

Americans Are Basically OK With CIA Torture Methods Like Rectal Feeding

Despite a scathing report on torture, a majority of survey respondents approve of the CIA's grisly methods.

By [AlterNet](#)

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In the wake of the Senate Intelligence Committee's torture report, released last week, 51% of respondents said that they think the CIA was justified using the methods in question, which included water boarding, rectal feeding, and sleep deprivation.

Only 29% of Americans said that torture was not justified. Another 20% said they did not have an opinion. The survey of 1,001 adult Americans was conducted December 11-14.

Despite the Senate report, which said torture provided no actionable intelligence that couldn't be found elsewhere, poll respondents disagreed; 56% of them said that torture did provide intelligence that prevented terrorist attacks. Only 28% concurred with the intelligence committee report that torture didn't provide this type of intelligence.

Respondents were almost evenly split on whether the Senate Intelligence Committee should have released the report. Forty-three percent said that the decision was not justified, while 42% said it was the right thing to do. Republicans were much more likely to approve of the CIA's use of torture, with more than two thirds saying that it was justified. Democrats could not agree on this issue, while 46% said that the CIA's methods were wrong, 37% said that they were justifiable.

Were CIA Interrogation Methods Following 9/11 Justified?

	Justified	Not justified	DK
	%	%	%
Total	51	29	20=100
Men	57	28	16=100
Women	46	30	23=100
White	57	26	17=100
Black	42	38	20=100
Hispanic	43	30	27=100
18-29	44	36	20=100
30-49	45	30	25=100
50-64	59	26	16=100
65+	62	26	12=100
College grad+	47	38	15=100
Some college	55	24	20=100
HS or less	51	27	22=100
Republican	76	12	12=100
Democrat	37	46	17=100
Independent	49	30	20=100
<i>Following news</i>			
Very closely	59	34	7=100
Less closely	49	27	23=100

Survey conducted Dec. 11-14, 2014. Whites and blacks include only those who are not Hispanic; Hispanics are of any race. Figures may not add to 100% because of rounding.

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Most white Americans (57%) found the CIA's methods justified, while blacks and Hispanics were more divided. Younger respondents (under 30) were less likely to say the CIA's methods were justified than those over 50 years of age. Men were more supportive of torture than were women.

However, the public didn't seem to pay much interest in the matter. While it was one of the most reported news stories of the week, just 23% of respondents said that they followed news about the torture report closely. By contrast, 35% said that they were paying close attention to the demonstrations around the country in the wake of two grand jury decisions not to indict police officers in the deaths of unarmed black men.

Most Americans are fine with the CIA's torture methods used in the wake of 9/11, according to a new poll conducted by Pew Research.

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