## Embodiment

#### Our individual critique of warfare is key to solve-

#### War is an embodied experience- our relation of the state of precarity that places bodies in a constant state of threat is necessary to understand the bodily manifestations of warfare

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This book places the body at the centre of critical thinking about war, giving embodiment and bodily issues an analytic recognition they have often been denied in the annals and ontology of conventional war scholarship. The reality of war is not just politics by any other means but politics incarnate, politics written on and experienced through the thinking, feeling bodies of men and women. From steeled combatants to abject victims, from the grieving relative to the exhausted aid worker, war occupies innumerable bodies in a multitude of ways, profoundly shaping lives and ways of being human. The opening description of war provides one vivid illustration of how war ‘makes sense’ at a fundamentally embodied and affective level. For the young Mozambican narrator, war is an anticipatory nervousness that constantly ‘lives inside’ her, a somatic knowing that underpins her every thought and move. As Nordstrom (1998: 108) argues, something ‘far more complex, multifaceted and enduring than the formal boundaries of war demarcated in military cultures takes root in the quotidian life of a country at war’. It is this ontology of war that the scholarship in this book seeks to elucidate and explore – the countless affective, sensory and embodied ways through which war lives and breeds. 1 Shaw (2005: 40– 1) argues that ‘the defect of most social theory of war and militarism is . . . that it has not considered war as practice, i.e. what people actually do in war’. This book aims to address that omission via an explicit focus upon the embodied practices, structures of feeling and lived experiences through which war and militarism take place. While this will include the examination of specific modes of embodying force and practices of ‘warfighting’, the analysis extends both temporally and spatially to consider the bodily preparations for, and the corporeal aftermaths of, war – both within militaries and beyond. Indeed, an analytic focus upon the body tends to render any clear demarcation of discrete war zones and times problematic, 2 emphasising instead the enactment and reproduction of war through affective dispositions, corporeal careers, embodied suffering and somatic memories that endure across time and space. 3 Furthermore, it is not just the bodies of combatants and victims that are produced by and central to war, but the bodies of veterans, witnesses, pacifists, patriots and many others. Given the global nature of contemporary economic, migratory and media flows, few in today’s interconnected world remain completely isolated from war’s touch (Sylvester 2011). While in post-­ conscription Western states with increasingly professionalised and privatised militaries, there may be less direct disciplinary engagement with civilian bodies – leading some commentators to have proposed the existence of ‘post-­ military society’ (Shaw 1991) and ‘post-­ heroic warfare’ (Luttwak 1995) – many such states have been marked by a profound re-­ militarisation at a wider political and cultural level in recent decades, a mobilisation that has often been intensely embodied and emotional. Ó Tuathail (2003: 859), for example, describes the political channelling of ‘the affective tsunami unleashed by the terrorist attacks of 2001’. He argues that 9/11 was processed by many Americans in a fundamentally visceral manner, becoming a ‘somatic marker’ – effectively a ‘gut instinct’ shaping perception and judgement below the threshold of rational, deliberative discussion – that would subsequently be appropriated to legitimate the military invasion of Iraq in 2003. Stahl (2010) relatedly understands the inculcation of contemporary consumers into the burgeoning interactive culture of ‘militainment’ in terms of affective and kinaesthetic entrainment, a seduction whose pleasures are ultimately felt at the expense of developing any other critical capacities to engage with matters of military might. It is through such mundane cultural practices that the legitimacy of having vast military force – what the anthropologist Catherine Lutz (2009) refers to as the ‘military normal’ – assumes an implicitness, becomes something not thought but routinely felt in everyday life. Such examples point to the need to think about the reproduction of war, and war readiness, in terms of a militarisation of sensation, affect and the body that operates over time and across multiple and broad constituencies. 4 The remainder of this chapter will concentrate on exploring the relative neglect of embodiment in many conventional discussions of war and the increasingly problematic and paradoxical status of the body in recent Western wars.

## Disability

#### Subjects are produced by opposing social forces, dominant one’s allow individuals to slip through the cracks and become un-grievable life

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To refer to "ontology" in this regard is not to lay claim¶ to a description of fundamental structures of being that are¶ distinct from any and all social and political organization.¶ On the contrary, none of these terms exist outside of their¶ political organization and interpretation. The "being" of the¶ body to which this ontology refers is one that is always given¶ over to others, to norms, to social and political organizations¶ that have developed historically in order to maximize precariousness for some and minimize precariousness for¶ others. It is not possible first to define the ontology of the¶ body and then to refer to the social significations the body¶ assumes. Rather, to be a body is to be exposed to social¶ crafting and form, and that is what makes the ontology of the¶ body a social ontology. In other words, the body is exposed to¶ socially and politically articulated forces as well as to claims of¶ sociality-including language, work, and desire-that make¶ possible the body's persisting and flourishing. The more or¶ less existential conception of "precariousness" is thus linked¶ with a more specifically political notion of "precarity." And¶ it is the differential allocation of precarity that, in my view,¶ forms the point of departure for both a rethinking of bodily¶ ontology and for progressive or left politics in ways that¶ continue to exceed and traverse the categories of identity. 1 The epistemological capacity to apprehend a life is partially¶ dependent on that life being produced according to norms¶ that qualify it as a life or, indeed, as part of life. In this way,¶ the normative production of ontology thus produces the¶ epistemological problem of apprehending a life, and this in turn¶ gives rise to the ethical problem of what it is to acknowledge¶ or, indeed, to guard against injury and violence. Of course,¶ we are talking about different modalities of "violence" at each¶ level of this analysis, but that does not mean that they are all¶ equivalent or that no distinctions between them need to be¶ made. The "frames" that work to differentiate the lives we¶ can apprehend from those we cannot (or that produce lives¶ across a continuum of life) not only organize visual experience¶ but also generate specific ontologies of the subject. Subjects¶ are constituted through norms which, in their reiteration,¶ produce and shift the terms through which subjects are recognized. These normative conditions for the production of¶ the subject produce an historically contingent ontology, such¶ that our very capacity to discern and name the "being" of the¶ subject is dependent on norms that facilitate that recognition.¶ At the same time, it would be a mistake to understand the¶ operation of norms as deterministic. Normative schemes are¶ interrupted by one another, they emerge and fade depending¶ on broader operations of power, and very often come up¶ against spectral versions of what it is they claim to know:¶ thus, there are "subjects" who are not quite recognizable as¶ subjects, and there are "lives" that are not quite--or, indeed,¶ are never-recognized as lives. In what sense does life, then,¶ always exceed the normative conditions of its recognizability?¶ To claim that it does so is not to say that "life" has as its¶ essence a resistance to normativity, but only that each and¶ every construction of life requires time to do its job, and that¶ no job it does can overcome time itself. In other words, the¶ job is never done "once and for all." This is a limit internal to¶ normative construction itself, a function of its iterability and¶ heterogeneity, without which it cannot exercise its crafting¶ power, and which limits the finality of any of its effects.