

None of Us Were Like This Before: American Soldiers and Torture

Joshua E.S. Phillips

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None of Us Were Like This Before: American Soldiers and Torture Joshua E.S. Phillips How the damaging legacy of torture affects not just detainees but also US forces.

Sergeant Adam Gray made it home from Iraq only to die in his barracks. For more than three years, reporter Joshua E. S. Phillips--with the support of Adam's mother and several of his Army buddies--investigated Adam's death. What Phillips uncovered was a story of American veterans psychologically scarred by the abuse they had meted out to Iraqi prisoners.

How did US forces turn to torture? Phillips's narrative recounts the journey of a tank battalion--trained for conventional combat--as its focus switches to guerrilla war and prisoner detention. It tells of how a group of ordinary soldiers, ill trained for the responsibilities foisted upon them, descended into the degradation of abuse. The location is far from CIA prisons and Guantanamo, but the story captures the use and nature of detainee abuse in the US armed forces that was once widespread.

Based on firsthand reporting from the Middle East, as well as interviews with soldiers, their families and friends, military officials, and the victims of torture, *None of Us Were Like This Before* reveals how soldiers, senior officials, and the US public came to believe that torture was both effective and necessary. The book illustrates that the damaging legacy of torture is not only borne by the detainees, but also by American soldiers and the country to which they've returned.



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