

By Helen Schietinger

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When John Yoo was to speak on the George Washington University campus in a debate hosted by the student chapter of the Federalist Society, Anagha Bharadwaj, a GWU law student who joined WAT at the inauguration, needed support from WAT to protest his presence. We immediately put out the call and two days later a trusty band of local activists showed up for the noon debate at the law school, including folks from Code Pink, TASSC, Vets for Peace and the South Korean peace movement. Campus police arrived to inform us that we weren't allowed to protest on campus: no signs, no picketing, no chanting on their hallowed grounds. But our showing on the public sidewalk in front of the building was articulate.

The Jacob Burns Moot Court Room was crowded — GWU Law is apparently teeming with Federalists — but Maha saved a couple of seats in the front row. She wasn't allowed to bring her rolled up banner into the room, but David Barrows and I walked in wearing orange jump suits with no problem. The panelists — the liberal faculty member Jonathan Turley and Yoo — made collegial jokes about the protesters outside, but there was no mention of the theatrical orange in the room. Not even when I donned my hood for Yoo's presentation. As Yoo defended presidential war powers, the outside protesters moved from the street to the windows behind him and began chanting. Their signs were visible to the audience and the chants provided a chorus that Yoo made light of in his remarks. During Turley's talk, defending Congress's rightful responsibility for war powers, he also emphasized the fact that torture is illegal and a war crime, but without implicating Yoo or the Bush administration. That gave me the opportunity to disrupt twice, identifying Yoo as the author of the torture memos and the architect of Bush's torture regime. I told Yoo he should be prosecuted for war crimes. As I left

the room, he said, "See you next time" and I responded, "See you in court."

Student activism is alive and well in the hallowed halls of GWU!