

Captured by the camera's eye: Guantanamo and the shifting frame of the Global War on Terror

Article (Published Version)

Van Veeren, Elspeth (2011) Captured by the camera's eye: Guantanamo and the shifting frame of the Global War on Terror. *Review of International Studies*, 37 (4). pp. 1721-1749. ISSN 0260-2105

This version is available from Sussex Research Online: <http://sro.sussex.ac.uk/42400/>

This document is made available in accordance with publisher policies and may differ from the published version or from the version of record. If you wish to cite this item you are advised to consult the publisher's version. Please see the URL above for details on accessing the published version.

Copyright and reuse:

Sussex Research Online is a digital repository of the research output of the University.

Copyright and all moral rights to the version of the paper presented here belong to the individual author(s) and/or other copyright owners. To the extent reasonable and practicable, the material made available in SRO has been checked for eligibility before being made available.

Copies of full text items generally can be reproduced, displayed or performed and given to third parties in any format or medium for personal research or study, educational, or not-for-profit purposes without prior permission or charge, provided that the authors, title and full bibliographic details are credited, a hyperlink and/or URL is given for the original metadata page and the content is not changed in any way.

Review of International Studies

<http://journals.cambridge.org/RIS>

Additional services for *Review of International Studies*:

Email alerts: [Click here](#)

Subscriptions: [Click here](#)

Commercial reprints: [Click here](#)

Terms of use : [Click here](#)



Captured by the camera's eye: Guantánamo and the shifting frame of the Global War on Terror

ELSPETH VAN VEEREN

Review of International Studies / Volume 37 / Issue 04 / October 2011, pp 1721 - 1749

DOI: 10.1017/S0260210510001208, Published online: 29 November 2010

Link to this article: http://journals.cambridge.org/abstract_S0260210510001208

How to cite this article:

ELSPETH VAN VEEREN (2011). Captured by the camera's eye: Guantánamo and the shifting frame of the Global War on Terror. *Review of International Studies*, 37, pp 1721-1749
doi:10.1017/S0260210510001208

Request Permissions : [Click here](#)

Captured by the camera's eye: Guantánamo and the shifting frame of the Global War on Terror

ELSPETH VAN VEEREN*

Abstract. In January 2002, images of the detention of prisoners held at US Naval Station Guantánamo Bay as part of the Global War on Terrorism were released by the US Department of Defense, a public relations move that Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld later referred to as 'probably unfortunate'. These images, widely reproduced in the media, quickly came to symbolise the facility and the practices at work there. Nine years on, the images of orange-clad 'detainees' – the 'orange series' – remain a powerful symbol of US military practices and play a significant role in the resistance to the site. However, as the site has evolved, so too has its visual representation. Official images of these new facilities not only document this evolution but work to constitute, through a careful (re)framing (literal and figurative), a new (re)presentation of the site, and therefore the identities of those involved. The new series of images not only (re)inscribes the identities of detainees as dangerous but, more importantly, work to constitute the US State as humane and modern. These images are part of a broader effort by the US administration to resituate its image, and remind us, as IR scholars, to look at the diverse set of practices (beyond simply spoken language) to understand the complexity of international politics.

Elspeth Van Veeren is a Doctoral Candidate in the Department of Politics at the University of Bristol. The central focus of her work is the production of meaning in world politics through an exploration of the material and visual practices at Joint Task Force Guantánamo. Her work also extends to ethnographic studies of UK police and emergency planning procedures, as well as to the interconnections between culture and politics. The latter is explored most recently in an article in *New Political Science* on inter-textuality and counter-terrorism in the Global War on Terrorism.

Take away from a painting all representation, all signification, any theme and any text-as-meaning, removing from it also all the material (canvas, paint) which according to Kant cannot be beautiful for itself, efface any design oriented by a determinable end, subtract the wall-background, its social, historical, economic, political supports, etc.; what is left? The frame [. . .]

Jacques Derrida (1991).¹

* For helpful comments on versions of this article, I would like to thank Terrell Carver, Jutta Weldes, Christina Rowley, Ana Jordan and Elisa Wynn-Hughes, as well as the two reviewers.

¹ Jacques Derrida, *The Truth in Painting*, trans. Geoff Bennington and Ian McLeod (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1991), p. 98.

Introduction

In January 2002, images of the detention of prisoners held at US Naval Station Guantánamo Bay as part of the Global War on Terrorism (GWOt) were released by the US Department of Defense, a public relations move that Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld later referred to as ‘probably unfortunate’.² These images, widely reproduced in the media, quickly came to symbolise the detention facility and the practices at work there. Nine years on, the images of orange-clad prisoners (or detainees as they are officially known) kneeling, being carried, or led, remain a powerful symbol of US detention practices, whether invoked by news media, human rights activists or producers of popular culture. Since the release of these initial photographs from Guantánamo, however, the ‘expeditionary’ detention facility has evolved into Joint Task Force-Guantánamo (JTF-GTMO), the specialised integrated facility for detention and interrogation. JTF-GTMO has spread across multiple sites and now has the capacity to hold over 2,000 detainees. Official images of these new facilities released by the Department of Defense have followed, documenting this evolution and providing one of the few access points for the public to the workings of US military detention practices.³

Responses to Guantánamo vary however. To some the sight/site represents the excesses of US power in the GWOt: popular newspapers in the US such as the *Washington Post* and *New York Times*, prominent organisations such as *The American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU)* and *Amnesty International*, as well as figures such as President Jimmy Carter and former Secretary of State Colin Powell, have all publicly condemned the facility.⁴ To others, Guantánamo symbolises retribution for the events of 11 September 2001, and the need to ‘do what it takes’ to provide security for US citizens. Opinion polls in the US reflect this split, and suggest the presence of a sustained, albeit diminishing, level of support for Guantánamo. For example:

- Immediately following the coverage and publication of the images of detainees arriving at Guantánamo in January 2002, 72 per cent of Americans supported the treatment of ‘Taliban soldiers’ there and only 4 per cent opposed it.⁵
- In July 2003, 65 per cent supported holding suspects without trial in a military prison while 28 per cent opposed it.⁶
- In 2005, despite the revelations of Abu Ghraib prisoner abuse and the Supreme Court’s rulings against the government in the *Hamdi vs. Rumsfeld*

² David Rose, *Guantánamo: America’s War on Human Rights* (London: Faber and Faber, 2004), p. 2.

³ This is not the first time that Guantánamo as a detention facility featured so prominently in the media. During the early 1990s, public attention was focused on the coverage and subsequent controversy over Camp Bulkeley, the Haitian refugee camp established in 1991–1993 to house HIV-positive refugees denied entry to the US. For a more detailed account, see Paul Farmer, *Pathologies of Power: Health, Human Rights, and the New War on the Poor* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2005).

⁴ ‘Colin Powell says Guantánamo should be closed’, *Reuters* (June 10 2007) available at: {<http://www.reuters.com/article/newsOne/idUSN1043646920070610>} accessed on 8 December 2008; Associated Press, ‘Carter urges closing of Guantanamo prison’, *The Washington Post* (8 June 2005).

⁵ ‘February 7 – Guantánamo Bay Captives’, *The Gallup Poll* (2003), p. 33.

⁶ ‘Public Support for Guantanamo Drops in US’, *Angus Reid Global Opinion Polls* (29 June 2006), available at: {<http://www.angus-reid.com/polls/view/12388>}, accessed 23 July 2009.

and *Rasul vs. Bush* cases the previous year, support ranged from 58 per cent of Americans approving of Guantánamo (compared to 36 per cent who disapproved),⁷ to seven out of ten believing that prisoners were being treated 'better than they deserve' or 'about right'.⁸

- In July 2006, the majority of Americans continued to support the government's policy of holding suspected terrorists without charge or trial by as much as 57 per cent, with 67 per cent of Americans confident that the US was protecting their rights and 51 per cent confident that Guantánamo had made the US safer from terrorism.⁹
- Finally, as recently as January 2010, an estimated 55 per cent of Americans favoured keeping the camp open, even though polling data from 2009 had suggested that the majority was finally reversing.¹⁰

In other words, despite sustained high-profile criticism, both nationally and internationally, including the continued circulation of the photographs of the original detention site, nine years on a majority of Americans continue to support the existence of JTF-Guantánamo and the efforts of US forces there as part of the GWoT. Given the content of the images released from Guantánamo, how might an interpretation or reading of these images support a policy position of maintaining the facility indefinitely, and help account for, rather than undermine, its continued existence? The answer lies in the way in which Guantánamo has been framed, not just rhetorically, but visually. The visual record of the site has been carefully managed by the US State since the release of the initial photographs and has played an important role in supporting its continued existence. In short, through controlling the domain of the representable – determining what was seen and unseen at Guantánamo – the US State helped to produce and privilege specific readings and understandings of the sight/site that were consistent with its message of Guantánamo detention practices as 'Safe, Humane, Legal, and Transparent',¹¹ which included shifting the frame in response to opposition.

Frames

To date, analyses of Guantánamo have focused on the implications for understandings of law, the debate over its 'exceptional' character, or the contest over definitions of the detainees, with the overall focus largely on examining the linguistic, or speech, practices at work.¹² Non-verbal practices, however, are also

⁷ 'Majority of Americans Oppose War with Iraq', *The Gallup Poll* (21 June 2005), p. 226.

⁸ '20%: Gitmo Prisoners Treated Unfairly', *Rasmussen Reports* (22 June 2005), available at: {<http://legacy.rasmussenreports.com/2005/Gitmo.htm>}, accessed 29 July 2009.

⁹ 'Washington Post-ABC News Poll June 22–25', *Washington Post* (2006), available at: {www.washingtonpost.com}, accessed 4 February 2008.

¹⁰ 'Most Americans Say Keep Gitmo Open', *The Gallup Poll* (11 January 2010), available at: {<http://www.cbsnews.com/blogs/2010/01/11/politics/politicalhotsheet/entry6084882.shtml>} accessed 7 February 2010; Brian Montopoli, 'Poll: Support For Closing Guantanamo Grows', *CBS News* (17 June 2009), available at: {www.cbsnews.com}, accessed 29 July 2009.

¹¹ Blair Heusdens, 'Service With a Smile: Joint Task Force Guantanamo Public Affairs' (5 October 2009), *The Wire*, available at: {<http://www.dvidshub.net>} accessed 2 November 2009.

¹² See, Claudia Aradau, 'Law Transformed: Guantánamo and the 'Other' Exception', *Third World Quarterly*, 28:3 (2007), pp. 489–501; Scott Michaelsen and Scott Cutler Shershow, 'Beyond and

an important part of the discourse surrounding Guantánamo. As Jutta Weldes suggests, discourse is not constituted through linguistic (that is, verbal) practices alone, but through non-linguistic practices as well; they ‘are mutually constitutive and jointly productive of the meanings of the social world’.¹³ Studying imagery, as non-verbal communication, and the visual articulations¹⁴ that are associated with a given discourse offers insights into the manner in which subjectivities – and realities – are constituted.¹⁵ Indeed, to ‘make sense’, security discourses must draw and rely on visual representations both implicitly and explicitly.

With regard to Guantánamo, the establishment and maintenance of the site by the Bush administration – along with its policies of indefinite detention and ‘harsh interrogation’ of individuals – has required inordinate amounts of power: from the physical occupation of 45 square miles of Cuba, through to the construction, staffing and regulation of the detention facility and the military city that surrounds it (including building the legitimacy and support this entails). All of which relies in turn on the construction of certain subject positions within the GWoT discourse. A closer examination of the imagery surrounding Guantánamo however provides a new and instructive way of understanding that construction and the extent of power involved. In short, JTF-GTMO’s continued existence is in large part due to the visual representations of Guantánamo produced and reproduced by the US State, which, in concert with verbal representations (generated during political speeches for example), created and maintained an ‘interpretative frame’ that privileged a reading of the detention sight/site as essential in the fight against terrorism and the security of the US.¹⁶

Before the Law at Guantánamo’, *Peace Review*, 16:3 (2004), pp. 293–303; Engin Isin and Kim Rygiel, ‘Abject Spaces: Frontiers, Zones, Camps’, in Elizabeth Dauphinee and Cristina Masters (eds), *The Logics of Biopower and the War on Terror: Living, Dying, Surviving* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007), pp. 181–203; Andrew W. Neal, ‘Foucault in Guantánamo: Towards an Archaeology of the Exception’, *Security Dialogue*, 37:1 (2006), pp. 31–46; Fleur Johns, ‘Guantánamo Bay and the Annihilation of the Exception’, *European Journal of International Law*, 16:4 (2005), pp. 613–35; Derek Gregory, ‘The Black Flag: Guantánamo Bay and the Space of Exception’, *Geografiska Annaler: Series B, Human Geography*, 88:4 (2006), pp. 405–27; Alison Howell, ‘Victims or Madmen? The Diagnostic Competition over “Terrorist” Detainees at Guantánamo Bay’, *International Political Sociology*, 1:1, (2007), pp. 29–47.

¹³ Jutta Weldes, *Constructing National Interests: The US and the Cuban Missile Crisis* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1999), p. 110. See also, Matt McDonald, ‘Securitization and the Construction of Security’, *European Journal of International Relations*, 14:4 (2008), pp. 563–87.

¹⁴ In using ‘articulation’ I borrow from Weldes, taking it to mean ‘a process through which meaning is produced [...] and temporarily fixed by establishing chains of connotations among different linguistic [and non-linguistic] elements’ (1999), p. 98. These linkages, or articulations, between elements are not fixed, but through repeated usage come to appear natural or common-sensical.

¹⁵ Kari Andén-Papadopoulos, ‘The Abu Ghraib torture photographs: News frames, visual culture, and the power of images’, *Journalism*, 9:5, (2008), pp. 5–30.

¹⁶ While this analysis focuses primarily on visual framing, there is a rich and growing body of literature across politics, policy analysis, political sociology, psychology and linguistics called ‘frame analysis’ that looks at the importance of verbal (and occasionally material) frames for shaping the ways in which individuals make sense of the world. See, Robert D. Benford and David A. Snow, ‘Frame processes and social movements: An overview and assessment’, *Annual Review of Sociology*, 26 (2000), pp. 611–39; Martin Rein and Donald A. Schon, ‘Reframing policy discourse’, in Frank Fischer and John Forester (eds), *The argumentative turn in policy analysis and planning* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1993), pp. 145–66; Martin Rein and Donald A. Schon, ‘Frame-critical policy analysis and frame-reflective policy practice’, *Knowledge and Policy*, 9 (1996), pp. 85–104; Rodger A. Payne, ‘Persuasion, frames and norm construction’, *European Journal of International Relations*, 7:1 (2001), pp. 37–61; Dvora Yanow and Peregrine Schwartz-Shea (eds), *Interpretation and method: Empirical research methods and the interpretive turn* (Armonk, NY: M E Sharpe, 2006).

The creation of this interpretive frame is therefore part of the performative power of the state: the power 'to orchestrate and ratify what will be called reality or, more philosophically, the reach and extent of the ontological field'.¹⁷ As Judith Butler argues, through the control of the representations of war, in this case the GWOt, a state establishes frames for viewing and therefore for understanding war. In other words, a state succeeds in generating support by controlling what can be seen and what cannot, formulating and renewing a political background of understanding and legitimacy 'through the frame':

In this sense, the frame takes part in the active interpretation of the war compelled by the state; it is not just a visual image awaiting an interpretation, it is itself interpreting actively, even forcibly.¹⁸

What is in the frame generated by the state becomes the representation of the war and therefore its visual record. In controlling the frame, these images therefore become 'not things we think about, but things we think with'¹⁹ and think through. When it comes to photographs, the specific settings, access, rules or expectations regarding photography, many of which in this case were established by the US military and administration, determine the frame. Any photographer who accepts these restrictions is operating within the established frame, 'is embedded in the frame itself'.²⁰ This may be especially true in the case of Guantánamo where the only point of access for the public to detention practices is through the sanctioned images of the facilities at Guantánamo.

Furthermore, while the very definition of what is included in the frame is important, it cannot be determined without understanding or recognising that which is left out.²¹ Through the process of framing, an active force of delineating the boundaries between what is included and what is not is at work: 'we cannot understand this field of representability simply by examining its explicit contents, since it is constituted fundamentally by what is cast out and maintained outside the frame within which representations appear'.²² As Butler explains, an image that is admissible 'into the domain of representability' also 'signifies the delimiting function of the frame even as, or precisely because, it does not represent it'.²³ Applying this to the process of identity construction, as David Campbell does, the identity of the 'us' cannot be completed without the constitution of a dangerous 'them' outside.²⁴ Taking this one step further, it is the boundary itself that becomes

¹⁷ Judith Butler, 'Torture and the Ethics of Photography', *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space*, 25:6 (2007), p. 952; Judith Butler, *Frames of War: When is Life Grievable?* (London: Verso, 2009).

¹⁸ *Ibid.*

¹⁹ John Gillis, in Barbie Zelizer (ed.), *Remembering to Forget: Holocaust Memory through the Camera's Eye* (Chicago: University of Chicago press), p. 3.

²⁰ Butler, 'Torture and the Ethics of Photography', p. 952.

²¹ For a discussion of the control over what is seen and unseen with regards to the imagery of the torture at Abu Ghraib prison, see Butler, 'Torture and the Ethics of Photography'; Butler, *Frames of War*, as well as Alex Danchev, 'Bad apples, dead souls', *International Affairs*, 84:6, (2008), pp. 1271–80; Alex Danchev, *On Art and War and Terror* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2009), as well as the film *Standard Operating Procedure* (Errol Morris, 2008). Though, in contrast to the images of Guantanamo, the imagery of Abu Ghraib was not officially sanctioned or produced by the US State for public circulation.

²² Butler, 'Torture and the Ethics of Photography', p. 953.

²³ *Ibid.*

²⁴ David Campbell, *Writing Security: US Foreign Policy and the Politics of Identity*, 2nd Rev edition (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1998).

important, the delineation between the inside and the outside. This is especially important as the boundary itself is mutable and a site of contention. Determining the boundary of the frame is an act of power as much as is defining the articulations and the contents of the frame, and therefore the effort to fix the boundary is ‘a nonfigurative operation of power that works to delimit the domain of representability itself’, and must also be examined.²⁵

Returning to the framing of Guantánamo, control over the representation of Guantánamo is thus enacted through what is seen in the images, through what is not seen, and through the establishment and movement of this boundary itself. In other words, the practices captured and consequently framed by the camera’s eye are articulations that work within the wider GWoT discourse to constitute identities, and indeed realities, for ‘terrorists’ and the guards who watch and control them ‘inside’, as well as for the US ‘outside’. The boundary used to delineate this framing, however, is not fixed, as is demonstrated by the US (re)framing of Guantánamo representations over the years.

In order to explore these images and this (re)framing for an insight into the creation of the visual record, the corresponding constitution of these subject positions and the consequent representation of captured terrorists ‘outside the wire’, I begin first with an exploration of the images themselves, focusing specifically on the control over their production and initial circulation by the US State, moving to their (re)production, (re)interpretation and (re)articulation – specifically by those whom I categorise as part of the Guantánamo resistance movement – and finally to the shifting of the frame itself by the US military and administration in response to this resistance. The content of these images, as well as their context(s), are interesting for a number of reasons, beginning with the fact that these images have been made public at all.

Producing visual frames

From the Crimean War onwards, cameras have been used to document war, the photographs produced increasing in verisimilitude with time and technology.²⁶ The style and format of these representations of war, however, generate an aesthetics that depends significantly on whether it is ‘our’ war or ‘theirs’. When it comes to looking at wars involving American forces, the imagery of war is dominated by representations of the ‘front-line’, although on closer examination this is most often limited to ‘a catalogue of armaments’, images of ‘our troops’ preparing, and of ‘our leaders’; rarely does combat or the cost of combat appear.²⁷ The GWoT does not escape or change this pattern, but amplifies it. Embedded journalists, military photographers and soldiers engaging in ‘military tourism’²⁸ are a constant, seemingly unlimited source of these images, distributed through traditional press and a

²⁵ Butler, ‘Torture and the Ethics of Photography’, p. 953.

²⁶ Susan Sontag, *Regarding the Pain of Others*, new edition (London: Penguin Books Ltd, 2003), p. 34.

²⁷ Michael Griffin, ‘Picturing America’s “War on Terrorism” in Afghanistan and Iraq: Photographic motifs as news frames’, *Journalism*, 5:4 (2004), pp. 381–402.

²⁸ Debbie Lisle, ‘Militourism: Visualizing Soldiers on Holiday’, presentation given at Manchester, University of Manchester (29 October 2008).

growing number of soldiers' own web postings ('milblogs').²⁹ Yet these new, and in some ways more varied, sources of images continue to (re)produce traditional representations.³⁰ This narrow definition of war photography means that other representations of war are often left out – whether it is the images of war dead, of damage caused, or images of the detention of 'our' prisoners.³¹ So much effort is invested in constituting a reality of 'our' wars as 'the good wars' that any representations of what 'we' do that do not fit within this construction, of actions or decisions that are morally suspect and inhumane (that is, torture), is problematic. As Griffin demonstrates, of the thousands of images surveyed, less than 1 per cent of the images used to represent the GWOt and the Iraq War included 'others', and no images of detention were included.³² So, whether justified by military necessity, national security, or as complying with the Geneva Conventions (to which I will return shortly), images of detention are not part of the traditional visible representations of war – with the interesting exception of Guantánamo.³³

Moreover, in contrast to other detention facilities in the GWOt such as Camp Bucca in Iraq or Bagram in Afghanistan, Guantánamo maintains a relatively closed visitation programme – families are not permitted to visit under any circumstances, while journalists, International Committee of the Red Cross aid workers and lawyers must go through an elaborate and lengthy application and screening process.³⁴ Visitors (if granted access) are provided a military escort and are subject to a series of regulations regarding their movements, including strict rules limiting photography inside the facility. Since late 2002, following the introduction of new regulations regarding photography, any photographs that are taken of detainees must be out of focus, from behind a detainee or cropped to remove the detainee's face in order to respect 'the spirit of the Geneva Conventions'.³⁵ Furthermore, access for visitors, whether from the press or government, may also consist solely of a pre-programmed guided tour of the

²⁹ Liam Kennedy, 'Soldier Photography: Visualising the War in Iraq', *Review of International Studies*, 35:4, pp. 817–33; Hugh Hewitt, 'Rise of the Milblogs', *The Weekly Standard* (1 April 2004), available at: {<http://www.weeklystandard.com/Content/Public/Articles/000/000/003/840fvqmo.asp>} accessed 17 July 2009).

³⁰ Griffin, 'Photographic motifs', p. 397.

³¹ As suggested by Butler, we are not often permitted to see the dead – whether civilians or American soldiers – as this may affect our sensitivities and as in the case of the GWOt this may be considered anti-American and unpatriotic. Butler, 'Torture and the Ethics of Photography', p. 951.

³² Griffin, 'Photographic motifs'.

³³ This is, however, not the first time that images of the detention of prisoners by Americans have been captured on film. Publicising a particular framing of the internment of Japanese-Americans during World War II was part of official government policy, while the capture and treatment of Viet Cong in Vietnam was documented and became part of the anti-war campaign. James Guimond, *American Photography and the American Dream*, (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1991), p. 139; Linda Gordon and Gary Y. Okihiro (eds), *Impounded: Dorothea Lange and the Censored Images of Japanese American Internment*, (New York: W. W. Norton, 2006).

³⁴ Military officials permit families to visit Camp Bucca and Abu Ghraib by appointment, providing access to a specialised visitor centre, while at Bagram a video-linkup between detainees and family is available. For a lawyer's perspective on accessing the site see, H. Candace Gorman, 'My Experiences Representing a Guantánamo Detainee', *Litigation*, 35:3 (2009), pp. 1–7 and Clive Stafford Smith, *Bad Men: Guantánamo Bay and The Secret Prisons* (London: Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 2007).

³⁵ Carol Rosenberg, 'Photo Reverberates 6 Years Later', *Miami Herald* (11 January 2008); JTF Guantánamo Public Affairs, *JTF-GTMO Media Ground Rules and Media Policy Agree to Abide*, Guantánamo Bay NAS, Cuba (October 2007), p. 4; JTF Guantánamo, *Camp Delta Standard Operating Procedures*, Guantánamo Bay NAS, Cuba (1 March 2004), p. 272.

facilities, with stops at the chaplaincy, the hospital, the now disused Camp X-Ray site ('to see the weeds growing') or a 'tour cell' (a demonstration cell used exclusively for visits).³⁶ Finally, when leaving the naval station, visitors and personnel alike are again subject to search in order ostensibly to prevent the loss or theft of confidential material, which includes preventing the release of images on cameras or laptops that have not been cleared.³⁷ Through these escorted visits, what visitors are permitted to see, photograph and (re)produce for 'outside' representation while on site and 'inside the wire' is strictly controlled.

Despite the fact that strict controls over the facilities exist, images of Guantánamo are nonetheless readily available and widely circulated. In sharp contrast, no other site (with the exception of Abu Ghraib) has received the extent of media or photographic coverage that Guantánamo has.³⁸ Nine years since the start of the GWoT and almost eight years since the start of the Iraq war, very few images are available of military detention facilities other than Guantánamo.³⁹ Camp Bucca and Camp Nama in Iraq, the Naval Consolidated Brig in South Carolina, and the internment facilities in Diego Garcia, all used to hold prisoners in the GWoT, remain invisible.⁴⁰ In contrast, despite the challenge of taking pictures in Guantánamo, there are thousands of photos of Guantánamo from inside the wire, many of which since 2007 have been made available on the JTF-Guantánamo website, and make up part of the 'virtual tour' of the facilities.⁴¹

In fact, the most recognisable of all the images of Guantánamo – the images of kneeling detainees taken on 11 January 2002, the first day of Camp X-Ray – were produced not by a journalist, but by the only photographer permitted to access the site in those early days, naval photographer Petty Officer Shane McCoy. 'McCoy was assigned to Combat Camera, an elite unit that took secret pictures not for the public but the Pentagon brass.'⁴² On the authorisation of the Pentagon, as confirmed by Assistant Secretary of Defense for Public Affairs (January 2001 to June 2003), Victoria 'Torie' Clarke, and therefore in contrast to the more traditional military policy of not permitting photographs of detention, McCoy was told to 'Take pictures. Choose some. Write captions. Send them to Washington.'⁴³ Shortly after, and again with the approval of the Pentagon, they appeared on CNN with the aim of making them widely visible.⁴⁴

³⁶ Journalist David Rose described his experience of these guided tours as Potemkin-like (*America's War on Human Rights*, p. 55); Rosenberg, 'Photo Reverberates'; James Yee, and Aimee Molloy, *For God and Country: Faith and Patriotism Under Fire* (New York: Public Affairs, 2005).

³⁷ Rosenberg, 'Photo Reverberates'.

³⁸ Admittedly, this could also be accounted for by a lack of journalist or public interest in the detention sites 'over there' as much as the level of control over the production of images. Nevertheless, the US administration is not actively promoting these sites to the same degree, and has not established the same high-profile military commission system for the other detention facilities.

³⁹ To date, for example, I have been able to locate only a select few images of the Bagram Theatre Internment Facility.

⁴⁰ This is not to mention the secret detention facilities allegedly operated by US personnel around the world.

⁴¹ JTF Guantanamo Public Affairs, *Joint Task Force Guantánamo Virtual Visit* (2008), available at: {www.jtfgtmo.southcom.mil/vvintro.html}, accessed 23 May 2008). With the exception, of Guantánamo Camp 7 ('the Platinum Camp').

⁴² Rosenberg, 'Photo Reverberates'.

⁴³ *Ibid.*

⁴⁴ Ari Fleischer, 'Press Briefing by Ari Fleischer', Office of the Press Secretary, The White House, (18 January 2002).

Therefore, with the exception of a few images that have been successfully smuggled out, the images that have made it 'outside the wire' have been approved for public release by US officials.⁴⁵ This includes tourist snaps like those found in personal memoirs or the more ubiquitous official military-approved photographs found on the JTF-Guantánamo website or sold by Getty Images.⁴⁶ The result is that, as Butler describes, every photograph that is produced according to these regulations contributes to building an interpretation, to building a frame that helps to generate meaning for the site. So aside from providing insights into the practices at work in the enactment of military detention policies, these images have come to represent Guantánamo, to frame it, to delineate the inside from the outside, and consequently, to help constitute a terrorist as well as a US State identity for those watching from 'outside the wire'. It is through this control of production of photographs that the US administration has attempted to frame an understanding of Guantánamo and by extension of the GWOt.

Seeing inside the wire: Guantánamo's first frame

The first thing to note on closer examination is that Guantánamo is most often represented not only by one or two images but by several different *series* of photographs, and that these series as a whole not only reflect the evolution of the detention facilities but (re)produce many of the key articulations in the discourse surrounding US detention practices in the GWOt. While the release and publication of the 'orange series' of photographs parallels the opening and closure of Camp X-Ray, the move to Camp Delta in April 2002 not only led to a corresponding change in photographic content but also provided an opportunity to change the visual representation – the frame – of the site, which consequently played a significant role in efforts to (re)situate Guantánamo within wider public discourse. Since April 2002, instead of the 'orange series', two new categories of images have been consistently (re)produced by the US military (through photographs produced and circulated by the military, as well as through the control of visiting photographers) to represent Guantánamo: a 'white series', and an 'empty cell series', each of which works to introduce a new kind of meaning to the representation of the site. Watching, in particular, the way in which faces and bodies appear, are marked, and disappear within these series provides an insight into the manner in which identities are constituted through the framing of Guantánamo, and specifically the process whereby detainees are dehumanised, resulting in lives that cease to be 'grievable'.⁴⁷

⁴⁵ One such illicit photograph is the now infamous image of the orange-clad detainee, hooded and shackled, being led away from the camera taken by photographer Shaun Schwarz and which for example appears in modified form as part of the promotional material for the Alex Gibney documentary *Taxi to the Dark Side* (2007). Anne Thompson, 'MPAA rejects Gibney's "Dark" ads: Org objects to hood on torture docu's poster', *Variety* (18 December 2007), available at: {<http://www.variety.com/>} accessed 20 July 2009; Scott Horton, 'Six Questions for Alex Gibney, Producer of the Oscar-Nominated "Taxi to the Dark Side"', *Harper's Magazine* (5 February 2008), available at: {<http://www.harpers.org>} accessed 20 July 2009.

⁴⁶ For use in personal memoirs see Yee & Molloy, *For God and Country*. See the public website of JTF-Guantánamo {<http://www.jftgtmo.southcom.mil/>} for examples.

⁴⁷ Butler, *Frames of War*.



Image 1. 'Detainees in orange jumpsuits sit in a holding area under the watchful eyes of Military Police at Camp X-Ray January 11, 2001 at Naval Base Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, during in-processing to the temporary detention ...' (*original caption*). (Photo by Petty Officer 1st class Shane T. McCoy/US Navy).

The orange series: a threat made visible

When the US administration announced the opening of the detention facilities at Guantánamo Bay, the accompanying images of detainees arriving at Camp X-Ray both produced and released by the Pentagon immediately captured public attention, featuring in many major news outlets. This initial series of images, now iconic, continues to circulate widely, often as the accompanying images for a press report, whether in the US, the UK or elsewhere, despite the years since the closure of the Camp X-Ray site.⁴⁸ It is this series of images that I refer to as the 'orange series', a series broadly characterised by an outdoor and arid setting in which orange-clad figures, shackled, and in some cases blindfolded, kneel, are carried, are led and watched by figures dressed in green military fatigues, and in which the camera's eye is often mediated by chain-linked and barbed-wire fences.⁴⁹

Despite the reaction of some viewers who read these images as a failure of policy in the GWoT (reaction in the UK press, for example, included *The Mirror's* publication of the kneeling figures on its front page with the heading 'Stop This

⁴⁸ By iconic, I mean photographs that are widely recognisable, reproduced in a number of ways and settings, and therefore 'acquire their own histories of appropriation and commentary'. Robert Hariman and John Louis Lucaites, *No Caption Needed: Iconic Photographs, Public Culture, and Liberal Democracy* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2007), p. 1.

⁴⁹ It is important at this stage to consider the ethics of reproducing these images. As Elizabeth Dauphinee argues, 'The "ethical" use of imagery of torture and other atrocities is always in a state of tension; the bodies in the photographs are still exposed to the gaze in ways that render them abject, nameless and humiliated – even when our goal in the use of that imagery is to oppose their condition.' I have chosen to include the images (and the accompanying original captions), despite the violence that this potentially reproduces, as on any level engaging in an analysis of the images requires a degree of reproduction, whether it is a description and discussion of the images or the images themselves. I feel that in reproducing them and engaging with them as a point of a more informed critique is preferable to not engaging with them directly. It also offers you the opportunity to look, and not just see, with me for your own reading. Elizabeth Dauphinee, 'The Politics of the Body in Pain', *Security Dialogue*, 38:2 (2007), pp. 139–55.

Brutality In Our Name, Mr. Blair'),⁵⁰ the orange series of images also produced the opposite effect, working with the official discourse as evidence to support the existence of terrorists and the role the US has to play in bringing them to justice. This supportive reading may have been the product of several key articulations of elements in the images contributing to a resultant (re)constitution of subjectivities for both detainees and the US. This includes those practices captured by the camera's eye of marking the bodies in the images and situating them through their relative positions and surroundings, beginning with the practices of limiting different types of seeing at Guantánamo.

To start with, within the orange series of images the faces of the detainees are always hidden from view: blacked-out goggles, surgical masks, caps, and averted gazes are alternative ways in which detainees were prevented from seeing, whether their surroundings, the guards, or each other.⁵¹ As justification, this practice of covering their eyes (as well as their ears and hands) was attributed on the one hand to the dangerous nature of the individuals being transported, as General Richard Myers, then chairman of the Joint Chief of Staff explained: 'These are people that would gnaw through hydraulic lines in the back of a C-17 to bring it down [. . .] So these are very, very dangerous people, and that's how they're being treated.'⁵² According to Rumsfeld, detainees are 'extremely dangerous people. One has bitten a guard and at least one other has threatened to kill Americans. These people are committed terrorists [. . .] We are keeping them off the streets, the airlines, and out of nuclear power plants. It seems a reasonable thing to do.'⁵³ Their ability to see (and hear) was articulated as dangerous, and covering their faces as shown in the images was for security: first, the security of the US personnel restraining them, but ultimately also 'our' security. In other words, the suggestion is that it is the nature of the detainees dictated these practices and not the US military.

On the other hand, the use of goggles and surgical masks – along with the practice of capturing detainees with the camera from the side or behind only – was explained as a way in which the US was complying with accepted international standards and treating detainees 'humanely'. Detainees were 'treated humanely today and will be in the future' explained Rumsfeld.⁵⁴ These practices not only limited detainees from seeing, and therefore from resisting their capture, but

⁵⁰ 'Brutality In Our Name, Mr. Blair', *The Mirror* (Editorial), (21 January 2002), p. 8.

⁵¹ The absence of hooding in this frame is important. Hooding does not appear in the images of Guantánamo though it does in the images of the transport to Guantánamo, capture in Afghanistan and in Iraq, as well as in many protests against and popular cultural representations of the GWOt. This practice has increased dramatically in the GWOt and is hugely controversial. CNN, 'Shackled Detainees Arrive In Guantánamo', *CNN.com* (11 January 2002), available at: {www.archives.cnn.com}, accessed 24 February 2008.

⁵² As we have since learned, these practices were in part derived from the training delivered to US service personnel during Survival, Evade, Resist and Escape (S. E. R. E.) training in preparation for their possible capture and detention by opposition forces who would not abide by the Geneva Conventions. In other words, this practice of limiting sight therefore owes as much to the US military's own fears over the likely treatment of 'us' by 'them'. Jane Mayer, 'The Black Sites: A rare look inside the C. I. A. 's secret interrogation program', *The New Yorker* (13 August 2007), available at: {http://www.newyorker.com/reporting/2007/08/13/070813fa_fact_mayer} accessed 8 December 2008; Katherine Eban, 'Rorschach and Awe', *Vanity Fair* (17 July 2007), available at: {<http://www.vanityfair.com/politics/features/2007/07/torture200707>} accessed 8 December 2008.

⁵³ Mark Dowdney, Oonagh Blackman, Gary Jones, 'War on Terror: Camp X-Ray: Shut it You Brits; Rumsfeld Blasts at MP Critics of Prison', *The Mirror* (23 January 2002), p. 10–11.

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*

also prevented the viewer from seeing *their* faces, which would be considered ‘inhumane’.⁵⁵ According to Torie Clarke, Assistant Secretary of Defense for Public Affairs, the practice of covering detainee faces ‘spares a captive humiliation’ banned by the Geneva Conventions when they are captured on camera. So publishing these images should have communicated and reassured the public that the US was ‘complying with the spirit of the Geneva Conventions’ and treating detainees ‘humanely’.⁵⁶ In short, these masking practices were also articulated as part of the US military’s approach to the humane treatment of detainees.

The interpretation and application of the Geneva Conventions with regards to photography however is based on three factors: that the images in context do not suggest prisoners are being ‘subjected to treatment that is humiliating, insulting, disrespectful, or dangerous’; that their intent is not to cause ‘insult’ or ‘humiliation’ (including potentially that which may be perceived as humiliation by families and communities); and that the images do not make a prisoner individually recognisable.⁵⁷ It is therefore this final point, that detainees are not individually recognisable, that forms the basis of the US administration’s continued claim to respect the ‘spirit of Geneva’ when it comes to photographic representations. By preventing viewers from seeing detainee’s faces, by *effacing* detainees and removing their individual identities, the US administration claims that they are sparing the captives a public (if not a personal) humiliation.⁵⁸

This photographic framing therefore works with efforts to ensure that detainees are not individually recognisable through the policy of not releasing the names of detainees held and the related practice of leaving detainee (and guard) names out of photo captions.⁵⁹ It took four years and a court ruling under the Freedom of

⁵⁵ This articulation of the US as humane is a recurrent theme in the discourse of the GWoT. The US mission in Afghanistan was narrativised at one point as a humanitarian mission to rescue the Afghan people, especially the Afghan ‘womenandchildren’. Richard Jackson, *Writing the War on Terrorism: Language, Politics and Counter-terrorism* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2005), p. 136.

⁵⁶ Rosenberg, ‘Photo Reverberates’.. Until 2005, the US government maintained that the detainees were not prisoners of war and therefore not subject to the protections outlined in the Geneva Conventions, though they would be treated ‘in the spirit of Geneva’. Donald Rumsfeld, ‘Defense Department Operational Update Briefing’, US Department of Defense News Transcript (4 May 2004). The US Supreme Court has since ruled in 2006 (*Hamdan vs. Rumsfeld*) that the detainees are protected under the Geneva Conventions, despite the attempt to legally constitute a category outside these regulations, citing in particular the regulations that require those captured to be protected until ‘their status has been determined by a competent tribunal’. Supreme Court of the US, *Hamdan vs. Rumsfeld, Secretary of Defense et al.*, 548 US (29 June 2006).

⁵⁷ Within the Conventions, it is the application of Articles 13 and 14 of the Third Convention for POW and the Fourth Convention for non-combatants (one of which should apply to the detainees) that is in question. Specifically, that individuals ‘must at all times be treated humanely’ including ‘protected, particularly against acts of violence or intimidation and against insults and public curiosity’ and are entitled in all circumstances ‘to respect for their persons and their honour’. The act of putting detainees, if considered entitled to protection under the Geneva Conventions, ‘in an unnecessarily degrading situation – irrespective of whether it was seen by the outside world – would in itself be a breach of the law’. Asking whether the photos are a breach of the Conventions is a separate question to asking whether they depict one. Anthony Dworkin, ‘The Geneva Conventions and Prisoners of War’, *The Crimes of War Project* (2003), available at: {www.crimesofwar.org} accessed 22 May 2008.

⁵⁸ Whereas the Abu Ghraib images or the images published of a captured Saddam Hussein post-2003 could be more clearly interpreted as a breach because in the former the treatment is almost incontestably abusive (and therefore disavowed as ‘bad apples’) and in the latter case because he is individually identifiable, the Guantánamo images are less clearly a violation of the Geneva Conventions.

⁵⁹ Stafford Smith, *Bad Men*.

Information Act for the government to release the names of the men held at Guantánamo, though to date the US military refuses to confirm the identities of the first twenty detainees 'captured' in those photographs,⁶⁰ despite public knowledge that the 'Tipton Three' (UK citizens Ruhul Ahmed, Asif Iqbal, and Shafiq Rasul) were among those who arrived in January 2002. The related practice of omitting names in captions in the orange series, replacing them with the labels 'Al-Qaeda', 'Taliban' or 'terrorist' as suggested in Department of Defense press releases, also work to de-individualise detainees (as well as to ascribe an assumed guilt). As Sontag argues, this practice of leaving names out of captions, unless it is a photo of a 'celebrity', is a complicit acceptance of the government's policy of effacement: 'to grant only the famous their names demotes the rest to representative instances of their occupations, their ethnicities, their plight'.⁶¹ This effacing of detainees in the orange series is an anonymisation of these individuals and a reduction of their identity to 'detainee' within this frame. More than that, it is an important part of a dehumanisation strategy that works to transform those detained into terrorists.

While the International Committee of the Red Cross (the 'guardians' of the Conventions) have not ruled officially that the US is incorrect with its interpretation of the orange series and *exposing* the captives to 'public curiosity', the ICRC did approach US authorities in 2002 to ask them not to use these photos as they may, despite or because of the practices taking place, be a violation of that 'spirit'.⁶² And, following the furore, the Pentagon did attempt to (re)impose a level of control over the images, pulling them from their websites, re-labelling them 'for official use only', and contacting news organisations to discourage their use in an effort to limit further distribution. The interpretation of the photos and therefore their legality thus remains ambiguous. What is suggested, however, is that the US administration attempted to use these photographs as part of its own claims to an identity as a humane agent who complies with the Geneva Conventions.

Effacing the terrorists

To continue, an important consequence of limiting 'our' view of detainee faces is not only that the detainees remain de-individualised and anonymous, but that these practices also limit detainees from seeing the camera, and from turning their eyes and therefore their gaze back at the viewer, eliminating the potential to return our gaze, again working to dehumanise. In the history of photography (and in art more broadly), the gaze of the subject is an important clue to the relations between subjects and between the subject and the viewer: it is suggested that the connection, or encounter, between the viewer and the subject is at its most powerful when the

⁶⁰ Rosenberg, 'Photo Reverberates'; Matt Davis, 'US lifts Guantánamo veil of secrecy', *BBC News Online* (4 March 2006), available at: {<http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/americas/4773050.stm>}, 8 December 2008.

⁶¹ Sontag, *Regarding the Pain of Others*, p. 70.

⁶² 'PoW footage 'breaks convention'', *BBC News Online* (24 March 2003), available at: {http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/middle_east/2881187.stm}, accessed 25 February 2008.



Image 2. 'US Army Military Police escort a detainee to his cell January 11, 2001 in Camp X-Ray at Naval Base Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, during in-processing to the temporary detention ...' (*original caption*). (Photo by Petty Officer 1st class Shane T. McCoy/US Navy).

gaze is returned.⁶³ Certain war or atrocity pictures capitalise on this gaze, deliberately 'facing' the subject so that the viewer feels more intimately connected in some way to the image. The subjects of Don McCullin's work, whether refugees fleeing the conflict in Biafra or Vietnam war soldiers, deliberately stare at the camera with their 'thousand yard stare' almost calling us to action.⁶⁴ The detainees in the orange series do not. They do not or cannot look and see the camera and consequently their ability to communicate with the viewer is limited. The potential for a connection that might be brought about between a subject and a viewer who are able to gaze at one another is absent from these images, as is a sense of detainee empowerment. When the detainees gaze is averted, when they become faceless, a disempowerment, even a humiliation or loss of dignity, is suggested as they are subject to a gaze that cannot be returned.

Furthermore, watching the guards and their gazes within the frame provides the viewer with another point from which to derive meaning from these images.⁶⁵ 'Torment, a canonical subject in art', as Sontag explains, 'is often represented in paintings as a spectacle, something being watched (or ignored) by other people.'⁶⁶ The guards in these photos, whose faces are clearly visible – imagine for a moment

⁶³ James Monaco, *How to Read a Film: The World of Movies, Media and Multimedia: Language, History, Theory*, 3rd edition (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000); Hariman and Lucaites, *No Caption Needed*, p. 142.

⁶⁴ Alex Danchev, 'Review: War Stories', *The Journal of Military History*, 69:1 (2005), pp. 211–15.

⁶⁵ The terms 'guards' is used broadly here to include all US military staff working at JTF-Guantánamo despite the varied roles they undertake (perimeter security, interrogator, linguist, psychologist, medic, chaplain etc.). While the differences between these types of guards are very important, they must be addressed in a separate article.

⁶⁶ Sontag, 2003, p. 38.

a set of images where *their* faces were covered by hoods or masks – direct their gaze either at the detainees (and therefore also position the direction of the viewer's gaze) or look elsewhere in the frame.⁶⁷ When their gaze is directed downward and fixed on the detainees, with the detainees gaze averted, their relative power and authority is communicated. However, as the guards never stare back at the camera – imagine again if they did as occurs in the Abu Ghraib images – or their attention is drawn elsewhere, it is also clear that the situation is under their control. When their gaze is drawn away from the detainees and the action of the frame '(t)he implication is: no, [what is occurring] cannot be stopped.'⁶⁸

Therefore, the framing that occurs within the orange series includes a systematic visual and literal (supported by the rhetorical) effacing of the detainees. In suggesting a compliance with the 'spirit' of the Geneva Conventions by effacing the detainees, hiding their faces and therefore their individuality, the US authorities paradoxically also encourage the reading of detainees as faceless and non-human, as an Other, making it easier to represent their identity as solely detainee and therefore terrorist and non-grievable, and consequently contributing to a discourse that justifies 'harsh interrogation' practices. In short, the practices which prevent 'them' from seeing 'us', and consequently prevent 'us' from seeing their faces also act to limit the possibility of an empathetic encounter with the detainee, as well as the possibility for viewing detainees as equal and therefore entitled to the same protections and rights as the citizen.⁶⁹ This effacing and dehumanisation through the control of the visual record is an important practice in the constitution of subjectivities, one that also works, however, with the practices surrounding the marking of detainee bodies.

Orange suits: marking terrorist bodies

While following the faces of detainees and guards is important, the practice of marking bodies is also a means of constituting subject positions, and therefore is part of the framing of Guantánamo. Within the orange series, detainee bodies are identified as a focus of our gaze and a point where meaning can be read by viewers/spectators by the practices that dress their bodies. The suits, along with the shackles and wires that restrain them, act as visual reference points for deriving meaning from these images. In other words, the control of the visual record also involves the mobilisation of objects in its construction of reality.

Firstly, using the uniforms borrowed from the American prison system, detainees were marked as different both from the guards that surrounded them (and from viewers). The orange jumpsuit or boiler-suit as a uniform has a well-established visual history within the US of association with prisoners, the US

⁶⁷ The fact that the faces of the guards are not hidden is interesting given the secrecy that in some cases seems to surround Guantánamo. Their names, but not their faces, are hidden from us, the viewer, as well as from the detainees. Moazzam Begg and Victoria Brittain. *Enemy Combatant: The Terrifying True Story of a Briton in Guantánamo* (London: The Free Press, 2007); Stafford Smith, *Bad Men*.

⁶⁸ Sontag, *Regarding the Pain of Others*, p. 38.

⁶⁹ Hariman and Lucaites, *No Caption Needed*, p. 142; Sontag, *Regarding the Pain of Others*.

justice system, and the guilt of those who wear them.⁷⁰ It is for that very reason that under US law individuals being held in custody but appearing ‘publicly’ in court to be tried have the right to apply to wear ‘civilian’ clothes and appear without shackles, as the trace of this practice may prejudice a jury or the public.⁷¹ Combined with the shackles, and in some cases the shaved head, surgical masks or goggles, this marking with a uniform was a practice that began a process of differentiation between identities, such that a body can be transformed into an Other that is dangerous.⁷² In other words, marking the bodies of detainees with an orange jumpsuit, and publicising that marking, facilitated a process of difference leading to Othering that is an essential component of constructing this threat of terrorism, particularly when juxtaposed against the bodies of guards in their green camouflage military uniforms and the trace of authority and legitimacy that this carries.

Secondly, detainee bodies in the orange series were marked by the guards and wires that surrounded them, forming a key component of the visual representations of Guantánamo and therefore the constitution of the subjects within it. Like the set of a play or film, part of the power of these images comes not only from the representations of the detainees, but also from the elements of the visual discourse that surrounds them, the *mis-en-scene*, which works to frame them within the shot. In the case of the orange series, this frame within a frame and marking of detainees occurs within each image as the detainees are surrounded by guards, some of whom carry or lead them, as well as by the wires and fences that define the boundary of the site.

In every frame circulated of Camp X-Ray, guards stand over detainees and surround them as they kneel or are led. The presence of guards in these images, often physically bracketing detainees, also establishes their relative identities and the power differential at work. The physical positioning of guards as they watch or lead detainees communicates their authority in the frame: their feet firmly on the ground, arms crossed or tucked into belts, or in one case casually leaning against the fence communicate to us that they are comfortable (if not at ease) and in control. By contrast, detainee bodies appear in positions that we, as the viewer, may find uncomfortable: with hunched shoulders and in a kneeling position, they appear disempowered, subjugated and subordinated relative to the standing guards. This works to situate detainees as passive and therefore emasculated within this frame, especially where it might be impossible to connect a gender to these bodies through their dress. Finally, when the hands of guards touch detainee bodies, they are always covered by surgical gloves, further marking them as unsafe. As a viewer, we therefore never see a detainee alone but always see them relative to the guards who surround him.

The second system of restraint, that acts to mark detainee bodies consists of the wires and fences that surround them within the frame, suggesting that these bodies need to be and are being restrained. This effect is particularly noticeable as images of the detainees are often mediated by the presence of the wire, adding a frame

⁷⁰ Juliet Ash, *Dress Behind Bars: Prison Clothing as Criminality*, (London: I. B. Tauris, 2010).

⁷¹ Saul M. Kassin and Lawrence S. Wrightsman, *The American Jury on Trial: Psychological Perspectives* (New York: Hemisphere, 1988), p. 102; Stafford Smith, *Bad Men*, p. 101.

⁷² William E. Connolly, *Identity/Difference: Democratic Negotiations of Political Paradox* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2002).

within the image and suggesting to the viewer the sensation of being kept in, hemmed in, even caged, a technique that is often used in photography or film.⁷³ These elements, while on the surface are part of the architecture of containment, also entail a specific visuality; fences, buildings, lighting and space are part of the material component of the discursive construction of the reality of Guantánamo.⁷⁴ They help to suggest the extent of danger posed by these bodies while at the same time communicating the efforts of the US forces to contain and pacify that threat.

Overall, although the detainees in these photographs remain anonymised, they are never unidentified. The policy of visual effacement and marking does not mean they have no identity, but a reductive identity over which they have little control is imposed on them. Whether through the practices that limit sight, or the use of uniforms or surroundings to mark their bodies, it is through the framing process of the images themselves that identities are read and therefore may be constituted, and in some cases reinforced through the use of captions that situate the orange-clad figures as 'Taliban', '*Al-Qaeda*' or detainees only.

From these images and the manner in which the elements of the visual discourse are articulated – including, importantly, the ways in which objects are part of these constructions – key messages from the orange series can be read. Most importantly, that terrorists exist and are dangerous, more dangerous than the average criminal, and that they must therefore be watched and restrained on a new scale. However dangerous they may be, terrorist bodies have nonetheless been identified, contained, even pacified. The orange series, without the captions or verbal articulations of the Bush administration, helps to produce a reality of the GWoT, which is not only about terrorist identities and threats, but also about US military power and its response to these threats.

Icon of outrage: rearticulation and resistance

Despite the short space of time (or time frame) during which the orange series was produced, and despite the fact that Guantánamo has evolved considerably from those early days, the orange series continues to 'haunt' us. The series is reproduced and circulated widely on the Internet and in the press. The power of these images, their ability to capture, communicate and reduce a complex series of meanings, has led to their status as iconic images of the GWoT. Their iconic status may in part be due to the possibility that these images can be read a number of ways; they come to represent different meanings to different people depending on a viewer's pre-existing perspective and the narrative to which they subscribe regarding the GWoT. As Susan Sontag reminds us, echoing Jacques Derrida but with specific regard to photographs, interpretation is always contested, never closed. Alter the caption and a photo may be used, reused and (re)produced with a different meaning: the well-know image 'Migrant Mother' by Dorothea Lange has come to mean the best and the worst of Depression-era US government policies but was later rearticulated to represent the horrors of the Spanish Civil War as well as the politics of the Black

⁷³ Monaco, *How to Read a Film*.

⁷⁴ See, for example, Joseph Pugliese, 'The Tutelary Architecture of Immigration Detention Prisons and the Spectacle of "Necessary Suffering"', *Architectural Theory Review*, 13:2 (2008), pp. 206–21.

Panthers; the raising of the US flag at Surabachi, an icon of American patriotism, has been (re)used in publicity for jeans and to protest for peace; and the portrait of Che Guevara which has accompanied many a revolutionary or anti-war protest has also been used to sell T-shirts.⁷⁵ Even ‘photographs of an atrocity may give rise to opposing responses’.⁷⁶ As Sontag explains, the same photograph of children killed by shelling during the Bosnian war was used by both Serbs and Croats as evidence of atrocities committed by the other side.⁷⁷

The images of Guantánamo reflect this contingency. As a result, both readings consistent with the official discourse and resistant readings are possible. The orange series has been so widely used and circulated in part because the images can be read in so many ways. Despite all the power exerted by the administration with regards to Guantánamo and the GWoT, the highly contingent nature of identities, and the contingent nature of the representations of these identities, suggest that efforts to fix detainee, as well as guard, identities through these images failed. Torie Claire perhaps should not have been as surprised as she was with the reception to the images: ‘Did I ever misread what was in those photos’, Clarke wrote. ‘The problem wasn’t that we released too much, it was that we explained too little [...] which allowed other critics to say we were forcing the detainees into poses of subjugation.’⁷⁸ Clarke underestimated or overlooked the difficulties, or impossibilities, of fixing a meaning to these images.

In particular, elements of these images can and have been successfully rearticulated within the discourse of anti-Guantánamo campaigns to transform detainee identities in the orange series from ‘terrorist’ to ‘torture victim’. This was accomplished both through the appropriation of these Department of Defense



Image 3. ‘Rally and march organized by Amnesty International and Witness Against Torture for the sixth anniversary of the first prisoners being sent to the Guantánamo Bay detention camp, Washington, DC, 11 Jan 2008.’ (*original caption*). (Photo by Keith C. Ivey).⁷⁹

⁷⁵ Vicki Goldberg, *The Power of Photography* (New York: Abbeville Press, 1991).

⁷⁶ Sontag, *Regarding the Pain of Others*, p. 11.

⁷⁷ Sontag, *Regarding the Pain of Others*, p. 9.

⁷⁸ Rosenberg, ‘Photo Reverberates’.

⁷⁹ See also, Stephen Moyes, ‘Jail Outrage: 1 Hour In Hell: US Prison Gear Test is a Nightmare’, *The Mirror* (22 January 2002), p. 10–11 for one of the first ‘performances’ of Guantánamo.

images by the resistance movement for their own campaigns, as well as the production of new images, most importantly images of protesters dressed as Guantánamo detainees ('performing' Guantánamo), which draw on the same elements in order to oppose US detention policies and practices. Whether reused or (re)produced, the orange series of Guantánamo images have contributed significantly to the contest over what Guantánamo means. While images alone cannot drive change, as argued by Berger and Perlmutter, the images of Guantánamo resulted in the constitution of a new 'icon of outrage'⁸⁰ that has been used successfully to mobilise an anti-Guantánamo campaign that, if it has not resulted in the closure of Guantánamo, has contributed significantly to its scaling back from 660 and a potential of 2,000 detainees to the 174 it holds as of October 2010 by helping to keep the issue in the public eye.⁸¹ This sustained appropriation and rearticulation of the images by protestors forced a reframing of detention practices by the US military.

Shifting the frame

After April 2002 and the move from Camp X-Ray to Camp Delta, the representation of Guantánamo changed. While the practices surrounding detention at the US facility remain similar – the short-shackling, blindfolding and the dressing in orange uniforms of new arrivals in particular⁸² – the frame shifted so that these are no longer visible. Instead, visual representations of Guantánamo are dominated by different images: the orange series has been replaced by a 'white series' and an 'empty cell' series. Whether this can be understood as a deliberate reframing or not, a shift in the frame has nevertheless occurred following the significant criticisms that were levelled at the Bush administration and the release of the initial images. Replacing the orange series, therefore, are a series of images that re-inscribe the 'humane' onto US detention practices. Once again watching the faces and bodies and how they are framed offers a point of reference for reading these images for the constitution of a new reality of detention at Guantánamo.

The white series: the new face of detention

Within the white series the blacked-out goggles are gone, as are the orange jumpsuits/boilersuits. Instead, detainees most commonly appear dressed in white or tan shirts and trousers, occasionally with a white skull-cap. Though they often remain accompanied by guards, in some images in the series detainees are seen sitting and interacting with one another or playing sports. Instead of images of detainees arriving and being 'processed' (at least 14 detainees arrived after the

⁸⁰ Dan Berger, 'Regarding the Imprisonment of Others: Prison Abuse Photographs and Social Change', *International Journal of Communication*, 1 (2007) pp. 210–37; David D. Perlmutter, *Photojournalism and Foreign Policy: Icons of Outrage in International Crises* (Westport, Conn: Praeger, 1998).

⁸¹ Pollyanna Ruiz, 'Manufacturing Dissent: Visual Metaphors and Community Narratives', in *Notions of Community*, ed. Janey Gordon (New York: Peter Lang Publishing, 2009), pp. 199–223.

⁸² Stafford Smith, *Bad Men*; Joint Task Force Guantánamo, *Camp Delta Standard Operating Procedures*, Guantánamo Bay NAS, Cuba (28 March 2003).



Image 4. 'Guards from the Navy Expeditionary Guard Battalion escort a detainee to the medical facility in Camp Four. Troopers escort detainees to the medical facility using "Gator" vehicles. Detainees are treated at a dedicated medical facility with state-of-the-art equipment and an expert medical staff of more than 100 personnel. There is a separate medical facility for mental health care.' (*original caption*). (Photo by Navy Petty Officer 2nd Class Michael Billings, 23 November 2007).

move to Camp Delta, for which there was significant press coverage, including high profile speeches by President Bush), we the viewer 'outside the wire' are presented with a different type of photograph.

First, the change of uniform reflects the introduction of a new system of categorisations or marking of detainees that occurred at JTF-Guantánamo in 2003. Though some detainees remain dressed in orange – those who are recent arrivals or are being punished and confined in the 'supermaximum prison' Camps – the bodies that are most visible appear dressed in white (or tan) and are the bodies of detainees who have the greatest degree of freedom to move around and to interact with other detainees within Camp Delta (particularly those that are classified as 'compliant' and are confined in the 'showcase' camp, Camp Four). In other words, in this new frame, which privileges representations of Guantánamo as equivalent to Camp Four, bodies are associated with and marked by a new uniform and its associated chain of signification.

Second, in some images we are permitted to see detainees 'at play', either sitting conversing with one another, eating, praying, or playing with a ball in an exercise yard. Whereas in Camp X-Ray and the orange series detainees were most often represented as severely restricted in their ability to move and passive, the white series depicts bodies being moved and moving with more freedom: when accompanied by guards detainees' feet may appear unshackled and, when on their

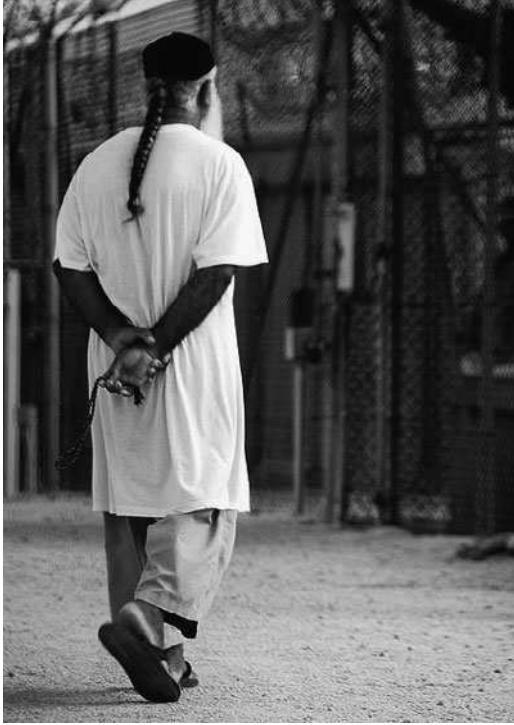


Image 5. 'A detainee in Camp Delta strolls about during recreation hours Aug. 8, 2007.' (original caption). (Photo by Navy Petty Officer 2nd Class Patrick Thompson).

own, detainees movements are seemingly uninhibited.⁸³ The wires, gates and watchtowers nevertheless remain within these frames, as the threat nevertheless remains and must be contained.

Turning from the body to the 'face' of detainees in the white series, not only have orange bodies been banished, but the faces of detainees have also been removed from this new frame. Detainees remain effaced, but the manner of this effacement has changed significantly. Masks, goggles or hunched shoulders are no longer used to hide their faces. Instead, detainees are effaced principally through the cropping of photographs and through the use of images in which they are not photographed from the front.⁸⁴ The images of Guantánamo detainees that have been released and appear in the press are those where detainees' heads have been literally cut out of the image – they have been figuratively decapitated by the frame of the photo.

⁸³ Indeed, this framing comes much closer to the representations of Japanese-Americans interned during World War II. At the time, the Roosevelt administration encouraged the publication of certain images of its internment facilities. Images from this period and place depict Japanese-American detainees at work, at school and play; without the captions or the context, these pictures could be mistaken for life for ordinary hard-working, if less prosperous, Americans. Within Guantánamo, these images of detainees 'at play' could be read as an attempt to suggest something similar – the normality of their lives in detention.

⁸⁴ Even within the military tribunal system in place, court artists are not permitted to depict detainee faces (Stafford Smith, *Bad Men*).

This framing accomplishes several things. First, it allows the US administration to continue to claim that it is acting in the spirit of the Geneva Conventions by not permitting images of individually recognisable detainees to leave Guantánamo, therefore (re)presenting their policies towards detainees as humane. The change in frame permits the US authorities to (re-)inscribe their respect for the ‘spirit of Geneva’ by limiting the possibility of individually identifying detainees. Second, this cropping, as opposed to covering up of faces, means that the possibility of a connection with a face is again reduced. Though ‘a face’ may be seen in the bodies of these men as they appear in the images (as Alex Danchev would argue interpreting Levinas),⁸⁵ the face that is not seen is left to the imagination to devise, encouraging a different relationship between the viewer and the subject. Though this effacement may be done in the name of ‘humane treatment’ and ‘in the spirit of Geneva’, it succeeds again in stripping detainees of an important part of the connection between the viewer and the subject in these images – their ability to return a gaze. Third, the remnant of the face that is occasionally left is most often the chin, which is often bearded. For American audiences, this bearded face may also help to reinforce the association between these bodies and terrorism, as the beard in American culture has historically been articulated as a symbol of wildness and barbarity, as with Cuba’s Castro or the bearded ‘TV Arab’ of Hollywood.⁸⁶ And finally, these images continue to allow the US to identify specific bodies as ‘terrorists’; to use these men as embodied signs of punishment and justice. The presence of men at the camp, like in the orange series, provides the US administration with a way of visually demonstrating the existence of terrorists, their capture and incarceration, and the US’ continued determination to bring them to justice, while (re)producing their treatment in Camp Delta as ‘humane’.

Empty cells: the humanity of clean spaces

In addition to the shift in frame through the white series, US authorities have also permitted and actively promoted the production and circulation of a second set of images, the ‘empty cell’ series. Whether visiting the sight/site in person or through the ‘virtual tour’ on the JTF website, visitors to JTF-Guantánamo are invited to view the empty cells (with or without ‘comfort items’ laid out), the empty, but sophisticated, hospital facilities, the empty exercise yards (with exercise equipment and football ready for use), the empty tribunal room, and the empty and abandoned Camp X-Ray.⁸⁷ These spaces are emptied and cleansed, even sanitised, literally and figuratively, of human presence for the visitor tours and photographs that are released, and therefore, as I argue, are part of the effort to demonstrate not only the modernity, but also the ‘humaneness’, of the facilities that the US military operates in Guantánamo.

⁸⁵ Danchev, ‘Review: War Stories’.

⁸⁶ Weldes, *Constructing National Interests*; Jack G. Shaheen. ‘Reel Bad Arab: How Hollywood Vilifies a People’, *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, 588:1 (2003), pp. 171–93.

⁸⁷ JTF Guantanamo Public Affairs, *Joint Task Force*; Stafford Smith, *Bad Men*; Yee & Molloy, *For God and Country*.



Image 6. 'Joint Task Force Guantanamo, Guantanamo Bay, Cuba (27 APR 2005) Detained enemy combatants with attorneys representing them in habeas corpus cases are brought to Camp Echo at Guantanamo Bay to meet privately with their attorneys. This is the standard living quarters inside Camp Echo.' (*original caption*). (Photo by *Photographer's Mate 1st Class Christopher Mobley, Fleet Combat Camera, Atlantic*).

First, within the empty cell series, bodies are absent from these images, even clean white-clad or guard bodies. If the images are populated by anything, it is a selection of the clothing and 'comfort items' that detainees are permitted: tan uniforms neatly folded, shoes or sandals, playing cards, chess or backgammon games, a mattress, a surgical mask to cradle a *Qur'an*, a prayer cap.⁸⁸ These items are neatly laid out, folded, clean and lined up on the bunk in the specially created 'tour cells' ready for the photographers. It is here that the orange suit reappears, though we are also shown the white uniforms of the better-behaved detainees. The orange suits have therefore not disappeared entirely from the frame of Guantánamo, but have been disassociated from bodies and displaced to the images of empty cells where their meaning changes as the suits become associated with order and cleanliness.⁸⁹ We are also invited to recognise that the US respects religion, and the value it places on well-being, and justice. This is accomplished through the promotion of images of the *Qur'an* and of other symbols associated with religion that are released, as well as through the images of the 'state of the art' facilities that the US has constructed for medical treatment of detainees and for the specially developed military tribunal process that is underway.

⁸⁸ Many of the 'comfort items' that detainees are authorised or that may be denied are not included in these photographs, such as additional toilet paper beyond 15 sheets a day, a comb in the shower, paper and pencil that must be returned at the end of each shift, a sheet, a towel, a Styrofoam cup, toothpaste or toothbrush, prayer beads, etc. For a complete list of the items see Joint Task Force Guantánamo, *Camp Delta Standard Operating Procedures*, 2003, Table 8.4.

⁸⁹ Even images of the fluorescent orange barricades located around the base were forbidden until July 2010.

The removal of the face, and even the body – which ordinarily ‘demands’ something of the viewer, particularly when turned towards us – from the images of Guantánamo, leaves the viewer with a less demanding and therefore limited connection with the individuals depicted. If there is a face in the empty cell series, it is captured through the absent-presence, to borrow from Derrida, of the detainees in the empty cells, hospital ward, exercise yard and military courtroom.⁹⁰ In viewing these images, we are invited to see how a detainee might live if they occupied that space, but we are still not invited to see them as individuals, let alone equals.

This framing of empty facilities therefore works again with the discourse articulated by US officials suggesting detainees are being held at ‘state of the art’ facilities for those assumed to be a threat, and who are treated humanely.⁹¹ Bush, Rumsfeld, Vice President Dick Cheney and Attorney General Michael Mukasey have publicly stated that the facilities and treatment are both sophisticated and humane.⁹² This discourse has carried over into the Senate, as House Armed Services Chairman Duncan Hunter (Republican of California) described Guantánamo as

a world-class detention facility where detainees representing a threat to our national security are well-fed, given access to top-notch medical facilities and provided an opportunity to obtain legal representation, which, incidentally, uniformed soldiers under the Geneva Conventions are not given.⁹³

Moreover, whereas the surgical gloves worn by guards in the orange series only hinted at the cleanliness of the US, and therefore the corresponding dirtiness of detainees, within the empty cell series the cleanliness and sanitary conditions are there for all immediately to admire as a sign of the detainees’ humane treatment. In other words, the policy of hiding bodies in the empty cell series succeeds in cleansing the representation of Guantánamo to the military and administration’s advantage. The cells and facilities cleansed of the dirty bodies of detainees works to add legitimacy to the claims that the facility is ‘state of the art’ and humane for its inmates. This tie between clean and civilised is a longstanding discursive tool used to build legitimacy for the military and works to show us the civilised nature of the US.⁹⁴

These images also work to support the administration’s position in the ‘diagnostic competition’ that is underway in the media regarding detainees’ mental

⁹⁰ Simon Norfolk’s photographic work in particular plays with the absence-presence post-war, see: {<http://www.simonnorfolk.com/>}.

⁹¹ Furthermore, to voice an opinion that these facilities are not treating detainees humanely is, however, constructed as an act that helps the terrorists by providing another way of recruiting. For a facility that has cost the US taxpayer approximately \$54 million, with an annual running cost of \$90 million to \$118 million it is important that it be considered state of the art. D. Bowker and D. Kaye, ‘Guantánamo by the Numbers’, *The New York Times* (2007), available at: {www.nytimes.com/2007/11/10/opinion/10kayeintro.html} accessed on 9 March 2008).

⁹² Rumsfeld, ‘Defense Department Operational Update Briefing’, fn. 54.

⁹³ As cited in Merle D. Kellerhals, ‘General Says Guantanamo Vital for Gathering Terror Intelligence: Detention center provides humane treatment, facilitates religious worship’, *Washington File* (29 June 2005). According to Senator Bill Frist, who similarly visited the site and was provided the tour of the facilities, ‘I left with an impression that health care there is clearly better than they received at home and as good as many people receive in the US of America.’ Bill Frist, ‘Congressional Record – Senate, Library of Congress’ (12 September 2006), available at: {<http://thomas.loc.gov/cgi-bin/query/D?r109:6:./temp/~r109QWKi3s>}, accessed 8 December 2008.

⁹⁴ See for example, the work of Aaron Belkin.



Image 7. 'The operating room at the detainee hospital at Camp Delta, Guantanamo Bay, Cuba.' 3 December 2002. (*original caption*). (Photo by Staff Sgt. Stephen Lewald, US Army).

health.⁹⁵ The administration and the human rights groups that oppose Guantánamo both engage in a pathologisation of detainees: the administration to reinforce the articulation that terrorists are madmen and human rights groups to suggest that their indefinite detention has rendered them mad. The images of clean and 'world-class' facilities, including the hospital spaces, helps to support the contention that the US is doing everything in its power to look after the well-being, including the mental health needs, of the detainees.

It is therefore no wonder that pro-Guantánamo advocates such as conservative talk show host Rush Limbaugh labelled it 'Club Gitmo', suggesting that its cleanliness and 'humane' treatment is suitable for a luxury Caribbean resort and more than what the detainees deserve: 'Your tropical retreat from the stress of jihad [. . .] Send your little jihadi to daycare in air-conditioned comfort! The food at Club G'itmo beats the taxpayer-provided lunches in the infidel's schools [. . .] Every check-in gets a brand new Koran and prayer rug.'⁹⁶

Overall, the images in the white and empty cell series continue to work to communicate the existence of terrorists, while simultaneously supporting a less contestable representation of the US, as both powerful and humane than that presented by the orange series. As the frame, and therefore what is seen, has shifted from one series to the next, the articulation of the US as humane is more easily read from the images, though the links with the administration's discourse remains

⁹⁵ Howell, 'Victims or Madmen?'

⁹⁶ The Rush Limbaugh Show (2008), available at: {http://www.rushlimbaugh.com/home/eibessential/illustrating_absurdity/clubgitmo.guest.html} accessed 30 July 2009.

the same: detainees are dangerous and a severe threat, but they remain successfully restrained and contained by the US military. If this shift is deliberate, then the frame has been moved by the Department of Defense in order to alter the visual record and (re)capture or (re)institute control over the interpretation of the images of Guantánamo and the representations of the detainees.

By carefully maintaining a practice of visually representing Guantánamo, US officials have succeeded in supporting their broader GWoT discourse visually – constituting a terrorist identity by representing, in the images released, US military practices of effacing, marking, restraining and watching ‘people that are darn dangerous’, ‘the worst of the worst’, and ‘the most dangerous, best trained vicious killers on the face of the earth’, while simultaneously constituting an American identity that does a ‘tough job’ maintaining security but is nonetheless respectful of human rights and ‘humane’.⁹⁷ As evidence of the success of this reframing, anti-Guantánamo campaigners continue to (re)produce imagery that draws uniquely on the orange series as representative of the site, suggesting that it is harder to sustain a narrative of US military violence, injustice, and even torture in a frame where the bodies or faces have been dressed differently or where the image has been scrubbed of human presence. By shifting the frame, the US administration has constituted an identity that is safe, clean and above all else humane – a framing which forms an important component in the legitimisation of the GWoT.

Outside the frame: beyond the domain of representability

Finally, what is left out of the frame entirely – and not just pushed out through the carefully reframing – is important for a consideration of the ways in which realities of Guantánamo are constructed through the management of its visual record, in particular the more controversial practices associated with detention. As human rights activists, lawyers and former detainees report, detainees were photographed or filmed as they were stripped and searched before and after boarding planes to Guantánamo, as they were ‘processed’ upon arrival, while being punished or ‘ERFed’, or while interrogated.⁹⁸ Similarly, practices such as the forced-feeding of hunger-striking detainees, and objects like the specialised chair used to restrain them, remain invisible. Moreover, in some cases areas of Guantánamo have been and remain entirely off-limits to visitors, and no visual record has been made public. Camp 7, the ‘Platinum Camp’, held the 14 or 15

⁹⁷ For an example of this discourse, see George W. Bush, ‘President Discusses Creation of Military Commissions to Try Suspected Terrorists’, Press Briefing, Washington (6 September 2006), available at: {www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2006/09/20060906-3.html} accessed 23 February 2008; Ari Fleischer, ‘Press Briefing by Ari Fleisher’, Office of the Press Secretary, The White House (18 January 2002); Donald Rumsfeld, ‘Defense Department Briefing’, *Global Security* (22 January 2002), available at: {www.globalsecurity.org/military/library/news/2002/01/mil-020122-usia01.htm} accessed 22 May 2008; Donald Rumsfeld, ‘Rumsfeld Lashes Out at Critics’, *BBC News Online* (23 January 2002), available at: {<http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/americas/1777313.stm>} accessed 23 February 2008.

⁹⁸ Begg & Brittain, *Enemy Combatant*; Shafiq Rasul, Asif Iqbal and Ruhel Ahmed. *Detention in Afghanistan and Guantánamo Bay* (4 August 2004), available at: {www.ccr-ny.org/v2/reports/docs/Gitmo-compositestatementFINAL23july04.pdf} accessed 10 May 2008). Mark Denbeaux, Joshua W. Denbeaux, R. David Gratz, Jennifer Ellick, Michael Ricciardelli, and Matthew Darby, *Captured on Tape: Interrogation and Videotaping of Detainees in Guantanamo Bay* (14 February 2008), available at: {<http://ssrn.com/abstract=1093330>} accessed 15 February 2010.

'high-value' detainees and was kept secret until officially acknowledged in December 2007.⁹⁹ These practices, objects and spaces have been acknowledged by the Pentagon or are documented in the JTF-GTMO *Standard Operating Procedures*,¹⁰⁰ yet they remain 'outside the frame', despite the possible existence of photographs and film that capture this side of detention, and the repeated attempts by campaigners and lawyers to make them public.

The focus on the images of Guantánamo that are visible also serve the purpose of detracting attention from other forms of detention occurring around the world, the international dimensions of these efforts, and the associated practices that may be occurring in a less visible way. Just as the focus on the Abu Ghraib abuse photos camouflage the institutional forces that may have led to those abuses, the focus on the practices within the images of Guantánamo occludes the overall institutional forces that are at work to 'breed and sanction such exploitation'.¹⁰¹ In other words, these reframing processes engage in a double silencing: one that hides the widespread extent of these practices, and the second that hides their systematic, institutional and hierarchically approved nature. The Bush administration repeatedly held up Guantánamo as representative of its humane and progressive approach to detention in the GWoT, providing unprecedented numbers of official photographs for release, but through the constant promotion and management of the domain of the representable of Guantánamo, the unrepresentable 'outside the wire' has remained relatively invisible.

Finally, what is missing from public media coverage, the JTF Guantánamo public website, and even from *The Wire*, the in-house staff magazine produced for JTF-Guantánamo personnel, are any images of the foreign nationals (from the Philippines or St Helena, for example) who work in the shadows of the base, cleaning the site or working in the kitchens.¹⁰² These personnel perform essential roles within the operations of the base, yet their presence is erased from the visual histories in the same way that traditional representations of security tend to ignore the 'margins, silences and bottom rungs'.¹⁰³ This omission from the frame of detention therefore ignores the interconnections of these communities to US national security and the extent of US webs of power and militarisation that are required for Guantánamo to operate. Meanwhile, the US narrative of national security continues to be represented as being performed by American military personnel alone doing their duty for the security of the US.

⁹⁹ Though two military lawyers were finally granted access under strict conditions of secrecy in 2008, Camp 7 remains off limits to journalists, is not part of the 'Gitmo tour' (virtual or 'real'), and photographs of it are not available. Carol Rosenberg, "'Platinum" captives help off limits in Gitmo camp', *Miami Herald* (2 June 2008); Carol Rosenberg, 'Lawyers inspect secret prison', *Miami Herald* (18 November 2008).

¹⁰⁰ Mark Mazzetti and Scott Shane, 'Pentagon Cites Tapes Showing Interrogations', *The New York Times* (13 March 2008), available at: {<http://www.nytimes.com/2008/03/13/washington/13intel.html?hp>} accessed 18 July 2009; JTF Guantánamo (2003), p. 4.1; JTF Guantánamo Headquarters, *Camp Delta Standard Operating Procedures*, Guantánamo Bay NAS, Cuba (1 March 2004), p. 4.1.

¹⁰¹ Timothy Kaufman-Osborn, 'Gender Trouble at Abu Ghraib?', *Politics and Gender*, 1:4 (2006), pp. 597–619.

¹⁰² Stafford Smith, *Bad Men*.

¹⁰³ Cynthia Enloe, 'Margins, Silences, and Bottom Rungs: How to Overcome the Underestimation of Power in Study of International Relations', in *The Curious Feminist* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2004), pp. 19–42.

So, rather than photographs acting as windows onto the site as part of the US authorities efforts towards transparency, and therefore constraining the types of practices that the US military is accused of engaging in there, this effort to reframe Guantánamo has had the opposite effect. Guantánamo's 'domain of representability' works to contest the anti-Guantánamo discourse that circulates and (re)present a new reality for the site, one that (re)inscribes the identities of detainees as terrorist and US as humane. As Butler suggests, admitting an image into the 'domain of representability' necessarily constitutes the domain of unrepresentability,¹⁰⁴ that which is excluded because it is not seen as representing. The state therefore also works not only to control the content of the frame, shifting it in order to manage and control what is seen in keeping with its interests, but also to determine the limits of that boundary through acts of exclusion. In framing Guantánamo through the shift from the orange series to the white and empty cell series, a corresponding move has also enabled the continued exclusion of a number of important sights/sites.

Conclusion

Much as in Victorian times, when exhibitions were arranged to demonstrate to the public the functioning of jails without permitting them access to the jails themselves, the images of Guantánamo provide the public with a window into the operations of the US military in Guantánamo. As an institution, a prison, and especially a military prison, relies on being both seen and unseen. The public is kept out of the prison (as much as inmates are kept in) but a public spectacle of the prison must occur in order for prisons to justify their existence and for publics to 'relearn the laws' through the signs that are produced from the bodies of those that are incarcerated.¹⁰⁵ With regard to Guantánamo, the images of detention allow US authorities to produce their own representations of detention; to demonstrate to their domestic audience, as well as international audiences, the effectiveness of the US military and State by proving the existence of terrorists (that they can be identified and captured), but also to constitute itself as a humane agent. These photographs are the official effort to construct, control and manage the visual record and therefore to produce the reality of Guantánamo.

Moreover, in controlling the production of images of Guantánamo, in generating a visual frame, the US military and US administration have sought to constitute and produce an embodied terrorist – an identity that is dehumanised through a strategy of effacement throughout the series of framings of Guantánamo. This dehumanisation is an essential part of the Othering process in the GWoT, and, with regards to Guantánamo, becomes particularly important as it limits the possibilities for an empathetic encounter, preventing the Other from being considered equal or 'grievable'.

However, in the process of creating representations of terrorists for publics 'outside the wire', the US government also constituted an international icon – the

¹⁰⁴ Butler, 'Torture and the Ethics of Photography'.

¹⁰⁵ Michel Foucault, *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison*, new edition (London: Penguin Books Ltd, 1991 [1977]).

orange-clad detainee. While trying to build support for their detention and interrogation policies in the name of the GWOt, they constituted an iconic body which has been, and continues to be, used as a political space for resistance. In response, the US military literally and figuratively shifted the frame, producing, circulating and promoting a new set of images, in particular removing the bodies as a strategy to reconstitute of the reality of US military detention as modern and humane. In so doing, the US state demonstrated its adaptability when confronted with an alternative reading of its actions. It recalibrated its visual framing to limit the scope for public interpretations that would go against the administration's narrative of Guantánamo and the GWOt. Significantly, these framings and reframings were accomplished not only through verbal or speech practices, but through key visual and material practices.

Given this, a reading of these images as communicating security is perhaps more understandable, offering a possible explanation for why the majority of Americans support these practices, and why, despite the Obama administration's promise to close Guantánamo, the future of the site as of late 2010 remains deeply contested. Therefore, beyond documenting the arrival of detainees at Guantánamo, these images function to help constitute a reality of detention in the GWOt. Appreciating how they generate meaning through their frame and therefore as part of the discursive practices in the GWOt is important for understanding the GWOt as a whole. These images therefore also serve as a reminder of the extent of power at work at Guantánamo, not only power exerted to restrain and interrogate the prisoners, but more importantly to create a public spectacle of these captive 'terrorists', working with other discursive practices, such as speeches, to frame the GWOt, and to limit the 'domain of representability'.

Even so, despite the attempts of the US military and Bush administration to shift and then fix the frame, this has remained impossible, due largely to the efforts of the Guantánamo resistance movements. The iconic detainee created in the orange series remains the most powerful and recognisable symbol of Guantánamo, hampering official attempts to close off other interpretations and readings as a necessary and effective part of its counter-terrorist strategy. The iconic nature of the orange series has done lasting damage to the international reputation of the US.

Asked why he thinks Guantánamo Bay, commonly dubbed Gitmo, should be closed, and the prisoners perhaps moved to US soil, Chairman of the Joint Chief of Staff, Admiral Mike Mullen said, 'More than anything else it's been the image – how Gitmo has become around the world, in terms of representing the US.'¹⁰⁶

The legacy of Guantánamo therefore relies powerfully on its visual record, including the practices of delineating what is seen and what is not. We therefore must not forget the frame and its part in helping to constitute that which is within it. Wherever the photos are reproduced, the selection of the frame for representation should be of as much interest as its contents. It should, if anything, serve to remind us to look beyond the frame to understand that which we look through.

¹⁰⁶ Robert Burns, 'Joint Chiefs Chairman: Close Gitmo', *USA Today* (13 January 2008), available at: {www.usatoday.com} 12 December 2008.