bound by any law ("Jay S. Bybee to Alberto Gonzales").

25 November 2003 One of Britain's most senior judges Lord Steyn condemns the US for a "monstrous failure of justice" over the holding of detainees at Guantánamo Bay.

14 January 2004 Human Rights Watch says in its World Report 2003 that "Washington has ignored human rights standards in its own treatment of terrorist suspects. It has refused to apply the Geneva Conventions to prisoners of war from Afghanistan, and has misused the designation of "enemy combatant" to apply to criminal suspects on U.S. soil. The Bush administration has also abused immigration laws to deny criminal suspects their rights. In 2002, the U.S. government actively tried to undermine important human rights initiatives such as the International Criminal Court, a new international inspection regime to prevent torture, and a United Nations resolution that the war on terrorism should be fought in a manner consistent with human rights" (New Survey Documents Global Repression).

10 March 2004 British detainees Tarek Dergoul, Shafiq Rasul, Ruhul Ahmed, and Asif Iqbal are released from Guantánamo without charge. (Timeline: Guantanamo Bay Briton). In an interview with *The Observer* from May 2004 Dergoul states that he was repeatedly abused during his two-year detention at Guantánamo: "They pinned me down and attacked me, poking their fingers in my eyes, and forced my head into the toilet pan and flushed. They tied me up like a beast and then they were kneeling on me, kicking and punching. Finally they dragged me out of the cell in chains, into the rec yard, and shaved my beard, my hair, my eyebrows" ("They Tied").

June 2006 In *Hamdan v. Rumsfeld*, the U.S. Supreme Court holds that the military commissions created by President Bush to try those detained in Guantánamo were impermissible because they failed to comply with the Uniform Code of Military Justice (UCMJ) and the Geneva Conventions. —The bodies of three detainees are found in their cells, hanging from sheets and clothing. Officials said all three left suicide notes, the contents of which were not been made public. Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for Public Diplomacy Colleen Graffy calls this a "good PR move to draw attention" and "a tactic to further the jihadi cause" (Guantanamo Suicides).

September 2006 US Senate passes The Military Commissions Act which disallows detainees from challenging their detention and reviewing evidence against them and allows for the use of evidence gained from coercion. (Military Commissions Act of 2006 (as passed by Congress).

April 2007 The U.S. Supreme Court rejects an appeal from Guantánamo Bay detainees who wanted to mount a court challenge to their five-year-long confinement. This is viewed as a victory for the Bush administration's legal strategy.

June 2007 US Supreme court reverses previous decision and agrees to hear claims by Guantánamo detainees challenging their detention (Glaberson).

Works Cited

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<http://archives.cnn.com/2002/US/01/28/ret.wh.detainees/>

Glaberson, William, “In Shift, Justices Agree to Review Detainees’ Case.” *The New York Times* (June 30, 2007). Available online.

“Guantanamo suicides a 'PR move'” BBC News (June 11, 2006): <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/americas/5069230.stm>.

“Jay S. Bybee to Alberto Gonzales, August 1 2002, Re: Standards of Conduct for Interrogation under 18 U.S.C. §§ 2340—2340A.” Danner, Mark, *Torture and Truth: America, Abu Ghraib, and the War on Terror*. London 2004. 115-166.

Mayer, Jane “The Experiment.” *The New Yorker* (11 -18 July 2005): 60-71.

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New Survey Documents Global Repression: Human Rights Watch: <http://www.hrw.org/press/2003/01/wr2003.htm>).

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Rose, David, "They tied me up like a beast and began kicking me" *The Observer* (16 May 2004): <http://observer.guardian.co.uk/international/story/0,,1217969,00.html>.

“Timeline: Guantanamo Bay Briton.” BBC News: <http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/uk/3545709.stm>

See Also:

The Center for Constitutional Rights: Guantánamo Global Justice Initiative: <http://www.ccr-ny.org/v2/gac/grp/readings/default.asp>

Krenberger, Verena and Olson, Greta, "Durchsetzung und Schutz von Menschenrechten mit allen Mitteln? Zur Folterdebatte in Deutschland und in den Vereinigten Staaten" (Imposing and Protecting Human Rights Using Any Means? On the Torture Debate in Germany and the United States). *Ethik des Strafens / The Ethics of Punishment*. Ed. Hans-Helmut Gander and Monika Fludernik. Ergon-Verlag: Würzburg. (In print)

Hyde, Alan, “Torture as a Problem of Ordinary Legal Interpretation.” *Ethik des Strafens / The Ethics of Punishment*. Ed. Hans-Helmut Gander and Monika Fludernik. Ergon-Verlag: Würzburg. (In print)