**Food for Thought**

"The healthy man does not torture others—generally it is the tortured who turn into torturers."

--- Carl Jung (1875-1961), Swiss Psychiatrist

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**Protest Against Torture**

Torture is a current issue that continues to arouse several protesters each year.

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**Abstract**

Torture violates human rights; a majority of states have ratified the international Convention Against Torture (CAT), but due to lack of enforcement, violations still occur unchecked. This research seeks to explain why states fail to comply with international human rights treaties. We suggest threat is the determining factor behind torture; torture is provisional. The threat we focus on is the fear states have of their enemies, which could range from another state to a terrorist group. We suggest that the level of threat against a state is directly related to the violation of human rights. We argue that the more threatened a state feels, the more likely they are to participate in the act of torture. These assumptions will be tested through an empirical and quantitative analysis on the compliance of CAT member states over time. We will test our threat-based explanation against other factors that may lead to torture.

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**Convention Against Torture Members as of 2005**

The vast majority of states have ratified the Convention Against Torture; the amount of torture that still exists in these states is astonishing.

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**Why Do States Ratify?**

There are several possible explanations of why most states have ratified international human rights treaties. It is widely known that international human rights treaties cannot be enforced; a member state can practice torture and incur no penalty. Why would a state ratify legislation knowing that it is optional to abide by the legislation? This can be explained to some extent by Oona Hathaway’s research on domestic enforcement and collateral consequences.

**Determining Factors**

• Whether or not the state is a democracy
• Region in which the state is located
• Whether or not the state has a new government

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**Why Study the Roots of Torture?**

Torture is an issue that a great number of people across the globe feel very strongly about; the violation of human rights is not taken lightly. It is important to study the cause of torture so that we better understand how to prevent it. Once the primary cause is identified measures can be taken to stop torture before it occurs. This new perspective on threat-based torture may lead to new and more effective answers. This research could help end this infringement upon human rights.

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**References**


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**Why Can States Get Away With Torture?**

States answer to no one; no force exists to enforce laws against torture.

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**Torture is Still Widely Practiced**

Prisoners’ human rights are still violated today through practices such as water-boarding, which is used to assist the interrogation process.

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**Acknowledgments**

I would like to thank the following individuals for making this research experience possible:

Dr. Wendy Wilkins, Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs
Dr. Gloria Cox, Dean, Honors College
Dr. Warren Burggren, Dean, College of Arts and Sciences

And a special thanks to my mentor, Dr. James Meernik, Department of Political Science.