
January 2020

The Torture Machine: Racism and Police Violence in Chicago

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Recommended Citation

Flint Taylor, *The Torture Machine: Racism and Police Violence in Chicago*, 13 DePaul J. for Soc. Just. (2020)

Available at: <https://via.library.depaul.edu/jsj/vol13/iss1/7>

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DISCUSSION BY FLINT TAYLOR
THE TORTURE MACHINE: RACISM AND POLICE VIOLENCE IN
CHICAGO

Introduction

The Center for Public Interest Law and National Lawyers Guild are pleased to welcome Flint Taylor, to discuss his book, The Torture Machine.^{*} Flint Taylor is a founding partner of the People’s Law Office in Chicago where they have been dedicated to litigating civil rights issues, government misconduct, and police violence cases for over 50 years. He has litigated landmark cases such as the Fred Hampton Black Panther case and was instrumental in the conviction of Jon Burge. Mr. Taylor is also an accomplished appellate advocate, who has successfully argued before the United States Supreme Court. Mr. Taylor has been the recipient of many awards for his decades of long work fighting against injustice, including the 2009 First Defense Legal Aid First Defender Award for his “tireless commitment to protecting the civil rights of Chicago citizens” and the 2010 National Lawyers Guild Chicago Chapter’s Arthur Kinoy People’s Law Award for his “commitment to the struggle for justice for the survivors of torture.”[†]

Thank you. I want to thank the Lawyers Guild and the public interest folks here for having me come today. It’s always an honor and a pleasure to come speak to law students, having been one myself. It was 50 years ago, not 30 years ago when I started doing this work. Thank you for making me 20 years younger. You know this law school has a lot of history and a lot of wonderful people who have come up through the ranks here starting in the 1970s when DePaul opened up its school to women and people of color. The People’s Law Office itself has had many people who have come through DePaul, including Joey Mogul and Sarah Gelsomino who ran the Civil Rights Clinic here for several years.

I see one of the many wonderful professors, deans, and great lawyers and judges in the history of the city whose work is mentioned in my book — Judge Wolfson, who is here today.

^{*} FLINT TAYLOR, THE TORTURE MACHINE: RACISM AND POLICE VIOLENCE IN CHICAGO (2019).

[†] Introduction by Leslie Hill: Chairperson, National Lawyers Guild, DePaul Chapter

And we cannot forget Andrea Lyon and Len Cavise, who did so much work here in this law school fighting against the death penalty and for human rights.

After all these years, in the courtrooms and on the streets, fighting for justice and against racism, I decided it might be worthwhile to write about it. I had from time to time written certain things, articles, both legal articles and political articles dealing with cases that I had worked on. And so, it seemed a good time to look back and forward and write about it. So, for the last three or four years I sat down and wrote *The Torture Machine* with the subtitle *Racism and Police Violence in Chicago*.

That is a large topic. And of course, I don't deal with all of it, but what I do deal with is what I was involved in with so many other people, including Judge Wolfson, back in the day, the Fred Hampton case, and of course the police torture scandal that started in the 70s, started to be uncovered in the 80s and still is a stain on this city as we sit here today. The Torture Machine, of which there is a picture on the book cover, it's quite graphic. This picture depicts the Torture Machine, or a torture machine. There were several torture machines, but this black box with a generator in it, with wires coming from the generator with alligator clips on the wires with the crank on that generator, was a device that the notorious commander, who started out as a detective and worked his way up as a Lieutenant and became a commander of police in Chicago, Jon Burge, and his men, who were known internally as "Burge's ass kickers," used among other torture techniques and implements to torture African American men on the South Side of Chicago in the seventies and eighties. In the late 1980s, Burge moved to the West side to what was known as Area Three detective headquarters and he, as commander there, and his men, many of whom he brought from Area Two on the South Side to the West Side, continued the torture.

What was the purpose of the torture? Well, it was at least two-fold. The number one purpose was to get confessions. We were in an era of intense law and order. Of intense racism in terms of the courts and in terms of the police and to get confessions from men who were reputed gang leaders, who were suspected of serious crimes, particularly crimes that involved police officers, it was something that got you promoted in the way that Jon Burge was promoted. But the torture machine has another meaning and in some ways it's a more significant and less graphic meaning, but nonetheless, something that the book attempts in its pages to communicate.

The Torture Machine is also the political machine of the city of Chicago. Call it what you will — for decades and decades, it was called the “Daley machine”, sometimes known as the “Democratic machine” or the “political machine,” however you want to term it, the torture scandal and the continuation of torture for over two decades and the fact that there are still some men in the penitentiary based on confessions that were tortured from them could not have happened without the torture machine, i.e. the political machine. So what we tried to do over the years as we were able to uncover more and more evidence of a systemic or systematic pattern and practice of torture; a pattern and practice that Judge Wolfson wrote about in 1997, in the Darrell Cannon appellate court decision, which was one of the first decisions that actually recognized this pattern and practice and recognized that people who were victimized by this pattern and practice had a right to raise it in court to challenge their confessions and their convictions.

Over the years, how did this evidence come out? Well, it came out in very interesting ways. In the early 1980s, there was the celebrated Andrew Wilson case where two African American men had allegedly killed two white Chicago police officers. They had escaped and there was the largest manhunt in the history of the city of Chicago looking for them. In those five days that they were looking for those men, they terrorized the entire South and West sides of the city of Chicago.

They pulled people out of their houses, they kicked down doors, and if they thought the person had any knowledge whatsoever about the crime or suspected that they might be involved in the crime, they tortured them. And let me back up for a moment and talk a little bit about what I mean when I use the word “torture.”

Torture as defined by the United Nations is broader than what we're talking about here in the Torture Machine and when we are talking about the tactics that Burge and his people used. Torture, as they (Burge and his men) used it, was this electric shock box and cattle prods and other electric devices on people's genitals and other parts of their bodies. We're talking about what's known internationally as “dry submarino” — that is suffocating people or making them think they're being suffocated. The implement that was used in the eighties was a typewriter cover. In those days, the detectives wrote their reports on typewriters that had plastic covers and they would use the covers to cut off the air supply of people while they were questioning them. Then they would punch them to knock the air out of their lungs so that they would think that they were dying. Mock executions, this was a technique that was used on Darrell Cannon, among others.

Darrell Cannon's case runs through the book because there are many twists and turns about his case right up until the present, starting back in the 1980s. But mock executions included Russian Roulette: taking a pistol and emptying the cartridges out of it, sticking it in a person's mouth, pulling the trigger and making that person think that there was a cartridge in one of the chambers and that it might go off. Another technique, the one that was used on Darrell Cannon, was shoving a shotgun in his mouth, making him think there was a shell in the shotgun and pulling the trigger. Darrell describes in detail how that felt. They did this three separate times, in a lonely deserted site on the Southeast side of Chicago, under a viaduct near a body of water out by the old

steelworks. The third time they did this to him, Darrell said he imagined that the back of his head had been blown off.

These were terroristic techniques that were used, and they were used against African American suspects, almost always. As the years went on, we were able to uncover that torture wasn't only used against Andrew Wilson in the early eighties, Andrew being the person who was ultimately picked up in 1982 with his brother, Jackie, for the police shootings. After they arrested Jackie and Andrew, they tortured them mercilessly with the box, with beatings, and with Andrew, they also handcuffed him across a radiator, one of those old ribbed steam radiators. When they electric shocked him, his body went up against the steam radiator and the burns he suffered as a result left marks on his chest. That was part of the evidence that ultimately established that Andrew Wilson was tortured. That evidence came to light in the early eighties, but nobody, and I mean nobody in the sense of the media, in the sense of the judge who was hearing the case at the time, or the chief prosecutor — who interestingly was none other than Richie Daley (Richard M. Daley) — cared about it. In fact, it countered what they wanted to do because they wanted to send Andrew Wilson to death row. If they, in fact, dealt with the evidence that he was tortured by a lieutenant of police, then not only would Andrew Wilson's case be in jeopardy, but also Burge and his men might have to be prosecuted. So Daley, his first assistant, Richard Devine, who you may have heard of (he later went on to be the head prosecutor) and others, rejected the evidence that was brought to them that Andrew Wilson was tortured and that along with him Jackie Wilson, his brother, was tortured as well — not quite as intensely because the evidence showed that Jackie was just driving the car and that Andrew had been the shooter.

Andrew was convicted. The motion to suppress his confession that was based on the torture that Andrew testified about in open court, in front of the media, the judge rejected as a fantastic

story despite all of the physical evidence on Andrew's body from the burns and the beatings and even the marks on his ears. There were marks on his ears that showed where those clips from that box had been put on his ears and showed where the electricity had been cranked into his body. Also, despite a courageous and honest doctor at Cook County jail, Jack Raba, who had written a report documenting the physical evidence of torture. That report in fact went all the way to the head prosecutor, Richard M. Daley, which is a cornerstone of the evidence that shows how the torture machine worked and how Daley and those under him covered this case up. So, Andrew was sentenced to death row and he decided to file a *pro se* civil rights lawsuit for damages. He got a jailhouse lawyer, who wrote up a complaint and filed it under section 1983 in federal court.

Judge Duff, who you will read quite a bit about in the book, appointed a lawyer to represent Andrew. That lawyer really didn't want anything to do with a cop killer, so he managed to get out of the case. Judge Duff appointed another lawyer to represent Andrew Wilson. The same thing happened again. Finally, in 1987, which is five years after the torture, and just about the time that Andrew Wilson's conviction was being reversed by the Illinois Supreme Court on the basis that he was tortured — his death penalty was vacated and he was given a new trial — Andrew contacted us. Us meaning the People's Law Office. The People's Law Office had a history of fighting these kinds of cases. Myself and my partner, Jeff Haas, had been involved in the Fred Hampton case, the civil case that lasted 18 months in Federal Court and during which it was uncovered that Fred Hampton, the Black Panther leader here in the city of Chicago, was the subject not only of a shoot-in by the police in a raid that killed him and Mark Clark, another Panther leader, but that in fact it was a murder and that it was orchestrated by the FBI from Washington with an FBI informant under a program called COINTELPRO.

We had fought that case for 13 years. Judge Wolfson represented one of the people who survived the raid in the criminal case back in 1970. That case was ultimately dismissed. But we got a reputation, particularly in the prisons, as the lawyers of last resort. The lawyers who would take the case that no one else would take. That reputation came by and large from the battles that we fought in the Fred Hampton case, the evidence we'd uncovered in that case and the fact that after 13 years, we were able to obtain a settlement for the families of Hampton and Clark and the survivors, which at that time was one of the largest civil rights settlements in history. The first chapter of the book is about that. It's about that 13 years of struggle. About how I started out, like many of you, as a law student, at your age, a second-year law student, working on the Fred Hampton case. Being called to the apartment where the murders took place, only hours after the police left in the morning of December 4th, 1969. It will be 50 years on December 4th. As a young law student, seeing the blood on the floor, seeing the bullet holes, and understanding that this was a murder scene, that this wasn't a shootout as the police and the State's Attorney of Cook County, who was behind this raid, were saying in all the newspapers. So that event changed our lives forever and led us to this 13-year odyssey that ended up in a successful resolution of the Hampton case.

Now we fast forward to the late eighties when Andrew Wilson contacted us. This is the case that certainly rivaled the Hampton case, in terms of when you looked at it going forward, the chances of success seemed very slight. The amount of work that it was going to take would be voluminous. And so how are we going to deal with this? Are we going to deal with this? And what we decided as an office was that, and this may seem obvious to you all, but it isn't to everyone, and that is, no one should be tortured, whether they're cop killers, innocent or guilty, black or white, rich or poor. Because of that, we decided to take the case. When we took the case, we had

no idea that 32 years later I'd be standing here telling you that I'm still working on this case. And by this case, I'm not talking necessarily about Andrew Wilson's case, that case only took 10 or 11 years to resolve, but during the Wilson civil trial in Federal Court (we actually did back to back trials because the first trial ended in a mistrial in front of Judge Duff) the evidence started to come out that it wasn't a rogue cop or a set of rogue cops who were enraged because their fellow officers had been shot and killed and they wanted to take revenge against these black men, who they believed, had participated in the murders of the police officers, but rather, it was much more than that.

We had an inclination of that reality as we went to trial in 1989 but, one day on the eve of trial, I got a letter. It was in a police department envelope. It was directed to me and it said, look, this has to be kept secret: "I'm afraid for my career and my life if this is exposed. But I want to tell you that this Wilson case is not an isolated case." The anonymous cop told us that we should place an ad in the Southtown Economist, which was the paper on the Southwest side, that a lot of cop families read, asking for more information. We didn't know exactly what to do, but we made up a little classified ad, a Wilson case one, saying, we want more evidence. It's in the book exactly how we wrote the ad. Two months later, we're on trial and I'm cross examining Burge on the stand. I come back from court frustrated because the judge would not let us get into any other cases. We've got both hands tied behind our back in essence. There's a message in my mailbox and a letter. It's another letter from the anonymous police source who we dubbed at some point or another as "Deep Badge." Deep Badge says, in this letter, again, "don't tell anybody about this. I don't want to end up like Frank Lavery."

Frank Lavery was a detective who worked under Burge, who in the early eighties, courageously came forward to lawyers in our office and exposed that an innocent 18-year-old

young man named George Jones was on trial for a murder that he didn't commit and that the police had evidence of his innocence in secret street files. These street files were kept by detectives and they often contained exculpatory evidence. They never turned these files over to the defense lawyers. And because Lavery came forward at great risk to his career and told us this in the middle of the Jones trial, he was not only disciplined for it, but he was also busted down from being a detective and sent to police headquarters to watch police recruits give urine samples.

There was much at risk for Deep Badge, but Deep Badge told us about another victim of police torture by the name of Melvin Jones, said he was in Cook County jail and also named many of the officers who worked with Burge. That's where we first learned the name "ass kickers." He identified by name "Burge's ass kickers" and also those detectives who didn't go along with the torture. Deep Badge said, "You can find Jones in jail." So, we found Jones and we also got a transcript of Jones's testimony. It turns out that Jones was not only tortured by Burge with the black shock box nine days before Andrew Wilson was tortured, but that he testified about it back in 1982. It wasn't like he had heard something in the news and came up with a story. He had told the story back when nobody was listening, and it was on record. We got that transcript, and we also interviewed him. What he said was that during his torture, Burge had boasted, "we're gonna do you like we did 'Satan' and 'Cochise.'" Those were two prison nicknames and we found those two individuals. One of them was Anthony Holmes, and another was a man named Collins. We found them. We found that they'd been tortured. We got their stories.

So then that onion started to unpeel. It was no longer just Andrew and Jackie Wilson and a couple of other isolated people, but it started to become a systemic issue of torture. That's what Deep Badge had told us. He had said "Daley knows about it." He said "all the prosecutors know about it." "The judges know about it." It was like he or she was laying out a plan that we could

follow, but we had this issue — what do we do with this? We're not supposed to bring this out. So, we brought it, the evidence, to the judge who was dead set against us, and he tried to figure out a way to keep us from putting it in evidence. And while recognizing on the one hand that it was a “hand grenade that had rolled into the trial,” he barred us from being able to put on the Jones evidence or any other instances of torture. The case went to the jury. The jury hung, and we were naively encouraged that, oh, well, now we’re going to have a new trial and there’s no longer the problem of bringing this evidence into the middle of the trial; the defense will have time to look at the evidence, so we should get it admitted this time.

But then, of course, we weren’t allowed to get it into evidence the second time either. The Book goes on to tell the story of those two trials, of the appeal, of how the evidence that Deep Badge brought us and that we developed led to decades of fighting to fully uncover the torture scandal, with all its different aspects. That evidence led to the firing of Jon Burge, then a commander, in 1993. It led in the 1990s to many cases, some of which we brought, challenging the death penalty, where men had been put on death row based on tortured confessions. And there were, at the same time, movements on the street and in the prison. There was a group of death row prisoners, who called themselves the Death Row 10, who organized themselves to raise the issue of torture. The Death Row 10 and the torture linked up with the fight here in this city against the death penalty. The combination of those two forces, in the prison, with the lawyers, and the activists, were able to convince Governor George Ryan, a staunch Republican, in 1999 to issue a moratorium on the death penalty and in 2003, to clear death row. And by clearing death row, what he did was he commuted all of the sentences on death row to life without parole. But he did more than that, he looked at the evidence of tortured confessions and he pardoned on the basis of

innocence, four of the Death Row 10 — Aaron Patterson, Leroy Orange, Madison Hobbey, who by the way was represented by Andrea Lyon here at DePaul, and Stanley Howard.

We and other lawyers then were able to bring lawsuits for those pardoned men; the statute of limitations was no longer a bar because they'd been exonerated. Under Supreme Court precedent, they could now bring cases for their wrongful convictions. That gave us a whole new avenue to continue our investigation of police torture. As a result, one of the things that I was able to do was to find the detectives, the African American detectives, who worked under Burge. We had gotten hints that these African American detectives were not pleased with what was going on, but that they were afraid to come forward and give their testimony. They had all retired by then, so I was able to go out with an investigator from DePaul named Mort Smith and find these detectives. Reluctantly, they all talked to us. Again, I talk about it in the Book in some detail, but what we were able to do then was fill in the mosaic of the pattern and practice of torture. These African American detectives were not allowed in the rooms where the torture took place, except if they opened the door when they heard screaming. One detective actually did that, Bill Parker, but the others were there when they heard screams. They were there when people, Burge's people, were talking about electric shock and the "Vietnam treatment." They were there when they would question someone, and the person wouldn't talk and then the "ass kickers" would take that man out. When they came back, as one detective said, the suspect was "singing like a canary." So those statements were very helpful, corroborating what Deep Badge told us and what we were developing with all of the torture survivors who we were finding, one by one, and whose statements we were also taking.

The struggle had caused Richard Devine, who was the State's Attorney at that time, to be recused from all Burge matters. He was recused because between the time he worked for Daley as

first assistant and the time he became the elected State's Attorney of Cook County, he had been in a private law firm, while his law partner, Bill Kunkle, had represented Burge in our Wilson civil cases. So, Judge Biebel, the chief criminal court judge, recused him, and appointed special prosecutors. Unfortunately, he appointed two special prosecutors who, while not connected to Richie Daley, were connected to Richie's father, Richard J. Daley. Those special prosecutors, it appeared, were hell bent on not indicting anybody and hell bent on cabining the investigation. As a result, their investigation went no higher than Burge. That investigation went on for four years from 2002 to 2006. Taxpayers paid \$7 million in taxpayer money and at the end, the special prosecutors indicted no one, even though they had the ability to at least indict for conspiracy, obstruction of justice, and perjury, even though the statute of limitations had run ostensibly on the torture itself. Instead, they issued a report.

We all were outraged by the report. We saw it as a whitewash. It exonerated Daley and Devine and all of the "Democratic machine" people who we felt were ultimately responsible for what had gone on and for why it had gone on for so long. As you know, Richie Daley had moved from being the chief prosecutor to being the mayor for the next 20 years. In that role, he was able to continue to manage the cover up and to continue to condone it. That report came out and we then, in conjunction with Northwestern Law and others, wrote what was called a shadow report — getting that terminology from reports that are written to the United Nations. We pointed out all the ways that the Special Prosecutors' report was deficient. Our report caused the Chicago City Council and the Cook County Board of Commissioners to hold hearings into the failures of the Special Prosecutors' report. It also gave a boost to the U.S. Attorney, Patrick Fitzgerald. All these years and all these decades, the feds had blown off all attempts to get them to investigate police torture, but Fitzgerald, because of where the evidence was at this particular point, and because he

had a reputation for being an independent prosecutor, seriously looked into the case. Burge had gotten some bad legal advice in one of the civil suits that were brought on the heels of the pardons. Burge answered some interrogatories saying, “I wasn't involved in torture, I didn't know about torture, and torture didn't happen as far as I know.” Well, that was under oath. After he answered those interrogatories, the lawyers who were representing all of these officers in all of these cases that we'd brought based on the pardons, gave what was better legal advice and that was to take the fifth amendment. So, from that point onward, they all took the fifth amendment in all of our cases, but it was too late for Burge.

The U.S. Attorney had five years to indict Burge for obstruction of justice and perjury. As I recounted in the Book, one morning in October of 2008, almost five years to the day from when Burge gave the interrogatories, I got an early morning call from an assistant U.S. Attorney who was involved in the investigation of Burge. He said, “don't tell anybody until this becomes public, but we're arresting Jon Burge today for obstruction of justice and perjury.” So, Burge was arrested and he was prosecuted. He went to jail. He went to Butner, served three and a half years and was released in 2014. By that time, he was a broken man. We went to the penitentiary and took his deposition, where he took the fifth amendment; he was dressed in the brown prison garb, and complained about the prison food and the prison medicine. He was in fact a prisoner. He, in fact, was suffering what the men whom he had tortured had suffered for much longer periods of time than he was suffering in the penitentiary. He came out of prison a broken man, but he came out unrepentant until the day that he died. He never conceded that he tortured anybody. He never showed any remorse. In fact, he went on record when reparations were granted to the men, and I will circle back to that in a moment, as calling torture survivors, Darrell Cannon and Anthony

Holmes, and myself, all sorts of epithets. Calling them vermin and other subhuman, racist comments and decrying the fact that the city had granted reparations.

What were and are the reparations and why did they come about? As we go through this history and we go through the prosecution of Burge, people, particularly people in the movement, felt, well, this isn't enough. On the one hand, the feds were investigating some of the underlings of Burge including two of his really, really heavy duty "ass kickers," John Byrne and Peter Dignan. Because they had arrogantly come off of the fifth amendment in 2007, the feds had until 2012 to indict them for perjury and obstruction of justice. Because in those 2007 depositions, I took them through all the cases of torture, including Darrell Cannon's, and they denied that they tortured anybody. So, we put on a silver platter an obstruction of justice and perjury case for these two very significant actors under Burge's command.

Some of the feds wanted to do something about it. The lawyers who were investigating were bringing in for questioning as potential witnesses many of the men who were tortured by these guys. Then I got another call, unfortunately, just before the five years ran on the statute of limitations for Byrne and Dignan, saying the feds were not going to follow through, they were not going to indict them. The underlying reason was because the U.S. Attorney did not want to rely exclusively on the testimony of those who were tortured. In the Burge case, they had gotten a detective to flip, at least partially, and talk about one instance of torture. And that gave them the courage to say we can go forward, even though the case against Burge was in fact carried by five victims of police torture, including Anthony Holmes, who was a very powerful witness. But the feds didn't want to do it without a flipper, and they couldn't flip anybody against Byrne and Dignan, so the acting chief of the U.S. Attorney's Office at that time decided at the last minute that they didn't want to go forward.

As a result, the only person who has ever been prosecuted for all of these crimes, and now we have 125 cases of police torture that have been documented, was Jon Burge. People rightfully felt, that this isn't enough, that we need to continue, we need to continue to fight for those people who are still in the penitentiary and we also need to fight for the Anthony Holmeses and Darrell Cannons and others who have never received compensation, who have never received recognition that they were tortured. A group called the Chicago Torture Justice Memorials came about and they fought along with other organizations including We Charge Genocide and other parts of the Movement for Black Lives. They raised the question of reparations. They self-consciously chose that language, "reparations," even though they realized that politically that might at that point be something that was very controversial.

In the last chapters, I talk about reparations and how those reparations came about. It came about primarily because of the movements that came to support and to fight for them and also because of the political vulnerability that Mayor Rahm Emanuel had at the particular time that these issues were being raised. He was on such bad paper with the African American community because he shut down 50 schools as well as other things he'd done in derogation of the interests of Black people in the city. He was looking to do something to kind of un-tarnish his image. So, in 2015, in May, the Chicago City Council unanimously passed an ordinance and a resolution for reparations. The reparations not only included \$100,000 for each individual who was tortured and who had not had a legal remedy, including Darrell Cannon and Anthony Holmes, but as importantly, there were four or five non-financial parts of the reparations and those included: a Memorial that has not been constructed at this point; and a complete public apology, which Rahm gave to the survivors in city council in May, and his words were remarkable. Most remarkable was and is the creation of a Center on the South Side of Chicago to treat survivors of police torture and

the teaching in the 8th and 10th grades of the Chicago public schools the history of police torture. These most important and unique reparations with regard to victims of police brutality and torture were established here in the city of Chicago in the year 2015.

I never miss an opportunity to speak about the cases that I've worked on because as people's lawyers, we try to uphold the name. We believe that not only are we lawyers who will take cases that perhaps others won't take, like the Hampton case, like the torture cases, but that we will also fight to uncover the evidence and expose that evidence so that we can talk about it. So, we can write about it. So, you all can learn about it. And that in these cases, and by writing this Book, I hope to demonstrate that in some way we were able to change the narrative. Change the narrative with regard to the Hampton case from a shootout, to a shoot in, to a police murder, to a police assassination, and to change the torture narrative, which started out as a decorated Vietnam veteran and police commander by the name of Jon Burge allegedly committing brutality against a convicted cop killer, to where we stand today and what the popular narrative is about Burge, the notorious torturer and his gang of torturers and also Daley's role, the Torture Machine's role, in the cover up. The importance of changing the narrative and bringing forward that narrative — the narrative that's not the narrative that the powers that be want you to believe — is important. As law students and as lawyers, you're going to go on hopefully and do important work. Important work that you'll be proud of. Important work that will be for the people, not against the people; that in some way you will all be peoples' lawyers of one kind or another.

That's why I'm happy to come here and speak to you all today, to show you that yes, there are lawyers that do this. Yes, there are lawyers that are continuing to do this. But yes, some of these lawyers are getting old with white hair and they need reinforcements. We trust that from among you, those reinforcements will come, and that in these very important and troubling times,

you law students will become lawyers that will fight the good fights and the good battles, and will win some of them like we have from time to time. Thank you.