Producing Pacification:
The Disciplinary Technologies of Smart Bombs and National Anti-War Organizing

Thesis

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Abstract

The disciplinary technology of pacification works as a tool, embedded within the logistical assemblage of liberalism, which works to maintain lines of force necessary for reproducing liberalism’s conditions for existence. Chapter One develops this conceptual framework, situating my approach in relation to Foucaultian scholarship on biopolitics and war. The proceeding chapters are an exploration of two different cases that demonstrate radically different contexts in which the pacification-assemblage-force assemblage is mobilized. In Chapter Two, I consider smart bombs as a disciplinary technology of pacification within the assemblage of ‘virtuous war’, tracing effects of the affective force of the bombs. And Chapter Three is a criticism of the current national anti-war strategy and concludes with a brief suggestion on a new paradigm – affectivism – that recenters a politics of resistance on deploying minor knowledge to produce new potentialities. Each one of the three elements of the triad, the disciplinary technology of pacification, the form of the concrete assemblage, and schematically mapping the topography of lines of force, are crucial components to the political analytics.
Dedication

For Tristan
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The idea for the thesis began while preparing for the National Debate Tournament in 2006. Without debate and the experiences provided to me by the debate team of the University of Missouri – Kansas City, I would never be where I am today. A draft version of Chapter Two was written while I was doing anti-war organizing in Santa Barbara, CA. Without the support of my friends and comrades there, my desire to rethink and challenge the military-industrial complex would have just been passing fascination. I would like to thank everyone who has taken the time to look over my chapters and give comments, especially Jedidjah de Vries, Darwin Bond-Graham, Jordan Camp, Daniel Olmos, and Rebecca Adelman. The participants in George Mason’s 2008 Graduate Conference in Cultural Studies “Histories of Violence” were particularly helpful and supportive, in particular Michael Lecker.

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Chapter 1: Tracing Lines of Force in the Biopolitics of Liberal War

They make a desert and call it peace.
- Tacitus

What is Biopower?

Foucault’s development of biopower in The History of Sexuality is extraordinarily rich. The chapter where he develops the concept is not grounded on the dense historico-empirical research that is characteristic of the majority of his work. For contemporary scholars this seems to cut both ways – maintaining a fidelity to Foucault becomes much easier because biopower is not circumscribed by historical-political contexts in the same way that his genealogies of madness, criminality, or sexuality were; on the other hand, some uses of biopolitics and biopower betray the trajectory of Foucault’s other work, reducing its consequences to either a mechanical extension of the same (like the tired liberal reading) or indirectly eliminating the sites of contingency that are crucial for developing a Foucaltian politics. This chapter will consider a variety of interpretations of biopower and biopolitics that have been developed by Foucault’s interlocutors. My task is not to challenge them on the basis of their authenticity but instead identify readings that maintain and extend the analytic force found in the concepts of biopolitics and biopower.
Biopower and biopolitics occupies a scant twenty-four pages in *The History of Sexuality, Volume 1*, and a few abbreviated remarks in the rest of Foucault’s published work – though they were touched on in Foucault’s lectures, which are being slowly published. They are also the most speculative part of his whole work, or at least the most speculative part of the histories of sexuality. This may be because biopower bridges the gap between the present moment and the historico-political analysis of Victorian sexuality. The move is somewhat uncharacteristic for Foucault: the majority of his work focuses on developments in modern France from the Enclosure Movements through the 19th Century, and when he begins his genealogy of sexuality in the last two volumes of the history, his analysis doesn’t go beyond ancient Greece and early Christianity. Earlier in Foucault’s scholarship, when his focus was primarily on archaeology, he even remarked that a rigorous analysis of epistemes is not possible until they had passed. As his structuralist inflections began being overshadowed by more genealogical writings like *Discipline and Punish*, it became increasingly apparent that his work, in spite of its focus on earlier centuries, was meant to disrupt the present.

Biopower is the name Foucault gives to the shift of modern power in the West. In the political realm, biopower is overshadowed by classical sovereign power until it emerges co-constitutively with capitalism to replace the power of the King. The key formulation of biopower is an inversion of the sovereign right to decide life and death that, for classical sovereignty, is limited only to taking life or letting live. Sovereign power operates through massive rituals of power that seize and extract, penalize and kill (through taxes, conscription, and public torture) and later through the development of a
disciplinary power that monitors, regulates and orders bodies in isolated zones of exclusion (like the military barracks, clinic, the hospital, and the prison). Modern political revolutions cut the off the head of the king, declaring the power of the people. The value of life is therefore no longer centered on the singular body of the sovereign; it now hovers at the site of the whole population. Biopower rearticulates the disciplinary techniques of power that uses sites of overt exclusion to manage public life, complementing or even preempting them with subtler types of control – through an intensification of surveillance and monitoring, biopower is more sensitive to the already existing forces within social bodies. Biopolitical strategies don’t oppose power by destroying it – which would require intensive investment to eliminate whatever already exists and build up a new system from the ground up – but instead subvert, redirect, intensify, or multiply already existing flows (of sexuality, migration, finance, natural resources, violence) to maximize intended outcomes with the defense and expansion of the population as its ultimate aim. The blunt force of the sword fades to become a hidden backdrop for the quiet scalpels of an army of technicians – petit sovereigns whose self-cultivation works on the life of the population.

**Productive Power**

Critical to Foucault’s formulation of biopower is a productive understanding of power. *The History of Sexuality* is where Foucault develops a formal critique of juridical power, which operates according to what he calls ‘the repressive hypothesis.’ When power is understood as negative, in the repressive hypothesis, then it only functions as a sort of ‘anti-energy’ that restricts, binds, prevents, prohibits and censors. In place of the
repressive hypothesis, Foucault posits an alternative understanding of power that acknowledges the productive effects of power. According to this view, even as power restricts and censors, it has generative effects.

*The History of Sexuality* functions as a case study in the productive aspects of power, highlighting how the Victorian attempt to restrict sexuality birthed a scientific discourse which produced a “great surface network” that stimulated bodies, intensified pleasure, incited discourse, formed knowledges and strengthened controls and resistance (105-6). Four historical figures Foucault identifies as being produced by this new linking of knowledge and power surrounding Victorian sexuality are the hysterical woman, the masturbatory child, the Malthusian couple and the perverse adult (104). These four subjects emerge from the meeting point of a multiplicity of strategies deployed as a result of the Victorian anxiety over sexuality, ultimately creating a unity of sex-discourse-power (103). What makes Foucault’s analysis so important is that these subjects did not pre-exist the Victorian era and merely became intelligible through new scientific modes of inquiry. Instead, as the new science of sexuality sought to control and limit sexuality, it also developed, provoked and induced otherwise disparate and contingent practices and knowledge, redirecting social forces in a way that caused the emergence of new sexual subjectivities.

An analytics of power changes if the productive effects of biopower are taken into account. Without a sovereign to act as the singular referent for all relations of power, the production of power is relocated to a multiplicity of sites. Instead of relying on a naïve
humanism that would assume essential aspects of human rationality, desire, and sociality, productive power allows one to create a social topology that accounts for reproducing life. Additionally, productive power shifts the terms of debate away from freedom and repression. Freedom implies that social, political, economic and cultural forces inhibit an otherwise unfettered subject. Instead, productive power proposes that different potentialities are to be increased or restricted as they are produced (increasing efficiency or productivity at performing certain tasks, added responsiveness to certain discursive pronouncements), but in a manner that is always radically circumscribed by its conditions of possibility because they rely on their conditions of possibility for their reproduction. Put another way, freedoms are produced, not liberated.

Other Sites of Biopower

There has been a considerable amount of scholarship developed around the account of biopower given in The History of Sexuality. Biopolitics has opened up a whole field of thought. One development, and maybe the one requiring the least leg-work, is extending Foucault’s analysis of sexuality itself. In The History of Sexuality, Foucault is very clear in stating that sex is the key pivot or intersection between the two forms of biopower – the disciplining of the body and the regulation of populations (145). Reproduction and sexuality, especially within feminism and queer theory, are fields of study that easily appropriate biopower. Additionally, sovereignty studies ranging from Critical Legal Studies, Critical International Relations and the governmentality critique of liberalism to more philosophical work like that of Agamben and Hardt and Negri, focus on biopower as a way to refigure how political power operates within the contemporary moment.
Lastly, there has been some scholarship (albeit uneven) on the politicization ‘of life itself’ which casts a broad net, covering such diverse topics as patenting living organisms, bioethics and the politics of biological research, the medicalization of deviance and aberrance, and the production of life. Of the approaches listed above, most use the history of sexuality books, *Discipline and Punish* and maybe the few abbreviated translations of Foucault’s lecture series as points of departure.

New analyses are beginning to emerge, however. As Foucault’s Collège de France lectures from the 1970s are slowly being translated into English, new perspectives on how Foucault theorized biopower are setting the stage for a much more ambitious development of biopower. Other than sexuality, there are two other fields of biopower developed by Foucault that Anglo-American scholars have utilized to broaden the scope of biopower as an analytic tool.

The first field of biopower involves social conflicts over sovereignty. Foucault does a historico-political analysis of social order, equating it to a form of warfare “going on beneath order and peace” (*SMBD* 59). In other works, Foucault mentions the idea in passing as an inversion of Clausewitz’s famous maxim, changing “war is politics by other means” to the Foucaultian “politics is war by other means.” *Society Must Be Defended* is the first text where Foucault explicitly connects societal conflicts with biopolitics. The argument is that there was a general economy of alliance, group conflict and relations of force that operated differently when the State did not hold a monopoly on war. As the State gains a monopoly on force, day-to-day warfare was effaced by a normalizing
discourse of society that was deployed by technicians and professionals to cleanse the social body of conflict (48-9). The discourse of war was first erased by the principle of national unity and then further displaced by the emergence of biopower which linked State control with the disciplinary anatomo-politics of the body and the biopolitical technologies of the population (239-40).

The other field of biopolitics developed by Foucault is political economy. In *The Birth of Biopolitics*, Foucault develops a careful account of the emergence of the neo-liberal subject, *homo oeconomicus*, in the 20th century. The self-fashioned subject of post-war liberalism, in many ways a reaction to European fascism, provides the foundation for a self-entrepreneurial *homo oeconomicus* that works to maximize human capital. The key shift from liberalism to neo-liberalism is a subject whose economic nature is not just to exchange, but to economize and compete in all aspects of life, maximizing return on investment in life – in the family with children and reproduction, at work as a manager or a wage-slave, or even in leisure time – the neo-liberal ideal is to extend a rationality of economic calculation completely.

These fields are illuminating, not merely because of the care and detail given to specific examples, but mostly because they indicate the extensiveness of biopower ignored by much Anglo-American work on Foucault. The unfortunately reality of much of the scholarship on biopower is that it often involves mechanical applications of subjects mentioned in Foucault’s published work. Not to reduce the consequence of many important contributions, but Foucault-inspired research often underplays the radical ways
in which biopower may challenge the contemporary understanding of topics not mentioned in *Discipline and Punish* or the histories of sexuality. Sexuality, biotechnology, surveillance and criminality might be a good beginning for discussing biopower, but they are surely not the end of analysis. The new fields opened up by Foucault’s *Society Must Be Defended* lectures alone – language, labor, race, class, war, peace, the State, and society – extend the horizon for thought far beyond what has become the Foucaltian canon. The challenge is to continue working in and beyond the limits of previous Anglo-American uses of biopower, using the recently translated lectures as guide for more ambitious scholarship.

**A Biopolitical Take on War: Logistical Life**

War may be a too obvious site for considering biopolitics. If nothing else, it is a probably the most dramatic object of inquiry for biopower. As noted in *The History of Sexuality*, war in the age of biopolitics is no longer waged in the name of the sovereign, it instead sets the stakes of war on the survival of the whole population, tied to threats to its biological existence. It is in this moment that we see the wholesale slaughter brought about in modern war – total wars that deploy technologies that tend toward complete annihilation or the game of nuclear deterrence that threatens most life on earth (137).

Julian Reid’s *The Biopolitics of the War on Terror* includes an incisive reading of Foucault. In the book he considers how the biopolitical aim of life is used to advance the war on terror. Biopolitics, he argues, has given rise to a form of life invested in producing militarism and ultimately death:
“Logistical life is a life lived under the duress of the command to be efficient, to communicate one’s purposes transparently in relation to others, to be positioned where one is required, to use time economically, to be able to move when and where one is told to, and crucially, to be able to extol these capacities as the values which one would willingly, if called upon, kill and die for.” (13)

The key to Reid’s reading of Foucault is his suggestion that most scholars overlook Foucault’s unique formulations that work to describe the management of populations through war under liberalism. His argument draws heavily on *Discipline and Punish* and *Society Must Be Defended* to argue that liberal regimes reduce society to a docile population through massive logistical controls. Those controls work on both registers of biopower: the disciplinary tactics of the body that individuate subjects and establish a predictable social order, and the biopolitics of the population which create strategies that regulate collective bodies of population. What Reid accuses others of forgetting is the investment in a system of logistics that such a system requires to continue operating. Not only are bodies part of a social order, which Reid argues is deeply rooted in logistics, but they are invested in that social order as a way of life. Liberalism’s commitment to the population is then less about ideologically specific socio-historical political forms (like the GOP or identity politics groups) but the logistical apparatus necessary to keep the population alive (but alive enough only to maximize reproduction, as Agamben would remind us). And while debates about how best way to secure the logistical life of the population may be politicized, conflicts are tempered by a higher principle – the docile peace that maintains a stable enough social order to maximize the logistical potential of society.
The strategy used to produce and maintain a docile population, argues Reid, deploys the technologies of pacification invented by the military sciences. Logistics are then a means to achieve greater pacification, whether by producing subjects that will also contribute to the pacification of society or by accumulating disciplinary techniques to more effectively wage war on those not willing to stay pacified (Reid 17-8). Liberal society has inherited the military science origins of disciplinary power and in the transformation from its purely military context, it has smuggled in militarism as it generalized the use of disciplinary techniques to perfect the conditions for reproducing and extending logistical life. War is not the opposite of liberalism then, but rather the task it is always preparing for and enacting, either in the millions of small disciplinary interventions of everyday life or through the regular militaristic mobilization of troops and armaments. {‘If we don’t get them with the internet and video games, we’ll get them with our guns and bombs.’}

By privileging the pacification of the population above the status of any individual subject of a nation-state, war in the age of logistical life complicates the conception of inside/outside that is central to classical international relations. It is not just about capturing the king, as in chess and medieval warfare but securing a way of life for the whole population. One of these complications involves stripping the exceptional status of subjects that nationhood or citizenship would usually protect. Since the aim of biopolitics is the passive survival of collective populations, anything that threatens logistical life becomes a threat that must be managed. The War on Terror is a clear demonstration of this logic: it mobilizes a discourse that claims that there are abject bad
subjects – terrorists – whose political expression threatens the most crucial aspect of liberalism – well-ordered logistical life – and that they therefore must be eliminated from the global logistical order or threatens the dissolution of the logistical way of life. But while terrorists are a paradigmatic case, the variety of subjects that could be classified as a threat to logistical life is almost endless – if a subject is perceived as too disruptive, too unpredictable or too costly, the protections of logistical life are withdrawn and the subject is left to fend for itself and potentially die (Open 38). This leaves us with an unsettling question: how thin is line (or as Agamben would note, the möbius strip) that separates this way of life from Kafka’s giant bureaucratic assemblages or Terry Gilliam’s Brazil?

A second complication, as Foucault’s genealogy of the emergence of liberalism in *Security, Territory, Population* indicates, is that the limits of logistical system of modern nation-states have spread far beyond the territorial boundaries of the State (51-71). As nation-states work to secure and expand their logistical potential, wars take on an increasingly administrative function that look more like policing actions. The official justifications for the war in Iraq barely concealed the fact that the United States saw Iraq as an impediment to its expanding logistical apparatus – a combination of Iraq being in control of major geo-strategic resources and the belligerence of Iraqi leader’s refusals to submit to United States hegemony (*Afflicted Powers* 102-7). Reid’s definition of logistical life must be expanded in order to discuss the character of how and why wars are engaged, however. In particular, opening up logistical life to an analysis of the changing political economy would ground logistical life in the concrete particularities of the changing capitalist mode of production. Despite his very public distance from the party
Marxism of the PCF, Foucault’s recently translated Collège de France lectures show that his later intellectual work was highly informed by political economy. Especially because liberalism’s form is so intimately tied to the economic subjects it produces, this may be the most fruitful ground for modifying and extending Reid’s book, especially in light of *The Birth of Biopolitics* lectures touched on above.

**Dispositifs, Assemblages, and Logistical Life**

What is the exact content of logistical life and what is its history? Upon further investigation, Reid’s definition reads like the general requirements of modern soldiers, which would coincide with his argument that logistical life is an intensification of the social using the disciplinary technologies developed by military science to control populations.¹ Reid’s soldier-citizen analog may be making too literal of a connection between military organization and its import into society as a generalized phenomenon. First, it is a remarkably un-genealogical move. As Foucault notes in “Nietzsche Genealogy History”, siting truth in a single expressivist origin merely creates a prison of essentialism and teleology. A properly genealogical project would instead “dispel the chimera of the origin” by considering concepts part and parcel with the play of forces that brought about their emergence (145-50). Second, Foucault also places the monastery as a site for the nascent beginnings of discipline. While this problematizes Reid’s initial claims, which if taken too simply, draws a straight line between military organization and the logistical life of liberalism, it could ultimately pay off by shifting the focus of the

¹ How well this compares to the “police state” found in *Security, Territory, Population* bears further investigation.
analysis of logistical life from its inception to its reproduction. The commitments of logistical life necessary to reproduce its conditions for sustainability are always shifting: if the aim is to intervene within currently existing liberalism, the origins of logistical life are relatively unimportant compared to its contingent composition and ability to shift/change. For instance, there may be certain requirements for citizens to follow that would seem to be coextensive with other liberal and neo-liberal values, like private property or conspicuous consumption, but which may be at odds with an imperative to always move when being told or to be efficient in all areas of life. The risk is that Reid gives too much weight to liberalism’s ontological origins of logistical life, which focus analysis on the facticity of a stable identity of logistical life, concealing sites of potential resistance. For example, when delivering a damning critique of liberalism, Reid claiming that war is an essential characteristic of liberal societies, “the declaration of liberal regimes’ war without end against Terror only serves to bring to light what was essentially true of liberal societies from their beginnings; their subjection to a form of regime dedicated not the removal of war from social relations, but to the reduction of life to principles deriving from the organization for war as a necessary condition of existence” (Reid 34). Though it works well for strongly criticizing liberalism, this overarching characterization obscures the qualitative differences that might exist between different liberalisms and their relation to war. Instead of developing counter-factuals to discount Reid’s concept of logistical life, I propose amending it by placing war as one among many tendencies of liberalism within a contested field of forces.
Foucault’s dispositif and Deleuze and Guattari’s assemblage are both models that would add a level of ‘epistemological humility’ to Reid’s claims. A dispositif, for Foucault, is a heterogeneous system that connects its constituent elements through relations of power and knowledge (Power/Knowledge 194-6). Foucault notes that his method follows the counter-intuitive claim that the phenomenon he’s examining doesn’t exist. And instead of trying to establish the facticity, truth, or cause of its emergence, he asks how events and practices can be organized around something that never existed (Birth of Biopolitics 3, 33). Drawing from the range of notes Foucault made about his methodology, we can surmise that the connections between its elements are not be based on linear or expressive causality, but are be based on partial, multiple, and indirect immanent relationships. A dispositif has no essential constitutive elements, it is only the product of numerous contingent forces in an encounter. As the elements and their force are intensified, reproduced, diminished, or replaced, the characteristics of the dispositif also change. The concept was developed in order to describe formations, at any given historical moment, while maintaining a commitment to the radical contingency, indirect causal relationship, and weak ontology of its constituent elements. While similar to his work in Archaeology of Knowledge, dispositif is put to use in more capacious ways. Unfortunately, Foucault never developed his account of dispositif in any detail, making it difficult to find specifically articulated ways to distinguish it from the forms developed according to his archaeological method. The concept of strata, which Deleuze uses when translating archaeology into his own conceptual system, works as a bridge between archaeology and

2 Is this also what Foucault in Security, Territory, Population calls a milieu (where he footnotes canguilhem on basically a proto-auto-poesis-esque paper on biology?)
dispositif. The use of strata is an attempt to make explicit the super-lingusitic semiology that is present in Foucault’s work that often gets ignored when systematized. The two critical elements in strata are its forms of content and expression that establish a complex set of relations between discursive and non-discursive elements (Foucault 48-51). Later, Deleuze argues that the archaeological task is to open up the discursive and non-discursive content of strata, making visible what and who is being spoken (52-60). As Reid’s analysis shows, Foucault’s later work retained but also moved beyond the problematics of archaeology’s focus on what is being spoken. Therefore, it may be useful to buttress Foucault’s dispositif with Deleuze and Guattari’s notion of an assemblage. Similar to the dispositif, an assemblage is a collection of disparate elements, what in physics is referred to as a multiplicity. Assemblages never make up a totality, there is always too much or too little, yet there are usually some elements that have cohered enough to create a contingently stable form.

The use of dispositif and assemblage aims to re-open certain aspects of logistical life to contingency and to resituate it within an even greater field of contingent forces. The connection between the militaristic emergence of disciplinary techniques of power and the contemporary logistical way of life may be much more complicated than the account developed by Reid may indicate. Logistical life likely has no fixed content, but rather involves a large range of overlapping and contradictory propositions. Even as one tries to “set the truth straight” and resolve the contradictory content, another discursive justification would emerge in its place – anyone who has followed internet debates or the rationalization for the Iraq War would realize this. More is developed on this in Chapter
3 in order to challenge the liberal and fascist poles of knowledge production found in national anti-war organizing.

The alternative I propose is *tracing lines of force*, following a topological mapping of strategic points of intervention within a dispositif or assemblage. This mode of inquiry shifts from establishing the truth about phenomenon to a Nietzschean exercise of power. As Deleuze reminds us, we shouldn’t ask ‘What is power and where does it come from’, but instead ‘How is it practiced?’; how to develop a practice used “to incite, provoke and produce,…constitute active affects, while to be incited or provoked, to be induced to produce, to have a ‘useful’ effect, constitute reactive affects” (*Foucault* 71). Fitting with Foucault’s analytics of power, analyses would proceed to develop a strategy. This is not to abandon knowledge, but to understand the force of power and truth that is immanent to its productive capacity.

**Power is Everywhere**

Tracing lines of forces is an attempt to radicalize the supposition that power is everywhere. The liberal critique of Foucault is that he totalizes power, creating a totalitarian concept of power that makes individual or collective resistance possible. Critics like Habermas have gained considerable recognition for this misreading of Foucault’s productive conception of power. The humbler liberal response provides a ‘Prodigal Son’ interpretation of Foucault’s politics. These authors drive a wedge between Foucault’s genealogical period and his work on ancient Greeks in the last two histories of sexuality. The argument is that Foucault recognized that, faced with a
totalizing conception of power, he (re)turned to a liberal conception of ethical self-creation in order to find a site for resistance. The recently translated *Birth of Biopolitics* lectures would hopefully dispel this for any trying to retain a liberal reading. In the lectures, Foucault argues that economistic self-creation is the stuff of neo-liberalism. Jeffrey Nealon’s work in *Foucault Beyond Foucault* offers a provocative amendment to the argument from Foucault’s lectures: self-creation isn’t a normative sphere of life that works outside of and in opposition to biopower (as the liberals say) but a category of everyday life that has been colonized and intensified under neo-liberal capitalism (80). The political strategy that Nealon suggests is radically immanent, “the Foucaultian question or problem is not so much uncovering resistance, as it is a question of ‘tuning’ it -- finding channels, concepts, or practices that can link up and thereby intensify transversal struggles into larger, collective but discontinuous movements” (106).

Reid’s diagnosis of violence of liberalism falls into a trap similar to the liberal reading of self-fashioning. Convinced that an ever-increasing escalation of violence is the only trajectory liberalism can follow, he argues that Foucault’s response is completely inadequate. In turn, he spends the remaining chapters of the book investigating ‘counter-ontologies’ developed by other thinkers, ways of life Reid attributes to Foucault’s peers – Deleuze and Guattari’s nomadic life, Baudrillard’s defiant life, Virilio’s circulatory life, and Hardt and Negri’s biopolitical life. In the epilogue, after addressing these figures, Reid’s dissatisfaction is clear – liberalism’s violence seems to be becoming more open and violent and all of the Foucaultian subjects seem to provoke more violence, not escape it. Nealon’s point might be most prescient here: a properly Foucaultian strategy would
not be to uncover resistance but to link up and expand the sites of struggle that already exist. Reid’s yearning for a world without Terror does not exist and to “establish other ways of constructing the life of human being” is always already a biopolitical project (Reid 129). By tracing lines of force in liberalisms, however, we can identify key topological sites for cutting in to redirect liberalism, producing force that make it unfold otherwise. Reid’s observation that liberalism fails as a totalizing project can be pushed one step further – not only will liberalism always commit disciplinary policing violence because it will fail to secure all life under its totalizing rule, but liberalism’s failure will be complete when it can no longer reproduce its own conditions of existence and gives birth instead to a set of collective form of subjectivities. This will only happen by experimenting in intensifying points of resistance in the cracks and fissures of liberalism, redirecting them and multiplying their intersection within dispositifs of our own creation.

**Pacification—Assemblage—Lines of Force**

The constellation of theoretical concepts developed in the chapter combine to make the conceptual triad pacification-assemblage-force. The disciplinary technology of pacification works as a tool, embedded within the logistical assemblage of liberalism, which works to maintain lines of force necessary for reproducing liberalism’s conditions for existence. The proceeding chapters of the thesis are an exploration of two different cases that demonstrate radically different contexts in which the pacification-assemblage-force assemblage is mobilized. In Chapter Two, I consider smart bombs as a disciplinary technology of pacification within the assemblage of ‘virtuous war’, tracing effects of the affective force of the bombs. And Chapter Three is a criticism of the current national
anti-war strategy and concludes with a brief suggestion on a new paradigm – affectivism – that recenters a politics of resistance on deploying minor knowledge to produce new potentialities. Each one of the three elements of the triad, the disciplinary technology of pacification, the form of the concrete assemblage, and schematically mapping the topography of lines of force, are crucial components to the political analytics.

Conceptualizing how disciplinary technologies are pacifying is crucial for understanding how modern power works without the flagrant displays of might that were integral to sovereign power. To reiterate the contrast made above between productive power and the ‘repressive hypothesis’ – rather than limiting and controlling, pacification produces and maximizes social behavior that is patterned and predictable. The study of pacification in Chapter Two focuses on how smart bombs structure and produce both the battlefield of Iraq and the body politic at home. What makes smart bombs so well suited for logistical life is not their destructive capacity but their ability to rhetorically and affectively undermine the representations of chaotic destruction associated with ‘dumb bombs’. The smart bomb is characterized as a virtuous technology that delivers peace by destroying people and infrastructure but leaves the logistical life of ‘good guys’ intact – pacification at its finest. The pacification in Chapter Three can be characterized differently, rather than demonstrating the ‘creative destruction’ of disciplinary technology, it instead

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3 Pacification can be contrasted with ‘securitization’, which is concerned with studying how various exertions of force are legitimated according to appeals to authoritative knowledge. Pacification is more or less ambivalent to disputing the foundational logic of legitimated force and is more concerned with charting the interactions of disciplinary technologies and subjects, with an eye toward recuperation or resistance within liberalism and the State form.
focuses on how subjects can be made to participate in their own pacification. There are two groups I analyze. On the one hand there are liberal anti-war groups that are incredibly successful at incorporating large amounts of bodies and ideologies in mass mobilizations that result in high head-counts and colorful press events. In the process of organizing, however, the governmentalized management of anti-war populations invests in the same logistical system that motivates the nation to go to war. This is most apparent when considering the pacifying disciplinary technologies anti-war groups use to maximize specific forms of political representation. And on the other hand are authoritarian anti-war groups that have statized their organizations to the point where enough emphasis has been placed on intensifying disciplinary techniques that are used to maintain group membership to eclipse developing tactics useful to influencing other strategic aims. In both cases, the groups employ disciplinary techniques of pacification on their own constituencies, producing an extensive investment in logistical thinking that mediates the multiplicity of anti-war sentiments before they even gain audience with the State.

Both chapters utilize assemblage theory to explain how the disciplinary techniques of pacification act differently in each case. The smart bomb of Chapter Two can only be understood inside the context of ‘virtuous war’ – a system of signs, as well as political and military strategies that transform a smart bomb into the ‘virtuous bomb’. The smart bomb is interesting because of the specific way it puts in motion various elements of the assemblage of the Iraq War, most notably how re-structuring the visual modality of
perception of the battlespace through a mechanical eye folds back onto war planners. 4

Chapter Three also deploys the concept of the assemblage as an alternative topography for mapping anti-war strategy. In an attempt to think beyond mere ‘speaking truth to power’, it reformulates truth as valuable to the extent that speaking can intensify forces and influence other elements connected to the anti-war assemblage. Therefore strategies that seek to create a social totality from anti-war sentiment can be sidestepped completely, offering a suitable replacement for both governmentalized and authoritarian ways of organizing.

Lastly, tracing lines of force is crucial for creating strategies unique to the assemblage in which pacification technologies are deployed. There is a radical asymmetry between the cases of Chapters Two and Three. In Chapter Two, the virtuous bomb is used to flatten the social field. They were used in the dismantlement of the logistical apparatus, including the destruction of large parts of the country’s infrastructure and a complete restructuring of public institutions. In contrast, the pacification used by anti-war organizations in the United States explored in Chapter Three exists within a radically different social field that is dominated by strong well-established political parties, is saturated by capital and media giants, and involves subjects deeply invested in many aspects of militarized logistical life. Resistance to pacification must look substantially different within each context. And because the political of resistance I am proposing is radically immanent, tracing the lines of force within the each assemblage is a crucial step

4 As Deleuze and Guattari note in A Thousand Plateaus, “the manner in which a science, or a conception of science, participates in the organization of the social field, and in particular [the way in which it] induces a certain division of labor [e.g. intellectual/manual or social/technical] is part of that science itself” (364).
to exploring paths of resistance. Because disciplinary technologies are incomplete and exist more like a net than a surface, tracing lines of force is an experiment in finding how investments apply differently to the variety of elements within each assemblage. The relative force will vary in intensity and degree, opening up into multiple possible connection and determinations that can be followed. What is at stake by analyzing each case using pacification—assemblage—force is not a uniform strategy that can followed regardless of context, but a set of tools that can applied to cases in order to derive specific, contingent possibilities to break from the patterned behavior produced by pacification.
Chapter 2: Virtuous Bombs: Violence Actualized in Iraq

Fuzzy camera shots, scratchy audio from satellite links-ups and vaguely optimistic reports from embedded journalists broadcast the opening days of the second US invasion of Iraq. In viewers’ minds, however, the representations of uncertainty, the friction, accidents and miscalculations in the battlefield melted away with the repetitive loops of stock footage of smart bombs gliding through chimneys, cruise missiles gracefully firing from battleships at sea and airplanes flying at supersonic speeds in tight formations. No matter how hard we tried to resist, our living rooms became virtual continuations of the war itself. From our vantage point, buildings were being bombed but we never saw the signs of death; our remote control changed the channel but never allowed us to switch to a station that showed death and its consequences. Contrary to the assurances of talking heads and war planners, it wasn’t just reporters or those at home who were assailed by uncertainty. In a rare moment of admission, the military reported that the pilots who dropped the first bombs of the war were kept in the dark as well. Fighter pilots have been increasingly kept out of the loop with automated technologies and military need-to-know, but this time it was even more drastic. The opening salvo was self-guided, the pilots were technicians unaware of their enemy, the technology did all the dirty work. Only
after watching TV news back on base did the pilots learn that they had fired the first shots of the second Gulf War in an attempt to assassinate Iraqi President Saddam Hussein.\textsuperscript{5}

The social body, subjects and institutions caught in war’s shifting regime of signs have shifted their orbit around a new constellation of discursive orientations. No more is the twisted logic of ‘total war’ employed during Vietnam, a strategy that boasted about its violence by using body counts for discursive orientation. Also abandoned has been the ‘pure war’ of deterrence where the atomic shadowboxing of superpowers concealed bloody endocolonization and proxy wars.\textsuperscript{6} Instead, the United States now embraces what James Der Derian calls virtuous war, a ‘bloodless’ war whose application of force is considered purely ethical. As Der Derian describes it, virtuous war develops ‘the technical capacity and ethical imperative to threaten and, if necessary, actualize violence from a distance – with no or minimal casualties.’\textsuperscript{7} Virtuous war is an attempt to fulfill a dream of the Enlightenment, delivering a force that is complete and yet seemingly self-induced and therefore impossible to resist – a machine that renders its calculating logic invisible, obscuring the grotesque practices that are necessary for its maintenance.\textsuperscript{8} And in its most potent form, formal enemies cease to exist and an unspecified enemy becomes the primary target.\textsuperscript{9}

\textsuperscript{5} Lumpkin, John J. ‘Fighters Target Saddam on First Night of War,’ The Associated Press, 12 April 2003.
\textsuperscript{6} Virilio, Paul and Sylvère Lotringer. Pure War (Los Angeles: semiotext(e), 2007) 7-13.
\textsuperscript{7} Der Derian, James. ‘Virtuous War/Virtual Theory,’ International Affairs (Royal Institute of International Affairs), 76:4, October 2000, 772.
\textsuperscript{8} ‘Hence the major effect of the Panopticon: to induce in the inmate a state of conscious and permanent visibility that assures the automatic functioning of power. So to arrange things that the surveillance is permanent in its effects, even if it is discontinuous in its action; that the perfection of power should tend to render its actual exercise unnecessary; that this architectural apparatus should be a machine for creating and sustaining a power relation independent of the person who exercises it; in short, that the inmates should be caught up in a power situation of which they are themselves the bearers.’ From Foucault, Michel. Discipline & Punishment: The Birth of the Prison (New York: Vintage Books, 1995) 195-220.
The desire to exact absolute control via an invisible hand is part of the US military’s disciplinary techniques that attempt to turn sites of resistance into nodes in a regulatory economy of force in order to produce docile subjects. Smart bombs are an example of this power. They utilize the all-seeing mechanical eye to remotely control the battlefield and to condition sympathetic reception at home. When the smart bomb is inserted into the relations of force that produce virtuous war, it is transformed into a dangerous technique of power – the virtuous bomb. While there has been consideration theorization on virtuous war as the realm of the virtual, this paper seeks to investigate the friction created in the sticky materiality of virtuous war when it must actualize violence through the virtuous bomb. The official narrative of the smart bomb is that it is an ethical scalpel used in ‘surgical strikes’ in order to correct the path of a social body being led astray by ‘bad guys’. While it might be useful for convincing some, the American narrative of precision has not directly translated into success on the ground. The US tactical geometry conceals elements that might work to subvert its logic, therefore creating soft spots and points of leverage that are sensitive to attack by Iraqis who exploit its easily predictable patterns.

**Armchair Bombardiers**

What does a scanner see? Into the head? Down into the heart? Does it see into me, into us? Clearly or darkly? I hope it sees clearly, because I can't any longer see into myself. I see only murk. I hope for everyone's sake the scanners do better. Because if the scanner sees only darkly, the way I do, then I'm cursed and cursed again. I'll only wind up dead this way, knowing very little, and getting that little fragment wrong too.

10 The Congress that keeps on funding the war?
Watching the first Gulf War was a truly cinematic experience, straight out of an action movie. One of the shiny new ‘toys’ was the precision-guided smart bomb. But smart bombs must not be understood only as explosive devices that could wreak physical havoc, they are also affective machines that rain precision-tailored messages. The military doctrine informing the inaugural operation of the second Gulf War rests plainly on this abstraction. ‘Shock and awe,’ as the operation was named, called for ‘precise, surgical amounts of tightly focused force to achieve maximum leverage’ to cause the adversary to panic, surrender, or both.11 But its affective force is not unidirectional, as critic William Merrin notes, it ‘was designed to mobilize the home front. If its explosive power was aimed at the Iraqis, its implosive power was aimed at us to produce identification with the bomb rather than its anonymous victims.’12 Perfect for virtuous war. When the bomb exploded, the camera shut off and reporters then cut to sports highlights; audiences were not presented the horrific devastation wreaked by the bombs. In all the excitement, the ‘behind the scenes footage’ was simply left on the cutting room floor – omitting the key facts that only 3% of the bombs used in the first Gulf War were smart bombs and that they were not nearly as accurate as depicted.13

The smart bomb is also the weapon for the general who is seeking to establish a God’s eye view of the battlefield. War planners decided that the gaze of an invisible eye would improve not only precision, but would allow for a strategic edge on human perception.

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Therefore, most smart bombs now use Global Positioning System (GPS), a satellite navigation system that can determine pinpoint locations anywhere on the globe, accurate to 1 to 100 meters.\textsuperscript{14} Coordinates are loaded into a bomb before the aircraft even takes off. Abandoning human sight for GPS exhibits a confidence in tracking, a way of seeing that eliminates visualizing objects in favor of calculating their trajectory, shifting the focus from objects to ‘trajects.’\textsuperscript{15} This modality sets the stage for privileging pattern over presence in terms of knowledge and subjectification.\textsuperscript{16} First, anxiety over an inability to access an unmediated objective reality shifted reliance to the mechanical eye. Acting on this logic, humans subjects are placed as data-managers and controllers in a world of relational information systems – in the world of virtuous bombs, the pilot becomes a quiet technician, manipulating instruments in the cybernetic virtual cocoon of the cockpit.\textsuperscript{17} Such a move blames the limitations of human perception as the source of imperfections in attempts to perfectly order the world via force. With the switch to the mechanical eye, which is posited as perfectible, the world would be understandable and with surveillance comes punishment. Armed with the belief that technology will fulfill their will to order, Pentagon officials dream of cutting through messy details of the fog of war – ‘in only a few years, if the technological capabilities of America's enemies remain only what they are today, the US military could effectively achieve total battlespace knowledge.’\textsuperscript{18} This mode of visibility becomes agnostic to the elements, and within the

\textsuperscript{18} Davis, Mike. ‘Shock and Awe,’ \textit{Socialist Review}, March 2003.
battlespace individual elements disappear almost completely. Total war established bodies, objects, and things as key markers for controlling space and winning a war. Under the Cold War logic of pure war, certainty was transferred from the actual to the virtual – where the affective violence of nuclear deterrence was to remain virtual lest it become actualized on bodies and things through Armageddon.\textsuperscript{19} Under virtuous war, however, war planners have attempted to create a war that is understood in only virtual terms. Bodies, places, and things no longer exist as individual entities with unique ontological status, they are a virtual threat that is elusive and hard to find.\textsuperscript{20} But when the striating machine of virtuous war actualizes violence by inscribing it on real bodies and surfaces, there are material effects that are both violent and exceptional to its internal logic – later justified as accidents.\textsuperscript{21} We may never know all the reasons why the military doesn’t ‘do body counts,’\textsuperscript{22} but maybe they are humble enough to know they can no longer know which ones are the ‘good guys’ and which ones are the ‘bad guys.’ Or maybe, in an extreme act of hubris, the logic of virtuous war has imbued the US intervention with such ethical force that anyone who dares interfere with their benevolent mission has relegated themselves to an unoccupiable position – like the enemy fighter who remains an exceptional figure and without classification until after they are behind bars and has provided enough military information that they’ve earned themselves a

\textsuperscript{20} In-divisible individuals become divisible ‘dividuals.’ Deleuze, Gilles. ‘Postscript on Societies of Control,’ \textit{Negotiations} trans. by Martin Joughin (New York: Columbia 1995) 177-182.
\textsuperscript{1} http://www.globalsecurity.org/org/news/2002/020323-attack01.htm
name, or the Iraqi homes that are considered at best unimportant impediments to motion or even hostile territory when designated as ‘guerilla hideouts.’

Though the smart bomb works to affectively whitewash its own violence, no amount of virtual distraction could eliminate its devastating impact. The logical economy of virtuous war has emboldened commanders to use smart bombs on targets that required too high a degree of accuracy. The Kosovo air strikes were comprised of nearly 70% smart bombs, but ton for ton, they killed the same amount of civilians as Operation Rolling Thunder in Vietnam. While virtuous war may have been initially conceived of as a technique of legitimation, the modality of perception has produced a calculative logic used by commanders. The greater the ability to deliver precise, lethal devastation from above, the greater the blindness to the integral accidents caused by battlefield conditions and imperfect technology. Consider the opening shots of the second Gulf War: fifty precision attacks intended for Iraqi leadership. They caused over a thousand civilians casualties, yet no leadership figures were harmed. But as far as winning the war through sounds and images, 24-hour news stories were eager to broadcast news of the probable death of ‘senior leadership,’ with few outlets concerning themselves with the human cost or the strategic failures of the attack.

The camera-bomb is a technology of concealment that even war commanders are not immune to. The affective and rhetorical strength of the virtuous bomb is it that it is a

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precise technology that is meant to deliver an equally precise approach to diplomacy and death. As these bombs have an increasingly recursive influence on the logic of war planners, emboldened commanders target things that require more precision than the bombs are capable of delivering. The first use of GPS-guided bombs in the NATO/US bombing of Kosovo is a clear example of this. Aerial targeting focused on destroying symbolic targets that would maximize favorable press coverage but minimize civilian casualties. Yet when the Chinese Embassy was hit, one NATO official could only remark, ‘we hit what we were aiming for…but we did not mean to hit the Chinese Embassy.’

The top brass’s response is illustrative of how war planners steeped in an enunciative field of calculation. If the actualized violence of the bomb is concealed by the affective narrative of precision, failure is compartmentalized to mechanical malfunction instead of casting doubt on the whole field of terms the technology was produced from. And in a more generalized sense, it conceals the logic of virtuous war. Having normalized the patterned ways of thought that made the accident inevitable, they believed it was only a lapse in intelligence-gathering, an perspective that ultimately allowed them to reassert their faith in the technology despite its failure. Despite these glaring contradictions, the narrative of precision has created a positive feedback loop; the use of precision weapons has increased despite its failures, legitimated by generals who

28 See, Guattari, Felix. ‘Regimes, Pathways, Subjects,’ in Jonathan Crary and Sanford Kwinter, Incorporations (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1992) 18, who argues that technology not only develops representation concepts, but assemblages that modify the coordinates of understanding and communicating perception. In particular, the field of calculation is a complex assemblage that produces and organizes the stratum of the battlefield according to its metaphysical principles.
29 McPeak and Pape, 160-1.
assume they will purge technology of its flaws and a polis that is oblivious to the weaponry’s shortfalls.

In attempts to remedy the faulty intelligence problem, one solution has been to slice humans away from battlefield decision-making. Current technology still requires a commander at the helm, however.30 Because of the enormous amount of un-parsed information that is culled, commanders are often limited to the role of information managers who interpret the information flows from a detached, impersonal perspective.31 Commanders lodged within this calculative assemblage of enunciation often choose to rely on sensors, networks and computers to make decisions for them because they believe robots and mechanical eyes have a strategic edge over their own insight.32 Gradually, humans are being eliminated completely from the loop, eliminating direct and indirect observation. Paradoxically, as the military observer becomes more separated from the thing represented, they become more resolved in the object’s presence. Once this system is complete, synthetic images will become an enigma – images created by a machine for a machine.33 The question becomes: what is left to prevent the dark vision of miscalculation in Stanly Kubrick’s Dr. Strangelove from coming true, or are we edging closer to the nuclear precipice because of the arrogant mechanical system whose sightless vision would send a cavalier pilot to ride a nuclear bomb to Armageddon?

30 Davis, np.
31 The centralization of command structures is historically situated by De Landa, Manuel. War in the Age of Intelligence Machines (New York: Zone Books, 1991) 71-83. De Landa concludes that commanders’ desire to centralize command is a reaction to uncertainty, but it creates a positive feedback loop that ultimately increases uncertainty at all levels of command.
32 For a more developed discussion of this point, see Ryan Bishop and John Phillips, 158-9.
33 Virilio,1994, 60-4.
A Failing Occupation

But the nomad is not necessarily one who moves; some voyages take place *in situ*, are trips in intensity. Even historically, nomads are not those who move about like migrants. On the contrary, they do not move; nomads, they nevertheless stay in the same place and continually evade the codes of settled peoples.

-Gilles Deleuze, ‘Nomadic Thought’

As discussed earlier, the logic of virtuous war that gave birth to accuracy does not guarantee success. The increased precision and lethality of weapons in the second Gulf War did help guarantee the United States a quick victory against the standing army of Iraq. Purely technologized developments on the battlefield assumed war would be won virtually, leaving the actual physical violence minimal and with an outcome already known. There is much more to a war than just deterring or defeating a standing army, however, a fact that the United States has only reluctantly come to terms with.

With the initial invasion came the repeated assertion from US officials all across the executive agencies and the Pentagon: the US troops were to be liberators not occupiers. What a brilliant idea from the perspective of virtuous war. With precision-guided munitions and a well-engineered attack, the United States would cleanly eliminate a brutal tyrant who was holding down a population who, when liberated, would self-organize a functioning and fully developed (read: Western) country. To further clarify their role, the US choose to avoid obligations under the Hague Convention of 1907 and the 1949 Fourth Geneva Convention, that requires occupiers to restore order and

guarantee the wellbeing of the population. Liberators, the alternative role the US chose, are exempted from these laws. The US was to eliminate a blockage that was preventing the Iraqi population from self-organizing and thus have no obligation to maintain order. As the initial combat wound down and the United States sought to pacify the population and install a liberal bourgeois democracy, it became apparent that virtuous war was ignoring the biopolitical character of nation-building – soldiers ‘had orders to kill people, but not to protect them’ and things were going terribly wrong. At the time of writing this paper, America is still bogged down in a lengthy occupation, something that it had not been planned for. The soldier, the agent of the US government most prominent in Iraq, was provided with the next generation of technology developed to defeat a flanked adversary or an urban warrior. It was clear that they were much more prepared to engage a virtual enemy on the terrain of sounds and images than the actual, where elementary body armor and skills to maintain biopolitical control are needed.

The disciplinary power of precision-guided weapons used to eviscerate a standing military has actually proven to be a weakness for the occupying force. ‘Shock and awe’ was meant to paralyze its victims, to force compliance. War planners applied a military standard, ‘decisive force,’ which called for such an absolute display of force that both society and the military would think resistance to be futile. But as Michel de Certeau notes, humans are ‘poets of their own affairs, trailblazers in the jungle of functionalist

rationality.’ We are all active producers despite the brute determinism of disciplinary power. As the decisive force of shock and awe intersected with differing interests and desires, it became a point of coherence for dissent. Like any social machine, it ‘generates blockages, exclusions, and dissipates energies,’ but ‘it also creates zones of inclusion, vitality, and freedom.’ Instead of symbolizing the ethics of virtuous war, shock and awe was labeled terrorism by both anti-war protesters and Iraqi freedom fighters. As one commentator put it, ‘For all the geekspeak about networks and ecosystems, and millenarian boasting about minimal robotic warfare, the US is becoming a terror state pure and simple--a 21st century Assyria with laptops and modems.’ Smart bombs are now at odds with nation building; the disciplinary power of smart bombs produces repression instead of creativity, a counter-productive strategy in a nation where a new regime is expected to spontaneously arise from the smoldering ashes of a dictatorship.

The same forces that enable virtuous war may carry with them the seeds of its own defeat. Virtuous war is made possible because of the military assemblage has multifaceted parts that reach far into science, technology, culture and politics – watching the bomb camera footage from smart bombs is like going to the movies, flying a fighter jet is like playing a video game. Though remarkably powerful in its ability to maintain strict disciplinary boundaries when necessary, virtuous war has been unable to control the multitude of techniques and mechanisms that actualize its global form. The transistors

39 Bogard, William. 271.
41 Davis, np.
that make the cruise missile possible also power cell phones. Those cell phones can now be used by Iraqis to preempt US military action or coordinate a set of attacks. Consider the weapon of choice for many Iraqis, the improvised explosive device (IED). IEDs are small bombs that are hidden along supply routes and then exploded remotely. These devices utilize easy to find detonation devices such as ‘garage door openers, car alarms, key fobs, door bells, toy car remotes, FRS and GMRS two-way radios, cellular telephones and pagers.’\textsuperscript{42} In addition to using this technology to make the devices themselves, Iraqis also use cinematic technologies that tap into a mediascape parallel to the American one that laid the groundwork for the American public for the attack on Iraq. Iraqis videotape IED attacks that can later be reviewed like the play footage of a football coach ‘preparing for the next big match-up’ or used to boast about their technological prowess to new recruits.\textsuperscript{43} So while the virtuous bomb creates an armchair bombardier at home, these bombs create a media spectacle that galvanizes resistance to the American occupation. Because they are driven by consumer technology, IEDs are dumb compared to the precision-guided bombs used by the US, yet they are much smarter than a stick of dynamite. As militarized technologies invade the very fabric of society, the possibility for resistance is manifest in the very same channels of power.\textsuperscript{44}


One of the most transformative aspects of IEDs is their ability to exploit striated space.\(^45\) Contrary to the smart bomb, which works in tandem with the geo-spatial god’s eye view of GPS, IEDs are relative and local, blowing up the cleanly formed strata in the most horrific and gruesome ways. Instead of relying on an inertial guiding system, like the smart bomb, whose movement is plotted from point to point by satellites, IEDs are placed by locals, familiar with the terrain. The GPS may be able to see every inch of Iraq, but there are cracks and fissures that a purely cartographic conception of the land will never pick up. In trying to account for this epistemological shortfall, the smart bomb opens up more space for resistance – as discussed earlier, commanders compensation strategies often expose blindspots in the narrative of precision that IED can exploit. The narrative of clean precision that had made humanitarian interventions seem bloodless can no longer be applied to the wholesale occupation and genocide of a nation. This is the perfect example of Virilio’s ‘war machines’: ‘[t]hey are machines in reverse—they produce accidents.’\(^46\) As the difference between accidental and virtual affects of virtuous war becomes concealed, the IED becomes increasingly viable. The geographic subjection of Iraq then becomes a liability to the colonizers; by relying on a neutral mechanical eye, they never tap into the principle of presence that only lived experience provides.

The United States occupation relies heavily on an economy of signs that articulates a field of geo-spatial markers in order to ‘restrict speed, regulate circulation, relativize movement, and measure in detail the relative movements of subjections and objects.’\(^47\)

\(^{47}\) Deleuze and Guattari, 386.
In practice, the regulation of streets, highways, even skies and rivers is central to United States logistics and reconstruction in Iraq. By creating capillaries in which people and things flow, the United States is able to give Iraqis a sense of freedom while still maintaining a relatively high degree of control. In some areas, like the besieged city of Fallujah, the United States imposes a strict disciplinary grid that allows them to fight street-by-street, block-by-block. The striation of highways is nevertheless one of America’s greatest weaknesses in Iraq. Iraqis are able to reclaim the streets with IEDs because the tactical geometries of American convoys render moves ‘locatable, predictable and masterable.’ The United States response to the attacks has been either to shut down highways or to take other reactive steps, measures that end up making American patrols more predictable and routinized. Ultimately, the imperial logic of the Americans self-destructs in an inversion of the narrative of subjection and the subjectified: the seer/hunter becomes the seen/hunted.

Conclusion

Virtuous war and its attempt to conceal the tragic consequences of warfare has had mixed success. The extensive control of the media coupled with views from the mechanical eye that were first unveiled by Dick Cheney during the first Gulf War significantly changed the perception of war provided to the American public. The public’s potential negative reaction to death was risky so it was cut in the same moment that US stopped doing body counts. Bomb cameras and other formed of controlled media are all that remain. The

50 Spanos, 154.

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narrative of precision has affectively changed commanders’ perception of war as well, emboldening them to strike at targets that require great accuracy. Military officials’ belief in the sanitized war has created sites of resistance where imperfect applications of force have failed to turn their targets into docile subjects. After seeing fellow Iraqis die in bombings due to bad intelligence or stray bombs, they could no longer believe the officials’ assertion that ‘the safest place for an Iraqi civilian is at home in his bed.’ The United States’ reliance on the idealized vision of the virtuous bomb can be a liability in nation building. The same mechanisms of power that helped the United States win the invasion have allowed a stubborn Iraqi population to resist colonization.

51 Peterson, np.
Chapter 3: The Governmentalized Biopolitics of National Anti-War Organizing

[What counts are not only the two opposed camps on the great line where they confront each other, but also the frontier along which everything passes and runs on a broken molecular line with a different orientation.]

-Deleuze “On the Line”

In an age of startling paradoxes and profound contradictions, it should be no surprise that the most astounding successes of the politics of protest have been marred by its even more remarkable failures. One event that highlights this challenge is the February 15th, 2003 protest of the soon to begin Iraq War. In terms of scale, both because of the number of participants and the spatial reach of the protest, it was the largest and most global protest ever. The level of organization that resulted from such an enormous undertaking dwarfed other landmark protests in history. And despite the enormity of the protest, the policy makers were unphased.

Apparently by reveling in the newness of everything (for we are in the age of triumph of the movements of movements, are we not?), we forgot to notice that there is a lot that is still the same. The originary violence that founded the liberal State cannot be banished by signs and chants that seek to quiet the State’s routine displays of naked aggression.

It has taken the anti-war movement years to adequately mourn its inability to prevent the Iraq War. After considerable time, following the rise of completely different figures and strategies as well as a shift in public opinion, the anti-war movement seems to have
finally shaken the insistent grief haunting it. Public perception is that the anti-war movement pinned its hopes on an electoral strategy that began with the Democrats reclaiming a Congressional majority in 2006 and the sweep of the 2008 election, culminating in the election of Barack Obama as President. It is in the first 100 days of Obama’s Presidency that I wrote the bulk of this thesis. Though it is far beyond the scope of this paper to provide even the briefest analysis of this particular historical conjuncture, when we look back at this moment it will no doubt look as complex and riddled with contradictions as any of the ones analyzed in this text.

What should we do with February 15th, 2003? Despite being the largest and first truly global mass mobilization in history, it did little to influence the United States’ march to war. It would be too easy to declare the day a failure but it does serve as a limit case for liberal protest.

My argument is that if dissent is to effectively challenge war, activists must abandon the disciplinary confessional-based practices encouraged by figureheads and the media spectacle, the governmentalized biopolitical logic of reducing protest to maximizing the amount of warm bodies that can fit on a well-ordered street, and the cult of personality of authoritarian groups that claim the moral high ground. The alternative is to work in-against-and-beyond the current national model for anti-war organizing.

At the heart of my analysis will be an exploration of the distinction between a politics of morality and a politics of force. Though strands of this distinction can be found in many
theories, one of the most powerful iterations is in the philosophy of Friedrich Nietzsche. Through his blistering critique of transcendentalism, Nietzsche developed a philosophy grounded in immanence and force. This chapter follows the same Nietzschean thrust developed in my first chapter. First, I develop the Foucaultian problematic of the regime of power and knowledge in which anti-war organizing resides. In the second part, I suggest shifting away from truth and institutional control as the aim of political action to a politics based on intensifying affective forces.

The National Anti-War Movement

The most visible opposition to the Iraq War has been liberally minded umbrella groups that plan mass mobilizations. These organizations go by the usual alphabet soup, NION (Not in Our Name), UFPJ (United for Peace and Justice), WCW (World Can’t Wait), and ANSWER (Act Now to Stop War & End Racism). While there are slight differences among the various groups, they all follow the same general model – hold ‘super-rallies’ that turn out tens or hundreds of thousands of protesters that peacefully march in cities like Los Angeles, Washington DC or New York.

Theoretically, it is important to acknowledge that none of these groups represent a social totality. It is impossible to draw a single thread through the resistance to the Iraq War. The diversity of people and ideas composing resistance at large is so striking it’s impossible to reduce it to a set of terms. The Deleuzo-Guattarian concept of assemblage describes its composition nicely: the multiplicity of ideas, people, words, and beliefs that compose the resistance is an assemblage made through a socio-historical bricolage of
found objects and indirect connections. Each of the national groups, in contrast, is the result of intentional strategies to transform the assemblage of resistance to the Iraq War into an organized, coordinated, representable form – the product of regulative techniques used to mark the multiplicity with intelligible and easily representable characteristics. To many, this may appear to be advantageous. In contrast, this chapter argues that there are serious drawbacks to the ways national anti-war organizations have negotiated anti-war sentiment. National anti-war groups usually fall between two poles: the liberal-bureaucratic and the fascist-charismatic. At one end there is the liberal-bureaucratic, like UFPJ, that tries to maintain only minimal commonality, through ‘points of unity’, in order to allow for diversity in their membership. Their organizing focuses almost exclusively on administrating resources and people under the umbrella of their mega-organization. At the other end are fascist-charismatics, like World Can’t Wait, which was formed by rank-and-file authoritarians (a Maoist group, the Revolutionary Communist Party in WCW’s case), and deploy strict mechanisms to maintain authoritarian control over their membership. Their organizational structure is focused on building a unified base of power in order to overthrow the current political power structure. Despite the variation in their techniques of representation, all locate civil society as the place to launch their campaigns against the State.

**Critique**

The limits of the anti-war movement demonstrate the shortfalls of liberalism diagnosed by post-structuralism. This section problematizes the movement according to two categories, power and knowledge – analytic cuts that reveal the inability of current
approaches to enact more forceful change. In particular, I would like to pick up on two dominant tendencies – first, the theory of power that underlines a social democratic politics of representation, and second, the theory of truth grounded in a humanist reassurance that political salvation will be delivered through universal truth and moral authority.

Social Democracy and Power

The narratives used by numerous anti-war groups appealed to the need for a vibrant civil society. The celebrations of the February 15th, 2003 protests championed what they felt was the largest and clearest message ever sent by civil society. One New York Times columnist was so amazed by the epoch-defining nature of the event that he wrote, “there may still be two superpowers on the planet: the United States and world public opinion.” Despite the celebration surrounding the “Second Superpower”, it arrived stillborn. The Bush Administration’s plans to invade Iraq continued unimpeded and were executed as planned.

National anti-war groups state that they have a fundamental commitment to democracy. Political society, they argue, has become non-democratic because it has failed to reflect anti-war sentiment at times where the majority opinion was clearly against the Iraq War. This insistence on returning to the lost form of democracy presupposes a specific form of

social democracy that has its roots in Hegel. Hegel’s formulation sets up a three-part conception of society, natural-civil-political. Natural society works as a foundational multiplicity of atomistic needs and interests that are un-organized. At each level, first civil society and then political society, the particular interests and needs that originated in natural society are mediated – reducing differences to commonalities until a universal interest of society can be derived and realized within the State form (Hardt 28-9). A vision for democratizing this process is found in Hardt’s reading of the political philosophy of Antonio Gramsci. Gramsci’s theories provide a reversal of the direction of Hegel’s social flows. The Hegelian conception of civil society argues that the particular differences of civil society are negated and preserved in unity when formally subsumed within political society. Inverting their relationship, a Gramscian account argues that the State exists secondarily and therefore only exists when civil society lacks development. If a fully developed form of democracy is constructed in civil society, the State will be re-absorbed and wither away, ultimately delivering complete democracy and self-determination (Hardt 29-30).

Foucault’s critique of disciplinary and biopolitical power offers an alternative understanding of civil society. Opposed to a Gramscian account, Foucault suggests that civil society is a product of and co-extensive with the State, not its cause. And moreover, the cause of the State is immanent and reproduces the desires, subjects, and identities necessary for its own necessary conditions for existence (Foucault 23-44). Under modern society, all of the institutions of civil society – the party, the union, the school, the church, the family – operate according to the same diagram of power as Foucault’s
paradigmatic cases of disciplinary institutions – the clinic, the military, the prison. (‘Is it surprising that prisons resemble factories, schools, barracks, hospitals, which all resemble prisons?’ [DP 228])

The enclosure institutions all deploy disciplinary technologies of power to produce subjects. The disciplinary techniques were appropriated differently in different institutions, but they all generally follow the same logic. Instead of replacing the forms of power that already exist, like sovereign juridical power, disciplinary technolog invests in disparate technologies – linking them together, forming a constellation of technologies that circulate and work together within the same enclosure (DP 216). Discipline, which initially operated primarily on the body, follows a number of steps that have been appropriated for use on other objects. First, bodies are isolated and divided into distinct units that can be controlled. Second, the signifying elements of a body are initially silenced and ignored, followed by a marking according to a formalized system that is generalized across the whole field of elements. Third, the body is submitted to a minute, constant, repetitive, and regular application of microforces, which fades into the background while conditioning the subject to become docile – more obedient as it becomes more useful (MF 153-60).

In The History of Sexuality Volume 1 Foucault supplements his previous analysis of disciplinary technologies by including an extended consideration of confession as a general technique that compels subjects to discipline themselves. As the famous Foucaultian phrase goes, “Western man has become a confessing animal” ever since the
confessional techniques of the church were generalized across society (58-9). The church, the prison, the clinic, the family, and the school are all famous examples Foucault gives, and each case highlights a confessing subject: the sinner confesses his sins to the priest, the criminal confesses her crimes to the judge, the madman confesses his madness to the doctor, the child confesses her wrongs to the parents, the student repeats knowledge back to his teacher. Each one of these are inducements to speak the truth of their conditions that serve to rein subjects into the juridical mechanisms of the institutions of confinement, leading them to take part in the production and circulation of the regime of truth and power that controls them.

The disciplinary enclosure, which used to regulate power exclusively through exclusion and normalization of subjects, has slowly faded away. With the erosion of the welfare state and its accompanying civil society, neo-liberal competition and privatization has reordered social production. The diagram of power that now dominates is biopower. Instead of eliminating disciplinary techniques of power completely, it re-situates them within the double-pincer of biopower: first, an anatomo-politics of the body that individuates and disciplines subjectivities, and second, a bio-politics of the population that regulates collective subjectivities with the reproductive life of the population as its aim (*HOS* 138-9). The impact of biopower on governance is profound. The image the sovereign as the unitary source for power faded away in Europe beginning in the sixteenth century and the operations of the State were taken over by an increasing variety of tactics of self-management (*STP* 126-145). In the eighteenth century, there was an intensification of the subjecitification in the art of governing, a refinement that connected
the *raison d’État* of the modern State with political economy through a new set of State juridical practices that was enabled by subjects who began speaking certain truths about themselves and the State. What emerged was a ‘frugal government’ out of which liberalism was born. Now the market and security, not justice, are the principles of truth of governmental practices (*BB* 28-35). The disciplinary techniques of individuation no longer work to normalize subjects within enclosed sites of confinement but still mark, order, and compel subjects to express and practice certain truths. Subjects now speak according to the grammar of the market and security, and when massified, re-produce the population-wide justifications for and means to manage subjects according to political economy and the State. Civil society is therefore a necessary component for the modern State – it is the space that a subject inhabits to publicly express their desires in the hope that other subjects, collectives, the State, or capital will respond to them. Without it, the State would have to use much more intensive forms of discipline to regulate society. The final complication is that since the modern State is not separate from civil society, but is co-extensive and immanent to it, civil society interests only find their way to the State after they are recuperated and articulated in biopolitical terms.

*Governmentalized Biopolitics*

The liberal-bureaucratic wing of the anti-war movement is a stark example of civil society operating according to governmentalized biopolitics. Large national groups like ANSWER, UFPJ, and Code Pink work as clearinghouses for local, national, and international expressions of anti-war sentiment. The two major angles of attack coordinated by these groups are individualized ‘speaking out’ and demonstrations.
Speaking out works to establish power according to the model of confessional outlined by Foucault in *The History of Sexuality* (61-2). Let’s begin with the simple act of speaking out via a website. A website will first convince you that something can be done about the Iraq War: it is only a few clicks away! Next, after you click through, you are provided a short information blurb to educate you on the issue, like the political and economic minutiae of an upcoming Congressional spending bill. Following that, the national group provides a channel for you to voice your concerns, whether it is via email, phone, or letter. Because they want to increase their impact, the group supplies you a form letter or talking points, maybe with market-researched language in order to increase its efficacy. Lastly, the group gets you to sign up yourself and some friends so that you will be contacted when the next important item they need you to speak out on (another Congressional bill?) arrives. It’s doubtful that your message goes directly to the Congressperson but your message is recorded by a staffer and compiled into a report. If you’re lucky, you receive a letter with a few short comments on the politician’s position on the issue, and a reminder that you are one among many constituents but that your contribution is important to the democratic process.

The result is a far cry from the democratic vision of Gramscian civil society. From start to finish, the process of speaking out outlined above was never meant to publicly open up to the realm of social contestation and State mediation or multiplying intersections with a plurality of economic, cultural and ideological social forces. Rather than challenging the hegemony of the State, many civil society institutions like national anti-war groups, recuperate and reorient the multiplicity of anti-war sentiments that exist in society.
Articulating anti-war sentiment requires transforming the elements being represented in civil society. In Hegel, this transformation is a progressivist educational process that negates and integrates elements, abandoning particularity while producing an abstract universal. Foucault’s historico-empirico approach provides a concrete analysis of this process without the essentialism or teleology of Hegel. The transformation of the anti-war multiplicity into the intelligible political form of civil society happens through disciplining, increasing the general productivity of subjects by creating a ‘docile social body’ with all of the associated consequences – eliminating antagonism, effacing differences, and producing subjectivities that have interiorized the generalized logic of the State (Hardt 31-33). For example, liberal-bureaucratic protest groups are saturated with individuals who constantly keep track of news and upcoming legislation, gradually becoming subject experts, likely more informed and more motivated than Congressional staffers. These self-appointed experts heavily influence the groups they’re involved in, spamming their allies with an overwhelming amount of emails and redirecting the energy of the group toward very specific policy-oriented ends. In an act of political triage, anything that is not thought to be immediately intelligible within the halls of Congress is branded as irrelevant or out of touch. Alternative subjectivities that are incompatible with the current political process are either recuperated or excluded, occluding possible worlds that exist without the State or governmentalized forms of power. Civil society must then be understood as the process of taking rowdy subjects and re-educating them about the ‘proper’ channels of State intervention, turning dissenters into priests of the State form. Those familiar with the ‘non-profit industrial complex’ know the story well: idealistic young kids intern with an advocacy group, quickly learn organizing skills and
become 60+ hour a week road warriors, usually burning out after about two years. Reflecting back they might be able to identify a few critical successes but bigger questions loom large about what type of expertise they now have – as one friend mentioned to me “I know how to play the game. I can chat up the press, schmooze with politicians and get warm bodies to an event. But, as I've become a non-profit insider I've become an outsider to the community I intended to help and the future I wanted to create”. In a world where civil society institutions are co-extensive with the State, it is increasingly difficult for organizers not to act as a relay between subjects and the halls of Congress or other civil society organizations, extending resonances deep within the hearts and minds of those ostensibly oppositional subjects not yet invested in the governmentalized logic of the State.

In addition to being governmentalized, national anti-war organizing is also biopolitical. Liberal-bureaucratic organizing adopts the two-step individuation and massification moves crucial to biopower. United For Peace and Justice (UFPJ) is a good example. On their website, they state, “Since our founding in October 2002, UFPJ has spurred hundreds of protests and rallies around the country, and organized the two largest demonstrations against the Iraq war” followed by a list of accomplishments. Each event is described in terms of how many individuals and organizations participated and where the event took place. For instance: “UFPJ initiated the call to action for a global day of protest on March 20, 2004, the one-year anniversary of the Iraq War. More than 2 million people worldwide took to the streets that day, holding over 575 protests in more than 60 countries.” The details of the day are reduced to convenient, delimited, and countable
points with the clarity of an accountant. If one cared enough to inquire about each individual protest, there are lists and lists that represent the day in terms of its numerical strength and global reach. According to Giorgio Agamben, this calculative account is endemic to the biopolitical logic of liberalism. Humanitarian organizations, Agamben argues, attempt to depoliticize catastrophes and have therefore lost any ability to grasp human life outside the figure of bare life, which considers life in its bare essentials – life alone and nothing else (HS 133). Though a different type of non-governmental organization, liberal-bureaucratic anti-war groups have adopted the same strategy – in order to maximize their numbers they open their arms to anti-war sentiment of all stripes, de-fanging the antagonistic force of dissensus by deploying disciplinary techniques of pacification to maintain order. Agamben argues that oppositional organizations have a secret solidarity with the powers they are trying to fight – the biopolitical act of constituting and reproducing a population-as-such, whether it be the people of a State or the members of a protest group, involves a fundamental split between a speaking people and their political representation as a People that creates an absolute separation between the speaking being and the living being of the bureaucratic machine (Means 30-5; Remnants 156). No doubt, the barely enthusiastic crowds of protestors at anti-war mass mobilizations tend to look like well-decorated zombies compared to the raucous red and black labor marches in the heyday of American unionism or the angry mob that stormed the Bastille. But if the point is just to have a few good photos and a headcount for the press release, does it really matter?
Subjugated Groups and Zombie Authoritarians

In national anti-war organizing the ends have become all but assumed while group self-preservation has become paramount. All of the organizations have had a hard time reacting to Obama’s election as President because he was ostensibly the anti-war candidate but doesn’t fall in line with the strong call for immediate withdrawal. There is a lot of general talk about ‘holding Obama accountable to make sure he ends the war’ but it rarely goes beyond that, general talk. World Can’t Wait (WCW) is a particularly interesting case because of their myopic focus on ‘the Bush Regime.’ In a moment when staying on message is considered paramount, their message of “drive out the Bush Regime” was consistent and unwavering. Bush’s status as a lame duck president set in early and WCW knew that they would have to deal with a major shift. A 2007 speech by national steering committee member Dennis Loo found deep within the organization’s website provides amazing insight into the Maoist strategy of WCW. The title of the speech is “The One Percent Solution” and explains how he envisions 1% of Americans getting involved in the current ‘Declare It Now’ campaign which asks people to make the color orange part of their everyday lives – more on the color orange later. Loo’s diagnosis of the current moment is that the Bush Regime is both morally and politically bankrupt and has created a vacuum that people will not know how to fill on their own. The critical leadership to concretely fill the leadership vacuum of the nation are the leaders of WCW, backed by the three million Americans that he hopes to have fill their ranks through the 1% campaign. In one section, Loo systematically explains his strategy:
Bringing forward the millions who we need and who are aching to act in some way that will make a difference depends upon leadership and a critical part of that leadership is right here in this room. We are the ones who can and are positioned to play that role in changing the political situation, of recognizing the crossroads that we are in and taking hold of the moral high ground and not letting go!

Creating a competing leadership AND bringing forward millions are interconnected and indispensable to each other: we need a leadership and a broad support base for that leadership. We need 1% to step forward to constitute our active base. This 1% will do several things:

1) It will create the favorable ground, the breathing room, the loyal, determined, solid base for the new competing leadership; 2) It will create the backbone of a network of activists who can be mobilized quickly and all over the nation; 3) It will make visible the determined resistance of tens of millions and it will concentrate and help to focus the inchoate sentiment of the majority against Bush and Cheney; 4) It will impact the wider population, allow us to bypass the MSM [Main Stream Media] and make real to the wider population another path as a real possibility.

At first glance Loo’s words appear to be polemic or political daydreaming – he is asking for nothing short of getting three million Americans to help boot out the federal government and international telecommunications giants in order to put him and other WCW leaders in their place; and this was to take place in the 15 months between when the speech was given and when Bush leaves office. Upon closer inspection, his comments are some of the few public strategy documents for WCW’s campaigns. Even though WCW’s fascist-charismatic tendencies drive them to obscure their member count, given the scope and reach of WCW, which has helped turn out hundreds of thousands for anti-war mobilizations, there are hundreds if not thousands of people who are actively working to realize Loo’s vision.
The fascist-charismatic social democracy presented by WCW is different from the social democracy of liberal-bureaucratic groups. The liberal-bureaucratic group is happy to retain distance from the State despite governmentalizing itself and its constituents. WCW, in its desire to seize the power of the State form instead follows the trajectory of what Deleuze and Guattari called a subjugated group. Guattari’s analysis of socialist revolutionary groups maps almost exactly onto WCW’s plan: they interpret Bush’s low approval rating as a clear mandate from the masses, “but this possibility was only accepted by turning the party, once a modest clandestine group, into an embryonic State apparatus able to direct everything, to fulfill a messianic vocation and substitute itself for the masses” (DI 197). And WCW is absolutely certain they have the masses on their side, “we have a majority of people on our side right now. Is there any question that there isn’t[sic] tens of million of people right now who want to do something?” The problem with the masses according to WCW, however, is that the Bush Regime’s lack of strong political and moral leadership has created a vacuum that the masses will not spontaneously fill. The don’t hold the capacity to do it themselves, Loo argues, “The political establishment and the corporate media’s complicity with the Bush agenda have deprived the American people of the traditional sources of leadership that they look to protect them from dictatorial and fascist threats like the Bush agenda.” Loo’s solution is to set up a competing leadership that establishes legitimacy through high moral standing and political prowess. Loo’s analysis follows the path of a subjugated group as outlined by Deleuze, with the detachment of a supposedly expert avant-garde as a leadership who claims to see through the ruse of ideology – the “smoke and mirrors” of the Bush Regime – the election of a disciplined, organized, hierarchized proletariat – the 1% – and a
residual sub-proletariat that is excluded or reeducated – those who ‘believe it but don’t show it’. The result is a reproduction of the same divisions that capitalism introduced into proletarian society, providing a foundation for capitalist relations of production (DI 198). When a group enters this state, it has severed itself from the real and subjectivity and imposes imaginary phenomena like Oedipalization, superegoification and group-castration instead. The result is a hierarchical organization that deploys a number of repressive measures to maintain the centripetal force necessary to guarantee its existence. Death, dispersal, and creative ruptures are blocked in the fear that they might threaten the survival of the group (197). Rumors about WCW provide a multitude of examples – local WCW chapters being purged because of disagreements over its sister Maoist organization the Revolutionary Communist Party or members being muzzled when not taking the party line. Deleuze and Guattari’s argument is much more powerful than the tired criticisms of authoritarian purges, however. Instead of just explaining how groups grasp for power when they fear that may soon lose it, Deleuze and Guattari have an explanation for the elaborate strategies that might otherwise appear as delusional. One consequence is ends-means reversal where desire is not invested in achieving the aims of the organization but is displaced onto the maintenance of the institutional structure. The ‘Declare It Now’ campaign is an excellent example, there are only two fundamental actions involved in the campaign: wearing orange and getting others to wear orange. Loo’s analysis extensively covers tactics on how to wear orange, various aspects of the everyday in which one could incorporate orange, and a multitude of suggestions on how to convince others to wear orange. The ultimate purpose of orange is limited, however, to creating a common signifier for the ‘inchoate majority’ to represent their support for
the WCW leadership. The stark contrast between a highly developed system of group membership and the almost nonexistent strategy reveals an intense desire to repress death. Once the associated imaginary Oedipal processes take over, a whole world unfolds for the fascist-charismatics where “phantom masses already possess a structure of subjugation, complete with leadership, a mechanisms of transmission, and core membership, aimlessly reproducing the errors and perversion they are trying to oppose” (198). The task of WCW has been redirected to the suppression of the radicalism itself instead of transversal connections of desire to other groups through multiplicity. Ultimately, WCW by crushing multiplicity seems to mirror the same neo-liberal capitalist system they wish to replace, producing zombie subjects who only know how to reproduce the institutional form.

**Knowledge and Truth**

It is time to bury the 60s mantra “speak truth to power”. There is no doubt that speaking truth intervenes within a field of power, but as Ward Churchill likes to remind us, some people pretend they are “speaking truth to power as if power doesn’t know what it is doing”. Too many activists assume that because they have convictions that they hold dearly that somehow when they speak them, the world will suddenly be remade in whatever image of utopia they have in their head.

Disaffection grew after the Iraq War began; apathy and depression spread and appeals to civil society changed form. It was almost as if there was recognition of the fundamental contradiction of liberalism. Appeals to the State had been ignored and no matter how
intelligible or strong the message had been sent to the Bush Administration, it was plainly apparent that they hadn’t influenced the march to war. Politicians’ unflinching steamrolling of pre-war protest became a rallying point for the few who continued strong, now calling it a truly un-democratic system; if politicians can completely ignore one of the loudest pronouncements of civil society, something wasn’t right. But instead of using it as an opportunity for rethinking the whole foundation of social democracy, most anti-war organizers solidified their commitments to social democracy with increasing shrillness as if restoring the lost dignity of American liberalism would cause a rupture in the dense field of justification that legitimated the US to attack Iraq. The 2004 re-election of Bush and a Republican-dominated Congress, seen by most as a litmus test for the continuation and escalation of the US occupation of Iraq, pushed some over the edge, often in self-marginalizing directions including accusations of a Bush-Cheney imperialist cabal and conspiracy theories about 9/11, but most just dug in more. On the liberal-bureaucratic side, the response was an intensification of the same – campaigns focused on electoral strategies or impeaching Bush and Cheney. The fascist-charismatics fanatically increased their tunnel-vision focus on torture, believing that it was a fundamental contradiction in the War on Terror that could not be resolved without revealing the violent totality of US Imperialism. What solidified between the poles was righteousness about ‘the truth’ (‘we were right all along’) that somehow meant that they would get their just deserts.

This section challenges the humanist notion that truth ultimately prevails. Alternatively, I propose that knowledge is implicated in a much more complicated politics of truth that
requires an analytics of the force of truth from the dipositif in which that truth is enmeshed.

_A Smug Mug_

One of the largest impediments to the success of the anti-war movement has been its smug righteousness. The extent to which anti-war sentiment was expressed at the register of truth and truth alone is astounding. Thinking that they could cause a substantial rupture in the justifications for war, Cindy Sheehan and the Gold Star families personally went after Bush, thinking that they had him in a double bind over the killing of innocents. Slogans over the false pretenses for war were ubiquitous, usually taking their aim at then President George W Bush: “When Clinton Lied, No One Died” “Liar In Chief” “Where Are The W.M.D.s?” “W.M.D.s = Weapons of Mass Deception” and so on. Endlessly repeated, they seemed to indicate that if Bush or the war planners were proven wrong, the war would become untenable. Being ‘right’ or ‘correct’ has only an indirect ability to effect change. There is no universal truth that manifests objects or sways ideas merely based on truth-value. Rather, “‘Truth' is to be understood as a system of ordered procedures for the production, regulation, distribution, circulation and operation of statements. 'Truth' is linked in a circular relation with systems of power which produce and sustain it, and to effects of power which it induces and which extend it. A 'regime' of truth’” (P/K 133). As crowds of anti-war protests paraded around caricatures of Bush they were creating a community of resistance but instead of posing a serious challenge to the war in Iraq, they masked a whole geography of power. In their article “Bush’s Mug”, Coleman and Thomas articulate four critiques of the economy of ridicule surrounding the
face of Bush. First, it focuses on a Presidentialism that places the identity and personality of the President as paramount – whether they are honest, personable, etc. Second, it is an investment in a juridical conception of sovereign power that focuses on the office of the Presidency as the critical juncture of American politics instead of the whole relay of power Foucault articulates in biopower. Third, it situates US geopolitics on a temporal plane that confines structural phenomena like neo-liberalism or imperialism to the space of Bush’s term as President. And fourth, it places the White House as the center of public scrutiny, ignoring the diverse network of the military industrial complex (“Bush’s Mug” 17-20). Their predictions seem have come true: the War on Terror has not ended and the military industrial complex has not changed. And because anti-war resistance was so deeply invested in opposing Bush, they lost most of its steam now that the charismatic figure of Obama is in office. For some, Obama might be seen as an incremental improvement over the last eight years; the shift in Presidential administrations marks a shift away from the fascist pole of liberal governance. The shift is to the liberal-yet-charismatic pole that is much more savvy at managing spectacle, however, and does not indicate a challenge to the two-party monopoly that is the foundation for American liberal governance. In fact, the liberal and fascist poles share authority – while one governs the other recharges until the pendulum swings in the opposite direction. Power therefore oscillates between the two poles, preventing escape.

*Symbolic Protest*

As the State lodges itself within the interiority of its subjects, it also de-values practices that might challenge the reproduction of its conditions for existence. According to
Foucault, this is the fundamental contradiction of liberalism. Liberalism produces freedom and requires its subjects to exercise their freedom (i.e. “speaking subjects”), which reproduces the conditions for liberalism. Freedom can be a risky enterprise, however, so liberalism always limits, controls, coerces, and threatens subjects in order to produce the specific form of freedom needed for liberalism and liberalism alone (BB 63-5). These are the docile subjects of the prison, generalized across the whole of society. The de-valued practices that groups elect to continue despite their de-valorized status often take the form of facile gestures. These gestures have taken on the name “symbolic protest”, a strange acknowledgement of the semiotic power that is rarely accompanied by the rigorous analysis of the production, articulation, and circulation of signs like that developed by semiotics.

World Can’t Wait’s ‘Declare It Now’ campaign is an excellent example of mechanically repeating de-valorized gestures. WCW was formed in 2005 as a response to the US legalization of torture, which they saw as both the fundamental contradiction of American Imperialism and the indicator of political and moral bankruptcy of the US political leadership. The Declare It Now campaign seeks to have three million Americans wear orange in order to demonstrate their opposition to torture. The color orange was chosen because it is the same color as the jumpsuits that prisoners of the War on Terror were wearing in the famous pictures from US military prison Guantanamo Bay. WCW Steering Committee members Dennis Loo’s strategy document for the Declare It Now campaign demonstrates a simplistic understanding of the semiotic production and circularity of orange even though it is the crucial tool for getting millions on his side. In
the document he argues that “orange isn’t going to become the color of resistance just because it gets associated with political protest” but that wearing orange it itself an act of resistance, “wearing orange everyday, decorating with orange, are themselves, in and of themselves, acts of resistance.” What remains obscure is the way in which saturating everyday life with a color performatively de-legitimates State power. It seems that Declare It Now assumes that there is an essential quality to the color orange that will express the exact political sentiment of the WCW. There have been numerous instances where symbols have performatively enacted new political worlds, especially the post-communist revolutions in Europe and Central Asia – the Rose Revolution in Georgia, the Orange Revolution in Ukraine, and the Tulip Revolution in Kyrgyzstan. Yet an analysis of those political moments and how it might relate to the Do It Now campaign is completely lacking. A suitably complex analysis would acknowledge that colors like orange only fit within the general economy of signs. And in the heavily mediated culture of the spectacle its hard to imagine the color orange triggering the complex associative chain necessary for Declare It Now to work.

To understand the full implications of Declare It Now, consider the disciplinary effects of the campaign as it relates to confessional practices. As formulated above, confession works to induce subjects to speak a certain type of truth that allows them to be managed. In the case of activism, the truth is often a governmentalized truth that marks them as subjects in order to be regulated at the level of the population, whether by national anti-war groups or other political institutions. Declare It Now is a hyper-intensification of this individuated marking members are meant to diffuse orange into all aspects of the
everyday in order to mark it with an anti-torture message. But even if America was painted in a sea of orange tomorrow, it wouldn’t necessarily mean the end of US torture practices or the ascendancy of WCW to the ranks of the political elite. The assumed direct link between the pervasiveness of orange and WCW political success exhibits an inability to understand the contingent force of truth. In a stunning move, Loo evacuates the performative power of orange by inverting its force, twice he mentions that “if you’re against it but don’t show it, then it doesn’t count. If you don’t act when it counts, your actions won’t count.” According to him, unless people immediately stand up and declare their allegiance to WCW they are complicit with the Bush agenda by saying “if you’re against it but don’t show it, then it doesn’t count.” The speech was given 15 months before Bush stepped down and Loo was very forthright about acknowledging that many people fail to ‘declare it now’. His solution is almost cartoonish: simply explain to people the ‘every day counts’ argument that “everyday [the Bush Regime] is in office more people are being tortured and more people are murdered, and global warming is being ignored” and he predicts, people will react affirmatively with responses like “oh, I didn’t think about that” or “I never thought of it that way.” Spreading the message begins to take the place of a strategic analysis of the current moment. Tracing lines of force wouldn’t even make sense within the Declare It Now paradigm because the truth has already been set and power has been reduced to two different positions, either the elite leaders who set the agenda or flattened subjectivity of the masses that aimlessly repeat the party line – “I’m against torture, are you? If you are, you have to show it. If you don’t, then you don’t really mean it.”
Toward a Politics of Truth

The Iraq War might be too obvious of an example for Foucault’s power/knowledge thesis. Foucault’s analysis focused predominately on scientific knowledge, which tries to establish its status as neutral and objective. Political propaganda, on the other hand, lends itself readily to thinking that the knowledge created for political purposes is implicated in a regime of truth and is therefore rarely held to the same rigorous standards. The implications are no less certain, however. According to Foucault power produces reality, a whole world of truth including objects and practices, before it ever excludes, represses, masks, or conceals (DP 194). In the construction of truth, knowledge is always shot through with power; it is only through knowledge that power can be made intelligible and negotiable – “there is no power relation without the correlative constitution of a field of knowledge that does not presuppose and constitute at the same time power relations” (DP 27). But because the truth that is created is not based on first principles or fixed propositional content, disproving one element in a whole field of political propaganda would have little effect on the whole world that has been constructed. One report noted that there were at least 935 false statements made by Bush and seven top officials in the two years following September 11, 2001 about Iraq being a threat to US national security. This buckshot approach to truth is intentionally incoherent, making it impossible to iron out all of the contradictions into a single refutable argument. So many justifications were given, not to give the Bush Administration to have a foundation of error-free truth, but to create a whole field of justifications that would provide them a general consensus in support of invading Iraq. Those who tried to systematically respond to the whole range of justifications for the war
were outflanked – those who were able to slog through the mess of details to only be shouted down as being unpatriotic.

This is why Foucault suggested thinking of knowledge as a strategic truth-game. According to truth-games, it is not about discovering a secret reality that will settle all disputes but deploying truth in a strategic manner (PT 195-6). There are two key considerations for truth games that can be developed from a Foucaultian perspective. First, that truth has force but only in a specific regime of power articulated in an assemblage of institutions and practices. Knowledge is transformed through power and actualized as a force. And second, the force of truth is immanent to the relations of power in which it is being deployed. Both of these speak to the radically concrete and historicized version of politics of knowledge/power outlined in his books on the clinic, the prison, and sexuality. Applying this problematic to Iraq War resistance radically challenges the national anti-war organizing paradigm. Returning to the WCW strategy document, we see an insistence on claiming the moral high ground – “the moral high ground is our one absolutely irrefutable argument. It is the one thing that nobody has a good retort to. It’s not the only weapon in our arsenal, but it’s our best weapon.” This line of argumentation only follows when trying to realize the Gramscian notion of a war for position that asserts that a single truth can inhabit a regime of truth. Alternatively, the game of truth would look to the effects of truth, the worlds in which that truth opens up and the force of that truth to actualize those worlds. In short, it shifts the question to a question of what speaking a particular truth does and how. In the next section I hope to
give some examples of enunciations of truth that acknowledge the force of truth and its place within concrete fields of power and knowledge.

**The Positive Project**

Proposing a positive project is difficult. Familiar concrete politicizations of Foucaultian theory, for instance, often focus on providing a counter-point to identity politics. In David Halperin’s *Saint Foucault*, the author contrasts the direct action tactics of ACT UP activism with the liberal strategy of making demands on the state to grant and protect rights. Additionally, concretizations of Deleuzo-Guattarian politics have become increasingly popular for theorizing various aspects of the “movement of movements.” Anti-war activism might provide a unique challenge to Deleuze and Guattari, however. Their project speaks more to developing a dense network of autonomy in constant nomadic escape from the capitalist mode of production. Not looking for State protection but to end a State practice, autonomy and escape don’t seem to be an appropriate strategy for anti-war activism. Rather than choose between the two however, this section argues for a positive project that combines a Foucaultian politics of resistance with Deleuzo-Guattarian affectivist assemblages.

*A Story and a Conceptual System*

One consistent problem in anti-war organizing is a lack of tactical creativity. Many previously effective tactics are mechanically repeated as if their success was not tied to the social milieu in which they emerged. Pacifist-oriented civil disobedience, for instance, which was extremely effective for subaltern subjects in liberationist movements,
has gained a near hegemonic status within anti-war resistance. Watching the ritualized
civil disobedience at the 2005 UFPJ “Operation Ceasefire” demonstration in DC in 2005
was almost surreal. The day after the large march, a few hundred protestors walked up to
the gates of the White House in an attempt to speak with President Bush. They spoke to
a police officer who refused them entrance and agreed to sit on the sidewalk to get
arrested. The police, likely already prepared because the planning of the event had been
publicly organized, showed up with a string of wagons and systematically took the
protestors away to be cited and released. Protestors met neither firehoses like the ones
used in Birmingham in the 1960s nor the palpable threat of massacre by machine-guns
like that in India during de-colonization. Standing on the sidewalk in front the White
House may have been unlawful but it wasn’t performatively transgressive as the march
on Birmingham was –blacks appearing ‘out of place’ in a southern city is very different
from hoping to create a media spectacle through mass arrest. Yet for some reason,
hundreds felt compelled to get marked, ordered and transported by the police and later
probably ordered to pay a fine. And since their gamble didn’t pay off (media coverage
was meager) I was left wondering if this orderly processional of subjects could ever turn
into the transgressive events that civil disobedience was meant to enact.

This is not to say that tactics are one-and-done or don’t have legs – it’s just that they have
to be considered within context. One way to pursue such a radically contextualized
strategy is through Foucault’s politics of resistance. Contrary to the quietist Foucault
that some in the American academy assume, the Foucaultian politics of Halperin’s Saint
Foucault is always lodged deep within social struggle. The ideal model given for a
politics of resistance is the direct action politics of ACT UP, a largely defunct AIDS activist organization with accomplishments that include blocking traffic on San Francisco’s Golden Gate Bridge, stopping trading on the New York Stock Exchange, and disrupting a *CBS Evening News* broadcast (23). The unique aspect of a politics of resistance is that it doesn’t focus on abstract ideas like rights or a legitimate political system that would deliver liberation or access to State power. Instead, resistance is already partially structured by the form of social domination it is in opposition to (56). Halperin’s quotation of Keith Gandal’s account of Foucault’s politics is particularly illuminating:

[H]e wanted to establish an activism that was predicated, not on the enumeration of values or the proposal of social policy, but on tactical considerations and ethical practice (including a practice of reform that would not depend upon the expert reformer). Foucault was concerned above all with the *effects* of his thinking and political activity…For Foucault, Truth did not reside in a set of ideas about the way things should be, but in a practice that talked about problems in a manner that opened up new possibilities for action (54).

There are two key points I draw from this quote for a politics of resistance. The first point, is the usefulness of a theory of power where politics is driven by tactical considerations about how to intervene in order to open up new possibilities for action not bound to a pre-determined social totality. One of the risks of direct action politics is that it might become overly instrumentalized. While the goal of the action might be met,
whether it be shutting down an event or providing mutual aid, if the action closes off possibilities for action instead of opening them up, direct action limits its future success. A Foucaultian politics of resistance would work to open up the possibility for future action, autonomy, and self-empowerment. The second point I draw from the quote is the necessity for a theory of knowledge where political activity and thinking are concerned with its effects. Instead of focusing on matters of truth, political activity becomes a question what it does. Is it working? How is it working? Is something coming through? What develops when these theories of power and knowledge are combined is a politics of resistance that is constantly engaging concrete social forms through a productive form of power and a politics of truth.

Affectivism

Part of the affirmative project is to propose a new political subject, the affectivist – activists who construct assemblages that produce affects in the social field. As a way to get to the theory of knowledge and power behind affectivism, let us first elaborate on the politics of resistance. To better understand the theory of knowledge of a politics of resistance, we can turn to Foucault’s effective history. Effective history is the critical use of knowledge to create a “reversal of a relationship of forces, the usurpation of power” by introducing discontinuities and subjects that so that things aren’t ‘just how they’re supposed to be’ but could always be otherwise (LCP 155). There are three aspects of Foucault’s effective history that are most useful for affectivist resistance. First, effective history is an act, and in the process of being performed the historian focuses on its effects because it recognizes that “knowledge is not made for understanding. It is made for
cutting” (154). Second, effective history inverts the metaphysicians’ relationship to proximity (the god’s eye view) by focusing on things that are closest – the body, feelings, and everyday practices. And third, effective history is perspectival – it admits that knowledge is produced from a position and follows a trajectory. These three elements offer critical insight into how to use critical knowledge in the truth-games of a politics of truth in a way that is congruent with a politics of resistance. The traditional understanding of knowledge as the set of rules that politics must follow is overly limiting. Alternatively, effective history is attentive to the ways the knowledge is produced, not uncovered, and is therefore always a tactical maneuver whose success can be measured in terms of its effects. Understanding the constructed nature of truth is crucial for transforming it from a dead, static form into a living, changing force within social forms. If pursued as a tool made for cutting in local situations that recognizes who is wielding the knowledge and how, effective history offers critical insights in how to produce knowledge outside of the governmentalizing and self-righteous tradition that much anti-war organizing currently follows.

Despite Foucault’s clear exposition of power, the productivity of power remains a difficult concept in English, especially given the Anglo-American reception of Foucault that often restricts his theories to the realm of discourse. Affectivism helps respond to this problem; it follows from Deleuze’s reading of Foucault as an addendum to the Fouculty notion of power. In the chapter entitled “Strategies or the Non-stratified: the Thought of the Outside (Power)” in his book on Foucault, Deleuze explains how to formulate a strategy based on Foucault’s rethinking of power/knowledge.
At the heart of Deleuze’s reformulation is a radical affectivity that serves as a “physics of action” (Foucault 72). Instead of retaining the term power, Deleuze translates the concept of productive power into the language of affect. This shift re-articulates power outside of the constellation of terms usually associated with the negative conception of power the Foucault calls the repressive hypothesis. Affect includes the whole associative chain of negativity, absence, lack, rule, prohibition, censorship and uniformity but it also encompasses all of the productive aspects of power developed by Foucault, receptivity to incitement, provocation and being induced to produce. Affects can therefore cover a whole spectrum from contagious enthusiasm and militant solidarity to isolating fear and harrowing sorrow. Additionally, affect does away with conceiving of power as an accumulated substance and instead focuses on its productive ability to affect or be affected; the ability to incite, provoke and produce while at the same time opening up; a matter that negotiates the mutual interactive force of elements within an immanent field (71).

Minor science helps explain how affectivist strategies are a radicalization of anarchist prefigurative politics. Prefiguration follows the old International Workers of the World maxim that one’s politics must follow ‘as if the revolution has already happened’ or ‘building a new world in the shell of the old.’ The idea is that one cannot wait until after the revolution to eliminate race or class divisions, those divisions must first be eliminated in the activist group. According to minor science, the process in which science is performed structures the social field: “the manner in which a science, or a conception of
science, participates in the organization of the social field, and in particular [the way in which it] induces a certain division of labor [e.g. intellectual/manual or social/technical] is part of that science itself” (364). Because affectivism utilizes minor science, its productivity is found in its ability to recognize, structure, and connect social fields without intensifying investment in disciplinary technologies of pacification. This Deleuzian conception of power relations provides a key recasting of the Foucaultian politics of truth: study affects not effects. This addresses the govermentality literature in particular, which has gotten great mileage with the Foucaultian imperative to study the effects of a phenomenon and not the illusory thing-in-itself. As the line goes: there is no State, only State effects. ‘State effects’ probematizes the coherence of the state by ignoring truth-claims about the status of the State itself, it shifts analysis to how specific material events and practices are organized around an empty, floating signifier. The simplicity of the move still lends itself to misuse by scholars, however. Even while remaining faithful to the Foucaultian imperative to study a thing’s effects, studying effects doesn’t necessary imply a questioning how the thing is produced or reproduced. If the production of the State is not put into question, the result is a State born a miraculous birth, a full-formed and unitary global ruler over the whole social field. In contrast, affect-as-power would posit that the State is a product of an immanent field of relations, the actualization of power within a multiplicity, and therefore partial and local, never global (75-6). This approach radically de-stabilizes any study of effects that might otherwise lapse into State-centrism. To study State affects means to study both the affects produced by the State and how affects come together to produce and re-produce the State form throughout an immanent social field.
When considered more generally, the concept of affect can be used to reveal a shortfall in effective history: though effective history is well suited for critique, it doesn’t provide an adequate account of the risks of recuperation. Leftists don’t have a monopoly on the use of critique, as exhibited by success of the sophisticated sytem of contemporary marketing or the politics of neo-conservatives like Karl Rove. Fortunately, Deleuze and Guattari’s minor science was formulated to address the question of recuperation. Minor science is a science based in practice, in contrast to the formalism of state science that creates a divide between concept and expression. The division of labor created by state science is meant to recuperate and bind the scientist to the state, “The State does not give power (pouvoir) to the intellectuals or conceptual innovators; on the contrary, it makes them a strictly dependent organ with an autonomy that is only imagined yet is sufficient to divest those whose job it becomes simply to reproduce or implement of all of their power (puissance)” (368). There are two ways that minor science wards off this recuperation that provide insight for a politics of resistance. First, a minor science doesn’t constitute science as an exterior, autonomous system (373). The production of a minor knowledge follows the matter and expression of the field it is acting upon, making its tactics coextensive and dependent on the particularity of the field, not abstractable from it. Its tactics are a process of creative itineration, not the creation of a grand theorematic apparatus and organization of work (374). Instead of aspiring for the axiomatic power of an autonomous of laws and constants independent from the matter being enacted on, minor science operates according to problematics. Problematics always pose more problems than they solve and resolve problems with collective, nonscientific activities.
Translated into political knowledge production, a political of resistance is a minor science when it remains attentive to the field of politics itself. The desire for creating an autonomous field of knowledge has taken on many political forms: liberation, freedom, revolution. This drive for political certainty must be resisted – minor science indicates that the way an affectivist can avoid being sucked up into the massive molar machine of the State is not by creating an absolute outside but by strategically lodging yourself deep inside (160-1). A second aspect of minor science builds on the first: an insistence on following not reproducing. Royal science tries to create constants, controlling and reducing differences between time and place in order to create a law that can be used to create a perfectly replicable form across differing conditions. Minor science instead follows the unique combinations of forces, the singularities, to create solutions out of what is at hand. For minor science, differences aren’t problems to be overcome but advantages that open up the problem to new solutions and a unique flavor (372-4). To be attentive to difference, a politics of resistance must therefore follow the matter it is acting on. Like the woodworker who masterfully eyes the specific qualities of each piece of wood before choosing her tools and remain attentive to the grain while cutting into the wood, affectivists must look at political situations and produce new knowledges by following singularities. The idea is not to create a model of abstract interest or political laws that members of a mega-group should follow. Minor science looks to illuminate the specifics of any given problematic, those aspects that can only be found when following the problem closely and with an eye toward each event’s unique conditions of existence. The path will often lack coherence, clarity, and consistency. For some it might look like
a chaotic lack of direction but the local connection and integration of singularities is not
diversionary but characteristic of the content and expression it is acting on (494).

Using assemblage thinking is a way to map the concrete social forms in order to determine
the best places for affectivsts to cut in and construct a new social field. I don’t want to
give the impression that assemblage thinking somehow intrinsically breeds resistance; as
the last chapter demonstrated, virtuous war is an assemblage and the smart bombs as one
of its constituent elements. There is a theoretical payoff that is possible, however. First,
assemblages acknowledge the constructed character of social forms. Developed in
Chapter One and at the beginning of this chapter, assemblages allow one to talk about the
bricolage of elements brought together to assemblage a contingent social form. One aim
of affectivsts would then be to reassemble elements and affects in order to produce
effects in the social field. Second, the concept of the assemblage is capacious in that it
shifts politics away from focusing merely on groups, which tend toward questions of
subjugation and identity. When considered in terms of an assemblage, the constituent
ontology of the social to a whole range of elements. In his opposition to subjugated
groups, Guattari lists a set of micro-political elements to contrast with the regular liberal
social field of individuals and their rational ideas: “arrangements of enunciation, of
subjectivization, pragmatic arrangements which do not coincide with circumscribed
groups. These arrangements can involve individuals, but also ways of seeing the world,
emotional systems, conceptual machines, memory devices, economic, social components,
elements of all kinds” (228). This expanded ontology is what a re-articulated social field
would look like beyond the logic of governmentality. Constructed assemblages, like
those outlined by Guattari, therefore serve as a horizon to direct political resistance in-against-and-beyond the governmentalized biopolitics that currently dominates national anti-war organizing.

**Public Affects**

Using affect to chart the social is a possible approach to identifying key points to intervene within assemblages of war. Joanne Sharp’s 2008 progress report on emotion in feminist geography provides insight into the current scholarship on constructing topographies of affect. Sharp’s review points toward an important current in geographic thought that has only been developed within the last decade. Most of the geographies of emotion take post-humanist networks and a critique of representation as a point of departure, indicating that there is potentially fruitful ground for engagement with the power/knowledge problematics developed in this thesis. A whole range of options are suggested in her essay, from work on the emotional dynamics of movements, and creating counter-topographies, to an affective opening up of the world through the act of wonder (4-5). The idea is that political action is motivated just as much by the modulation, reduction, or amplification of affects as any other process. Though a nascent field, topographies of affect may provide identifying and transforming the social assemblages of war through a politics of resistance.

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53 This is also found in schizoanalysis. As Eugene W. Holland notes, the schizoanalytic formulation is much stronger – all action arises from affect/desire.
Feel Tank Chicago, a cell of Feminism Unfinished, has pursued political scholarship on affect with brilliant results. Feel Tank is a response to thinks tanks, studying feelings instead of thoughts. Feel Tank explores the notion that public spheres are composed of affect worlds and that imagining them as simply effects of rationality and rationalization misses some of the most important aspects of public life. Formed in the shadow of 9/11, many of the members of the Feel Tank are veteran AIDS activists and many of them came to the project with political depression. Recognizing that they were struck by a sort of low-grade, normalized version of epistemic shock that is associated with trauma, the Feel Tank started questioning the origins of their shock, ultimately concluding that it was probably a response to the pervasive militarism and social catastrophes that were piling up. This lead to an event they hosted called the “International Day of the Politically Depressed.” Event participants showed up in bathrobes and handed out magnets that said “Depressed? It Might Be Political!” The point was to transform negative feelings into public affects that would produce public sites for community formation. In addition, it demonstrated a radical critique of the repressive hypothesis. Already suspicious of any form of power the would follow from claims of interiority or an authentic ‘true’ self, the public feelings group concludes that Foucault’s critique of the repressive hypothesis applies just as much to affects as sexuality. The everyday and insidious effects of negative affects are not necessarily an “effect of bad power” that would follow from claims of interiority or emotional articulations of an inner self, but negative affects are rather an critical way of being that can be redirected for political purposes. By publicly performing depression, Feel Tank sought to depathologize negative affects and turn them into a reservoir for political action instead of a withdrawal from it (Berlant 450-1,
Cvetkovich 460-4). If more approaches like this catch on – using affectivism to produce actions and events previously thought impossible because of our ignorance of the social topography of affect – we may see a time where the affectivist who constructs assemblages replaces the activist who organizes the masses.

**A Provisional Conclusion**

Biopower and biopolitics make fitting bookends for this thesis. As Julian Reid’s logistical life demonstrates, there is a deep investment in a liberal way of life that has used war to extend embed itself within the reproduction of the population. In fact, a defining characteristic of biopolitical power is the routinization of war and violence in the name of whole populations. However, in his account of logistical life, Reid gives too much credit to the universalizing desires of liberalism. Foucault’s insistence on a rigorous historico-empirical approach provides a strange optimism – while things might look bleak, especially with the universalizing form of liberalism seeming so complete, liberalism only exists as a contingent form and it can be otherwise. Biopower may work to colonize contemporary life but it is still a contingent form with cracks, fissures and inconsistencies that leave room for identifying lines of force. Following the lead of Nealon, a path can be charted to another world, not through an outside but straight through via an intensification of transversal struggles that already exist within the social field. The way to accomplish this is through what I propose to call a “tracing lines of force”, a politics that identifies critical points of leverage within an already constructed yet always contingent social assemblage.
Chapter Two follows from the pacification—assemblage—force triad developed in general terms in the first chapter. By focusing on smart bombs as a technology of war, I reveal the disciplinary techniques of pacification that underlie the logic of virtuous war. Talking heads and military officials have insisted that technological advances have inaugurated an era of clean, precise weapons that are operated with the surgical care of a doctor. However, it is apparent that the technological advancements are an intensification of the assemblage of virtuous war through the development of a visual modality that assists pacification. The smart bomb has not risen to a place of prominent within the military established because it has substantially improved accuracy but because of its affective force—a narrative of precision that catalyzes support at home and guarantees certainty on the battlefield. Such a brazen attempt at domination and control produced a resistant subject, the IED-wielding insurgent. The IED works in near perfect contrast to the smart bomb—smoothing space with a different type of precision that opposes the predictable and routine disciplinary violence of the occupation.

The last chapter builds on the previous two chapters by considering a difference case of the pacification—assemblage—force triad. I explore how national anti-war organizing, which is opposed to the assemblage of virtuous war, can also be invested in pacification. In this case however, pacification is intensified via the governmentalized biopolitics of national anti-war organizing. No doubt, after the events of February 15, 2003, it might be hard to conclude with much optimism. Especially after the election of a new president who has promised to end the war, the wind has been taken out of the sails of the anti-war movement. This might be most important time to look back at the last eight years and re-
tool. Reid’s insistence that liberalism is deeply invested in a way of life that requires war should be a warning sign for us all. Even as war looks like it is setting on the horizon, it will rise again soon. The two poles of the anti-war movement in the current moment need serious rethinking. The liberal-bureaucrats are far too caught up in governmentalized forms of biopower to produce alternative worlds. And until those alternative worlds are imagined, liberal-bureaucrats will be in secret solidarity with war, replicating the liberal way of life that create war as a necessary condition for liberalism’s reproduction. Fascist-charismatics are caught up in a parallel struggle, created by their desire for seizing the power of the State form. Obsessed with repressing the death of their organization, fascist-charismatics have Oedipalized their form, shutting off most channels that could be used to build transversal connections other desiring organizations outside of the rigid boundaries of their own group.

I have left the reader with an affirmative project that combines the Foucaultian politics of resistance with Deleuzo-Guattarian affectivist assemblages. This combination produces a politics of resistance in and through a multiplication of the social field via the productive force of affect. Without the promise of liberation or foundational truth, this politics may be dissatisfying for some – it is a profoundly disorienting call for political engagement with no end in sight that follows from inside the lines of force of already constructed social forms. The examples of this politics are hardly inspirational. The International Day of the Politically Depressed is making the best of a bad situation and may even be a consequence of the hangover from the now nearly defunct ACT UP. But the possibility of other worlds that would actualize a productive affect, embodied in joy and solidarity
through resistance, is something worth striving for. And who can’t resist at a time when
the utter contingency of liberal war is just waiting to be nudged, pushed, incited, and
provoked?
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