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#### **Status quo Targeted Killing represents a move to authoritarianism, a lack of political, social, and ethical responsibility on the part of society, and a prevalent discourse of militarism**

Giroux 13 (Henry, mcmaster U prof, <http://www.truth-out.org/opinion/item/14483-the-shooting-gallery-obama-and-the-vanishing-point-of-democracy> dw: 12-2-2013, da: 1-13-2014, lido)

The move toward an authoritarian and dystopian state - one marked by its flight from moral and political responsibility - has been made more acceptable by the widespread popular willingness to overlook, if not legitimate, the ongoing violation of civil liberties as a central theme of government policy, military conduct, mainstream news media and popular culture in general. Mainstream culture is flooded with endless representations of individuals, government officials, and the police operating outside of the law as a legitimate way to seek revenge, implement vigilante justice and rewrite the rationales for violating human rights and domestic law. TV programs like Dexter and Person of Interest, as well as a spate of Hollywood films like as Gangster Squad and Django Unchained have provided a spectacle of legal lawlessness and violence unchecked by ethical considerations and allegedly justified by the pursuit of noble ends.¶ The culture of violence, fear and sometimes manufactured terror takes a toll politically and ethically on any democratic society, especially when it becomes the most popular spectacle in town. Unfortunately, the line between fiction and material reality, along with the more hallowed spheres of politics and governance, has collapsed and it has become more difficult to determine one from the other. Forms of violence and violations of civil rights that should be unthinkable in a democracy are now lauded as necessary and effective tactics in the war on terrorism, and so rarely subject to critical interrogation. Some of the more notable transgressions are evident in former Vice-President Dick Cheney's infamous statement to Tim Russert on NBC's Meet the Press in which he stated that the Bush administration would have to "work ... the dark side" and the 2006 comment by John Brennan in which he claimed that we have "to take off the gloves" in some areas in order to wage a war against terrorism. And while torture has been denounced by President Obama, the administration has in actuality created a new foundation for violating civil rights and promoting human abuses.¶ As the White Paper memo produced by the Justice Department's Office of Legal Counsel makes clear, Obama has put into play government policies so extreme and brutal that the administration has propelled itself to the vanishing point of legal illegalities. This is partly evident in the Obama administration's claim, duly noted even in the mainstream press, that it can target and kill American citizens anywhere on the globe. The emergence of such practices has little to do with a legitimate need to promote national security and a country's right to self-defense. On the contrary, such policies represent America's slide into barbarism, made all too vivid by the fact that the officials who are responsible for them are not only held unaccountable, but nominated to the highest positions in the American government. Witness the nomination of John Brennan as the next director of the CIA. Moreover, the Obama administration now has carried this institutionalization of mad violence to an extreme with the assertion that a few officials in the highest reaches of government can decide which Americans and foreigners can be targeted and killed as enemies of the United States.¶ ¶ The winter 2013 release of the Justice Department's "White Paper," the confirmation hearings for John Brennan as the next CIA Director, and the publication of "Globalizing Torture: CIA Secret Detention and Extraordinary Rendition"8 all provide powerful evidence of the ongoing assault on American democracy under the Bush and Obama administrations, and the consolidation of a culture in which fear and punishment reign unchecked and the law is on the side of the most frightening of anti-democratic practices. These indices reveal, in turn, a society in which terror becomes as totalizing as the loss of any sense of ethical and political responsibility. These revelations are about more than the fact that the United States is losing its moral compass or is violating civil liberties and promoting human rights abuses, though these registers should not be dismissed.¶ What such commentary misses is the degree to which the Obama administration exercises scorn toward democracy itself, such that it now resembles an authoritarian state. The White Paper, for instance, reveals a mode of governance, policy, and practice that is deeply anti-democratic in its claim to be able to use lethal, yet legal, force against American citizens anywhere on the globe. When secrecy replaces judicial review and presidential power can be evoked without limits to kill Americans, it becomes difficult to recognize the United States as a democratic nation. Evoking the language of Orwellian legality to legitimate the claim that Americans can be killed without due process, the White Paper justifies assassinating American citizens if they are a "senior operational leader of al-Qaeda or associated force," if they "pose an imminent threat of violent attack to the United States" and if their "capture is infeasible."9¶ ¶ This Orwellian language operates in the dead zone of morality and jurisprudence. Moreover, this discourse becomes meaningless in light of the administration's claim that the use of such sweeping authority and actions do not need judicial review, can be done in secret, away from the public domain and does not need to provide evidence to a judge before or after an attack.10 What is truly shocking is that an American citizen can be targeted for assassination by the US government without the latter having to provide any proof of guilt - or the former being given the right to establish innocence. This is more than an attack on constitutional rights or a violation of human rights; it is a capitulation to authoritarianism. Glenn Greenwald captures this in his insightful comment:¶ “The most extremist power any political leader can assert is the power to target his own citizens for execution without any charges or due process, far from any battlefield. The Obama administration has not only asserted exactly that power in theory, but has exercised it in practice.... The definition of an extreme authoritarian is one who is willing blindly to assume that government accusations are true without any evidence presented or opportunity to contest those accusations. This memo - and the entire theory justifying Obama's kill list - centrally relies on this authoritarian conflation of government accusations and valid proof of guilt. They are not the same and never have been. Political leaders who decree guilt in secret and with no oversight, inevitably succumb to error and/or abuse of power. Such unchecked accusatory decrees are inherently untrustworthy.... That's why due process is guaranteed in the Constitution and why judicial review of government accusations has been a staple of western justice since the Magna Carta: because leaders can't be trusted to decree guilt and punish citizens without evidence and an adversarial process. That is the age-old basic right on which this memo, and the Obama presidency, is waging war.”11¶ The administration's legal rhetoric and the practices it legitimates increasingly make the United States look like the ruthless Latin American dictatorships that seized power in the 1970s, all of which appealed to paranoia, fear, security and the use of extra-legal practices to defend barbaric acts of assassinations, torture, abuse and disappearance. The writer Isabel Hilton rightly invokes this repressed piece of history and what it reveals about the current Obama administration. She writes:¶ “The delusion that office-holders know better than the law is an occupational hazard of the powerful and one to which those of an imperial cast of mind are especially prone. Checks and balances - the constitutional underpinning of the democratic idea that no one individual can be trusted with unlimited power - are there to keep such delusions under control.... When disappearance became state practice across Latin America in the 70s, it aroused revulsion in democratic countries where it is a fundamental tenet of legitimate government that no state actor may detain—or kill—another human being without having to answer to the law.”12¶ Not only has the Obama administration discarded the principles of justice, judicial review and international law in its willingness to kill Americans without limits on its authority, it openly flaunts such behavior as integral to how the United States defines itself in a post- 9/11 world. And while it has agreed recently to release its legal reasoning for killing US citizens by armed drones, it has done so only "to ease pressure on John Brennan, the architect of the drones strategy, at his Senate confirmation hearing as CIA Director."13 How can any American possibly talk about living in a democracy in which the President of the United States claims that he and a few high-ranking government officials have the right and "the power ... to carry out the targeted killing of American citizens who are located far away from any battlefield, even when they have not been charged with a crime, even when they do not present any imminent threat in any ordinary meaning of that word."14¶ In a democracy, citizens have constitutional rights, checks and balances limit unaccountable authority and human rights are upheld rather than scorned. The task of governance and political leadership is not to promote dangerous policies, but to draw out injustices embedded in the recesses of the past and present, to make clear that the cover of secrecy and silence will not protect those who violate the law, and to reject forms of patriotic militarism that sanction illegality in the name of a permanent war on terrorism. But there is more at stake here than a call for transparency, the embrace of human rights and the rejection of a government that imprisons, eavesdrops on US citizens or kills them without charges, trial and due process. There is also an obligation of democratic leadership and governance to uphold some measure of accountability and to redress the policies and practices that implicate the United States in a long history of torture - one that extends from the genocide of Native Americans to the enslavement of millions of Africans and their descendants, to the killing of 21,000 Vietnamese under the aegis of the CIA's infamous Phoenix Program. The purpose of this history is not to induce shame but to recognize that such crimes were legitimated by political conditions and institutionalized policies that must be excised from American domestic and foreign policies if there is to be hope for a future that does not simply repeat the past.

#### Drone wars perpetuated by the US represent silent injustices, extreme racism, and structural violence against Muslims

Mizner 13 (David, Jacobin staff, <http://www.salon.com/2013/10/04/the_war_on_terror_starring_an_american_journalist_partner/> dw: 10-4-2013, da: 1-10-2014, lido)

The U.S. government kills a lot of Muslims. With its war against Afghanistan, its sanctions on and wars against Iraq, its drone campaigns in Pakistan, Yemen, and Somalia, it’s probably killed more than a million Muslims in the last quarter century. Let’s say a million. That’s more than a 9/11’s worth of corpses every month. And that doesn’t include the killing done by governments the United States props up and arms. Nor does it account for torture, maiming, poisoning, and terrorization. The brutalization of Muslims might be the defining feature of U.S. foreign policy in the post-Cold War era.¶ Not many Americans care. Their — our — indifference is both cause and effect of the dominant tenor of antiwar advocacy in the United States. Pundits and politicians tell Americans that we should oppose this or that American war or this or that involvement in another country’s war because it would hurt … Americans. It would cost “us” money. Or put “our” soldiers “in harm’s way.” Or threaten our safety. Or subvert our democracy. Or tarnish our reputation. Or violate our constitution. Rarely mentioned are the bodies ripped apart by the U.S. military monster. Rachel Maddow wrote an entire book opposing U.S. war-making and made only fleeting references to non-American victims.¶ During the debate over the proposed U.S. bombing of Syria, New York Timescolumnist Frank Bruni set out to remind us of the human toll of war. Justly taking aim at the expression “boots on the ground,” he pointed out that there would be people in those boots — so far, so good — but didn’t think to mention that Syrian footwear would be similarly inhabited. He went on to say that “the toll of our best intentions and tortured interventions” in Iraq and Afghanistan are thousands of dead, injured, and traumatized Americans.¶ Of the tens of millions of Iraqi and Afghan victims he wrote not a word. Post Traumatic Stress Disorder? Americans wars have given entire populations PTSD.¶ While the overwhelming opposition of Americans to (further) U.S. military intervention in Syria’s civil war was heartening, the rhetoric of some leading opponents was sickening. Congressman Alan Grayson (D-FL), warning against intervention from the ostensible left, kept saying that the suffering of Syrians was “none of our business.” In an interview on Democracy Now he wandered into truly dark territory when he seconded the stateswoman from Alaska: “…Palin actually has this right: Let Allah sort it out.”¶ I’m not suggesting that opponents of war should use only moral arguments; they’re wise to try to appeal to people’s self-interest, and nationalism in pursuit of peace is, if not a virtue, nonetheless preferable to nationalism in pursuit of war. Likewise, antiwar advocates on the Left can’t afford to be finicky about allies: I’d team up with the ideological descendants of Charles Lindberg to try to stop a U.S. military intervention. But nowadays, to listen to the rhetoric of mainstream war opponents is to hear a story in which foreign victims of American wars — almost always people of color — do not appear. The popular way of opposing war draws on the very chauvinism and racism that produce war.

#### The paradigm of pre-emption like that illustrated by modern targeted killings nullifies the mediator between sovereign and subject, creating a decisionist paradigm of sovereign authority that inflicts unethical violence against the other and creating an ethic of autoimmunity.

Stockdale ’13 LIAM P.D. STOCKDALE, B.A.(h), M.A., “ GOVERNING THE FUTURE, MASTERING TIME: TEMPORALITY, SOVEREIGNTY, AND THE PRE - EMPTIVE POLITICS OF (IN)SECURITY,” A Thesis Submitted to the School of Graduate Studies in Partial Fulfilment of the Requirements for the Degree Doctor of Philosophy @ McMaster University, July 2013, <http://digitalcommons.mcmaster.ca/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=9237&context=opendissertations> jss

To elaborate, recall that the logic of pre-emption’s concern with governing the future confers “epistemic primacy” upon the imagination (Aradau & van Munster 2011: 85). We have seen that this has the effect of radically enhancing the discretionary capacity of the relevant sovereign authority—whether titular executive or “petty” functionary—since the latter must actively construct the imagined potentialities that form the primary epistemic basis for anticipatory action. We have also seen that because the future being acted upon remains inherently unknowable, it follows that in the course of imagining possible futures against which to act in the present, no potentiality can be a priori excluded from consideration. This stems from the explicitly precautionary aspect of pre-emptive security, which demands that decision-makers “take the most far-fetched forecasts seriously” because the very uncertainty they are seeking to tame precludes the summary dismissal of any imaginable possibility (Ewald 2002: 288; Daase & Kessler 2007). The result is that a pre-emptive politics of security manifests as a regime in which, by default, “everyone is suspect” in the eyes of the sovereign—and it is under such conditions of “universal suspicion” that anticipatory action must be taken (Ericson 2008: 66).71 Moreover, the previous chapter has shown that such action operates beyond the juridical order and through a decisionist idiom, meaning that normative limits on the scope of decisional possibility are all but eliminated. It thus follows that, in the context of a pre-emptive security rationality, the only effective limitations on the exercise of sovereign power are the limits of the sovereign imagination itself. Put another way, under a politics of pre-emption, the sovereign is tasked with taming the future’s radical contingency; and because the epistemic basis for any action toward this end consists of an imagined potentiality of the sovereign’s own construction, individuals are either targeted or ruled out based on the subjective discretion of the relevant sovereign authority rather than any objective juridico-normative guidelines. And since none can be a priori excluded, all are always already potential targets for anticipatory action. What thus emerges is a political condition in which, logically speaking, any individual may be subjected to what amounts to a unilaterally-decided intervention at any time, since the futurity of the threat means that no one can be summarily absolved from suspicion and it takes only the whim of the relevant sovereign to “deem” an individual to be a threat and thus precipitate a pre-emptive response. This has the effect of rendering all subjects perpetually vulnerable to a potentially violent intervention based on the conjectural imagining of a future that may not ever come to pass. To be sure, this vulnerability is rarely translated into such acts of arbitrary sovereign violence, and in fact is quite unlikely to ever do so in the case of almost every individual. Yet this empirical fact is largely immaterial to the conceptual point being made here because, when considered from the perspective of political subjectivity, this ever-present potential for anticipatory sovereign intervention based upon speculative imaginings of potential futures implies that the subjective condition that emerges under a pre-emptive security regime can be best described as precarious. Indeed, its is this permanent state of vulnerability to such interventions that characterizes the subjective experience, because even if no such action ever takes place, the constant possibility that it will is the defining feature of the prevailing political condition. It is important to recognize that this possibility is what follows from the enhanced decisional discretion that we have seen is vested in the sovereign by the logic of pre-emption. This is because, as discussed in the preceding chapter, the pre-emptive decision is placed outside the circumscriptions of the juridical order, which removes the normative barriers that protect individuals from being targeted on the basis of conjectural knowledge that they have no capacity to contest. The point, therefore, is that even if such arbitrary targeting never actually takes place—which is most likely to be the case for almost everyone—this will not be because of any normative constraints upon the sovereign’s decisional authority; rather, it will be because the sovereign happened to decide against it. In other words, even if the sovereign never exercises the decisionist prerogatives conferred upon it by the logic of pre-emption, the mere existence of these prerogatives signifies that the potential for arbitrarily violent irruptions of sovereign power remains ever-present. A perpetual vulnerability to such interventions thus defines the subjective condition under a pre-emptive security regime, characterizing this condition as inherently precarious. Returning to the relationship between pre-emption and exceptionalism, these points further highlight this connection by demonstrating that the relations between sovereign and subject enacted by the logic of pre-emptive security closely resemble those that characterize the particular spaces in which the political exceptionalism theorized by Schmitt and Agamben is manifested. For instance, in his description of one such space—that which he terms the “camp”—Agamben argues that sovereign power confronts its subjects “without any mediation,” since the sovereign’s ability to act is unbound by juridical norms while subjects are deprived of any agentic capacity to resist or contest its unilateral decisions (Agamben 2000: 41, 1998: 171). Importantly, this is precisely the sort of relation that obtains under a pre-emptive security rationality, since on the one hand, the imperative to govern the future demands a sovereign authority that must decide to act on the basis of its own imagination and thus cannot be limited by the juridical order; while on the other, those targeted for anticipatory intervention by such a decision cannot contest or resist it, since any demonstrable present innocence is ultimately irrelevant when the basis for intervention is an imagined future that may never come to pass. Accordingly, just as in the proverbial “camp,” the possibility that any individual may be arbitrarily subjected to potentially violent sovereign interventions is always present under a preemptive security regime. Indeed, even within the boundaries of sovereign states ostensibly committed to the rule of law and the upholding of human rights norms, the adoption of a preemptive security rationality enacts a political condition characterized by the ever-present potential for anyone to be inscribed as the sort of “bare life” against which “everything is possible” (Agamben 1998: 170). The subjective experience that results from such a politics of potentiality can thus best be described as precarious. The Killing of Anwar al-Awlaki A useful illustration of these points can be found in the incident briefly discussed at the opening of the preceding chapter—namely, the targeted assassination of suspected Al-Qaeda operative and US citizen Anwar al-Awlaki who, in September 2011, was killed by an American drone strike as his vehicle travelled down a rural road in northern Yemen. This case is particularly instructive because it clearly illustrates both the type of action on the part of sovereign authorities that is made possible by the logic of pre-emptive security, and the concomitantly precarious subjectivity that is thereby enacted. To elaborate upon these points, it must first be established that the Obama administration’s decision to target al-Awlaki in fact constituted an explicit exercise in preemptive security. This is evidenced on the one hand by the fact that the broader CIA “Killing Program” of which it is a prime example has been framed in precisely such terms by its proponents (Leander 2011, Kessler & Werner 2008). For example, in a 2012 interview with the New York Times, former National Counterterrorism Centre head Michael E. Leiter claimed that the practice of targeted killing via drone strike was embraced by President Obama as the most appropriate response to the “situation where he is being told people might attack the United States tomorrow” (quoted in Becker and Shane 2012, emphasis added). This suggests that Obama and his administration view drone warfare as an effective way to ensure that such a catastrophic future does not come to pass—that is, in explicitly pre-emptive terms. Moreover— and with respect to the al-Awlaki case in particular—the pre-emptive character of the killing is emphasized by the administration’s post hoc framing of the incident. Indeed, while acknowledging the exceptional character of the act, the administration sought to legitimate the killing after the fact by specifically invoking the pre-emptive imperative. In this respect, it was simply asserted that al-Awlaki “posed some sort of imminent threat”—the precise nature of which was not specified—which thus justified “extraordinary measures”—in this case the due process-free killing of a citizen by his own government (Koring 2011, emphasis added). This suggests that the decision to target al-Awlaki was made on the basis of an imagined future in which that ambiguous potential threat had, in fact, manifested as the “next attack.” In relying upon the speculative imagination in this way, the targeting of al-Awlaki thus constituted an archetypical manifestation of a pre-emptive security rationality in action. Besides being an exemplar of pre-emptive security, however, the targeted killing of al- Awlaki also constituted an archetypically “exceptional” act, as it exemplified both pillars of political exceptionalism described in the preceding chapter. With respect to the first pillar—the suspension of the juridical order—the act was patently extrajudicial, and thus suspended the legal order at moment and point of its occurrence. Specifically, the killing was not authorized through conventional judicial channels or in accordance with prevailing standards of evidence, and as such, was both ordered and carried out absent the due process of law guaranteed to all US citizens under the Fifth Amendment. Moreover, that killing al-Awlaki by remote drone strike would contravene the juridical order appears to have been apparent to the Obama administration in that, much as the Bush administration sought to circumvent existing legal limitations on Presidential authority by invoking the “unitary executive” doctrine, the Obama White House sought to justify the killing through an alternative line of legal reasoning premised upon enhanced executive discretion. This is evidenced by an internal memo from the Justice Department, prepared with specific reference to the al-Awlaki case, which asserted that “while the Fifth Amendment’s guarantee of due process applied, it could be satisfied by internal deliberations in the executive branch” alone (quoted in Becker & Shane 2012, emphasis added). This Bush-like circumvention of the juridical order through appeals to executive privilege hints at how the al-Awlaki case also embodies the second pillar of exceptionalism—a decisionist paradigm of sovereign authority. In this respect, the decision to target al-Awlaki proceeded from the Justice Department’s aforementioned position and took place in accordance with the Obama administration’s approach to drone warfare that “concentrates power over the use of lethal U.S. force outside war zones within one small team at the White House” (Dozier 2012). This process was chronicled in detail by an extended New York Times investigation published in May 2012 (Becker and Shane 2012), and is worth quoting at length to illustrate the degree to which the exercise of sovereign authority underpinning the drone campaign takes a decidedly decisionist form: Every week or so, more than 100 members of the government’s sprawling national security apparatus gather, by secure video teleconference, to pore over terrorist suspects’ biographies and recommend to the president who should be the next to die. This secret ‘nominations’ process is an invention of the Obama administration, a grim debating society that vets the PowerPoint slides bearing the names, aliases and life stories of suspected members of Al Qaeda’s branch in Yemen or its allies in Somalia’s Shabab militia…[N]ames go off the list if a suspect no longer appears to pose an imminent threat…The nominations [then] go to the White House, where by his own insistence and guided by [chief counterterrorism advisor Jim] Brennan, Mr. Obama must approve any name. This executive-centred approach is archetypically decisionist in nature, as the final authority regarding who is to be killed and when the strike is to take place is both excused from the limitations of the existing juridical order, and explicitly granted to the president alone.72 Indeed, operating under the presupposition that executive branch deliberation followed by the president’s final decision constitutes due process of law, the administration’s pre-emptive use of drone warfare liberates the executive branch from any normative circumscriptions regarding the use of violence, thus vesting within the person of the president the discretionary capacity to determine who to target, when to strike, and, crucially, what counts as evidence that someone poses a threat sufficient to merit being killed (Ackerman 2012). Such prerogatives clearly mirror those ascribed to the sovereign under the decisionist paradigm that the preceding chapter identified with the logic of pre-emptive security, as the president both decides when and where to intervene, and must also conjecturally construct the ultimate epistemic/evidentiary foundation upon which to make this decision. The al-Awlaki case thus offers an additional illustration of the relationship between preemption and exceptionalism. However, with specific relevance to the concerns of this chapter, it also forcefully reveals the practical implications of this link for the character of political subjectivity in a pre-emptive security context. Specifically, it highlights the degree to which the anticipatory exercise of sovereign power shifts the relation between sovereign and subject in the direction of an unmediated confrontation, thus enacting a precarious condition of subjectivity. Indeed, in the al-Awlaki case, the nature of sovereign/subject relation was such that once the president made the pre-emptive decision to target al-Awlaki for assassination, the latter could immediately be killed with impunity by the agents of American sovereignty. In other words, the law no longer served as a mediator between sovereign and subject, since al-Awlaki, a US citizen, could nonetheless be killed purely on the basis of an executive decree. Any juridico-normative limitations on the president’s decisional authority were thus subordinated to a pre-emptive imperative with which such limits are fundamentally incompatible. What is more, the decision also deprived al-Awlaki of the capacity to contest or resist this precarious status, as the extrajudicial character of the targeting process serves to shield such decisions from the degree of judicial review that the Fifth Amendment purportedly guarantees all citizens. Thus, faced with a sovereign power that could unilaterally decide when he would be killed and against which he had no immediate legal recourse, al-Awlaki was effectively inscribed as precisely the sort of “bare life” that Agamben and others associate with the “exceptional” space of the “camp” without actually being located in such a space (Agamben 2000, 1998).73 The al-Awlaki case thus provides a clear example of the sort of exceptional intervention that is made possible by the logic of pre-emptive security, while also demonstrating that such exceptional interventions take place at the discretionary will of the sovereign. In other words, what the al-Awlaki killing shows is that, under the logic of pre-emption, the sort of violent, unilaterally-decided intervention to which he was exposed can, in fact, take place anywhere and against anyone if the sovereign “deems” it to be necessary. This is because whether such an intervention ultimately takes place does not depend upon any extant normative limitations on the authority of the sovereign—indeed, we have seen that such limitations are incompatible with a pre-emptive security rationality. Rather it depends ultimately upon the sovereign’s conjectural imaginings of potential futures that may or may not come to pass. Put in terms of the al-Awlaki case, the point is that under the pre-emptive security regime being prosecuted through the drone warfare program, if Obama had decided not to kill al-Awlaki, this would not have been because of any juridical limitations on his doing so; it would have ultimately been because the president himself simply decided not to—a decision which, one way or the other, is rendered absolute (in the Schmittian sense) by the imperatives of pre-emption. Al-Awlaki’s killing thus illustrates the precarious subjectivity that is enacted by a pre-emptive security rationality quite well, since it shows how the law is effectively diminished as a meditative barrier between sovereign and subject, thus rendering the latter perpetually vulnerable to being unilaterally and incontestably inscribed as bare life if the sovereign “deems” it fit, irrespective of who they might be or where they might be located. This latter point—that a pre-emptive security rationality diminishes the limitations on either who can be targeted for anticipatory action or where this targeting can occur—is an important aspect of the precarious subjectivity that accompanies a pre-emptive security regime, and can be further clarified by considering two particular details of the al-Awaki case. The first is that al-Awlaki was an American citizen. This is significant because, as already mentioned, the Fifth Amendment to the US Constitution protects all citizens from being “deprived of life, liberty, or property, without due process of law.” Accordingly, possession of American citizenship ought to shield an individual from execution by the state on the basis of a unilateral executive decision. Yet al-Awlaki’s killing was authorized and carried out on precisely these terms. This provides a useful illustration of the point that, under a pre-emptive security rationality, there can be no effective restrictions upon who can be targeted for anticipatory intervention. This is a necessary component of pre-emptive security, since deference to such juridico-normative circumscriptions as the rights of citizenship would limit the enhanced discretionary authority of the sovereign, thus compromising its capacity to render the pre emptive imperative actionable. Indeed, the al-Awlaki case shows that, under a pre-emptive rationality, the imperative to tame temporal contingency trumps existing normative mediations between sovereign and subject, such that even the protections of citizenship can be disregarded in the present in the name of attempting to govern the future. The second aspect of the al-Awlaki case that illustrates the unmediated relation between sovereign and subject in the context of pre-emptive security is the fact that the killing took place on Yemeni territory, and thus outside the legally defined jurisdiction of the American executive that authorized and carried it out. This shows that the decisionist form of sovereign authority presupposed by pre-emptive security operates beyond legal circumscriptions relating not only to who one is—such as the protections of citizenship—but also to where one is located—such as the jurisdictional boundaries of states. This is again because the imperative to tame the future requires a sovereign power largely unconstrained by juridico-normative limitations, which includes those associated with present spatio-political distinctions such as state borders. Indeed, the sources of potential catastrophe are defined temporally rather than spatially, and thus may not neatly correspond to present spatial arrangements. As such, efforts to pre-empt them by acting upon the future must disregard these arbitrary spatial distinctions of the present, since deference thereto would compromise the absolute decisional authority that is required to render the preemptive imperative politically actionable. The adoption of a pre-emptive security rationality thus presupposes the liberation of sovereign power from circumscription by the spatialized distinctions of the prevailing global political order, as it can only be effectively deployed against a fluidly indefinite future if it is able to operate across the spatio-material rigidities that constitute that order.74 The practical result is that the precarious subjectivity associated with the ever-present potential of a pre-emptive intervention is not confined to the spatial coordinates of the state from which the intervening force derives its authority, nor to any explicitly designated “exceptional space” over which this authority exercises absolute sovereignty—such as a traditional “camp” of the Guantánamo Bay type. Rather, the logic of pre-emptive security requires that the exceptional relations between sovereign and subject that obtain in these latter spaces—in which an individual is inscribed as “bare life” and thus confronts sovereign power “without any mediation” (Agamben 2000: 41)—be enacted anywhere it is deemed to be necessary by the relevant sovereign authority, irrespective of existing spatial demarcations and the normative circumscriptions that correspond thereto. In other words, under a pre-emptive security regime, spatially constituted mediations between sovereign and subject—such as state borders, “camp” fences, or other specific delineations between an “inside” and an “outside”—are rendered effectively irrelevant with respect to determining where exceptional interventions can take place. The al-Awlaki case exemplifies precisely this sort of spatially unconstrained sovereign power in action, as it shows that an individual unilaterally “deemed dangerous” by the American executive remains equally vulnerable to violent anticipatory intervention whether s/he is located beyond or within the legal sovereign jurisdiction of the United States. Indeed, the Hellfire missiles that killed al-Awlaki were fired from a drone aircraft remotely piloted by American personnel, and struck and killed an American citizen on sovereign Yemeni territory. The very act of firing these missiles as a pre-emptive intervention against a potential future in which al- Awlaki had engineered the “next terrorist attack” thus served to enact the logic of the “camp” not within the boundaries of the American state or within a specifically delineated “exceptional space” subject to American sovereignty, but along a rural Yemeni road. This illustrates how the operationalization of pre-emptive security creates a condition in which anyone can be designated for anticipatory intervention—since the targeting process relies upon a unilateral sovereign decision based on a speculatively imagined future in which all are potential suspects—and in which those who are targeted can be subjected to a sovereign intervention anywhere they might be located.75 By demonstrating how the pre-emptive exercise of sovereign power transcends limiting norms relating to a targeted individual’s citizenship affiliation and spatial location, the al-Awlaki case offers both a useful illustration of the overlap between pre-emptive security and political exceptionalism, and an archetypical example of the type of unilaterally decided, corporeally violent, anticipatory action that is thus made possible by the logic of pre-emptive security. In fact, the due process-free killing of a citizen by his own government represents precisely the type of exceptional intervention that is enabled—and perhaps even demanded—by the logic of preemptive security, thus highlighting the precarious character of political subjectivity that accompanies the adoption of such rationalities. Indeed, so long as a pre-emptive rationality prevails, all political subjects within the reach of a sovereign authority operating along those lines are rendered perpetually vulnerable to such interventions as that which killed al-Awlaki, even if they are never actually targeted in practice. In other words, the very fact that the al- Awlaki killing could take place at all shows that this state of vulnerability to what Massumi (2005a) refers to as the “lightning strike” of anticipatory sovereign violence defines the subjective experience under pre-emptive security. To be sure, such interventions are infrequent—although the ongoing escalation of the drone warfare campaign under the Obama administration may increase their incidence. However, the point is that they are made possible by the adoption of a pre-emptive security rationality, and that this possibility enacts a highly precarious condition of political subjectivity. The subjective experience is precarious because the de facto elimination of juridico-normative mediation between sovereign power and political subject permits the former to confront the latter in much the same way as takes place in such overtly exceptional spaces as the Agambenian “camp” or the Schmittian state. In this sense, the logic of pre-emptive security presupposes the creation of the same sort of subjective condition that obtains in the proverbial state of exception—that is, a decidedly precarious subjectivity. It must therefore be recognized that the enaction of such a condition is what is at stake with the adoption of a pre-emptive approach to (in)security governance. The Incoherence of Pre-emptive Security? The core line of argument developed across both this and the previous chapters of Part II can distilled down to the following: due ultimately to the political temporality embedded in the logic of pre-emption itself, the adoption of a security rationality based thereupon entails the creation of what amounts to an exceptional(ist) political condition, with the result that the lived experience of political subjects under a pre-emptive security regime can be best described as precarious. The contradictory tensions inhering in the idea of pre-emptive security should thus already be somewhat apparent, since such a condition of precarious subjectivity is antithetical to the idea of “security” in its most elementary sense. To be sure, all security rationalities embody certain tensions, such that the pursuit of security in accordance with their tenets also produces insecurity to a greater or lesser extent—indeed, shedding light upon such tensions is the primary purpose of the critical security studies project. However, with respect to the notion of preemptive security in particular, these tensions are especially glaring, to the extent that its conceptual coherence can be brought into serious question. Indeed, the arguments developed in this study suggest that, by virtue of its own constitutive logic, a pre-emptive security rationality in fact brings into being precisely the sort of insecurity that it is normatively premised upon diminishing. In other words, a pre-emptive security rationality does not merely fail with regard to its underlying normative promises to deliver a particular form of “security”; it also actively inscribes a political condition characterized by the exact opposite. In the last two sections of this chapter, I call into question the conceptual coherence of pre-emption as a security strategy by unpacking these points in greater detail. To begin, it is useful to take a step back and more clearly enumerate the tensions inherent to pre-emptive security rationalities, as implied by the insights proffered in this study thus far. In this respect, the preceding discussions have shown how the logic of pre-emptive security demands that an effectively arbitrary, life-and-death decisional authority be granted to relevant sovereign authorities. This, in turn, creates an environment in which individual citizens are perpetually vulnerable to being “deemed dangerous” and thus subjected to a potentially violent anticipatory intervention. And while pernicious excesses where wholly innocent individuals are targeted in this way are rare, the key point is that such instances are nevertheless made possible by the logic of pre-emptive security. Indeed, beyond the Mohamed Hersi and Anwar al-Awlaki cases discussed above—where the question of complete innocence is less clear—one need only consider two other high-profile cases—the shooting death of Jean Charles de Menezes in 2005 (Vaughan-Williams 2007; Taylor 2006) and the extraordinary rendition of Maher Arar in 2002- 03 (Mutimer 2007)—to appreciate this point. Yet the most important issue for present purposes is that the institutionalization of this immanent possibility is an originary function of the logic of pre-emption itself, as it is ultimately traceable to the operational requirements of the temporally inflected political imperative to act on the future. This is problematic for the coherence of preemptive security because it suggests that the adoption of a pre-emptive rationality also necessarily implies the enactment of a condition where anyone can be arbitrarily deemed dangerous and subjected to anticipatory violence at any time, regardless of the surrounding political circumstances. Indeed, precisely because it is an originary function of the logic of preemption itself, such an exceptional condition would emerge under a pre-emptive security regime even in the case of states ostensibly committed to the rule of law and the upholding of human rights norms, thus rendering even their own citizens perpetually vulnerable to these sorts of exceptional interventions—whether at the airport, at the border, in a London Tube station, on a rural Yemeni road, or elsewhere (see Amoore 2008: 115). Such a condition of perpetual vulnerability is incompatible with the most basic understanding of security as “a condition of being protected [and] free from danger,” thus destabilizing any claims that pre-emptive strategies are able to deliver anything that might be understood as “security” (Der Derian 2009: 152). Moreover, these problems are exacerbated by the explicitly “precautionary” ethos that underpins contemporary manifestations of pre-emptive security. As we have seen, this leads to an emphasis upon immediate action over moderated restraint, thus ensuring that adopting a preemptive rationality will result in a high level of anticipatory activity and a concomitantly increased likelihood that inevitable errors will result in excessive and unjustified violence. As David Runciman (2004) asserts, anticipatory political strategies akin to pre-emptive security prioritize action over inaction and therefore “do not take seriously enough the downside of getting things wrong.” Thus, in addition to increasing the likelihood that individuals will be wrongly targeted, the precautionary ethos also has the effect of ensuring that incidents such as the Menezes shooting—in which an innocent man was killed by petty sovereigns acting under a pre-emptive rationality—can be framed as mere “accidents” or “mistakes” that, while regrettable, are an inevitable price to be paid for the putative protections of a pre-emptive security regime (Vaughan-Williams 2007: 183). By placing the blame for such excesses on the unique circumstances of each case, this problematically obscures the crucial point that—in a manner reminiscent of Virilio’s (2007) notion of the “integral accident”—they can be ultimately traced back to the logic of pre-emption itself, since it is what ultimately makes them possible. It therefore becomes quite difficult to resist the ongoing embrace of pre-emptive rationalities by political elites, since the exceptional violence that such rationalities originarily entail can be discursively papered over in these sorts of ways. The potentially deleterious implications for the experience of political subjectivity, and thus everyday life, under a pre-emptive security regime are thus quite significant—particularly in the context of the liberal democratic polities at the forefront of its institutionalization in policy circles. These considerations seriously call into question the coherence of pre-emption as a security rationality. However, not only do they imply that the latter is incapable of delivering a condition that can be understood as “security,” but, perhaps more importantly, they also suggest that pre-emptive security rationalities in fact reproduce precisely the form of insecurity that they are ultimately premised upon diminishing. To elaborate upon this point, we must recall exactly what it is that a pre-emptive security rationality seeks to achieve. Most simply in this regard, it promises above all to protect human subjects against potentially forthcoming harms, since the threats against which it is framed are located in a future that may or may not come to pass. Put another way, pre-emptive security rationalities are premised upon the reduction—and, ideally, the elimination—of a certain vulnerability caused by exposure to potential violence represented by the possible future irruption of catastrophe. The problem, however, is that by responding to an uncertain future by enacting a politics of exceptionalism in which sovereign authorities can target subjects for anticipatory intervention on the basis of speculation and conjecture, preemptive security actually replaces the initial form of vulnerability that it seeks to diminish—to the irruptive threat posed by a radically uncertain future—with another form of vulnerability—to the will of a decisionist sovereign authority that can unilaterally intervene suddenly and violently in an effort to govern that future. Indeed, the potential violence of vulnerability to the “next terrorist attack” is subjectively little different from the potential violence of vulnerability to indefinite detention at Guantánamo Bay, assassination by drone strike in rural Yemen, summary execution in a London Tube station, or any other such exceptional exercises of sovereign power that are necessarily made possible by a politics of pre-emption. Thus, while the latter is normatively premised upon protecting against the potential violence of an uncertain future, the mechanisms by which it does so create a lived present fraught with an alternative form of potential violence—namely, the perpetual possibility of an extrajudicially-decided lightning strike by the state security apparatus. The preceding arguments have shown that this possibility is part and parcel of pre-emptive security, which thus places individual citizens in arguably as precarious a position as does their untempered exposure to the potential catastrophes lurking in the future’s unknowable depths. The adoption of a pre-emptive security rationality thus brings into being precisely the sort of condition that it is premised upon eliminating. Like so many governmental innovations of the post-9/11 global security climate, therefore, the notion of pre-emptive security in fact “ends up producing, reproducing, and regenerating the very thing it seeks to disarm” (Derrida 2003: 99). This calls into question the coherence of the idea of pre-emptive security itself, and poses a serious challenge to its viability as a policy strategy for (in)security governance. This incoherence of pre-emptive security is perhaps the most important conclusion of Part II of this study, and the next section suggests that reading the idea of pre-emptive security through Derrida’s concept of “autoimmunity” is a particularly effective way to emphasize this point. Pre-emptive Security and “Autoimmunity” The quotation from Derrida in the preceding paragraph was deliberately chosen, as it is taken from his own critical engagement with the Western response to the attacks of 9/11—a response that includes the types of pre-emptive security strategies with which this study is concerned (Derrida 2003). In context, the quotation is part of his broader description of how the socio-political dynamics unleashed by this response represent a concrete illustration of his notion of “autoimmunity” (Derrida 2005, 2003). This concept is central to Derrida’s later “political” writings, and although it has been widely discussed across a number of disciplines, its appropriation by the International Relations literature has remained quite limited.76 In this section, I consider how the idea of autoimmunity offers a useful conceptual lens through which to theorize the problematic character of pre-emptive security, since it concisely describes the sorts of internally contradictory tensions that the previous section has identified, and thus emphasizes how their deleterious practical effects are in fact an originary function of the logic of pre-emption itself. This point is crucial, since it can productively serve as the conceptual foundation for a serious policy critique of the emerging consensus around the utility of pre- emptive security strategies in particular, and the efficacy of anticipatory governance rationalities more generally. Derrida’s Autoimmunity We must begin by elaborating upon what precisely Derrida meant when speaking of “autoimmunity.” The term itself is, of course, derived from the vernacular of medical science,77 where it describes a category of disease in which the body’s own immune system “misrecogniz[es] parts of itself as other than itself and then seeks to eliminate these unrecognized and hence antagonistic aspects of itself” (Cohen 2004: 8). An autoimmune response thus constitutes “a living contradiction,” as the very mechanism whose purpose is to protect the body—the immune system—ends up turning against the body and ultimately harming it (Ibid.). Derrida appropriates this idea and extends its application to the realm of the social, asserting that in fact “all kinds of beings, from discourses to institutions” are subject to what he terms “a general logic of autoimmunity” (Naas 2006: 25, Derrida 2002). In elaborating upon this “general logic,” however, Derrida modifies the meaning of autoimmunity from its original medical formulation in subtle yet important ways. In particular, he places greater emphasis on its relation to the root concept of “immunity” by specifying that autoimmunity only emerges subsequent to an original “immunizing gesture” (Naas 2006: 34; Arfi 2010a: 246, 2010b: 312). Thus, for Derrida, any attempt by a social entity—such as a political community—to “immunize” itself against a putatively threatening “other”—through the construction and defence of a sovereign boundary, for example—necessarily renders that entity subject to the “illogical logic” of autoimmunity (Derrida 2005: 35-6). Autoimmunity is thus originarily present in any immunizing move, as “there is no immunity without autoimmunity”— the one is part and parcel of the other (Derrida 2003: 159). Moreover, because the autoimmunitary process is precipitated by the immunizing gesture itself, Derrida asserts that it is, more specifically, the immunity of the entity that is destroyed by the logic of autoimmunity. In other words, the process of autoimmunity represents the destruction not of the entity itself— although this may ultimately follow—but more specifically of its own immunitary protections. This particular specification is important for Derrida, as it is made clear in two of the more lucid descriptions of his understanding of autoimmunity. In Rogues, for instance, he describes it as “this strange illogical logic by which a living being can spontaneously destroy, in an autonomous fashion, the very thing within it that is supposed to protect it against the other, to immunize itself against the aggressive intrusion of the other” (2005: 123); while in Philosophy in a Time of Terror, he describes it as “that strange behaviour where a living being, in quasi-suicidal fashion, ‘itself’ works to destroy its ‘own’ immunity” (2003: 94, emphasis original; see also Borradori 2003: 20). In accordance with this formulation, Derrida emphasizes that in the socio-political context, the operation of this logic can lead an original immunizing gesture to ultimately bring into being precisely that which it is premised upon protecting, or “immunizing”, against (Derrida 2003: 99). Indeed, since it is the immunitary protection itself that is compromised, the types of condition(s) that this protection seeks to preclude are ultimately made manifest by the autoimmune process. Derrida thus asserts that any attempt to foreclose against what he calls “the coming of the other”—by which he means any “event” situated beyond the realm of knowability/calculability—must inevitably lead to an “exposure” to precisely that “other” through the logic of autoimmunity that is always already immanent in such a move (2005: 152- 53; Gasché 2004: 295; Arfi 2010a: 246).78 In more concrete terms, these ideas have been deployed by Derrida himself, along with numerous others, with respect to the actions of the liberal West in the wake of the 9/11 attacks (Derrida 2005: 40, 2003: 94-99; Cheah & Guerlac 2009: 12-13; Miler 2009: 128; Naas 2006: 31; Mitchell 2005: 919). The arguments here vary in nuance and sophistication, but generally focus upon the enaction by such polities of various illiberal practices, and emphasize how the very politico-juridical elements that ostensibly “immunize” liberal democratic states and their citizens against such things as arbitrary sovereign violence and human rights violations are thus transgressed in the name of securing those very elements through an ongoing “War on Terror.” While occasionally representing rather facile applications of Derrida’s characteristically complex theoretical claims, such arguments nonetheless highlight the key aspects of the concept by emphasizing both that it is “immunity” itself which is compromised by the autoimmune process, and that the practices that trigger the process ultimately end up bringing into being the very type of condition they aspire to secure (or “immunize”) against (Derrida 2003: 94). Pre-emptive Security as Autoimmune In light of both Derrida’s formulation and the arguments developed in this and the preceding chapters, the idea of pre-emptive security can be usefully read in terms of “autoimmunity.” Indeed, not only do pre-emptive security rationalities constitute precisely the sort of social processes that Derrida claims are subject to the logic of autoimmunity, but the conceptual tensions identified in the preceding section are an excellent example of that logic being borne out. In this respect, recall from chapters 2 and 3 that the advent of pre-emptive rationalities of government was precipitated by an apparent need for reformulations of sovereignty aimed at more actively taming the radical uncertainty of the late-modern world. The adoption of a pre-emptive security rationality can in this sense be understood as exactly the sort of “immunizing gesture” of which Derrida speaks, since it is normatively premised upon diminishing vulnerability to potential violence by “immunizing” against the catastrophic potentialities deemed to inhabit the unknowable depths of the future. Moreover, such potentialities—typified by the spectre of the “next terrorist attack”—constitute the very type of incalculable “event” or “other” against whose coming an “immunizing gesture” as theorized by Derrida seeks to foreclose (Derrida 2005: 135, 144, 148, 152; Gasché 2004: 295). The idea of pre-emptive security as a socio-political project is thus exactly the sort of process to which the “illogical logic” of autoimmunity is claimed by Derrida to apply.

#### Autoimmunity justifies its own escalatory ends through infinite threat construction—in claiming that it’s ‘try or die’ they will continually up the ante of destructive possibility by claiming the alternative is always worse. This ethos is the condition of possibility for extinction.

Callus and Herbrechter ‘4 Ivan Callus, Head of the Department of English at the University of Malta and PhD in English from Cardiff, and Stefan Herbrechter, reader in Cultural Theory at Coventry University and PhD in English from Cardiff“The Latecoming of the Posthuman, Or, Why "We" Do the Apocalypse Differently, "Now."” Reconstruction, Vol. 4, No. 3, Summer 2004, http://reconstruction.eserver.org/043/callus.htm

<23> It needs to be said immediately that if "we" are starting to discuss endism differently it is because the apocalypse can be done so more unthinkably and incalculably now than was ever the case. The challenge of the nuclear that provided a focus for "No Apocalypse, Not Now" is one about which it is possible to be almost nostalgic in the context of all the circumstances that make the posthumanous so immediate to both experience and possibility: the biotechnology revolution and the various technologies for the prosthesization of the human, the prospect of engineered pandemics, worldwide virality that could be digital as well as organic, indeed all the processes that could conceivably operate according to the logic of autoimmunity, whereby "a living being, in quasi-suicidal fashion, 'itself' works to destroy its own protection, to immunize itself against its 'own' immunity" (Derrida's emphasis) [26]. According to Derrida, "what is put at risk by this terrifying autoimmunitary logic is nothing less than the existence of the world, of the worldwide itself" (Derrida's emphasis; 98-99). This risk, whereby the human itself creates the conditions for that which might exceed it, doing so without simultaneously immunizing itself against the worst with any adequacy or proper foresight, is what makes the posthumanous the episteme of our time. Reflections upon it could therefore look like a processual rather than posthumous epitaph on the human. In that context, the (sur)passing of the human becomes less amenable to the protocols of poststructuralist counter-intuitiveness than may previously have been the case. Hence, to recast the famous reflections from the conclusion to Foucault's The Order of Things (1966), the posthumanous is an invention of very recent date, and what is therein discovered is that the erasability of the human is an all too immediate wager. <24> A grim scenario brings this point starkly home. It has to do with the fact that the worries of the Cold War, even the rigors of all previous wars, look -- and one hopes to be forgiven for saying this -- almost quaint beside the order and enormity of the posthumanous understood as the apocalyptic eventuality that is scripted by the various formulations of the autoimmunity contrived by the human. It is by no means certain, to follow Blanchot and Rapaport, that humanity will grow quite as blasé about the banality of the end as it had grown inured, through thanatopraxie and the various resources of the writing of the disaster, to Cold War menaces [27]. Quite simply, that is because it is possible to do the apocalypse more inventively now, and through all the inventions that have made previous technologies of the end obsolete and that will continue, in a paradoxical renewing of their ends, to do so. This, in fact, is itself a sign of the apocalyptic newness of the "now." Previous apocalyptic technologies have been obliterated by an accelerated logic of obsolescence, almost as if previous generations seem datedly exterminable, while "we" appear to be available to more designedly state-of-the-art (indeed practically "designer") endings which are potentially procurable by those -- and this where terrorism comes in -- undeterred by any détente. Consequently, the worst is not merely thinkable, but apprehensible as something on this side of improbability. In that apprehending the mannerisms of deconstructive, poststructuralist, or postmodernist logic, particularly their counter-intuitive temporalities and their reluctance to countenance straightforward projections of supersedence, seem to lack le bon ton. Indeed, there is no greater indication of the appositeness of a different tone and a different temporization of the posthumanous, and of the way in which even deconstruction finds itself driven to do the apocalypse differently now, than the following statement by Derrida: We are talking about a trauma, and thus an event, whose temporality proceeds neither from the now that is present nor from the present that is past but from an im-presentable to come (à venir). A weapon wounds and leaves forever open an unconscious scar; but this weapon is terrifying because it comes from the to-come, from the future, a future so radically to come that it resists even the grammar of the future anterior [emphasis added]. [28]

#### Normalized greed, militarism, violence, and individualization is a product of modern society caused by instances of exploited power like targeted killing. This politics of disimagniation causes a cycle of greed and power that never go checked, and causes a lack of ability to care about others ethically.

Giroux 13 (Henry, prof at Mcmasters U, <http://truth-out.org/news/item/14814-the-politics-of-disimagination-and-the-pathologies-of-power#i>, dw: 2-27-2013, da: 1-11-2014, lido)

We live in a time of deep foreboding, one that haunts any discourse about justice, democracy and the future. Not only have the points of reference that provided a sense of certainty and collective hope in the past largely evaporated, but the only referents available are increasingly supplied by a hyper-market-driven society, megacorporations and a corrupt financial service industry. The commanding economic and cultural institutions of American society have taken on what David Theo Goldberg calls a "militarizing social logic."[1] Market discipline now regulates all aspects of social life, and the regressive economic rationality that drives it sacrifices the public good, public values and social responsibility to a tawdry consumerist dream while simultaneously creating a throwaway society of goods, resources and individuals now considered disposable.[2] This militarizing logic is also creeping into public schools and colleges with the former increasingly resembling the culture of prison and the latter opening their classrooms to the national intelligence agencies.[3] In one glaring instance of universities endorsing the basic institutions of the punishing state, Florida Atlantic University in Boca Raton, concluded a deal to rename its football stadium after the GEO Group, a private prison corporation "whose record is marred by human rights abuses, by lawsuits, by unnecessary deaths of people in their custody and a whole series of incidents." [3A] Armed guards are now joined by armed knowledge. Corruption, commodification and repressive state apparatuses have become the central features of a predatory society in which it is presumed irrationally "that market should dominate and determine all choices and outcomes to the occlusion of any other considerations."[4]¶ The political, economic, and social consequences have done more than destroy any viable vision of a good society. They undermine the modern public's capacity to think critically, celebrate a narcissistic hyperindividualism that borders on the pathological, destroy social protections and promote a massive shift towards a punitive state that criminalizes the behavior of those bearing the hardships imposed by a survival-of-the-fittest society that takes delight in the suffering of others. How else to account for a criminal justice stacked overwhelmingly against poor minorities, a prison system in which "prisoners can be held in solitary confinement for years in small, windowless cells in which they are kept for twenty-three hours of every day,"[5] or a police state that puts handcuffs on a 5-year old and puts him in jail because he violated a dress code by wearing sneakers that were the wrong color.[6] Why does the American public put up with a society in which "the top 1 percent of households owned 35.6 percent of net wealth (net worth) and a whopping 42.4 percent of net financial assets" in 2009, while many young people today represent the "new face of a national homeless population?"[7] American society is awash in a culture of civic illiteracy, cruelty and corruption. For example, major banks such as Barclays and HSBC swindle billions from clients and increase their profit margins by laundering money for terrorist organizations, and no one goes to jail. At the same time, we have the return of debtor prisons for the poor who cannot pay something as trivial as a parking fine. President Obama arbitrarily decides that he can ignore due process and kill American citizens through drone strikes and the American public barely blinks. Civic life collapses into a war zone and yet the dominant media is upset only because it was not invited to witness the golf match between Obama and Tiger Woods.¶ The celebration of violence in both virtual culture and real life now feed each other. The spectacle of carnage celebrated in movies such as A Good Day to Die Hard is now matched by the deadly violence now playing out in cities such as Chicago and New Orleans. Young people are particularly vulnerable to such violence, with 561 children age 12 and under killed by firearms between 2006 and 2010.[8] Corporate power, along with its shameless lobbyists and intellectual pundits, unabashedly argue for more guns in order to feed the bottom line, even as the senseless carnage continues tragically in places like Newtown, Connecticut, Tustin, California, and other American cities. In the meantime, the mainstream media treats the insane rambling of National Rifle Association's (NRA) Executive Vice President Wayne LaPierre as a legitimate point of view among many voices. This is the same guy who, after the killing of 20 young children and six adults at Sandy Hook Elementary School, claimed the only way to stop more tragedies was to flood the market with more guns and provide schools with more armed guards. The American public was largely silent on the issue in spite of the fact that an increase of police in schools does nothing to prevent such massacres but does increase the number of children, particularly poor black youth, who are pulled out of class, booked and arrested for trivial behavioral infractions.¶ At the same time, America's obsession with violence is reinforced by a market society that is Darwinian in its pursuit of profit and personal gain at almost any cost. Within this scenario, a social and economic order has emerged that combines the attributes and values of films such as the classics Mad Max and American Psycho. Material deprivation, galloping inequality, the weakening of public supports, the elimination of viable jobs, the mindless embrace of rabid competition and consumption, and the willful destruction of the environment speak to a society in which militarized violence finds its counterpart, if not legitimating credo, in a set of atomizing and selfish values that disdain shared social bonds and any notion of the public good. In this case, American society now mimics a market-driven culture that celebrates a narcissistic hyperindividualism that radiates with a new sociopathic lack of interest in others and a strong tendency towards violence and criminal behavior. As John le Carré once stated, "America has entered into one of its periods of historical madness."[9] While le Carré wrote this acerbic attack on American politics in 2003, I think it is fair to say that things have gotten worse, and that the United States is further plunging into madness because of a deadening form of historical and social amnesia that has taken over the country, further reproducing a mass flight from memory and social responsibility. The politics of disimagination includes, in this instance, what Mumia Abu-Jamal labeled "mentacide," a form of historical amnesia "inflicted on Black youth by the system's systematic campaign to eradicate and deny them their people's revolutionary history."[10]¶ America's Plunge Into Militarized Madness¶ How does one account for the lack of public outcry over millions of Americans losing their homes because of corrupt banking practices and millions more becoming unemployed because of the lack of an adequate jobs program in the United States, while at the same time stories abound of colossal greed and corruption on Wall Street? [11] For example, in 2009 alone, hedge fund manager David Tepper made approximately 4 billion dollars.[12] As Michael Yates points out: "This income, spent at a rate of $10,000 a day and exclusive of any interest, would last him and his heirs 1,096 years! If we were to suppose that Mr. Tepper worked 2,000 hours in 2009 (fifty weeks at forty hours per week), he took in $2,000,000 per hour and $30,000 a minute."[13] This juxtaposition of robber-baron power and greed is rarely mentioned in the mainstream media in conjunction with the deep suffering and misery now experienced by millions of families, workers, children, jobless public servants and young people. This is especially true of a generation of youth who have become the new precariat[14] - a zero generation relegated to zones of social and economic abandonment and marked by zero jobs, zero future, zero hope and what Zygmunt Bauman has defined as a societal condition which is more "liquid,"less defined, punitive, and, in the end, more death dealing.[15]¶ Narcissism and unchecked greed have morphed into more than a psychological category that points to a character flaw among a marginal few. Such registers are now symptomatic of a market-driven society in which extremes of violence, militarization, cruelty and inequality are hardly noticed and have become normalized. Avarice and narcissism are not new. What is new is the unprecedented social sanction of the ethos of greed that has emerged since the 1980s.[16] What is also new is that military force and values have become a source of pride rather than alarm in American society. Not only has the war on terror violated a host of civil liberties, it has further sanctioned a military that has assumed a central role in American society, influencing everything from markets and education to popular culture and fashion. President Dwight D. Eisenhower left office warning about the rise of the military-industrial complex, with its pernicious alignment of the defense industry, the military and political power.[17] What he underestimated was the transition from a militarized economy to a militarized society in which the culture itself was shaped by military power, values and interests. What has become clear in contemporary America is that the organization of civil society for the production of violence is about more than producing militarized technologies and weapons; it is also about producing militarized subjects and a permanent war economy. As Aaron B. O'Connell points outs:¶ “Our culture has militarized considerably since Eisenhower's era, and civilians, not the armed services, have been the principal cause. From lawmakers' constant use of "support our troops" to justify defense spending, to TV programs and video games like "NCIS," "Homeland"and "Call of Duty," to NBC's shameful and unreal reality show "Stars Earn Stripes," Americans are subjected to a daily diet of stories that valorize the military while the storytellers pursue their own opportunistic political and commercial agendas.”[18]¶ The imaginary of war and violence informs every aspect of American society and extends from the celebration of a warrior culture in mainstream media to the use of universities to educate students in the logic of the national security state. Military deployments now protect "free trade" arrangements, provide job programs and drain revenue from public coffers. For instance, Lockheed Martin stands to gain billions of dollars in profits as Washington prepares to buy 2,443 F-35 fighter planes at a cost of $90 million each from the company. The overall cost of the project for a plane that has been called a "one trillion dollar boondoggle" is expected to cost more "than Australia's entire GDP ($924 billion)."[19] Yet, the American government has no qualms about cutting food programs for the poor, early childhood programs for low-income students and food stamps for those who exist below the poverty line. Such misplaced priorities represent more than a military-industrial complex that is out of control. They also suggest the plunge of American society into the dark abyss of a state that is increasingly punitive, organized around the production of violence and unethical in its policies, priorities and values.¶ John Hinkson argues that such institutionalized violence is far from a short-lived and aberrant historical moment. In fact, he rightfully asserts that: "we have a new world economy, one crucially that lacks all substantial points of reference and is by implication nihilistic. The point is that this is not a temporary situation because of the imperatives, say, of war: it is a structural break with the past."[20] Evidence of such a shift is obvious in the massive transfer upward in wealth and income that have not only resulted in the concentration of power in relatively few hands, but have promoted both unprecedented degrees of human suffering and hardship along with what can be called a politics of disimagination. Borrowing from Georges Didi-Huberman's use of the term, "disimagination machine," I argue that the politics of disimagination refers to images, and I would argue institutions, discourses, and other modes of representation, that undermine the capacity of individuals to bear witness to a different and critical sense of remembering, agency, ethics and collective resistance.[21] The "disimagination machine" is both a set of cultural apparatuses extending from schools and mainstream media to the new sites of screen culture, and a public pedagogy that functions primarily to undermine the ability of individuals to think critically, imagine the unimaginable, and engage in thoughtful and critical dialogue: put simply, to become critically informed citizens of the world.¶ Examples of the "disimagination machine" abound. A few will suffice. For instance, the Texas State Board of Education and other conservative boards of education throughout the United States are rewriting American textbooks to promote and impose on America's public school students what Katherine Stewart calls "a Christian nationalist version of US history" in which Jesus is implored to "invade" public schools.[22] In this version of history, the term "slavery" is removed from textbooks and replaced with "Atlantic triangular trade," the earth is 6,000 years old, and the Enlightenment is the enemy of education. Historical figures such as Jefferson, Thomas Paine and Benjamin Franklin, considered to have suspect religious views, "are ruthlessly demoted or purged altogether from the study program."[23] Currently, 46 percent of the American population believes in the creationist view of evolution and increasingly rejects scientific evidence, research and rationality as either 'academic' or irreligious.[24]¶ The rise of the Tea Party and the renewal of the culture wars have resulted in a Republican Party which is now considered the party of anti-science. Similarly, right-wing politicians, media, talk show hosts and other conservative pundits loudly and widely spread the message that a culture of questioning is antithetical to the American way of life. Moreover, this message is also promoted by conservative groups such as The American Legislative Exchange Council, (ALEC) which has "hit the ground running in 2013, pushing 'model bills' mandating the teaching of climate change denial in public school systems."[25] The climate-change-denial machine is also promoted by powerful conservative groups such as the Heartland Institute. Ignorance is never too far from repression, as was recently demonstrated in Arizona, where State Rep. Bob Thorpe, a Republican freshman Tea Party member, introduced a new bill requiring students to take a loyalty oath in order to receive a graduation diploma.[26]¶ The "disimagination machine" is more powerful than ever as conservative think tanks provide ample funds for training and promoting anti-public pseudo-intellectuals and religious fundamentalists while simultaneously offering policy statements and talking points to conservative media such as FOX News, Christian news networks, right-wing talk radio, and partisan social media and blogs. This ever growing information/illiteracy bubble has become a powerful force of public pedagogy in the larger culture and is responsible for not only the war on science, reason and critical thought, but also the war on women's reproductive rights, poor minority youth, immigrants, public schooling, and any other marginalized group or institution that challenges the anti-intellectual, anti-democratic worldviews of the new extremists and the narrative supporting Christian nationalism. Liberal Democrats, of course, contribute to this "disimagination machine" through educational policies that substitute critical thinking and critical pedagogy for paralyzing pedagogies of memorization and rote learning tied to high-stakes testing in the service of creating a neoliberal, dumbed-down workforce.¶ As John Atcheson has pointed out, we are "witnessing an epochal shift in our socio-political world. We are de-evolving, hurtling headlong into a past that was defined by serfs and lords; by necromancy and superstition; by policies based on fiat, not facts."[27] We are also plunging into a dark world of anti-intellectualism, civic illiteracy and a formative culture supportive of an authoritarian state. The embrace of ignorance is at the center of political life today, and a reactionary form of public pedagogy has become the most powerful element of the politics of authoritarianism. Civic illiteracy is the modus operandi for creating depoliticized subjects who believe that consumerism is the only obligation of citizenship, who privilege opinions over reasoned arguments, and who are led to believe that ignorance is a virtue rather than a political and civic liability. In any educated democracy, much of the debate that occupies political life today, extending from creationism and climate change denial to "birther" arguments, would be speedily dismissed as magical thinking, superstition and an obvious form of ignorance. Mark Slouka is right in arguing that, "Ignorance gives us a sense of community; it confers citizenship; our representatives either share it or bow down to it or risk our wrath.... Communicate intelligently in America and you're immediately suspect."[28] The politics and machinery of disimagination and its production of ever-deepening ignorance dominates American society because it produces, to a large degree, uninformed customers, hapless clients, depoliticized subjects and illiterate citizens incapable of holding corporate and political power accountable. At stake here is more than the dangerous concentration of economic, political and cultural power in the hands of the ultrarich, megacorporations and elite financial services industries. Also at issue is the widespread perversion of the social, critical education, the public good, and democracy itself.

#### We affirm a politics of radical imagination and hope in response to unrestricted war powers authority of the President of the United States in the area of targeted killing.

#### Pointing out and criticizing the oppressive nature of targeted killing is the first step in stopping the immoral and violent society it justifies

Giroux 13 (Henry, mcmaster U prof, <http://www.truth-out.org/opinion/item/14483-the-shooting-gallery-obama-and-the-vanishing-point-of-democracy> dw: 12-2-2013, da: 1-13-2014, lido)

What is missing in the refusal to make visible the United States' descent into authoritarianism is the necessity for the American people to see what is wrong with such actions, who should be held accountable, why such acts of human cruelty should not happen (again) and what actions must be taken to open up the possibilities for society to exercise collective judgments that enable a rejection of past actions as well as the possibility of a more just future. Moreover, as philosophy professor Maria Pia Lara argues, refusing to narrate human cruelty is tantamount to relinquishing the moral imperative to build a transformed democratic community. She contends that exposing and engaging the hidden dimensions of cruelty and the abuse of human rights is part of a moral imperative "directed at making others understand that what happened did not need to happen." Moreover, such "stories [provide] us with a moral sense of the need to keep examining the past in order to ... build a space for self-reflection [and] define the process of establishing a connection between the collective critical examination of past catastrophes and the learning processes in which societies engage."15¶ At a time in history when American society is overtly subject to the quasi militarization of everyday life and endlessly exposed to mass-produced spectacles of commodified and ritualized violence, a culture of cruelty and barbarism has become deeply entrenched and more easily tolerated. Beyond creating in this instance a moral and affective void in the collective consciousness - a refusal to recognize and rectify the illegal and morally repugnant violence, abuse and suffering imposed on those alleged to be dangerous and "disposable" others - such a culture contributes to the undoing of the very fabric of civilization and justice. The descent into barbarism can take many forms, but one version may be glimpsed when torture becomes a defining feature of what a country considers acceptable policy (to say nothing of riveting entertainment), or the majority of its inhabitants remain passive when the President of the United States claims he has the right to put together a kill list in order to assassinate American citizens. How else to explain the fact that 49 percent of the American public "consider torture justified at least some of the time [and] fully 71 [percent] refuse to rule it out entirely"?16¶ Frank Rich has suggested that the American public's indifference to national security issues is partly due to the massive hardships and suffering many Americans have endured as a result of the Great Recession.17 This may be true but what it overlooks are the ever-growing anti-democratic forces, or what might be called authoritarianism with a soft edge, which haunt American politics and the modern ideal of democracy. The civic imagination is in retreat in American society and the public spheres that make it possible are disappearing.¶ Clearly, political and popular culture are in dire need of being condemned, interrogated, unlearned and transformed through modes of critical education and public debate, if American democracy is to survive as more than a distant and unfulfilled promise. Americans have lived too long with governments that use power to promote violent acts, conveniently hiding their guilt behind a notion of secrecy and silence that selectively punishes those considered expendable - in its prisons, public schools, foster care institutions and urban slums. As Tom Engelhardt points out, what has not sunk in for most Americans, including the mainstream media, is that the United States has become a lockdown state, or more appropriately an authoritarian state, as evidenced by the fact that the Obama administration can:¶ torture at will; imprison at will, indefinitely and without trial; assassinate at will (including American citizens); kidnap at will anywhere in the world and 'render' the captive in the hands of allied torturers; turn any mundane government document (at least 92 million of them in 2011 alone) into a classified object and so help spread a penumbra of secrecy over the workings of the American government; surveil Americans in ways never before attempted (and only 'legalized' by Congress after the fact, the way you might back-date a check); make war perpetually on their own say-so; and transform whistleblowing - that is, revealing anything about the inner workings of the lockdown state to other Americans - into the only prosecutable crime that anyone in the complex can commit.18¶ The fateful consolidation of an authoritarian state reaches its tipping point when a government engages in these practices along with the claim that it can kill its own citizens anywhere in the world without recourse to due process or any moral qualms. Such policies point to more than an ethically empty space and the atrophy of democratic modes of governance, politics and culture, they point inexorably to the dark caverns of a society that has embraced the foundations of authoritarianism. Democracy has been hijacked in the United States by right-wing extremists, the financial elite, the military-industrial-academic complex and a demagogic cultural apparatus that has created a state of emergency that appears to "lack the kind of collective sense of urgency that would prompt us to fundamentally question our own ways of thinking and acting, and form new spaces of operation."19 All of us are now in the shooting gallery and we are all potentially the targets.

#### Radical imagination solves—by opening up a space of dialogue and knowledge regarding the injustices around drone strikes, we are able to create a more democratic political discourse that allows for the flourishing of social movements.

Giroux 13 (Henry, prof at Mcmasters U, <http://truth-out.org/news/item/14814-the-politics-of-disimagination-and-the-pathologies-of-power#i>, dw: 2-27-2013, da: 1-11-2014, lido)

Against the politics of disimagination, progressives, workers, educators, young people and others need to develop a new language of radical reform and create new public spheres that provide the pedagogical conditions for critical thought, dialogue and thoughtful deliberation. At stake here is a notion of pedagogy that both informs the mind and creates the conditions for modes of agency that are critical, informed, engaged and socially responsible. The radical imagination can be nurtured around the merging of critique and hope, the capacity to connect private troubles with broader social considerations, and the production of alternative formative cultures that provide the precondition for political engagement and for energizing democratic movements for social change - movements willing to think beyond isolated struggles and the limits of a savage global capitalism. Stanley Aronowitz and Peter Bratsis point to such a project in their manifesto on the radical imagination. They write:¶ “This Manifesto looks forward to the creation of a new political Left formation that can overcome fragmentation, and provide a solid basis for many-side interventions in the current economic, political and social crises that afflict people in all walks of life. The Left must once again offer to young people, people of color, women, workers, activists, intellectuals and newly-arrived immigrants places to learn how the capitalist system works in all of its forms of exploitation whether personal, political, or economic. We need to reconstruct a platform to oppose Capital. It must ask in this moment of US global hegemony what are the alternatives to its cruel power over our lives, and those of large portions of the world's peoples. And the Left formation is needed to offer proposals on how to rebuild a militant, democratic labor movement, strengthen and transform the social movements; and, more generally, provide the opportunity to obtain a broad education that is denied to them by official institutions. We need a political formation dedicated to the proposition that radical theory and practice are inextricably linked, that knowledge without action is impotent, but action without knowledge is blind.”[29]¶ Matters of justice, equality, and political participation are foundational to any functioning democracy, but it is important to recognize that they have to be rooted in a vibrant formative culture in which democracy is understood not just as a political and economic structure but also as a civic force enabling justice, equality and freedom to flourish. While the institutions and practices of a civil society and an aspiring democracy are essential in this project, what must also be present are the principles and modes of civic education and critical engagement that support the very foundations of democratic culture. Central to such a project is the development of a new radical imagination both through the pedagogies and projects of public intellectuals in the academy and through work that can be done in other educational sites, such as the new media. Utilizing the Internet, social media, and other elements of the digital and screen culture, public intellectuals, cultural workers, young people and others can address larger audiences and present the task of challenging diverse forms of oppression, exploitation and exclusion as part of a broader effort to create a radical democracy.¶ There is a need to invent modes of pedagogy that release the imagination, connect learning to social change and create social relations in which people assume responsibility for each other. Such a pedagogy is not about methods or prepping students to learn how to take tests. Nor is such an education about imposing harsh disciplinary behaviors in the service of a pedagogy of oppression. On the contrary, it is about a moral and political practice capable of enabling students and others to become more knowledgeable while creating the conditions for generating a new vision of the future in which people can recognize themselves, a vision that connects with and speaks to the desires, dreams and hopes of those who are willing to fight for a radical democracy. Americans need to develop a new understanding of civic literacy, education and engagement, one capable of developing a new conversation and a new political project about democracy, inequality, and the redistribution of wealth and power, and how such a discourse can offer the conditions for democratically inspired visions, modes of governance and policymaking. Americans need to embrace and develop modes of civic literacy, critical education and democratic social movements that view the public good as a utopian imaginary, one that harbors a trace and vision of what it means to defend old and new public spheres that offer spaces where dissent can be produced, public values asserted, dialogue made meaningful and critical thought embraced as a noble ideal.¶ Elements of such a utopian imaginary can be found in James Baldwin's "Open Letter to My Sister, Angela Davis," in which he points out that "we live in an age in which silence is not only criminal but suicidal."[30] The utopian imaginary is also on full display in Martin Luther King Jr.'s "Letter from Birmingham City Jail," where King states under the weight and harshness of incarceration that an "injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere ... [and asks whether we will] be extremists for the preservation of injustice - or will we be extremists for the cause of justice?"[31] According to King, "we must use time creatively, and forever realize that the time is always ripe to do right. Now is the time to make real the promise of democracy."[32] We hear it in the words of former Harvard University President James B. Conant, who makes an impassioned call for "the need for the American radical - the missing political link between the past and future of this great democratic land." [33] We hear it in the voices of young people all across the United States - the new American radicals - who are fighting for a society in which justice matters, social protections are guaranteed, equality is insured, and education becomes a right and not an entitlement. The radical imagination waits to be unleashed through social movements in which injustice is put on the run and civic literacy, economic justice, and collective struggle once again become the precondition for agency, hope and the struggle over democracy.

#### Modern movements are too much theory and not enough praxis—they need a new language of politics for their ideals to spread. A politics of hope bridges this gap—it acknowledges conditions that make dialogue possible, it asks questions of power holding it accountable, is a precondition for entering an individual and societal struggle, and allows us to learn as moral and political agents.

Giroux 13 (Henry, prof at Mcmasters U, <http://www.truth-out.org/opinion/item/20307-hope-in-the-age-of-looming-authoritarianism>, dw: 12-2-2013, da: 1-11-2014, lido)

The ruling elites have taken flight from any sense of social and ethical responsibility and their willing and active repression of conscience has opened the door to new forms of authoritarianism in which the arrogance of corporate power finds its underside in a hatred of all others that threaten its power. Some contemporary theorists suggest that politics as a site of contestation, critical exchange and engagement is in a state of terminal arrest or has simply come to an end. However, too little attention is paid to what it means to think through how the struggle over democracy is inextricably linked to creating and sustaining public spheres where individuals can be engaged as political agents equipped with the skills, capacities and knowledge they need not only as autonomous political agents but also to believe that such struggles are worth taking up. The growth of cynicism in American society may say less about the reputed apathy of the populace than about the bankruptcy of the old political languages and the need for a new language and vision for clarifying intellectual, ethical, economic and political projects, especially as they work to reframe questions of agency, ethics and meaning for a substantive democracy.¶ In opposition to the attacks on critical thought, engaged citizenship, the discourse of hope and the erosion of "the public character of spaces, relations, and institutions,"[xx] young people, workers, intellectuals, artists and environmentalists are once again taking seriously Theodor Adorno and Max Horkheimer's insistence "to hang on to intellectual and real freedom" and to ensure that thinking does not become "immune to the suggestion of the status quo,"[xxi] thus losing its "secure hold on possibility."[xxii] Increasingly, young people and others concerned about a substantive democracy are taking political stands; they are becoming more willing to cross boundaries, join questions of understanding and power, and bring into being with passion and conscience new ways of engaging with the world. In doing so, this diverse group of activists, intellectuals and concerned global citizens is intervening in the world on several registers.¶ Such groups, while in their infancy, are determined to unmask society's most pernicious myths, restage power in productive ways, rescue the promise of social agency from those places where it has been denied, and further the ethical and political imperative to provide an accurate historical account of the racial state and racial power. More and more, youths and others marginalized by race and class are refusing the dominant scripts of official authority and the limitations they impose upon individual and social agency. Progressives and oppositional groups are rethinking what it would mean to engage spaces of neglect and human suffering such as schools, shelters, food banks, union halls and other sites of potential resistance as starting points from which to build unfamiliar, potential worlds of hope, learning and struggle. In the process of thinking seriously about structures of power, state formation, race, sexuality, technology, class and pedagogy, these new modes of resistance never substitute moral indignation for the hard work of contributing to critical education and enabling people to expand the horizons of their own sense of agency and collectively challenge structures of power.¶ From Québec and Athens to Paris and New York City, these emerging collective movements bristle with a deeply rooted refusal to serve up well-worn and obvious truths, reinforce existing relations of power or bid retreat to an official rendering of common sense that promotes "a corrosive and demoralizing silence."[xxiii] What emerges in these distinct but politically allied voices is a pedagogy of disruption, critique, recovery and possibility, one that recognizes that viable politics cannot exist without will and awareness, and that critical education motivates and provides a crucial foundation for understanding and intervening in the world. Freedom in this discourse means learning how to think critically and act courageously - refusing to substitute empowering forms of education for mind-deadening training and numbing methods of memorizing data and test taking.¶ Collectively these emerging movements of resistance are developing an understanding of politics that demands not only a new language but also necessitates a broader vision, sense of organization and robust strategies that are critical and visionary. This commitment translates into a pedagogy and politics capable of illuminating the anti-democratic forces and sites that threaten human life; at the same time, its visionary nature cracks open the present to reveal new horizons, different futures and the promise of a global democracy. And yet, under the reign of casino capitalism, racist xenophobic nationalisms and other anti-democratic forces, notions of citizenship are increasingly privatized, commodified or subject to various religious and ideological fundamentalisms that feed a sense of powerlessness and disengagement from democratic struggles, if not politics itself. The culture of cruelty is alive and well as casino capitalism presents misfortune as a weakness and the logic of the market instructs individuals to rely on their own wits if they fall on hard times, especially because the state has washed its hands of any responsibility for the fate of its citizens. Hope is in the air, but it is crucial to recognize that the creeping authoritarianism descending upon the United States will not give up power easily, if at all. Consequently, an impatient patience proceeds slowly and persistently offers the formative culture necessary for feeding a radical imagination waiting to manifest itself concretely in a new vision, social movement and fierce urgency of struggle. ¶ Hope, in this instance, is the precondition for individual and social struggle, involving the ongoing practice of critical education in a wide variety of sites and the renewal of civic courage among citizens, residents and others who wish to address pressing social problems.[xxiv] Hope says "no" to the totalizing and common-sense discourse of the neoliberal present; it contains an activating presence that opens current political structures to critical scrutiny, affirms dissent and pluralizes the possibilities of different futures. In this sense, hope is a subversive force. In opposition to those who seek to turn hope into a new slogan or to punish and dismiss efforts to look beyond the horizon of the given, young people and other activists are resurrecting a language of resistance and the pedagogical condition necessary for providing a sense of opposition and engaged struggle. Clearly, hope as a practice of freedom is not an individual indulgence but rather a crucial part of a broader politics that acknowledges those social, economic, spiritual and cultural conditions in the present that make certain kinds of agency and democratic politics possible. It is a narrative that embodies the reality of struggles ahead and the recognition that in such struggles there are moments of possibility, new worlds, different relationships and more justice.¶ The philosopher Ernst Bloch provides essential theoretical insights into the importance of hope.[xxv] Bloch believes that hope cannot be removed from the world and is not "something like nonsense or absolute fancy; rather it is not yet in the sense of a possibility; that it could be there if we could only do something for it."[xxvi] As a discourse of critique and social transformation, hope in Bloch's view foregrounds the crucial relationship between critical education and political agency, on the one hand, and the concrete struggles needed to give substance to the recognition that every present is incomplete, on the other.¶ Hope becomes political rather than Disneylike when it is anticipatory rather than messianic, mobilizing rather than therapeutic, revealing rather than romanticizing. The longing for a more humane society in this instance does not collapse into a retreat from the world but emerges out of critical and practical engagements with present behaviors, institutional formations, and everyday practices. Hope does not ignore the multiplying dimensions of human suffering, exploitation and social relations; on the contrary, it acknowledges the need to sustain the "capacity to see the worst and offer more than that for our consideration."[xxvii] If democracy is to once again become a rallying cry for massive global struggles, hope has to become a political and ethical referent, which shows us how to believe "that in this moment in our history we have something of great import to accomplish by exercising an optimism of the intellect in order to open up ways of thinking that have for too long remained foreclosed."[xxviii]¶ Hence, hope is more than a politics - it is also a practice that provides the foundation for enabling human beings to learn about their potential as moral and civic agents. Hope is the outcome of those pedagogical practices and struggles that draw upon public memory, dangerous knowledge and repressed lived experiences, while at the same time linking individual responsibility with a progressive sense of social change. As a form of utopian longing, educated hope opens up horizons of comparison by evoking not just different histories but also different futures; at the same time, it serves as "a major resource as the weapon against closure."[xxix] Critical and educated hope is a subversive force when it pluralizes politics by opening up a space for dissent, makes authority accountable, and becomes an activating presence in promoting social transformation.¶ Judith Butler is right in insisting that "For me there is more hope in the world when we can question what is taken for granted, especially about what it is to be human."[xxx] What Butler and many others now recognize is that any viable notion of political and social agency is dependent upon a culture of questioning, whose purpose is to "keep the forever unexhausted and unfulfilled human potential open, fighting back all attempts to foreclose and pre-empt the further unravelling of human possibilities, prodding human society to go on questioning itself and preventing that questioning from ever stalling or being declared finished."[xxxi]¶ The project of asking questions that make power accountable, of reclaiming politics from exile, must strike a careful balance between leaving itself forever open to future questions and acting decisively to change the lived experience of ever-expanding ranks of dispossessed and disposable peoples. Reclaiming politics requires a form of educated hope that accentuates how politics is played out on the terrain of imagination and desire as well as in material relations of power and concrete social formations. Freedom and justice, in this instance, have to be mediated through the connection between civic education and political agency, which presupposes that the goal of educated hope is not to liberate the individual from the social - a central tenet of neoliberalism - but to take seriously the notion that the individual can only be liberated through the social. ¶ Hope as a subversive, defiant practice should provide a link, however transient, provisional and contextual, between vision and critique, on the one hand, and engagement and transformation on the other. But for such a notion of hope to be consequential, it has to be grounded in a vision and educational project that has some hold on the present. In opposition to an age of profound pessimism, hope becomes meaningful to the degree that it mobilizes visions, agents, organizations and strategies while reclaiming an ethic of compassion, justice and collective struggle for those institutions in which equality, freedom and justice flourish as part of the ongoing struggle for a global democracy. The greatest threat to social justice and democracy is the disappearance not only of critical discourses that allow us to think outside of and against the demands of official power but also those spaces where politics can even occur, where people can learn and assert a sense of critical agency, embrace the civic obligation to care for the other and refuse to take "shelter where responsibility for one's actions need not be taken by the actors."[xxxii] If neoliberalism displaces any obligation to the future in favor of short-term financial gains, one goal of organized democratic resistance is to connect writing, pedagogy and politics to the obligations everyone has to a democratic politics and future that can renew the principles of social justice and collective responsibility. This is not a short-term endeavor but a long term investment that demands more than demonstrations. It demands a vision, participatory politics, organizational structures and strategies that move between the local and the global. ¶ An inclusive democratic politics must be responsive to the varied needs of the citizens who comprise it. To facilitate critical thought and nurture the flexibility, it requires public intellectuals and other socially responsible activists to offer better questions, work with social movements and help enact policies that serve democratic interests. This suggests creating public spheres and formative cultures that enable conversations in which acts of critical recovery unleash possibilities that have been repressed by official history or caught in the trap of existing social realities. In an age when the dominant tendency among academics is to follow power and fashion, there is a need for intellectuals, educators, artists and others to exhibit a strong sense of political conviction and an admirable civic courage in their willingness to speak against the status quo, take risks and struggle to give history back to those who are increasingly removed from the political sphere.¶ There is more at stake here than saying no, making power visible and recognizing that our individual and collective experiences are not dictated by fate. There is also the challenge of confronting the actual with the possible, of pulling hope down to earth, of making sure that the possibilities we engage with address real problems and concrete expressions of domination and power. In addition, there is the need to translate our theoretical concerns into public action, lift up the level of discourse to connect our civic institutions and public spheres to the dynamics of everyday life and give worldly expression to critical work and necessary social change. Without the ability to see how each of our lives is related to the greater good, we lack the basis for recognizing ourselves as bearers of rights and responsibilities - the precondition of our being human - who can assume the task of governance instead of simply being governed. We lack the basis for raising questions about the goals and aims of our society and what we want our society as a whole to accomplish, especially in the context of the challenge of creating a global democracy. In short, we lack what makes a democratic politics viable. One task that can be used to reclaim the political and the spirit of civic courage is to recognize and critically interrogate how the radical imagination, especially among young people is being suppressed. The structural forces include subjecting students to a form of debt-servitude that crushes their sense of agency and ties them to long reach of the banks and financial services. Many students also have little time to think, write, dissent and organize collectively because they are now a disposable population who are either unemployed or working long hours in menial and soul-draining jobs. Those who are in school are being educated under disciplinary controls and pedagogies of repression that kill the creative spirit and offer young people a future of dead-end work and political conformity. Young people also are growing up at a time when every institution they inhabit has become an inspection and surveillance regime intent on watching them, treating them like criminals and subjecting them to a culture of fear.¶ Conformity and political dysfunction is also the outgrowth of a market-driven world view in which everything is individualized and privatized, cleansed of any sense of either ethical responsibility or an analytic framework that understands the power of systemic oppression. Right-wing ideology, which reinforces either a dead-end consumerism as a way of life or a religious fundamentalism that robs young people of any sense of agency, further erodes the production of those modes of identity, values and ideals necessary to be a critical and engaged citizen. The structures and ideologies of these anti-democratic forces are part of the new neoliberal machinery of social and civil death that have become powerful forces for depoliticizing both the young and old. The structures, ideologies, power relations and cultural apparatuses that commodify, punish and remove young people from the discourse of democracy must be interrogated, challenged and transformed. For example, public schools must be reclaimed as democratic public spheres dedicated to the practice of freedom. Schools need to be defended as a public good, not a private right or limited entitlement for the rich. Not only must they be redefined through democratic forms of participation, access and self-management, they must also be financed equitably and dedicated to educating all young people as compassionate, critical, thoughtful and knowledgeable citizens. Moreover, after 40 years of being deskilled and positioned as mind-numbing technicians, public-school teachers need to regain control of their classrooms, to be allowed autonomy over the conditions of their labor and to be given the opportunity to shape their classrooms and participate in school governance. In addition, students need to be exposed not only to the archives of different cultures, intellectual traditions and disciplines, they also need to be encouraged to think for themselves, to be provided with the capacities to be self-educated and to learn to connect what they know to what it means to learn how to govern rather than be governed.¶ In addition, young and older people need jobs. This suggests not simply a jobs program but a refiguring of political and economic power in which wealth, resources and income would be distributed fairly and resources invested in those institutions that make up the commons, public life, and are essential to any democracy. Public schools, independent media, health care, the social wage are just a few of the fundamental issues that need to be addressed as part of a robust and collective struggle for an insurrectional democracy. There is as urgent need for left and progressive groups to challenge the structures and ideological dominance of mainstream cultural apparatuses whose emphasis on market values, identities and social relations are politically irresponsible and ethically dangerous. There is also an imperative need for alternative public spheres in which non-commodified values, identities, subjectivities and values are nurtured in the name of a new understanding of what justice, freedom and democracy mean as they inform each other as part of the social good. ¶ For the last 33 years Americans have been told that the only thing they have in common are the very values, practices and relations that separate them and make it difficult for people to comprehend what a real democracy might look like. Unchecked individualism, privatization, gated communities, commodification, unbridled worship of the profit motive, deregulation, policies that benefit the rich and powerful, and a survival of the fittest ethic have become gospel in a society marked by massive inequalities in wealth, income and power. Shared obligations and claims have been relegated to the private realm, handed over to for-profit-delivery services agencies or charities. Access to quality health care, wages, jobs, education and basic services are now a function of privilege and wealth. Democracy has been subverted by a ruthless, updated form of class warfare in which the social contract has been destroyed and wealth and force have triumphed over justice and compassion. Americans are in the midst of a democratic deficit and a surplus of authoritarian and anti-democratic practices. This is not to suggest that democracy is dead in the United States as much as to indicate the need for its ideals to be reclaimed and struggled over by opening up a new conversation about politics, justice, long-term organization strategies and the meaning of democracy in the age of casino capitalism. Increasingly, there are many active movements for resistance emerging in the United States. These include groups protesting environmental destruction, the squashing of worker rights, the lowering of wages, the war on youth, voter suppression efforts, the attack on women's reproductive rights, the ongoing production of toxic trade agreements, the reach of the mass incarceration state, the ruthless accumulation of wealth by the upper 1 percent, the Walmartization of America, and the economic terrorism wielded by major corporations to scare workers into giving up pensions, accept poverty-level wages and abandon workers' rights. These movements are important because they have started a new conversation about the emptying-out of democracy, the suffering caused by massive inequality in wealth and income, and the rise of the punishing state. But they will fail unless they convert their singular interests into a shared set of collective goals, a shared project for reclaiming the ideology, space and policies that govern a democracy. This is not a call to give up single-issue struggles but to expand their efforts at resistance and change by finding a common ground among these diverse efforts around which they can build a national and international movement for taking back public goods, the commons and democracy itself.¶ Reform is necessary but not enough. Democracy is not in crisis; it is moribund, its ideals reduced to either Disney-inspired nostalgia or misappropriated to legitimate its opposite. The United States now lives under the weight of a mode of authoritarianism that needs to be resisted and dismantled. This means moving beyond the call for piecemeal reform. One starting point might be to invent a new language and understanding of politics so as to address the root of the problem Americans face. Rethinking the discourse of politics provides the groundwork for waging struggles to bring under democratic control those economic, political, social and cultural modes of power and politics that have defaulted on democracy and subjected the vast majority of Americans to an unimaginable amount of misery, hardship and suffering. Paraphrasing James Baldwin, the United States in its current form needs to be robbed of its tyrannical power and transformed. The fulfilment of that prophecy comes with a price - humiliation, jail, loss of employment - but the alternative is worse and points to a growing national security, corporate and surveillance state and species of authoritarianism that encourage a range of anti-democratic practices - profit-hungry monopolies; the ideology of faith-based certainty; the pursuit of ethno-racial purity; the militarization of everyday life; the destruction of civil liberties; the practice of torture; and the undermining of any vestige of critical education, responsible dissent, and public dialogue.¶ What the American public needs to address is that the United States is no longer on the brink of authoritarianism - rather, it has moved; it is at the stage where every effort is made on the side of corporate, political imagination and financial elites to make sure that the current reign of tyranny is neither challenged nor held accountable. Being indignant is not enough. The time has come to define the possible in an entirely new way. At the very least, this suggests building new social movements, organizations and strategies rooted in the power of the radical imagination, one that is capable of generating new terrains of struggle, practices of freedom and forms of educated hope that make possible what Jacques Derrida once called "the promise of a democracy to come."[xxxiii]

#### Hope is the right middle ground—it creates a space that allows us to question power, find solutions to problems, and enables agency.

Giroux 13 (Henry, prof at mcmasters U, <http://truth-out.org/opinion/item/18578-hope-in-a-time-of-permanent-war>, dw: 9-4-2013, da: 1-11-2014, lido)

Hope is not an individual fantasy or a recourse to a romanticized and unrealistic view of the world. On the contrary, it is a subversive force that enables those who care about democracy and its fate to not mistake the difficulty of individual and collective agency with the urgent need to shape it in the interest of the arc of justice and the promise of a democracy to come. In opposition to those who seek to turn hope into a new slogan or punish and dismiss efforts to look beyond the horizon of the given, progressives need to resurrect a language of resistance and possibility, a language in which hope is viewed as both a project and a pedagogical condition for providing a sense of opposition and engaged struggle. As a project, Andrew Benjamin insists, hope must be viewed as "a structural condition of the present rather than as the promise of a future, the continual promise of a future that will always have to have been better."[x] Rather than viewed as an individual proclivity, hope must be seen as part of a broader politics that acknowledges those social, economic, spiritual and cultural conditions in the present that make certain kinds of agency and democratic politics possible.¶ The late philosopher Ernst Bloch rightly argued that hope must be concrete, a spark that not only reaches out beyond the surrounding emptiness of capitalist relations, anticipating a better world in the future, a world that speaks to us by presenting tasks based on the challenges of the present time. For Bloch, hope becomes concrete when it links the possibility of the "not yet" with forms of political agency animated by a determined effort to engage critically with the past and present to address pressing social problems and realizable tasks.[xi] Bloch believes that hope cannot be removed from the world and is not "something like nonsense or absolute fancy; rather it is not yet in the sense of a possibility; that it could be there if we could only do something for it."[xii] As a discourse of critique and social transformation, hope in Bloch's view foregrounds the crucial relationship between critical education and political agency, on the one hand, and the concrete struggles needed, on the other, to give substance to the recognition that every present is incomplete. This is a discourse that must be reclaimed, used and mobilized in the interest of a radical hope willing to struggle collectively, take risks and make education central to any viable notion of transformative politics.¶ Prophecy, moral witness and civic courage matter more than ever in American society. And we see hits of such practices in the rise of public intellectuals such as Michael Lerner, Stanley Aronowitz, Carol Becker, Angela Davis, Chris Hedges, Amy Goodman, Bill Moyers, Robin D.G. Kelley, Noam Chomsky and too many others to name. We also see the power of collective hope in the increasing resistance by unions, workers and young people to the attack on all things public in Wisconsin, North Carolina, Maine and other states now controlled by right-wing Republican extremists. In this instance, the longing for a more humane society does not collapse into a retreat from the world but emerges out of critical and practical engagements with present policies, institutional formations and everyday practices. Hope in this context does not ignore the worse dimensions of human suffering, exploitation and social relations; on the contrary, it acknowledges the need to sustain the "capacity to see the worst and offer more than that for our consideration."[xiii] This reclaiming of hope from the idiocy of consumer and celebrity culture, from a market that turns hope into a commodity and from a government that kills hope with its electronic gulags, its proliferating war zones and its militarizing ideologies and policies is a crucial element for the reclamation of not just hope but a fundamental element of politics itself.¶ Hence, hope is more than a politics, it is also the outcome of those pedagogical practices and struggles that tap into memory and lived experiences while at the same time linking individual responsibility with a progressive sense of social change. As a form of utopian longing, democratic hope opens up horizons of comparison by evoking not just different histories but different public memories and futures; at the same time, it substantiates the importance of ambivalence while problematizing certainty or, as Paul Ricoeur has suggested, it serves as "a major resource as the weapon against closure."[xiv]Democratic hope is a subversive force when it pluralizes politics by opening up a space for dissent, making authority accountable, becoming an activating presence in promoting social transformation.¶ The current limits of the utopian imagination are related, in part, to the failure of intellectuals, academics, artists, workers, educators and progressives to imagine what pedagogical conditions might be necessary to bring into being forms of political agency that might expand the operations of individual rights, social provisions and democratic freedoms. At the same time, a politics and pedagogy of hope is neither a blueprint for the future nor a form of social engineering but a belief that different futures are possible, holding open matters of contingency, context and indeterminacy. It is only through critical forms of education that human beings can learn about the limits of the present and the conditions necessary for them to "combine a gritty sense of limits with a lofty vision of possibility."[xv]Equally crucial is the belief that hope needs to translate into collective struggles and disciplined social movements that go beyond popular protest and what Aronowitz calls "signs without organization."[xvi] Such struggles are crucial to develop disciplined national organizations, infrastructures, cultural apparatuses and modes of collaboration among diverse artists, intellectuals, workers and others to address the totality of issues confronting American society and the need to get at the roots of those injustices weighing down on America like an all-consuming plague.¶ Democratic hope poses the important challenge of how to reclaim social agency within a broader struggle to deepen the possibilities for social justice and global democracy. Judith Butler is right in insisting that "there is more hope in the world when we can question what is taken for granted, especially about what it is to be human."[xvii] Bauman extends this insight by arguing that the resurrection of any viable notion of political and social agency is dependent upon a culture of questioning, whose purpose, as he puts it, is to "keep the forever unexhausted and unfulfilled human potential open, fighting back all attempts to foreclose and pre-empt the further unraveling of human possibilities, prodding human society to go on questioning itself and preventing that questioning from ever stalling or being declared finished."[xviii] Neither the death of hope, its commodification nor its romanticization are enough to explain the absence of struggle in the United States. Mass ignorance matters, as does a political economy that manufactures it, but at stake here are larger issues about those modes of education, socialization and the production of subjects in American society that willingly buy into their own oppression and subjugation.¶ The fear of taking power has deeper roots in the American public than simply the plague of not knowing. While the pedagogical nature of politics cannot be disavowed, it must be supplemented into a deeper understanding of how capitalism subverts people's needs, how depth psychology works through dominant cultural apparatuses as part of a broader public pedagogy that cripples the spirit, redirects the drive for pleasure and subverts the imagination. This is a different war waged by neoliberal society - not just on the body and mind but on the individual and collective psyche. And if the left and progressives are to address this element of low-intensity warfare on the home front they will have to connect hope to a sustained inquiry, as Aronowitz argues, over the shaping of the political and cultural unconscious.[xix] Outrage has gone astray, losing its moral and political moorings, and has been absorbed in self-deprecation, depression, cynicism, a fear of the other, a hatred of poor minorities, a distrust of the Arab world and a disgust for democratic social bonds.¶ War has become not simply a strategy but a way of life in the United States. It has been elevated to an all-encompassing ideology and politics that includes a view of all citizens as potential terrorists in need of surveillance and an ongoing attack on dissidents, critical journalists, educators and any public sphere capable of questioning authority. Hope provides a potential register of resistance, a new language, a different understanding of politics and a view of the future in which the voices of the public are heard rather than silenced. Hope also accentuates how politics might be played out on the terrain of imagination and desire as well as in material relations of power and concrete social formations. Freedom and justice, in this instance, have to be mediated through the connection between civic education and political agency, which presupposes that the goal of hope is not to liberate the individual from the social - a central tenet of neoliberalism - but to take seriously the notion that the individual can only be liberated through the social.¶ Democratic hope is a subversive, defiant practice that makes power visible and interrogates and resists those events, social relations and ideas that pose a threat to democracy. It refuses to escape into firewall of obtuse academic discourse removed from the problems of everyday life, it rejects the alleged neutrality of mainstream media, rebuffs the discourse of idiocy and simplification that characterizes celebrity culture, and it disallows a sterile and empty discourse of common sense, which wages a war on informed criticism, the imagination and the very possibility of imagining a better world. Hope at its best provides a link, however transient, provisional and contextual, between passion, vision and critique, on the one hand, and engagement and transformation, on the other. But for such a notion of hope to be consequential it has to be grounded in a pedagogical project that has some hold on the present. Hope becomes meaningful to the degree that it identifies agencies and processes, offers alternatives to an age of profound pessimism, reclaims an ethic of compassion and justice, and struggles for those institutions in which equality, freedom and justice flourish as part of the ongoing struggle for a global democracy.¶ Yet, such hopes do not materialize out of thin air. They have to be nourished, developed, debated, examined and acted upon to become meaningful. And this takes time, and demands what might be called an "impatient patience." When outrage dissipates into silence, crippling the mind, imagination, spirit, and collective will, it becomes almost impossible to fight the galloping forces of authoritarianism that beset the United States and many other countries. But one cannot dismiss as impossible what is simply difficult, even if such difficulty defies hope itself. Bauman is right, once again, in arguing that "As to our hopes: hope is one human quality we are bound never to lose without losing our humanity. But we may be similarly certain that a safe haven in which to drop its anchor will take a very long time to be found."[xx] As the current administration tries to persuade the American public and a cravenly Congress that military intervention is necessary in Syria, Obama is betting against hope - against the possibility that his investment in war, state violence and secrecy will be challenged by the American public. There is more at stake here than a military strike against Syria, there is the Hobbesian imaginary of endless permanent war and the presence of a security-warfare state that can only imagine violence as a solution to whatever problem it identifies. The future of American society lies in opposition to the warfare state, its warfare culture, its mad machinery of violence and its gross misdeeds. State violence is not a measure of greatness and honor. Such violence trades in incredulous appeals to security and fear mongering in its efforts to paralyze the impulse for justice, the culture of questioning, and the civic courage necessary to refuse and oppose complicity with state terrorism. Hope turns radical when it exposes the acts of aggression against injustices perpetuated by a militarized state that can only dream of war. But hope does more than critique, dismantle, and expose the ideologies, values, institutions, and social relations that are pushing so many countries today into authoritarianism. It begs for more than a retreat into the language of criticism by developing a renewed sense of what it means to imagine otherwise, rethink a more just sense of the future, reclaim the principles of a real democracy, and organize a political discourse that inhabits not common sense but reflective sense, good sense—a sense that the struggle is not over and demands a broad based social movement in which the struggle for a new democratic global social order can be constructed.

#### Debate is key—higher education is at a crisis in which it has been reduced to a pedagogy commoditized by power

Giroux 14 (Henry, mcmasters U, <http://www.truth-out.org/opinion/item/21113-disimagination-machines-and-punishing-factories-in-the-age-of-casino-capitalism> dw: 1-13-2014, da: 1-13-2014, lido)

Higher education, especially in the post-World War II period through the '60s and '70s, was, however ideally, considered a place where young people were taught how to think, engage in critical dialogue, and take on the responsibilities of informed and critical citizens. Now such students are subject to a technically trained docility, defined largely as consumers and told that the only value education has is to prepare them to be workers and consumers ready and eager to serve the ideological and financial interests of the global economy. Critical thought and the radical imagination have become a liability under casino capitalism and for a growing number of institutions the enemy of public and higher education because they hold the potential to be at odds with the reproduction of a criminogenc culture in which greed, unchecked power, political illiteracy and unbridled self-interest work to benefit the wealthy and corporate elite. Under such circumstances, education becomes simply a business, developing an obsession with accountability schemes, measurable utility, authoritarian governing structures, and a crude empiricism for defining what counts as research.¶ How else to explain the following comment made by the president of Macomb Community College in Michigan: "Macomb is working with the federal government and other community colleges to better prepare students for the world that exists, not the world they want to live in." [13] Or for that matter the blatant anti-intellectual bias imposed on colleges in Florida where Governor Rick Scott wants to push students toward business-friendly degrees by lowering tuition for academic fields and subjects that "steer students toward majors that are in demand in the job market." [14] Of course, those areas such as philosophy, sociology, music, the arts, and other mainstays of the liberal arts would be more costly and their demise would intensify. Graeber argues that this assault on higher education has now become an object of intense state violence. He writes:¶ “Make no mistake: to threaten someone with a stick is the ultimate anti-intellectual gesture. And if one thing has become clear in recent months, this is the first - really the only - impulse of the current government when faced with challenges to their vision for higher education. Police infiltration, surveillance, elected student leaders banned from political activities on campus, the arrest of students for simple acts of expression like chalking slogans on sidewalks, send a clear and constant message. There can be no reasoned discussion on these issues. There is no longer anything to talk about. Certainly, democracy has absolutely nothing to do with it. The pursuit of knowledge and understanding have been declared nothing but a consumer product, or else a form of technical training to increase overall economic productivity; these are the only way these matters can be discussed; if anyone wishes to gather to object to this, to gather in places of learning to insist that knowledge and understanding are not mere economic goods but something precious and valuable in their own right, they can only do so by permission of those who are telling them otherwise; otherwise, they can expect to be physically attacked.” [15]¶ Similarly, higher education has become a dead zone for killing the imagination, a place where ideas that don’t have practical results go to die and where faculty and students are punished through the threat of force or harsh disciplinary measures for speaking out, engaging in dissent and holding power accountable. Faculty in most universities have been reduced to part-time jobs and function as indentured servants with no benefits, shockingly low salaries and no power to shape the conditions under which they work. With over 70 percent of faculty now holding the status of contingent labor, they are increasingly becoming one of the largest groups of professionals that qualify for food stamps to survive. These contingent and debt-ridden faculty live in a culture in which time is a burden rather than a luxury and have few opportunities to research, write and engage important social issues. At the same time, they live under both a survivalist mode and a culture of fear knowing that they can be dismissed arbitrarily at any time for the slightest infraction. Even tenured faculty are feeling the heat of a business-oriented de-democratizing university. For example, the Kansas Board of regents recently drastically curtailed tenure and academic freedom by claiming that both tenured and non-tenured faculty who used social media in ways that were not in the interest of the university, decided exclusively by the CEO of the university, were subject to dismissal. Speech that now impairs or reduces the university’s "efficiency" overrides the right of faculty to exercise free speech or address issues they deem socially and politically important. For all intent and purposes, this signifies not only the end of tenure but academic freedom. Moreover, as William Black points out, "in both substance and dishonesty of presentation, the Regents’ policy is literally Orwellian." [16]¶ Increasingly students are exposed to a low-intensity war in which they are held hostage to disciplinary measures in which they are subject to police violence and corporate and government modes of surveillance. Such practices are designed to punish them whenever they exercise the right of protesting peacefully against a range of policies that are depriving them of a decent education and turning higher education into an adjunct of the military-industrial-surveillance complex. A more subtle form of pedagogical repression burdens them with a lifetime of debt and does everything possible to depoliticize them and remove them from being able to imagine a more just and different society. Debt bondage is the ultimate disciplinary technique of casino capitalism to rob students of the time to think, dissuade them from entering public service, and reinforce the debased assumption that they should simply be efficient cogs serving a consumer economy and a punishing society. The ongoing attack on civic values, critical education and the social state has taken on the status of a low-intensity war that began with the election of Ronald Reagan in 1980, though its emergent tendencies are deeply rooted in the American past.

#### We have an infinite obligation to not stay silent in regards to the unjust oppression of the other

Perrin ‘4 Colin Perrin, PhD in Law and Philosophy from the University of Kent, held research positions at the University of New South Wales and the University of Durham, 2004, Social and Legal Studies, Vol. 13, No. 1

Explicitly it is a matter of ‘speaking for those who . . . can no longer speak for themselves’ and in this respect of attesting to their suffering or dying because they cannot do so. Their suffering takes place ‘in secret’ and ‘after dark’, in ‘remote cells’ and above all in silence. And so language is required in order to ‘expose’ this violence and this suffering that without it would remain hidden and would continue to take place in silence. How though can one speak for the other without effacing his or her otherness, without silencing his or her silence in a speech that would take the other’s place and in which, therefore, it would be as if the other had not been silenced at all? While the implication here is that one could only do justice – or at least avoid doing this injustice – to the other by not speaking, by keeping silent and thereby keeping the other’s place, it is exactly because the other cannot represent his or herself that here one is called upon to speak. But since this is not the call for an articulate or ‘fine-sounding’ response, again: what is the nature of this demand for language and of the language it demands? These questions, I suggest, can be addressed and answered via a consideration of what Maurice Blanchot (1986) calls ‘the disaster’. Here, I am forced to simplify his account which concerns the fact that the disaster cannot present ‘itself’. The disaster ruins its own possibility for – like silence – it refutes or negates ‘itself’ as it ruins – or silences – the very terms in which it could be or be represented as a disaster. The disaster is so destructive that it destroys any trace of its occurrence. This is the immeasurable or incalculable extent of its disastrousness and it is for this reason that one cannot say or even decide that ‘there is’ the disaster. As Blanchot (1981) says of death: ‘when we die, we leave behind not only the world but also death . . . it is the loss of the person, the annihilation of the being; and so it is also the loss of death’ (p. 55). But what in this respect Blanchot goes on to call ‘the impossibility of dying’ – the impossibility of experiencing, or of being the subject of, one’s own death – is also true of a suffering that he says is less something ‘I’ go through than something that goes through ‘me’: ‘Suffering is suffering when one can no longer suffer it’ (Blanchot, 1993: 44). Above all therefore the disaster is so overwhelming that there can be no attesting to it. To present it or to represent it is to efface the very disastrousness that makes it a disaster. Thought, experience, language: all are inadequate to the disaster. How then can one bear witness to it? Or as Blanchot (1986) asks: ‘How can thought be made the keeper of the Holocaust where all was lost, including guardian thought?’ (p. 47, emphasis removed). For Blanchot, this ‘thought’ of the disaster does not produce a resignation to the impossibility of presentation or representation. Rather it imposes a demand or an obligation insofar as it ‘exposes us to a certain idea of passivity’ (Blanchot, 1986: 3). But this passivity bears the ruin and self-ruin that characterize the disaster. Its being is similarly impossible and so it is to this impossibility, to the idea of a ‘self-refuting’ passivity, that the disaster exposes ‘us’. I will come back to this. But now I want to indicate the relevance of this thought for the obligation to calculate that Derrida traces to the incalculability of justice, as well as for the relativist or postmodernist idea of difference indicated at the very beginning of my discussion. It is also a certain idea of ‘passivity’ that Derrida (2002a) takes up in the name of what he calls an ‘incalculable and giving [donatrice] idea of justice’ (p. 257); an idea of justice that implies the sense in which ‘being just’ means being just or responsive or true to something in its difference or its singularity. 12 Again I will have to simplify Derrida’s argument which concerns the impossible realization of this idea in a decision that, as ‘finite’, would always interrupt or cut into the infinite calculation that justice requires (p. 255).13 Such a decision is for this reason always violent. But while it is never just, it is, for Derrida, nevertheless necessary. There is, he says, and here after Pascal, no justice before law: ‘Justice isn’t justice, it is not achieved, if it does not have the force to be “enforced”; a powerless justice is not justice’ (p. 238). ‘It is necessary then to combine justice and force’ and in accordance with this necessity ‘justice demands, as justice, recourse to force’ (p. 239, emphasis added). Derrida’s claim, therefore – and here it recalls the argument that silence requires language if it is to ‘be’ – is that justice can only come into ‘being’ in law, and as it is enforced by law. According to this force, law or the decision cannot be just. But what Derrida discerns here is a command to calculate or to decide that is – now recalling the fact that for Amnesty International the other can no longer speak for him or herself – ‘founded’ upon the fact that justice cannot present ‘itself’, that it cannot be ‘itself’, before or outside of law. Restated, Derrida’s argument here is that the ‘difference’ in the name of which (an extreme) relativism would reject human rights is, before any calculation, beyond its determination even as difference. ‘Difference’ appears as difference only if it has already been calculated, only if it has already been determined and so at the same time violated in its ‘difference’. Again, without this determination, without this decision, difference could not appear at all. And so it is according to this ‘decision’ – a decision that is as violent as it is necessary, as excessive as it is unavoidable – that relativism must also calculate; or, more precisely, it must have already calculated. Without law there can be no justice. And so one has to decide; one has to speak. Why? I am already at the most crucial point of Derrida’s argument: ‘Abandoned to itself, the incalculable and giving [donatrice] idea of justice is always very close to the bad, even to the worst’ (Derrida, 2002a: 257). To begin to explain this point, I return to Blanchot’s thought of the disaster: for the insight of this thought consists in the fact that as the disaster ruins its own possibility, so its occurrence, its presence, would be unverifiable. There would be no difference between its presence and its absence. And it is this unverifiability that Amnesty International invokes as the impossibility of interpreting or representing the difference between ‘one’ absence or silence and ‘another’. ‘You’ve probably never heard of the Marsh Arabs before. You probably never will again’; ‘Kids. You can never find them when you want them’. And so on. In this undecidable absence or silence, it is impossible to tell whether the disaster has, or has not, taken place. Again, it is impossible to tell the difference between its presence and its absence and it is because of this impossibility, I suggest, that in not speaking or deciding one comes very close to ‘the worst’. In this passivity, in this attempt to respond or do justice to the disastrousness of the disaster, one’s silence would constitute a ‘killing silence’ in the sense that it would be ‘complicit’ with the disaster (in its unverifiability). What Amnesty International refers to as ‘the silence of good people’ is, for them, ‘the deadliest enemy’ for this reason: exactly because it cannot be told apart from that non-response which reflects a lack of concern with the other’s suffering or with his or her death, and which results from a failure or a refusal to have been or felt touched by it.14 Unheard, ‘the silence of good people’ remains indistinguishable from a ‘silence’ – or more precisely an absence of silence – that does not ‘expose’ the other’s suffering and thereby allows it to continue in silence. For as Derrida (2002a) says, it is in its proximity to the worst that the incalculable and giving idea of justice can ‘always be reappropriated by the most perverse calculation’ (p. 257). In ‘silence’, silence cannot be heard at all. Or, after Blanchot, the passivity of this ‘silence’ would be so passive that it would be unable to bear witness to anything, even to its own passivity. Exposed to this idea of passivity, passivity exposes ‘us’ to its demand: for as Blanchot (1986) says, ‘passivity is a task’ (p. 27). It is only in speech or in writing that the ‘justice’ of one response can be distinguished from the injustice of none. And, against Scarry’s characterization, the language demanded by Amnesty International may be understood on this ‘basis’: already acknowledging its own inadequacy and its own imprecision, it is – recalling Derrida – the language to which silence, as silence, must have recourse.

#### Policy change is insufficient – the temporalities of preemptive security must be contested at the level of thought to shift away from exceptionalist violence

Stockdale ’13 LIAM P.D. STOCKDALE, B.A.(h), M.A., “ GOVERNING THE FUTURE, MASTERING TIME: TEMPORALITY, SOVEREIGNTY, AND THE PRE - EMPTIVE POLITICS OF (IN)SECURITY,” A Thesis Submitted to the School of Graduate Studies in Partial Fulfilment of the Requirements for the Degree Doctor of Philosophy @ McMaster University, July 2013, <http://digitalcommons.mcmaster.ca/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=9237&context=opendissertations> jss

Moreover, with respect to the broader contribution of this study, an emphasis upon both of these points together is quite important. This is because although this study is primarily conceptual in nature, these points together can serve as the conceptual foundation for a more policy-oriented critique of pre-emptive security in particular, and anticipatory governance more generally. In this respect, they suggest that the problematic practices associated with pre-emptive security rationalities cannot be remedied by simply modifying existing policies or implementation strategies. Rather, because these problems have been revealed as fundamentally inherent to the logic of pre-emption itself, they will continue to emerge whenever pre-emption is the overarching aim of a particular policy regime, regardless of the way in which it is practically implemented. This undercuts important lines of defence against critics of pre-emptive security, since, for instance, it renders untenable the claim that such violent excesses as the Menezes shooting are mere aberrational “mistakes” unique to the circumstances of a particular case, instead emphasizing that their possibility is part and parcel of a pre-emptive approach. Viewed from this perspective, an argument for further entrenching anticipatory security governance becomes much more difficult to support, as an equally compelling argument can be advanced that the wholesale embrace of pre-emptive security will merely replace one form of insecurity with another. Understanding pre-emptive security in terms of “autoimmunity” may therefore lead policymakers currently enamoured with the idea to more thoroughly scrutinize its viability as a rationality for (in)security governance. Thus, in addition to being analytically useful in terms of concisely capturing the key conceptual points developed in Part II of this study, framing pre-emptive security in terms of Derrida’s notion of “autoimmunity” creates discursive space for further critical interventions that explicitly question its practical validity and policy legitimacy—particularly in the context of the liberal democratic states whose core juridico-political tenets are challenged by the exigencies of pre-emptive security, yet whose policymaking elite remain strong supporters of it. Indeed, the al- Awlaki killing—which was undertaken by the most powerful of such states, the US—offers an archetypical example of the autoimmune process in action, since the political process through which the imagined threat he posed was pre-empted required the enaction of a form of sovereign authority whose existence poses an equally serious threat of potential violence to those it is ostensibly trying to protect.79 Understanding pre-emptive security in terms of autoimmunity clearly emphasizes such tensions, thus lending greater urgency and legitimacy to attempts to resist the emerging consensus in favour of anticipatory governance strategies that characterizes contemporary liberal societies.