

**PEW RESEARCH CENTER'S FORUM ON RELIGION AND PUBLIC
LIFE**
Survey on People of Faith and Torture

The Pew Research Center's Forum on Religion and Public Life conducted a survey which found that a majority of Evangelicals and Catholics believe that the use of U.S. government sponsored torture against suspected terrorists to procure important information, can be justified. The survey, conducted April 14-21, 2009 had a total sample size of 742 American adults, and sought to demonstrate differences in the views of four major religious traditions: Evangelical Protestants, white non-Hispanic Catholics, mainline Protestants, and those who are unaffiliated. Participants were asked this question: do you think the use of torture against suspected terrorists in order to gain important information can often be justified, sometimes be justified, rarely be justified, or never be justified? Participants were also questioned on their frequency of religious service attendance.

The overall results reveal that 15 percent of Americans agree that torture against suspected terrorists can often be justified, while 34 percent agree that torture can sometimes be justified. Twenty two percent of those surveyed answered that torture can rarely be justified while 25 percent believe that torture can never be justified. The remaining 4 percent surveyed did not provide an opinion.

Among the 742 surveyed, 336 individuals attend religious services on a weekly basis. In this group, 16 percent claimed that torture use can often be justified, while 38 percent said that it can sometimes be justified. Nineteen percent answered that torture can rarely be justified while 25 percent claim that it can never be justified. Two percent did not provide an answer.

Among the 225 individuals that attend religious services once a month or a few times in a year, 18 percent believe that torture can often be justified, and 33 percent believe it can sometimes be justified. Twenty three percent of these individuals believe that torture can rarely be justified, and an equal amount of those surveyed say it can never be justified. Three percent did not answer.

One hundred sixty eight individuals answered that they seldom or never attend religious services. In this group, 12 percent agreed that torture can often be justified, while 30 percent answered that it can sometimes be justified. Twenty seven percent claimed that torture can rarely be justified, and 26 percent answered that it can never be justified. Five percent did not provide an answer.

White Evangelical Protestants composed the largest religious tradition in this survey. Among the 174 individuals surveyed, 18 percent answered that torture against suspected terrorists can often be justified, while 44 percent claimed that torture can sometimes be justified. In contrast, 17 percent claimed it can rarely be justified, and 16 percent answered that it can never be justified. Five percent did not answer.

Among the 122 white, non-Hispanic Catholics that were polled, 19 percent believe that torture can often be justified, and 32 percent believe it can sometimes be justified. Twenty seven

percent claim that it can rarely be justified while 20 percent believe that torture can never be justified. Two percent did not answer.

The use of torture against suspected terrorists...

