



**0. Torture Instruments from Medieval Times - Story Preface**

1. MAN IN THE STATE OF NATURE
2. THE HERETIC'S FORK
3. BREAKING WITH A WHEEL
4. THE JUDAS CRADLE
5. THE IRON MAIDEN OF NUREMBERG
6. HANGING, CAT PAWS AND CRUELTY
7. HEAD CRUSHERS, THE RACK AND WATER TORTURE
8. THE HANGING CAGE
9. BEHEADING
10. BURNING AT THE STAKE

Stocks—in Belstone, Dartmoor (England)—used to punish offenders. Photo by Ethan Doyle White, online via Wikimedia Commons. License: [CC BY-SA 4.0](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/4.0/)

**CAUTION: THIS STORY, AND ITS LINKS, CONTAIN GRUESOME REFERENCES OR IMAGES**

*...Deep down  
in our poor human nature  
lurks the love  
of blood...*

Was A.R. Allinson right when he wrote those awful words? Is there some reason why people persist in torturing each other?

It's not good enough to say torture only happens in the absence of law. Sometimes torture happens when the law is perverted. When a person is charged with a capital crime, and is not represented by counsel, the law is perverted. When a death sentence is the likely trial outcome, and no lawyer is allowed to speak for the accused, what kind of law do we have?

What is the point of having "legal proceedings" at all when the end result is intentionally unjust? Who could even begin to think the word "fair" is remotely connected to such "trials?"

Sometimes instruments of torture defy human comprehension. The links to photographs in this story will allow you to examine actual torture devices, gathered together for an exhibit that began in Florence (in 1983) and closed in Barcelona (in 1986). Many of these objects are originals, used as far back as the 1500s. Others are accurate reconstructions.

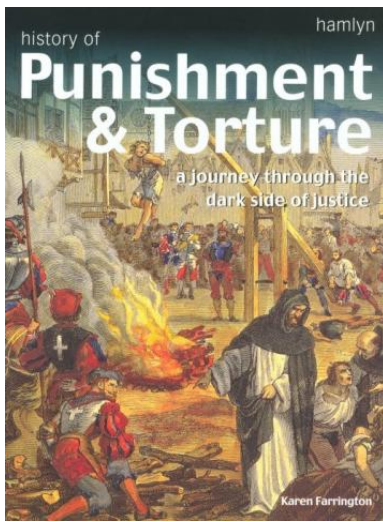
The links to drawings and illustrations depict how these instruments of torment were used.

See [Alignments to State and Common Core standards for this story online at:](http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/AcademicAlignment/Torture-Instruments-from-Medieval-Times)

<http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/AcademicAlignment/Torture-Instruments-from-Medieval-Times>

See [Learning Tasks for this story online at:](http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/AcademicActivities/Torture-Instruments-from-Medieval-Times)

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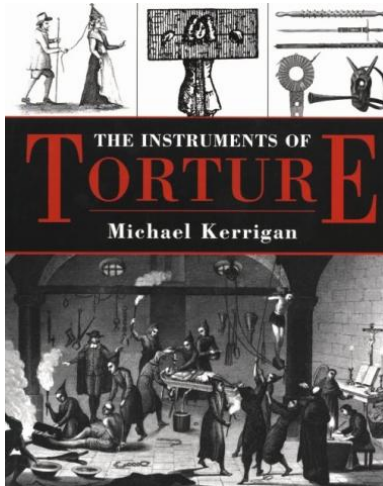


## History of Punishment and Torture

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## Instruments of Torture, by Michael Kerrigan

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