#### The metaphor of war is ingrained in our thoughts and our actions. We attempt to understand the enemy in the “war on terror” without identifying the cause for fighting – the figurative becomes literal as reality reinforces the metaphor. This devalues the Other and marks them for extermination, allowing for exponential increases of war powers authority.

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The phrase "the war on terror" has been used so frequently that it is deeply entrenched in our thinking, so deeply that we might not realize that the phrase itself is not a description but a metaphor. The use of the war metaphor should be approached with caution, especially in the case of the war on terror. As with 8 '\*' Chapter One the influential phrase "The War on Drugs," widely used by the White House in the 1980s and 1990s, to say we are at war with something immediately invokes certain associations. It reduces an imposingly large, abstract, or disconcertingly complex problem to a well-defined, simplified, and ultimately manageable entity. It is difficult in a literal sense to be at war with something as opposed to someone, but by invoking the war metaphor, that "something," be it drugs or terror, is personified. Once the opposing idea is personified, metaphorically mutated into something approximating a human enemy, it appears possible to defeat that enemy, to achieve the clear triumph that would not be possible in battling either abstract concepts or complex and daunting social problems. The lure of such a promised victory proves almost irresistible it calls up the feelings of triumph, clarity, and righteous response that so often elude us in considering hard-to-solve problems. Although war may evoke a range of horrific associations, it also has a compelling appeal; an "appropriate" war on an appropriately framed enemy can actually be more comforting than frightening. As Michael Erard notes, a phrase like "the war on terror" subtly "encodes a frame in which an intangible terror can be targeted or conquered." The success of this strategic frame depends on "the martial fantasy of inevitable victory."l2 It comes to seem almost ignoble not to answer the war metaphor's call to arms. The imagety around the figurative war often participates in a lofty range of speech, calling up, through images of flags, banners, and bands of brothers, the sentiments we feel for nation, community, identity, and other such potent values. Jayne Docherty and Frank Blechman, scholars in the field of conflict resolution, urge that the war metaphor should be used with caution: "Every metaphor is a way of sensing [sic] the world and every metaphor is also a way of not sensing [sic] the world. If we lock onto a single description of the problem and the appropriate response too early, we may not discover the most effective long-term responses to a crisis."13 If we jettison the war metaphor in favor of another, new analogies might lead to new possibilities for response and resolution. ¶ Why has the White House narrowed its metaphorical message so successfully that the war metaphor has largely over-taken all others? Why has the media echoed and replicated this metaphor in all its coverage? One answer to that question lies in the appeal, not of war itself, but of what the metaphor of war calls up. Erard notes that the phrase "war on terror" deliberately recycles a Cold War frame "in which we waged war on another intangible, Communism. And we won!" The promise of the phrase "the war on terror" is that "we can win this one, too." It invokes a national history of confident military strength: "America, after all, wins its wars."14 Beyond the powerful appeal to a triumphalist history of the allusion to narratives of victory, the war metaphor promises something that is perhaps equally powerful: the simplification of the complex, the clarification of the subtle. ¶ There is a certain clarifying quality to an extreme metaphor such as the metaphor of war that makes it potentially very attractive. War has the ability to focus issues, framing them definitively and inarguably. The public rage directed against those who questioned the war on terror in its early days is evidence of this: simply to question the appropriateness of this frame was sensed [sic] as unpatriotic, even traitorous. One of the clearest examples of the war metaphor calling up the language of treason to brand sceptics is found in the response to an article penned by noted essayist Susan Sontag in the Septem~ ber 24, 2001 issue of The New Yorker. Sontag argued that the attacks of 9/11 needed to be understood within the broader context of decades of American foreign policy in the Middle East; in return, she was publicly denounced as a "quisling," a "fifth columnist," even a "pathetic ayatollah of hate.!! Political commentator Andrew Sullivan even invented a prize, the Susan Sontag award, for pillorying what he saw as the worst outpourings of the left." ¶ Similarly, John Edwards, candidate for the Democratic presidential nomination, was also called a traitor when he repudiated the notion that there is a "global war on terror," calling this metaphorical framing an ideological doctrine advanced by the Bush administration. In a May 2007 defense policy speech, Edwards called the war on terror a "bumper sticker" slogan used by Bush to justify everything from abuses at the Abu Ghraib prison to the invasion of Iraq. "By framing this as a war," Edwards said, "we have walked right into the trap the terrorists have set-that we are engaged in some kind of clash of civilizations and a war on Islam." His statements were immediately denounced: on the conservative web site Townhall.com a reader wrote "All you anti-war traitors should hang. We are at war because there is an enemy that initiated the war. After that any speech that gives aid and comfort and encouragement to the enemy should be hanged as a traitor."l6 ¶ The war metaphor has also allowed the use of the term "Fifth Column" which disparages dissenters thought to pose an internal threat. Fifth columnists are traitors who act out of sympathy with the enemy to undermine a nation's solidarity from within. The term is currently being used by those on the political right to cast aspersions on academics and intellectuals who criticize the government by teaching the literature and politics of the Middle East. On the August 21, 2006, broadcast of his nationally syndicated radio show, Bill O'Reilly told his 3.5 million listenersl7 that "the Bush administration is in a war not only with the terrorists, but also with the far left in this country." Discussing the Bush administration's domestic surveillance program, which was recently struck down as unconstitutional by a federal district court 10 ''P Chaptet One judge, 0' Reilly described the "far left" as the "fifth column in this country."18 Once the conceptual structure of war has been evoked, it casts any dissent into a particularly negative, destructive light. Voices of difference are figured as dangerous, destructive, even traitorous: once we have war, it seems, we have traitors. ¶ Just as wars involve two clearly defined sides, so the metaphor of war enticingly promises a clear narrative of aggressors and victims, winners and losers, soldiers and insurgents. Immediately after September 11, the war metaphor seemed, at first glance, to be reasonable: after all, the attack on the Pentagon was against a military target, the attacks were intended to challenge American economic and military power, and the level of damage made the south end of Manhattan look very much like a war zone, with all the attendant horror and chaos. However, other aspects of the attack do not fit this framing as well: The World Trade Center was not a military target; the attack vehicles were not military weapons; the attack was carried out entirely within this country; and, perhaps most importantly, the attackers did not represent the policy of another sovereign state. As events unfold, many commentators have cast doubts on the war metaphor, arguing that this is not (or should not be) a war against Islam, just against violent Islamic fundamentalists. These observers argue that the false clarity of the war metaphor effectively masks the many uncertainties and ambiguities of the War on Terror. For example, a sweepingly categorical term such as “enemy" can be used to obscure the fact that in this conflict the enemy is not a specifically national or a specifically religious one. As critics of the war on terror remind us, we need to beware of false logical propositions such as "All terrorists are Muslims therefore all Muslims are terrorists."19 In the war on terror, the identification of the enemy has been increasingly difficult and problematic. Is the enemy terror itself? How is such an abstraction to be fought? What territory can be gained in such a hypothetical battle? What will be the front lines in this terrain of abstraction and symbolism? ¶ In spite of its difficulties, the war metaphor has remained dominant. If we are in a war, then we have a specific lexicon or vocabulary to draw upon. Like the lexicon of any metaphorical system, this one does not simply describe things, but shapes the way we sensed [sic] them: our vocabulary guides our thinking, urging us to interpret events according to and within the frame of that language. The lexicon of war raises the stakes of the discussion and generates intensity: war, after all, is about our very survival. What is this lexicon? Its nouns crucially define identities: "our side" has "an enemy" who becomes "the enemy." We have "adversaries" and "antagonists." These nouns define the people and countries involved in conflict primarily in terms of opposition: we are defined by who we are against, and our opponents are defined as our opposites; both sides are thus locked into roles of essential difference and eternal opposition. The verbs in our lexicon of war also perform this kind of ideological work. In war, we "attack," "defend," "strike," and "engage" the enemy; we develop tactics and strategic objectives and employ "necessary means." The verbs of war allow for glorious activity: we are not passive but active, not acted upon but acting. The verbs of war are, frankly, rather exciting: they support a sense of progress and movement, while they negate any undesirable self-picturing of ourselves as hesitant, static, or uncertain. They replace the role of victim with the more potent role of aggressive defender. In this vocabulary, we are defined as hunter rather than prey, warrior rather than victim. Even the adjectives of war have a significant effect: soldiers are strong, active, powerful agents, while civilians are less than this: less experienced, less knowing, less involved in the conflict first-hand, and therefore less deserving of a voice. ¶ The lexicon of war tacitly endorses the military's valuing of hierarchy and authority. Within this model, as citizens, part of the price of our recovered security is to defer to those in government and military who are thought of [sic] as experts in the necessary deployments of war. This is significant because, in war, civilians have a limited importance relative to the martial arena: their job is to support the troops, not to question. The success of the war, we are told, requires singleness of vision and voice; a nation at war requires a harmonious chorus of support from its citizens, not a cacophony of dissenting voices. Any voice raised in protest, and thus out of tune with the prevailing chorus, is silenced, excoriated, or expelled. Voices of resistance or questioning are told, as the Dixie Chicks were famously told by an angry fan, to "shut up and sing."20 ¶ In this way the discourse of war enlists us into particular roles, and offers little space for the creative re-casting of these roles. The war metaphor offers the promise of victorious domination and protection: it implies we can so thoroughly defeat our enemies that we can keep them from ever hurting us again. This is a suspect promise, however; we have never successfully managed to fight the war to end all wars, and so clearly the closure and finality implicitly offered by the war metaphor is at least in part wishful thinking. Dochetty argues that the war on terror will be no exception: the difficulties of identifying and locating the terrorist perpetrators will make a final reprisal difficult, and the very military attacks that create refugees will create new enemies emerging from the crowded refugee camps, perpetuating "the cycle of fear and terror for our children and grandchildren."" The war metaphor thus serves us poorly pragmatically and strategically as well as ideologically: we hamper ourselves if we assume we understand the nature and motivation of our enemies, or if we assume we can predict their response to our activities. We hamper ourselves further if we don't examine the contexts and conditions that have given rise to the world's escalating cycles of unrest and violence. ¶ Another important aspect of the war metaphor is its inherent selfjustification. It offers us a model that is reactive: our retaliation is right and, indeed, inevitable. We were given no choice in the matter, we might say to ourselves; we are in a war, this paradigm suggests, because others have declared war on us. Morally, the war metaphor risks everything a society builds by over-focusing resources on the war effort: "The great challenge of this metaphor is that it carries an all-or-nothing element. 'If you are not for war, you must be for doing nothing.' Without alternative models, critics of war do look weak and indecisive. Alternative metaphors are so badly needed. "22 ¶ Many who urge a cautious, critical, or reflective attitude towards the war on terror emphasize not only the metaphor's ideological work, but its powerful political effect. Lakoff and Frisch argue that the war metaphor was primarily adopted for political reasons. Susan Sontag argues that because of its indefinite "enemy," the anti ... terror war can never end, a "sign that it is not a war, but, rather, a mandate for expanding the use of American power. "23 The war metaphor allows for this expansion of power: when the government declares war on cancer or poverty or drugs it means the government is asking that new forces be mobilized to address the problem but when the government declares war on terrorism, it is giving itself permission to do what it wants. "When it wants to intervene somewhere, it will. It will brook no limits to its power."24 The war metaphor negates any other non-military possibility as a way to defend the country. Since national security is inextricably tied to the war's success, to be against the war is to be against the nation's very survival, and therefore to be a national threat. Within the war metaphor, any hesitation to support the war becomes unpatriotic. ¶ While the war metaphor encourages the government to "do what it wants" internally, an equally important feature is the war metaphor's repressive powers domestically. Lakoff and Frisch insist that the war metaphor puts dissenters on the defensive, since hesitation to give the President fuller authority opens critics and Congress to charges of defeatism, weakness, and lack of patriotism. Once the military extends the field of battle, the war metaphor creates a new literal reality, one that substantiates and reinforces the original metaphor. The war metaphor offers the President enlarged wartime powers and confers on him an "extraordinary domestic power" to fulfill the "agenda of the radical right" in moving resources away from social needs towards military needs in over-riding environmental safeguards, and in establishing systems of surveillance and intimidation to influence both enemies and citizens.25 Since "war trumps all other topics," the war metaphor often expands powers not just in the international but in domestic arenas, granting the President a degree of power over political discussion as well as action.26 Sontag's editorial echoes these concerns, arguing for the explicit connection of the war metaphor to the subjugation of free, open political debate. Framing America's post-911 foreign policy as "actions undertaken in war time," she says, acts as "a powerful disincentive" to critical discussion: in the aftermath of the attacks, individuals objecting to "the jihad language used by the American government (good versus evil, civilization versus bar ... barism) were accused of condoning the attacks, or at least the legitimacy of the grievances behind the attacks. "27 Because the war metaphor elevates virtues such as solidarity and unanimity, even a simple call to reflectiveness "is equated with dissent, dissent with lack of patriotism."28 Within this model, reflection sides with the enemy, acting as a challenge to the "moral clarity" required to sustain a war.¶ The importance of how things are defined, then, cannot be underestimated. Frank Luntz advises right-wing organizations which words work best to sell their ideas to the public. He is credited with making estate taxes appear less palatable when he suggested they be re-named "death taxes." Through focus ... group research, Luntz found that "estate tax" wasn't an ob-jectionable concept to the majority of the public; it evoked a sense of wealthy people having to pay their fair share. The term "death tax," however, kindled voter resentment, calling up an image of government intruding into private family grief to snatch away the savings citizens wanted to pass along to loved ones. This word change had significant political impact: by provoking an outcry from a public who for the most part wouldn't be paying any significant amount in death taxes, the net result was a tax break for the wealthiest Americans. After the introduction of the new phrase, public support helped the Congress to repeal the tax. Economists observe that the repeal of the tax may cost more than a trillion dollars in lost revenue that could be used for much-needed social programs. Small words, then, clearly carry large consequences. In June 2004, Luntz wrote a memo for the Bush administration entitled Communicating the Principles of Prevention & Protection in the War on Terror, which offered guidance on specific language to use when talking about the war in Iraq. He notes: this document is intended to create a lexicon for explaining the policy of "preemption" and the "War in Iraq." However. you will not find any instance in 14 '\*' Chapter One which we suggest that you use the actual word "preemption," or the phrase "The War in Iraq" to communicate your policies to the American public. To do so is to undermine your message from the start. Preemption may be the right policy, and Iraq the right place to start. But those are not the right words to use.29 His advice was to connect the war on terror to the war in Iraq by ensuring that "no speech about homeland security or Iraq should begin without a reference to 9/11." Luntz's recommended phrases such as "It is better to fight the War on Terror on the streets of Baghdad than on the streets of New York or Washington" and "9/11 changed everything," became staples of Republican rhetoric. Luntz acknowledged the influence of the war paradigm, and how essential it was to domestic political control, when he stated that invoking the war on terror would establish the conditions for Bush's electoral win in 2004. "If the public thinks of [sic] what the President's doing as a war on terror, he wins. If they think of [sic] it as a war on Iraq, Kerry wins. What is the context of what the President is doing? Define it one way, you have one outcome; define it another way, you have a different outcome."30 ¶ Luntz's words suggest that governments may rise or fall on the meaning of a word, and that this meaning is determined by the context or frame in which the word circulates. The largest framing of the war on terror is a frame of race, and thus our most demeaning language and our harshest representations are reserved for those marked as racially Other. Evidence for this assertion can be found in the difference of language used to talk about internal voices of difference and those external Others who, as we draw them through our metaphoric language, are not just different but are defined by their difference. While the language used to denounce the "traitors" who publicly question the war on terror and American foreign policy is punitive, it still allows a basic value [sic] to those it denounces. "Quislings" are cowards, but they are cowardly persons; fifth columnists are dangerous and subversive, but dangerous and subversive people. These accusations attack groups' or individuals' actions, and the language of the accusations addresses these actions rather than the fundamental identity of the actor, who remains a fundamentally human agent. This goes against our historical sense that traitors are the worst kind of enemy because they destroy from within. Traditionally, traitors are thought of [sic] as far worse than external enemies. But the language of the war on terror does not bear this out. lnternal critics, while traitors, are allowed their value [sic]; the language and images associated with Arab terrorists, in comparison, relentlessly strips that value [sic] away. It achieves this by inextricably linking the "enemy other" with the animal-and not just any animal, but what we consider to be the lowest order of animal. War in general encour-ages imagery that debases the enemy, as follOWing chapters will show; perhaps the most important reason to resist the war metaphor, then, is that it goes forward upon a sustained and seductive devaluing [sic] of the enemy that, if we continue to indulge it, risks reducing our own value [sic].

#### The traditional concept of peace doesn’t exist – war powers mandate social systems to declare war on one population to create peace for another – reflection on the conceptual state of war precedes instrumental solutions.

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It is not simply wrong to argue that the difference between war and its other is disappearing. There is plenty of evidence for the overlap between the practices of war and the practices of peace in the contemporary world. Yet, this view is not complete or complex enough to provide a truly telling insight into the problem of war, especially in its current form. I want now to turn to a series of thinkers who, while acknowledging the inter-penetration of war and its other in the contemporary world, have also provided a more nuanced account of how that complex is experienced or what it might mean.¶ Although he includes the War on Terror in his discussion, to Achille Mbembe, it is the colonial war that is the archetype of the state of war in the contemporary. In Mbembe, the distinction between war and peace, as well as between state and non-state combatants, has broken down, leaving the identity of war itself in crisis. This is the flipside of the crisis of the thinking of the social we derived at the end of our discussion of Derrida. The increasing difficulty of defining a clear distinction between war and its other produces a crisis in the definition of war as much as of the social.¶ Mbembe’s aim is to reveal a style of sovereignty whose function is not the achievement of political autonomy, but “the generalised instrumentalisation of human existence and the material destruction of human bodies and populations” (Mbembe, 2003, p. 14). He thus goes beyond accounts of sovereignty as the state of exception, arguing that this is a mere preliminary to the exercise of a “right to kill” (p. 16). Sovereignty then creates “death-worlds, new and unique forms of social existence in which vast populations are subjected to conditions of life conferring on them the status of living dead” (p. 40). Mbembe argues that one of the central critiques of modernity has focussed on the “complete conflation of war and politics” (p. 18), identified with Nazism. The historical origins of the logic the Nazis put into practice, however, is to be found in colonialism. The colonial—and later apartheid systems— gave rise to a “unique terror formation” displaying a “concatenation of biopower, the state of exception and the state of siege” (p. 22). Mbembe goes on: “the colony represents the site where sovereignty consists fundamentally in the exercise of a power outside the law . . . and where ‘peace’ is more likely to take on the face of a ‘war without end’ ” (p. 23). In this context, “the distinction between war and peace does not avail” (p.25). Colonial war does not simply aim at the pacification of the colony. War – whether enacted through explicit armed conflict or through the uninterrupted terrorisation of the local population, or through processes of administration that divide communities, uproot crops and orchards, hold populations in indefinite bureaucratic paralysis (at permit offices and check-points), disable economic relationships or explicitly arrest, detain and kill arbitrarily – becomes colonial normality. “The fiction of a distinction between ‘the ends of war’ and ‘the means of war’ collapses” (p. 25).¶ Mbembe evokes Deleuze and Guattari’s trope of the “war-machine” to describe the related death-world where warfare has become dissociated from the state. He uses Africa as an example: ¶ Here, the political economy of statehood dramatically changed over the last quarter of the twentieth century. Many African states can no longer claim a monopoly on violence and on the means of coercion within their territory. Nor can they claim a monopoly on territorial boundaries. Coercion itself has become a market commodity. Military fighting power [sic] is bought and sold on a market in which the identity of suppliers and purchasers means almost nothing. Urban militias, private armies, armies of regional lords, private security firms, and state armies all claim the right to exercise violence or to kill. Neighbouring states or rebel movements lease armies to poor states. Nonstate deployers of violence supply two critical coercive resources: labour and minerals. Increasingly, the vast majority of armies are composed of citizen soldiers: child soldiers, mercenaries and privateers. (Mbembe, 2003, p. 32) ¶ We have witnessed how such arrangements, entangled with struggles over resources destined for western markets, from diamonds to the opium poppy, quickly establish themselves in regions where the state has been destabilised and becomes only a bit-player, like Afghanistan and Iraq. It would be naïve to find [sic] such a model becoming generalised directly, but given that the consequences of climate change remain unpredictable, and the tenor of Mbembe’s argument is that what happens in the post-colonial world might be repeated in the supposedly developed world (colony prefigures camp), it would be foolish therefore to dismiss these developments as of only local interest.¶ Herfried Münkler picks up this very point in an account of The New Wars. Citing Trutz von Throta, Münkler speculates about whether the present state of war in Africa might say more about the future of the developed world than its past (Münkler, 2005, p. 34). The analogy between an autonomous, self-motivating and more or less continuous war that simply feeds off itself and the War on Terror—let alone the wars declared in western societies on drugs, crime, poverty and so on—is hard to resist. How does Münkler characterise these wars? They are first and foremost wars without noticeable beginning and achievable end. “They begin somehow or other, and end somewhere or other. Scarcely any of the parties can say clearly which purposes and aims are being pursued by means of the war” (p. 33). Many of the processes of the legitimate daylight global economy and culture feed this propensity to war. The new wars are fed by their “insertion into the process of economic globalisation or shadow globalisation, and the development of new constellations of interests geared not to the ending of war but to its theoretically endless continuation” (pp. 32–3). The distinction between combatants and non-combatants breaks down (p. 15), exposing women in particular to a sexual violence now used unambiguously as a weapon of terror and ethnic domination. Indeed, Münkler draws attention to “the extensive sexualisation of violence that is observable in nearly all the new wars” (p. 86). Strategic goals fade in the face of an “economy . . . of violence . . . one big torture machine whose purpose is to produce pain and suffering but not to enforce a political will” (p. 86).¶ This development in which war has become a self-generating activity is perhaps the most explicit repudiation we have met of Clausewitz’s instrumentalist account of warfare. Again, Münkler reads it as symptomatic of a structural crisis in contemporary sociality. The supposed modern rules of warfare, established at the end of the Thirty Years’ War, in which states co-existed inside agreed boundaries and exercised a monopoly on violence within their own territory, are really what is at stake in the new wars. A generalised and irregular warfare, which preceded the formation of the state, now returns at the other end of the period of rational warfare, where the state is starting to break down: [T]here is also the question of whether [the new wars] can in a sense be described as a return to a stage prior to Europe’s early modern statization of war; a look at that earlier period is a suitable way of bringing out similarities with the conditions in which the state is no longer what it was then not yet: the monopolist of war. (Münkler, 2005, p. 2)¶ This spread of war sweeps up even the organisations whose aim is to bring peace, such as international aid agencies, which get caught up in the economy of war by making resources available that can swiftly end up on the black market: “what was supposed to relieve hunger and poverty becomes a resource of war” (p. 18). Yet, this model of a continuous war “with neither an identifiable beginning or a clearly defined end” (p. 15) also describes wars in which states are now engaged. The war in Iraq and the War on Terror, as well as the generalised use of warfare as the language of social policy, prove [sic] the limits of the instrumentalist account of war. Torture, extraordinary rendition, imprecise bombing, rape, as well as the intensification of police action, legislation to restrict press freedom and civil and human rights more generally, all find [sic] the state spreading terror, executing arbitrary power, cultivating heightened social division and insinuating suspicion into social relations. It is, of course, arguable that this has always been a resource to which the state has easily and readily turned, and Derrida, for example, has argued that all states are by definition “rogue states” (Derrida, 2005). However, what we find [sic] now is not the use of these techniques in pursuit of specific social goals (economic, geopolitical or racial domination, for example), but as a substitute for sociality in general, in a social, even global, war without term. Terror becomes not a tool, but a form of continuous tension, from which some may profit, while others remain cowed. As Mbembe’s description of the Israeli occupation of Palestine outlines, this kind of war soon becomes normalised, a state of constant intimidation and emergency. The wars on drugs and crime that have dominated social policy in certain western countries achieve nothing more than this state of permanent unsettling of the social order.¶ Here, we find [sic] the historical realisation of a non-Clausewitzian version of war. The generalisation of war as a type of peace with peace’s aims shows that the deconstruction of the war/peace and friend/enemy dichotomies we have outlined in Derrida is not simply a piece of abstruse theorising. The historical situation in which we live is not one where war and its other are clear alternatives. Given we are in a perpetual state of low-level conflict in which acts of war and the rhetoric of the social combine with one another in complex ways, it is chimerical to even believe that the tangle can be rationalised into discrete alternatives wherein we can actually withdraw our troops, pressure our governments, discipline our corporations and pacify our popular culture in order to construct an enduring peace. As we have found [sic], this tangle persists in our understandings of what society is, even when they attempt to simplify it. Mbembe and Münkler show that this situation is not merely theoretical.¶ It is thus too simple to think of [sic] this complex state of affairs as simply the implementation of policy, as the widespread reference to Clausewitz would imply, nor as merely the erasure of difference between war and its other. The generalisation of war as Mbembe and Münkler describe it reveals a world in which the intensification of war in one place—one part of the world or fraction of society—has as its aim the consolidation of peace in another. Violence in the occupied zone or the failed state coincides with the uninhibited extension of luxury and security elsewhere. The sacralisation of the victims of the September 11 attacks, when viewed in a global context, is evidence of a society unable to believe that the violence it was accustomed to witness, even enact, elsewhere could be visited on its very heartland. The sense of outrage, even injustice, this provoked is illustrative of a global situation where violence is normalised but not evenly spread. The spreading administration of violence in one place is the securing of peace elsewhere, and it is this very contradiction that allows the violence to be rationalised. This then confirms the deconstructive account in which war and peace only attain their co-ordination because of the irreducible disjunction between them.¶

#### We must understand war as constantly evolving – attempting to strive for peace ignores that war is always the medium – understanding war as an unstable concept allows for adaptation of political understanding to cope with the political uncertainty of the future.

- Our current conditions of war can’t be changed if we don’t seek to understand war itself.

War as a term can only be defined in relation to its opposite, such as peace, love, et cetera, BUT that opposite is always changing.

Rejection of war in favor of its opposites ignores how war is always fought in the name of realizing these states of peace.

The future will inevitably bring new social, political problems that will be impossible to address with one grand solution.

Instead we must understand war not as a stable concept but as ever evolving.

Mansfield, ‘8 [Nick Mansfield; As the Dean Higher Degree Research at Macquarie University in Sydney, Australia, he is the senior academic responsible for postgraduate research study across all Faculties and departments. After completing his PhD in English Literature from the University of Sydney, Nick was a Harkness Fellow at Columbia University in New York, and subsequently at Yale University. After returning to Australia, he taught at Flinders University in Adelaide, and then at Macquarie, first in English and then in Critical and Cultural Studies. Nick is one of the founding general editors of the journal Derrida Today. ; “Theorizing War: From Hobbes to Badiou”; Palgrave Macmillan, November 11, 2008; p. 162-167]

The aim of this book has been to show that war is always defined in relation to something else, what we have called its other. This other may vary: it may be society, sovereign authority, politics, love, peace, friendship or something else. What is important about this relationship is not that it defines what war is opposite to and distinct from nor does it simply identify what the mechanism is that uses war as an instrument. It reveals the context within which war must emerge. This is not simply the historical or political context. Historical context is important, of course. Each thinker that we have studied can be said to be reacting to the specific war that defined or dominated their era: Hobbes, the religious and civil wars of the seventeenth century; Clausewitz, the wars of the revolutionary and Napoleonic era, in which the people became a major player for the first time; Freud, the First World War; Foucault, the war of the racial Holocaust; Virilio, the Cold War of Mutually Assured Destruction; Baudrillard, the First Gulf War; Žižek, the War on Terror and so on. Sometimes this address is direct and conscious; sometimes implicit and incidental. Their accounts, however, emerge in more than an historical context: they rely on a conceptual context as well, in which war is not just a literal material situation, but an abstraction or an idea. This is what makes war available as part of the unfolding of human meaning. In this way, war itself is not the problem. It is the way war is implicated in and required by other denominations of human meaning that condemns us to repeated bouts of official violence. War never emerges outside of a relationship to some conceptual other, and it is in the complexity of this relationship that our future fortunes of war will be determined.¶ As we have found [sic], this relationship can never be thought [sic] to stabilise simply around the idea that war and its other are opposites or merely continuous with one another. Even in the accounts of Hobbes and Kant, for example, the idea that war and civil society are opposites proves to be a much more complex argument than it at first appears: in the Hobbesian version, we find that civil society may seem to supplant the natural state of war, but is in fact, the fulfilment of war’s ostensible purposes. In Kant, peace emerges as a progression beyond war, but only by way of it. In both these arguments, the relationship between war and peace is not one of simple contrast, but of complex entanglement, in which peace never quite leaves war behind, indeed continues to depend on it. In our time, on the other hand, we find [sic]f a kind of Clausewitzian consensus, in which war is thought of [sic] as co-ordinated with both international diplomatic and domestic social policy, as a vast para-military police action in which unruly lapsed allies are disciplined or various kinds of social deviancy defined and excoriated. Theorists are quick to argue that what we find [sic] here is the increasing disappearance of any difference between war and its other. Yet, while this generalisation of war seems to be taking place, at no time has war been less publicly acceptable nor more automatically rejected—even indiscriminately and pre-emptively—by vast sections of the population. The generalised moral revulsion at war is not a real obstacle to war nor does it herald its demise. Indeed, while their constituents demonstrate against wars and ridicule them on blogs, politicians seem paralysed when it comes to contesting the determination of heads of government to resort to warfare. As Ryan C Hendrickson has argued in The Clinton Wars: The Constitution, Congress and War Powers (Hendrickson, 2002), the US Congress has been increasingly reluctant to resist the will of a president who has decided on military action, even when it has the constitutional power to do so. The general revulsion at war therefore is not necessarily incompatible with a generalisation of war in practice. Indeed, my aim has been to show the opposite: that the general deployment and the general rejection of war are part of a single complex. It is much too simple, however, to find [sic] this complex as part of a willing ignorance [sic] on the part of the bulk of humanity, wherein moral comfort and self-regard would be assured by rejection of war even though affluent lifestyles may depend on war for their continued opportunity. It is too easy to think of [sic] the war problem simply morally, that we play at rejecting wars from which we are actually happy to profit. Our rejection of war, like our purported commitment to democracy and human rights, is not merely hypocritical. It must be understood as part of a complex in which war and its other emerge together in a double relationship in which they both encourage and refuse one another: we reject war because it ruins social relations, shatters bodies and savages our human rights. Yet, we also look to war to preserve the social, protect threatened lives and enlarge rights. War kills and saves simultaneously. It destroys the things in the name of which it is implemented. To think of [sic] a loss of difference between war and its other is to overlook the complex situations in which war emerges and which keep it alive despite our moral repugnance and endless official lamentations for those of us whom it has annihilated.¶ To say that war is double and that it is implicated conceptually in other values that we want to preserve is not to simply say that we should be resigned to war enduring. It is an attempt to provide a new and useful way by which war can be understood, and argues, as all analysis does, that material situations like war cannot be dealt with if they are not understood, and that new ways must continually be sought to rethink them. Theory is not an enduring ideal truth to be applied to practical situations, but the invention of new conceptual forms that may help us represent and explain hitherto obscure or enigmatic phenomena. Thinking of war in terms of the war/other complex means always understanding [sic] the emergence of war as the deployment of something else with it. The two must always appear in relationship with one another even if they are considered to be antagonistic or mutually destructive. So war and whatever its other might be in a particular context, facilitate the emergence of one another, even in their defiance of one another. It is this inseparability of war and its other that makes it possible to understand [sic] war and its other as co-ordinated. What was Nazi war but a tribute, in its most organised and exultant murderousness, to life? What was Communist insurgency but the most regimented and anonymous embrace of the possibilities of freedom? And what are democracy’s post-1989 wars but the most brutal and oppressive attempt to spread human rights?¶ These complex situations can and should not be disguised by an eternal but vacuous resort to morality. The logic that attributes the doubleness of war to hypocrisy is a singularly unenlightening example of the ascendancy of moral discourse in discussions of war. Of course, our attitude to war must be moral: we could not protect ourselves from the cult of official violence if it were not, nor could we begin to understand [sic] war as a problem and something to be surpassed, something I have assumed as relatively uncontentious from the outset. Yet, because war is politically, economically, and above all, conceptually situated, it must be recognised not as primarily a moral, but a political problem. Since the Vietnam War, resistance to war has been fundamentally based on revulsion at its violence and destructiveness and the popular culture that naturalise it. This resistance has been primarily rhetorical and gestural, as it befits its interest in the aesthetics of war and in tune with the general aestheticisation of politics of the time. It has rested on general humanist clichés about community, fraternity and an ideal social future. In other words, it has relied on a banal and unsustainable understanding of the mutual alienation of the human and war. This conception is not wrong in any simple sense, but it is too uncomplicated to deal with the dynamics of the war/other complex, in which the human can be as much a justification for war as reason for scepticism towards it, and is indeed probably both. To engage with war properly, we have to realise that this kind of opposition is not enough. When war is in play, so is something else, war’s various others. Humanist sentimentality often attempts to present what we have identified as war’s others as unquestionable or non-negotiable: How can we possibly contest the value implicit in love, or sociality or human rights? Is not this the worst kind of post-modern relativism, in which we allow what should be absolute values to be held up for debate? Yet it is these various “values” that accompany and facilitate the emergence of war, and that always wrong-foot us when we attempt to reject it. Do we not want dictators to be removed, women’s rights restored and ethnic cleansing resisted? If we are in favour of these goals, how can we resist the wars that aim to achieve them? Does not this make the rejection of war merely automatic and adolescent?¶ The refusal to debate these values results in both an impotent and unworldly rejection of war, on the one hand, and a mindless acquiescence to it, on the other. The argument of this book has been that it is necessary to understand the complexity of the implication of such values in war. This understanding requires the courage to rethink these values and the political will to engage unsentimentally with their historical function. Questioning war must involve a questioning of the very things in the name of which wars are fought, not in order simply to reject them, but to engage properly with their real historical and political function. If you are unwilling to deal with this dynamic and seek mere recourse to absolute rejections of war, or absolute endorsement of the values that oppose (and/or allow) war, then you risk remaining stuck in the cycle from which politics should always be attempting to free us. Just because they have failed us and have proven corrupt, easily intimidated and willingly compromised, we should not exempt parliaments from being one place amongst others where such politics should take place. In short, wherever it happens, the politics of war must also provide a properly critical account of war’s other.¶ Our inherited models of politics have opted either for the grand narrative approach to the realisation of optimal ideological goals or else a molecularism, in which social fractions either withstand or disrupt the forces attempting to limit them. The first relies on a model of a uniform and collective trajectory of human development, which can no longer be sustained, as well as having a weak understanding of what Foucault so ably identified as the “regional” (Foucault, 2003, p. 27) way in which power operates. The second fails to produce more general insight into the dynamics of human collectivity, the politics of the economic in particular. The pitting of these two models of politics against one another defined post-modern debate. Yet, we may be now confronting a political epoch in which neither of these ways of thinking about politics helps us: the first because it aims to recover an older sense of human universality that is long gone, irrecoverable, ineffective and probably already unlamented; the second because the radical disruption of identity and administration, however relevant it remains to challenging the silent violence of culture, policy and social institutions, will not reassemble the sites of collective intention, scrutiny and negotiation that we will need in order to deal with the challenges of the politics of climate change—economic activity discovering its final limits, the resulting dislocation of human populations inequitably experienced, the threat of states acting unilaterally to secure their interests regardless of the consequences and so on. What we will be confronting will be a series of situations that will not be easily assimilable to theoretical models developed in wholly different contexts, co-ordinated as they were, first, with the expansion and, then, the contraction of Western historicity. This future could well produce a set of unfolding or overlapping crises in which wars develop. It will be absolutely crucial to understand the dynamic behind these wars: What are they being fought for? It may be true that globalisation will not result in the liquidation of the nation state, as Hirst and others have argued. Yet, in the twenty-first century, however pragmatically persistent the nation state may be, it lacks any enduring sense of natural inevitability, and contests with economic, religious and ethnic allegiances which may co-ordinate with it—from the potentially unknowable flows of capital through an increasingly abstract financial market to the bonds of fundamentalist dogmatism— but which may overwhelm it as well. There is and will continue to be a remaking of the plural relationships that will cluster around a set of unrecognisable warfares. War will not perhaps be the instrument of established social collectivities or an expression of their values, but the thing that brings them into existence in the first place, inventing ideological and dogmatic formations hitherto unknown, or loose coalitions of established national and international institutions. Who will fight which wars in the name of what? As we have found [sic], what gives rise to a war, what justifies it can also define the very point of view from which it can be resisted, not that our attitude to war should always and everywhere be simply one of refusal. Economic security, political rights and even peace are examples of the double constructs in the name of which war can be both defended and critiqued.¶ My argument is that, given the unpredictability of our political future and the superannuation of the political models we have inherited, a theoretical construct like the war/other complex may provide one way in which future situations may be thought not ideologically but pragmatically. Traditionally war has been treated as if it is a discrete event, anticipated by causes and followed by consequences, but a singular thing nevertheless. The war/other complex allows us to think of [sic] war in its embeddedness in the unfolding of global social relations in general. In this way, it may not only provide a more pragmatic way of understanding a future politics, but by reinventing new ways of imagining the collective and the specific dynamic by which it may subsume individual bodies and events, it may take over the function of our previous political paradigms.¶

#### Metaphor is everywhere and unavoidable BUT there are certain metaphors that are detrimental.

The argument-as-war metaphor utilized by debate becomes a form of rhetorical violence that puts participants and critics at odds with each other.

The metaphorical guides the literal as conceptions of argument-as-war makes it so.

Lakoff and Johnson, ‘80 [George Lakoff, Richard and Rhoda Goldman Distinguished Professor of Cognitive Science and Linguistics at the University of California at Berkeley; Mark Johnson, Knight Professor of Liberal Arts and Sciences in the Department of Philosophy at the University of Oregon; excerpt from "Metaphors We Live By"; http://theliterarylink.com/metaphors.html]

Metaphor is for most people device of the poetic imagination and the rhetorical flourish--a matter of extraordinary rather than ordinary language. Moreover, metaphor is typically viewed as characteristic of language alone, a matter of words rather than thought or action. For this reason, most people think they can get along perfectly well without metaphor. We have found, on the contrary, that metaphor is pervasive in everyday life, not just in language but in thought and action. Our ordinary conceptual system, in terms of which we both think and act, is fundamentally metaphorical in nature.¶ The concepts that govern our thought are not just matters of the intellect. They also govern our everyday functioning, down to the most mundane details. Our concepts structure what we perceive, how we get around in the world, and how we relate to other people. Our conceptual system thus plays a central role in defining our everyday realities. If we are right in suggesting that our conceptual system is largely metaphorical, then the way we thinks what we experience, and what we do every day is very much a matter of metaphor. ¶But our conceptual system is not something we are normally aware of. in most of the little things we do every day, we simply think and act more or less automatically along certain lines. Just what these lines are is by no means obvious. One way to find out is by looking at language. Since communication is based on the same conceptual system that we use in thinking and acting, language is an important source of evidence for what that system is like.¶ Primarily on the basis of linguistic evidence, we have found that most of our ordinary conceptual system is metaphorical in nature. And we have found a way to begin to identify in detail just what the metaphors are halt structure how we perceive, how we think, and what we do.¶ To give some idea of what it could mean for a concept to be metaphorical and for such a concept to structure an everyday activity, let us start with the concept ARGUMENT and the conceptual metaphor ARGUMENT IS WAR. This metaphor is reflected in our everyday language by a wide variety of expressions:

ARGUMENT IS WAR

Your claims are indefensible.

He attacked every weak point in my argument.

His criticisms were right on target.

I demolished his argument.

I've never won an argument with him.

you disagree? Okay, shoot!

If you use that strategy, he'll wipe you out.

She [sic] shot down all of my arguments.

It is important to know [sic] that we don't just talk about arguments in terms of war. We can actually win or lose arguments. We think of [sic] the person we are arguing with as an opponent. We attack his positions and we defend our own. We gain and lose ground. We plan and use strategies. If we find a position indefensible, we can abandon it and take a new line of attack. Many of the things we do in arguing are partially structured by the concept of war. Though there is no physical battle, there is a verbal battle, and the structure of an argument--attack, defense, counter-attack, etc.---reflects this. It is in this sense that the ARGUMENT IS WAR metaphor is one that we live by in this culture; its structures the actions we perform in arguing. Try to imagine a culture where arguments are not viewed in terms of war, where no one wins or loses, where there is no sense of attacking or defending, gaining or losing ground. Imagine a culture where an argument is viewed as a dance, the participants are thought of [sic] as performers, and the goal is to perform in a balanced and aesthetically pleasing way. In such a culture, people would view arguments differently, experience them differently, carry them out differently, and talk about them differently. But we would probably not view them as arguing at all: they would simply be doing something different. It would seem strange even to call what they were doing "arguing." In perhaps the most neutral way of describing this difference between their culture and ours would be to say that we have a discourse form structured in terms of battle and they have one structured in terms of dance. This is an example of what it means for a metaphorical concept, namely, ARGUMENT IS WAR, to structure (at least in part) what we do and how we understand what we are doing when we argue. The essence of metaphor is understanding and experiencing one kind of thing in terms of another. It is not that arguments are a subspecies of war. Arguments and wars are different kinds of things--verbal discourse and armed conflict--and the actions performed are different kinds of actions. But ARGUMENT is partially structured, understood, performed, and talked about in terms of WAR. The concept is metaphorically structured, the activity is metaphorically structured, and, consequently, the language is metaphorically structured. ¶Moreover, this is the ordinary way of having an argument and talking about one. The normal way for us to talk about attacking a position is to use the words "attack a position." Our conventional ways of talking about arguments presuppose a metaphor we are hardly ever conscious of. The metaphors not merely in the words we use--it is in our very concept of an argument. The language of argument is not poetic, fanciful, or rhetorical; it is literal. We talk about arguments that way because we conceive of them that way--and we act according to the way we conceive of thing¶The most important claim we have m ade so far is that metaphor is not just a matter of language, that is, of mere words. We shall argue that, on the contrary, human thought processes are largely metaphorical. This is what we mean when we say that the human conceptual system is metaphorically structured and defined. Metaphors as linguistic expressions are possible precisely because there are metaphors in a person's conceptual system. Therefore, whenever in this book we speak of metaphors, such as ARGUMENT IS WAR, it should be understood that metaphor means metaphorical concept.¶ THE SYSTEMATICITTY OF METAPHORICAL CONCEPTS¶ Arguments usually follow patterns; that is, there are certain things we typically do and do not do in arguing. The fact that we in part conceptualize arguments in terms of battle systematically influences the shape argument stake and the way we talk about what we do in arguing. Because the metaphorical concept is systematic, the language we use to talk about that aspect of the concept is systematic.¶We saw in the ARGUMENT IS WAR metaphor that expressions from the vocabulary of war, e.g., attack a position, indefensible, strategy, new line of attack, win, gain ground, etc., form a systematic way of talking about the battling aspects of arguing. It is no accident that these expressions mean what they mean when we use them to talk about arguments. A portion of the conceptual network of battle partially characterizes file concept of an argument, and the language follows suit. Since metaphorical expressions in our language are tied to metaphorical concepts in a systematic way, we can use metaphorical linguistic expressions to study the nature of metaphorical concepts and to gain an understanding of the metaphorical nature of our activities.

#### Vote aff to restrict the power of the war metaphor.

#### Just like there’s no one perfect definition of war, there’s no perfect definition of debate; the activity constitutes a multitude of different things in various contexts. The war metaphor antagonizes debaters and stifles debate’s potential.

#### The meaning behind language is not stagnant, but instead constantly fluctuating.

There are a vast number of replacements to the metaphor of argument as war. Instead of choosing just one, we should expand our rhetorical possibilities and never end the search for how to define and relate to debate.

Cohen, ’95 [Daniel H. Cohen, Ph.D., Philosophy, Indiana University. Professor of Philosophy at Colby College; “Argument is War ... and War is Hell: Philosophy, Education, and Metaphors for Argumentation”; Informal Logic Vol. 17, No.2 (Spring 1995)]

To be sure, there are alternative understandings of argumentation available. I think it completely justified to speak of the progress that has been made in characterizing argumentation by exploiting the resources of speech act theory, critical theory, formal logic, rhetorical analysis, and all the other relevant conceptual tools at our disposal. To take one example, arguments can be characterized in terms of their various linguistic roles or in terms of their effects as conversational episodes. From that perspective, one of the primary functions of an argument is "enhancing the acceptability of the speech act for which it is an argument."9 What I like about this particular formula, besides its succinct elegance, is how it abstracts to a level from which the adversarial element can be regarded as merely an accidental means to a more important end, and thereby allows for other means to that end. It creates room for answers to the question of why someone might seek arguments for something she already believes; the argument-is-war metaphor does not. It also endorses the possibility of arguing/or something without arguing against anybody; and again, the argument-is-war metaphor cannot accommodate that. Specifically, explanations qualify as arguments under this conception, and this seems meet since explanations constitute a large part of many arguments. Explanation can indeed serve as a kind of justification, and justification generally is the province of argument.¶This points to a way to articulate the connection between interpretation and argumentation that was suggested earlier: in order to understand some texts, a certain kind of sympathetic reading can be necessary. This might involve speculating about an author's motives, providing a charitable interpretation for apparently inconsistent passages, or the like. From the perspective provided by thinking of arguments along the speech-act lines just presented, reading looks a lot like arguing with the author. Readers need to argue with, meaning alongside, the author rather than with, meaning against, the author, in order to enhance whatever it is that the text is saying, showing, or doing. And, needless to say, authors and readers do not have to be adversaries. The "argument" between them is not adversarial. This is not, to be sure, how students of philosophy are typically taught to read a philosophical text. They are trained to read "critically," Le., they are trained to read with a combatant's eye, an eye that is open for any weaknesses in the argument that can be turned to advantage in a critical paper. All too often we read the way we argue in another respect: we read with "our defenses up" lest we be convinced of something we didn't want to believe. "I'll be damned if I'm going to let this author teach me something new!" Since this is not the attitude we want in the classroom, we should think along different lines:¶ (1) Argument is not war; it is reciprocal reading. ¶ Speech-act approaches have shown that they can shed light on the subject of argumentation. Unfortunately, what should be understood as helpful characterizations are all too often interpreted as definitive analyses or necessary and sufficient conditions, Le., as definitions. These can then be taken as challenges to other workers in the field to find or construct both counterexamples that should belong to the category but do not fit the description, and counterexamples that do fit the description but should not count as arguments. For the example at hand, it might be pointed out that one way of enhancing a speech act is to say it with a smile, but that should hardly count as an argument. Or, again, revising a poem seems a clear example of a speech-act-enhancing activity that is just as clearly not an argument. Arguments may include interpretations, but that does not make all interpreters into arguers. Conversely, when I tell my son to wear his seat belt, and answer his question, "Why?" by offering appropriate reasons, I am not arguing for or enhancing the acceptability of any speech-act, except under some ad hoc reading, although I am certainly arguing for some act: his buckling his seat belt. While it is certainly helpful to have as wide a variety of examples as possible at hand, this can degenerate into an esoteric exercise, indeed an idle academic exercise of exactly the same sort of nit-picking that I have just done with the counter-examples here. I have taken a very illuminating characterization and managed to show that, being very, very legalistic, it is, to no one's surprise, inadequate as a definition. What we need are not new definitions, but new metaphors. Fortunately, Aristotle was wrong in thinking that metaphor is the work of genius. On the contrary, metaphor is a linguistic commonplace, something that every competent language user understands and employs (although, to be sure, creating the brilliant metaphors that permanently reshape our thoughts is no mean feat).¶ I sometimes think that what good philosophizing and, more generally, effective teaching of any kind have in common is that they revolve around the same kind of activity: the search for just the right metaphor. Metaphors are more than merely elliptical similes or stylistic affectations for embellished expression. They are vehicles for making the unfamiliar familiar, which is what makes them particularly important for education. There is, however, something funny about characterizing metaphors as linguistic devices for articulating unfamiliar thoughts by transplanting them into a more familiar context: it buys into the questionable dichotomy of thought and language. The implied model is that we think things, and then we somehow translate them into written or spoken words. Thinking and speaking or writing are not nearly as easily distinguishable as this model suggests. There is some wisdom in the old chestnut "How am I supposed to know what I think until I hear what I have to say?" Metaphors are not just elegant or clever ways of conveying new thoughts; they are also ways of thinking new thoughts, of grasping those thoughts, and even of formulating them in the first place. And this is what makes the art of metaphor so important for philosophy. Because I think of both philosophy and education this way, I think the question that we really should be addressing is not where and how arguments fit into philosophy and education, but what metaphors for arguments fit in with the goals of philosophy and education. It is especially appropriate to ask the question in this form when philosophy and education are being sung in a Pragmatist key. ¶The meaning of a metaphor is invariably, and notoriously, under-determined. This is what stymies reading them as elliptical similes. Sure, arguments are like war, but how? Everything is like everything else in some respect, if we are but clever enough to sense [sic] it. Arguments are rafts on the sea of uncertainty carrying us to the terra firma of truth. Arguments are verbal dances responding to inaudible Gricean rhythms and unknown Jungian syllogisms. Arguments are the mortar holding together the bricks out of which theories are built. Arguments are mental exercises for athletes of the intellect. It is not hard, I think, to make sense out of any of these metaphors, but it is an amazing ability nonetheless. Interpreting metaphors is nearly the art that creating them is. ¶In some respects, interpreting metaphors may actually be the greater art. The exercise of creating metaphors can with relatively little effort be extended indefinitely. Even restricting ourselves just to traffic metaphors (and getting carried away with the exercise), we can say that arguments are (i) conversational traffic jams-(ii) gridlock with a lot of honking and little movement; (iii) arguments are conversational traffic accidents; (iv) they are wrong turns, or (v) detours, or (vi) dead ends or (vii) roundabouts on the streets of discourse; or should we have said that they are (viii) short cuts to the truth at the end of the road; maybe (ix) they are long and winding roads to nowhere; or, instead, we can conceive of arguments as (x) intellectual one way roads to their conclusionsalthough maybe they are really (xi) one-lane roads but with two-way traffic. More positively, they can be thought of as a case of (xii) a merging traffic of ideas or even better as (xiii) conceptual roads under construction. ¶ Conceptual connections like these can be constructed almost at will. The list can be expanded, if not ad infinitum, then at least ad nauseam, so that almost any arbitrarily constructed metaphor, even an initially inscrutable one, such as that arguments are the road kill alongside the highways of life (ad nauseam indeed!), can be made intelligible and plausible: both arguments and road kill are to be avoided, they are the tragic end for those who innocently enter areas of high traffic, they are what can happen when we aren't careful, and so on. Admittedly, this is stretching the point, but that is exactly what metaphors do so well. Still, the fact that so many traffic metaphors are so readily available suggests that they identify an important set of features about arguments, viz., something about their internal dynamics and the possible interactions that can arise from them.¶ In contrast to the argument-as-traffic metaphors, the argument-is-war metaphor makes a different point. What it emphasizes (or creates!) is the adversarial aspect of argumentation, which is why this particular metaphor is objectionable in the classroom. But, interpretation being an art, other conclusions could also be drawn from the metaphor. There will always be an indefinitely large supply of abstractable similarities between the tenor and vehicle of a metaphor, wars and arguments in this case. Wars may involve more than just two parties, but never less than two, and we usually assume that this is true of arguments as well; wars can be ended by simple agreement of the parties involved, and so can arguments; wars are occasions that test the national resolve and sense of identity, while arguments can do the same for the individual; wars need not end with a winner and a loser, because both sides might claim victory, when in fact both sides may have lost a great deal, and there is surely a counterpart for arguments.¶ Of course, there are also great differences that might be offered as counterexamples or counterbalances to the value of this metaphor. Wars can be prevented by diplomatic efforts, so they represent a failure of diplomacy. Arguments are not always symptomatic of communicative failure. Often they are the expressly intended product of rational inquiry! Indeed, if we include rational discourse under the rubric "diplomacy," then it is precisely arguments as we "officially" conceive them that can best prevent wars! Wars can be prevented by arguing, but arguing, obviously, cannot. Argument, as rational engagement, is antithetical to military engagement, and the metaphor would then have to be thought of [sic] as an ironic reversal. (Then again, if fighting for peace can make sense, so might arguing for agreement.) If arguments are to be a positive way of addressing differences, then¶ (2) Argument is not war; it is diplomatic negotiation.¶ Two of these just-mentioned features common to war and argument merit particular attention. First, wars never end up where they started. The status quo ante bellum can never really be achieved. What starts out as a war of principle, especially when successful, might well end up as a war of conquest, and, conversely, the unsuccessful war for conquest is transformed into a war of principle. Successful defensive re-actions inevitably seek to pre-empt any possible future transgressions. What, for example, was the American Civil War all about? The Vietnam War? The Gulf War? The answers that today's history books offer differ from the answers given by those wars' own contemporaries. ¶ Something very similar happens in arguments, especially when they are thought of as verbal wars. Interestingly, Imre Lakatos has made just this point with respect to mathematical proofs, the very paradigms for the "official" picture of arguments as exercises in pure reason. IO Proofs and refutations, he argued, are two parts of the same dialectical process. Counter-examples to proposed theorems, he maintained, do not in general function as real refutations. Rather, the role they most often play in mathematics is to demand further clarification of the intended range of the thesis or to seek greater articulation in the definitions of the concepts used. The theorems that result from, or survive, this process are inevitably changed by the process. That is, what a proof is "all about" changes as the proof proceeds, and this is no less applicable to other kinds of arguments.¶ (3) Thus, argument is not war; it is growth or adaptation. ¶ Wittgenstein reached a very similar conclusion about mathematical proofs, albeit for different reasons. II A proof, he asserted, never proves what it set out to prove. Proofs establish new conceptual connections between the thesis in question and other parts of the system of mathematics. These connections are constitutive of the meanings of the concepts involved, so the meaning of the sentence proved always has new semantic-conceptual accretions. Therefore, the sentence that has been proved, the theorem, can never have exactly the same meaning as the sentence to be proved, despite their typographic identity. In just the same way, to revert to an earlier example, no poem can really ever be revised because any revisions would, in a very real sense, result in a new and different poem. Is there a way to think of arguments as altering, or even constructing, new meanings? That is, can what an argument is "all about" be subject to the same sorts of historiographic revisions as the casus belli? It seems so. ¶ (4) That is, argument is not war; it is metamorphosis.¶ The other feature common to wars and arguments I want to note is that they are multiple-agent events (or, at least, multi-voice events, to accommodate those of us who habitually argue with themselves). It takes more than one party to start a war or an argument, it takes more than one party to sustain a war or argument, and it also takes more than one to finish a war or argument. Just as a war is never really over until both sides agree to a cessation of hostilities-otherwise there will be a prolonged guerrilla war, permanent tensions, or an uneasy truce without real peace-so too an argument is never really over until some sort of consensus has been achieved-lest there be continued verbal sniping, simmering resentments, or a lingering grudge beneath the surface. Arguments might result in situations that are analogous to the results of wars, but there is also the possibility that they end otherwise. Arguments may result in an exchange of ideas, rather than just the imposition of one side's ideas on the other. And this is certainly a legitimate pedagogical role for arguments. In the classroom, then, ¶ (5) Argument should not even be like war; it should be a kind of cross-pollination, leading to hybridization. ¶Alternatively, arguments can end in with the construction of a new conceptual order, as the Second World War gave birth to the United Nations. Ideally, in seminar ¶ (6) Argument is not at all war; it is brainstorming. ¶The best arguments, then, rather than being destructively adversarial, involve a constructive co-operation between their participants. If debate is to be contstructive for everyone involved, then ¶ (7) Instead of being a kind of war, argument can be more like a barnraising.¶Although the language of warfare is so readily used to describe arguments, there is a difference that is both obvious and important, but still easy to overlook: arguments, like brainstorming sessions or barn-raisings, can be desirable in a way that wars cannot. If we focus on the possible outcomes rather than the origins, the ends rather than the beginnings, then one way to conceptualize arguments is as those events in rational discourse that tend to create or lead to consensus. This combines the transformative-constructivist aspect with the multiple-agency aspect of arguments in a way that accommodates the move from philosophy as the pursuit-of-truth to philosophy as the pursuit-of-wisdom by shifting the balance in emphasis from (to borrow a phrase from Richard Rorty) objectivity to solidarity, while simultaneously respecting the possibility of non-competitive or even cooperative argumentation for educational ends. Simply put: "Let's hash it out" does not have to mean "let's fight it out." ¶Perhaps arguments are more like town meetings than anything else, because they are sometimes contentious, but sometimes co-operative; there may be several opposing factions, or only interested but as yet undecided citizens; sometimes they are divisive and inconclusive, but sometimes they are indeed constructive; they may begin with a consensus for action, and serve merely as strategy sessions for orchestrating actions, or they may begin with a cacophony of voices-and end the same way. For all its openness to the variety of forms arguments can take, the purposes they can serve, and the many possible outcomes that can result from them, in the end, I don't think the town-meeting metaphor serves very well. It will not challenge the argument-is-war metaphor, if only because town meetings do not occupy as prominent a place in our conceptual geography as war. War is, however, a dangerous metaphor, particularly when it has been allowed to form, to deform, argumentation in the classroom. Other metaphors are available, and still others that are even better are waiting to be created, but in the end I am skeptical that any single metaphor can fit all the shapes that arguments take or serve all the purposes that arguments serve. In that case, we do not really need to come up with a new metaphor to reflect and reform our practice; we need instead to traffic in as many metaphors as possible-including all those traffic metaphors!