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### 1AC

A diferentes países los

Certifican los gringos

No quieren que exista droga

Pues dicen que es un peligro

¿Díganme quien certifica

A los Estados Unidos?

Para agarrar a los narcos

México a sido derecho.

Los gringos compran la coca

La pagan a cualquier precio.

No quieren que exista droga

Pero se dan privilegios

Different countries are

Certified by the gringos

They do not want drugs there

For they say that is a danger

Tell me who certifies

The United States?

To catch the narcos

Mexico has been straight.

The Americans buy coke

They pay it at any price.

They do not want drugs to exist

But give themselves privileges.

(from “El General” by Los Tigres del Norte, translation in “Criminals and enemies? The Mexican drug trafficker in official discourse and in narcocorridos” by Alejandro Lajous)

#### The duplicitous US attitude toward drugs is adeptly captured here by Los Tigres del Norte. Foreign supply is a threat, but domestic demand is a lost cause; while little is done to curtail consumption, the centerpiece of US engagement toward Mexico is characterized by militarized surveillance and violent suppression to combat drug trafficking. Any deviance from the status quo is perceived as a threat – the only option is the perpetuation of Calderon’s “war”

Freidersdorf, 13

staff writer at The Atlantic, where he focuses on politics and national affairs (Conor, “Mexico Is Ready to End Failed Drug-War Policies—Why Isn't the U.S.?,” The Atlantic, 30 April 2013, <http://www.theatlantic.com/politics/archive/2013/04/mexico-is-ready-to-end-failed-drug-war-policies-why-isnt-the-us/275410/)//bghs-BI>

Did you know that the U.S. has been operating surveillance drones in Mexico, providing air support for the Mexican military, tracking the movements of Mexican citizens, sharing state-of-the-art spy technology with Mexican officials, and sending CIA agents to help Mexico train drug informants? Did you know the DEA has more employees stationed in Mexico than any of its other foreign posts? That Mexican nationals trained and bankrolled by the CIA raid Mexican drug cartels? Or that the CIA runs high-tech "fusion centers" in Mexico City, Monterrey and elsewhere? "For the past seven years, Mexico and the United States have put aside their tension-filled history on security matters to forge an unparalleled alliance against Mexico's drug cartels, one based on sharing sensitive intelligence, U.S. training and joint operational planning," Dana Priest reports in the Washington Post. "But now, much of that hard-earned cooperation may be in jeopardy." Enrique Pena Nieto, Mexico's new leader, reportedly dislikes the status quo, and was shocked, on taking office this December, at the degree of United States involvement in his country. The article is worth reading in full. What I can't help but remark upon is the way that it handles the spectacular failure of the War on Drugs. It notes "mounting criticism" that any success fighting cartel leaders has also helped to incite "more violence than anyone had predicted, more than 60,000 deaths and 25,000 disappearances in the past seven years alone." Put another way, the period of maximum American involvement has coincided with a horrific spike in drug-related violence. "Meanwhile," Priest continues, "the drug flow into the United States continued unabated. Mexico remains the U.S. market's largest supplier of heroin, marijuana and methamphetamine and the transshipment point for 95 percent of its cocaine." So the strategy was high cost, low reward. It increased violence and did nothing to reduce the drug supply. Yet the fact that it completely failed plays basically no role in the rest of the article, in large part because everyone in the United States government apparently wants to preserve the failed status quo. American officials are very upset that Mexico's new leader has decided to go his own way. Look at the very next sentences: No one had come up with a quick, realistic alternative to Calderon's novel use of the Mexican military with U.S. support. But stopping the cartel violence had become Peña Nieto's top priority during the campaign. The U.S. administration didn't know what that meant. Some feared a scaling back of the bilateral efforts and a willingness to trade the relentless drive against cartel leaders for calmer streets. Does anyone else think that "a willingness to trade the relentless drive against cartel leaders for calmer streets" just might be "a quick, realistic alternative to Calderon's novel use of the Mexican military with U.S. support"? At the very least, it surely it doesn't make sense to presume, as the article seems to, that the obviously failed status quo is the most "realistic" way forward. Sticking with it is arguably delusional. But that angle is seemingly never pursued. As ever, the utter failure of American drug policy is taken by the establishment as evidence that persisting is of even more importance. The policies the United States pursued in Mexico as part of our increased role there coincided with a huge uptick in violence and no reduction in the supply of Mexican drugs? By God, let's hope that the Mexicans don't decide to try something completely different! It's the most irrational status-quo bias you're likely to find. Given that Mexicans are the ones dealing with the dead bodies in the current arrangement, little wonder that they're able to appreciate the irrationality more than America's mystifyingly persistent drug warriors. Drugs can have awful affects all on their own. What's even worse are black markets in drugs. There's only one way to end them in a free country. And policymakers aren't open to it, despite the fact that ending prohibition would weaken the cartels more than anything. So the carnage continues.

#### Since its origination in 1970s US domestic policy, the “war on drugs” has proven a failed initiative, yet it endures; the US-Mexico border has developed into an Agambenian space of exception where law is suspended by the sovereign

Parker, 11 – master’s degree in cultural and political studies from Royal Holloway, University of London, written extensively in the academic arena on geopolitics, ‘radical’ politics and protest, and mass media (Lindsay, “The Making of a Space of Exception: the War on Drugs, Agamben, and Ciudad

Juarez,” Cultural Geography, August 2011, http://lindsayparkerdotnet.files.wordpress.com/2012/10/the-making-of-a-space-of-exception.pdf)//bghs-BI

The “war on drugs” was introduced into the American lexicon by Richard Nixon in 1971 (Cockburn & St. Clair 1998) as a continuation of the prohibitionist drug laws originating from 1914’s Harrison Narcotics Tax Act. The “war on drugs” was simultaneously enforced with Nixon’s “war on crime” that both emphasized “radical turn[s] from welfarist criminal justice approaches emphasizing rehabilitation and redistribution, towards coercive penal governance” (Corva 2008:178). Whereas a welfarist order understood illicit behaviour as symptomatic of an unjust socio-economic society and tried to rehabilitate users, the penal state adopted strict rules that would place offenders in prison for even small amounts of possession (Beckett & Sassoon 2000). Currently this “zero tolerance” policy emphasizes prohibition, halting production, distribution, and the consumption of drugs at the cost of $15 billion annually to the federal government, with state and local governments spending another $25 billion in 2010 alone (Office of National Drug Control Policy 2010). Yet the response nationally and internationally from civilians, lawyers, medical professionals, academics, and police enforcement alike is that the “war on drugs” is an overwhelming failure that has not reduced drug use, drug trafficking, or violent crime, but that has rather resulted in the growth of a multi-billion annual black market that promotes violence and results in harmful repercussions to society (Baum 1996; Bertram 1996). A major source of this violence stems from rival drug cartels throughout Central and South America fighting for trade routes and access to portals along the US/Mexican border across which they can smuggle narcotics for US consumption. The passing of NAFTA in 1994 made trafficking easier and more efficient than ever before (Andreas 1995; Campbell 2009) resulting in the competition for domination of border towns and cities, such as Ciudad Juarez, positioned a mere two miles away from the American border. This strategic location is crucial because of the United States’ insatiable demand for narcotics, especially cocaine. It is estimated that 80-90% of Central and South American cocaine ends up in the United States making border cities and towns incredibly valuable and vulnerable spaces of violent competition (United Nations 2010). As Mexico and the United States keep battling drug cartels in what seems an impossible war to win, narcotics are illegally exported into the United States where demand is still high. The war on drugs and resulting turf war in Juarez are indicative of a re-configuration of geographies of sovereignty and exceptional space along and beyond the border. Sovereign power is a key theme to Agamben’s Homo Sacer: Sovereign Power and Bare Life (1998). Translated from “Sacred Man, “homo sacer” refers to a bare life that is stripped of all citizens” rights that can be killed by anyone without punishment. Human life becomes politicized as it becomes dominated by the sovereign’s suspension of juridical order allowing for otherwise illegal crimes to become normalized because where there is no law, nothing can be illegal. This state of exception is a “point of indistinction between violence and law, the threshold on which violence passes over into law and law passes over into violence” (1998: 32). This threshold is at the core of what Agamben calls the paradox of sovereignty. If sovereign powers are able to declare spaces of exception or suspend the law, they are effectively placing themselves outside of the law. In his own work Agamben uses the example of Nazi concentration camps to exercise the tangibility and physicality of a space of exception, or where juridical order has been indefinitely suspended by sovereign actors. More recently, Agamben and others have identified Guantanamo Bay as such a space (Butler 2002; Gregory 2006). In these examples the sovereign powers, though acting within or outside of the law, were state actors. Agamben’s reading of sovereignty loosely follows Westphalian tenets including the principle of the sovereignty of states and fundamental right to self-determination, the principle of international law equality between states, and the principle of non-intervention of one state in the internal affairs of another state (Lyons & Mastanduno 1995). Traditional theorizations of sovereignty stemmed from Westphalia have increasingly come under scrutiny with some even posing the end of a traditional sovereignty in the political realm (Camilleri & Falk 1992; Hardt & Negri 2000; Ward 2003). These are important in considering how ideas of sovereignty have shifted through history and political landscapes including times of civil disobedience, terrorism, war, and globalization, which is especially intertwined (geo)politically and economically with the drug war. The drug war in Juarez is another example that is challenging traditional ideas of how sovereignty is practiced on the ground and how strict binaries of legal and illegal are being nullified and subverted as sovereign state actors are losing power to drug cartels.

#### The war metaphor remains dominant in official discourse surrounding drugs, collapsing the distinction between criminal and enemy – peace is impossible until the enemy is annihilated

Lajous, 12 – doctor of Law at Yale, professor and researcher at Centro de Investigación y Docencia Económica, a Mexican center of research and higher education specialized in social sciences (Alejandro Madrazo, “Criminals and enemies? The Mexican drug trafficker in official discourse and in narcocorridos,” translated by Fernanda Alonso)//bghs-BI

III. The criminal and the enemy in the official discourse On December 4th, 2006, just three days after assuming the presidency of the Mexican government, Felipe Calderon announced the first deployment of federal forces, Army included, so as to perform police functions in a state: his native state, Michoacan. "Be assured that my government is working hard to win the war against crime" (Calderón, 2011q). With this, the President defined his crime fighting strategy as a war; he justified the move on the fact that the number of drug-related killings in the region during the previous year exceeded 500.10 A few weeks later, on January 22, 2007, at the XXI Session of the National Security Council, the President went further: "To win the war against crime it is essential that we work together beyond our differences [...] beyond any political party’s flag and any private interest." (Calderon, 2007n) He presented the war as a reason to demand national unity in a country deeply divided by party likes and dislikes, after a competed and questioned election. Infancy is destiny; the use of war metaphors marked the official narrative surrounding crime and security throughout the his administration. Since then, the government does not pursue common criminals in the fulfillment of police functions or law enforcement, but instead confronts them in a war, for which there will be no truce until the enemy is defeated. The war jargon in the war on drugs has dominated the narrative, the political imaginary and the current government policy. The war metaphor in the government’s discourse has obvious practical and strategic functions. On the one hand, "(...) it is applied to keep justifying the use of the Armed Forces..." (Miguel Lopez Norzagaray David 2010; 172), one of the building blocks of the security policy for the administration. On the other hand, it functions as a rhetorical framework to call for national unity. However, it also has consequences that go beyond those that it seemingly seeks. On the one hand, it builds up crime and on the other it blurs the boundaries between different categories within the law. The government does not prosecute people who commit different types of crimes –kidnapping, drug trafficking, and murder– but crime itself. In this sense, "(...) drug trafficking was framed within a larger enemy, an enemy that is even more sparse than the very same drug trafficking, one ranging from common crime to the organized social structure needed to commit a crime." (Norzagaray Lopez 2010; 229) This section looks to explore how, in the official discourse dominated by the war metaphor, the distinction between criminal and enemy collapses. By labeling delinquents as enemies, President Calderon is not only establishing an identity between the terms, but also establishing in the political imaginary, on which he reflects and builds his discourse, that the criminal fulfills the function of the enemy (and not only shares his label).11

#### Politicizing the criminal as the enemy subjects them not to law but unlimited sovereignty, enabling the state to justify sacrifice of the political community and making civil war inevitable

Lajous, 12 – doctor of Law at Yale, professor and researcher at Centro de Investigación y Docencia Económica, a Mexican center of research and higher education specialized in social sciences (Alejandro Madrazo, “Criminals and enemies? The Mexican drug trafficker in official discourse and in narcocorridos,” translated by Fernanda Alonso)//bghs-BI

II. The criminal and the enemy in the political imaginary8 The temptation to label a criminal as an enemy and point him out as "public enemy number 1”, is enormous, especially when the threat he represents is perceived as overwhelming. But the distinction between a criminal and an enemy in the political imaginary is crucial: it reflects and supports the distinction between sovereignty and law, between political action –in its strictest sense— and legal action. Criminals and enemies may do the same violent acts, destroying property and persons. Nevertheless, the modern political imaginary carefully maintained the distinction as a matter of both formal law and informal representation. (Kahn, 2010; 1) In the modern political imaginary, the criminal and the enemy occupy different spaces: the criminal faces the law; the enemy faces sovereignty. Law is restricted, predetermined, it cannot overturn the rules that it is made up of; sovereignty is unlimited, unrestricted, subject only to its ability to affirm itself. The criminal is not the enemy; the enemy is not the criminal. The enemy can be killed but not punished. (…) On the other hand, the criminal can be punished but, in most of the West, he cannot be killed. (Kahn, 2010; 1)9 The distinction lies precisely on the difference between the criminal’s relationship to law and the enemy’s relationship to sovereignty. The criminal is a citizen, a part of the political community, and therefore enjoys the protection of the very laws which he infringes; the enemy is the opposite of a citizen, located outside the political community and posing a threat to it; consequently the enemy does not enjoy the protection of the law, nor is he under obligation to abide by it. Moreover, the enemy has the right to resist the violence of a political community to which he does not belong to; the criminal does not. Informally, warfare is imagined as a sort of duel: a reciprocal relationship of threat, of killing and being killed. (…) This is why every war is imagined as “self-defense” by both sides of the conflict. The confrontation with the criminal, on the other hand, is certainly not imagined as a duel. Criminals have no right of self-defense against the police. The force of law is asymmetrical. For this reason, we think of the violence of law – policing – as “depoliticized.” There is a corresponding depoliticalization of the violence of crime: it is not political threat, but personal pathology. Law enforcement aims to prevent the violence of the criminal from becoming a source of collective self-expression. Were it to become so, we would confront an enemy. (Kahn, 2010; 2) The law in a political community says nothing to its enemies, nor does it say anything about its enemies. The enemy does not operate in the restricted field of law, operating instead in the unrestricted space of sovereignty. Contrastingly, the criminal is determined by the law he infringes: Everything about the criminal is defined by law, from the elements of the crime, to the procedure of adjudication, to the character of punishment. His depoliticalization is accomplished through his complete juridification. The law, however, will not tell us who are our enemies. It will not define the conditions of victory or defeat. It will not tell us how seriously to take a threat or how devastating to make the response. The enemy, despite the efforts of international law, is not a juridical figure at all. (Kahn, 2010; 2) The enemy is located outside the political community and threatens it. Because of this, the enemy endows members of the community with an identity: they are ultimately identified in contrast to the person who is not a member of the political community: the enemy (who is in turn, identified in contrast to the first). The criminal does not fulfill that role in the political imaginary. His existence does not identify us, and he does not identify himself as opposed to the political community, but rather he participates in it. True, he participates from a marginal and stigmatized position, but he is part of the community that punishes him. Against the enemy, the state may legitimately require sacrifices from us –including our lives— so as to protect the continuity of the political community. Against the criminal, we require the State’s protection, not vice versa. We are presented then, with two very different categories, which must not be confused. The criminal is a member of the political community; the enemy is not. The criminal is subject to the law of the community and is simultaneously protected and bound by it; the enemy is not. The criminal should be punished; the enemy destroyed or subdued. The criminal is completely juridified (he is regulated and precisely constraint by the law) and, therefore, depoliticized; the enemy is necessarily a politicized subject (he defines the polis by opposing it) and cannot be understood through the law. But the distinction between criminal and enemy is not only important to them; the distinction is fundamental –foundational even– to the political community, i.e. to "us", all individuals belonging to it: At stake in the criminal/enemy distinction, I will argue, is the relationship of sovereignty to law. These are not just categories of theory, but the organizing principles of political and personal narrative. When we lose control of the categories, we can lose the sense of who we are. (Kahn, 2010; If we collapse the two categories, we lose our political identity. We no longer know who belongs to the "us" (the political community, which in principle, includes criminals) and who belongs to the "they" (the enemies). When the criminal becomes an enemy, the community’s action is no longer the application of law, but that of a civil war: Indeed, under some circumstances criminals do become enemies: the order of law becomes the disorder of civil war. (Kahn, 2010; 5) When the criminal is politicized, he is mistaken for the enemy; he becomes the enemy. He is no longer identified by the law (which signals him as an offender), but instead he is identified as that which opposes sovereignty, that is the political community; against which he is now "entitled" to confront. The community can no longer demand obedience from him. He goes from being in an asymmetrical relationship governed by the law to a symmetric relation (symbolically) analogous to a duel, in which the law disappears and all that remains is the contrast of two competing wills in the field of sovereignty. That is, in a space in which only a civil war can be deployed, no longer a normative system.

#### The biopolitical determination of the threshold beyond which life ceases to have juridical value creates the category of a “life devoid of value” which spills over to the biological body of every living being and nullifies value to death

Agamben, 98 – professor of philosophy at university of Verona (Giorgio, Homo Sacer: Sovereign Power and Bare Life, pg. 139-140)

It is not our intention here to take a position on the difficult ethical problem of euthanasia, which still today, in certain coun­tries, occupies a substantial position in medical debates and pro­vokes disagreement. Nor are we concerned with the radicaliry with which Binding declares himself in favor of the general admissibility of euthanasia. More interesting for our inquiry is the fact that the sovereignty of the living man over his own life has its immediate counterpart in the determination of a threshold beyond which life ceases to have any juridical value and can, therefore, be killed without the commission of a homicide. The new juridical category of “life devoid of value” (or “life unworthy of being lived”) corre­sponds exactly—even if in an apparently different direction—to the bare life of homo sacer and can easily be extended beyond the limits imagined by Binding. It is as if every valorization and every “politicization” of life (which, after all, is implicit in the sovereignty of the individual over his own existence) necessarily implies a new decision concerning the threshold beyond which life ceases to be politically relevant, becomes only “sacred life,” and can as such be eliminated without punishment. Every society sets this limit; every society—even the most modern—decides who its “sacred men” will be. It is even pos­sible that this limit, on which the politicization and the exceprio of natural life in the juridical order of the state depends, has done nothing but extend itself in the history of the West and has now— in the new biopolitical horizon of states with national sovereignty—moved inside every human life and every citizen. Bare life is no longer confined to a particular place or a definite category. It now dwells in the biological body of every living being.

#### When the legitimacy and existence of a population is in question, politics become murderous – the entirety of the world is reduced to bare life in an attempt to rid the public sphere of all risk. The only option becomes the extermination of all life

Duarte, 5 – professor of Philosophy at Universidade Federal do Paraná (André, “Biopolitics and the dissemination of violence: the Arendtian critique of the present,” April 2005, http://works.bepress.com/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1017&context=andre\_duarte)//bghs-BI

These historic transformations have not only brought more violence to the core of the political but have also redefined its character by giving rise to biopolitical violence. As stated, what characterizes biopolitics is a dynamic of both protecting and abandoning life through its inclusion and exclusion from the political and economic community. In Arendtian terms, the biopolitical danger is best described as the risk of converting animal laborans into Agamben’s homo sacer, the human being who can be put to death by anyone and whose killing does not imply any crime whatsoever 13).  When politics is conceived of as biopolitics, as the task of increasing the life and happiness of the national *animal laborans*, the nation-state becomes ever more violent and murderous. If we link Arendt’s thesis from *The Human Condition* to those of The Origins of Totalitarianism, we can see the Nazi and Stalinist extermination camps as the most refined experiments in annihilating the “bare life” of *animal laborans* (although these are by no means the only instances in which the modern state has devoted itself to human slaughter). Arendt is not concerned only with the process of the extermination itself, but also the historical situation in which large-scale exterminations were made possible – above all, the emergence of ‘uprooted’ and ‘superfluous’ modern masses, what we might describe as *animal laborans* balanced on the knife-edge of ‘bare life.’ Compare her words in ‘Ideology and Terror’ (1953), which became the conclusion of later editions of The Origins of Totalitarianism: Isolation is that impasse into which men [humans] are driven when the political sphere of their lives… is destroyed… Isolated man who lost his place in the political realm of action is deserted by the world of things as well, if he is no longer recognized as homo faber but treated as an *animal laborans* whose necessary ‘metabolism with nature’ is of concern to no one. Isolation then become loneliness… Loneliness, the common ground for terror, the essence of totalitarian government, and for ideology or logicality, the preparation of its executioners and victims, is closely connected with uprootedness and superfluousness which have been the curse of modern masses since the beginning of the industrial revolution and have become acute with the rise of imperialism at the end of the last century and the break-down of political institutions and social traditions in our own time. To be uprooted means to have no place in the world, recognized and guaranteed by others; to be superfluous means not to belong to the world at all 14). The conversion of homo faber, the human being as creator of durable objects and institutions, into *animal laborans* and, later on, into homo sacer, can be traced in Arendt’s account of nineteenth century imperialism. As argued in the second volume of The Origins of Totalitarianism, European colonialism combined racism and bureaucracy to perpetrate the “most terrible massacres in recent history, the Boers’ extermination of Hottentot tribes, the wild murdering by Carl Peters in German Southeast Africa, the decimation of the peaceful Congo population – from 20 to 40 million reduced to 8 million people; and finally, perhaps worst of all, it resulted in the triumphant introduction of such means of pacification into ordinary, respectable foreign policies.” 15)  This simultaneous protection and destruction of life was also at the core of the two World Wars, as well as in many other more local conflicts, during which whole populations have become stateless or deprived of a public realm. In spite of all their political differences, the United States of Roosevelt, the Soviet Russia of Stalin, the Nazi Germany of Hitler and the Fascist Italy of Mussolini were all conceived of as states devoted to the needs of the national *animal laborans*. According to Agamben, since our contemporary politics recognizes no other value than life, Nazism and fascism, that is, regimes which have taken bare life as their supreme political criterion are bound to remain standing temptations 16).  Finally, it is obvious that this same logic of promoting and annihilating life persists both in post-industrial and in underdeveloped countries, inasmuch as economic growth depends on the increase of unemployment and on many forms of political exclusion. When politics is reduced to the tasks of administering, preserving and promoting the life and happiness of animal laborans it ceases to matter that those objectives require increasingly violent acts, both in national and international arenas. Therefore, we should not be surprised that the legality of state violence has become a secondary aspect in political discussions, since what really matters is to protect and stimulate the life of the national (or, as the case may be, Western) *animal laborans*. In order to maintain sacrosanct ideals of increased mass production and mass consumerism, developed countries ignore the finite character of natural reserves and refuse to sign International Protocols regarding natural resource conservation or pollution reduction, thereby jeopardising future humanity. They also launch preventive attacks and wars, disregard basic human rights, for instance in extra-legal detention camps such as Guantánamo,27)  and multiply refugee camps. Some countries have even imprisoned whole populations, physically isolating them from other communities, in a new form of social, political and economic apartheid. In short, states permit themselves to impose physical and structural violence against individuals and regimes (‘rogue states’ 18) ) that supposedly interfere with the security and growth of their national ‘life process.’ If, according to Arendt, the common world consists of an institutional in-between meant to outlast both human natality and mortality, in modern mass societies we find the progressive abolition of the institutional artifice that separates and protects our world from the forces of nature 19).  This explains the contemporary feeling of disorientation and unhappiness, likewise the political impossibility we find in combining stability and novelty 20).  In the context of a “waste economy, in which things must be almost as quickly devoured and discarded as they have appeared in the world, if the process itself is not to come to a sudden catastrophic end,” 21)  it is not only possible, but also necessary, that people themselves become raw material to be consumed, discarded, annihilated. In other words, when Arendt announces the “grave danger that eventually no object of the world will be safe from consumption and annihilation through consumption,” 22)  we should also remember that human annihilation, once elevated to the status of an ‘end-in-itself’ in totalitarian regimes, still continues to occur – albeit in different degrees and by different methods, in contemporary ‘holes of oblivion’ such as miserably poor Third World neighbourhoods 23)  and penitentiaries, underpaid and slave labour camps, in the name of protecting the vital interests of *animal laborans*. To talk about a process of human consumption is not to speak metaphorically but literally. Heidegger had realized this in his notes written during the late thirties, later published under the title of Overcoming Metaphysics. He claimed that the difference between war and peace had already been blurred in a society in which “metaphysical man [human], the animal rationale, gets fixed as the labouring animal,” so that “labour is now reaching the metaphysical rank of the unconditional objectification of everything present.” 24)  Heidegger argued that once the world becomes fully determined by the “circularity of consumption for the sake of consumption” it is at the brink of becoming an ‘unworld’ (Unwelt), since ‘man [human], who no longer conceals his character of being the most important raw material, is also drawn into the process. Man is “the most important raw material” because he remains the subject of all consumption.’ 25)  After the Second World War and the release of detailed information concerning the death factories Heidegger took his critique even further, acknowledging that to understand man as both subject and object of the consumption process would still not comprehend the process of deliberate mass extermination. He saw this, instead, in terms of the conversion of man into no more than an “item of the reserve fund for the fabrication of corpses” (Bestandestücke eines Bestandes der Fabrikation von Leichen). According to Heidegger, what happened in the extermination camps was that death became meaningless, and the existential importance of our anxiety in the face of death was lost; instead, people were robbed of the essential possibility of dying, so that they merely “passed away” in the process of being “inconspicuously liquidated” (unauffällig liquidiert). 26)  The human being as *animal laborans* (Arendt), as homo sacer (Agamben), as an ‘item of the reserve fund’ (Heidegger) – all describe the same process of dehumanisation whereby humankind is reduced to the bare fact of being alive, with no further qualifications. As argued by Agamben, when it becomes impossible to differentiate between biós and zóe, that is, when bare life is transformed into a qualified or specific ‘form of life,’ we face the emergence of a biopolitical epoch 27).  When states promote the animalisation of man by policies that aim at both protecting and destroying human life, we can interpret this in terms of the widespread presence of the homo sacer in our world: “If it is true that the figure proposed by our age is that of an unsacrificeable life that has nevertheless become capable of being killed to an unprecedented degree, then the bare life of homo sacer concerns us in a special way… If today there is no longer any one clear figure of the sacred man, it is perhaps because we are all virtually homines sacri.” 28) Investigating changes in the way power was conceived of and exercised at the turn of the nineteenth century, Foucault realized that when life turned out to be a constitutive political element, managed, calculated, and normalized by means of biopolitics, political strategies soon became murderous. Paradoxically, when the Sovereign’s prerogative ceased to be simply that of imposing violent death, and became a matter of promoting the growth of life, wars became more and more bloody, mass killing more frequent. Political conflicts now aimed at preserving and intensifying the life of the winners, so that enmity ceased to be political and came to be seen biologically: it is not enough to defeat the enemy; it must be exterminated as a danger to the health of the race, people or community. Thus Foucault on the formation of the modern biopolitical paradigm at the end of the nineteenth century:…death that was based on the right of the sovereign is now manifested as simply the reverse of the right of the social body to ensure, maintain or develop its life. Yet wars were never as bloody as they have been since the nineteenth century, and all things being equal, never before did regimes visit such holocausts on their own populations. But this formidable power of death… now presents itself as the counterpart of a power that exerts a positive influence on life that endeavours to administer, optimise, and multiply it, subjecting it to precise controls and comprehensive regulations. Wars are no longer waged in the name of a sovereign who must be defended; they are waged on behalf of the existence of everyone; entire populations are mobilized for the purpose of wholesale slaughter in the name of life necessity: massacres have become vital. It is as managers of life and survival, of bodies and the race, that so many regimes have been able to wage so many wars, causing so many men [humans] to be killed. And through a turn that closes the circle, as the technology of wars have caused them to tend increasingly toward all-out destruction, the decision that initiates them and the one that terminates them are in fact increasingly informed by the naked question of survival. The atomic situation is now at the end of point of this process: the power to expose a whole population to death is the underside of the power to guarantee an individual’s continued existence. The principle underlying the tactics of battle – that one has to be capable of killing in order to go on living – has become the principle that defines the strategy of states. But the existence in question is no longer the juridical existence of sovereignty; at stake is the biological existence of a population. If genocide is indeed the dream of modern powers, this is not because of a recent return of the ancient right to kill; it is because power is situated and exercised at the level of life, the species, the race, and the large-scale phenomena of population. 29)  Arendt proposed no political utopias, but she remained convinced that our political dilemmas have no necessary outcome, that history has not and will not come to a tragic end. Neither a pessimist nor an optimist, she wanted only to understand the world in which she lived in and to stimulate our thinking and acting in the present. It is always possible that radically new political constellations will come into our world, and responsibility for them will always be ours. If we wish to remain faithful to the spirit of Arendt’s political thinking, then we must think and act politically without constraining our thinking and acting in terms of some pre-defined understanding of what politics ‘is’ or ‘should’ be. In other words, I believe that the political challenge of the present is to multiply the forms, possibilities and spaces in which we can act politically. These may be strategic actions destined to further the agendas of political parties concerned with social justice. They can also be discrete, subversive actions favoured by small groups at the margins of the bureaucratised party machines, promoting political interventions free of particular strategic intentions, since their goal is to invite radical politicisation of existence. Finally, there are also actions in which ethical openness towards otherness becomes political: small and rather inconspicuous actions of acknowledging and welcoming, of extending hospitality and solidarity towards others.

Thus,

Resolved: The United States federal government should substantially increase its economic engagement toward Mexico.

#### In the face of the hegemonic “war” discourse, an alternative has arisen in the public imaginary: the *narcocorrido*. Ambivalent but credible, epic but ordinary, it constitutes rebellion against a political system sustained on exceptionalism

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IV. The criminal and the enemy in the saga of the narcocorrido There is popular tradition, deeply rooted in our country, that through various means such as literature, popular press, oral tradition and music, highlights and records the events of criminal’s lives, opposing the official discourse (see eg Speckman, 2002). One of the best-known means that materialize this tradition is the popular music genre known as the corrido, popular music relating noteworthy events and the daily life of communities. Specifically, the narcocorrido, presents itself as a contemporary successor or subgenre of the corrido. The narcocorrido is of interest here because it offers an alternative view to the official stance on drug trafficking in our country. Faced with a hegemonic official discourse on drug trafficking, popular culture, and on occasions the drug traffickers themselves,13 offer their vision of the phenomenon, through narcocorridos. Luis Astorga points out that some narcocorridos are spontaneous products of popular culture, while others are deliberately sponsored by drug traffickers themselves to build their own image. The two variants break the state monopoly ub geberatubg of the discourse referring to drug trafficking (Astorga, 1997). With the dawn of the narcocorridos, "the identity of the group was no longer subject to the will, imaginary and interest of those who had hitherto managed to impose their classifications, and turn them into official discourse" (Astorga, 1997, 2). Astorga argues that the stories told in the narcocorridos focus on presenting facts, rather than justifying them: "There is no justification for their activities, only an affirmation of situations where the primacy of the ethical codes and rules of the game at play are often disputed through gun shots" (Astorga, 1997, 10-1). The stories reflected in the narcocorridos are in fact ambivalent: torn between telling the facts and even criticizing them, or praising and vindicating the protagonists. For some, the narcocorridos tend more towards the second pole of this spectrum (Benavides et al., 2009, 152). Regardless of whether the stories told in the narcocorridos are understood as "documentation" of the popular interpretation of the facts or as a ladatio of the patrons of the musicians who compose them, the truth is that in recounting the events from the perspective of those living surrounded by drug trafficking and its profits, narcocorridos express cultural counter-values to the official discourse and culture. The narcocorrido is presented as the popular voice that contrasts with the discourse of political power; at least that is what it intends (Lara, 2003) (Wald, 2008). This is not to say that the narcocorrido (fully) articulates a political or ethical discourse, but rather it outlines one, providing an epic, but not enough to articulate an ethic14. It is the epic that is offered by the narcocorrido what perhaps allows us a glimpse into the roles of the criminal, authority, the law and the enemy in the popular imaginary of communities living near or in contact with drug-related business and its prohibition. Both the corrido and the narcocorrido deal with the heroic deeds of cultural heroes or individuals who are considered to be exceptional or considered to have done exceptional deeds, usually with great bravery and courage in the face of danger: soldiers and revolutionary leaders in the early twentieth century; drug traffickers and smugglers at the end of the same century. One of the main functions that wields the corrido and which made it so popular during the twentieth century, was the broadcasting of events that occurred during the period of the Mexican Revolution of 1910, which were very difficult to transmit from mass media such as newspapers ... for the majority of the population that was submerged in appalling illiteracy ... there was no point in disseminating the news in print ... the corrido (...) has definitely served as an important form in broadcasting, that brings us closer to life in the communities ... [In the corridos,] the Mexican masses have seen their desires, passions, frustrations and sympathies reflected. (Lara, 2003; 213) "The history of the narcocorrido goes all the way back to the corridos of border smugglers in the nineteenth century. In those years it was not marijuana, cocaine or heroin that was being smuggled, but fabrics, spices and clothing, among other goods. The flow of contraband also wasn’t like it is today, from south to north, but rather the opposite; goods were transported from the U.S. to Mexico." (Ramírez-Pimienta, 2011; 22) Alcohol prohibition, established in 1920 in the United States, led to the creation of a smuggling business from Canada and Mexico. For Mexican bootleggers, alcohol smuggling was a task that: "Was extremely dangerous and difficult, as the smugglers sometimes had to travel hundreds of miles trying to bring the cargo to its destination, whilst confusing the hated rinches, the Texas Rangers, who were in charge, along with federal agencies, of combating them. (...) It is in this context that the most important precursor of drug trafficking corridos is produced in the nineteen twenties and early thirties… the corridos about tequila smugglers. " (Ramírez-Pimienta, 2011, 35-36) From the origins of the smuggler’s corrido15, an important feature for understanding the relationships between traffickers and officials can be identified: "(...) we have found several notions that are still paradigmatic in the current narcocorrido. Namely, we found a strong collusion and transposition between drug dealer, police officer and politician. In other words, we have politicians and police who are traffickers or are protecting traffickers." (Ramírez-Pimienta, 2011; 68) Specifically, in its origins, the smuggler’s corrido identifies the foreign U.S. authority, or the national authority subdued to it, as threats to the protagonist: "(...) virtually no one in the corridística community would object to representing the American Rangers (be they soldiers, customs police or border patrol agents) in a negative fashion. The Anglo-Saxon with power over the Mexican community (or the Mexican under the services of Anglo- Saxon law) is a target accepted by this community, which perceives itself as victimized." (Ramírez-Pimienta, 2011; 35) In addition to identifying the U.S. authority as the threat to the smuggler (or the Mexican authority under the US authority), the smuggler’s corrido outlines another feature imputed to authority figures: their corruption and, consequently, their participation (usually subordinate) in crime. One of the most famous examples of this type of ballad is the 'Corrido de Mier', also known as 'The Mier customs' and 'The Ward' (...) [what is] narrated makes it clear from the first verses how incredible it is that they managed to mock the entire guard, i.e. all the employees of the customs office, opening the possibility that customs play the part of accomplices rather than smugglers’ incompetent enemies.16 With the narcocorrido, as a subgenre distinguished from the general corrido and as its closest ancestor, the corrido that specifically addresses contraband, grows the propensity to move from a mere chronicle of events or deeds to the elation of heroic deeds (not necessarily an epistle) of the protagonists of the events: This new type of corrido approves and praises those outside the law. It celebrates the heroism of those who are able to pass to the world of crime. In general, the narcocorridos are chronicles of adventure, betrayal, misfortune, love and other acts of individuals involved in the "business", another of the many synonyms of drug trafficking. Be it either through the common language or through key words and phrases, a partial, but credible vision of what drug trafficking is, is being embodied. Some corridos deal with the origins of the drug dealer, and others express the economic causes that push the ordinary Mexican to become a drug dealer. (Massard, 2005) The vision they provide is a criticism to the general context in which the adventure of the drug dealer comes to be, and therefore, it diverges from the official discourse. In speaking of criminals, of the poverty from which they escape, of the crimes and acts corruption, a vision is reflected which cannot but constitute itself as a critique of the world reflected in the official discourse. The narcocorrido reflects the economic crisis and the gradual decline of the system inherited from the Revolution. If it is true that the land reform returned the land to the peasants, today the small farmer has no way out and prefers to replace corn with marijuana, evidently increasing the value of land cultivated and the crop itself. Sociologists agree that narcocorridos represent a sample of the rebellion against a political system that not only fails to provides outputs, but has made corruption and impunity the pillars of its survival, since the tentacles of the drug trafficking have reached the echelons of power... (Massard, 2005) What do the narcocorridos say? What do they tell us about the place that drug traffickers, as criminals, play in the popular political imaginary? Do we see a politicization of the drug trafficker, which corresponds to his politicization in official discourse of the war on drugs?

#### Representations and exposition are the organizing principles behind the debate which we can challenge to alter power

Agamben, 2000 – professor of philosophy at the College International de Philosophie in Paris (Giorgio, Means Without End: Notes on Politics, p. 93-95)

Exposition is the location of politics. If there is no ani­mal politics, that is perhaps because animals are always already in the open and do not try to take possession of their own exposition; they simply live in it without car­ing about it. That is why they are not interested in mir­rors, in the image as image. Human beings, on the other hand, separate images from things and give them a name precisely because they want to recognize themselves, that is, they want to take possession of their own very ap­pearance. Human beings thus transform the open into a world, that is, into the battlefield of a political struggle without quarter. This struggle, whose object is truth, goes by the name of History. It is happening more and more often that in porno­graphic photographs the portrayed subjects, by a calcu­lated stratagem, look into the camera, thereby exhibiting the awareness of being exposed to the gaze. This unex­pected gesture violently belies the fiction that is implicit in the consumption of such images, according to which the one who looks surprises the actors while remaining unseen by them: the latter, rather, knowingly challenge the voyeur’s gaze and force him to look them in the eyes. In that precise moment, the insubstantial nature of the human face suddenly comes to light. The fact that the actors look into the camera means that they show that they are simulating; nevertheless, they paradoxically ap­pear more real precisely to the extent to which they ex­hibit this falsification. The same procedure is used to­day in advertising: the image appears more convincing if it shows openly its own artifice. In both cases, the one who looks is confronted with something that concerns unequivocally the essence of the face, the very structure of truth. We may call tragicomedy of appearance the fact that the face uncovers only and precisely inasmuch as it hides, and hides to the extent to which it uncovers. In this way, the appearance that ought to have manifested human be­ings becomes for them instead a resemblance that be­trays them and in which they can no longer recognize themselves. Precisely because the face is solely the loca­tion of truth, it is also and immediately the location of simulation and of an irreducible impropriety. This does not mean, however, that appearance dissimulares what it uncovers by making it look like what in reality it is not: rather, what human beings truly are is nothing other than this dissimulation and this disquietude within the appearance. Because human beings neither are nor have to be any essence, any nature, or any specific destiny, their condition is the most empty and the most insubstantial of all: it is the truth. What remains hidden from them is not something behind appearance, but rather appearing itself, that is, their being nothing other than a face. The task of politics is to return appearance itself to appearance, to cause appearance itself to appear. The face, truth, and exposition are today the objects of a global civil war, whose battlefield is social life in its en­tirety, whose storm troopers are the media, whose victims are all the peoples of the Earth. Politicians, the media establishment, and the advertising industry have under­stood the insubstantial character of the face and of the community it opens up, and thus they transform it into a miserable secret that they must make sure to control at all costs. State power today is no longer founded on the monopoly of the legitimate use of violence — a mo­nopoly that states share increasingly willingly with other nonsovereign organizations such as the United Nations and terrorist organizations; rather, it is founded above all on the control of appearance (of doxa). The fact that politics constitutes itself as an autonomous sphere goes hand in hand with the separation of the face in the world of spectacle — a world in which human communication is being separated from itself. Exposition thus transforms itself into a value that is accumulated in images and in the media, while a new class of bureaucrats jealously watches over its management.

#### **Our affirmation is a form of play that liberates debate from rigid rules and detaches humanity from the sacred**

Dragona, 8 – PhD Candidate in the Faculty of Communication and Mass Media at University Of Athens, Freelance media arts curator (Daphne, “WhoDaresToDe-sacraliseTodaySPlay,” Personal Cinema, Page Last Modified 24 April 2008, http://www.personalcinema.org/warport/index.php?n=Main.WhoDaresToDe-sacraliseTodaySPlay?)

Giorgio Agamben considers play a most important element in culture, explaining that it is the only one that can profane what is considered sacred. It can liberate humanity from the “sacred”, without negating it. It can profane the “sacred” without destroying the myth behind; it does not simply politicise. And if play is to cause changes and form our lives in better ways, this would be through its capacity to be an act of profanation by itself. But, unfortunately, this tendency according to Agamben is in decline and the need to regain it is a political necessity (Agamben 2006 : 127). What are the conditions of play today? Can it seriously play a role in our everyday lives? Who could re-attribute its capability to profane? Defining play There have been many definitions of play from different disciplines and orientations. Sutton – Smith in his book The Ambiguity of Play refers frequently to Mihail Spariosu who had called play “amphibolous” describing a basic disagreement between the Western philosophers over whether play is an orderly and rule- governed affair according to the common western society norms, or a chaotic, violent and indeterminate interaction of forces, according to some more modern approaches (Sutton Smith 1997/2001: 80). Roger Caillois had also seen two poles in play, but as a continuum where diversified forms could be set. On one extreme we find “paidia”, an “indivisible principle”, common to diversion, turbulence, free improvisation and carefree gaiety which is manifested by uncontrolled fantasy. At the other end, we find “ludus”, bound with “arbitrary, imperative and purposely tedious conventions”. The more the “frolic and impulsive exuberance” of paidia is “disciplined by an inversed tendency to its anarchic and capricious nature”, the more play approaches ludus (Caillois 1958/2001: 13). The Western European thought mostly followed the rationalistic common pattern and embraced the politicized, ruled form of play surpassing its anarchic and vivid features. This can be easily seen by the well known definitions of Huizinga and Caillois who, although they described play as free and unproductive activity, still insist on its dependency on the rules and its separation from everyday life. (Caillois 1958/2001: 43, Huizinga 1955: 13) Is it play or game? The old scholars, Huizinga and Caillois, did not especially differentiate the two terms. It seems that the rules that institutionalised play gave form to games. Play appears to be the idea, the notion, the anarchic and spontaneous basis, the activity based on fantasy, what Caillois called paidia, as Plato and Aristotle first put it. Accordingly, games seem to be the expressions and the forms of play that are governed by rules, demand discipline and form hierarchies, need a constraint space and time, reflecting more the ludus element. Generally, one could assume that play as a notion precedes games – it is their presupposition; it is the play ‘instinct’ that inspires the formation of forms. (Huizinga in Wark 2007: 181) In our times, with the explosion of the video game industry, the two words seem to have enclosed different features and ideas. Edward Castronova highlights the difference as follows: “Play is an intense, survival- relevant action that is not serious… Play is make believe… Play is an easy- to- copy behaviour that brings joy… Games are not the same thing as play. Games are designed goal environments with uncertain outcomes. They are social institutions. Games are a perfect environment for creating play, but also they appear under other circumstances. Elections… stock markets… wars are games.” (Castronova 2007: 100,101) In the digital era, games in the form of video games distant themselves more from play. Games compared to play can be described, can be analysed; they become a product, a commodity; they can be copied, copyrighted and become a subject of control. As Alexander R. Galloway notes, the video game is a cultural object bound by history and materiality, consisting of an electronic computational device and a game simulated in software (Galloway, 2006: 1) Risks of play Mckenzie Wark writes in his recent book Gamer Theory that games are no longer a past time, outside or alongside of life. They are now the very form of life, and death, and time, itself (Wark 2007: 06) To a certain degree, every civilization can be described and characterised by its games but what happens today is that life itself has taken the form of a game; of game and not play. While gaming platforms today are being used widely for different disciplines we might need to wonder: What are the risks play runs in this context? How could they be faced? The risk of contamination According to the classic thinkers of play, there was one main threat for play, its “contamination” by the ordinary life. Play could only be considered as a “stepping out of real life, into a temporary sphere with a disposition of its own” (Huizinga 1955: 8). The world of play and that of everyday life were considered as two different universes, antagonistic to each other (Caillois, 1958/2001: 44, 53). This austere distinction was what the situationists tried to break and to transcend. “Play, radically broken from a confined ludic time and space, must invade the whole of life”, they stated in 1958. The situationists with their notions of the psychogeographies, the derive, the situation and the détournement had proposed a fusion of play into the cities, a total swift where the player is in reality the “liver”. In our days, a different fusion of play occurred. Our everyday life is a fusion in itself of the virtual and the real. As Edward Castronova mentions “the real world can be a terribly empty place.” Synthetic worlds may offer experiences and opportunities that one might not have in their real life. Of course, “reality remains reality, strongly sensated but unfiltered, raw. It will always command attention, but it has long since abandoned the claim to all of our attention. We already live partly in media. Games are just the latest improvement.” (Castronova 2007: 30, 69) The risk of productivity Play is longer by definition an occasion of pure waste; waste of time, energy, ingenuity and skill. Play’s second major risk is the one formed by productivity, by players who belong to the generation of the prosumers, as they are producers and consumers at the same time. Play nowadays becomes part of the immaterial labour, within which as Lazzarato notes ‘leisure time’ and ‘working time’ are increasingly fused, making play – in our case- inseparable from work (Lazzarato 1997). This affective labor of play produces the informational and cultural content of the commodity that at the end is defined as game. Within this content stand today’s synthetic worlds where the players contribute voluntarily with their work and behaviour to the formation of the gaming worlds and the augmentation of the virtual economy. Communication is continually improved as the power of this form is found in the collective process, in the users/prosumers social relations. People of course might as well make profit for themselves. This kind of play can be to their advantage. But one can not overlook the fact that this era of ludocapitalism, as Dibbel frames it, is “a curious new post-industrial revolution, driven by play as the first one was driven by steam”. (Dibbell in Shaviro 2007) The risk of being the alibi The risk of play being exploited and being used as an alibi for economical or political profit is not a new one. The ambiguous –in ethic terms - economy of the casinos, the lotteries and the hippodromes or even the economy of the sports industry are such phenomena that have given birth to discussions, problems and even scandals for most of the countries of the Western world. However, the highest risk for play today is found in the exploitation of play being made by the military entertainment complex. War as a game is an old metaphor. Chess and Go and especially the 19th century Kriegsspiel which was used to aid Prussian officers, could be considered as predecessors of the games that would be used for military entertaining purposes later on (Halter 2002). But what the media and especially the video games changed was the possibilities given for nationalistic propaganda. Games like America’s Army, are at the same time a recruiting tool, an edugame, a test bed and tool and a propaganda game. Such games can influence attitudes and behaviours and win a communication battle that would otherwise be lost. Creating falsifying images of super-clean pure war, as seen on the screens, the games succeed in “using sweet power to win a war on ideas” (Neiborg 2007: 79) Summarizing the risks above, the impression given is that we have “nowhere to hide outside the gamespace” (Wark 2007: 183). But, are we trapped within a total game or is play itself trapped as well at the end? The sovereignity of the game over play today is a fact. Having been institutionalized, play has been accredited with the seriousness of an academic, social, political and economic value and has become an issue of controversial discussion accordingly. But in reality, again, it is mostly games we are talking about, not play. Contemporary play is purposely sacralised and distant, used as an excuse for games’ abuses. Being considered sacred, play’s case reminds us of religion. Religion does not unify all; on the contrary it keeps the roles distinct and separated. It keeps people apart from the divine (Agamben 2006: 124). So it happens with play, keeping the players apart from play itself. Could this separation be broken? And could play become an important contributory factor to our lives’ amelioration? Setting play free “It was in fact from art that play broke free” Raoul Vaneigem wrote in reference to Dada (Vaneigem 1967). To transcend rigid and crystallized forms, rules need to be broken. One can play by rules, or play with the rules. Freedom can be regained by those who can play with today’s forms of play, who can appropriate them, see through and reverse them, by those who can profane what is considered sacred. Following the famous predecessors of the dada, Surrealism, Fluxus and Situationism, artists today turn again towards play and use it as a means to challenge stereotypes, to offer new ways of reading and understanding, to break the constraints and offer new perspectives. Art merged with new media, activism, philosophy, politics and social sciences takes the role of the animator, the hacker, the player – “liver” today. Artists working on these fields through projects that do not necessarily need to be game – based, reveal play’ s multifaceted original character and propose means for its use, liberation and expansion within different sides of life. Play as play… Play can not be doubted and its fundamental role, original features and continuous presence is what some artists highlight. Axel Stockburger’s Tokyo Arcade Warriors – Shibuya and William Wegman’ s Dog Duet (Two Dogs and a ball) showcase how play absorbs one in the most serious and utter way. Documenting only the figures of players and not the action itself, one can still not deny or doubt play even if it is hidden. Other artists working on the field, show how playfulness is kept intact, while common playgrounds are being transformed into new ones based on technology. Such are the cases of Himalaya’ s Head by Devart where a snow war takes place between physical and virtual players or Jumping Rope by Orna Portugaly, Daphna Talithman and Sharon Younger, where participants are invited to jump a rope which is being turned by two virtual projected characters. Play back in action… Artists like the Ludic Society and Gordan Savicic follow a neo – situationist approach of play; they bring action back to the real dimension and spread it in the cities. In their projects they create ludic ambiances and city walks where the notions of the “dérivé”, the “détournement” and the “psychogeographies” are being appropriated to raise questions about today’s everyday life and potentialities for playfulness. Objects of Desire by the Ludic Society is a playful metaphor where objects take the place of subjects, with obsessions and desires that they follow to find their home. Gordan Savicic’ s Constraint City / the pain of everyday life is based on a corset with high torque servo motors and a WIFI-enabled game-console, that when worn, can write and read the city codes while also being a fetish object causing pain according to the strength of signal it gets. Following a different direction, David Valentine and MediaShed, also re-invite play back to the ordinary life, as seen on their video The duellists that documents a CCTV parkour performance. Two free-runners run an acrobatic competition in a shopping mall of Manchester Arndale. The fluid, uninterrupted movement of them acting as players re - energizes the environment in the most vivid and spontaneous way. Play caught in between… Other artists look into limits between the virtual and the real in today’ s play. The work of Silver and True named Sell your Rolex comments on the virtual dimension lived by millions of people today. Taking the roles of the user and its avatar, players note that behaviours of the virtual world are odd, funny and embarrassing when brought back to real life. How accurate is simulation after all in realistic terms? The MIT Lab with Stiff People’ s League mingles the two dimensions through a mixed reality game of soccer, happening simultaneously in the real space and in the world of Second Life. The common relationship between physical and virtual world is inverted as physical players need to rely on the virtual ones to play the game. Play reclaimed… Different questions are being raised by artists regarding play’s exploitation for purposes of political, nationalistic and ideological propaganda. Is morality a question? Are people conscious enough about what they are playing? John Klima in his project The Great Game.Epilogue brings reality into a game context as he incorporates in a child’s arcade ride true information from the conflict in Afghanistan, which has been collected by the Department of Defense of the US. John Paul Bichard with the Art of War addresses the issue of the representation of violence and its ways of interpretation through the contemporary media. Through two video works with footages from the army, one cannot tell what is real and what is imaginary anymore. In a similar direction, Vladan Joler has created the Schengen Information System, Version 1.0.3, a game where the player takes on the role of the activist who should intrude the building of the Schengen Information System and destroy the archives. Making use of publicly accessible technology and information, the artist has managed to make a realistic reconstruction and reverse the common use of games for military training purposes. Derivart wishing to tackle a socio-economical issue -that of real estate in Spain - use play to situate a problem and raise people’s awareness. The Burbujometro, showing the prices of apartments in different Spanish cities in the form of bubbles, that the user can shoot, criticizes the building boom of the 2000s. Play 2.0… The Folded-in project, created by Personal Cinema and the Erasers is a different critique on today’s play. The project examines the notion of borders in the era of the web 2.0 social networks. In the form of an online game application which reverses and criticizes the platform of YouTube, the projects seeks to find if players in the digital spaces could be liberated from their common prejudices and beliefs and to what extent they are supporters of immaterial labour, being the ideal prosumers. Taking this problem more to its extremes, one meets the phenomenon of the gold farming. Ge Jin with his documentary The Gold Farmers examines how the growth of virtual economy has given birth to the phenomenon of the gaming sweatshops and aims to answer how it leads play to become real work and what facts are hidden behind it. Play re-discussed… But how far can games and their creators go when observing, reproducing and criticizing today’s real world? Danny Ledonne, a young artist from Colorado, polarised the audience when he made a videogame of the Columbine assassination in the 90’s. Wishing to express this controversy, he made a documentary about the game investigating the issues of games, violence, and ethics. A lot of answers regarding the strategies followed by artists today and the phenomenon of the play culture, are also given in the 8 bit documentary by Marcin Ramocki & Justin Strawhand where they examine the overall influence play has in our everyday culture. CONCLUSION Play in our times presents a paradox. Despite its wide use and continuous presence in different forms of cultures, it is distant and trapped in its own formations, the games. Games are being accused; play is being sacrilised and is placed on a pedestal. Running certain risks, within this structure, play’s influential role on our culture is questioned. If, following Giorgio Agamben, play’s significance lies on the fact that it can detach humanity from the “sacred”, play would need to liberate itself first from the constraints of the sacred. To achieve this, one should not deny play; because this would lead to its cancellation. What one should do is to profane, to neglect, to surpass the constraints and break the rules. And this again can happen only through play itself, through its anarchic and vivid features that are today being wept out. This is how the actions taken by the artists can be described: as actions of profanity where they appropriate the myth and reverse the ceremony of the sacred. This violation is also an act of play itself that is then set free from all constraints. But there is one last point to remember: According to Agamben, profanation gains its complete meaning only when what has been profaned, is then rendered back to the people, at their disposal to start all over again. So this act is not an act of cancellation or politicisation; it is an act about raising awareness and about re-assigning to play its capacity to become a passage for true life, as Vaneigem would describe it. Can art fulfill this? Let’s hope so and wait and see…

#### Truth and predictability are nihilistic illusions built upon a myth of sameness and unity grounded in a fear of the flux and movement which lie at the heart of life – embrace the ecstasy of risk and the glory of active interpretation which uses force to wrest meaning from the abyss of nihilism.

**Lotringer, 1** – Professor of Foreign Philosophy at the European Graduate School in Saas-Fee, Switzerland, Professor Emeritus of Comparative Literature at Columbia University, (Sylvere, “The Dance of Signs” in Hatred of Capitalism: A Semiotext(e) Reader ed. Kraus&Lotringer, Los Angeles:Semiotext(e), pg 174-176)

Freud is not blind to this: "The producer which the author makes his Zoe adopt for curing her childhood friend's delusion shows a far reaching similarity - no, a complete agreement in its essence - with the analytical method which consists, as applied to patients suffering from disorders analogous to Hanold's delusion, in bringing to their consciousness, to some extent forcibly, the unconscious whose repression led to their falling ill" (Standard Edition, IX, 88). Such is the powerful thrust of similitude. Freud has no more qualms to reduce "poetic creations" to real persons or the "Pompeian fancy" to a simple "psychiatric study." Beneath the trappings of truth, on the razor's edge of demonstration, forces are confronting each other in order to turn the process - the text -into a product. If Gradiva adheres so perfectly to the analytical mold, the analysis of the novel must serve as an absolute proof, in Freud's words, of the theory of the unconscious. Absolute proof - or absolute counter-proof... Even thought "absolute" is clearly too strong a word for such a circum-scribed operation, to counter Freud's interpretation and thus unsettle he theory of the unconscious is indeed the substance of the present attempt. Not to replace Freud's elaborate construct with another, more powerful, mode of evaluation would certainly prove the wisdom in the face of the illusion of truth. Although "nihilistic" at heart, such a perspective is not bound to be simply negative. It can attest to a growing force. I realize that I can overcome the temptation of total interpretations, whose values are universal (they are actually symptoms of fear and apathy). To destroy the belief in the law, to dissipate the fiction of predictability, to reject the sage recurrence of the "same," this is not just a "critical" stand. It is an act of force. But destruction must not open onto an absence of values, worthless or meaninglessness. It must lead to a new evaluation. Nietzsche sees in the wisdom of the East a principle of decadence, a weakening of the power of appropriation. Force of intention matters more than will to truth. To reject truth without intensifying the force of invention still participates in the ascetic ideal, thus in ressentiment. "To read off a text without interposing an interpretation" therefore is "hardly possible" (The Will to Power, 479). I must use my creative forces to create values without falling into the inertia of truth or an anemia of will. I must render the text, and the world, to their "disturbing and enigmatic character"; will them incomprehensible, elusive, "in flux," only indebted to perspective valuations: "The greater the impulse toward unity, the more firmly may one conclude that weakness is present; the greater the impulse toward variety, differentiation, inner decay, the more force is present" (WP, 655). Inner decay: to dance away over oneself. Motion, not emotions. Freud's interpretation resists the false neutrality of science. It only shows a sign of decline when it aims for the truth, when it succumbs to the temptation of unity, the sick security of monism, the illusion of a reconciliation. A reactive interpretation, it assumes powerful, but fabricated, weapons: the difference between objects and subjects, cause and effect, means and ends, etc. That Gradiva presents a certain order of succession in no way proves that individual moments are related to one another as cause and effect, that they obey a "law" and a calculus but rather that different factions abruptly confront each other in their attempt to draw their ultimate consequence at every moment. "As long as there is a structure, as long as there is a method, or better yet as long as structure and method exist through the mental, through intelligence, time is trapped - or else we imagine we have trapped it" (John Cage, Pour les Oiseaux. Belfond, 1976, 34). Structural analysis properly discerned that a narrative establishes | a confusion between time (succession) and logic (cause and effect). However, instead of "delogifying" time, it forced narrative time to sub-mit to narrative logic. Far from being dispelled, the confusion became the very springboard of analysis! It is high time to take advantage of this latency of the narrative, of the divorce between consequence and construction, in order to "rechronocize" succession. I will, here and now, stop wanting the story to go somewhere. I will forget what I know feebly, in advance, in order to gather the whole complexity of forces at play in a text. I will learn to resist the melody of casual relations and the torpor of narrative accumulations in order to reinvent the intensity of risks, ceaselessly menacing and forever being reborn.

## 2AC

### 2AC – Invisibility

#### You read the Invisible Committee wrong – they impact turn your framework argument and love the aff

Them in 9 http://tarnac9.noblogs.org/gallery/5188/insurrection\_english.pdf

There’s no reason to engage in one citizens’ collective or another, in one extreme left impasse or another, in the latest communitarian imposture. All the organizations that claim to contest the present order themselves have all the puppetry of the form, morals and language of miniature States about them. None of the old lies about “doing politics differently” have ever contributed to anything but the indefinite extension of Statist pseudopodia48 . There’s no reason to react to the news of the day, but to understand each information given as an operation carried out on a hostile battlefield full of strategies to decode, an operation aiming precisely to stir up some certain reaction or another among some group of people or another, and to see that operation itself as the real news contained within the apparent news. There’s no more reason to expect or wait for anything – to expect that it will all blow over, that the revolution will come, a nuclear apocalypse or a social movement. To wait anymore is madness. The catastrophe isn’t coming; it’s here. We’re already situated within a civilization’s movement of collapse. And we have to take part in it. To stop waiting means to enter into insurrectionary logic in one way or another. It means to begin to hear, once again, in the voices of our rulers, that trembling of terror that’s never really left them. Because to govern has never meant anything but to hold back, by a thousand subterfuges, the moment when the crowd will string you up – and every act of government is nothing but another way to keep from losing control over the population.

#### The K misreads history – change is the key internal link to progress – also their argument necessitates complicity in evil because any action *could* be coopted

Trott, 10

Ben Trott, journal newspaper in which to think through, debate and articulate the political, social, economic and cultural theories of our movements, as well as the networks of diverse practices and alternatives that surround them; “Skipping steps,” May 2010, http://www.redpepper.org.uk/Skipping-steps/ //bghs-ms

Second, The Coming Insurrection offers a very one-dimensional reading of history, which derives directly from that of the Situationists. For The Invisible Committee, history is the history of defeat. Or rather, what Debord would call 'recuperation', turning systemic opposition or criticism into something not only controllable, but profitable. Think of the trajectory taken by punk: from a riotous youth movement to the shelves of H&M, via Vivienne Westwood diamond-studded safety pins. This narrative is not incorrect as such, but it is incomplete. The book fails to recognise, for instance, that the precarious, flexible and mobile reality of work today, which it so vividly describes, is in part a result of the earlier rejection of the monotony of the assembly line. This does not mean we should just be happy with our lot. But failing to recognise the role that previous generations' struggles played in shaping the world runs the risk of underestimating the range of possibilities to bring about further changes. It is on the basis of these shortcomings that The Coming Insurrection proposes its strategy for change: an attempt to deploy forms of struggle that cannot be recuperated (as if they existed!), de-linked from the rest of the left, and relatively disinterested in some of the most pressing questions. Such as: where and by whom is social wealth produced today? Or: how can we go about democratically deciding how we want to produce and live in the future? In the current political and economic climate, proposals for a radical remaking of society are an urgent necessity. But in skipping vital questions the book ends up providing a strategy unlikely to bear fruit.

Any risk we solve is a reason to vote aff – extend Ali and Batur – Islamophobia enables violent exclusion, war, and genocide – this is an unethical system of segregation that you should make every effort to reject

No link – we aren’t a movement – our argument is just that if the judge thinks Islamophobia is bad, they should vote aff to align themselves against it

#### Orejection destroys ability to find allies

Krishna, 93 (Sankaran, professor of political science, university of Hawaii, Alternatives 1993 v. 18 p.400)

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

### Discourse Shapes Reality

#### Their position is incoherent—content has no meaning without an interrogation of form

Bleiker 2000 (Roland Bleiker, professor of international relations at the University of Queensland, 2000, “Popular Dissent, Human Agency and Global Politics” pg. 280)

To recognize that language is politics is to acknowledge that form and substance cannot be separated. The manner in which a text is written, a speech is uttered, a thought is thought, is integral to its content. There is no neutral form of representing the world, a form that is somehow detached from the linguistic and social practices in which the speaker or writer is embedded. Science and philosophy, empirical analyses and literature, mathematics and poetry, are all bound by the form through which they convey their ideas. Being built on specific grammatical and rhetorical structures, all of these stories and accounts, Michael Shapiro points out, implicitly advance political arguments. All of them, “no matter how much their style might protest innocence, contain a mythical level—that is they have a job to do, a perspective to promote, a kind of world to affirm or deny.” This is not to say that every account of social dynamics is equally insightful or valid. But it is to accept that linguistic practices are metaphorical. Some tropes, however, have been so extensively rehearsed and are so deeply entrenched in linguistic and cultural traditions that they appear as authentic representations of the real. Dissent in global politics is the process that interferes with such objections.

### 2AC – FW

#### The entirety of Western politics rests on the state of exception – any action that begins with the State maintains the ability to determine life

Agamben 98 – professor of philosophy at the University of Verona (Giorgio, Homo Sacer, pg. 8-9)

The protagonist of this book is bare life, that is, the life of *homo sacer* (sacred man), who *may be killed and yet not sacrificed,* and whose essential function in modern politics we intend to assert. An obscure figure of archaic Roman law, in which human life is included in the juridical order || *ordinamento* || solely in the form of its exclusion (that is, of its capacity to be killed), has thus offered the key by which not only the sacred texts of sovereignty but also the very codes of political power will unveil their mysteries. At the same time, however, this ancient meaning of the term sacer presents us with the enigma of a figure of the sacred that, before or beyond the religious, constitutes the first paradigm of the political realm of the West. The Foucauldian thesis will then have to be corrected or, at least, completed, in the sense that what characterizes modern politics is not so much the inclusion of zo~in rhepo/is—which is, in itself, absolutely ancient—nor simply the fact that life as such be­comes a principal object of the projections and calculations of State power. Instead the decisive fact is that, together with the process by which the exception everywhere becomes the rule, the realm of bare life—which is originally situated at the margins of the political order—gradually begins to coincide with the political realm, and exclusion and inclusion, outside and inside, bios and zoe right and fact, enter into a zone of irreducible indistinction. At once exclud­ing bare life from and capturing it within the political order, the state of exception actually constituted, in its very separateness, the hidden foundation on which the entire political system rested. ‘When its borders begin to be blurred, the bare life that dwelt there frees itself in the city and becomes both subject and object of the conflicts of the political order, the one place for both the organiza­tion of State power and emancipation from it. Everything happens as if, along with the disciplinary process by which State power makes man as a living being into its own specific object, another process is set in motion that in large measure corresponds to the birth of modern democracy, in which man as a living being pres­ents himself no longer as an *object* but as the *subject* of political power. These processes—which in many ways oppose and (at least apparently) bitterly conflict with each other—nevertheless con­verge insofar as both concern the bare life of the citizen, the new biopolitical body of humanity.

#### Passivity

Antonio, 95 – Professor of Sociology at the University of Kansas (Robert J., “Nietzsche's Antisociology: Subjectified Culture and the End of History,” The American Journal of Sociology, 101.1, p. 14-15, 1995)

The "problem of the actor," Nietzsche said, "troubled me for the longest time."' He considered "roles" as "external," "surface," or "foreground" phenomena and viewed close personal identification with them as symptomatic of estrangement. While modern theorists saw differentiated roles and professions as a matrix of autonomy and reflexivity, Nietzsche held that persons (especially male professionals) in specialized occupations overidentify with their positions and engage in gross fabrications to obtain advancement. They look hesitantly to the opinion of others, asking themselves, "How ought I feel about this?" They are so thoroughly absorbed in simulating effective role players that they have trouble being anything but actors—"The role has actually become the character." This highly subjectified social self or simulator suffers devastating inauthenticity. The powerful authority given the social greatly amplifies Socratic culture's already self-indulgent "inwardness." Integrity, decisiveness, spontaneity, and pleasure are undone by paralyzing overconcern about possible causes, meanings, and consequences of acts and unending internal dialogue about what others might think, expect, say, or do (Nietzsche 1983, pp. 83-86; 1986, pp. 39-40; 1974, pp. 302-4, 316-17). Nervous rotation of socially appropriate "masks" reduces persons to hypostatized "shadows," "abstracts," or simulacra. One adopts "many roles," playing them "badly and superficially" in the fashion of a stiff "puppet play." Nietzsche asked, "Are you genuine? Or only an actor? A representative or that which is represented? . . . [Or] no more than an imitation of an actor?" Simulation is so pervasive that it is hard to tell the copy from the genuine article; social selves "prefer the copies to the originals" (Nietzsche 1983, pp. 84-86; 1986, p. 136; 1974, pp. 232-33, 259; 1969b, pp. 268, 300, 302; 1968a, pp. 26-27). Their inwardness and aleatory scripts foreclose genuine attachment to others. This type of actor cannot plan for the long term or participate in enduring net-works of interdependence; such a person is neither willing nor able to be a "stone" in the societal "edifice" (Nietzsche 1974, pp. 302-4; 1986a, pp. 93-94). Superficiality rules in the arid subjectivized landscape. Neitzsche (1974, p. 259) stated, "One thinks with a watch in one's hand, even as one eats one's midday meal while reading the latest news of the stock market; one lives as if one always 'might miss out on something.' `Rather do anything than nothing': this principle, too, is merely a string to throttle all culture. . . . Living in a constant chase after gain compels people to expend their spirit to the point of exhaustio0n in continual pretense and overreaching and anticipating others." Pervasive leveling, improvising, and faking foster an inflated sense of ability and an oblivious attitude about the fortuitous circumstances that contribute to role attainment (e.g., class or ethnicity). The most mediocre people believe they can fill any position, even cultural leadership. Nietzsche respected the self-mastery of genuine ascetic priests, like Socrates, and praised their ability to redirect ressentiment creatively and to render the "sick" harmless. But he deeply feared the new simulated versions. Lacking the "born physician's" capacities, these impostors amplify the worst inclinations of the herd; they are "violent, envious, exploitative, scheming, fawning, cringing, arrogant, all according to circumstances." Social selves are fodder for the "great man of the masses." Nietzsche held that "the less one knows how to command, the more urgently one covets someone who commands, who commands severely—a god, prince, class, physician, father confessor, dogma, or party conscience." The deadly combination of desperate conforming and overreaching and untrammeled ressentiment paves the way for a new type of tyrant (Nietzsche 1986, pp. 137, 168; 1974, pp. 117-18, 213, 288-89, 303-4).

### AT: Decisionmaking

#### Switch-side debate creates worse decision making by lending credibility to Rightist fascism

Kahn, 10 (Richard Kahn, Assistant Professor of Educational Foundations and Research at the University of North Dakota, Critical Pedagogy, Ecoliteracy, and Planetary Crisis: The Ecopedagogy Movement, 2010, pp. 9-11)

Worse still, though, is that here environmental literacy has not only been co-opted by corporate state forces and morphed into a progressively-styled, touchy-feely method for achieving higher scores on standardized tests like the ACT and SAT, but in an Orwellian turn it has come to stand in actuality for a real illiteracy about the nature of ecological catastrophe, its causes, and possible solutions. As I will argue in this book, our current course for social and environmental disaster (though highly complex and not easily boiled down to a few simple causes or strategies for action) must be traced to the evolution of: an anthropocentric worldview grounded in what the sociologist Patricia Hill Collins (1993) refers to as a matrix of domination (see chapter 1); a global technocapitalist infrastructure that relies upon market-based and functionalist versions of technoliteracy to instantiate and augment its socio- economic and cultural control (see chapters 2 and 3); an unsustainable, reductionistic, and antidemocratic model of institutional science (see chapter 4); and the wrongful marginalization and repression of pro-ecological resistance through the claim that it represents a “terrorist” force that is counter to the morals of a democratic society rooted in tolerance, educational change, and civic debate (see chapter 5). By contrast, the environmental literacy standards now showcased at places like the Zoo School as “Hall- marks of Quality” (Archie, 2003, p. 11) are those that consciously fail to develop the type of radical and partisan subjectivity in students, that might be capable of deconstructing their socially and environmentally deleterious hyper-individualism or their obviously socialized identities that tend toward 10 Critical Pedagogy, Ecoliteracy, and Planetary Crisis state-sanctioned norms of competition, hedonism, consumption, marketization, and forms of quasi-fascistic patriotism. Just as Stapp (1969) theorized environmental literacy as a form of political moderation that could pacify the types of civic upheaval, that occurred during the Civil Rights era, now too during the tendentious political atmosphere that has arisen as the legacy of the George W. Bush presidency, being environmentally literate quite suspiciously means learning how to turn the other cheek and listen to “both sides” of an issue—even when the issue is the unprecedented mass extinction of life taking place on the planet. In a manner that accords more with Fox News than Greenpeace, a leading environmental literacy pamphlet (Archie, 2003) emphasizes that “Teaching and learning about the environment can bring up controversies that must be handled in a fair and balanced manner in the classroom” (p. 11). Later in the document a teacher from Lincoln High School in Wisconsin is highlighted in order to provide expert advice in a similar fashion: “I’d say the most important aspect of teaching about the environment is to look at all aspects involved with an issue or problem. Teach from an unbiased position no matter how strong your ideas are about the topic. Let the kids make decisions for themselves” (p. 12), she implores. This opinion is mirrored by the Environmental Education Division of the Environmental Protection Agency (a federal office, created by the Bush administration, dedicated to furthering environmental literacy), which on its own website underscores as “Basic Information” that “Environmental education does not advocate a particular viewpoint or course of action. Rather, it is claimed that environmental education teaches individuals how to weigh various sides of an issue through critical thinking and it enhances their own problem-solving and decision-making skills.”10 Yet, this definition was authored by an administration trumping for a wider right-wing movement that attempts to use ideas of “fair and balanced” and “critical thinking” to occlude obvious social and ecological injustices, as well as the advantage it gains in either causing or sustaining them. This same logic defending the universal value of nonpartisan debate has been used for well over a decade by the right to prevent significant action on global warming. Despite overwhelming scientific acceptance of its existence and threat, as well as of its primarily anthropogenic cause, those on the right have routinely trotted out their own pseudo-science on global warming and thereby demanded that more research is necessary to help settle a debate on the issue that only they are interested in continuing to facilitate. Ecopedagogy: An Introduction 11 Likewise, within academic circles themselves, powerful conservatives like David Horowitz have the support of many in government who are seeking to target progressive scholars and viewpoints on university and college campuses as biased evidence of a leftist conspiracy at work in higher education (Nocella, Best & McLaren, Forthcoming). In order to combat such alleged bias, “academic freedom” is asserted as a goal in which “both sides” of academic issues must be represented in classrooms, departments, and educational events. The result of this form of repressive tolerance (see chapter 5) is simply to impede action on matters worth acting on and to gain further ideological space for right-wing, corporate and other conservative-value agendas.11 It is clear, then, that despite the effects and growth of environmental education over the last few decades, it is a field that is ripe for a radical reconstruction of its literacy agenda. Again, while something like environmental education (conceived broadly) should be commended for the role it has played in helping to articulate many of the dangers and pitfalls that modern life now affords, it is also clear that it has thus far inadequately surmised the larger structural challenges now at hand and has thus tended to intervene in a manner far too facile to demand or necessitate a rupture of the status quo. What has thereby resulted is a sort of crisis of environmental education generally and, as a result, the prevailing trends in the field have recently been widely critiqued by a number of theorists and educators who have sought to highlight their limitations.

### AT: SSD

#### Bracketing off of our protest is enabled by the state of exception and legitimizes brutal cycles of governmentality – turns switch-side

Elmer and Opel, 8 (Greg Elmer, associate professor of communication and culture at Ryerson University, PhD in communication from the University of Massachusetts at Amherst, director of the Infoscape Research Lab at Ryerson University, Andy Opel, associate professor of communication at Florida State University, PhD in mass communication from the University of North Carolina, member of the International Communication Association, November 2008, “Preempting Dissent: The Politics of an Inevitable Future,” pages 29-41)

SHORTLY AFTER THE LARGE-SCALE PROTESTS against the World Trade Organization in Seattle in late November 1999, police, law enforcement agencies, the military, and global weapons manufacturers began to rethink their responses to public protests. Since the Seattle protests, similar semi—annual gatherings of government officials and corporate trade lawyers have consistently attracted large public protests, organized by public-interests groups denied participation in the decision-making process of trade agreements such as the Global Agreement on Trade and Tariffs (GATT), the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA), and the Free Trade Area of the Americas (FTAA). Wide—scale protests were seen in Prague, Genoa, Cancun, Quebec City, Miami, and, most recently, Mar Del Plata, Argentina. Moreover, as we will see in this chapter, as the size and sophistication of resistance grew, so too did political and legal responses to that resistance. Responses to such protests have been greatly influenced by military and so—called ‘homeland’ security strategies enacted after the terrorist attacks of 9/11 and the initiation of the controversial second Gulf War. As we see in this chapter, the combination of a changing political climate in response to war and terrorism, particularly the expansion of preemptive forms of social control and political containment, has resulted in a new set of practices that have reconfigured public space and criminalized multiple aspects of free speech and public assembly in the United States. This chapter argues that in the shadow of 9/11, the war in Iraq, and the ongoing “War on Terror,” a disturbing form of geopolitical apartheid has emerged in the United States. At the core of this trend is a set of micro-political strategies and technologies that attempt to contain spaces of dissent and detain protestors (Boghosian, 2004). Some activists and critics have labeled these anti-democratic tendencies the “Miami Model,” after the strategies deployed in November 2003 against Free Trade of the Americas protestors by federal, state, and local law enforcement agencies stationed in Miami. The Miami model of law enforcement was characterized by 1) the deployment of overwhelming numbers of law enforcement officers, 2) preemptive arrests of peaceful and law—abiding protestors, and 3) widespread police surveillance techniques before, during, and after protests (Getzan, 2004). And while these three pillars—overwhelming force, preemptive arrests, and surveillance—-provide a good overview of police and law enforcement strategies, in this chapter we focus on the manner in which spaces of dissent, debate, and democracy are being regulated and policed through the courts, going into more depth in the next chapter, through a study of the introduction of weapons meant to easily contain and detain protestors and, more broadly, immobilize dissent. Of greater concern is the degree to which such strategies systematically marginalize dissent, spatially and politically speaking. From the creation of “free speech zones” and the proposal for protest free “Pedestrian Safety Zones”2° to the political screening of participants in political “town hall meetings,” space has increasingly become a tool to limit open debate, freedom of speech, and political dissent in the US. Part of our interest in exposing the strategies of political segregation, first through the containment of protest spaces, and second, through the deployment of preemptive hand-held weapons, is theoretical. The segregation of deviance has often been influenced by Foucaultian theories of panopticism and social control. An increasing number of scholars, however, are arguing that Foucault’s panoptic prison, even deployed in metaphorical terms, has been overextended, particularly when considering broader geographic perspectives (Haggerty & Ericson, 2000; Elmer, 2004). Many scholars arguing that panopticism must move beyond architectures or institutions of social control, do so in large part to theorize emerging technological, “virtual,” or simulated forms of surveillance and discipline (e.g., Bogard; Gandy). While we find such arguments to be productive, they typically juxtapose their ideas against corporeal surveillance and monitoring of the past. Human surveillance and policing factors, conversely, play a key role in monitoring political organizing activities and training, peaceful protests, and acts of civil disobedience (Boghosian, 2004, p. 29). Moreover, Foucault’s metaphorical use of a penitentiary as the historical trope or dispositif for social discipline, reformation, and self-actualization, while providing a broad conceptual framework for a dispersed theory of self-discipline, control, and conformity, has little to say about that which escapes conformity, namely public protest, civil disobedience, and other forms of social and political dissent. Under the constant gaze of social mores and values, Foucault’s subjects are implored to change and police their own behaviour. The proliferation of surveillance technologies (such as closed-circuit TV, CCTV), preemptive policing, programs that attempt to anticipate future social and geopolitical risks (Elmer Opel, 2006), and the presumption of guilt instead of innocence, are in part a response to past intelligence failures. The inability to gain adequate and up-to-date intelligence on domestic and international risks in the US, UK, Iraq, Pakistan, North Korea, Iran, etc., continues to highlight the limits and shortcomings of surveillance programs and intelligence—gathering techniques. The recognition of decentred and distributed network infrastructures and relationships among protesters, migrants, and terrorists in the US and elsewhere, has similarly stretched conventional thinking about the structure and deployment of surveillance programs and technologies. In short, members of such feared networks are not typically considered panoptic subjects, that is to say, they are not clients, candidates, or inmates in need of reform, or self-discipline. Rather, it is argued that such networked subjects have become increasingly influenced by strategic and indefinite forms of containment and detainment. Didier Bigo’s (2006) extension of Foucault’s theories of social control provides a helpful point of departure. While Bigo shares the goal of extending theories of social and political control outside of the prison and other social institutions, he maintains an interest in the social control of populations, specifically through the mobility, capture, and detainment of specific populations. By introducing the concept of the “ban-opticon,” Bigo succeeds in moving outside the panoptic walls of punishment, to question the optics and governmentality of indefinite detainment, a questionable spatial and legal tactic used in the “War on Terror” and with migrant communities. Such detainees, be they in Guantanamo Bay or in immigrant holding centres in the EU and elsewhere, have no intention of turning their subjects into law-abiding, productive citizens (Miller, 1993), rather their goal is both to remove individuals from war, or to merely return them to their previous location—to ban them. In both cases, individuals are immobilized and excluded from participating in war and/ or entering Western societies. Although political protestors produce a different set of challenges from domestic law enforcement and forces of political control in the US—primarily their visibility in the media as increased evidence of opposition to the political status quo—they are similarly immobilized, contained, and in some cases detained without charge. Such detainments, further, in many instances are not subject to punishment (fines, etc.); rather, they are increasingly used to preemptively, and temporarily remove protestors from public spaces until the conclusion of protests (Boghosian, 2004, p. 29). The operationalization of preemptive tactics in the US further highlights the limitations of Foucault’s decentred model of power, in which sovereignty is manifest through dispersed disciplinary technologies. Strategies of political containment and detainment, spatially and individually speaking, are in large part enabled by what Gieorgio Agamben (2005) refers to as the “state of exception,” the “no man’s land between public law and political fact” (p. 1). Ironically, while conservatives in the US continue to argue against a “living constitution,” where interpretations over the nation’s law change over time,21 the Bush administration actively sought to reinterpret executive powers during the so-called War on Terror. Following Agamben, Didier Bigo (2006) argues that such interpretations are enacted through explicit declarations by political rulers, a declaration that invokes an exception to the rule of law. Broadly construed, the US administration continues to invoke the War on Terror to blur the line between law and politics. In defence of the secret wiretapping program, the Bush administration has argued that an exception to the rule of law was enacted by the legislation, giving the president preemptive powers to carry out surveillance. Similar arguments have been made in the UK, Canada, and France. The Boston Globe and other media in the US also reported about the growing use of “signing statements” by the US president, as a means to state his exception to the new law. For example, after the signing of US Senator John McCain’s anti—torture bill in the January 2006, the president declared that “The executive branch shall construe [the law] in a manner consistent with the constitutional authority of the President as Commander in Chief.” He also added that this interpretation “will assist in achieving the shared objective of the Congress and the President ... of protecting the American people from further terrorist attacks” (Savage, 2004). Of course, many American laws that govern executive power, public debate, and, as we see next, dissent and protest in public space, are so broadly written that they practically cultivate political exceptionalism. For example, as an adjunct to debates over the US Patriot Act, the “spatial tactics” of law enforcement have recently produced a series of controversial rulings about the accessibility of public spaces for the purposes of political protest. Thus, at a time when public advocates and intellectuals have reinforced the importance of understanding the democratic and political aspects of various geographies——most notably innovative and tolerant ones (Florida, 2003) and environmentally sustainable ones (Gore, 2007)—the American legal system continues to downplay or altogether avoid spatial considerations in First Amendment cases. Timothy Zick (2005), for example, argues that “The reason courts fail to properly scrutinize spatial tactics is that they have accepted the common conception of place as mere res—a neutral thing, an undifferentiated mass, a backdrop for expressive scenes” (p. 3). Results of this legal conception of place as a “neutral thing” include the protest zones (some resembling cages”) established at both the Democratic and Republican national conventions during the summer of 2004 as well as the now routine practice of keeping protestors many blocks and often miles away from free trade, WTO, or GATT meetings. Later in the same year the G8 summit was held on the tiny (private) Sea Island, just off the coast near Savannah, Georgia, a choice that made it nearly impossible——given the security noose around the island——to stage a meaningful and visible protest. In South Carolina, the well-known activist Brett Bursey gained nationwide attention for a series of attempts to protest against President Bush at Republican Party organized rallies, the last of which, in 2004, resulted in his arrest and conviction under a statute that enables the Secret Security to establish a security perimeter or zone around the president. Mirroring Zick’s argument about the court’s treatment of space as an objective or neutral equation in contemporary politics, an aide to the former South Carolina Senator Strom Thurmond, was quoted on National Public Radio as saying that: The statute under which Mr. Bursey’s been charged alleges that he failed to vacate an area that had been cordoned off for a visit by the president of the United States. It is a content—neutral statute, and Mr. Bursey is charged not because of what he was doing but because of where he was doing it. The US statute in question—-USC 18: 1 752(a)(l)(ii), “Temporary residences and offices of the President and others”—while not a new, post-9/11 law, nevertheless raises obvious questions and concerns about its use as a political tool for spatially and politically marginalizing dissent. The law in effect establishes a temporary “residence” for the president as he goes about his business across the country. The law forbids groups or individuals from entering or remaining with an area (defined as “building,” “grounds,” or “any posted, cordoned off. . .” area where the president is visiting).24 Moreover, the law does not apply universally, only to those who intend “to impede or disrupt the orderly conduct of Government business or official functions.” Interestingly, in the course of preparing Bursey’s defence, lawyers were able to gain access to the Secret Service’s policy manual on protests. The South Carolina Progressive Network subsequently used the document to highlight the means by which the Bush administration was interpreting the above mentioned law to segregate protestors away from the president’s supporters and the media. Moreover, The Progressive Network also maintained that while the law did give the Secret Service the power to cordon off access to the president, “There is no limitation to the size of the restricted area.” Furthermore, “In the Bursey case, the restricted area was approximately 70 acres and stretched for a mile.”25 With no spatial limits on the separation of protestors from the US president, political marginalization becomes a distinct possibility. The spatial segregation of speakers according to the content of their messages all too easily bifurcates voices and perspectives into “two sides,” mirroring the dominant red/ blue political culture of the US. Thus in the absence of political leaders, protests, and, perhaps more importantly, acts of civil disobedience, lose their publicity, all too often becoming marginalized spectacles distanced from the machinations of political parties, candidates, and government. Zick put it this way: “In these places, protests and demonstrations become staged events, bland and neutered substitutions for the passionate and, yes, sometimes chaotic face-to—face confrontations that have characterized our country’s past” (Zick, 2005, p. 45). The process of segregating public space according to political message and turning public gatherings into “staged events” is contrasted with the actual political strategy of the staged event or “town hall meeting,” where pre-screened publics appear to ask government officials “authentic” questions, a practice that has many online examples as well.26 This illusion of public participation is another quality of the spatial turn in free speech politics where city streets are cordoned off to become de facto “stages” for media cameras. By literally separating the demonstrators from the object of their demonstration, the protest zone becomes “a way of controlling the content of the debate without really acknowledging that is what is being done” (Mitchell, 2003, p. 39). In addition to creating media frames and stages, protest zoning also facilitates preemptive police tactics, placing all potential protestors in one location in the name of security. Fencing in protestors or zoning them away from a given site implies a threat or danger that requires preemptive zoning, thus “assuming guilt until innocence is proven” (Mitchell, 2003, p. 39). Mitchell refers to this zoning as the “ghettoization” of protest; we prefer the South African analogy of an apartheid as more accurate. Whereas a ghetto is often viewed as the result of low-income people clustered together out of necessity and a lack of resources, apartheid was an explicit legal and spatial strategy that segregated settlements and produced a second-class citizenry. Parallels can be drawn to the state of liberal democracy in the United States, where protestors and political dissidents are legally restrained and contained outside of the so-called mainstream political stage. Yet, as we will see in the next chapter, preemptive arrests, facilitated by segregationist spatial tactics and exceptionalist forms of governmentality, often move beyond the realm of the panoptic to the violent repressive use of weaponry, what are creatively termed “less-lethal technologies.” As we shall see, many new crowd control technologies have incorporated decidedly preemptive logics that explicitly reinforce our belief that the preemptive doctrine is as much about controlling behaviours and seeking broader political compliance as it is a technique for reducing actual risks and dangers.

### 2AC – Neolib

#### Case turns the K – the system’s motor will never be jammed in a world of security’s state of exception

Agamben, 2000 (Giorgio Agamben, professor of philosophy at the European Graduate School; “Means Without End,” Univ. Minnesota Press, 2000, pg. 133)

Nothing is more nauseating than the impudence with which those who have turned money into their only raison d'etre periodically wave around the scarecrow of economic crisis: the rich nowadays wear plain rags so as to warn the poor that sacrifices will be necessary for everybody. And the docility is just as astonishing; those who have made themselves stolidly complicitous with the imbalance of the public debt, by handing all their savings over to the state in exchange for bonds, now receive the warning blow without batting an eyelash and ready themselves to tighten their belts. And yet those who have any lucidity left in them know that the crisis is always in process and that it constitutes the internal motor of capitalismin its present phase, much as the state of exception is today the normal structure of political power. And just as the state of exception requires that there be increasingly numerous sections of residents deprived of political rights and that in fact at the outer limit all citizens be reduced to naked life, in such a way crisis, having now become permanent, demands not only that the people of the Third World become increasingly poor, but also that a growing percentage of the citizens of the industrialized societies be marginalized and without a job. And there is no so-called democratic state today that is not compromised and up to its neck in such a massive production of human misery.

#### Capitalism isn’t the root cause of anything – pretending it is justifies the worst violence – empirics prove

Aberdeen, 3 (Richard Aberdeen; 2003 “THE WAY A Theory of Root Cause and Solution” http://freedomtracks.com/ uncommonsense/theway.html)

A view shared by many modern activists is that capitalism, free enterprise, multi-national corporations and globalization are the primary cause of the current global Human Rights problem and that by striving to change or eliminate these, the root problem of what ills the modern world is being addressed. This is a rather unfortunate and historically myopic view, reminiscent of early “class struggle” Marxists who soon resorted to violence as a means to achieve rather questionable ends. And like these often brutal early Marxists, modern anarchists who resort to violence to solve the problem are walking upside down and backwards, adding to rather than correcting, both the immediate and long-term Human Rights problem. Violent revolution, including our own American revolution, becomes a breeding ground for poverty, disease, starvation and often mass oppression leading to future violence. Large, publicly traded corporations are created by individuals or groups of individuals, operated by individuals and made up of individual and/or group investors. These business enterprises are deliberately structured to be empowered by individual (or group) investor greed. For example, a theorized ‘need’ for offering salaries much higher than is necessary to secure competent leadership (often resulting in corrupt and entirely incompetent leadership), lowering wages more than is fair and equitable and scaling back of often hard fought for benefits, is sold to stockholders as being in the best interest of the bottom-line market value and thus, in the best economic interests of individual investors. Likewise, major political and corporate exploitation of third-world nations is rooted in the individual and joint greed of corporate investors and others who stand to profit from such exploitation. More than just investor greed, corporations are driven by the greed of all those involved, including individuals outside the enterprise itself who profit indirectly from it. If one examines “the course of human events” closely, it can correctly be surmised that the “root” cause of humanity’s problems comes from individual human greed and similar negative individual motivation. The Marx/Engles view of history being a “class” struggle ¹ does not address the root problem and is thus fundamentally flawed from a true historical perspective (see Gallo Brothers for more details). So-called “classes” of people, unions, corporations and political groups are made up of individuals who support the particular group or organizational position based on their own individual needs, greed and desires and thus, an apparent “class struggle” in reality, is an extension of individual motivation. Likewise, nations engage in wars of aggression, not because capitalism or classes of society are at root cause, but because individual members of a society are individually convinced that it is in their own economic survival best interest. War, poverty, starvation and lack of Human and Civil Rights have existed on our planet since long before the rise of modern capitalism, free enterprise and multi-national corporation avarice, thus the root problem obviously goes deeper than this. Junior Bush and the neo-conservative genocidal maniacs of modern-day America could not have recently effectively gone to war against Iraq without the individual support of individual troops and a certain percentage of individual citizens within the U.S. population, each lending support for their own personal motives, whatever they individually may have been. While it is true that corrupt leaders often provoke war, using all manner of religious, social and political means to justify, often as not, entirely ludicrous ends, very rare indeed is a battle only engaged in by these same unscrupulous miscreants of power. And though a few iniquitous elitist powerbrokers may initiate nefarious policies of global genocidal oppression, it takes a very great many individuals operating from individual personal motivations of survival, desire and greed to develop these policies into a multi-national exploitive reality. No economic or political organization and no political or social cause exists unto itself but rather, individual members power a collective agenda. A workers’ strike has no hope of succeeding if individual workers do not perceive a personal benefit. And similarly, a corporation will not exploit workers if doing so is not believed to be in the economic best interest of those who run the corporation and who in turn, must answer (at least theoretically) to individuals who collectively through purchase or other allotment of shares, own the corporation. Companies have often been known to appear benevolent, offering both higher wages and improved benefits, if doing so is perceived to be in the overall economic best interest of the immediate company and/or larger corporate entity. Non-unionized business enterprises frequently offer ‘carrots’ of appeasement to workers in order to discourage them from organizing and historically in the United States, concessions such as the forty-hour workweek, minimum wage, workers compensation and proscribed holidays have been grudgingly capitulated to by greedy capitalist masters as necessary concessions to avoid profit-crippling strikes and outright revolution.

#### The war on drugs serves as a pretext for US hegemony over Mexico and expansion of neoliberal policies

Mercille, 11

lecturer in the School of Geography, Planning and Environmental Policy at Univeristy College Dublin, PhD from UCLA (Julien, “Violent Narco-Cartels or US Hegemony? The political economyof the ‘war on drugs’ in Mexico,” Third World Quarterly, Vol. 32 No. 9, 2011, pp 1637–1653, Taylor & Francis Online)//BI

What are the causes of Mexico’s drug trafficking and violence? What is the meaning and purpose of the war on drugs in Mexico? The conventional answers to such questions have been presented by a number of government officials, journalists and scholars.4 While there exist a variety of theoretical, methodological and empirical emphases, such approaches have all neglected the central role of political economy in their analyses. For example, some have provided ethnographic accounts of US–Mexico drug trafficking,5 others have interpreted the drugs war at the border as fulfilling a symbolic political function allowing US government leaders to show resolve to voters and Congress,6 or have studied the role of the drugs war in militarising the US– Mexico border,7 and have compared and contrasted the war on narcotics with the war on immigration and homeland security waged by the US government.8 Despite these differences, the mainstream interpretation shares the following components: . Overwhelming attention is directed to the drug cartels, seen as the main— or even only—source of the problem of drug trafficking and violence. . The US, concerned with drug use and violence, collaborates with the Mexican authorities to reduce the cartels’ power by waging a war on drugs in Mexico. If lawlessness prevails, the cartels could take over parts of the state and refugees could flood the US. . A key obstacle to US plans is corruption among Mexican officials, fuelled by the cartels, which makes it difficult to win the drugs war. . Thus, solutions include cleaning Mexican institutions of corruption, interdiction and arrests of drug kingpins, increasing military aid, and promoting NAFTA-type free trade agreements to achieve economic development. . Some researchers recognise that US drug consumption and firearms smuggling to Mexico are part of the problem and call for reducing US demand for drugs and regulating gun sales and trafficking. The conventional view thus focuses on the drug cartels’ role in causing mayhem in Mexico and corrupting its governmental institutions. In the words of General (ret) Barry McCaffrey, US drug czar under Bill Clinton, Mexico ‘is fighting for survival against narco-terrorism’ and we need to support ‘the courageous Mexican leadership of the Calderón Administration’ because ‘the violent, warring collection of criminal drug cartels could overwhelm the institutions of the state’ and we could be faced with ‘a surge of millions of refugees crossing the US border to escape the domestic misery of violence’.9 Robert Bonner, former director of the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) and chief of US Customs and Border Protection, comments approvingly on Calderón’s militarised drug war because he thinks the Mexican military is ‘one of the country’s few reliable institutions’. True, it has led to 40,000 deaths since 2006, but ‘the increase in the number of drug-related homicides, although unfortunate, is a sign of progress’, because it shows the government is finally destabilising the cartels. The US is depicted as a well intentioned leader fighting the scourge of drugs and corruption for which the cartels are responsible. For example, Richard Haass, the president of the Council on Foreign Relations, comments that ‘American efforts to . . . shore up the [Mexican] justice system have been substantial’.10 Some analysts add that the large US consumption of drugs and smuggling of firearms into Mexico must also be taken into account and rightly call for a reduction in demand in the US and better regulation of the flow of guns southward. However, they remain blind to, and even support, US hegemony over Mexico (political, economic and military). For example, David Shirk, in a Council on Foreign Relations report, asserts that ‘US authorities should make greater efforts to encourage NAFTA trade by facilitating legitimate cross-border flows’ to develop the Mexican economy.11 There is also a right-wing libertarian view that opposes drug prohibition and Washington’s war on drugs in Mexico and elsewhere while calling for the legalisation of drugs as a solution. In some respects this position goes against the mainstream interpretation, but it still focuses on corruption and narcocartels, and neglects the crucial political economic dimension. For example, it fails to consider the detrimental impact of neoliberal ‘free trade’ agreements on drug problems. On the contrary, it advocates more economic deregulation: ‘Latin American governments should move more aggressively to deregulate their economies and spur economic growth, thereby creating new opportunities for those people who are now involved in the lower echelons of the drug trade . . . The adoption of the North American Free Trade Agreement provided important new economic opportunities for Mexico.’12 This article presents an alternative interpretation that focuses on US hegemony over Mexico and in particular the neoliberal reforms like NAFTA that it has promoted since the early 1980s. Although the article’s emphasis is on drug issues, it is framed within a critical political economic analysis of US foreign policy and neoliberalism. In outline, and as will be illustrated throughout, it is maintained that post-World War II US foreign policy has been shaped by the following key factors. First and foremost is the corporate sector’s need to maintain a favourable investment climate and markets in Latin America and elsewhere. Second is geopolitics and military strategy,

**MARKED**

which in Latin America has meant trying to keep the region as a US ‘backyard’ free of European, and later Chinese, influences, in addition to supporting allied military and militaristic regimes in power to prevent internal opposition from steering the region on a path independent of US hegemony. Ideology also plays a role in co-opting and making acceptable US policies to elites and segments of the population in Latin America.13 The article first shows that neoliberal policies have increased the size of the drugs industry, for example by forcing millions of peasants into the drugs trade in search of work. Second, it demonstrates how US hegemonic projects like NAFTA have been protected and policed partly under the pretext of the war on drugs, which is used discursively to promote closer bilateral relations between the US and Mexican militaries. This allows the latter to contain popular opposition to neoliberal policies in general, but also to use drugs control directly as a pretext to arrest individuals and groups who resist such projects. Washington’s support for institutions and officials corrupted by the Mexican narcotics industry and associated with human rights abuses—the Mexican government, military and security forces, and perhaps even some cartel leaders—will be highlighted. Third, drugs money laundering by US banks will be discussed with reference to Mexican cases to show that the financial sector’s involvement in narcotics has never been tightly regulated because it provides significant liquidity to a powerful segment of US society. The article concludes by pointing to the large US drug consumption that fuels trafficking and to Washington’s failure to invest more in treatment of addicts and prevention, the two solutions proven by research to be the most effective in reducing consumption, as opposed to the relatively ineffective arrests of drug kingpins and seizures of narcotics shipments.14 The US failure to stop the smuggling of firearms south of the border will also be briefly discussed. Overall, and contrary to the mainstream interpretation, the article emphasises the significant responsibility of the US in Mexico’s drug traffic and its discursive manipulation of the war on drugs, none of which, however, negates the responsibility of Mexican drug cartels as generators of violence. The next section provides historical background showing the continuities between the past and more recent situation.