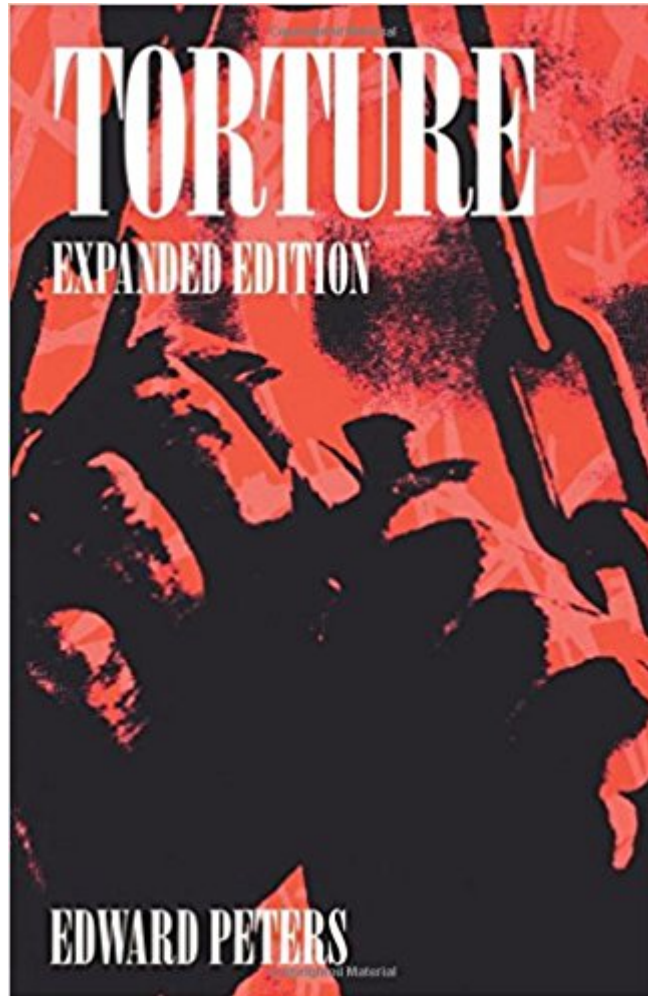


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Torture



Synopsis

"Torture has ceased to exist," Victor Hugo claimed, with some justification, in 1874. Yet more than a century later, torture is used routinely in one out of every three countries. This book is about torture in Western society from earliest times to the present. A landmark study since its original publication a decade ago, *Torture* is now available in an expanded and updated paperback edition. Included for the first time is a broad and disturbing selection of documents charting the historical practice of torture from the ancient Romans to the Khmer Rouge.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

"In the restrained prose of *Torture* lies a passionate message about the intentional violation of the bodies of human beings, in our time and in the past." — *New York Times* "*Torture* goes beyond the solemn declaration of evil's banality. It offers an explanation of how institutional characteristics — even more strongly than personal ones like sadism or psychosis — produce that evil. It contributes to our understanding — if we dare call it that — of how creatures who begin by crying for their mothers can graduate to bashing in heads." — *Philadelphia Inquirer* "A masterful analytical history of torture's emergence in Roman law, its insertion into the medieval law of proof, its gradual abolition after 1750, and its dreadful recrudescence in modern times. The book is an exemplary application of historical scholarship to an issue where emotions tend to run ahead of reason." — *Times Literary Supplement*

Edward Peters is Henry Charles Lea Professor of History at the University of Pennsylvania. His publications include *The Magician, the Witch, and the Law*, *Heresy and Authority in Medieval Europe*, *The First Crusade*, and, with Alan C. Kors, *Witchcraft in Europe, 400-1700: A Documentary History*, all available from the University of Pennsylvania Press.

Major help for my research paper. His work is used in many scholarly research. I wasn't disappointed with the content of this book. The font and the closeness of the spacing on the pages is the only issue I personally had.

I used this book as a resource for a university paper and found it to be a good resource for students. Peters presents the information in a clear and concise way.

This is a great book for someone interested in the role of torture in medieval European law and society. It is not for the torture junkies out there - there are no loving pictures of paraphernalia with titillating "Oh, how horrible" captions. But there is a great deal of data, insight and analysis for the reader interested in how the medieval mind perceived torture. The book forms a trilogy with Lea's other medieval judicial histories of the ordeal and the duel. Highly recommended for anyone with an interest in medieval law and its social underpinnings, rather dry for anyone else.

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