

BEYOND THE SPECTACLE OF TERRORISM

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RETHINKING POLITICS IN THE SOCIETY OF THE IMAGE*

When our fears have all been serialized, our creativity censored, our ideas 'marketplaced,' our intelligence sloganized, our strength downsized, our privacy auctioned; when the theatricality, the entertainment value, the marketing of life is complete, we will find ourselves living not in a nation but in a consortium of industries, and wholly unintelligible to ourselves except for what we see as through a screen darkly.

Toni Morrison¹

AUDIO-VISUAL REPRESENTATIONS have transformed not only the landscape of cultural production and reception, but the very nature of politics itself, particularly the relationships among nationalism, spectacular violence, and a new global politics. Screen culture now dominates much of everyday life in developed countries as the "audio-visual mode has become our primary way of coming in contact with the world and at the same time being detached (safe) from it."² It is impossible to comprehend the political nature of the existing age without recognizing the centrality of the new visual media.³ Not only have these new mass and image-based media — camcorders, cellular camera-phones, satellite television, digital recorders, and the Internet, to name a few — enacted a structural transformation of everyday life by fusing sophisticated electronic technologies with a ubiquitous screen culture; they have revolutionized the relationship between the specificity of an event and its public display by making events accessible to a global audience. They have also ushered in a new regime of the spectacle in which screen culture,⁴ and visual politics create spectacular events just as much as they record them. But emerging alongside the "global repositioning of visual communication practices, utilities, and techniques" is a culture that circulates and intensifies "anthropologically threatening images"⁶ of violence, terror, and suffering. As acts of terrorism and the modalities of the spectacle converge, a new species of technological magic is produced in which shock becomes the structuring principle in creating certain conditions of reception for the images and

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discourses of terrorism and fear. What is especially disturbing about this “war of images” is that it is not only being shaped by a state-driven politics that reinforces the reckless polarities between terrorists and victims; it is also being utilized by diverse terrorist groups mired in the most narrow and life-threatening political and religious fundamentalisms. Understanding the emergence of the spectacle of terrorism is all the more significant since, as novelist and cultural critic Marina Warner puts it, “in the realm of culture, the character of our representations matter most urgently. ...The images we circulate have the power to lead events, not only [to] report them, [and] the new technical media have altered experience and become interwoven with consciousness itself.”⁷

The pedagogical force of culture is now writ large within circuits of global transmission that defy both the military power of the state while simultaneously reinforcing the state’s reliance on military power to respond to the external threat and to control its own citizens. In the United States, the war against terrorism, with its requisite pedagogy of fear dominating every conceivable media outlet, creates the conditions for transforming a weak American democracy into a dangerous authoritarian state.⁸ Or, when the spectacle of terrorism is used by governments as in President George W. Bush’s celebration of “shock and awe” as a form of spectacularized violence, it becomes the primary pedagogical tool to incorporate the populace into the racial fantasies of empire and the illusion of American triumphalism packaged as a victory of civilization over barbarism. Meanwhile, insurgents use digital video cameras to defy official power, recruit members to battle occupying forces, and to spread their doctrines of fear and religious orthodoxy. U.S. power responds with the increased use of military force abroad and images of fear and terror — as well as an expanding carceral apparatus — at home.⁹ The spectacle of terrorism not only confronts us with the reality of violence and the spread of authoritarianism as the emerging condition of contemporary politics; it also posits a notion of the social bereft of any democratic substance. As part of the war for and against terror, the importance of social life has emerged once again alongside the demand for security, but has been now largely defined, as Mary Kaldor insists, through a relationship between violence and politics in which “rather than politics being pursued through violent means, violence becomes politics. It is not conflict that leads to war but war itself that creates conflict.”¹⁰

Neither the concept of the spectacle nor the practice of terrorism itself is new, each offering a distinct and complex genealogy that has been engaged by a number of contemporary theorists. But the merging of the spectacle,

terrorism, war, and politics (beginning with the September 11th terrorist attacks on the World Trade Center in New York City) suggests something unique about the deadly power and battle of images in contemporary global culture. A cinematic politics of the visceral has replaced the more measured and thoughtful commentary on human suffering and alienation bequeathed by a post-World War II generation of intellectuals, artists, and others working in the public interest. Representations of fear, panic, vulnerability, and pain increasingly override narratives of social justice; pure entertainment, as a return to the hyper-real, enshrines audio-visual representations of the gruesome, opening up a new and “important chapter ... in the contemporary war of images.”¹¹ Death and suffering are now inscribed in the order of politics and the power of the image such that the alliance between terror and security in the contemporary era cannot be understood outside of how the spectacle shapes and legitimates social relations.

Violence, with its ever-present economy of organized fear, is no longer viewed or experienced merely as a side effect of war, greed, exclusion, and criminal behavior; it has become fundamental to a deliberate strategy of representation, marked by an excess of hyper-real visual displays of violence, in which the spectacle is central to a species of political rebirth that puts life back into a social order where only a vague and celluloid memory of consumption exists. As society is increasingly organized through a biopolitics that celebrates militaristic values and merges art and the aesthetic of military brutality: representations of violence, war, young warriors, and militaristic values not only become normalized throughout the entire social edifice, they also provide the most important foundation for addressing a revitalized sense of politics, agency, and struggle. Spectacular images of the “Shock and Awe” bombing of Baghdad by U.S. forces; the beheadings of hostages such as Nicholas Berg, Paul Johnson, Jr., and *Wall Street Journal* reporter, Daniel Pearl; the destruction of sixteenth-century mosques (in Banja Luka, Bosnia) or of Buddhist statues (in Bamiyan, Afghanistan)— all are intended to highlight and give legitimation to a reading of politics and agency in which more tactile categories such as fear, death, survival, life, and security replace the more abstract and modernist principles of truth, reason, and justice.¹² This is a politics in which violence becomes central to a war of images, and the spectacle becomes central to legitimating social relations in which the political and pedagogical are redefined in ways that undercut democratic freedom and practices. Mass and image-based media have become a new and powerful pedagogical force, reconfiguring the very nature of politics, cultural production, engagement, and resistance. Under such circumstances, it becomes all the more urgent for educators, artists,

and citizens to develop a new set of theoretical tools to comprehend how visual representations of shockingly horrific violence are shaping the very nature of politics at a time when global media are conscripted into the U.S. “war on terror.” What would it mean to understand, engage, and transform the spectacle of terrorism as part of a broader struggle over the culture of politics, new media technologies, and democracy itself?

In what follows, I want to argue that while the merging of terror, violence, and screen culture has a long history, a new type of spectacle — the spectacle of terrorism — has emerged in the post-9/11 world, inaugurated by the video images of the hijacked planes crashing into the World Trade Center. This event, I suggest, not only signals a structural transformation in the pedagogical power of the image but also constitutes a space for a new kind of cultural politics. I begin this discussion by examining the changing nature of the spectacle in contemporary society, analyzing the spectacle of fascism and the spectacle of consumerism as two different expressions of what I call the *terror of the spectacle*. I then attempt to address the emergence of the *spectacle of terrorism* through a consideration of the beheading videos that have been used by Iraqi insurgents in their attempts to resist Western occupation. I then argue that critical discourses of the spectacle¹³ need to be revised so as to provide the theoretical tools required to fully understand how the spectacle has changed as a pedagogical and political practice since the first video images of fiery plane crashes and collapsing towers inaugurated the war on terror. My argument also develops recent work on state and non-state violence, terrorism, and the state of exception in relation to the concept of the spectacle, arguing that the relation between terrorism and security cannot be fully understood without also considering the issue and importance of the new media and their productive moment as a form of cultural pedagogy and politics. I will conclude by exploring how the new fusion of media technology and politics might produce a new form of public pedagogy and a more critical conception of cultural politics.

BEYOND THE SPECTACLES OF FASCISM AND CONSUMERISM

The history of the spectacle is inextricably tied to the politics of illusion, seduction, pageantry, and exhibition. In the twentieth century, voyeurism and fantasy worked together through various representations and practices organized within diverse pedagogical sites to render subjects willing to surrender their potential as agents to the state and, more recently, the demands of the market. The main pedagogical functions of the spectacle

were to promote consent (though it also functioned coercively), integrate populations into dominant systems of power, heighten fear, and operate as a mode of social reproduction largely through the educational force of the broader culture. In addition to organizing cultural ideas, knowledge, images, and symbols, the spectacle also harnessed “the vast institutional and technical apparatuses” available to different social orders engaging in a cultural politics designed to “relegate subjects passive, and obscure the nature and effects of capitalism’s power and deprivations.”¹⁴ While the threat of state violence and terror has been present in most historical appearances of the spectacle, the degree to which such violence became visible or was actually employed depended on the state’s ability “to command obedience for the sake of peace, justice, prosperity, and reasonable expectations of security.”¹⁵ The spectacle is neither a universal nor a transcendental force haunting social relations. It emerges in different forms under distinct social formations, and signals in different ways how cultural politics works necessarily as a pedagogical force, formerly in the production of subjects willing to serve the political and economic power represented by the spectacle and increasingly in the production of political and economic power willing to serve the spectacle itself, bypassing even the minimalist democratic gesture of gaining consent from the subjects whose interests are supposed to be served by state power.

Before briefly analyzing two modern social formations — fascism and neoliberalism — and the ideologies that characterize the nature of the spectacles that govern them, I want to define in general terms the distinction between what I call the terror of the spectacle and the spectacle of the terror. The *terror of the spectacle* refers to older notions of the spectacle that are often associated with both fascist culture and late capitalism’s culture of commodification. Fascism and consumer capitalism share some very general features of the terror of the spectacle. These include the use of the spectacle “to build consensus by invoking collective rituals that attempt to mobilize affective structures of identification,”¹⁶ demanding a certain mode of attentiveness or gaze elicited through phantasmagoric practices (including various rites of passage, parades, pageantry, advertisements, and media presentations), and offering the populace a sense of unity that serves to integrate them into state power.¹⁷ One consequence of these features is that civic life is debased through the use of public spectacles in which visual symbols and visual culture work to aestheticize politics through affective appeals to the monumental, commercial, and heroic, denigrating rational debate, dialogue, and language in general. The political registers and ideological coordinates of the terror of the spectacle are often written on the

large screens and surfaces of the cultural landscape, as in the pageantry of the Nazi rallies, the visual spectacle of consumer culture, and the simulacra of the age of neoliberal glitz and celebrity culture. The terror of the spectacle is also evident in the visual character of the postcards and rituals that mediated the lynching of African-Americans at a time when racist symbolism defined and legitimated barbaric social relations as part of the discourse of law and order. Thus, the terror of the spectacle appeals to a sense of unity, whether racial, nationalistic, or market-based, and, in doing so, downplays matters of politics and power while pointing to a utopian future as a basis for unity and consent. Politics and power are not eliminated; they are simply hidden within broader appeals to solidarity. In short, the terror of the spectacle does not require a politics in which terror is central to its very definition of sovereignty, and the various antidemocratic relations being legitimated do not necessarily involve a form of politics and technological mediation in which the primacy of the visual demands the heightened spectacularity of war.

In contrast, the spectacle of terrorism as an expression of state and corporate power aims at creating a new notion of the subject forged in social relations largely constructed around fear and terror, legitimating a notion of sovereignty that “resides, to a large degree, in the power and the capacity to dictate” who is safe and who is not, who is worthy of citizenship and who is a threat, who can occupy the space of safety and who cannot, and ultimately “who may live and who must die.”¹⁸ Equally important, the spectacle of terrorism is not simply a new expression of state and corporate power; it is increasingly in open revolt against state and corporate power and posits a form of address that is both explicitly political and expressed primarily as “the right to kill,” the right to embrace lawlessness as the defining space of the political, and the right to exercise “power outside of the law.”¹⁹ The spectacle of terrorism conjures up its meaning largely through the power of images that grate against humane sensibilities. Rather than indulging a process of depoliticization by turning consuming into the only responsibility of citizenship, the spectacle of terrorism politicizes through a theatrics of fear and shock. Moreover, the spectacle of terrorism is not simply about the “thrill of the illusion”; it is primarily about “the image added with the thrill of the real.”²⁰ That is, under the auspices of the spectacle of terrorism, the small-screen culture of the television, camcorder, and computer asserts its power mainly through a massive return to “the real” in which hyper-violence attempts to construct a subject and a public in a state of permanent fear; as well as a world that is turned upside down, bereft of its traditional modernist, market-based coordinates.²¹ The spectacle of

terrorism undercuts the primacy of consumerism,²² challenges state power, and uses the image to construct a new type of politics organized around the modalities of death, hysteria, panic, and violence. But it does more; mediated through the new image-based technologies, the spectacle of terrorism emerges as a central force in shaping antidemocratic social relations forged in a culture of fear and death and also in legitimating the very connection between terrorism and security.²³

The terror of the spectacle and the spectacle of terrorism are neither completely divorced from each other nor suggestive of a complete historical break in that they overlap and coexist. Elements of the terror of the spectacle, such as the representational politics of consumerism are alive and well, and both regimes share a number of traits, including the ability to mobilize “people’s feelings primarily to neutralize their critical senses, massaging minds and emotions so that the individual succumbs to the charisma of vitalistic power.”²⁴ In addition, both regimes accentuate performative practices designed to foster unity in the interest of solidifying authoritarian ideologies, values, and identities.

One significant example of new technology being put to political use in order to produce the terror of the spectacle emerged in the 1930s with the spectacle of fascism. The fascist spectacle was embodied in the theater of gigantism with its precisely scripted pageantry around “the massing of groups of people”;²⁵ endless representations glorifying war, physical perfection, and virility posing as enlightened experiences; monumental rallies accentuating obedience to the heroic leader; art glorifying racial purity and uniformed white men; and mythological representations of ultranationalism. Allen Feldman captures this phenomenon in his analysis of the fascist political rally and the aestheticization of modern violence. He writes:

The Fascist political rally was a theatre that incorporated the individual spectator into a virtualized corporate body of sovereignty. The construction of this virtual mass subject aligned political attention and a politics of suggestion with mass consumption aesthetics. This was mechanical reproduction in the service of a mythographic spectacle, in which violence was sold as a political commodity, as a binding media of crowd formation, and, through the cinematics of the mass rally, made palatable as a mechanized and routine efficacy.²⁶

Wedded to a culture of spectacularized symbols, fascist imagery both masculinized the public sphere and infused it with a militaristic spirit “derived principally from the exultation of war as a space in which men can know

themselves better and love one another legitimately in the absence of the feminine."²⁷ Transforming politics into aesthetics, the fascist spectacle energetically sought to destroy democratic notions of legality, morality, values, and justice. As both a political act and an instrument of power, the fascist spectacle turned individual and social experience into a projection of state power; in doing so, it destroyed any vestige of democratic solidarity, replacing it with a sutured community "that privileged cultic forms over ethical norms"²⁸ and favored authoritarian power over critical reflection and autonomous agency. Combining premodern sentiments with modern machines, the fascist spectacle stylized political action through a "seductive organization of public signs, meanings, and iconographies."²⁹ Merging the cult of violence with the technology of the broadcast media, fascist aesthetics and the political culture it produced were organized through a larger-than-life scale of illusion and transparency that was "possible only in the age of film, the gramophone and the loudspeaker."³⁰ Violence in the fascist spectacle was a unifying force for a "pure politics" that glorified the image of a belligerent ultranationalism and the state as a vitalistic military power, with its promise of triumphalism and empire. In addition, such violence was reproduced in the fascist adulation of the strong over the weak, evident not only in a commitment to racist ideology obsessed with purity, but also in the militarization of public space, the celebration of "the armed and militarized political subject,"³¹ and the mindless exaltation of sacrifice for the fatherland. As Paul Gilroy rightly argues, visual technologies in the service of the fascist spectacle both devalued speech as a medium of communication, and allowed the public to move beyond the reflexive world of print culture to the culture of the screen in which the "national collective could discover and take pleasure in itself and its common subordination to an all-powerful leadership."³²

After World War II, the spectacle was reformed in the crucible of consumer society, as the most central values of consumer ideology combined with new media technology to produce new modes of communication and mass consumption that were constitutive of everyday life. State violence now made its mark not only through the prisons, courts, police surveillance, and other criminalizing forces; but also through forms of symbolic violence mediated by a regime of consumer-based images, and staged events that narrowed individual and social agency to the dictates of the marketplace, reducing the capacity for human aspirations and desire to the needs embodied in the appearance of the commodity. Guy Debord's pioneering work in *The Society of the Spectacle*³³ provides a number of important theoretical insights for critically understanding the transformation of the spectacle

under late capitalism. Although the spectacle is commonly viewed as mere entertainment, disconnected from power and politics, Debord insisted that “[t]he spectacle is the self-portrait of power in the age of power’s totalitarian rule over the conditions of existence.”³⁴ The spectacle that emerged under late capitalism represented a new form of state control that was quite different from, even as it bore the political trace of, the fascist spectacle. Debord believed that the spectacle represented a “new stage in the accumulation of capital [in which] more and more facets of human activity and elements of everyday life were being brought under the control of the market.”³⁵

Rejecting conventional Marxist notions of economic determinism, Debord followed the theoretical lead of Antonio Gramsci, the Frankfurt School, and other neo-Marxist theorists who argued that domination was secured increasingly through “a social relationship between people that is mediated by images,”³⁶ and that capitalism had successfully employed an image industry to transform commodities into appearances and history into staged events. The image had replaced the commodity as the basic unit of capitalism; rather than arguing that commodities remained the *sine qua non* of domination, he insisted, as Eugene L. Arva points out, that in the current era, “the system of mediation by representation (the world of the spectacle, if you wish) has come to bear more relevance than commodities themselves.”³⁷ In such circumstances, the society governed by the spectacle “proclaims the predominance of appearances and asserts that all human life, which is to say all social life, is mere appearance.”³⁸ In Debord’s theory, the media had become the quintessential space of late capitalism, and consumerism was their legitimating ideology. Or, to cite Debord’s famous quip, “the spectacle is capital accumulated to the point where it becomes image.”³⁹

What is so crucial about Debord’s theory is that it connects the state’s investment in social reproduction not only to the exploitation of labor but to the manipulation of “the field of images — the alternative world conjured up by the new battery of ‘perpetual emotion machines’ of which TV was the dim pioneer and which now beckons the citizen every waking minute.”⁴⁰ Not only was the world of images a structural necessity for capitalism; it also affirmed the primacy of the pedagogical as a crucial element of the political, and made possible “the submission of more and more facets of human sociability — areas of everyday life, forms of recreation, patterns of speech, idioms of local solidarity ... to the deadly solicitation (the lifeless bright sameness) of the market.”⁴¹

According to Debord, “any critique capable of apprehending the spectacle’s essential character must expose it as a visible negation of life and as a negation of life that has *invented a visual form for itself*.”⁴² The consumer society *qua* society of the spectacle induced conformity, depoliticization, and passivity by relentlessly attempting to hijack any viable notion of critical engagement and resistance through reconstituting the educational force of the culture in the interests of late capitalism. *The Society of the Spectacle* stands as “a warning against the paralysis of the senses, the lethargy of the mind, and the political inertia with which a primarily visually determined, visually accessible, and most visually livable reality threatens” any viable notion of the autonomous subject.⁴³ Debord thus furthered our understanding that domination had to be analyzed as part of a politics of consent in which all aspects of social life were increasingly being shaped by the communication technologies under the control of corporate capital. Yet, he rejected the dystopian notion of the totally administered society and consistently argued for developing forms of resistance that took seriously the conditions that connected individual and social agency to elements of critique and social transformation.

Debord’s notion of the spectacle made a significant contribution in mapping a new form of control associated with the accumulation of capital. The colonization of everyday life by the spectacle became operational through a merger of state and corporate power that had a mutual interest both in controlling the images through which society represented itself, and in producing a subject consistent with the needs of consumerism, the desires embodied by the commodity, and the values of the marketplace. In a globalizing post-9/11 world, the conditions that produced both fascist spectacles and the spectacles of consumer society have once again mutated beyond the grasp of an analysis based upon modernist assumptions of time and space being homogeneous and fixed. As Lutz Koepnick points out, we now live in a “post-Fordist culture ... characterized by hybrid multimedia aggregates and diversified strategies of consumption.”⁴⁴ A number of theorists have attempted both to build upon the work of Debord and to render a more complex theoretical understanding of how the spectacle itself has changed, particularly in light of the emergence of new mass and image-based media technologies, the global advance of religious fundamentalisms, and the tragic events of September 11, 2001.⁴⁵ Not only has the old model of a monolithic system of media control and cultural reproduction been undermined by contemporary media and technologies, such as the Internet, computers, digital cameras, and VCRs, but entirely new configurations of communication relations have emerged in which control over the produc-

tion, dissemination, and consumption of information has become more decentered and the global flows of images less manageable by corporations and governments.⁴⁶ At the same time, new media, with their diverse technological image-making landscape, have produced a new type of consumer who is more technologically savvy and who uses such media in more complex ways. As Stanley Aronowitz points out, "The excluded can use image-making as a weapon for laying hold and grasping cultural apparatuses. ... [P]lacing old forms in new frameworks changes their significance."⁴⁷ In the age of cultural technologies, such as Tivo digital video recording, the Apple iPod, the Blackberry wireless handheld, the camcorder, and the camera-phone, the relationships among time, space, and place have been both stretched and compressed. Speed refigures our ability to access information, appropriate images from around the globe, and communicate with people on the other side of the planet. Mark Poster suggests that as communication technologies bypass the first media era in which "a small number of producers" controlling "film, radio, and television sent information to a larger number of consumers, an entirely new configuration of communication relations has emerged."⁴⁸ Just as new cultural technologies make possible highly individualized forms of symbolic appropriation, the undiversified masses have given way to a diverse globalized public far removed from the homogeneous community of viewers and producers that was allegedly characteristic of the older broadcasting age of media. Radically new modes of communication and resistance based upon the new media are on full display in the global justice movements, in the emergence of bloggers holding corporate and government powers more accountable, and in the new kinds of cultural and political struggles waged by the Zapatistas, the Seattle protesters, and various new social movements held together through the informational networks provided by the Internet and the Web.⁴⁹ Of course, I am not suggesting that new media and technological developments have ushered in structural changes amounting to a democratization of the media. Arguments suggesting that media technologies such as the Internet constitute a new democratic public sphere are vastly premature; yet, the new electronic media have not entirely faulted on their potential for both multiplying sites of cultural production and offering "resources for challenging the state's coordination of mass culture."⁵⁰ Consequently, any analysis of public issues must take into account the effects, speed, rhythms of information and communication, real-time images, differential modes of control, and unprecedented power increasingly deployed by the new media. Debord could not have imagined either how the second media revolution would play out, with its multiple producers, distributors, and consumers; or how a post-9/11 war on terrorism would shift, especially in the United

States, from an emphasis on consumerism to an equally absorbing obsession with war and its politically regressive corollaries of fear, anxiety, and insecurity.⁵¹

The economic, political, and social safeguards of modernity, however restricted, along with traditional spatial and temporal coordinates of experience, have been blown apart in the “second media age” as the spectacularization of fear and the increasing militarization of everyday life have become the principal cultural experiences shaping identities, values, and social relations.⁵² Giorgio Agamben asserts that under the spectacle of terrorism, security not only dominates state activity but also creates the potential for a new kind of authoritarianism:

In the course of a gradual neutralization of politics and the progressive surrender of traditional tasks of the state, security becomes the basic principle of state activity. What used to be one among several definitive measures of public administration until the first half of the twentieth century now becomes the sole criterion of political legitimation. The thought of security bears within it an essential risk. A state which has security as its sole task and source of legitimacy is a fragile organism; it can always be provoked by terrorism to become itself terroristic.⁵³

The mythic threat of terrorism and violent crime provides the state with the legitimating power to increase its security and militaristic directions. At the same time, the contemporary state also reproduces its authoritarian tendencies through social policies characterized by “monetary and fiscal conditions for the internal, but spurious expansion of (fictitious) capital, among whose elements is a reverse redistributive program [and] a vastly expanded regime of coercion, that is, the growth of the police powers of government at home and abroad directed against the insurgencies that object to the growing phenomenon of an authoritarian form of democracy.”⁵⁴ A “state of emergency”⁵⁵ exercised under the banner of the “war on terrorism,” the primacy of neoliberal market values at all costs, and the legitimating principle of “permanent war” has trumped not only an atrophied democratic polis but also its nemesis: the spectacle of consumerism. The consolidation of increasingly authoritarian state power in public life supersedes even the glitz of the suburban shopping mall — now reconceived as a tantalizing target for terrorist activity. Enabled by the old and new media, a new kind of postmodern fear now haunts the United States in the contemporary era — a fear that is inextricably tied to the spectacle of terrorism and the move toward a state of emergency.

VISUAL MEDIA AND THE SPECTACLE OF TERRORISM

[A] generalized, illogical, and often unspecified sense of panic is facilitated in this postmodern environment where all scenarios can and often are played out. This generalized panic is no longer akin to the centralized fear which emanates from the power of the sovereign in the modern era. Rather, it is an evanescent sentiment that anything can happen anywhere to anybody at anytime. This postmodern fear is not capable of yielding logical, reasonable outcomes. All it does instead is accelerate the spiralling vortex of media-produced information. All it does is give way to emergencies (which will only last until the next panic is unleashed). This panic, I believe, is the paroxysmic achievement of media power.

—Francois Debrix⁵⁶

Since September 11, 2001, a different type of spectacle has emerged in which fear and terror have become its most salient organizing principles, and politics reveals itself through the raw display of power and brutal violence. The distinctive mark of the gruesome and horrible attacks on the Twin Towers and the Pentagon is that they were designed to be visible, designed to be spectacular. They not only bear an eerie similarity to violence-saturated Hollywood disaster films but are similarly suited to — intended for — endless instant replay on the nightly news, bringing an end to democratic freedoms with democracy's blessings. The attacks were clearly predicated on the assumption that “a picture is worth a thousand words — that a picture in the present condition of politics is itself, if sufficiently well-executed, a specific and effective piece of statecraft.”⁵⁷ In retrospect, the events of 9/11 not only redefined the relationship between the power of the media and the politics of the social imaginary; they also ushered in a new kind of politics, one tied to a new notion of the spectacle that no longer works principally in the service of state domination. I want to suggest that this emerging spectacle of terrorism is quite different from the fascist spectacles and the spectacle of consumerism that operated as a different force of control and unification at the cost of genuine political participation. Not only is the state an object rather than the subject of terrorist spectacles; the origins of such attacks are also bereft of state organization and legitimation. I am not suggesting that the state does not engage in terrorist acts mediated through the aesthetic of violence. Actually, this has become commonplace in recent times. What I am arguing is that the “definition of politics as the warlike relation par excellence”⁵⁸ is no longer exercised merely by the state but also through relations forged outside of its control, and that in the present historical moment, the vulnerability of state sovereignty and the

possibility of stateless sovereignty have, in part, enabled the ascendancy of fundamentalist religious authority throughout the globe.

Before I elaborate on the distinctive characteristics of the spectacle of terrorism and its implications for connecting critical pedagogy and cultural politics, I want to first highlight the changing nature of the spectacle in contemporary society by looking at examples of images being mobilized within the aesthetic of mass-mediated violence that complicate previous theories of the spectacle. Unlike Guy Debord's society of the spectacle, which justifies capitalism by elevating consumption to an aesthetic ur-experience, the spectacle of terrorism affirms politics (of war, life, sacrifice, and death) over the pleasurable aesthetics of commodification, through an appeal to the real over the simulacrum. Further, it capitalizes on a notion of subjectivity and identity that is troubled in a world where meaning appears to have collapsed, building social consensus around fear rather than consumption, and substituting a compassion for the other with a fear for oneself. The spectacle of terrorism has colonized the gaze and imagination of millions of people, especially as it emerges in a flood of images that bypass traditional sites of power such as dominant television networks and newspapers outlets. Counteracting a media saturated with images of American violence against Muslims, the insurgent-produced videos and images provide a means of response and a measure of revenge in the Arab world.

Removed from any conventional modes of representation, the spectacle of terror trades on our inability to "look away from representations of diseased or damaged bodies, from excremental objects, from the staged decompositions of life that have become central to contemporary aesthetic practice — we are, in a sense, staring into the dimension of 'bare life' that uncannily persists in its exclusion from any normativity, from any form of life."⁵⁹ And it is precisely this affective structure of identification, with a viscerally moving presence of elemental fear, suffering, abjection, degradation, and death, that ties us to a retrograde notion of the social that is organized around a culture of shared fears rather than shared responsibilities. Such staring, however, may ultimately be part of what sustains our affective bond to the existing state of authoritarian social relations. The spectacle of terrorism cannot be thought of or grasped without a recognition of the growing public fascination with and proliferation of a series of globally distributed images that include footage of the two hijacked planes crashing into the World Trade Center in Manhattan, the pornographic representations of abuse and torture at Abu Ghraib prison, the brutal execution of Nicholas Berg, the beheading of *Wall Street Journal* reporter Daniel Pearl by al-Qaeda terrorists,

the endless images shown on Fox News celebrating U.S. military operations in Iraq, and the Osama bin Laden propaganda videos.

Digital video cameras, fax machines, and photographs are now also employed as part of the spectacle of terrorism, increasingly used by marginalized groups and insurgents to fight a new kind of war against state power with its arsenal of conventional bombs, helicopters, tanks, guns, and soldiers. Video technology in particular has become a primary tool used by terrorists to distribute images, including speeches by terrorist leaders, gruesome beheadings, jihadist hip-hop music videos, and suicide bombers using cell phones to document their own deaths. The Internet, too, has become a powerful tool for airing streaming videos and images that bear witness to the victims of state terrorism, as in the images of Muslims being abused or killed by American and British soldiers, the photos of the torture of detainees at Abu Ghraib prison, or the pictures of Israeli soldiers abusing Palestinians. While previous conceptions of the spectacle were almost entirely linked to entertainment, pageantry, parades, broadcast media, and various visual strategies used by dominant powers to garner consent from the populace, the new spectacle of terrorism complicates the relationship between audio-visual culture and politics, with no guarantees that the new technologies cannot be redeployed against state power itself. This is evident not only in the infamous example of the Rodney King video, in which a digital camcorder recorded an insidious act of police brutality and was used eventually to convict the police officers involved in the crime, but also more recently when a gruesome video was made public showing Serbian soldiers killing Bosnian Muslims in the town of Srebrenica. This video provided the Serbian public, only half of whom believed the massacre of eight thousand Muslims at Srebrenica actually took place, with graphic and direct evidence of the crimes committed by a Serbian unit known as the Scorpions, which was “under the command of the Serbian interior ministry.”⁶⁰ Once the television broadcast of the video was widely viewed, Serbian President Boris Tadic issued a public assurance that the perpetrators of the crime would be punished. In such cases, the impact of the spectacle resulting from acts of *state terrorism* forced issues of accountability and responsibility to the fore; a traumatized segment of the citizenry achieved justice. But how does one account for the lure of videos by *non-state terrorists*?

Gary Bunt uses the term “Cyber Jihad” to describe how adept the Iraqi insurgents have become at both manipulating the Internet and getting their messages out to domestic and international audiences.⁶¹ The terrorist videos — which are sold on the street, distributed to television networks, and post-

ed on the Internet — address a range of audiences and cover a diverse number of activities, including statements recorded by suicide bombers, tributes to deceased fighters, and documentary images of insurgents engaged in military operations such as shooting mortars or launching land-to-air missiles. The most popular videos, the ones that have had the greatest effect on target audiences, are the gruesome beheading and execution videos.⁶² Here, hostages are generally seen blindfolded and kneeling on the ground, surrounded by Islamic militants who sometimes precede the execution with political statements or demands read in Arabic. The hostages are usually forced to identify themselves and sometimes prodded to plead pitifully for their lives before the camera. The beheadings are remarkably grisly, often carried out with long, serrated knives. Recent videos exhibit as many as ten executions at a time.

I have argued that the new regime of the spectacle is distinct from that of consumer society; yet, it is ironic that the spectacle of terrorism appears perfectly matched for the U.S. media constantly in search of higher ratings. And while established TV networks will not air the actual beheadings, they provide enormous coverage of hostage-takings and kidnappings by terrorists groups. As Ibrahim al-Marashi points out, the “videos of kidnapped hostages have proved successful in forcing world leaders to withdraw troops from Iraq, preventing international firms from participating in reconstruction efforts, and instigating rallies against the occupation of Iraq in the hostages’ countries. Therefore, however repugnant is the footage, it constitutes a success for the insurgents in attracting world attention to their cause.”⁶⁴ One measure of the success that the spectacle of terrorism provides for oppositional groups can be seen in the popularity of their videos. For instance, Hamza Hendawi reports that, in Baghdad, “real-life horror has become the view fare of choice, supplanting the explosion of pornography that filled the post-Saddam Hussein vacuum.”⁶⁵ In outdoor food markets in Baghdad, crowds gather to watch “video footage of a truck bomber seated behind the steering wheel smiling and murmuring his last words before crashing into U.S. military vehicles on an overpass.”⁶⁶ As the public executions, assassinations, and bombings continue in Iraq, they are followed by an endless stream of videos that can be purchased as DVDs in local markets, some for as little as thirty cents a piece. Ibrahim al-Marashi reports that the “sale of video discs featuring hostages being executed by Islamic militants was banned by the Iraqi police, yet still make up 75 percent of the domestic movie vendors’ sales, indicating that Iraqis are aware of the insurgents’ capabilities for sowing fear in Iraq, if not approving the insurgents’ actions.”⁶⁷ In fact, images of death and torture are not only sold in Baghdad

and other parts of the Arab world, they are also viewed online across the globe and have been sold in the United States. According to one report, a convenience store in Tampa, Florida, stocked its shelves with a DVD titled *Buried in the Sand*, which shows some of the gruesome torture Saddam Hussein handed out to his enemies and also “prominently features the end of Nicholas Berg’s life — in all, a series of brutally graphic, violent images culminating with the beheading.”⁶⁸ As Matthew Mcallester points out, “it is not just Iraqis who are keen to see the films; Internet users all over the world appear to be satisfying their curiosity online by watching the same videos, which often are released by the kidnappers after they have killed their hostages.”⁶⁹ Images of fear, shock, and hate are now global, posted on Internet sites, recorded on DVDs, captured on videos and sold to the general public, appearing in a multitude of public spaces, including Internet cafes. Dan Klinker, a Dutchman who runs a website that displays this kind of footage, claims that “[d]uring tragic events like beheadings, the amount of visitors can rise up to 750,000 a day.”⁷⁰

The implications of the political and market success of the videos cannot be overstated. While dominant groups have a long history of merging politics and aesthetics to impose state power, the media and technologies of the current era enable new forms of resistance in that the war of images is neither exclusively controlled by a dominant Western power nor used entirely by the state against its declared enemies. Sinan Salaheddin is right to insist that “behind the mix of brutality, adeptly produced video and a free global distribution system, the militants are tapping into a network of fears many centuries old — and blending the ancient with the modern to create a freshly powerful method of communication.”⁷¹ Upping the terror quotient, the insurgents use the media to instil fear in the West by graphically portraying a mutilating brutality and, at the same time, to make a claim, however false and preposterous, for a “traditional” Islam authenticated by a mode of execution with the sword. In combining a premodern form of punishment with the commandeering of a modern medium, the decapitation videos have enabled insurgents in Iraq not only to create a strategy for tapping into a powerful source of collective fear, but also to use the new electronic technologies to recruit young Muslims to join the Iraqi insurrection in the name of an authentic and original Islam.

American news outlets have responded by focusing on the sheer brutality of the execution videos and condemning the primitiveness of the insurgents. For instance, Paul Marshall, writing for the *Weekly Standard*, saw in the beheadings Muslim fanatics waging an “apocalyptic war [in order] to purge

the world of all but their version of Islam."⁷² On one hand, mainstream media commentary expressed incessant outrage against the beheadings, but offered little, if any, analysis of either the conditions that produced the videos and their rampant popularity or what they suggest about how the nature of the political is being refigured within the new media and the realm of the virtual.⁷³ For example, Ted Koppel, on the television program *Nightline*, expressed moral outrage over people who downloaded the beheading videos from the Internet, suggesting that, when viewed, such images coarsen our moral senses toward violence.⁷⁴ On the other hand, many commentators omitted moral outrage as a factor of serious analysis. Cultural critic Neal Gabler argued that images of beheadings are popular because they can be integrated into the new information economy, thereby playing "to an emerging sensibility that regards finding and then watching these images not as horrors to be shunned or terrible realities to be viewed but as pieces of information one must see because not to see them is to be left out. ... It is less voyeurism than a kind of validation. ... Not to know is to be condemned to eternal geekdom."⁷⁵ Michael Ignatieff, a defender of U.S. policies in Iraq, came closer to offering a balanced perspective on the videos, arguing that the war of images waged by Iraqi insurgents constituted a different kind of politics in which the camera had become "a vital new weapon;"⁷⁶ and narratives of mortification at the hands of the occupying powers fuelled a new sense of entitlement among radical Muslims, who could rationalize that "in an occupied country there are no innocent foreigners."⁷⁷ But Ignatieff's support for U.S. interests means that his analysis ultimately fails to understand the larger political implications of the war of images, condemning the videos as simply a form of evil, in an effort to strengthen the "moral" fortitude needed to continue a U.S. occupation that has resulted in the violent deaths of over 600,000 Iraqi civilians and the wounding of thousands more.⁷⁹

There is little awareness, in commentaries such as Ignatieff's, that the emotional intensity of images of horror and torture becomes more meaningful when such images articulate with particular kinds of memories of different groups that give them a resonance; suggesting that the specific kinds of vulnerability and fear they are mobilizing cannot simply be defined by some kind of generalization, such as a morbid Eastern fascination with violence. For many people, these images produce powerful associations with memories drawn from Muslim resistance in the face of Soviet oppression in Afghanistan, the struggle of the Palestinians against Israeli state terrorism, and various opposition movements against the presence of the United States in the Middle East under both Bush regimes. As another

specific example, the Pearl video must be seen as a part of duelling memories and discourses of appropriation. It has been used by Islamic fundamentalists as testimony to the power of their movement and “the Pearl body as a rhetorical condensation of America, of Jewishness, of Zionism; the Pearl body is, metaphorically speaking, America.”⁸⁰ Yet the Pearl video is also part of an expanding discussion in Jewish circles about the escalation of violence and new forms of anti-Semitism that are emerging around the world.

Despite the general lack of critical and sustained attempts to understand the spectacle of terrorism within the changing conditions of the new information age⁸¹ — with its integration of electronic, satellite, and digital technologies and its enormous power to influence multiple producers and consumers — the significance of these new conditions is not lost on the Iraqi government, which has attempted to counter the popularity of the insurgents’ war of images by producing their own reality-based television show called *Terrorism in the Grip of Justice*.⁸² The show, which is aired twice a day, features an ongoing series of confessions by captured insurgents. The government appropriates the spectacle of terrorism in order to “win the hearts and minds of the Iraqi people”⁸³ through a war of images, peddling fear as part of the larger discourse of security and government control.

Central to a post-9/11 politics are the elements of a growing authoritarianism, in which religious and political orthodoxies have come together in different ways to undermine any vestige of democracy as a force for global change. In the era of the spectacle of terrorism, violence as theater emerges as part of a regime of representation used by the state in order to legitimize its increasingly bold display of force, and the militarization of everyday life as its primary function. At the same time, crime and terror merge, as violence becomes the only viable mediator of politics, the only form of agency available in a global world where the spaces of lawlessness grow exponentially.⁸⁴

The demon of economic uncertainty now combines with the demon of spectacularized violence to make generalized fear a paralyzing condition, rather than an aberration, of everyday life. The loss of privilege, status, and jobs, and the deep-seated sense of uncertainty that shape neoliberal capitalism are now conjoined and amplified by gathering anxiety, a sense of helplessness, and the dread of random violence. As larger segments of the working and middle classes become utterly disposable, the spectacle of terrorism takes hold within the context of an emergent carceral state, one based on fear and promoted through the spectacle of inequality and terrorism.⁸⁵ Cities degenerate into besieged fortresses; people of color live with

the ongoing fear of incarceration; public schools are transformed into laboratories for police surveillance modeled after prisons; and the general public's understandable desire for security, fanned by an endless array of media-induced panics over the phantom threat of terrorism, becomes fodder for reactionary policies and violent acts by both state and non-state terrorists alike, all aimed at drawing limits on or rolling back hard-won democratic freedoms.

Any critical attempt to engage the spectacle of terrorism must take place within a broader understanding of how the new media and electronic technologies have merged with the war on terror in both its state-sanctioned form and as a tool of insurgency and opposition to state power, particularly the power of the United States and its allies. The new media technologies coupled with the logic of permanent war have helped to redefine the very conditions that make politics possible. The alienation felt by many people in an utterly privatized and individualized market society is exacerbated within a government and media-produced culture of fear, suggesting that the terror we face at home and abroad cannot be fought without surrendering one's sense of agency and social justice to a militarized state.⁸⁶ Meanwhile, the dominant media monopolize the symbolic field in ways typically compatible with state interests; they promote a certain version of endemic danger and insecurity and consistently mobilize the deepest impulses of people's vulnerability, which in turn reinforces the military, security, and surveillance functions of the state. Politics in Iraq and Israel, for instance, are increasingly linked to the representations and ideology of violence, revenge, occupation, and exclusion. In the United States, the weak notion of citizenship demanded by a market-based, commodity-driven society has given way to a version of the overzealous citizen-soldier obsessed with "American military power as the truest measure of national greatness"⁸⁷ and enthralled with military action as a central feature of patriotism. As Agamben argues, "In the end, security and terrorism may form a single deadly system, in which they justify and legitimate each other's actions."⁸⁸

Increasingly located within the "ghost sociability" of the West, in which most people do not have to leave home in order to participate in society's rituals and civic culture, the spectacle of terrorism and its hyperaccelerated media technologies now connect people to global society while reinforcing the empty space at the heart of the neoliberal social order.⁸⁹ The spectacle of terrorism confronts the subject not with the obligations of consumption but with a fear about her own freedom, a freedom that is now a permanent task rather than a right. My point here is that state authoritarianism and

neoliberal expansion give people very real cause to be afraid — for society as a whole, not just for their own personal safety. The past conditions of relative security and affluence that enabled the spectacle of consumerism to monopolize public consciousness no longer exist; that is, people can no longer afford to buy into its fantasy-driven logic. By contrast, the increasing power of the spectacle of terrorism as a mediator of the realities of death, violence, and human suffering can, in part, be accounted for in the way in which it offers up images that resonate with cultural memories and forms of experience that are tied to specific, rather than general, sensibilities and lived events. In this instance, the goal of making the political more pedagogical means taking seriously the value of connecting these horrific images and accounts of human degradation — even productions by those deemed terrorists — to the lived experiences of all members of the global public, who share a similar fate of being increasingly terrorized by the expansion of authoritarian values and practices. The images of terror resonate powerfully with a range of ideologies, issues, and cultural memories that mark contemporary life in the neoliberal landscape, making visible those struggles, for instance, that U.S. and Iraqi citizens have in common. Hence, the spectacular attacks of September 11th on the major symbol of capitalism (the World Trade Center) and the center of militarism (the Pentagon) can, in part, be understood as reinforcing a general sense of fear and insecurity brought on by market volatility and the frenzy of downsizing; but more specifically, they resonate with a set of historical conditions in which a new global vulnerability has emerged regarding the inability of the state to protect its citizens from both terrorists and larger economic and natural disasters.

RESISTING THE SPECTACLE OF TERRORISM

[W]e cannot have a properly political relation to invasions and war crimes, military operations and paramilitary atrocities ... in the present and future if we do not attend to the centrality of image product and management in them. We will be at an even greater loss if we do not admit that the high-speed electronic media have created new opportunities not just for activism and awareness, but also for performance, presentation, advertising, propaganda, and for political work of all kinds.

—Thomas Keenan⁹⁰

As the link between the media and power becomes more integrated, the visual theater of terrorism mimics the politics of the “official” war on terrorism. Echoing the discourse of the “official” war on terrorism, the violence of extremist groups as well as state-sanctioned and corporate

violence are understood almost exclusively within the discourse of moral absolutes pitting good against evil. Whether it is President George W. Bush's claim that "You are either with us or against us"⁹¹ or Osama bin Laden's injunction that "You are either a believer or an infidel,"⁹² this is a repressive binary logic that represents a public pedagogy that devalues democratic, reasoned debate in favor of feeding an apocalyptic desire for destruction and death. Just as the necessity of fighting terror has become the central rationale for war by the Bush administration and other governments, a visual culture of shock and awe has emerged; made ubiquitous by the Internet and 24-hour cable news shows devoted to representations of the horrific violence associated with terrorism, ranging from images of night-time bombing raids on Iraqi cities to the countervailing imagery of grotesque killings of hostages by Iraqi fundamentalists. The visual theater of terrorism aestheticizes politics, celebrates a sacralization of politics as war, while raw violence becomes stylized as it is integrated into audio-visual spectacles that shock and massage the mind and emotions with a theatricality of power and a steady regimen of fear, violence, and vengeance. If the media are to be believed, every aspect of life, as Brian Massumi has argued, increasingly appears as "a workstation in the mass production line of fear."⁹³

The spectacle of terrorism not only requires a new conception of politics, pedagogy, and society; it also raises significant questions about the new media and its centrality to democracy. Image-based technologies have redefined the relationship between the ethical, political, and aesthetic. While "the proximity is perhaps discomfoting to some, ... it is also the condition of any serious intervention"⁹⁴ into what it means to connect cultural politics to matters of political and social responsibility. The spectacle of terrorism and the conditions that have produced it do not sound the death knell of democracy, but demand that we "begin to rethink democracy from within these conditions."⁹⁵ How might we construct a cultural politics based on social relations that enable individuals and social groups to rethink the crucial nature of pedagogy, agency, and social responsibility in a media-saturated global sphere? How can we begin to address these new technologies within a democratic cultural politics that challenges religious fundamentalism, neoliberal ideology, militarism, and the cult of entertainment? Such a collective project requires a politics that is in the process of being invented, one that has to be attentive to the new realities of power, global social movements, and the promise of a planetary democracy. At stake here is a pedagogical practice that develops those ideologies and skills needed to critically understand the new visual and visualizing technologies and their attendant screen culture; not simply as new modes of communication, but

as structural forces and pedagogical tools capable of expanding critical citizenship, animating public life, and extending democratic public spheres.

It would be a mistake to simply align the new media exclusively with the forces of domination and commercialism, or what Allen Feldman calls “total spectrum violence.”⁹⁶ Instead, what has to be stressed is the dialectical role of the new media within the larger political, social, and communicative landscape. It is too easy either to overly romanticize the new image-based technologies or to simply dismiss them as new sources of oppressive control. Even within the spectacle of terrorism, there are hints of structural forces and elements of resistance that could be used for emancipatory rather than oppressive purposes. Both the spectacle of the September 11th bombings and the beheading videos communicate far more than grisly acts of terror and atrocity. They also “point to ... a new structural feature of the international state system: that the historical monopoly of the means of destruction by the state is now at risk.”⁹⁷ At the same time, terrorist spectacles illustrate how important it is to engage in struggles to defend democracy and reclaim the social from the “necropolitics” of state-sanctioned and stateless terrorists.⁹⁸ The spectacle of terrorism, with its recognition of the image as a key force of social power, makes clear that cultural politics is now constituted by a plurality of sites of resistance and social struggle; offering up new ways for progressives to conceptualize how the media might be used to create alternative public spheres, as in, for instance, pirate radio, alternative film production, new interactive forms of communication, and so on. Theorists such as Thomas Keenan, Mark Poster, Douglas Kellner, and Jacques Derrida are right in suggesting that the new electronic technologies and media publics “remove restrictions on the horizon of possible communications”⁹⁹ and, in doing so, suggest new possibilities for engaging the media as a democratic force both for critique and for positive intervention and change. The spectacle of terrorism, if examined closely, provides some resources for rethinking how the political is connected to particular understandings of the social; how distinctive modes of address are used to marshal specific identities, memories, and histories; and how certain pedagogical practices are employed to mobilize a range of affective investments around images of trauma and suffering.

A democratic defense of the social also has to be waged on another front, currently dominated by a neoliberal discourse, by asking hard questions concerning not only how to imagine the basic elements of a social democracy; but also what it would mean to expand the reach of democratic values by placing limits on markets and the drive for efficiency, profits, and priva-

tization. Equally important, a defense of common social goods, substantive equality, public services, redistribution of wealth, collective protection against risk, racial and economic justice, public ownership, and critical education has to take place at a time when democracy is being endlessly invoked as a justification for the culture of fear. Any viable democracy requires informed citizens with access to information that enables them to govern rather than simply be governed. By reasserting a notion of democracy that rejects the concept of passive citizenry, it will be possible to resurrect the concept of an expansive social contract that views economic equality and difference as inseparable from political democracy. Democracy implies an experience in which power is shared; dialogue is connected to involvement in the public sphere; competency is linked to intervention; and education enables a public capacity to deal with and respect differences that expand the range of values, capacities, and social forms that inform public life.

Central to a rethinking of cultural politics is the issue of pedagogy both as a structural formation and as a moral and political practice. Pedagogy is now primarily public, no longer restricted to traditional sites of learning such as the school, family, or place of worship. Diverse material contexts and institutional forces, such as conservative foundations in the United States, fund new sites for the dissemination of knowledge, ranging from radio, cable, and television stations to high-speed Internet connections offering magazine and newspaper sites.¹⁰⁰ Think-tanks vie with pirate radio stations, alternative online zines, and blogs. These diverse pedagogical sites also organize “personal and public structures of attention” within specific circuits of power as part of their attempt to reach distinct audiences.¹⁰¹ The combination of new technologies and diverse modes of circulation and interaction is mediated, in turn, through various interpretative communities, which both situate texts and confer meanings in ways that cannot be specified in advance. Meanings are received, but they are not guaranteed, and posit an important terrain of struggle. And, while public pedagogy is the outgrowth of new public technologies, the particular forms and ideologies it produces are almost always open to interpretation and resistance.

Roger Simon has suggested that there is a need for various cultural workers to develop pedagogical practices which encourage a form of attentiveness that enables audiences to engage in a dialogue with the stories told by spectacles of terrorism.¹⁰³ Such a pedagogy would reject the anti-intellectualism, the fear of critical dialogue, and the general indifference to the stories of others that are embedded in the pedagogy of the spectacle. In addressing what kind of pedagogical work is performed by the spectacle of terrorism,

audiences would analyze, first, how their own gaze might be aligned with the insidious modes and bodies of power that participate in images of destruction; and, second, what is at stake in their attraction, expanding upon the highly individuated response solicited by the spectacle. The experience of the spectacle must be collectivized through pedagogical practices that assert its social articulations — that is, articulations of “remembering” how it is intimately connected to historical struggles over power — and mediates among different stories, contexts, and relations that can address a public rather than a merely private sensibility. The spectacle of terrorism currently resonates with the entrenched spirit of social Darwinism, endemic to neoliberalism and the contemporary racial backlash. This entrenchment paralyzes critical agency through the regressive retreat into privatized worries and fears, and powerfully undermines all notions of dialogue, critical engagement, and historical remembrance.¹⁰⁴ Against such a pedagogy of closure, there is the need for a pedagogy that values a culture of questioning, views critical agency as a condition of public life, and rejects voyeurism in favor of the search for justice which is inextricably linked to how we understand our relationship to others within a democratic global public sphere. Such a pedagogy must reject the dystopian, anti-intellectual, and often racist vision at work in the spectacle of terrorism and, in doing so, provide a language of both criticism and hope as a condition for rethinking the possibilities of the future and the promise of global democracy itself.

Finally, any viable pedagogical struggle against the spectacle of terrorism must work diligently to rescue the promise of a radical democracy from the clutches of religious, market, and militaristic fundamentalists who have hijacked a once-rich social imaginary, reducing politics to the rabid discourse of neoliberal individualism, the utterly sectarian impulses of religious fundamentalists, and the authoritarian values of a newly energized militarism. Although the spectacle of terrorism connects directly to affairs of state through the new media, any politics that matters will have to engage both the culture of the image and screen and those material relations of power and institutions on local, national, and global levels that deploy information technologies. Under the shadow of a growing authoritarianism, the spectacle of terrorism gives meaning to the social primarily through the modalities of xenophobia, violence, and death and, in doing so, makes fear the condition of unity and surrendering dissent and freedom the condition of agency. Any effective challenge to the spectacle of terrorism must embrace those strategies and movements willing to raise “democracy and politics to the global level at which capital seeks and enjoys its freedom from human ideas of decency and justice.”¹⁰⁵ This suggests that any viable

oppositional global politics must get beyond the growing isolation of intellectuals from the activist movements that are developing across the globe. Such a politics needs a sober assessment of the growing democratic and anti-neoliberal tendencies that are emerging in Argentina, Brazil, and Venezuela. As Stanley Aronowitz points out, a global politics cannot afford to ignore the new possibilities arising from the 1999 demonstrations by students and workers in Seattle, the "subsequent mass demonstrations at Quebec, Genoa and Spain against the key institutions of global capital, and the development of the World Social Forum, whose location in Brazil's Porto Alegre was symbolic of a global shift, as both an attempt to create a new civil society and a post-9/11 continuation of the protests." Integrating a global perspective and reclaiming the social as part of a broader democratic imaginary means drawing attention to the realities of power and authority and locating across multiple and diverse spaces and borders what Edward Said calls "the energy of resistance ... to all totalizing political movements and institutions and systems of thought."¹⁰⁷

What can be learned from the democratic relations that are being developed in places such as Northern Ireland, Israel, and Palestine, which are consistently being subjected to terrorism?¹⁰⁸ What is to be learned from the new South Africa as it mediates the legacy, torture, and abuses of apartheid through the forging of a new state, legal system, and set of social relations?¹⁰⁹ What is to be critically appropriated from oppositional cultures and their use of the new media as part of a large attempt to keep democracy alive? What might it mean to address the spectacle of terrorism as part of a broader attempt to make the pedagogical more political by developing social relations grounded in a sense of power, history, memory, justice, ethics, and hope; all of which would be seen as central to connecting the new media to global democratic struggles? The spectacle of terrorism has developed a singular focus of communication and control, in part, because of the atrophy of public discourse. The central challenge here is to develop new forms of solidarity in order to not only address the conditions of authoritarianism and various fundamentalisms, which increasingly generate a culture of fear and insecurity, but also provide new ways of dealing with and defusing the experiences of fear, threat, and terror. Such a challenge points to the necessity of providing the public with an expanded vision and a productive sense of the common good, a new language for what it means to translate private considerations into public concerns, and a deeply felt concern with how power can work in both the symbolic and material realms to produce vocabularies of critique and possibility in the service of a substantive and inclusive global democracy.

NOTES

- ¹ Toni Morrison, "Racism and Fascism," *The Nation* 260:21 (May 29, 1995), p. 760.
- ² Eugene L. Arva, "Life as Show Time: Aesthetic Images and Ideological Spectacles," *Perspectives on Evil and Human Wickedness* 1, no.2 (2003): 74.
- ³ The relationship between the media and politics has been explored in far too many books to mention. Three different but useful texts are Robert McChesney, *The Problem of the Media* (New York: Monthly Review Press, 2004); Nick Couldry, *The Place of Media Power* (New York: Routledge, 2000); and Mark Poster, *The Second Media Age* (London: Polity Press, 1995). For a complex and brilliant analysis of the information society, see Scott Lash, *Critique of Information* (London: Sage, 2002).
- ⁴ Some important analyses of the relationship between the new media and aesthetics as well as critical commentaries on visual culture are Lev Manovich, *The Language of the New Media* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2001); Jessica Evans and Stuart Hall, eds., *Visual Culture: The Reader* (London: Sage, 1999); Hugh Mackay and Tim O'Sullivan, eds., *The Media Reader* (London: Sage, 1999); and Couldry, *The Place of Media Power*.
- ⁵ Classic works on the spectacle include Guy Debord, *The Society of the Spectacle*, trans. Donald Nicholson-Smith (New York: Zone Books, 1994), originally published as *La société du spectacle* in 1967; Jean Baudrillard, *Simulacra and Simulation* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1995); Douglas Kellner, *The Persian Gulf TV War* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1992); Carol Becker, *Surpassing the Spectacle* (Boulder, CO: Rowman and Littlefield, 2002); Jean Baudrillard, *The Spirit of Terrorism*, trans. Chris Turner (London: Verso Press, 2002); Slavoj Žižek, *Welcome to the Desert of the Real* (London: Verso Press, 2002); Douglas Kellner, *Media Spectacle and the Crisis of Democracy* (Boulder, CO: Paradigm Press, 2005); and Retort (Iain Boal, T. J. Clark, Joseph Matthews, and Michael Watts), *Afflicted Powers: Capital and Spectacle in a New Age of War* (London: Verso Press, 2005).
- ⁶ Allen Feldman, "On the Actuarial Gaze: From 9/11 to Abu Ghraib," *Cultural Studies* 19, no. 2 (March 2005): 203.
- ⁷ Marina Warner, "Disembodied Eyes, or the Culture of Apocalypse," *Open Democracy*, April 18, 2005), pp. 1-2, available online at www.OpenDemocracy.net.
- ⁸ One of the best accounts of the politics of fear can be found in Zygmunt Bauman, *Liquid Fear* (London: Polity, 2006); see also Henry A. Giroux, *Against the New Authoritarianism* (Winnipeg: Arbeiter Ring, 2005).
- ⁹ Ruth Wilson Gilmore, *Gold Gulag: Prisons, Surplus, Crisis, and Opposition in Globalizing California* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2007).
- ¹⁰ Mary Kaldor, "How to Free Hostages: War, Negotiation, or Law-enforcement," *Open Democracy*, September 19, 2004, available online at <http://www.OpenDemocracy.net>.

¹¹ Warner, "Disembodied Eyes," pp. 1-2. For instance, Steven Bochco's thirteen-episode television series "Over There" is being aired as one of the "first American television series that has tried to process a war as entertainment while it was still being fought." Billed as a program "that dramatizes wartime slaughter and suffering, with its expertly filmed battle scenes ... limbs torn off by exploding mines," the series reproduces a central assumption of the spectacle of terrorism that politics is war and violence is its most important commodity. See Alessandra Stanley, "The Drama of Iraq, While It Still Rages," *New York Times*, July 27, 2005, available online at <http://www.nytimes.com/2005/07/27/arts/television/27stan.html?8hpib>

¹² This idea comes from Achille Mbembe, "Necropolitics," trans. Libby Meintje, *Public Culture* 15, no.1 (2003): 11-40.

¹³ Debord, *Society of the Spectacle*; Kellner, *Persian Gulf TV War*; Kellner, *Media Spectacle and the Crisis of Democracy* (Boulder, CO: Paradigm Press, 2005).

¹⁴ Steve Best and Douglas Kellner, "Debord, Cybersituations, and the Interactive Spectacle," *Illuminations*, December 26, 2004, pp. 1-16, available online at <http://www.uta.edu/huma/illuminations/best6.htm>.

¹⁵ Candace Vogler and Patchen Markell, "Introduction: Violence, Redemption, and the Liberal Imagination," *Public Culture* 15, no. 1 (Winter 2003): 1.

¹⁶ See Roger I. Simon, Mario DiPaolantoni, and Mark Clamen, "Remembrance as Praxis and the Ethics of the Inter Human," *Culture Machine*, October 24, 2004, pp. 1-33, available online at <http://culturemachine.tees.ac.uk/Cmach/Backissues/j1004/Articles/simon.htm>.

¹⁷ I am in agreement with John and Jean Comaroff, who argue that the obsession with crime and violence is increasingly becoming central to the definition of the nation-state (though the authors are referring to South Africa) and that the "theatricality of premodern power" has complicated the forms of internalized, capillary kinds of discipline advocated by Foucault. Power now has a face, visible in its brute show of force, strength, policing, militarizing, and surveillance. See Jean and John Comaroff, "Criminal Obsessions, After Foucault: Postcoloniality, Policing, and the Metaphysics of Disorder," *Critical Inquiry* 30 (Summer 2004): 804.

¹⁸ Mbembe, "Necropolitics," pp. 11-12.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 17, 23.

²⁰ Jean Baudrillard, "L'Esprit du Terrorisme," *South Atlantic Quarterly* 101, no. 2 (Spring 2002): 413.

²¹ The return to "the real," as used here, is not unlike Slavoj Žižek's claim that what was once experienced as a kind of spectral fantasy by Americans, whether the spectacle of Third World disasters or the apocalyptic horrors virtualized in Hollywood films, has now intruded into reality. See Žižek, *Welcome to the Desert of the Real*.

²² Two qualifications need to be made here. First, I am not suggesting that there is a clean break with the past and the politics of consumerism. Second, my point is not that fear and terrorism have replaced consumerism but, rather, that they have added to it in a way that creates a new kind of fear, one that is not merely an extension of the logic of consumerism.

²³ I am not suggesting here that image-based culture is on the side of authoritarianism and that print culture is on the side of debate and literacy, as some theorists have claimed. Rather, I am arguing that there are different modalities of literacies operating in complex ways in different historical formations; and that, at present, the modality of address organized through aural and image-based culture constitutes a new set of linkages among the culture of fear, the politics of terrorism, and image-based culture.

²⁴ Lutz Koepnick, "Aesthetic Politics Today: Walter Benjamin and Post-Fordist Culture," in *Critical Theory: Current State and Future Prospects*, ed. Peter Uwe Hohendahl and Jaimey Fisher (New York: Berghahn Books, 2001), pp. 95-96.

²⁵ Susan Sontag, "Fascinating Fascism," *New York Review of Books*, February 6, 1975, available online at <http://www.history.ucsb.edu/faculty/marcuse/classes/33d/33dTexts/SontagFascinFascism75.htm>.

²⁶ Feldman, "On the Actuarial Gaze," p. 215.

²⁷ Paul Gilroy, *Against Race* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2000), p. 146.

²⁸ Koepnick, "Aesthetic Politics," p. 96.

²⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 95.

³⁰ Rey Chow, "Fascist Longings in Our Midst," *Ariel* 26, no. 1 (January 1995): 38.

³¹ Paul Gilroy, *Against Race*, p. 150.

³² *Ibid.*, p. 159.

³³ The publication information for this title can be found in Note 5.

³⁴ Debord, *Society of the Spectacle*, p. 19.

³⁵ Retort (Iain Boal, T. J. Clark, Joseph Matthews, and Michael Watts), "Afflicted Powers: The State, the Spectacle, and September 11," *New Left Review* 27 (May-June 2004): 8.

³⁶ Debord, *Society of the Spectacle*, p. 12.

³⁷ Arva, "Life as Show Time," p. 70.

³⁸ Debord, *Society of the Spectacle*, p. 14.

³⁹ Ibid., p. 24.

⁴⁰ Retort, "Afflicted Powers," p. 9.

⁴¹ Ibid., p. 8.

⁴² Debord, *Society of the Spectacle*, p. 14.

⁴³ Arva, "Life as Show Time," p. 76.

⁴⁴ Koepnick, "Aesthetic Politics," p. 108.

⁴⁵ Of course, there is the related work of Jean Baudrillard, Slavoj Žižek, and Thomas Keenan; but rather than taking up these authors separately, I have tried to specifically incorporate their ideas about how the new regime of the spectacle moves the issue of struggle into the realm of the symbolic. See Baudrillard, *Spirit of Terrorism*; Žižek, *Welcome to the Desert of the Real*; and Keenan, "Mobilizing Shame," *South Atlantic Quarterly* 103, no. 2/3 (2004): 435-449.

⁴⁶ See Lash, *Critique of Information*.

⁴⁷ Stanley Aronowitz, *Dead Artists, Live Theories, and Other Cultural Problems* (New York: Routledge, 1994), p. 42.

⁴⁸ Mark Poster, *The Information Subject* (Amsterdam: Gordon and Breach, 2001), p. 127.

⁴⁹ For a brilliant exploration of the new information technologies and their connection to war, terror, and new resistance movements, see Chris Hables Gray, *Peace, War, and Computers* (New York: Routledge, 2005).

⁵⁰ Koepnick, "Aesthetic Politics," p. 95.

⁵¹ This issue is analyzed in detail in Corey Robin, *Fear: The History of a Political Idea* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2004).

⁵² I have taken up these issues in more detail in Henry A. Giroux, *Public Spaces/Private Lives: Democracy Beyond 9/11* (Boulder, CO: Rowman and Littlefield, 2003); *The Abandoned Generation: Democracy Beyond the Culture of Fear* (New York: Palgrave, 2004); and *The Terror of Neoliberalism: The New Authoritarianism and the Eclipse of Democracy* (Boulder, CO: Paradigm Press, 2004).

⁵³ Giorgio Agamben, "On Security and Terror," trans. Soenke Zehle, *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, September 20, 2001, available online at <http://egs.edu/faculty/agamben/agamben-on-security-and-terror.html>.

⁵⁴ Stanley Aronowitz, "The Retreat to Postmodern Politics," *Situations* 1, no. 1 (April 2005): 32.

⁵⁵ Giorgio Agamben touches on the relationship between the culture of fear and the state of emergency in his comment that "President Bush's decision to refer to himself constantly as the 'Commander in Chief of the Army' after September 11, 2001 must be considered in the context of this presidential claim to sovereign powers in emergency situations. If, as we have seen, the assumption of this title entails a direct reference to the state of exception, then Bush is attempting to produce a situation in which the emergency becomes the rule, and the very distinction between peace and war (and between foreign and civil war) becomes impossible." See Agamben, *State of Exception* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2005), p. 23.

⁵⁶ Francois Debrix, "Cyberterror and Media-Induced Fears: The Production of Emergency Culture," *Strategies* 14, no. 1 (2001): 152.

⁵⁷ Retort, "Afflicted Powers," p. 13.

⁵⁸ Mbembe, "Necropolitics," p. 18. I want to thank Susan Searls Giroux for this idea and for pointing me to the work of Achille Mbembe, which explores the issue of state violence being endemic to modernity and state rule.

⁵⁹ Eric L. Santer, "Some Reflections on States of Exception," in *Social Insecurity*, ed. Len Guenther and Cornelius Hesters (Toronto: Anansi Press, 2000), p. 157.

⁶⁰ BBC News, "Serbian Leader 'Shocked' by Video," June 19, 2005, available online at <http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/europe/4605223.stm>.

⁶¹ Gary R. Bunt, *Islam in the Digital Age: E-Jihad, Online Fatwas, and Cyber Islamic Environments* (London: Pluto Press, 2003).

⁶² The beheading videos certainly have had the most impact in forcing the hand of various governments to deal directly or indirectly with the terrorists. In Baghdad, the popularity of porno discs has been replaced by that of beheading videos. See J. M. Berger, "New Terror Tactic: Sidewalk Beheadings Hit Iraq," *Intelwire.com*, January 21, 2005, available online at <http://intelwire.egoplex.com/>; Patrick J. McDonnell, "Confession Videos Transfix Iraqis," *Los Angeles Times*, March 2, 2005, available online at www.freenewmexican.com; Matthew Mcallester, "Iraqi Beheadings Now Fueling Global 'Snuff' Film Market," *Star Tribune*, October 17, 2004, available online at http://virtuallyislamic.blogspot.com/2004_10_01_virtuallyislamic_archive.html; Hamza Hendawi, "Horror Stars on Iraqi TV Screens: Videos of Beheadings Replace Porn as Fare," *Messenger-Inquirer.com*, September 27, 2004, available online at <http://www.Messenger-Inquirer.com>; and News Wire Services, "Death Videos Big Sellers," *New York Daily News*, September 27, 2004, available online at <http://www.nydailynews.com/front/story/236229p-202702c.html>.

⁶³ Akeel Hussein and Colin Freeman, "Two Dead Soldiers, Eight More to Go, Vow Avengers of Iraqi Girl's Rape," *Telegraph.co.Uk* (September 7, 2006).
Online: <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/main.jhtml?xml=/news/2006/07/09/wirq09.xml>

⁶⁴ Ibrahim al-Marashi, "Iraq's Hostage Crisis: Kidnappings, Mass Media in the Iraqi Insurgency," *Middle East Review of International Affairs* 8, no. 4 (December 2004): 8.

⁶⁵ Hendawi, "Horror Stars on Iraqi TV Screens," p. 1.

⁶⁶ Ibid.

⁶⁷ al-Marashi, "Iraq's Hostage Crisis," p. 12.

⁶⁸ ABC News, "Video of Beheadings Found for Sale at Tampa Gas Station," *ABC Action News*, November 9, 2004, available online at <http://www.wfts.com/stories/2004/11/041109video.shtml>.

⁶⁹ Mcallester, "Iraqi Beheadings."

⁷⁰ Cited in *ibid.*

⁷¹ Sinan Salaheddin, "Iraq Beheadings: Medium Becomes Message," *ABC 7 News*, September 23, 2004, available online at <http://www.wjla.com/headlines/0904/175208.html>.

⁷² Paul Marshall, "War Against the Infidels the Message Behind the Beheadings," *Weekly Standard*, July 5, 2004, available online at http://www.freedomhouse.org/religion/country/Saudi%20Arabia/War%20Against%20the%20Infidels.htm?article_id=170.

⁷³ For a brilliant analysis of the role of the new media and the realm of the virtual, see Poster, *Information Subject*, and Nick Couldry, *Contesting Media Power: Alternative Media in a Networked World* (Boulder, CO: Rowman and Littlefield, 2003).

⁷⁴ Ted Koppel, "Nightline: Images of War," *ABCNewsstore.com*, September 23, 2003, available online at <http://www.ABCNEWSstore.com>.

⁷⁵ Neal Gabler, "Downloading Death," *Salon.com*, May 13, 2004, available online at <http://www.salon.com/ent/feature/2004/05/13/berg/print.html>.

⁷⁶ Of course, Ignatieff is a liberal whom the conservatives love since he believes that torture can be discussed in reasonable ways and that the might of empire can be defended as long as it makes a claim to democracy. For an insightful critique of Ignatieff's policies, see Mariano Aguirre, "Exporting Democracy, Revising Torture: The Complex Missions of Michael Ignatieff," *Open Democracy*, July 15, 2005, available online at <http://www.OpenDemocracy.net>.

⁷⁷ Michael Ignatieff, "The Terrorist as Auteur," *New York Times Magazine*, November 14, 2004, p. 50.

⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 52-53.

⁷⁹ There are conflicting figures on the number of Iraqi killed and dead but the 600,000 figure comes from: Sabrina Tavernise and Donald G. McNeil, Jr. "Iraqi Dead May Total 600,000, Study Says," *The New York Times* (October 11, 2006). Online: <http://www.nytimes.com/2006/10/11/world/middleeast/11casualties.html?ex=1318219200&en=516b1d070ff83c15&ei=5088&partner=rssnyt&emc=rss> See the "Iraqi Body Count Press Release," *Iraq Body Count Project*, July 19, 2005, available online at <http://www.iraq-bodycount.net/press/pr12.php>.

⁸⁰ Davin Allen Grindstaff and Kevin Michael DeLuca, "The Corpus of Daniel Pearl," *Critical Studies in Media Communication* 21, no. 4 (December 2004): 310. Grindstaff and DeLuca provide an extensive and insightful analysis of how the Pearl video has been transformed into raw material for multiple discourses about terrorism, nationalism, and memory.

⁸¹ Although important critiques holding great promise emerged in the aftermath of the events of 9/11, these have rarely been applied to the more general spectacle of terrorism. See, for example, Arva, "Life as Show Time"; Baudrillard, "L'Esprit du Terrorisme," pp. 403-415; Feldman, "On the Actuarial Gaze," pp. 203-226; Jonathan Flatley, "All That Is Solid Melts into Air: Notes on the Logic of the Global Spectacle," *Afterimage* 30, no.2 (September/October 2002): 4-5; Samuel Weber, "War, Terrorism, and Spectacle: On Towers and Caves," *South Atlantic Quarterly* 10, no. 3 (Summer 2002): 449-458; and Douglas Kellner, "September 11, Spectacles of Terror, and Media Manipulation: A Critique of Jihadist and Bush Media Politics," *Logos* 2, no. 1 (Winter 2003): 86-102, available online at <http://www.gseis.ucla.edu/faculty/keener/ed270/index.html>;

⁸² Patrick J. McDonnell, "Confession Videos Transfix Iraqis," *Associated Press*, March 2, 2005, available online at <http://www.freewmexican.com>.

⁸³ *Ibid.*

⁸⁴ These themes are brilliantly explored in Comaroff and Comaroff, "Criminal Obsessions," pp. 800-824; and Mbembe, "Necropolitics," pp.11-40.

⁸⁵ I take up this issue in Henry A. Giroux, *Against the New Authoritarianism* (Winnipeg: Arbeiter Ring Publishing, 2005).

⁸⁶ On the influence of militarism in the United States, see Andrew J. Bacevich, *The New American Militarism* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2004).

⁸⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 2.

⁸⁸ Agamben, "On Security and Terror."

⁸⁹ Retort, "Afflicted Powers," p. 16.

⁹⁰ Keenan, "Mobilizing Shame," pp. 441-442.

⁹¹ President George W. Bush, "President Welcomes President Chirac to the White House,"

White House News Release, November 6, 2001, available online at <http://www.white-house.gov/news/releases/2001/11/print/20011106-4.html>.

⁹² Adnan R. Kahn, "Piety and Profits," *MacLeans.ca*, December 27, 2004, available online at http://www.macleans.ca/topstories/religion/article.jsp?content=20041227_96020_96020.

⁹³ Brian Massumi, "Preface," in *The Politics of Everyday Fear*, ed. Brian Massumi (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1993), p. viii.

⁹⁴ Keenan, "Mobilizing Shame," p. 447. Keenan explores the relationship between ethics and responsibility in even greater detail in his *Fables of Responsibility* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1997).

⁹⁵ Jacques Derrida cited in Michael Peters, "The Promise of Politics and Pedagogy in Derrida," *Review of Education/Pedagogy/Cultural Studies* (in press).

⁹⁶ Feldman, "On the Actuarial Gaze," p. 212.

⁹⁷ Retort, "Afflicted Powers," p. 17.

⁹⁸ The concept of necropolitics is taken from Mbembe, "Necropolitics."

⁹⁹ Jürgen Habermas, *Theory of Communicative Action, Vol. 2. Lifeworld and System: A Critique of Functionalist Reason*, trans. Thomas McCarthy (Cambridge, UK: Polity Press, 1987), p. 390.

¹⁰⁰ Lewis H. Lapham, "Tentacles of Rage-The Republican Propaganda Mill, A Brief History," *Harper's Magazine*, September 2004, pp. 31-41.

¹⁰¹ Sharon Sliwinski, "A Painful Labour: Responsibility and Photography," *Visual Studies* 19, no. 2 (2004): 148.

¹⁰² Dilip Parameshwar Gaonkar and Elizabeth A. Povinelli, "Technologies of Public Forms: Circulation, Transfiguration, Recognition," *Public Culture* 15, no. 3 (2003): 385-397.

¹⁰³ See Simon, DiPaolantoni, and Clamen, "Remembrance as Praxis," pp. 1-33.

¹⁰⁴ Some excellent sources on neoliberalism are Pierre Bourdieu, *Acts of Resistance* (New York: Free Press, 1989); Noam Chomsky, *Profit over People: Neoliberalism and the Global Order* (New York: Seven Stories Press, 1999); Zygmunt Bauman, *The Individualized Society* (London: Polity Press, 2001); Colin Leys, *Market Driven Politics* (London: Verso, 2001); Jean and John Comaroff, eds., *Millennial Capitalism and the Culture of Neoliberalism* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2001); Doug Henwood, *After the New Economy* (New York: The New Press, 2003); Kevin Phillips, *Wealth and Democracy: A Political History of the American Rich* (New York: Broadway, 2003); Paul Krugman, *The Great Unraveling: Losing Our Way in the New Century* (New York: W.W. Norton, 2003); David Harvey, *The New Imperialism* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2003); William Greider, "The Right's Grand Ambition: Rolling Back the 20th Century," *The Nation*, May 12, 2003, pp. 1-12; Lisa Duggan, *The Twilight of Equality:*

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¹⁰⁵ Daniel Leighton, "Searching for Politics in an Uncertain World: Interview with Zygmunt Bauman," *Renewal: A Journal of Labour Politics* 10, no. 1 (Winter 2002): 14.

¹⁰⁶ Aronowitz, "The Retreat to Postmodern Politics," p. 43.

¹⁰⁷ Edward W. Said, *Power, Politics, and Culture: Interviews with Edward W. Said*, ed. Gauri Viswanathan (New York: Vintage Books, 2001), p. 65.

¹⁰⁸ I want to thank Roger Simon for this suggestion.

¹⁰⁹ Some of the most important work on South Africa and postcolonialism can be found in various essays by John and Jean Comaroff. See, for example, John L. Comaroff and Jean Comaroff, "Nurturing the Nation: Aliens, Apocalypse and the Post Colonial State," *Journal of South African Studies* 27, no. 3 (September 2001): 627-651; John L. Comaroff and Jean Comaroff, *Cultural Policing in Postcolonial South Africa* (Chicago: American Bar Federation, 1999); John L. Comaroff and Jean Comaroff, "Reflections on the Colonial State, in South Africa and Elsewhere: Factions, Fragments, Facts and Fictions," *Social Identities* 4, no. 3 (October 1998): 321-361; and John L. Comaroff and Jean Comaroff, eds., *Civil Society and Political Imagination in South Africa* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1999).

