

On March 25 and 26, 2011, the Duke University Divinity School in Durham, North Carolina hosted a conference on torture. The conference, titled “Toward a Moral Consensus on Torture,” was sponsored by the Duke Human Rights Center, the National Religious Campaign Against Torture (NRCAT) and the North Carolina Council of Churches. Events were held at First Presbyterian Church, Durham and at Duke Divinity.

Speakers and panelists representing diverse faith traditions included:

- Abdullah Antepli, then Duke University Muslim chaplain and adjunct faculty member of Islamic Studies
- Kalman Bland, then Professor of Jewish Studies and Director of the Center for Jewish Studies at Duke University
- Richard Cizik, then president of the New Evangelical Partnership for the Common Good
- David Gushee, then Mercer University professor and chair of the Board of the New Evangelical Partnership for the Common Good
- Linda Gustitus, then president of NRCAT
- Scott Horton, contributing editor of *Harper's Magazine*
- George Hunsinger, founder of NRCAT
- Robin Kirk, executive director of the Duke Human Rights Center
- Ingrid Mattson, then director of the Macdonald Center for the Study of Islam and Christian-Muslim Relations at Hartford Seminary
- David LaMotte, then Program Associate for Peace at the North Carolina Council of Churches
- General (ret.) Stephen Xenakis, a psychiatrist active in anti-torture efforts

Amy Laura Hall, Associate Professor of Christian Ethics, was the faculty coordinator for the conference and moderated the sessions. Kara N. Slade (Ph.D. Mechanical Engineering, Duke; Ph.D. Theology, Duke) was at that time a Divinity student and is now associate rector at Trinity Church, associate chaplain of the Episcopal Church at Princeton, and Canon Theologian of the Diocese of New Jersey. Rev. Dr. Slade coordinated all logistics. Matthew Elia was at that time a Divinity student and is now a doctoral candidate in Theology at Duke. Matthew designed the logo, banners, and posters for the event. Due to the small budget for the event, this team collaborated with small groups of volunteers from across the Triangle. Attendance fees were \$35 and \$10 for all students. Registration costs included meals and parking fees. This two-day event aimed to equip participants to understand the arguments against torture and to prepare them for anti-torture advocacy within their own communities, with a working assumption that the greatest protection against the U.S. government's use of torture is a shared understanding that torture is always wrong.

Media coverage included:

[Sojourners Magazine](#),

[Duke Today](#)

[Huffington Post](#)

[Catholic Moral Theology](#)

[The Institute on Religion and Democracy](#)

[The Daily Caller](#)

The Muslim World, founded in 1911, ran a special issue in 2013, edited by Daniel Arnold and Amy Laura Hall, on torture, entitled “Toward A Moral Consensus Against Torture.”

Daniel E. R. Arnold and Amy Laura Hall, “Introduction to Toward a Moral Consensus Against Torture, a Special Volume of *The Muslim World*”

Kalman P. Bland, “Jewish Perspectives on Torture”

Abdullah Antepli, “Inter-Faith View of Torture — A Muslim Perspective”

Amey Victoria Adkins, “From Crib to Cage: The Theological Calculus of Solitary Confinement”

Mohammad Fadel, “Theology, Torture and the United States: Do Abrahamic Religions Have Anything Meaningful to Say?”

Robin Kirk, “No Right to be Silent on Torture”

Daniel E. R. Arnold, “The Architecture of Torture/The Architecture of Disavowal: Torture, Race, and the Visual in *Glory* and *The Siege*”

Ghada Hashem Talhami, “Torture: The Theology of the Modern State”

Abdullahi Ahmed An-Na'im, “Critical Reflections on Torture, Religion and Politics”

Amy Laura Hall, “Torture and Television in the United States”