# V-Bilt 1AC

### 1

#### We begin with a recounting of the testimony of Rafiq-ur-Rehman before Congress on Tuesday October 29 Of this year

Congressman Grayson, thank you for inviting me to speak. Thank you also for

everything you did to try to help our lawyer, Shahzad Akbar, obtain a visa. While in

the end we did not succeed, it was reassuring to me that some members of the US

government were trying to shed light on this terrifying US practice.

My name is Rafiq-ur-Rehman. On October 24, 2012, a CIA drone killed my 67 year

old mother and injured my children and those of my brother’s.

Nobody has ever told me why my mother was targeted that day. Some media outlets

reported that the attack was on a car, but there is no road alongside my mother’s

house. Others reported that the attack was on a house. But the missiles hit a nearby

field, not a house. All of them reported that three, four, five militants were killed.

But only one person was killed that day – Mammana Bibi, a grandmother and

midwife who was preparing to celebrate the Islamic holiday of Eid. Not a militant, but

my mother.

In urdu we have a saying: aik lari main pro kay rakhna. Literally translated, it means

the string that holds the pearls together. That is what my mother was. She was the

string that held our family together. Since her death, the string has been broken and

life has not been the same. We feel alone and we feel lost.

We also feel scared. My family no longer gathers together like it did when my mother

was alive. I hardly see my brothers and sisters and my children rarely see their

cousins. Their cousins tell them that they are afraid to visit because the drone might

then kill them, too.

Four of my children were injured that day and four of my brother’s children. We have

had to borrow money and sell land to pay for the childrens’ medical treatment. There

has been no compensation to help with these bills. The Pakistani government

accepted my claim and confirmed the details. But it says it is not responsible; the

U.S. is.

I am a primary school teacher in my community. I come from a family of teachers.

Both of my brothers are teachers and my father is a retired headmaster.

Congressman Grayson, as a teacher, my job is to educate. But how do I teach

something like this? How do I explain what I myself do not understand? How can I in

good faith reassure the children that the drone will not come back and kill them, too,

if I do not understand why it killed my mother and injured my children?

My mother is not the first innocent victim of US drones. Numerous families living in

my community and the surrounding area have also lost loved one, including women

and children, in these strikes over the years. Dozens of people in my own tribe that I

know are merely ordinary tribesman have been killed. They have suffered just like I

have. I wish they had such an opportunity as well to come tell you their story. Until

they can, I speak on their behalf as well. Drones are not the answer.

In the end I would just like to ask the American public to treat us as equals. Make

sure that your government gives us the same status of a human with basic rights as

they do to their own citizens. We do not kill our cattle the way US is killing humans in

Waziristan with drones. This indiscriminate killing has to end and justice must be

delivered to those who have suffered at the hands of unjust.

#### Rafiq’s powerful testimony has the ability to fundamentally alter the way congress allows the CIA and the Military to conduct war. Unfortunately, policymakers in the United States just don’t care. Only 5 representatives decided to show up to hear the testimony of Rafiq and his children. A story that brought the translator to tears was only received by 1 percent of those the resolution asks us to role-play. We refuse to pretend to be the government because we refuse to act like we don’t care. What congress has done in unacceptable, but individuals like you and me are at the root of this problem. Denying our own complicity in this violence normalizes the destruction of everything “Other”. While american deaths are inscribed in monuments to be never forgotten, the deaths the u.s. causes are denied any form of grief

Butler 4 – PhD, Hannah Arendt Professor of Philosophy at the European Graduate School  
Judith, 2004, “Precarious Life: The Powers of Mourning and Violence” p. XIV-XV. http://butlerphile.files.wordpress.com/2010/06/butler\_judith\_-\_precarious\_lif.pdf

The second piece “Violence, Mourning, Politics,” takes up a psychoanalytic understanding of loss to see why aggression sometimes seems so quickly to follow. The essay pursues the problem of a primary vulnerability to others, one that one cannot will away without ceasing to be human. It suggests as well that contemporary forms of national sovereignty constitute efforts to overcome an impressionability and violability that are ineradicable dimensions of human dependency and sociality. I also consider there how certain forms of grief become nationally recognized and amplified, whereas other losses become unthinkable and ungrievable. I argue that a national melancholia, understood as a disavowed mourning, follows upon the erasure from public representations of the names, images, and narratives of those the US has killed. On the other hand, the US’s own losses are consecrated in public obituaries that constitute so many acts of nation-building. Some lives are grieveable, and others are not; the differential allocation of grievability that decides what kind of subject is and must be grieved, and which kind of subject must not, operates to produce and maintain certain exclusionary conceptions of who is normatively human: what counts as livable life and a grievable death?

#### Thus, vote for the 1AC as an act of grieving.

### 2

#### The hatred of war is spread not by politicians, but individuals who share the imperial logic sprouting from the american government. Friends being called terrorists in high school lunchrooms because they are proud to wear a debutta, family members fearing for their own because the boys at school decided that “not from here” was a suitable excuse to be targeted, and neighbors struggling against a society that refuses to let a woman from Indian parents forget that she is different exemplify this normalization of violence. The Other is not someone far away and foreign, but people we interact with every day.

#### Until we confront this violence, it will continue to destroy everyone caught in its path. Instead of viewing warfare solely as enacted by congress, we must own up the violence we wage on behalf of the u.s., and grieve the deaths we have been complicit in. To deny this connection is uniquely depoliticizing

Susanne Kappeler (Associate Professor at Al-Akhawayn University) 1995 The Will to Violence: The Politics of Personal Behaviour, pg. 75-76

War does not suddenly break out in a peaceful society; sexual violence is not the disturbance of otherwise equal gender relations. Racist attacks do not shoot like lightning out of a non-racist sky, and the sexual exploitation of children is no solitary problem in a world otherwise just to children. The violence of our most commonsense everyday thinking, and especially our personal will to violence, constitute the conceptual preparation, the ideological armament and the intellectual mobilization which make the 'outbreak' of war, of sexual violence, of racist attacks, of murder and destruction possible at all. 'We are the war', writes Slavenka Drakulic at the end of her existential analysis of the question, 'what is war?': I do not know what war is, I want to tell [my friend], but I see it everywhere. It is in the blood-soaked street in Sarajevo, after 20 people have been killed while they queued for bread. But it is also in your non-comprehension, in my unconscious cruelty towards you, in the fact that you have a yellow form [for refugees] and I don't, in the way in which it grows inside ourselves and changes our feelings, relationships, values - in short: us. We are the war . . . And I am afraid that we cannot hold anyone else responsible. We make this war possible, we permit it to happen.5 'We are the war' - and we also 'are' the sexual violence, the racist violence, the exploitation and the will to violence in all its manifestations in a society in so-called 'peacetime', for we make them possible and we permit them to happen. 'We are the war' does not mean that the responsibility for a war is shared collectively and diffusely by an entire society - which would be equivalent to exonerating warlords and politicians and profiteers or, as Ulrich Beck says, upholding the notion of'collective irresponsibility', where people are no longer held responsible for their actions, and where the conception of universal responsibility becomes the equivalent of a universal acquittal.6 On the contrary, the object is precisely to analyse the specific and differential responsibility of everyone in their diverse situations. Decisions to unleash a war are indeed taken at particular levels of power by those in a position to make them and to command such collective action. We need to hold them clearly responsible for their decisions and actions without lessening theirs by any collective 'assumption' of responsibility. Yet our habit of focusing on the stage where the major dramas of power take place tends to obscure our sight in relation to our own sphere of competence, our own power and our own responsibility — leading to the -well-known illusion of our apparent 'powerlessness' and its accompanying phenomenon, our so-called political disillusionment. Single citizens — even more so those of other nations - have come to feel secure in their obvious non-responsibility for such large-scale political events as, say, the wars in Croatia and Bosnia-Hercegovina or Somalia - since the decisions for such events are always made elsewhere. Yet our insight that indeed we are not responsible for the decisions of a Serbian general or a Croatian president tends to mislead us into thinking that therefore we have no responsibility at all, not even for forming our own judgement, and thus into underrating the responsibility we do have within our own sphere of action. In particular, it seems to absolve us from having to try to see any relation between our own actions and those events, or to recognize the connections between those political decisions and our own personal decisions. It not only shows that we participate in what Beck calls 'organized irresponsibility', upholding the apparent lack of connection between bureaucratically, institutionally, nationally and also individually organized separate competences. It also proves the phenomenal and unquestioned alliance of our personal thinking with the thinking of the major powermongers. For we tend to think that we cannot 'do' anything, say, about a war, because we deem ourselves to be in the wrong situation; because we are not where the major decisions are made. Which is why many of those not yet entirely disillusioned with politics tend to engage in a form of mental deputy politics, in the style of 'What would I do if I were the general, the prime minister, the president, the foreign minister or the minister of defence?' Since we seem to regard their mega spheres of action as the only worthwhile and truly effective ones, and since our political analyses tend to dwell there first of all, any question of what I would do if I were indeed myself tends to peter out in the comparative insignificance of having what is perceived as 'virtually no possibilities': what I could do seems petty and futile. For my own action I obviously desire the range of action of a general, a prime minister, or a General Secretary of the UN — finding expression in ever more prevalent formulations like 'I want to stop this war', 'I want military intervention', 'I want to stop this backlash', or 'I want a moral revolution.'7 'We are this war', however, even if we do not command the troops or participate in so-called peace talks, namely as Drakulic says, in our 'non-comprehension': our willed refusal to feel responsible for our own thinking and for working out our own understanding, preferring innocently to drift along the ideological current of prefabricated arguments or less than innocently taking advantage of the advantages these offer. And we 'are' the war in our 'unconscious cruelty towards you', our tolerance of the 'fact that you have a yellow form for refugees and I don't' - our readiness, in other words, to build identities, one for ourselves and one for refugees, one of our own and one for the 'others'. We share in the responsibility for this war and its violence in the way we let them grow inside us, that is, in the way we shape 'our feelings, our relationships, our values' according to the structures and the values of war and violence.

#### Current discourse surrounding warfare is detached from the violence it describes. Newscasters report atrocities in the same monotone they use to report the weather, and to the public those killed are just numbers across the bottom of the screen. Until any emotion can be felt for those sacrificed to the american war machine, they will continue to remain faceless.

#### The affirmative’s affective response is necessary to solve- it creates a connection with the Other, and outrage has unique political potential

Judith Butler, 09- “Frames of War: When is Life Grievable?” Judith Butler is Maxine Elliot Professor in the Departments of Rhetoric and Comparative Literature at the University of California, Berkeley. Pg. 39-42

Open grieving is bound up with outrage, and outrage¶ in the face of injustice or indeed of unbearable loss has¶ enormous political potential. It is, after all, one of the¶ reasons Plato wanted to ban the poets from the Republic.¶ He thought that if the citizens went too often to watch¶ tragedy, they would weep over the losses they saw, and¶ that such open and public mourning, in disrupting the¶ order and hierarchy of the soul, would disrupt the order¶ and hierarchy of political authority as well. Whether we¶ are speaking about open grief or outrage, we are talking¶ about affective responses that are highly regulated by¶ regimes of power and sometimes subject to explicit¶ censorship. In the contemporary wars in which the US is directly engaged, those in Iraq and Afghanistan, we¶ can see how affect is regulated to support both the war¶ effort and, more specifically, nationalist belonging. When¶ the photos of Abu Ghraib were first released in the US,¶ conservative television pundits argued that it would be un-American¶ to show them. We were not supposed to have¶ graphic evidence of the acts of torture US personnel had¶ committed. We were not supposed to know that the US¶ had violated internationally recognized human rights. It¶ was un-American to show these photos and un-American¶ to glean information from them as to how the war was¶ being conducted. The conservative political commentator¶ Bill O'Reilly thought that the photos would create a¶ negative image of the US and that we had an obligation to¶ defend a positive image.5 Donald Rumsfeld said something¶ similar, suggesting that it was anti-American to display the¶ photos.6 Of course, neither considered that the American¶ public might have a right to know about the activities of its¶ military, or that the public's right to judge the war on the¶ basis of full evidence is part of the democratic tradition of¶ participation and deliberation. So what was really being¶ said? It seems to me that those who sought to limit the¶ power of the image in this instance also sought to limit the¶ power of affect, of outrage, knowing full well that it could¶ and would turn public opinion against the war in Iraq, as¶ indeed it did. The question, though, of whose lives are to be regarded¶ as grievable, as worthy of protection, as belonging to¶ subjects with rights that ought to be honored, returns us¶ to the question of how affect is regulated and of what we¶ mean by the regulation of affect at all. The anthropologist¶ Talal Asad recently wrote a book about suicide bombing in¶ which the first question he poses is: Why do we feel horror¶ and moral repulsion in the face of suicide bombing when¶ we do not always feel the same way in the face of state-sponsored¶ violence?7 He asks the question not in order to¶ say that these forms of violence are the same, or even to¶ say that we ought to feel the same moral outrage in relation¶ to both. But he finds it curious, and I follow him here,¶ that our moral responses-responses that first take form as¶ affect-are tacitly regulated by certain kinds of interpretive¶ frameworks. His thesis is that we feel more horror and moral¶ revulsion in the face of lives lost under certain conditions¶ than under certain others. If, for instance, someone kills¶ or is killed in war, and the war is state-sponsored, and we¶ invest the state with legitimacy, then we consider the death¶ lamentable, sad, and unfortunate, but not radically unjust.¶ And yet if the violence is perpetrated by insurgency groups¶ regarded as illegitimate, then our affect invariably changes,¶ or so Asad assumes.¶ Although Asad asks us to think about suicide bombing something¶ I won't do right now-it is also clear that¶ he is saying something important about the politics of¶ moral responsiveness; namely, that what we feel is in part¶ conditioned by how we interpret the world around us; that¶ how we interpret what we feel actually can and does alter¶ the feeling itself. If we accept that affect is structured by¶ interpretive schemes that we do not fully understand, can¶ this help us understand why it is we might feel horror in the¶ face of certain losses but indifference or even righteousness in light of others? In contemporary conditions of war and¶ heightened nationalism, we imagine that our existence is¶ bound up with others with whom we can find national¶ affinity, who are recognizable to us, and who conform¶ to certain culturally specific notions about what the¶ culturally recognizable human is. This interpretative¶ framework functions by tacitly differentiating between¶ those populations on whom my life and existence depend,¶ and those populations who represent a direct threat to my¶ life and existence. When a population appears as a direct¶ threat to my life, they do not appear as "lives," but as the¶ threat to life (a living figure that figures the threat to life).¶ Consider how this is compounded under those conditions¶ in which Islam is seen as barbaric or pre-modem, as not¶ yet having conformed to those norms that make the human¶ recognizable. Those we kill are not quite human, and not¶ quite alive, which means that we do not feel the same¶ horror and outrage over the loss of their lives as we do¶ over the loss of those lives that bear national or religious¶ similarity to our own.

#### The legal discourse of the status quo is founded upon a vacillation between reverence and destruction of life, switching from benevolent to violent with no explanation. The wars in the middle east, beginning with the goal of protecting life, have become over a decade of destructive policy.

#### Our injection of affect is key to displace this. Even “successes” of law in the past inevitably turn violent again

Judith Butler, 09- “Frames of War: When is Life Grievable?” Judith Butler is Maxine Elliot Professor in the Departments of Rhetoric and Comparative Literature at the University of California, Berkeley. Pg. 159-160

Asad offers a complex argument about the liberal constituents of identity, suggesting that suicide bombing strikes at what holds the liberal subject together, asking whether "suicide terrorism (like a suicidal nuclear strike) belongs in this sense to liberalism?" One of "the tensions that hold modern subjectivity together" involves two apparently opposite values: "reverence for human life and its legitimate destruction." Under what conditions does that reverence become primary? And under what conditions is that reverence abrogated through recourse to precepts of just wars and legitimate violence? Asad remarks, "Liberalism, of course, disapproves of the violent exercise of freedom outside the frame of law. But the law is founded by and continuously depends on coercive violence." This paradoxical founding of political liberalism makes itself known in the "tensions that hold modern subjectivity" in what Asad calls "the West."18 In fact, these tensions expose the rifts in modern subjectivity, but what is particularly modern is the vacillation between these two principles that are split off from one another, forming something like a dissociative disorder at the level of political subjectivity. Paradoxically, what holds the subject together for Asad is the capacity to shift suddenly from one principle (reverence for life) to another (legitimate destruction of life) without ever taking stock of the reasons for such a shift and for the implicit interpretations that condition these distinct responses. One reason we want to know about such apparently inexplicable shifts is that they appear to form the moral groundwork for an acceptable political subjectivity, which is to say that an unreasoned schism functions at the basis of this contemporary political rationality. I would like to suggest that what Asad offers us is a critique of a certain kind of liberal subject that makes that very subject into a political problem to be explicitly addressed. We can take this subject as the ground of politics only if we agree not to think well or carefully about the conditions of its formation, its moral responses, and its evaluative claims. Let us recall the kind of fundamental claims that are made in the course 'of "normative" debate about these issues; for example, that there are "subjects," Muslim or homosexual, who stand in positions of moral opposition to one another; that they represent different "cultures" or different "times in historical development," or fail to conform to established notions of "culture" or intelligible conceptions of "time," as the case may be. One response to this framework is to insist that there are different constructions of the subject at work, and that most versions of multiculturalism err when they assume that they know in advance what the form of the subject must be. The multiculturalism that requires a certain kind of subject actually institutes that conceptual requirement as part of its description and diagnosis. What formations of subjectivity, what configurations of life-worlds, are effaced or occluded by such a mandatory move?

#### Our use of the war narrative from the view of those being targeted allows us to escape the dominant frame that allows violence to continue. We must confront the lives on the other end of the drone screen before the violence will end. Any solution that leaves them faceless will inevitably revert back to violence

Judith Butler, 09- “Frames of War: When is Life Grievable?” Judith Butler is Maxine Elliot Professor in the Departments of Rhetoric and Comparative Literature at the University of California, Berkeley. Pg. 10-11

The frame that seeks to contain, convey, and determine¶ what is seen (and sometimes, for a stretch, succeeds in doing¶ precisely that) depends upon the conditions of reproducibility¶ in order to succeed. And yet, this very reproducibility entails¶ a constant breaking from context, a constant delimitation¶ of new context, which means that the "frame" does not¶ quite contain what it conveys, but breaks apart every time¶ it seeks to give definitive organization to its content. In¶ other words, the frame does not hold anything together in¶ one place, but itself becomes a kind of perpetual breakage,¶ subject to a temporal logic by which it moves from place¶ to place. As the frame constantly breaks from its context,¶ this self-breaking becomes part of the very definition. This¶ leads us to a different way of understanding both the frame's¶ efficacy and its vulnerability to reversal, to subversion, even¶ to critical instrumentalization. What is taken for granted¶ in one instance becomes thematized critically or even¶ incredulously in another. This shifting temporal dimension of the frame constitutes the possibility and trajectory of¶ its affect as well. Thus the digital image circulates outside¶ the confines of Abu Ghraib, or the poetry in Guantanamo¶ is recovered by constitutional lawyers who arrange for its¶ publication throughout the world. The conditions are set for¶ astonishment, outrage, revulsion, admiration, and discovery,¶ depending on how the content is framed by shifting time¶ and place. The movement of the image or the text outside of¶ confinement is a kind of "breaking out," so that even though¶ neither the image nor the poetry can free anyone from prison,¶ or stop a bomb or, indeed, reverse the course of the war, they¶ nevertheless do provide the conditions for breaking out of¶ the quotidian acceptance of war and for a more generalized¶ horror and outrage that will support and impel calls for justice¶ and an end to violence. Earlier we noted that one sense of "to be framed" means¶ to be subject to a con, to a tactic by which evidence is¶ orchestrated so to make a false accusation appear true.¶ Some power manipulates the terms of appearance and¶ one cannot break out of the frame; one is framed, which¶ means one is accused, but also judged in advance, without¶ valid evidence and without any obvious means of redress.¶ But if the frame is understood as a certain "breaking¶ out," or "breaking from," then it would seem to be more¶ analogous to a prison break. This suggests a certain¶ release, a loosening of the mechanism of control, and¶ with it, a new trajectory of affect. The frame, in this sense,¶ permits-even requires-this breaking out. This happened¶ when the photos of Guantanamo prisoners kneeling and¶ shackled were released to the public and outrage ensued; it¶ happened again when the digital images from Abu Ghraib¶ were circulated globally across the internet, facilitating a¶ widespread visceral tum against the war. What happens at¶ such moments? And are they merely transient moments¶ or are they, in fact, occasions when the frame as a forcible¶ and plausible con is exposed, resulting in a critical and¶ exuberant release from the force of illegitimate authority? How do we relate this discussion of frames to the¶ problem of apprehending life in its precariousness? It¶ may seem at first that this is a call for the production of¶ new frames and, consequently, for new kinds of content.¶ Do we apprehend the precariousness of life through the¶ frames available to us, and is our task to try to install¶ new frames that would enhance the possibility of that¶ recognition? The production of new frames, as part of the¶ general project of alternative media, is clearly important,¶ but we would miss a critical dimension of this project if¶ we restricted ourselves to this view. What happens when¶ a frame breaks with itself is that a taken-for-granted¶ reality is called into question, exposing the orchestrating¶ designs of the authority who sought to control the¶ frame. This suggests that it is not only a question of¶ finding new content, but also of working with received¶ renditions of reality to show how they can and do break¶ with themselves. As a consequence, the frames that, in¶ effect, decide which lives will be recognizable as lives¶ and which will not, must circulate in order to establish¶ their hegemony. This circulation brings out or, rather,¶ is the iterable structure of the frame. As frames break¶ from themselves in order to install themselves, other¶ possibilities for apprehension emerge. When those frames¶ that govern the relative and differential recognizability of¶ lives come apart-as part of the very mechanism of their¶ circulation-it becomes possible to apprehend something¶ about what or who is living but has not been generally¶ "recognized" as a life. What is this specter that gnaws at¶ the norms of recognition, an intensified figure vacillating¶ as its inside and its outside? As inside, it must be expelled¶ to purify the norm; as outside, it threatens to undo the¶ boundaries that limn the self. In either case, it figures¶ the collapsibility of the norm; in other words, it is a sign¶ that the norm functions precisely by way of managing¶ the prospect of its undoing, an undoing that inheres in¶ its doings.

#### Status quo discussions are regulated by violent interests that establish a climate of fear, where all difference is rejected and elites determine whose lives count as reality, creating world-wide groupthink gone violent. The affirmative is necessary to reconstitute reality in the eyes of the public sphere

Butler 4 – PhD, Hannah Arendt Professor of Philosophy at the European Graduate School  
Judith, 2004, “Precarious Life: The Powers of Mourning and Violence” p. XIV-XV. http://butlerphile.files.wordpress.com/2010/06/butler\_judith\_-\_precarious\_lif.pdf

The Levinasian face is not precisely or exclusively a human face, although it communicates what is human, what is precarious, what is injurable. The media representations of the faces of the “enemy” efface what is most human about the “face” for Levinas. Through a cultural transposition of his philosophy, it is possible to see how dominant forms of representation can and must be disrupted for something about the precariousness of life to be apprehended. This has implications, once again, for the boundaries that institute what will and will not appear within the public life, the limits of a publicly acknowledged field of appearance. Those who remain faceless or whose faces are presented to us as so many symbols of evil, authorize us to become senseless before those lives we have eradicated, and whose grievability is indefinitely postponed. Certain faces must be admitted into public view, must be seen and heard for some keener sense of the value of life, all life, to take hold. So, it is not that mourning is the goal of politics, but that without the capacity to mourn, we lose that keener sense of life we need in order to oppose violence. And though for some, mourning can only be resolved through violence, it seems clear that violence only brings on more loss, and the failure to heed the claim of precarious life only leads, again and again, to the dry grief on an endless political rage. And whereas some forms of public mourning are protracted and ritualized, stroking nationalist fervor, reiterating the conditions of loss and victimization that come to justify a more or less permanent war, not all forms of mourning lead to that conclusion. Dissent and debate depend upon the inclusion of those who maintain critical views of state policy and civic culture remaining part of a larger public discussion of the value of policies and politics. To charge those who voice critical views with treason, terrorist-sympathizing, anti-Semitism, moral relativism, postmodernism, juvenile behavior, collaboration, anachronistic Leftism, is to seek to destroy the credibility not of the views that are held, but of the persons who hold them. It produces the climate of fear in which to have a certain view is to risk being branded and shamed with a heinous appellation. To continue to voice one’s views under those conditions is not easy, since one must not only discount he truth of the appellation, but brave the stigma that seizes up from the public domain. Dissent is quelled, in part, through threatening the speaking subject with an uninhabitable identification. Because it would be heinous to identify as treasonous, as a collaborator, one fails to speak, or one speaks in throttled ways, in order to sidestep the terrorizing identification that threatens to take hold. This strategy for quelling dissent and limiting the reach of critical debate happens not only through a series of shaming tactics which have a certain psychological terrorization as their effect, but they work as well by producing what will and will not count as a viable speaking subject and a reasonable opinion within the public domain. It is precisely because one does not want to lose one’s status as a viable speaking being that one does not say what one thinks. Under social conditions that regulate identifications and the sense of viability to this degree, censorship operates implicitly and forceful. The line that circumscribes what is speakable and what is livable also functions as an instrument of censorship. To decide what views will count as reasonable within the public domain, however, is to decide what will and will not count as the public sphere of debate. And if someone holds the views that are not in line with the nationalist norm, that person comes to lack credibility as a speaking person, and the media is not open to him or her (though the internet, interestingly, is). The foreclosure of critique empties the public domain of debate and democratic contestation itself, so that the debate becomes the exchange of views among the like-minded, and criticism, which ought to be central to any democracy, becomes a fugitive and suspect activity. Public policy, including foreign policy, often seeks to restrain the public sphere from being open to certain forms of debate and the circulation of media coverage. One way a hegemonic understanding of politics is achieved is through circumscribing what will and will not be admissible as part of the public sphere itself. Without disposing populations in such a way that seems good and right and true, no war can claim popular consent, and no administration can maintain its popularity. To produce what will constitute the public sphere, however, it is necessary to control the way in which people see, how they hear, what they see. The constraints are not only on content- certain images of dead bodies in Iraq, for instance, are considered unacceptable for public visual consumption- but on what “can” be heard, read, seen, felt, and known. The public sphere is constituted in part by what can appear, and the regulation of the sphere of appearance is one way to establish what will count as reality, and what will not. It is also a way of establishing whose lives can be marked as lives, whose deaths will count as deaths. Our capacity to feel and to apprehend hangs in the balance. But so, too, does the fate of the reality of certain lives and deaths as well as the ability to think critically and publicly about the effects of war.

#### The Impact is endless assassination. If we allow drone strikes to continue the government will arrogate itself the right to kill anyone seen as suspect, anywhere in the world, at any time.

DEREK GREGORY, Department of Geography, University of British Columbia, “The everywhere war” This paper was accepted for publication in May 2011 http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/store/10.1111/j.1475-4959.2011.00426.x/asset/j.1475-4959.2011.00426.x.pdf?v=1&t=hkind5qg&s=fede42c8a2c2eefd37163c1ed92c6f5f887cf207

For many, particularly in the United States, 9/11 was a moment when the world turned; for others, particularly outside the United States, it was a climactic summation of a longer history of American imperialism in general and its meddling in the Middle East in particular. Either way, it is not surprising that many commentators should have emphasised the temporality of the military violence that followed in the wake of the terrorist attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon on that bright September morning: the ‘war on terror’ that became ‘the long war’. For the RETORT collective, the invasions of Afghanistan and Iraq marked ‘the elevation – into a state of permanent war – of a long and consis- tent pattern of military expansionism in the service of empire’ (RETORT 2005, 80). Keen (2006) wrote of ‘endless war’, Duffield (2007) of ‘unending war’ and Filkins (2008) of ‘the forever war’. The sense of per- manence endures, and yet Engelhardt (2010, 2–3) ruefully notes that it remains difficult for Americans to understand ‘that Washington is a war capital, that the United States is a war state, that it garrisons much of the planet, and that the norm for us is to be at war somewhere at any moment’. Bacevich (2010, 225) traces this state of affairs to what he calls the ‘Wash- ington rules’ that long pre-date 9/11. These are ‘the conviction that the obligations of leadership require the United States to maintain a global military pres-ence, configure its armed forces for power projection, and employ them to impose changes abroad’, which he argues have formed ‘the enduring leitmotif of US national security policy’ for the last 60 years and ‘propelled the United States into a condition approximating perpetual war’. Each of these temporal formulations implies spatial formations. For RETORT (2005, 103) ‘military neo- liberalism’ is ‘the true globalization of our time’. The planetary garrison that projects US military power is divided into six geographically defined unified com- batant commands – like US Central Command, CENTCOM – whose Areas of Responsibility cover every region on earth and which operate through a global network of bases. If you think this unremark- able, ask yourself Bacevich’s question: how would the United States react if China were to mirror these moves? Think, too, of the zones in which the shadow of US military violence still falls: not just Afghanistan and Iraq, but also Iran, Libya, Pakistan, Somalia, Yemen. Then think of the zones where the rhetoric of the ‘war on terror’ has been used by other states to legitimise repression: Chechnya, Libya, Palestine, the Philippines, Sri Lanka. And then think of the cities that have become displacements of the space of war, punctuation points in what Sassen (2010, 37) calls ‘a new kind of multi-sited war’: Casablanca, Lahore, London, Madrid, Moscow, Mumbai. All these lists are incomplete, but even in this truncated form they suggest the need to analyse not only ‘the forever war’ but also what we might call ‘the every- where war’. This is at once a conceptual and a material project whose scope can be indexed by three geo-graphs that trace a movement from the abstract to the concrete: Foucault’s (1975–6) prescient suggestion that war has become the pervasive matrix within which social life is constituted; the replacement of the concept of the battlefield in US military doctrine by the multi-scalar, multi-dimensional ‘battlespace’ with ‘no front or back’ and where ‘everything becomes a site of perma- nent war’ (Graham 2009, 389; 2010, 31); and the assault on the global borderlands where the United States and its allies now conduct their military opera- tions. The first two are never far from the surface of this essay, but it is the third that is my primary focus. Duffield (2001, 309) once described the borderlands as ‘an imagined geographical space where, in the eyes of metropolitan actors and agencies, the characteris- tics of brutality, excess and breakdown predominate’. There, in the ‘wild zones’ of the global South, wars are supposed to occur ‘through greed and sectarian gain, social fabric is destroyed and developmental gains reversed, non-combatants killed, humanitarian assis- tance abused and all civility abandoned’. This imagi- native geography folds in and out of the rhetorical distinction between ‘our’ wars – wars conducted by advanced militaries that are supposed to be surgical, sensitive and scrupulous – and ‘their’ wars. In reality, however, the boundaries are blurred and each bleeds into its other (Gregory 2010). Thus the US-led invasion of Afghanistan in October 2001 combined a long- distance, high-altitude war from the air with a ground war spearheaded by the warlords and militias of the Northern Alliance operating with US infantry and Special Forces; counterinsurgency in Afghanistan and Iraq has involved the co-option of ragtag militias to supplement US military operations; and in Afghani- stan the US Army pays off warlords and ultimately perhaps even the Taliban to ensure that its overland supply chain is protected from attack (Report of the Majority Staff 2010). In mapping these borderlands – which are also shadowlands, spaces that enter European and Ameri- can imaginaries in phantasmatic form, barely known but vividly imagined – we jibe against the limits of cartographic and so of geopolitical reason. From Rat- zel’s view of der Krieg als Schule des Raumes to Lacoste’s stinging denunciation – ‘la géographie, ça sert, d’abord, à faire la guerre’ – the deadly liaison between modern war and modern geography has been conducted in resolutely territorial terms. To be sure, the genealogy of territory has multiple valences, and Ratzel’s Raum is not Lacoste’s espace, but a criti- cal analysis of the everywhere war requires carto- graphic reason to be supplemented by other, more abile spatialities. This is not only a matter of tran- scending the geopolitical, connecting it to the bio- political and the geo-economic, but also of tracking space as a ‘doing’, precarious, partially open and never complete. It is in something of this spirit that Bauman (2002, 83) identifies the ‘planetary frontier- lands’ as staging grounds of today’s wars, where efforts to ‘pin the divisions and mutual enmities to the ground seldom bring results’. In the course of ‘inter- minable frontierland warfare’, so he argues, ‘trenches are seldom dug’, adversaries are ‘constantly on the move’ and have become for all intents and purposes ‘extraterritorial’. I am not sure about the last (Bauman is evidently thinking of al Qaeda, which is scarcely the summation of late modern war), but this is an arresting if impressionistic canvas and the fluidity con- veyed by Bauman’s broad brush-strokes needs to be fleshed out. After the US-led invasion of Iraq it was commonplace to distinguish the Green Zone and its satellites (the US political-military bastion in Baghdad and its penumbra of Forward Operating Bases) from the ‘red zone’ that was everywhere else. But this cat- egorical division is misleading. The colours seeped into and swirled around one another, so that occupied Iraq became not so much a patchwork of green zones and red zones as a thoroughly militarised landscape saturated in varying intensities of brown (khaki): ‘intensities’ because within this warscape military and paramilitary violence could descend at any moment without warning, and within it precarious local orders were constantly forming and re-forming. I think this is what Anderson (2011) means when he describes insurgencies oscillating ‘between extended periods of absence as a function of their dispersion’ and ‘moments of disruptive, punctual presence’, but these variable intensities entrain all sides in today’s ‘wars amongst the people’ – and most of all those caught in the middle. This is to emphasise the emergent, ‘event-ful’ quality of contemporary violence, what Gros (2010, 260) sees as ‘moments of pure laceration’ that punc- ture the everyday, as a diffuse and dispersed ‘state of violence’ replaces the usual configurations of war. Violence can erupt on a commuter train in Madrid, a house in Gaza City, a poppy field in Helmand or a street in Ciudad Juarez: such is the contrapuntal geog- raphy of the everywhere war. It is also to claim that, as cartographic reason falters and military violence is loosed from its frames, the conventional ties between war and geography have come undone: that, as Münkler (2005, 3) has it, ‘war has lost its well-defined contours’. In what follows, I propose to take Münkler at his word and consider three borderlands beyond Afghanistan and Iraq that illuminate some of the ways in which, since 9/11, late modern war is being trans- formed by the slippery spaces within which and through which it is conducted. I focus in turn on ‘Af-Pak’, ‘Amexica’ and cyberspace, partly because these concrete instances remind us that the every-where war is also always somewhere (Sparke 2007, 117), and partly because they bring into view features of a distinctly if not uniquely American way of war. Af-Pak’ ‘Af-Pak’ is the cover term coined by the Obama administration, and probably by its Special Represen- tative for Afghanistan and Pakistan Richard Hol- brooke, to describe the regional battlespace in which the United States pursues its armed conflict with the Taliban and al Qaeda. The term is widely disliked in Afghanistan and Pakistan, but its hyphen marks a pro- foundly ambiguous zone. The border was surveyed between 1894 and 1896 to delimit British colonial territories in India along the north-west frontier with Afghanistan. This so-called Durand Line bisected the cultural region of Pashtunistan, dividing villages and extended families with strong culture and kinship connections between them, and ever since the forma- tion of Pakistan in 1947, Afghanistan has insisted that the demarcation lapsed with the end of colonial rule. The established body of international law rejects the Afghan position, but Mahmud (2010) argues that the continued entanglements of law and colonial power show that in this post-colonial space law is still part of the problem rather than the solution because the border freeze-frames colonial demarcations. Not sur- prisingly, the borderlands are highly porous and many of their inhabitants routinely cross from Afghanistan into Pakistan and back without bothering about any border formalities. This includes the Taliban, whose movements are both episodic, fleeing hot pursuit from Afghanistan, and seasonal, returning from Pakistan when fighting resumes in the spring. This recent history has compounded the porosity of the region so that ‘Af-Pak’ also conjures up a shadowy, still more dispersed ‘risky geography’ that wires Afghanistan and Pakistan to ‘Londonistan’ and other European cities, and to terrorist cells and militant groups that threaten Europe and the continental United States (Amoore and de Goede 2011). Although the Taliban is predominantly Pashtun, it is not a monolith that straddles the border. The Taliban emerged in the early 1990s as an armed and predomi- nantly Pashtun response to the brutalising rule of the militias of the Northern Alliance who governed Afghanistan in the turbulent aftermath of the Soviet occupation in 1989. The Taliban sought to impose its own stringent version of Islamic law, and its advance drew thousands of veterans from the guerilla war against the Red Army and from Afghan refugee camps in Pakistan. The civil war that ensued was a bloody and protracted affair; hundreds of al-Qaeda fighters fought alongside Taliban troops, although the relations between the two were far from straightforward, and by the end of the decade Afghanistan had been virtually consumed by the violence. The insular, ultra- nationalist project of the Taliban was supported by Pakistan throughout the 1990s, and the neo-Taliban that regrouped after the US-led invasion of Afghani- stan has continued to seek an accommodation with Islamabad (Gregory 2004, 41–2). Its leadership council was driven from Kandahar and is now based in Quetta; its four regional military councils are based in Pakistan too, and it enjoys the support of Pakistan’s Directorate for Inter-Services Intelligence. These affili- ations sharply distinguish the Afghan Taliban from the Pakistan Taliban, or Tehrik-i-Taliban (TTP), which was formed in December 2007 as a loose coalition of militant Islamicist groups under Baitullah Mehsud. The Pakistan Taliban endorses the struggle against the US-led International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) in Afghanistan, but its primary target is the Pakistani state: it seeks to establish its own rule over the Feder- ally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA) on the border. The Pakistan military has conducted a series of offen- sive operations against the TTP in those areas, punc- tuated by wavering truces, but the FATA continue to have a tense and attenuated relationship to Islamabad, and in Urdu they are known as ilaqa ghair, ‘alien’, ‘foreign’, or even ‘forbidden’ lands. These ambivalences have a direct impact on strikes by Unmanned Aerial Vehicles (UAVs) in the FATA. The attacks are carried out by armed MQ-1 Predators and MQ-9 Reapers launched from bases in Afghanistan (and until early this year in Pakistan too) but remotely controlled by the CIA from the continental United States. The Predator was jointly developed for the US Air Force and the CIA, and at the CIA’s request it was armed with Hellfire missiles in early 2001. After 9/11 President George W. Bush signed an authorisation that gave the CIA wide latitude in the ‘war on terror’ through the issue of ‘kill, capture or detain’ orders against members of al Qaeda. Its immediate conse- quence was the initiation in October of the same year of the program of extraordinary rendition conducted in the shadows of the global war prison: the seizure, incarceration and torture of terrorist suspects at ‘black sites’. This was subsequently supplemented by a program directed at killing named individuals – ‘High Value Targets’ – who were on a list compiled by the CIA’s Counterterrorism Center. The first UAV strike in Pakistan took place on 18 June 2004. The initial pace was slow, in part because the number of UAVs was limited but also because the target list was restricted and ground intelligence meagre. There were eight more strikes before the assassination of Benazir Bhutto on 27 December 2007 prompted Bush to expand the target list from al Qaeda to a wider array of individuals, and thus to increase the rate of strike; by the end of 2008 there had been 46 strikes in Pakistan. As extraordinary renditions were terminated and black sites closed, President Barack Obama widened the scope of the target list still further and dramatically stepped up the tempo; faster and more powerful Reapers were pressed into service, borrowed from Air Force operations in Afghanistan, and by the end of 2010 there had been a further 180 strikes. Baitullah Mehsud was assassinated by a Predator strike in August 2009 – after 16 unsuccessful strikes over 14 months that killed several hundred others (Mayer 2009) – but this seems to have been a rare success. The vast majority killed in the last 2 years have reportedly been ordinary foot soldiers – people ‘whose names were unknown or about whom the Agency had only fragmentary information’ (Cloud 2010), although it had no hesitation in declaring vir- tually none of them civilians – and this has led to doubts about the purpose and parameters of the cam- paign (Miller 2011). These operations raise troubling questions. Some arise from the resort to extra-judicial killing that the United States once condemned: if it is wrong to torture suspects, how can it be right to assassinate them? How secure is the evidential basis on which targeting decisions are made? Others arise from the use of UAVs and the time–space compressions pro- duced by the techno-cultural armature of this new mode of war, although I think that most of the criti- cism about video feeds reducing war to a video game is misplaced – these are profoundly immersive tech- nologies that have quite other (and more serious) con- sequences for killing – but in any case these concerns apply with equal force to the strikes carried out by the Air Force’s Predators and Reapers in Afghanistan that use the Pentagon’s Joint Integrated Prioritised Target List to ‘put warheads on foreheads’ (Gregory 2011). Still others arise from the legal apparatus that consti- tutes the extended war zone, and it is these that concern me here. Plainly the United States is not at war with Pakistan, and even though Islamabad gives the nod to the strikes – while closing its eyes to their effects – Murphy (2009, 10) claims that the authority of Islamabad to sanction US military actions in the FATA is far from clear. For its part, the Obama admin- istration represents the strikes as legitimate acts of self-defence against the Afghan Taliban who are engaged in a transnational armed conflict and seek sanctuary across the border and as effective counter- terrorism tactics against al Qaeda and its affiliates hiding in Pakistan. But these are inadequate responses for at least three reasons that all revolve around the battlespace as a grey zone. First, even though the Air Force may be involved to some degree, it is the CIA that plans and executes the strikes. The CIA was created in 1947 as a civilian agency to counterbalance the influence of the mili- tary. Since then there has been a general ‘civilianisa- tion’ of war in all sorts of ways, which includes the outsourcing of support services to contractors, and the CIA has been transformed from a civilian agency into ‘a paramilitary organisation at the vanguard of Ameri- ca’s far-flung wars’ operating from an ‘archipelago of fire-bases’ in Afghanistan and beyond (Mazzetti 2010; Shane et al. 2010). But the CIA does not operate under military control so that, as Singer (2010) observes, the clandestine air war in Pakistan is commanded not by an Air Force general but by ‘a former congressman from California’, Leon Panetta, the Director of the CIA. According to Horton (2010), this is ‘the first time in U.S. history that a state-of-the-art, cutting-edge weapons system has been placed in the hands of the CIA’. Hence Singer’s (2010) complaint that civilians are operating advanced weapons systems outside the military chain of command and ‘wrestling with complex issues of war’ for which they have neither the necessary training – this is a moot point: it may be that CIA operators follow similar procedures protocols to their Air Force counterparts, including the incorpora- tion of legal advisers into the kill-chain to endorse the ‘prosecution of the target’ (Etzioni 2010; Mckelvey 2011) – nor, according to the National Security Act, the legal authority. This is the most damaging objec- tion because it turns CIA operators into the category that Bush so confidently consigned to the global war prison after 9/11: unlawful combatants (O’Connell 2009). This is such an obvious point that Paust (2010, 45), who otherwise endorses the strikes as acts of self-defence, concludes that the CIA’s lawyers must be leftovers from the Bush administration ‘who have proven either to be remarkably ignorant of the laws of war or conveniently quiet and complicit during the Bush–Cheney program of serial and cascading crimi- nality’. These considerations radically transform the battlespace as the line between the CIA and the mili- tary is deliberately blurred. Obama’s recent decision to appoint Panetta as Secretary of Defense and have General David Petraeus take his place as Director of the CIA makes at least that much clear. So too do the braiding lines of responsibility between the CIA and Special Forces in the killing of Osama bin Laden in Abbottabad in May 2011, which for that reason (and others) was undertaken in what Axe (2011) portrays as a ‘legal grey zone’ between two US codes, Title 10 (which includes the Uniformed Code of Military Justice) and Title 50 (which authorises the CIA and its covert operations) (Stone 2003). The role of the CIA in this not-so-secret war in Pakistan thus marks the for- mation of what Engelhardt and Turse (2010) call ‘a new-style [battlespace] that the American public knows remarkably little about, and that bears little relationship to the Afghan War as we imagine it or as our leaders generally discuss it’. Second, representing each drone strike as a sepa- rate act of self-defence obscures the systematic and cumulative nature of the campaign. Although the Obama administration insists that its targeting procedures adhere to the laws of armed conflict, the covert nature of a war conducted by a clandestine agency ensures that most of its victims are wrapped in blankets of secrecy. Accountability is limited enough in the case of a declared war; in an undeclared war it all but disappears. There is little or no recognition of civilian casualties, no inquiries into incidents that violate the principles of discrimination and proportionality, and no mechanism for providing compensation. The Cam- paign for Innocent Victims in Conflict reports from the FATA that: Drone victims receive no assistance from the Pakistani or US governments, despite the existence of Pakistani compensation efforts for other conflict-victims and US com- pensation mechanisms currently operating in Iraq and Afghanistan. Victims are left to cope with losses on their own while neither the Pakistani nor the US governments acknowledge responsibility for the strikes or the civilian status of those collaterally harmed. Rogers (2010, 64) The single exception to date has been the decision by Islamabad to compensate victims of a US drone strike in North Waziristan in March 2011. The details, such as they are, are revealing. Local people had gathered at a market with Taliban mediators to settle a dispute over a chromite mine; two UAVs launched four mis- siles that killed at least 40 people. Pakistan’s Prime Minister and the Chief of Army Staff both sharply condemned the strike as a reckless attack on civilians, including elders and children, but US officials insisted that the meeting was a legitimate terrorist target not ‘a bake sale’, ‘county fair’, ‘charity car wash’ or ‘the local men’s glee club’ (sic) (Masood and Shah 2011; Rodriguez 2011). As even this case shows, the advanced technology that makes the UAV campaign possible – the combination of sensor and shooter in a single platform – does not dispel the fog of war. Far from making the battlespace transparent, this new apparatus actively exploits another grey zone, the space between civilian and combatant that is peopled by the spectral figures that haunt the landscape of insurgency. Third, the legal logic through which the battlespace is extended beyond the declared zone of combat in Afghanistan is itself infinitely extendible. If the United States is fighting a global war, if it arrogates to itself the right to kill or detain its enemies wherever it finds them, where does it end? (Blank 2010–11). Human Rights Watch posed the key questions in a letter to Obama on 7 December 2010: While the United States is a party to armed conflicts in Afghanistan and Iraq and could become a party to armed conflicts elsewhere, the notion that the entire world is automatically by extension a battleground in which the laws of war are applicable is contrary to international law. How does the administration define the ‘global battle- field’ and what is the legal basis for that definition? What, if any, limits exist on ordering targeted killings within it? Does it view the battlefield as global in a literal sense, allowing lethal force to be used, in accordance with the laws of war, against a suspected terrorist in an apartment in Paris, a shopping mall in London, or a bus station in Iowa City? Do the rules governing targeted killing vary from one place to another – for example, are different criteria used in Yemen and Pakistan?’ Human Rights Watch (2010) These bloody geographies exploit another grey zone. Legal opinions are sharply divided about the regula- tion of armed conflict between state and non-state actors that takes place beyond state borders (‘transna- tional armed conflicts’). It is those states that have most strenuously pressed for the regulation of intra- state wars and the establishment of international criminal tribunals for conflicts in Ruanda and the former Yugoslavia that have most vigorously insisted on being allowed the maximum freedom to conduct their own trans-border campaigns against non-state actors (Benvenisti 2010). Law and war have always been intertwined, and international law is often re-made through war – in fact operating at the margins of the law is one of the most powerful ways of chang- ing it – and the UAV strikes in Pakistan are evidently no exception. They seek at once to expand the battlespace and to contract the legal armature that regu- lates its constitution. I have argued elsewhere that the American way of war has changed since 9/11, though not uniquely because of it (Gregory 2010), and there are crucial continuities as well as differences between the Bush and Obama administrations: ‘The man who many considered the peace candidate in the last election was transformed into the war president’ (Carter 2011, 4). This requires a careful telling, and I do not mean to reduce the three studies I have sketched here to a single interpretative narrative. Yet there are connections between them as well as contradictions, and I have indicated some of these en route. Others have noted them too. Pakistan’s President has remarked that the war in Afghanistan has grave consequences for his country ‘just as the Mexican drug war on US borders makes a difference to American society’, and one scholar has suggested that the United States draws legal authority to conduct military operations across the border from Afghanistan (including the killing of bin Laden, codenamed ‘Geronimo’) from its history of extra-territorial opera- tions against non-state actors in Mexico in the 1870s and 1880s (including the capture of the real Geronimo) (Margolies 2011). Whatever one makes of this, one of the most persistent threads connecting all three cases is the question of legality, which runs like a red ribbon throughout the prosecution of late modern war. On one side, commentators claim that new wars in the global South are ‘non-political’, intrinsically predatory criminal enterprises, that cartels are morphing into insurgencies, and that the origins of cyber warfare lie in the dark networks of cyber crime; on the other side, the United States places a premium on the rule and role of law in its new counterinsurgency doctrine, accentuates the involvement of legal advisers in targeting decisions by the USAF and the CIA, and even as it refuses to confirm its UAV strikes in Pakistan provides arguments for their legality. The invocation of legality works to marginalise ethics and politics by making available a seemingly neutral, objective language: disagreement and debate then become purely technical issues that involve matters of opinion, certainly, but not values. The appeal to legality – and to the quasi-judicial process it invokes – thus helps to authorise a widespread and widening militarisation of our world. While I think it is both premature and excessive to see this as a transformation from governmentality to ‘militariality’ (Marzec 2009), I do believe that Foucault’s (2003) injunction – ‘Society must be defended’ – has been transformed into an unconditional imperative since 9/11 and that this involves an intensifying triangulation of the planet by legality, security and war. We might remember that biopolitics, one of the central projects of late modern war, requires a legal armature to authorise its interven- tions, and that necropolitics is not always outside the law. This triangulation has become such a commonplace and provides such an established base-line for contemporary politics that I am reminded of an inter- view with Zizek soon after 9/11 – which for him marked the last war of the twentieth century – when he predicted that the ‘new wars’ of the twenty-first century would be distinguished by a radical uncertainty: ‘it will not even be clear whether it is a war or not’ (Deich- mann et al. 2002). Neither will it be – nor is it – clear where the battlespace begins and ends. As I have tried to show, the two are closely connected. For this reason I am able to close on a less pessimistic note. As I drafted this essay, I was watching events unfold on the streets of Cairo and other Egyptian cities, just weeks after similar scenes in Tunisia. I hope that the real, lasting counterpoint to 9/11 is to be found in those places, not in Afghanistan, Pakistan or Iraq. For those events show that ‘freedom’ and ‘democracy’ cannot be limited to the boastful banners of military adventur- ism, hung from the barrels of guns or draped across warships, and that ordinary people can successfully rise up against autocratic, repressive and corrupt regimes: including those propped up for so long by the United States and its European allies. Perhaps one day someone will be able to write about ‘the nowhere war’ – and not from Europe or North America.