Guantánamo
Public Memory Project Exhibition

Information Pamphlet

Guantánamo Public Memory Project

The Guantánamo Public Memory Project seeks to build public awareness of the long history of the US naval station at Guantánamo, Bay, Cuba from multiple perspectives and to foster dialogue on the future of this place, its people, and the policies it shapes.

SHAPING AN EMPIRE

WHAT ARE THE CONSEQUENCES OF GLOBAL EXPANSION?

"Cuba ought to be free and independent, and the government should be turned over to the Cuban people."

– William McKinley, 1898

Beginning with the presidency of Thomas Jefferson, American politicians routinely argued for the purchase or annexation of Cuba from Spain. Geographically, Cuba was vital to protecting the trade of American goods via the Mississippi River. Cuba's sugar economy also encouraged planters in the American South to see the island's slave owners as allies in their own efforts to resist the growing movement for abolition. In the tense decades before the Civil War, calls for annexation, with Cuba joining the United States as a slave state, grew more fervent.

SHAPE THE DEBATE

Is the US an empire today?

VOTE Yes or No by texting GITMO#3 to 41411.
See your comments shape the debate.

When Cuban insurgents began fighting against Spanish colonial rule in 1868, many Americans openly embraced calls for "Cuba Libre," and welcomed exiles such as José Martí as freedom fighters. When the fight for Cuban independence resumed in 1895, however, Americans were divided as to whether their impending intervention in the conflict represented a humanitarian mission or a prelude to annexation. Bolstered by a rabid press calling for American men to defend and rescue Cuba from Spanish brutality, at the same time American imperialists openly questioned whether Afro Cubans and racially mixed Cubans, who were key members of the insurgency, were capable of governing independently.

Shortly after the United States declared war on Spain, American forces occupied Guantánamo Bay. Peace negotiations at the end of the war found Spain surrendering to the United States rather than to revolutionary forces from its former colony. Cuba was left extremely vulnerable to further American manipulation in its economy and politics, as subsequent treaties would prove.

OUR POINT OF

We are interested in how the involvement in Cuba in 1898 rescue, to claims about the themselves, to economic moti exchange military intervention

– Rutgers University

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SEE more images
GO deeper
gitmomemory.org/p3

1897 1898 1899 1923

How did we get to Gitmo?

"Guantánamo" has become an international symbol of America's War on Terror, and a lightning rod for debates about torture, detention, national security, and human rights. But the US naval station at Guantánamo Bay—also known by its military acronym "GTMO" or its nickname, "Gitmo"—was part of American politics and policy for a century before 9-11. It has been used to shape American empire, confront Cold War conflicts, and shape new approaches to immigration and public health. It has been "closed" several times, only to be put to new use. Long before the first enemy combatant arrived, thousands of others lived in this "legal black hole"—Caribbean refugees stranded there in tent cities; military families who remember it as a treasured American home; and scores of Cuban exiled workers cut off from their families across the fence line.

In 2012, students at 11 universities around the country asked: what can GTMO's history tell us about what's happening now—there, and here at home? They dug through historical and visual archives; talked to people who worked there, lived there, were detained there, or advocated for those who were; and explored how GTMO relates to issues, people, and places in their own communities. Each student team created one or two of the panels in this exhibit, sharing their discoveries—and the difficult questions they struggled with.

Now you can add your community's voice to the national dialogue by hosting the exhibit, inviting your students to contribute public memory projects, hosting public dialogues, or joining the on-line discussion.
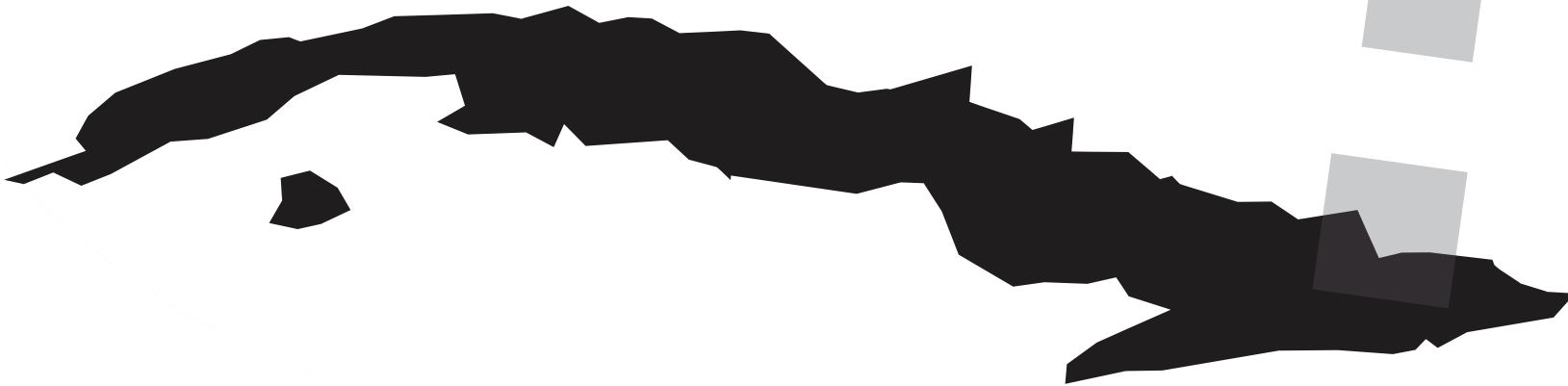
Exhibit Components

Exhibit comprises 13 light-weight 70"x80" banners and:

- **Video testimonies:** Over one hundred 3-5 minute audio portraits of people who experienced GTMO first-hand from diverse perspectives, including refugees held there, military children who grew up there, Cubans who worked there, and "enemy combatants."

- **"Shape the Debate" text-message voting activity:** opportunity to add your take to the growing national dialogue and see your feedback shape the debate on exhibit monitors.

- **Mobile multimedia:** access video testimonies and deeper digital content through your smart phone.

Additional Resources

- **Web platform:** at www.gitmomemory.org, including interactive map, blog, and timeline.

- **Teaching resources:** curriculum and extensive resource library with primary and secondary sources, including documents, images, and video footage.

- **Dialogue kits:** detailed discussion guides for you to host conversations about GTMO and the questions it raises in your own communities.

- **Speakers' bureau:** list of experts – from scholars to people with direct experience – on a diversity of issues.

- **Opportunity to engage students and communities** by creating their own public memory projects or participating in on line discussions.

Exhibit comprises thirteen 70"x 80" banners each with the following components:

BIG QUESTION
the larger issue students grappled with when studying this history

CUBAN *BALSEROS* AT GTMO

SAFE HAVEN OR PRISON CAMP?

"**It was worth it...to have a new life.**"
- Conrado Basulto, *balsero*

"**It felt like a prison.**"
- Sergio Lastres, *balsero*

In August 1994, when President Castro lifted an emigration ban, thousands of Cubans set to sea, many on makeshift rafts. These "rafters", or *balseros*, fled extreme food rationing, rampant power shortages, and the political repression of Cuba's post-Soviet "Special Period in Peacetime."

Fearing an immigration crisis, President Clinton reversed US policy of automatically granting Cubans who left the island asylum. He ordered the Coast Guard to intercept and send approximately 32,000 Cubans to the "safe haven" of GTMO.

GTMO officials first told *balseros* they would never enter the US, but did not explain how long they would be held or where they would go. Already overwhelmed by thousands of Haitians detained at GTMO, US military personnel struggled to accommodate the Cubans. Many *balseros* suffered extreme heat, hunger, violence, and acute boredom during their detainment.

SHAPE THE DEBATE

Should the government use GTMO for refugees in the future?

SMS **VOTE** Yes or No by texting GITMO#8 to 41411. See your comments shape the debate.

But conditions gradually improved, and with help from aid agencies, *balseros* created a vibrant community that included art galleries, newspapers, and a radio station.

Ultimately, the US government admitted most *balseros* within a year of their arrival at GTMO. This stood in stark contrast to the treatment of Haitians detained there, the majority of whom were returned to a volatile Haiti.

The last *balsera* left GTMO on January 31, 1996. But the base continues to hold handfuls of Cuban refugees captured at sea—the current "wet-foot/dry-foot" policy only grants asylum to Cubans who make it to US soil. Recently improved facilities now stand ready to house potential future refugees.

OUR POINT OF VIEW

As students living in a city charged with post-9-11 memories, we are grateful to the Cuban *balseros* for offering a glimpse of pre-9-11 Guantánamo and sharing their stories of the community that emerged behind barbed wire.

- New York University

SMS QUESTION
Visitors are invited to vote and comment via text message on a current debate GTMO's history raises. Votes and comments are continually updated and shown in an exhibit monitor

OUR POINT OF VIEW
Students share "where they're coming from" and how their backgrounds framed their approach

TIMELINE

1994   1995

September 1, 1994. Courtesy Corbis.

On August 19, 1994, President Clinton announced: "The people leaving Cuba will not be permitted to come to the United States. They will be sent to a safe haven." This policy reversal left many *balseros* frustrated with the lack of information, inspiring protests against their seemingly indefinite detention.

December 20, 1994. Courtesy The Miami Herald.

All aspects of life at Guantánamo were uncertain, from the citizenship status of those born there to medical care. One *balsera* remembers, "for many months there the people thought that we were going to die there...that nobody in the world was going to find out about us."

QR CODE
Visitors scan with their smartphone to access video testimonies and other additional content

HEAR real stories
SEE more images
GO deeper
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Approximately 2,500 *balsero* children passed through GTMO, each identified with an ankle bracelet. It was not always fun and games; one twelve-year-old girl told a psychiatrist working at GTMO, "I am already crazy. The only thing I see is barbed wire everywhere and this terrifies me."

November 29, 1994. Courtesy The Miami Herald.

c. 1995. Courtesy Aurora De Armendi.
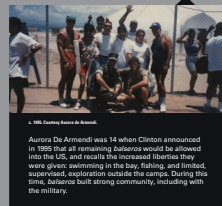
Aurora De Armendi was 14 when Clinton announced in 1995 that all remaining *balseros* would be allowed into the US, and recalls the increased liberties they were given: swimming in the bay, fishing, and limited, supervised, exploration outside the camps. During this time, *balseros* built strong community, including with the military.

Sample exhibit banners:

Banner 1

SHAPING AN EMPIRE

WHAT ARE THE CONSEQUENCES OF GLOBAL EXPANSION?

Beginning with the presidency of Thomas Jefferson, American politicians routinely argued for the purchase or annexation of Cuba from Spain. Geographically, Cuba was vital to protecting the trade of American goods via the Mississippi River. Cuba's sugar economy also encouraged planters in the American South to see the island's slave owners as allies in their own efforts to resist the growing movement for abolition. In the tense decades before the Civil War, calls for annexation, with Cuba joining the United States as a slave state, grew more fervent.

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Shortly after the United States declared war on Spain, American forces occupied Guantánamo Bay. Peace negotiations at the end of the war found Spain surrendering to the United States rather than to revolutionary forces from its former colony. Cuba was left extremely vulnerable to further American manipulation in its economy and politics, as subsequent treaties would prove.

1897   1898   1899   1923

OUR POINT OF VIEW

We are interested in how the premises that spurred US involvement in Cuba in 1898—from gendered narratives of rescue to claims about the fitness of certain people to govern themselves, to economic motives—still shape how Americans rationalize military interventions today.

– Rutgers University, New Brunswick

HEAR real stories
SEE more images
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Banner 2

GUANTÁNAMO HITS HOME

HOW HAS GTMO AFFECTED AMERICA'S LAWS AND VALUES?

In 2001 Adnan Latif, a Yemini citizen, traveled to Afghanistan seeking medical attention and found himself in the wrong place at the wrong time. Arrested and imprisoned in GTMO, he was never charged with a crime. A judge ordered his release in 2010. That decision was overturned a year later. Latif died in GTMO in September 2012 after years of solitary confinement, hunger strikes, and suicide attempts.

Ever since suspected terrorists were declared "enemy combatants" and imprisoned at GTMO, the government has argued that the Constitution does not apply to them.

Initially, the Bush Administration denied detainees the right of habeas corpus: the constitutional right to challenge in court the lawfulness of their imprisonment. In 2008 the Supreme Court held in *Boumediene v. Bush* that detainees do have that right, confirming that at least some portions of the Constitution apply at GTMO. The Obama administration no longer uses the term "enemy combatants." Nevertheless, it continues to argue that some GTMO detainees may be held indefinitely.

Federal prisons, like the one in Terre Haute, Indiana, hold individuals convicted of terrorist acts. These terrorists, like the 1993 World Trade Center bombers and Timothy McVeigh, have stood trial and been convicted in US courts. Despite this record, some GTMO detainees face military trials, which have fewer fairness protections than our criminal justice system. After representing detainees at GTMO, Indiana Supreme Court Justice Steven David protested military trials, stating, "Our Constitution is not a handicap in the War on Terrorism."
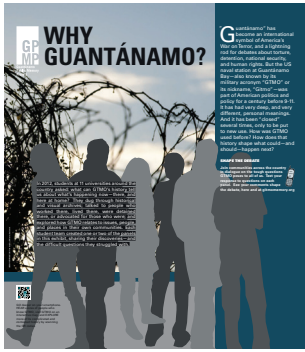
Have the events at GTMO hit home for you?

" It must be against some law for you to do this to me. "
– Adama Bah, falsely accused of terrorist activities

2001   2005   2006   2010

OUR POINT OF VIEW

We write as digital natives and students of history and culture. We have grown up during the War on Terror, and we—for the risk—just like you—of being incriminated by investigation and association. We believe that the legacy of Guantánamo matters and we believe it matters now.

– Indiana University - Purdue University Indianapolis

HEAR real stories
SEE more images
GO deeper
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Download pdf of all panels at: picture-projects.com/load/GTMO/panels.pdf

Themes

Each exhibit banner focuses on a different theme or time period in GTMO's history.

1. Introduction

Overview of the exhibit with monitor displaying continually updated visitor responses to "Shape the Debate" questions. (32"-40" monitor required in front of or positioned near this panel).

2. Where is Guantánamo?

An orientation to the base's geography and built environment.

3. What are the Consequences of Global Expansion?

How the US came to control the territory of Guantánamo Bay after the War of 1898.

4. What Laws Apply in a State of Exception?

The peculiar 1903 lease with Cuba that created GTMO's "legal black hole," and who it has impacted in the decades since.

5. How Do Policies Build Places?

The development of the base's infrastructure through WWII.

6. How do International Tensions Shape Everyday Lives?

Daily life for military families and Cuban workers on the base during the Cold War.

7. Who is a Refugee? What Makes a Refuge?

Experiences of Haitian refugees feeling Haiti who were interdicted at sea and held at GTMO from 1991-1994, including those in the infamous "HIV prison camp."

8. Safe Haven or Prison Camp?

Experiences of Cuban Refugees held at GTMO from 1994-1996, exploring refugees' diverse assessments of their time in tent cities.

9. Is the US Sacrificing Civil Liberties to Secure It Safety?

The legal battles over GTMO and its relation to debates over detention in the US. Includes statistics on GTMO prisoners since 9-11.

10. How has GTMO Affected America's Laws and Values?

Domestic repercussions of GTMO, including Islamophobia and "Little Gitmo" at Terre Haute, Indiana.

11. What Does Art Reveal About GTMO?

Art created by people detained at GTMO in different moments and for different reasons, with context of how the art was created and the role in played in detainees' experiences. Includes video on art of Cuban refugees with testimony from Cuban artists. (19"-22" monitor required in front of or near this panel)

12. How Do Memories of GTMO Survive?

How the military families who grew up at GTMO remember the base as a treasured home and maintain close ties with each other through reunions.

13. Who Decides GTMO's Future?

How GTMO has been "closed" before, and the variety of visions—both Cuban and American—for its future.

Multimedia and Visitor Participation

Multimedia content: Exhibit requires 2 monitors for content related to specific panels. Additional content can be projected from the web platform at www.gitmomemory.org, or venues can make the web platform available for visitors to explore on computers. Content includes:

❏ Video testimonies: 3-5 minute audio portraits from people who lived, worked, were detained at GTMO, or advocated for people there from the Cold War through the War on terror

❏ Interactive map of the base, including sites from Camp X-Ray to refugee tent cities to McDonald's, brought to life with personal testimonies

❏ Timeline of GTMO's history in images and testimony, from 1898 through the present.

Mobile multimedia: Using their smart phones, visitors can access video testimonies as well as deeper information on each panel's theme by scanning the QR codes on each panel.

"Shape the Debate": Visitor participation system that relies on mobile phones, requiring no equipment from the venue. Each panel includes a "Shape the Debate" question with instructions for how to text votes and comments on the big questions GTMO's history raises, such as "Is the US an Empire Today?" and "Should the US judge the quality of refugees it admits? On what basis?" Visitors can see their votes and comments shape the debate in the monitor at the start of the exhibit.
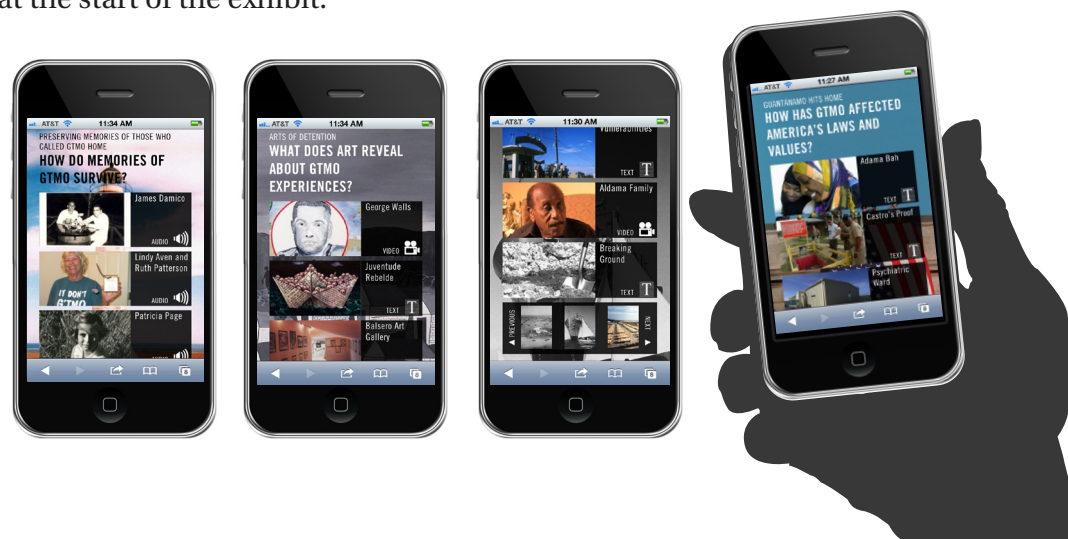
As foreign policies change, should the United States maintain permanent foreign bases?

Your Answers

67% YES | 33% NO

YES They are essential to maintaining our standing as a world leader
Submitted by SMS

NO The expense is too great for bases that serve little purpose
Submitted by SMS

YES History has shown us we must always be ready
Submitted by SMS

NO The United Nations is capable of handling foreign policy and conflict
Submitted by SMS

THIS WEEK IN GUANTÁNAMO: 1903 AND 2012

1903, December 10: Official control of Guantánamo Bay is "handed" to the U.S. in a ceremony on the battleship Kearsage. At noon on that day the Cuban flag is lowered and the American flag is raised. Only one Cuban is present at the ceremony.

2012, December 12: The Justice Department has ruled that the Obama administration does not have to disclose video showing the forced extraction of Guantánamo Bay prison detainees because doing so would be detrimental to national security.

PARTICIPATING UNIVERSITIES

ARIZONA STATE UNIVERSITY, TEMPE

BROWN UNIVERSITY

INDIANA UNIVERSITY-
PURDUE UNIVERSITY INDIANAPOLIS

NEW YORK UNIVERSITY

RUTGERS UNIVERSITY, NEW BRUNSWICK

THE NEW SCHOOL FOR PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

UNIVERSITY OF MASSACHUSETTS, AMHERST

UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, RIVERSIDE

UNIVERSITY OF MIAMI

UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

UNIVERSITY OF NORTH CAROLINA
AT GREENSBORO

UNIVERSITY OF WEST FLORIDA

View of Monitor Content in Introduction Panel

How Your University Can Participate

Invite your university to join the national dialogue in one or more of the following ways:

❏ Teach a course on GTMO using our teaching resources: over 11 universities have used our database of primary and secondary multimedia resources and our sample curriculum to teach courses or units on GTMO's history and the challenges of its public memory.

❏ Host the exhibit, and use it as a catalyst for conversation in your community. The exhibit is traveling through the end of 2014, but can be shown simultaneously in multiple venues, with conversations facilitated between host communities. Check out the exhibit schedule to identify potential conversation partners in other regions – or host it in 2015 and beyond.

❏ Host public programs using our speakers' bureau of experts– from scholars to people with direct experience – on a diversity of issues

❏ Facilitate local dialogues using our dialogue kits to host conversations about GTMO and the questions it raises in your own communities

❏ Invite your students and/or communities to contribute to GTMO's public memory by conducting additional oral histories, creating digital mini-exhibits for the web platform, or even creating an additional exhibit panel that gives your take on an underrepresented theme. Student work can be displayed at subsequent venues and on the website.

Participating Universities

Students and faculty from the following universities participated in creating the Guantánamo Public Memory Project.

Hub Institution

❏ Columbia University, Institute for the Study of Human Rights

University Partners

❏ Arizona State University, Tempe, Public History

❏ Brown University, Public Humanities

❏ Indiana University – Purdue University Indianapolis, Museum Studies and Public History

❏ The New School for Social Engagement, Oral History

❏ New York University, Center for Latin American and Caribbean Studies, Museum Studies Program, Public History and Archives

❏ University of California, Riverside, Public History

❏ University of Massachusetts, Amherst, Public History and Art History

❏ University of Miami, Documentary Production

❏ University of Minnesota, History

❏ University of North Carolina, Greensboro, Public History

❏ University of West Florida, Public History

Exhibit Schedule

The exhibit is scheduled to travel to the following venues. However, if your institution wishes to host it during one of the times below, you may display an additional copy at the same time as another venue, with conversations facilitated between host communities.

Dates	Venue
December 13 2012 – February 10 2013	Kimmel Windows Gallery, New York University, New York, NY
February 18 – March 29 2013	Douglass Library, Rutgers University, New Brunswick, NJ
April 8 – May 12 2013	Cultural Arts Gallery, Indiana University-Purdue University Indianapolis, IN
May 20 – Summer 2013	California Museum of Photography, Riverside, CA
September 11 – October 9 2013	Herter Gallery, University of Massachusetts, Amherst, MA
October 16 – November 29 2013	Phoenix Public Library, Phoenix, AZ
December 6 2013 – January 2014	International Civil Rights Center and Museum, Greensboro, NC
February – March 2014	Minnesota History Center, St. Paul, MN
April – May 2014	Historic Pensacola Village, Pensacola, FL
Fall 2014	University of Rhode Island Feinstein Providence Campus Gallery, Providence, RI

Exhibit Components

Provided:

13 Banners - W 70" x H 80", 108 linear feet.
Digital prints on durable soft knit polyester;

Wall/ceiling hanging elements*: 6" invisible hooks
26 3/4" wood dowels, 13 with end caps for hanging

DVD: Arts of Detention

For Panel 1- "Introduction"
Mac mini computer to display url: http://gitmomemory.
org/televisual-monitor/?panel=2&refresh=5

Additional equipment: (required, not provided)

For Panel 1- "Introduction"
32"-40"1080p monitor
Monitor stand**, Power outlet, Internet access

For Panel 11- "Arts of Detention"
19"-21"monitor
DVD player or monitor flash drive capability
Monitor stand**, Power outlet

Additional equipment optional to display additional
multimedia content, not provided
For end of exhibition (or as space permits)
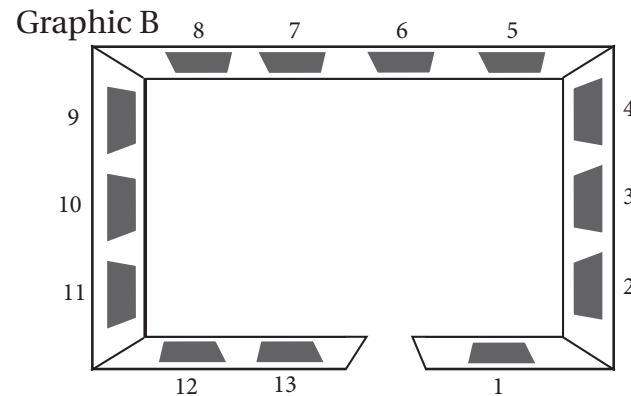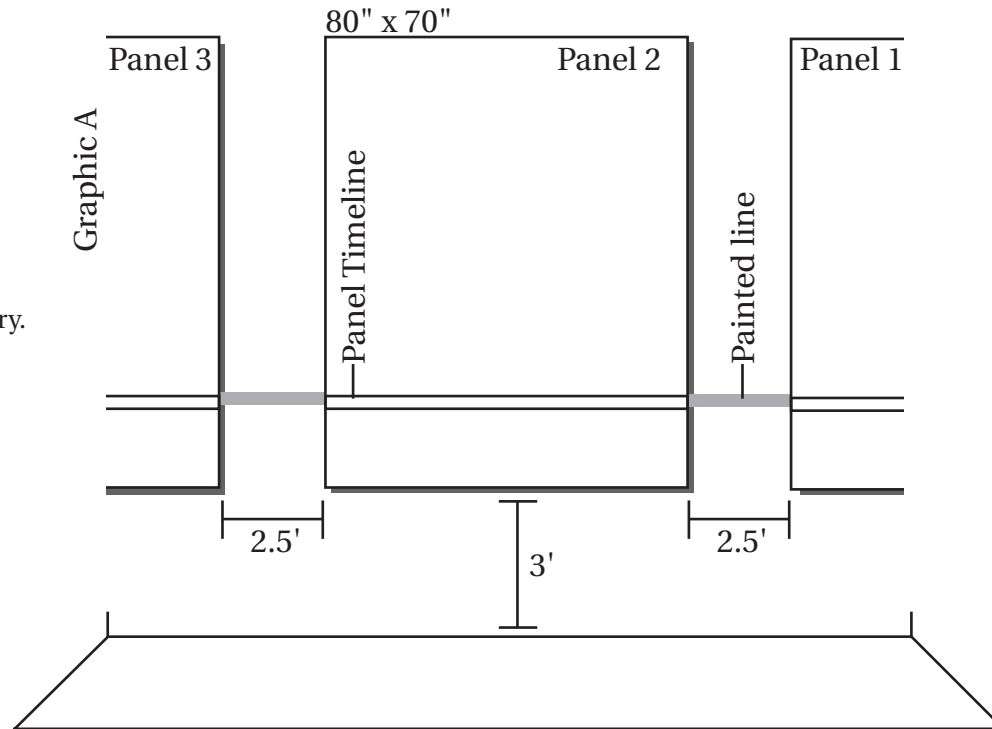Computer (for website display and use)
with mouse, keyboard and sound card
Computer stand***, Headphones, Power outlet,
Internet access

Exhibit Display

Detailed installation instructions can be downloaded at:
picture-projects.com/load/GTMO/instructions.pdf
- Hang panels 3 feet from ground level and at least 2.5
  feet between panels
- Align timeline graphic near the bottom of the panels.
- Display panels chronologically from right to left as
  shown in graphic B.
- (Optional) A line may be painted behind the panel,
  aligned with the panel timeline as shown in graphic A.

Graphic A

Panel 3   80" x 70"   Panel 2   Panel 1

Panel Timeline

Painted line

2.5'   3'   2.5'

Graphic B

8   7   6   5

9   4

10   3

11   2

12   13   1

* Alternative hardware may be used as desired. A good hardware supplier is www.
  rosedisplays.com. They have many hooks and make hanging hardware called "gotcha
  bars" which affix to ceiling and hold graphics via horizontal bars.

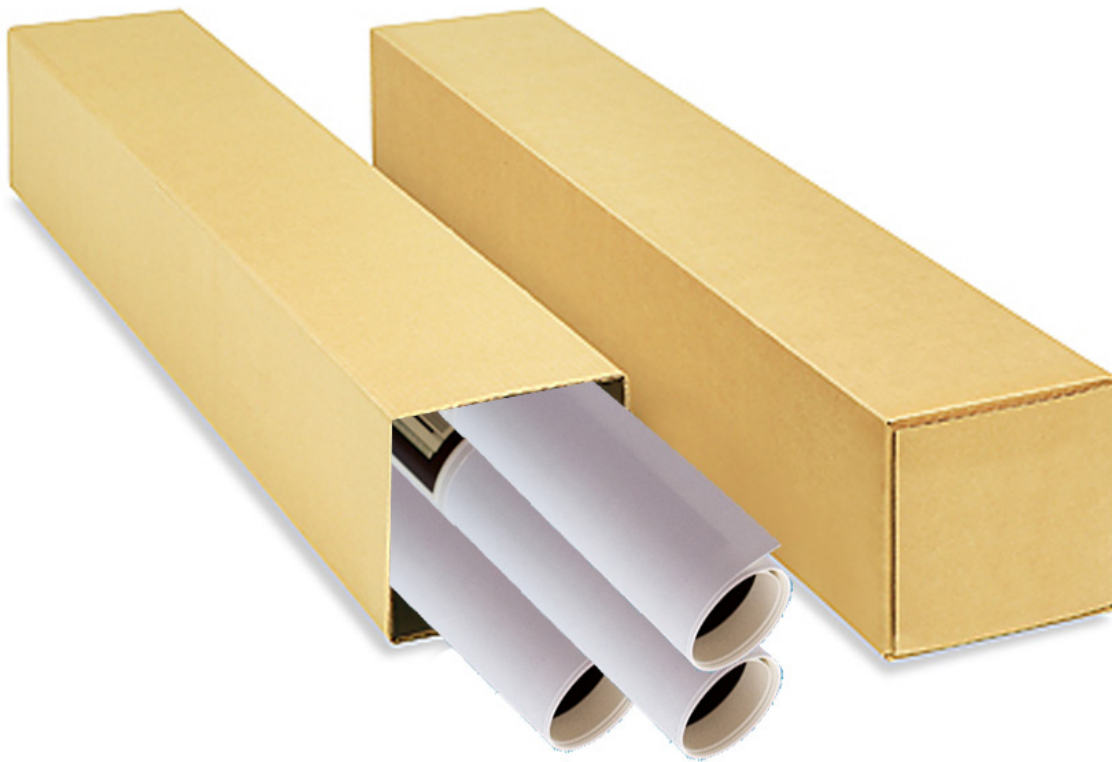** Size for monitor stands may vary depending on the monitor size.

*** Computer stand should be high enough for a standing guest.

Shipping

Two 8 x 8 x 85" 2-piece Telescopic Boxes for domestic shipping are provided.

Weight: approximately 20 lbs each

Each box will contain 6-8 panels rolled around their dowels (in seam pockets at the top and bottom) wrapped in bubble wrap.

Pricing and Specifications

Contents	13 (thirteen) 70" x 80" digital prints on durable soft knit polyester; wall/ceiling hanging elements: 26 1/2" wood dowels with 13 pairs of end caps; Mac Mini; Apple mini display port to VGA adapter. Additional equipment required (not provided): 32"-40" 1080p monitor with internet access; 19"-21" monitor, both monitors with stands
Size	108 running feet, est. min. (with 2.5" minimum space between panels) Up to 180 linear feet as space allows
Supplemental Resources	Associated curriculum; dialogue kits; speakers' bureau (all provided)
Participation Fee	$7,500 per 12-week booking period plus shipping (shipping materials provided)
Shipping Size & Weight	Two 8 x 8 x 85" boxes of approximately 20 lbs each. Estimated cost for domestic shipping $50-500
Security	Limited
Contact	guantanamo@columbia.edu