

Torture on TV Rising and Copied in the Field – From ‘Human Rights First’

Watch "Primetime Torture" — a 14-minute film produced by Human Rights First that explores the way torture and interrogation are portrayed on TV. The film features scenes from some of TV's most popular shows and interviews with seasoned interrogators, military educators and Hollywood screenwriters.



<<http://action.humanrightsfirst.org/ct/Npem-091KmNO/>>

No character on TV uses torture more than Jack Bauer, the hero of the FOX program "24" which begins its 7th season on Sunday night. **In Bauer's hands torture appears to be the perfect tool to fight terrorism.**

As the *The New York Times* <<http://action.humanrightsfirst.org/ct/2dem-091KmNI/>> and *Washington Post* <<http://action.humanrightsfirst.org/ct/2pem-091KmNu/>> reported, this **season of "24" will make the debate over the use of torture central to the plot line.** We are concerned about this development.

Two years ago Human Rights First began to investigate how "24," which has shown 89 scenes of torture in its first six seasons, influenced the thinking and the actions of young people in the armed services. We learned that some junior soldiers — even some interrogators at Guantanamo Bay — had copied abusive interrogation techniques they saw depicted on the program. And military educators told us that "24" was the biggest problem they had in their classrooms.

In response, Human Rights First — helped by donations from hundreds of our supporters — developed a training film that we provided to more than 1,200 military educators. The 15-minute film <<http://action.humanrightsfirst.org/ct/Npem-091KmNO/>> weaves together scenes from the program with the words of real world interrogators who explain that Bauer's tactics would never work in the field. The film is in use at a variety of facilities ranging from ROTC classrooms to classes at the U.S. Military Academy at West Point.

As the new season of "24" begins, we want our film to reach a wider audience. Please consider forwarding a link to this film to anyone you think may be interested:

<http://www.PrimeTimeTorture.org>
<<http://action.humanrightsfirst.org/ct/27em-091KmN7/>>

We have also worked hard to educate the producers of the program about the impact "24" has had. We brought Brigadier General Patrick Finnegan, the Dean of the U.S. Military Academy at West Point and several senior interrogators to the set of the program to talk to them about the way they showed torture. "I asked them to stop," Finnegan explained to *The New Yorker* <<http://action.humanrightsfirst.org/ct/21em->

[O91KmNW/](#)> after the visit.

This season of "24" will make the debate over the use of torture central to the plot line. To date torture has been a part of the action but its use and effectiveness has not been debated explicitly at length by the characters. Though we expect a more nuanced discussion of these tactics than has ever been broadcast before by the program we fear that the take home message of the series has been — and always will be — that torture is effective and can be justified.

More than 13 million people are likely to watch the first episode. The 7th season will also be broadcasted overseas in dozens of countries, including in the Middle East.

We believe "24" will help set the tenor of the public debate over interrogation policy in this country and abroad.

In the coming months we will likely call on you to help us combat misleading information forwarded by the program. We invite you to learn more about our efforts to influence the way that torture is portrayed in popular culture by visiting www.primetimetorture.org <<http://action.humanrightsfirst.org/ct/27em-O91KmN7/>> . And we look forward to working with you in the future.

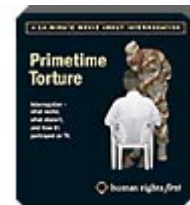
Best,

David Danzig
Director, Primetime Torture Project

P.S. We are making a second training film that will also be distributed to military educators free of charge. While the first film focused on how "24" shows torture in a misleading way, the second will focus on what real world interrogators actually do to gain information from suspected terrorists. **Please support the production of this film.**

<https://secure.ga1.org/05/etn_ptt/nB7em-O91vifu?>

Those who contribute \$250 or more to production will have their names listed in the credit portion of the film.



Primetime Torture
Training Movie