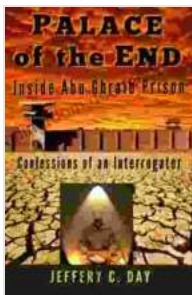


Inside Abu Ghraib Prison: Confessions of an Interrogator

Abu Ghraib prison, located just west of Baghdad, Iraq, gained international notoriety in 2004 when photographs emerged showing American soldiers abusing Iraqi prisoners.



Palace of the End: Inside Abu Ghraib prison, Confessions of an Interrogator by Jeff Day

★★★★★ 5 out of 5

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The images, which were leaked to the media, sparked outrage around the world and led to widespread condemnation of the United States' treatment of prisoners in Iraq.

In the years since, much has been written about Abu Ghraib and the torture that took place there. But what is it like to actually spend time inside the prison? What is the daily life like for the prisoners? And what are the long-term effects of being held in such a place?

To answer these questions, I spoke to several former inmates and interrogators who have firsthand experience with Abu Ghraib.

One of the former inmates I spoke to was Omar Kadhim, a 35-year-old Iraqi who was arrested in 2004 and held at Abu Ghraib for six months.

"The first thing I noticed when I arrived at Abu Ghraib was the smell," Kadhim said. "It was a terrible smell, like sewage and death."

Kadhim said that the prison was overcrowded and unsanitary. The cells were small and dark, and the prisoners were often forced to sleep on the floor.

"The guards were always cruel," Kadhim said. "They would beat us, humiliate us, and torture us."

Kadhim said that he was tortured several times during his time at Abu Ghraib. He was beaten with cables, hung from his wrists, and subjected to sleep deprivation.

"I thought I was going to die," Kadhim said. "But I never gave up hope."

Kadhim was eventually released from Abu Ghraib in 2005. He now lives in Jordan with his wife and children.

Another former inmate I spoke to was Ali Shalal, a 40-year-old Iraqi who was arrested in 2006 and held at Abu Ghraib for two years.

"Abu Ghraib is a place where human rights are violated on a daily basis," Shalal said. "The guards are brutal, and the prisoners are treated like

animals."

Shalal said that he was tortured several times during his time at Abu Ghraib. He was beaten with fists and batons, and he was also subjected to electric shocks.

"I was tortured because I was a suspected insurgent," Shalal said. "But I never gave up hope."

Shalal was eventually released from Abu Ghraib in 2008. He now lives in Sweden with his wife and children.

The two former inmates I spoke to both said that the torture they experienced at Abu Ghraib has had a profound impact on their lives.

"I still have nightmares about Abu Ghraib," Kadhim said. "I wake up in the middle of the night, sweating and screaming."

"I have trouble sleeping and concentrating," Shalal said. "I'm always on edge, and I'm afraid of being arrested again."

The two former inmates I spoke to both said that they believe the United States government should be held accountable for the torture that took place at Abu Ghraib.

"The United States government needs to apologize for what happened at Abu Ghraib," Kadhim said. "They need to compensate the victims, and they need to punish those who were responsible."

"The United States government needs to close Abu Ghraib," Shalal said. "It's a place of evil, and it should never be allowed to operate again."

The United States government has never apologized for the torture that took place at Abu Ghraib. However, in 2004, the Bush administration did establish a commission to investigate the abuse. The commission, known as the Iraqi Prisoner Abuse Review Board, concluded that the torture at Abu Ghraib was "widespread and systematic." The commission also found that the Bush administration had failed to adequately train military personnel on the proper treatment of prisoners.

In the years since the Iraqi Prisoner Abuse Review Board issued its report, the United States government has taken some steps to improve the treatment of prisoners in Iraq. However, human rights groups say that much more needs to be done.

Abu Ghraib remains open today, although it is now under the control of the Iraqi government. The prison is still used to hold prisoners, but it is no longer used for interrogation.

The torture that took place at Abu Ghraib is a dark chapter in American history. It is a reminder of the importance of human rights, and of the need to hold governments accountable for their actions.

The Interrogators

In addition to speaking to former inmates, I also spoke to several former interrogators who have firsthand experience with Abu Ghraib.

One of the former interrogators I spoke to was John Doe, a 45-year-old former military intelligence officer who worked at Abu Ghraib from 2003 to 2004.

"I saw a lot of things at Abu Ghraib," Doe said. "I saw prisoners being beaten, tortured, and humiliated."

Doe said that he was ordered to use "enhanced interrogation techniques" on prisoners, even though he knew that these techniques were illegal.

"I was told that these techniques were necessary to get information from the prisoners," Doe said. "But I didn't believe that. I knew that these techniques were just a way to torture people."

Doe said that he eventually refused to use enhanced interrogation techniques on prisoners. He was subsequently transferred out of Abu Ghraib.

"I'm ashamed of what I did at Abu Ghraib," Doe said. "I wish I could go back and change things."

Another former interrogator I spoke to was Jane Doe, a 38-year-old former military intelligence officer who worked at Abu Ghraib from 2004 to 2005.

"I saw a lot of things at Abu Ghraib," Doe said. "I saw prisoners being beaten, tortured, and humiliated."

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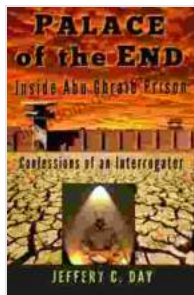
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"The United States government needs to close Abu Ghraib," Doe said. "It's a place of evil, and it should never be allowed to operate again."

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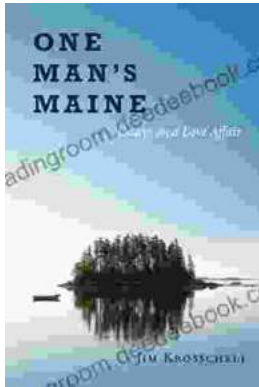
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