

# BUSH OKS TORTURE. MEDIA YAWNS.



So ABC News had an exclusive interview and got a pretty important scoop last night. You may have heard about it: George Bush, a man who took an oath to support and defend the Constitution, admitted (with zero shame) that he approved of the meetings at which his top advisors discussed and approved the excruciating details of torture.

And, yes, I'm aware our national security team met on this issue. And I approved.

The President just admitted that he approved torture.

And thus far at least, no one seems to give a damn. As of 9AM, the NYT published no news of Bush's admission. The WaPo placed a story on A3 (stating that they had already reported this, even though they hadn't reported **this**). ABC, the outlet that got the damn scoop, places the story fourth on its list of stories, behind Obama and Indiana and Hillary telling Bill to "butt out," with the main picture on the front page cycling through such critical stories as a dog who invited himself to his owner's funeral. Oh—and do you think maybe there's a connection between the stories of teens beating each other and the President, approving of torture?

This is an exclusive with the President who, after lying about torture for four years, just admitted that he knew and approved of the torture! And yet you place it there among the cute puppy stories?

As for the rest of the news media, thus far, crickets. Though kudos to Randy Scholfield of the Wichita Eagle who—without yet having the news that the Principals did not really insulate

Bush from these discussions—states, "Nor will history judge the American people kindly if we look the other way."

I understand Bush's approval of torture is not news, as in, something the beltway insiders didn't already know. I agree with Bush, sort of, that this is not startling. At the same time, it appalls me that the President of the United States can admit to approving torture and yet no one finds that unusual, that no one is interrupting existing programming to announce this, that even ABC treats this as one story among the cute puppy and Hill and Bill stories. At the very least, try to muster some outrage that the President has been lying about torture for four years, could ya?

Remember Watergate? Remember "what did the President know, and when did he know it?" We just got the answer to that question, the answer damns this Administration, but no one seems to care.

Update: Here's Digby:

I thought I was long past the point of being shocked at anything the Bush administration did. They suspended the constitution after 9/11 and set forth a series of legal opinions that said the president can do anything he deems necessary to "protect the country." Once you truly absorb that fact, it's hard to be emotionally affected by anything else you learn.

But I was wrong. This shocks me. The president of the United States casually admits on television that he approved of his national security team personally deciding which specific torture techniques should be used against prisoners:

[snip]

There was a time when the Village clucked and screeched about "defiling

the white house" with an extra marital affair or hosting fund raising coffees. I would say this leaves a far greater stain on that institution than any sexual act could ever do. They did this in your name, Americans.

The vice president, national security advisor and members of the president's cabinet sat around the white house "choreographing" the torture and the president approved it. I have to say that even in my most vivid imaginings about this torture scheme it didn't occur to me that the highest levels of the cabinet were personally involved (except Cheney and Rumsfeld, of course) much less that we would reach a point where the president of the United States would shrug his shoulders and say he approved. I assumed they were all vaguely knowledgeable, some more than others, but that they would have done everything in their power to keep their own fingerprints off of it. But no. It sounds as though they were eagerly involved, they all signed off unanimously and thought nothing of it.