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#### We meet and our aff is key to topic education

**Zenko ’12** [Micah, Douglas Dillon fellow in the Center for Preventive Action (CPA) at the Council on Foreign Relations (CFR). Previously, he worked for five years at the Harvard Kennedy School and in Washington, DC, at the Brookings Institution, Congressional Research Service, and State Department’s Office of Policy Planning, “Targeted Killings and Signature Strikes,” June 16, <http://blogs.cfr.org/zenko/2012/07/16/targeted-killings-and-signature-strikes/>]

No matter how U.S. officials (secretly) refer to the practice, signature strikes against military-age men have been part of U.S. targeted killings outside of battlefields from their beginning. In fact, the very first targeted killing was a signature strike.¶ After a year-long manhunt and several missed opportunities by Yemeni soldiers, on November 3, 2002, a fusion of human intelligence assets and signals intercepts pinpointed Abu Ali al-Harithi—an operational planner in the al-Qaeda cell that bombed the USS Cole in 2002—and his bodyguards living in the Marib region near the border with Saudi Arabia. Yemeni and U.S. forces on the ground, supported by a Predator drone circling above, were monitoring al-Harithi’s group when they left a compound in two Toyota SUVs. All of the men were in one vehicle and the women in the other. According to an unnamed U.S. official, “If the women hadn’t gotten into another car, we wouldn’t have fired.” (A member of the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence later wondered, “What do we do, next time, if the women get into the car?”)¶ Reportedly, the National Security Agency (NSA) intercepted a satellite phone call coming from the SUV filled with men. After an NSA analyst—who had listened to tapes of al-Harithi’s voice for years—heard confirming evidence, he shouted: “He’s in the backseat, and he’s giving the driver directions!” With that confirmation, a CIA-controlled Predator drone was authorized to fire a single Hellfire missile, which destroyed the SUV and killed al-Harithi, four unknown Yemenis, and Ahmed Hijazi (otherwise known as Kemal Derwish)—a naturalized U.S. citizen who recruited six men from Lackawanna, New York, to briefly attend an al-Qaeda training camp in Afghanistan. Ultimately, the Lackawanna Six pled guilty to providing material support to al-Qaeda and received sentences ranging from seven to nine years in federal prison.¶ As the Los Angeles Times reported the drone strike: “Even though the CIA wasn’t sure who else was in the car, the customary rules of armed conflict say that anyone sitting next to a legitimate target such as Harithi was, in effect, accepting the risk of imminent death.” (Many international legal scholars would dispute this interpretation.) At the same time, U.S. officials acknowledged that the CIA did not know Hijazi was in the vehicle before the CIA launched the missile, although one later claimed his death was justifiable “collateral damage” since “he was just in the wrong place at the wrong time.”¶ It is plausible that the military-age males who happened to get into al-Harithi’s SUV that day were involved with the suspected al-Qaeda operative in planning terrorist plots. However, there is no way to know this with any certainty, and the Bush administration never presented any supporting evidence to this effect. Moreover, we will never know what specific evidence was used to target al-Harithi, because some of it came from suspected al-Qaeda operative Abd al Rahim al-Nashiri. In 2008, CIA director Hayden testified before the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence that Nashiri was one of three detainees that the CIA waterboarded, and information obtained by torture is not admissible in a military commission trial.¶ Whether they are called signature strikes, crowd killing, or Terrorist Attack Disruption Strikes, all have been part of U.S. targeted killings from the start, and continue with the CIA’s tactic of staggered drone strikes to kill rescuers of initial victims. The Obama administration makes the false choice that kinetic counterterrorism options are either “large, intrusive military deployments” or drone strikes (although some signature strikes have been conducted with cruise missiles). Or, as former CIA official Henry Crumpton—who, according to his memoir, authorized the first U.S. drone strike on October 20, 2001, in Afghanistan—crudely described the dichotomy: “Look at the firebombing of Dresden, and compare what we’re doing today.” However, people have the right to disagree with the ethical and moral tradeoffs of how drone strikes are currently conducted, and the unwillingness of the Obama administration to discuss them, as well as Congress’ reticence to question them. After ten years of signature strikes, isn’t this a debate worth having?

#### Counter-interp- “targeted killing” is lethal force against those not in custody- broad definitions are comparatively better than scholars like Anderson- it’s most real world for legal practice

**Guardian ’13** [Jan, translator at the International Monetary Fund, Resident Representative Office in Belarus, “TARGETED KILLINGS: A SUMMARY,” <http://acontrarioicl.com/2013/02/27/targeted-killings-a-summary/>]

Currently there is no legal definition of targeted killings in either international or domestic law.[1] ‘Targeted killing’ is rather a descriptive notion frequently used by international actors in order to refer to a specific action undertaken in respect to certain individuals.¶ Various scholars propose different definitions. Machon, for example, refers to ‘targeted killing’ as an “intentional slaying of a specific individual or group of individuals undertaken with explicit governmental approval,”[2] whereas Solis suggests that for there to be a targeted killing (i) there must be an armed conflict, either international or non-international in character; (ii) the victim must be specifically targeted; (iii) he must be beyond a reasonable possibility of arrest; (iv) the killing must be authorized by senior military commanders or the head of government; (v) and the target must be either a combatant or someone directly participating in the hostilities.[3] But whereas some scholars seek to use a human rights-based definition, [4] others propose those which do not entail the applicability of international humanitarian law. [5]¶ However, such definitions are incorrect for several reasons. First of all, the definition of a ‘targeted killing’ has to be broad enough as to cover a wide range of practices and flexible enough as to encompass situations within and outside the scope of an armed conflict, thus, being subject to the application of both international human rights law and international humanitarian law, as opposed to the definition provided by some scholars and even states themselves.[6] Secondly, one should bear in mind that defining an act as an instance of ‘targeted killing’ should not automatically render the illegality of such an act at stake.[7] Moreover, the definition also has to cover situations where such an act is carried out by other subjects of international law, rather than only by states.¶ Therefore, maintaining an element-based approach and synthesizing common characteristics of multiple definitions, it is more advisable to use the one employed by Alston and Melzer, which refers to targeted killings as a use of lethal force by a subject of international law (encompassing non-state actors) that is directed against an individually selected person who is not in custody and that is intentional (rather than negligent or reckless), premeditated (rather than merely voluntary), and deliberate (meaning that ‘the death of the targeted person [is] the actual aim of the operation, as opposed to deprivations of life which, although intentional and premeditated, remain the incidental result of an operation pursuing other aims).[8]

#### They limit the heart of the topic- most strikes are signature-based, and they only allow bad drones affs that don’t solve

**VanValkenberg 3-2**-13 [Noah VanValkenberg, Contributing Writer for Outside Colby, a non-partisan political publication, “Making Drones More Effective: Refining a Necessary Practice in Warfare,” <http://outsidecolby.com/2013/03/making-drones-more-effective-refining-a-necessary-practice-in-warfare/>]

Drones are a crucial piece of the United States’ global war on terror. They have eliminated dangerous individuals such as Anwar al-Awlaki and other senior members of Al Qaeda. However, there is a significant difference between targeted strikes and “signature strikes”—and the use of the latter is only serving to endanger US security.¶ In a typical targeted strike, high-level terrorists are profiled and their names are passed up the chain of command. The National Security Adviser, in conjunction with the Director of Central Intelligence (CIA), will recommend individuals on this “kill list” to President Obama. Ultimately, the President makes the call of who to strike. This is the way drone strikes should work: a missile is only fired after careful analysis and evaluation by experts, and a decision by the President.¶ Signature strikes work entirely differently. Armed drones often loiter over a specific area with no specific mission. If they see a group of individuals acting suspiciously, a relatively low-level intelligence officer can make the call to shoot. The definition of “acting suspiciously” is particularly problematic, as a man carrying a rifle and riding in a pickup truck in the desert may meet that standard. Signature strikes have killed prominent pro-US Yemeni leaders, as documented in the New York Times, they have stoked significant anti-American sentiment, and they have killed 176 children in Northern Pakistan alone.¶ Currently, signature strikes make up the majority of drone attacks, and the targets’ identities are rarely conclusively known. According to an article published in the Journal of International Criminal Justice by Jens Ohlin, only eight percent of suspected militants killed in signature strikes between 2008 and 2010 were mid- to high-level targets. The rest posed no threat to US national security and the strikes incurred enormous collateral damage.¶ However, that collateral damage is enormous. According to the widely cited study Living Under Drones, published by Stanford and NYU, one signature strike alone killed forty members of a peaceful meeting of tribal elders in Northwest Pakistan. The same study argues that many individuals now refrain from going to funerals, because they are so frequently targeted by signature strikes.

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#### Drones don’t inherently lower the threshold for war

**Etzioni 13** (Amitai Etzioni is a professor of international relations at George Washington University and author of Hot Spots: American Foreign Policy in a Post-Human-Rigid World., March-April 2013, "The Great Drone Debate", aladinrc.wrlc.org/bitstream/handle/1961/14729/Etzioni\_DroneDebate.pdf?sequence=1,)

Mary Dudziak of the University of Southern California’s Gould School of Law opines that “[d]rones are a technological step that further isolates the American people from military action, undermining political checks on . . . endless war.” Similarly, Noel Sharkey, in The Guardian, worries that drones represent “the ﬁnal step in the industrial revolution of war—a clean factory of slaughter with no physical blood on our hands and none of our own side killed.” This kind of cocktail-party sociology **does not stand up to even the most minimal critical examination**. Would the people of the United States, Afghanistan, and Pakistan be better off if terrorists were killed in “hot” blood—say, knifed by Special Forces, blood and brain matter splashing in their faces? Would they be better off if our troops, in order to reach the terrorists, had to go through improvised explosive devices blowing up their legs and arms and gauntlets of machinegun ﬁre and rocket-propelled grenades—traumatic experiences that turn some of them into psychopath-like killers? Perhaps if all or most ﬁghting were done in a cold-blooded, push-button way, it might well have the effects suggested above. However, as long as what we are talking about are a few hundred drone drivers, what they do or do not feel has no discernible effects on the nation or the leaders who declare war. Indeed, there is **no evidence** that the introduction of drones (and before that, high-level bombing and cruise missiles that were criticized on the same grounds) made going to war more likely or its extension more acceptable. Anybody who followed the American disengagement in Vietnam after the introduction of high-level bombing, or the U.S. withdrawal from Afghanistan (and Iraq)—despite the considerable increases in drone strikes—knows better. In effect, the **opposite argument may well hold**: if the United States could not draw on drones in Yemen and the other new theaters of the counterterrorism campaign, the nation might well have been forced to rely more on conventional troops and prolong our involvement in those areas, a choice which would **greatly increase our casualties and zones of warfare**. This line of criticism also neglects a potential upside of drones. As philosopher Bradley Strawser notes, this ability to deploy force abroad with minimal United States casualties may allow America to intervene in emerging humanitarian crises across the world with a greater degree of ﬂexibility and effectiveness.61 Rather than reliving another “Blackhawk down” scenario, the United States can follow the model of the Libya intervention, where drones were used by NATO forces to eliminate enemy armor and air defenses, paving the way for the highly successful air campaign which followed, as reported by The Guardian’s Nick Hopkins. As I see it, however, the main point of moral judgment comes earlier in the chain of action, well before we come to the question of which means are to be used to kill the enemy. The main turning point concerns the question of whether we should go to war at all. This is the crucial decision because once we engage in war, we must assume that there are going to be a large number of casualties on all sides—casualties that may well include innocent civilians. Often, discussions of targeted killings strike me as being written by people who yearn for a nice clean war, one in which only bad people will be killed using surgical strikes that inﬂict no collateral damage. Very few armed confrontations unfold in this way. Hence, when we deliberate whether or not to ﬁght, we should assume that once we step on this train, it is very likely to carry us to places we would rather not go. Drones are merely a new stepping stone on this woeful journey. Thus, we should carefully deliberate before we join or initiate any new armed ﬁghts, but draw on drones extensively, if ﬁght we must. They are more easily scrutinized and reviewed, and are more morally justiﬁed, than any other means of warfare available.

#### The aff’s restraint reverses squo militarism and solves alt

Brooks ’13 (Rosa, Professor of Law at Georgetown University Law Center and a Bernard L. Schwartz Senior Fellow at the New America Foundation, “Drones and Cognitive Dissonance,” chapter for *Drones, Remote Targeting And The Promise Of Law*, Peter Bergen and Daniel Rothenberg, Eds. Forthcoming, Cambridge University Press, 2013)

There is nothing mystical about drones. They are not inherently “evil,” and they’re not a panacea, either. Drone strikes are just another tactic in America’s lethal toolkit – just another means of delivering death, **not inherently any worse** or any better than any other way to kill people. From a narrow legal perspective, drones are also just “business as usual”. Both the United States and the international community **have long had rules** governing armed conflicts and the use of force in national selfdefense. These rules apply whether the lethal force at issue involves knives, assault weapons, grenades, tank-mounted machine guns, or weaponized drones. When drone technologies are used in traditional armed conflicts—on “hot battlefields” such as those in Afghanistan, Iraq or Libya, for instance – **they pose no new legal challenges**, and can and should be regulated using the existing laws of war. But if drones used in traditional armed conflicts present no “new” legal issues, some of the activities and policies enabled and facilitated by drones pose enormous challenges to existing legal frameworks. For example, as discussed above, the availability of drone technologies makes it far easier for the United States to “expand the battlefield,” striking targets in places where it would be too dangerous or too politically controversial to send troops. Often this expansion challenges existing legal frameworks. For example, drones enable the United States to strike targets inside foreign states, and do so quickly, efficiently and deniably.37 As a result, drones have become the tool of choice for so-called “targeted killing” – the deliberate targeting of an individual or group of individuals, whether known by name or targeted based on patterns of activity, inside the borders of a foreign country. It is when drones are used in targeted killings outside of recognized armed conflicts that their use challenges existing legal frameworks. Law is almost always out of date: we make legal rules based on existing conditions and technologies, perhaps with a small nod in the direction of predicted future changes. As societies and technologies change, law increasingly becomes an exercise in **jamming square pegs into round holes.** Eventually, that process begins to do damage to existing law: it gets stretched out of shape, or broken. Ideally, we update the laws before too much damage is done. Right now, US drone policy is on the verge of doing irreparable damage to the rule of law – and it’s not clear that either the President, Congress of the public cares. Understanding how US drone policy challenges existing legal ideas, systems and norms requires a consideration of the concept of “rule of law” as well as a review of the relationship between the laws of war and “ordinary” law.

#### US military power is objectively and empirically good – prevents war, extinction

Barnett 11 (Thomas P.M. Barnett, Former Senior Strategic Researcher and Professor in the Warfare Analysis & Research Department, Center for Naval Warfare Studies, U.S. Naval War College American military geostrategist and Chief Analyst at Wikistrat., worked as the Assistant for Strategic Futures in the Office of Force Transformation in the Department of Defense, “The New Rules: Leadership Fatigue Puts U.S., and Globalization, at Crossroads,” March 7 <http://www.worldpoliticsreview.com/articles/8099/the-new-rules-leadership-fatigue-puts-u-s-and-globalization-at-crossroads>)

It is worth first examining the larger picture: We live in a time of arguably the greatest structural change in the global order yet endured, with this historical moment's most amazing feature being its relative and absolute lack of mass violence. That is something to consider when Americans contemplate military intervention in Libya, because if we do take the step to prevent larger-scale killing by engaging in some killing of our own, we will not be adding to some fantastically imagined global death count stemming from the ongoing "megalomania" and "evil" of American "empire." We'll be engaging in the same sort of system-administering activity that has marked our stunningly successful stewardship of global order since World War II. Let me be more blunt: As the guardian of globalization, the U.S. military has been the greatest force for peace the world has ever known. Had America been removed from the global dynamics that governed the 20th century, the mass murder never would have ended. Indeed, it's entirely conceivable there would now be no identifiable human civilization left, once nuclear weapons entered the killing equation. But the world did not keep sliding down that path of perpetual war. Instead, America stepped up and changed everything by ushering in our now-perpetual great-power peace. We introduced the international liberal trade order known as globalization and played loyal Leviathan over its spread. What resulted was the collapse of empires, an explosion of democracy, the persistent spread of human rights, the liberation of women, the doubling of life expectancy, a roughly 10-fold increase in adjusted global GDP and a profound and persistent reduction in battle deaths from state-based conflicts. That is what American "hubris" actually delivered. Please remember that the next time some TV pundit sells you the image of "unbridled" American military power as the cause of global disorder instead of its cure. With self-deprecation bordering on self-loathing, we now imagine a post-American world that is anything but. Just watch who scatters and who steps up as the Facebook revolutions erupt across the Arab world. While we might imagine ourselves the status quo power, we remain the world's most vigorously revisionist force. As for the sheer "evil" that is our military-industrial complex, again, let's examine what the world looked like before that establishment reared its ugly head. The last great period of global structural change was the first half of the 20th century, a period that saw a death toll of about 100 million across two world wars. That comes to an average of 2 million deaths a year in a world of approximately 2 billion souls. Today, with far more comprehensive worldwide reporting, researchers report an average of less than 100,000 battle deaths annually in a world fast approaching 7 billion people. Though admittedly crude, these calculations suggest a 90 percent absolute drop and a 99 percent relative drop in deaths due to war. We are clearly headed for a world order characterized by multipolarity, something the American-birthed system was designed to both encourage and accommodate. But given how things turned out the last time we collectively faced such a fluid structure, we would do well to keep U.S. power, in all of its forms, deeply embedded in the geometry to come. To continue the historical survey, after salvaging Western Europe from its half-century of civil war, the U.S. emerged as the progenitor of a new, far more just form of globalization -- one based on actual free trade rather than colonialism. America then successfully replicated globalization further in East Asia over the second half of the 20th century, setting the stage for the Pacific Century now unfolding. As a result, the vector of structure-building connectivity shifted from trans-Atlantic to trans-Pacific. But if the connectivity push of the past several decades has been from West to East, with little connectivity extended to the South outside of the narrow trade of energy and raw materials, the current connectivity dynamic is dramatically different. Now, the dominant trends are: first, the East cross-connecting back to the West via financial and investment flows as well as Asian companies "going global"; and second, the East creating vast new connectivity networks with the South through South-South trade and investment. The challenge here is how to adjust great-power politics to these profound forces of structural change. Because of the West's connectivity to the East, we are by extension becoming more deeply connected to the unstable South, with China as the primary conduit. Meanwhile, America's self-exhausting post-Sept. 11 unilateralist bender triggered the illusion -- all the rage these days -- of a G-Zero, post-American world. The result, predictably enough for manic-depressive America, is that we've sworn off any overall responsibility for the South, even as we retain the right to go anywhere and kill any individuals -- preferably with flying robots -- that we deem immediately threatening to our narrowly defined national security interests. The problem with this approach is that China has neither the intention nor the ability to step up and play anything resembling a responsible Leviathan over the restive South, where globalization's advance -- again, with a Chinese face -- produces a lot of near-term instability even as it builds the basis for longer-term stability.

#### Relying on the heuristic of scenario planning is best – it allows us to cope with impossibly complex systems and use that complexity to our advantage

Gorka et al 12 (Dr. Sebastian L. V., Director of the Homeland Defense Fellows Program at the College of International Security Affairs, National Defense University, teaches Irregular Warfare and US National Security at NDU and Georgetown, et al., Spring 2012, “The Complexity Trap,” Parameters, <http://www.carlisle.army.mil/USAWC/parameters/Articles/2012spring/Gallagher_Geltzer_Gorka.pdf>)

Once we abandon complexity and begin to talk of prioritization, diffusion of power, and speed of change, we start to see that there is a deep irony in the complexity trap. Proclaiming complexity to be the bedrock principle of today’s approach to strategy indicates a failure to understand that the very essence of strategy is that it allows us to cope with complexity—or at least good strategy does. Strategy is a commitment to a particular course of action, a heuristic blade that allows us to cut through large amounts of data with an overriding vision of how to connect certain available means with certain desired ends. **By winnowing the essential from the extraneous, such heuristics often outperform more complicated approaches to complex** (or even allegedly “wicked”) **problems that end up being computationally intractable**. **The more complex the system, the more important it is to rely on heuristics to deal with it**. Whether through the use of heuristics or otherwise, **the ability to peer through seemingly impenetrable complexity and to identify underlying patterns and trends is richly rewarded when others remain confused or intimidated by the apparent inscrutability of it all**—especially when that ability is coupled with a recognition that **small changes can have a big impact when amplified throughout an interconnected system**. If complexity, whether real or perceived, is truly the defining characteristic of the current strategic environment, then we should be witnessing a corresponding renaissance in grand strategy design and longterm strategic planning. 40 Not so, unfortunately—or at least not yet. More to the point, **because strategy copes with complexity, complexity actually rewards truly strategic actors**. Those who are prepared, organized, and rich in physical and human capital can exploit complexity to secure their interests. For example, **international regime complexity enables “chessboard politics**” whereby strategic actors can shop among forums for the best international venue to promote their policy preferences or can use cross-institutional political strategies to achieve a desired outcome. 41 Due to its high concentration of technical and legal expertise, the United States is ideally suited to exploit this complexity and to thrive in an age of chessboard politics. 42 The first step is replacing the current reactive worship of complexity with proactive prioritization. To escape the complexity trap, let us dare to decide—that is, let us strategize.

#### Legal reforms restrain the cycle of violence and prevent error replication

Colm O’Cinneide 8, Senior Lecturer in Law at University College London, “Strapped to the Mast: The Siren Song of Dreadful Necessity, the United Kingdom Human Rights Act and the Terrorist Threat,” Ch 15 in Fresh Perspectives on the ‘War on Terror,’ ed. Miriam Gani and Penelope Mathew, <http://epress.anu.edu.au/war_terror/mobile_devices/ch15s07.html>

This ‘symbiotic’ relationship between counter-terrorism measures and political violence, and the apparently inevitable negative impact of the use of emergency powers upon ‘target’ communities, would indicate that it makes sense to be very cautious in the use of such powers. However, the impact on individuals and ‘target’ communities can be too easily disregarded when set against the apparent demands of the greater good. Justice Jackson’s famous quote in Terminiello v Chicago [111] that the United States Bill of Rights should not be turned into a ‘suicide pact’ has considerable resonance in times of crisis, and often is used as a catch-all response to the ‘bleatings’ of civil libertarians.[112] The structural factors discussed above that appear to drive the response of successive UK governments to terrorist acts seem to invariably result in a depressing repetition of mistakes.¶ However, certain legal processes appear to have some capacity to slow down the excesses of the counter-terrorism cycle. What is becoming apparent in the UK context since 9/11 is that there are factors at play this time round that were not in play in the early years of the Northern Irish crisis. A series of parliamentary, judicial and transnational mechanisms are now in place that appear to have some moderate ‘dampening’ effect on the application of emergency powers.¶ This phrase ‘dampening’ is borrowed from Campbell and Connolly, who have recently suggested that law can play a ‘dampening’ role on the progression of the counter-terrorism cycle before it reaches its end. Legal processes can provide an avenue of political opportunity and mobilisation in their own right, whereby the ‘relatively autonomous’ framework of a legal system can be used to moderate the impact of the cycle of repression and backlash. They also suggest that this ‘dampening’ effect can ‘re-frame’ conflicts in a manner that shifts perceptions about the need for the use of violence or extreme state repression.[113] State responses that have been subject to this dampening effect may have more legitimacy and generate less repression: the need for mobilisation in response may therefore also be diluted.

#### Their kritik creates a false dichotomy between total rejection and oppression—their “all or nothing” alternative dooms coalitions and closes off space for political activism

Krishna ’93 [Sankaran, Dept. of Polit. Sci., Alternatives, 1993]

The dichotomous choice presented in this excerpt is straightforward: one either indulges in total critique, delegitimizing all sovereign truths, or one is committed to “nostalgic”, essential unities that have become obsolete and have been the grounds for all our oppressions. In offering this dichotomous choice, Der Derian replicates a move made by Chaloupka in his equally dismissive critique of the more mainstream nuclear oppression, the Nuclear freeze movement of the early 1980s, that according to him, was operating along obsolete lines emphasizing “facts” and “realities” while a “postmodern” President Reagan easily outflanked them through an illusory Star Wars program. (See KN: chapter 4)Chaloupka centers this difference between his own supposedly total critique of all sovereign truths (which he describes as nuclear criticism in an echo of literary criticism) and the more partial (and issue-based) criticism of what he calls “nuclear opposition” or “antinuclearists” at the very outset of his book. (KN: xvi) Once again, the unhappy choice forced upon the reader is to join Chaloupka in his total critique of sovereign truths or be trapped in obsolete essentialisms.This leads to a disastrous politics, pitting groups that have the most in common (and need to unite on some basis to be effective) against each other. Both Chaloupka and Der Derian thus reserve their most trenchant critique for political groups that should, in any analysis, be regarded as the closest to them in terms of an oppositional politics and their desired futures. Instead of finding ways to live with these differences and to (if fleetingly) coalesce against the New Right, this fratricidal critique is politically suicidal. It obliterates the space for a political activism based on provisional and contingent coalitions, for uniting behind a common cause even as one recognizes that the coalition is comprised of groups that have very differing (and possibly unresolvable) views of reality.¶ Moreover, it fails to consider the possibility that there may have been other, more compelling reasons for the “failure” of the Nuclear Freedom movement or anti-Gulf War movement. Like many a worthwhile cause in our times, they failed to garner sufficient support to influence state policy. The response to that need not be a totalizing critique that delegitimizes all narratives.The blackmail inherent in the choice offered by Der Derian and Chaloupka, between total critique and “ineffective” partial critique, ought to be transparent. Among other things, it effectively militates against the construction of provisional or strategic essentialisms in our attempts to create space for an activist politics. In the next section, I focus more widely on the genre of critical international theory and its impact on such an activist politics