THE 'IMAGE' QUESTION IN SECURITIZATION THEORY: ON MEDIATING AND IMAGING DISCOURSES OF IN/SECURITY

by

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For my parents, Mary and Steve

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ABSTRACT

The "linguistic turn" in international relations and policy studies has contributed to an understanding of the "constructedness" of the field of security studies. Yet, there has been marginal attention to pictorial or visual readings of the subject and the potential of images to shape discursive realities. This thesis asks how this can be accounted for by first reformulating the framework of securitization so as to situate it within the "pictorial turn," and examine the interfaces between visual culture and policy-making practices and public discourse that facilitate securitization in the ongoing War on Terror. It examines how discursive and visual imaging procedures functions as a form of communication, and the ways in which diverse media forms shape perception of potential threats. This thesis draws upon social constructivism, discourse theory, the sociology of communication and critical theory to address these questions.

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CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

"The relation between what we see and what we know is never settled."

- John Berger, *Ways of Seeing*

Theoretical considerations which pose, or counter-pose, 'image' to 'reality' are not a new exercise to International Relations (IR) theorists, but the present social conditions under which this question might be posed today demand a re-working of our understanding of the two concepts. This question is of paramount importance to the Copenhagen School of critical security studies, especially, because of the explanatory capacity afforded to the concept of the 'threat image' to which securitizing practices are directed, and from which these practices earn their political power. Thus, given the methodological preferences and epistemological leanings of Copenhagen theorists, it comes as a surprise that such little theoretical attention has been given to the concept of the image and its status in relation to new forms of media technologies, and the way that media practices effect (and affect) political practices of security. As Paul Virilio observes, in the present age of ubiquitous mediation, the word is logically 'withering away' before the instantaneity of the real-time image,[1] the consequences of which have yet to be seen.

As a theoretical study, this thesis seeks to understand the interstices of and intersections between visual media culture and the politics of securitization. It is an effort to contribute to an area of Critical Security Studies (CSS) theory that remains underdeveloped – namely, the role imagery plays in communicating a condition of

[1] Virilio, Paul. *The Information Bomb*. Trans. Chris Turner. London: Verso (2000), pg. 72

security or insecurity and how it structures political and social responses. In an effort to convene a method for examining new media as a site of political engagement, this study seeks to interpret how imaging functions as a form of political communication and the ways in which the medium and the image simultaneously shape perception. In doing so it addresses the argument that information and communication technologies are neither "neutral" nor "value free," but strategically and aesthetically regulate our perception of and response to events. The question can be stated as follows: "In a culture replete with images, can 'pictorial discourses' inform theories and practices of international security?"

What I present in this thesis is an overview of authors and theoretical works that hinge on the ways in which social and political life are mediated by images, how perception is shaped by new forms of media, and how the consequences of these developments can be interpreted. While my selection of the authors and material is in no way exhaustive what I hope to present is a preliminary exploration into images, and the ways in which threat images can be better understood and theoretically adapted to securitization theory. Moreover, this thesis focuses attention on the post-structuralist dimension of securitization theory because, as James Der Derian has observed, the impact of new technological practices are almost invisible to traditional methods in IR. These practices, he argues, are elusive because "they are more 'real' in time and space, their power is evidenced through the exchange of signs not goods, and their effects are transparent and pervasive rather than material and discrete."[2]

[2] Der Derian, James. "The (s)pace of international relations: Simulation surveillance, and speed." James Der Derian (ed.). *Critical Practices in International Theory: Selected Essays*. New York: Routledge (2009), pg. 45

With this, a new picture of securitization can be presented when viewed through the scope of an exponentially mediated reality, and the importance of imagery as a complement and component of verbal discourses is of high importance as 'screens' increasingly mediate social relations. Images, therefore, play a key role in structuring the way we experience a security issue or event, and in some cases can condition perceptions and appropriate responses. While these insights are not unified by particular disciplinary or methodological boundaries, methods of political inquiry to capture these emerging phenomena are primarily qualitative and interpretive epistemologies because studying verbal discourses alone is not sufficient to the present informational environment.

In Search of the Image

The Copenhagen School defines securitization by the practices and techniques of production, diffusion, and reception/translation that construct existential threats, the performative processes that bring them to bear on a community, prompting an audience to support certain emergency measures taken to curb that threat.[3] However, the particular framework used by the Copenhagen School is 'discourse-centric'; that is, it pays insufficient attention to forms of non-verbal and/or visual forms of communication (Balzacq, 2010), which cannot stand up to the obvious observation that, in industrialized states, ideas and information have come to be mediated through a fabricated, sensory environment of images, displays and sights.[4] While James Der Derian (2003) cautions

[3] Balzacq, Thierry. "Preface." Securitization Theory: How security problems emerge and dissolve. New York: Routledge (2011). pg. xv, emphasis in original

[4] Lister, Martin, et al. *New Media: A Critical Introduction*. London: Routledge (2003), pg. 100 – I say in industrialized states because there is still a vast "digital divide" on a global scale between those who have access to new technologies and those who have limited or no access at all. The divide is an intra- and interstate phenomenon.

against prematurely labeling a particular historical period or cultural transition, he asserts that the "Digital" or "Information Age" is the best possible descriptor used to define "our current period of late-modernity."[5]

Schwartz and Pryblyski argue that "modernity" is a useful discursive frame for making sense of the relationship between visual experience and cultural hegemony in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, and provides the most explicit genealogy for discussions of the culture of the twenty-first century. Moreover, of the multiple ways to denote and define modernity (e.g.: political, economic, social and cultural attributes such as nationalism, democracy, imperialism, consumerism, and capitalism), the technologically reproducible image making must be added.[6] The political concern for doing so stems from the observation that a growing interface between militarization, securitization and visual culture is occurring (Campbell and Shapiro, 2007), yet the literature on these topics has yet to devote extensive theoretic and empirical attention to the ways in which non-discursive elements can be incorporated under frameworks that detail the communicative practices of security construction, or the *constructedness* of security practices (Williams, 2003). In other words, securitization theory has not adequately grasped the changing structures and characteristics of media, and the manner in which it continues to shape the way in which information is presented, and how we consume the information we receive.

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[5] Der Derian, "The question of information technology in international relations." *Critical Practices in International Theory: Selected Essays*, ed. James Der Derian. New York: Routledge (2009), pg. 278

[6] Schwartz, Vanessa R. and Jeannene M. Przyblyski. "Visual Culture's History: Twenty-First Century Interdisciplinarity and its Nineteenth Century Objects." Schwartz, Vanessa R. and Jeannene M. Przyblyski (eds.). *The Nineteenth-Century Visual Culture Reader*. New York: Routledge (2004), pg. 8-9

Observing Visual Culture

Broadly stated, "visual culture" is an epithet used to take account of the role images, and visual experience, play within a particular community or society, which transverses and transcends the content of those images or their referential depictions to the physical world.[7] Some observers note that with the development of new media, a new aesthetic emerges in which depth, narrative and meaning are being replaced with "the pleasures of sensuous experience and spectacular effects."[8] With certain technological developments, the mechanical production and reproduction of images fill our senses with a world of images, symbolic objects and spectacles and sights on a new scale.[9] The study of visual culture, therefore, involves understanding the signifying systems and languages, and the decoding or reading of these signs.

But images are not intrinsically affecting. The idea of a "visual economy" has been cited by David Campbell to call attention to the way in which visual images are a part of "a comprehensive organization of people, ideas and objects." This involves the organization of production comprising the individuals and technologies that produce images, the circulation of goods, meanings, the transmission and publication of images and image-objects, and the cultural resources and social systems through which images are interpreted and valued. The organizational dimensions bring a picture into being and help produce meaning. In terms of the social and political power this attributes, Campbell argues that

[7] Lister, et al. "New Media," pg. 98
[8] Ibid., pg. 97
[9] Ibid., pg. 100

> the idea of a visual economy makes clear that the visual field is both made possible by and productive of relations of power, and that these power relations bear at least some relationship to wider social and political structures which are themselves associated with transnational relations of exchange in which images are commodities... the idea of a "visual economy" signals the practices through which a place and its people is enacted and our response made possible.[10]

From this one can further posit that vision is a political act. Yet conceiving of vision in this way is encumbered by the perception that "seeing" is a sovereign sense. As Walter Benjamin has asserted: "the mode of human sense perception changes with humanity's entire mode of existence."[11] Objects that comprise a visual culture, according to Schwartz and Przyblyski, can be studied as modes of image making that define visual experience in particular historical circumstances.[12] Vision, therefore, is a historically specific experience, mediated by new technologies and the individual and social forms they enable; image production and reception abide by historically contingent scopic regimes. Technological devices or systems, therefore, "shape our culture and environment, alter patterns of human activity, and influence who we are and how we live."[13]

The development of the internet, digital media, and mobile phone technology has become one of the most visible and all-pervasive indicators of technological change on social and political life.[14] These technologies are neither neutral nor value-free, but in fact structure and shape our everyday activities, our movements, and forms of communication. However, side-stepping a technologically-determinist position, it must

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[10] Campbell, David. "Geopolitics and Visuality." *Political Geography*. Vol. 26. No. 1 (2007), pg. 359
[11] Benjamin, Walter. "The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction." Schwartz, Vanessa R. and Jeannene M. Przyblyski (eds.). *The Nineteenth-Century Visual Culture Reader*. New York: Routledge (2004), pg. 66
[12] Schwartz and Przyblski, "Visual Culture's History," pg. 6-7
[13] James, Ian. *Paul Virilio*. New York: Routledge (2007), pg. 2
[14] Ibid., pg 1-2

be further noted that humans and technology are in a circular, mutually reinforcing relationship whereby each shape and affect the other. Paul Virilio's writings have focused on technologies of transport and of communication, and it becomes evident in his writing that speed or relative movement is the element or medium in which our experiences unfold.

Virilio argues that our current period is characterized by 'speed', which alters modes of temporal and spatial perception by abolishing distances and dimensions and increases the volume of "information" produced. With such observations, complexity pervades his discourse. The way we experience media technologies is based no longer upon spatiality and extensive time, but rather a temporal, intensive instant. In this, Virilio argues, that the virtuality of media experience comes to dominate over the actual experience; that is, the exposure of the calculated instant dominates over the embodied temporality or duration. Within the context of new media, argues Paul Virilio, the accelerated speeds of transmission and communication afforded by modern technologies lead to a loss of immediate presence, and a diminution of lived experience.[15] This decline in lived experience at the expense of 'speed' has led him to conclude that new media creates a crisis of 'dimensions' and of 'representation'[16] – it is the 'public image' set into motion, which therefore produces powerful effects of perception, affection, and action.

Developing these intuitions, Der Derian argues that new media is *e*-motive, producing a transient electronic affect conveyed at speed. A new way of seeing emerges that is centered around the transmitted image in real time, and creates new ways of being

[15] Ibid., pg. 45
[16] Ibid., pg. 46

by altering the way we experience our sensible realities. "In the immediacy of perception," argues Der Derian, "our eyes become indistinguishable form the camera's optics, and the body goes missing." The argument follows that we are visually and virtually present at global events. McLuhan acknowledges similar developments, arguing that the body is extended by way of its consciousness into the media forms, supplying it with its affective potential. In other words, the sensible horizon of reality blends with the substitutive re-presentation of reality in the form of an image, as individuals live more and more of their life through a screen, and the perception of the interconnectedness fostered by globalizing processes is brought into stark contrast with new media technologies.

Finding Connections

The growing interface between media technologies and securitization is evidenced by the way in which security practices are conducted through the same medium by which they are represented – through real-time global surveillance, media dis/simulation, and embodied in a doctrine of network-centric warfare. According to James Der Derian (2009), in the post-9/11 world, a commitment to innovative, virtualized security technologies and methods will be the chief means through which the United States intends to (re)secure its borders, maintain its hegemony and bring order to international politics. As he observes, diplomatic and military policies are increasingly based upon "technological and representational forms of discipline, deterrence, and compulsion."[17]

[17] Der Derian. *Virtuous War: Mapping the Military-Industrial-Media-Entertainment Network*. Boulder, CO: Westview Press (2009), pg. xxxi

In Der Derian's conceptualization of the Military-Industrial-Media-Entertainment Network (MIME-NET), an updated re-figuring of Eisenhower's Military-Industrial Complex, media technologies create an "all-too-real matrix," that according to Der Derian, seamlessly merges the production, representation and execution of war. Yet, in a condition of 'virtuous war', he argues: "made-for-TV wars and Hollywood war movies blur, military war games and computer video games blend, mock disasters and real accidents collide, producing on screen a new configuration of virtual power, the military-industrial-media-entertainment network."[18] This virtuality "collapses distance, between here and there, near and far, fact from fiction," and furthermore renders the battlefield "global and inclusive" and overriding further distinctions between "military and civilian, combatant and non-combatant, participant and observer."[19]

If MIME-NET represents the present configurations of media in the service of state power, in an age of diffuse and universal terror network-centric security constitutes the method for exploiting this development to its full potential. Der Derian further notes how "9/11 defied the public imagination of the real – not to mention, as just about every public official and media authority is loathe to admit, the official imagination and pre-emptive capacity of the intelligence community, federal law enforcement, air port security, military and other government agencies."[20] Guided by a *dispositif* of risk, this has led to the creation of security systems with impressive reach, seeking to control the process of securitization in both its present and future phases. The term 'premediation' describes the ways in which diverse institutions of government and culture visualize a

[18] Ibid. "Virtuous war." *Dictionary of War*. Accessed November 2010
[19] Campbell. "Cultural Governance and Pictorial Resistance: Reflections on the Imaging of War." *Review of International Studies*. Vol. 29 (2003), pg. 62
[20] Der Derian. "In Terrorem: Before and After 9/11." Ken Booth and Tim Dunne. *Worlds in Collision: Terror and the Future of Global Order*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan pg. 104

plurality of threats, acting as a technique of risk management that does so for the purposes of mobilizing action in the present.

Outlining the Problematic

Williams insists, "treating social communication in a strictly linguistic-discursive form risks limiting the kinds of acts and contexts that can be analyzed as contributing to securitizations." He states,

> The Copenhagen School's casting of security as a speech-act is not just a metaphor; it delineates a structure of communicative action, and a framework for the explanation of social practices. The act itself is conceived of in linguistic terms, the institution refers to the position from which it is spoken, and the appropriate tool for its recognition as a securitizing act is an analysis of the rhetorical and discursive structure (the "internal, linguistic-grammatical" rules and "conventional procedures") of the act and its consequences.[21]

What Williams suggests is that a sole focus upon political speech only in the linguistic-discursive sense fails to adequately capture the environment within which speech acts are constructed and disseminated. James Der Derian has used network-centric warfare as a linguistic *entente*, also relating to the ways in which certain societal institutions mediate our relationship to the images we view, and shape the way we perceive reality through those images. Media has been known to be instrumental in psychological operations (PSYOPS) and perception management in fighting an enemy, as well as gaining support domestically. Louise Amoore, moreover, highlights the fact that visualization processes are not only in the dissemination of images via media outlets, but also integral in construction of images and perception. These observations expand the notion of the speech act. "Speech-acts," as Williams deduces, "are inextricable from the image-

[21] Michael C. Williams. "Words, Images, Enemies: Securitization and International Politics." *International Studies Quarterly*. Vol. 47, No. 4 pg. 525

dominated context in which they take place and through which meaning is communicated."[22] This statement will be investigated in this thesis.

And while the Copenhagen School recognizes that speech acts are not only reducible to the act of speaking – that it is a "broader performative act which draws upon a variety of contextual, institutional, and symbolic resources for its effectiveness"[23] – the role attributed to the image is still underspecified. Frank Moller succinctly states the problem:

> Regardless of its cultural and discursive turn, the field of security studies has not yet paid sufficient attention to visual culture. In particular, approaches that focus on the articulation of security have been quite inattentive to images…There is no reason to assume that security policy would be unaffected by the world's 'hypersaturat[ion] with images'.[24]

Thus, for Williams, the shift in communicative structures, in the medium of communication, represents a key challenge for the *rhetorics* of securitization; for the persuasive and affective/impressive influences on audiences.[25] With regard to reading the rhetorics of securitizing acts, techniques attuned to visual representation and reception, and the contextual aspects is paramount. He asks a number of formidable questions:

> In what ways are visual representations structured, and how do they tap into deeply sedimented social perspectives? How do images have an impact on viewers that differs from the impact of words on listeners, or text on readers? How are images capable of contributing to processes of securitization or desecuritization, and how are they linked to more conventional speech-acts in this process?[26]

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[22] Ibid.
[23] Ibid., pg. 526
[24] Moller, Frank. "Photographic Interventions in Post 9/11 Security Policy." *Security Dialogue*. Vol. 38, No. 2 (2007), pg. 179
[25] Williams, "Words, Images, Enemies," pg. 527
[26] Ibid., pg. 528

In order to address questions encompassing a visual culture into which securitizing speech acts are projected, work must be done to assess how perception is organized and structured, and thus how information is disseminated and consumed and/or experienced. With this, it is possible to understand how certain events or issues are construed as 'security', how securitizing moves can 'succeed' or 'fail' in convincing an audience of a relevant and 'real' existential threat, and what technologies and institutions are involved in mediating the securitizing process – these are questions yet to be explicitly addressed in the securitization literature.

This thesis attempts to trace a theoretic strand that constructs the socially mediated image in critical social and political theory. It is a theoretical study grounded in social constructivism, discourse theory, the sociology of communication and critical theory. It examines the role "imaging" plays in communicating a condition of security *and* insecurity, and structuring political and social perceptions and consequent responses. I argue that more can be said about the homeland security dilemma, and the unsettling affects that attend the factors of terrorism and the persistent focus and "neurotic" imagining of failure on the part of the media and public officials by studying how perception of terrorism and failure is structured and the medium through which these notions are disseminated and consumed. More specifically, using the homeland security dilemma as a foil, the primary goal of this thesis is to examine the pragmatic communicative techniques that construct a 'threat image'; a tool and a symbolic element within the framework of securitization theory that mediates perception. This project is, therefore, a study in communications theory, not specific policies per se. As such, it asks a series of questions: What are the current configurations of social, political and

technological forces that are producing and disseminating the current 'threat images' – conceived as particular articulations predicated on textual/discursive and visual elements which manifest out of utterances from securitizing and functional social actors, and underwrite policy writing? How can we conceive the relationship of images to security within an increasingly mediated public sphere? What does it mean for the theory and practice of security politics and the construction of security policy? These are the main questions that underpin this project.

The term 'imaging' will be used to develop the role of images in securitization discourse, specifically the construction of existential threats through visual means. In doing so, I am not simply referring to images supplied by satellites, media and social media, but to the process of imaging itself. This entails a comprehensive theoretic look behind the utility and consequences of the construction, dissemination and reception of images, as well as sources of distortion. The argument follows that the differentiated nature of security has made the discourse more complex, given the advancement of a (critical) position that advocates that the concept of security be "widened" and "deepened" so as to encompass broader range of social and cultural, environmental, economic, military, and state issues, which has brought the state into a closer relationship with civil society. Der Derian, moreover, describes the advent of *heteropolarity*, the emergence of actors who are different "in power and kind (state, corporate, group, individual)," and "connected nodally through networks rather than hierarchically through states."[27] New globalized identities and symmetries of power that are re-inscribing the map of international politics, and coupled with the complexity and extensivity introduced

[27] Der Derian, "Virtuous War," pg. 209

by information technology networks, the importance of a "consumer identity" increased based upon the production, circulation, and acquisition of *images*.[28]

A ubiquitous policy tool, the securitization discourse thus operates within a broader, increasingly complex, discursive community, one compressed geographically via global processes and networks, which produce a greater opportunity for contact and cooperation. Arguably, in doing so the complexity of security communities has increased. Securitization discourse seeks to reduce the complexity of these environments so as to identify a clearer representation of potential threats, as well as a clearer direction for policy-oriented decision-making. Images assist in effectuating this process by providing quickly communicable and interpretable representations of threats that provide a basis and direction for subsequent action.

Threat images can be viewed as the outcome of symbolically mediated interactions, practices, and effects generated by a configuration of social actors, such as media institutions, security industries, and political officials, that gain a powerful materiality through media networks. **Chapter two** begins by examining the methodological questions imaging raises for securitization theory. Securitization theory provides a framework for addressing interdependent questions related to identifying security problems and how 'threat images' are constructed and realized in policy. In the field of security studies more broadly, securitization constitutes a shift toward language, understanding threats as being inseparable from the intersubjective representations in which communities understand them, viewing security as a discursive practice. However, this methodological choice is too narrow, and I pose the question of a "pictorial" turn for

[28] Ibid., pg. 210

security studies to establish how imaging is not simply reliant upon discourse and discursive practice, but also the active creation of images and their meaning through different texts.

The **third chapter** examines the concept of imaging in more depth. Imaging is a practice that seeks to achieve a common, structured perception of a threatening or ominous development by reducing the complexity of the security environment into easily manageable, calculated images. Imaging draws upon a particular literature that ties together the technical and psychological arguments, and seeks to understand how visual technologies strategically and aesthetically construct desired as well as unintended visions of a security problem. This is illustrated by the problem of *new terror*, and the way in which counter-terrorism operations have been undertaken, and the consequences of these actions. New media developments have altered the way in which individuals view the world, and the war on terror has armed this vision with an increased capacity for social control.

The **fourth chapter** examines the consequences of imaging through the critical concept of 'spectacle', and how the fascination with terror is perpetuated socially and sustained within policy-making. Using the theory of imaging put forth in chapter three, it reworks aspects of the homeland security dilemma (Harvey, 2010) to draw attention the implications of how the present imaging of security has affected perceptions of terrorism by encouraging a constant state of vigilance, and hence fear. Perceptions of failure and rising expectations, key pillars in the HSD framework, are integral to this position. The thesis will **conclude** with the implication imaging has for international relations theory and policy-making , and offer possibilities for future research on the topic of the image in

securitization theory. Moreover, while the core purpose of this thesis is to examine how and why the image matters, the conclusion offers possibilities for viewing the counter-theoretical position as a direction for future research.

CHAPTER TWO

Securitization Theory: Questions of Method

The purpose of this chapter is to provide context for the argument being made regarding imaging. It will examine the securitization framework developed by the Copenhagen School, from both its philosophical and sociological dimensions. Securitization provides a useful starting point for this discussion because it accounts for the ways in which the notion of security has expanded beyond state-centric positions to include a broader range of subjects and methods in the debate on security. Images and processes of imaging have discursive components, and to include such phenomena under the framework means that the theory must be extended to comprehend the ways in which various 'texts' resonate together to facilitate the construction of a security narrative. In doing so it argues that not only discourse and texts matter for security, but also images. In this regard, a methodologically pluralist approach to the Copenhagen School is developed to enliven a dialogue over the various processes through which securitization manifests.

Widening and Deepening International Security Studies

The 'critical' in the term 'critical security studies' is more of an orientation toward the subject than a precise theoretical label. It rests on the distinction made by Robert Cox between types of theory – between problem-solving theory and critical theory. Krause and Williams (1998), citing Cox, note that the former takes "prevailing social and power relationships and the institutions into which they are organized…as the given framework for action," while the latter "calls them into question by concerning

itself with their origins and how and whether they might be in the process of changing."[29] This serves the practical goal of including a broader range of approaches under a single banner, which enrich 'mainstream' debate, and the intellectual goal of questioning the underlying epistemology and ontological positions that prescribe what it means to make fully verifiable claims about the world.[30] Debate regarding the expansion of the field of security studies occurs in a manner of "widening" (the possible referent objects of security) and "deepening" (the manner in which we are able to 'know' those objects). It has, in various manifestations, drawn attention to the importance of identities, and the ways in which they are structured, or constructed. Securitization theory squarely developed from the 'critical turn' in international relations, and has been an influential contribution to the 'widening-deepening' debate in international security studies.

While a thoroughgoing assessment of the widening-deepening debate is not possible here, I present a few key insights that critical approaches have identified as shortcomings to the way we have conventionally approached the topic of security specifically, and the study of international relations generally. It grew out of dissatisfaction with the narrowing of the field that occurred as a result of the political imperative of the Cold War. To those seeking to expand the concept of security, the narrow military state-centric agenda was analytically, politically, and normatively problematic.[31] As Buzan, et al, note, this was stimulated by the rise of economic and environmental agendas in international relations during the 1970s and 1980s, and later by

[29] Krause, Keith, Michael C. Williams. "Preface: Toward Critical Security Studies." Keith Krause, Michael C. Williams, ed. *Critical Security Studies: Concepts and Cases*. Minneapolis, MN: U. Minnesota P. (1997, pg. xi
[30] Ibid., pg. x
[31] Buzan, Barry, Lene Hansen. *The Evolution of International Security Studies*. New York: Cambridge U. P. (2009), pg. 187

the rise of concerns with issues of identity and trans-national crime in the 1990s.[32] Since the mid-1990s, 'critical security studies' has been more broadly institutionalized, adding to on-going debates about security by problematizing dominant military and statist understandings, as well as contributing to the expansion of knowledge regarding emergent sources of non-military threats, such as AIDS, poverty, and environmental degradation. The widening debate was primarily issue-driven, while the call to deepen the field of security stemmed from a necessity to methodologically assess new issues of security. But it was not without its critics.

Stephen Walt, an advocate of the 'traditional approach' argues that the field should be defined more narrowly:

> Security studies may be defined as the study of the threat, use, and control of military force. It explores the conditions that make the use of force more likely, the ways that the use of force affects individuals, states and societies, and the specific policies that states adopt in order to prepare for, prevent, or engage in war.[33]

Walt situates this reading explicitly within the realist literature in international relations theory, as it focuses specifically upon the use of military power and statecraft – e.g. arms control, diplomacy, crisis management. Threats arise primarily from an anarchical, self-help international system that emerges from material capabilities of possible opponents.[34] According to Walt, including 'nonmilitary phenomena' under the banner of security

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[32] Buzan, Barry, Ole Waever, Jaap de Wilde. *Security: A New Framework for Analysis*. Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner (1998), pg. 2

[33] Krause, Keith, ". "From Strategy to Security: Foundations of Critical Security Studies." Keith Krause, Michael C. Williams, ed. *Critical Security Studies: Concepts and Cases*. Minneapolis, MN: U. Minnesota P. (1997), pg. 54

[34] Ibid., "Critical Theory and Security Studies: The Research Programme of 'Critical Security Studies'." *Cooperation and Conflict*. Vol. 33, No. 3 (1998), pg. 306

studies risks "expanding security studies excessively."[35] The expansion of the security field, he argues, would destroy its intellectual coherence and make it more difficult to devise solutions to any important problem that plague global politics.

Other critics have argued that given the political function of the word security, it can be counter-productive, as it "extends the call for state mobilization to a broad range of issues" and positions security as a "desired condition toward which all relations should move."[36] Too much focus upon the issue of security can divert attention and resources away from "welfare-based" social, economic and political practices. While it is important to consider the stabilizing political function security potentially serves, overall the relationship between security-insecurity still contains serious conflicts over the amount of security to strive for. To militate against the unwieldy expansion of security, the Copenhagen School notes that securitization ought to be viewed as the inability to effectively mitigate problems through established political means. Taken together, these critiques encourage theorists and practitioners to aim toward *de*securitization, or ways of shifting issues into the normal bargaining processes of the political sphere.[37] As such, the securitization framework adheres to strictly defined criteria as to how security issues are framed, endorsed and acted upon.

In terms of deepening security analysis, Keith Krause has observed, most critical scholarship assumes a constructivist orientation by asking: "how from the welter of information and interaction passing among states and their representatives, are threats

[35] Walt, Stephen. "The Renaissance of Security Studies." *International Studies Quarterly*. Vol. 35, No. 2 (1991), pg. 213
[36] Buzan, et al, "Security," pg. 4
[37] Ibid., pg. 4

constructed and mobilized against?"[38] The contribution made by the Copenhagen School is in its assessment of the ways in which threats are defined and constructed through discourse – a process termed "securitization." The framework adopts a discursive framework for identifying how threats are constituted towards specific issues, the acceptance of these issues, and the consequent response. While Copenhagen School theorists share similarities with realist-oriented international relations, they do not assume security to be an immutable condition, but rather established through practice and hence manageable.

A critical approach examines the processes whereby threats are represented, and unseats the traditional claim that security is a static condition, replacing it with the dynamic notion that security "acquires different meanings in different societies, or in the same society at different times."[39] The Copenhagen School argues that the meaning of security can be known only through the discursive practices that constitute an issue as such. Security then is not an objective condition, or, at least in every case, unambiguous and immediate. Where the objectivist approach assumes that the state is itself an object and security a material condition, securitization theory views security as constructed through an ensemble of social and political relations.

The 'Logic' of Securitization Theory

Securitization theory provides a framework for conceptualizing and studying questions centering on the political construction of security issues. For the Copenhagen School, the general concept of ''security'' is constituted within *national* security

[38] Krause, "Critical Theory and Security Studies," pg. 306
[39] Ibid., pg. 313

discourse, which, according to Lene Hansen (2009), "implies an emphasis on authority, the confronting—and construction—of threats and enemies, an ability to make decisions, and the adoption of emergency measures."[40] Under the framework of securitization, security is not simply an objective or subjective condition, but is rather a term that *does something* – securitize. The theoretical logic of securitization – its definition and criteria – is intersubjective establishment of an existential or systemic threat to the point where it will have real political consequences, requiring extra-ordinary political responses.

Security frames the issue either as a special kind of politics or as above politics' and the Copenhagen School establishes certain benchmarks for defining issues, placing them along a spectrum from non-politicized to securitized. With a non-politicized issue, the state does not deal with it and it is not in any other way made an issue of public debate and decision. They are those issues that, according to Hansen, "do not command political and/or media attention and which are regulated through consensual and technical measures."[41] A politicized issue is a part of public policy, requiring government decision and resource allocations or, more rarely, some other form of communal governance. Again, Hansen notes that these issues "are devoted to close media and political scrutiny, generating debate and usually multiple policy approaches, while not commanding the threat-urgency modality of securitization."[42] Finally, a "*securitization* is a case in which an issue is no longer debated as a political question, but dealt with at an accelerated pace and in ways that may violate normal legal and social rules."[43] However, in democratic societies, in order for these issues to be moved along this spectrum requires cooperation

[40] Hansen, Lene, Helen Nissenbaum. "Digital Disaster, cyber security and the Copenhagen School." *International Studies Quarterly*. Vol. 53, No. 4 (2009), pg. 1158
[41] Ibid., pg. 1159
[42] Ibid.
[43] Ibid., pg. 1158-59; emphasis in original

or acquiescence from the relevant audience. There are, therefore, two aspects to the process of securitization: (1.) identification of an existential threat to a referent object, and (2.) the emergency action taken to protect the referent object, or the effects on inter-group relations as a result of the emergency action.

An issue is only elevated to the status of emergency with the acceptance by an audience in order for state officials to use whatever means they have at their disposal to block a threat to a particular referent object. The claims that are likely to be effective are based on the forms in which they can be made, the objects to which they refer, and the social positions from which they can effectively be spoken. They are usually rhetorically, culturally and institutionally sedimented claims based on the identity of a society, an institution or an actor.[44] The sociological critiques push this point further, stating that securitizing acts conform to the particular institutional logics, and differentiated social and decision-making structures to succeed.[45] The interaction of context and strategy are crucial to the process. This further unseats a monolithic reading of "sovereign decision," and expands the environment within which claims are made and adjudicated.

The Copenhagen School frames their analysis around a discourse that presents a referent object as being existentially threatened. And since security measures are never simply imposed, there is always some need to "argue one's case." As Buzan, et al, specify:

> We do not place the demand so high to say that an emergency measure *has* to be adopted, only that the existential threat has to be argued and just gain enough resonance for a platform to be made from which it is possible to legitimize

[44] Williams, "Words, Images, Enemies," pg. 514
[45] Williams, Michael C. "The Continuing Evolution of Securitization Theory." *Securitization Theory: How security problems emerge and dissolve*. New York: Routledge (2011), pg. 216

> emergency measures or other steps that would not have been possible had the discourse not taken the form of existential threat, point of no return, and necessity.[46]

Williams recognizes that dilemmas about identifying this process are partly raised due to idea that the Copenhagen School has set the bar too high in terms of "exceptionality," and its over-commitment to the voice of the sovereign.[47] In terms of exceptionality and emergency, however, a pragmatic reworking of Schmitt's conception of the political is required. For Schmitt, "the political" cannot be inferred specifically from the content of any given issue. Instead, it is how we relate to specific issues that make them political or non-political. What makes an issue "political" in this instance is the intense relationship that individuals have toward it. The fullest form of intensification can result in a divide between friend and enemy. Quoting Schmitt, Williams notes,

> The political…is the most intense and extreme antagonism, and every concrete antagonism becomes that much more political the closer it approaches the most extreme point, that of the friend-enemy grouping…Every religious, moral, economic, ethical, or other antithesis transforms itself into a political one if it is sufficiently strong to group human beings according to friend and enemy.[48]

The "political," for Schmitt, is not about issues and politics but about existence. Schmitt's thought is tied to the labeling of a threat as something counter-posed to the survival of a referent object, but the systemic nature of security is political rather than a technocratic decision. What has been gleaned from this reading, however, is the relationship of political-intensity equates security with survival, as an issue is presented as posing an existential threat to a designated referent object.[49] Any issue is capable of

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[46] Buzan, Security, pg. 25 – emphasis added
[47] Williams, "The Continuing Evolution of Securitization Theory," pg. 217
[48] Williams, "Words, Images, Enemies," pg. 516
[49] The Copenhagen School uses a multi-sectoral approach, which recognizes the state, the military, the economy, the environment, and society as the locus of referent objects.

securitization if it can be intensified to the point where it is presented and accepted as an existential threat, and actors are posed as friends versus enemies. [50]

Declarations of danger result from a social calculation of a threat that objectifies events, disciplines social relations, and isolates an ideal identity of the referent object said to be at risk. From Schmitt's perceptive, moreover, a security condition is thus constituted by a particular kind of discursive act that places the referent object within a binary that pits actors against the choice of life (and the necessary procedures that are necessary to preserve it) or death (and the absolute consequences that entails). Security has the capacity to then set into stark contrast certain conceptual, moral, aesthetic, understandings of self-other, life-death, proximity-distance, indifference-responsibility. In his understanding, discourse is then non-political as every sovereign decision is made based upon 'existential' calculations. The sovereign, he would argue, declares the state of emergency, the rules (and their exceptions) to deal with it.

As outlined above, this conception is based upon a 'calculation' of danger, risk, and threat. This notion of calculation highlights the importance of the processes of gradual *intensification*. Intensification, in this usage, holds the potential to break free of the dichotomy of exceptional and normal politics. The notion of thresholds, argues Salter, puts the focus upon processes of *shift* – "the process of changing the meaning of and issue into and out of the realm of security."[51] Salter makes an important observation that security ultimately depends upon the limits of politics: "Security issues must be brought

[50] Williams, "Words, Images, Enemies," pg. 516
[51] Salter, Mark B. "When Securitization Fails: the hard case of counter-terrorism programs." *Securitization Theory: How security problems emerge and dissolve*. New York: Routledge (2011), pg, 120

to the realm of the political before it is redefined as outside normal politics."[52] Through this pragmatic reading, according to Williams, "the relationship between forms of 'unease', thresholds, cascades, and strategies of policy entrepreneurship and security, might be brought into view by seeing them as forms of intensification."[53] Extremity is the concentration of various intensifying practices. The Schmittian legacy implicit in the securitization framework limits the discourse regarding security to the state. While it is true that the final decision-making power rests with the political executive, these "acts of will" cannot be functionally isolated to the sovereign alone, but permeate civil society.

Securitization and Discursive Strategies

The methodology used to study this process relies primarily on speech act theory. Securitization theory, therefore, has been responsible for turning the gaze of security theorists toward language, establishing a mode of enquiry into the construction of security issues that understands language as providing the link between the nature of reality and how we come to know that reality. The theory of 'securitization' focuses on discursive practices to elucidate the ways in which actors present certain issues as threats that call for certain exceptional measures to be taken that otherwise fall outside the 'normal' political process.

Mapping meaning through discourse analysis captures the design of threat images. Balzacq offers an explanation as to why discourse analysis is appealing to students of securitization:

> [D]iscourse analysis helps students map the emergence and evolution of patterns of representations which are constitutive of a threat image. In this sense, discourse

[52] Ibid.
[53] Williams, "The Continuing Evolution of Securitization Theory," pg. 218

> is a vehicle of meaning, a meaning which is rarely self-evident but has to be charted by the analyst.[54]

More specifically, discourses are analytically compelling if viewed as bodies of texts that bring ideas, objects, and practices into being, as this suggests that they are *resources* and *practices*. As socio-cultural resources, discourses reveal how people construct meaning about the world, and their role within it. As practices, discourses are structures of "meaning-in-use," or how these constructions are deployed in social activity.[55] As such, discourses are "created, supported and contested through the production of, dissemination, and consumption of texts."[56] This is not limited to written or spoken words only, but can involve a variety of signs, including written utterances, symbols, pictures, or music. What unites these objects is their ability to convey meaning, within a given context.[57] As such the aim of discourse analysis is to establish how the patterns of representation embodied by discourse are contextually enabled or constrained. In this instance, meanings conveyed by different units are not heterogeneous, and occur across time and space.[58]

Speech Acts and Audience(s)

The approach to discourse analysis used by the Copenhagen School is indebted to the work of Austin and Searle. The enterprise of speech act philosophy, observes Balzacq, emphasizes the function of language, doing things rather than simply reporting on or describing things. In this case, utterances are conceived as a performative activity

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[54] Balzacq, Thierry. "Enquiries into methods: a new framework for securitization analysis." *Securitization Theory: How security problems emerge and dissolve*. New York: Routledge (2011), pg. 39
[55] Ibid.
[56] Ibid.
[57] Ibid.
[58] Ibid., pg. 40

that can change the conditions of a certain situation.[59] A total speech act situation is constituted by a combination of: the *locution* (the utterance of an expression that contains a given sense and reference); an *illocution* (the act performed in articulating an locution); and *perlocution* (the consequential effects that are aimed to evoke the feelings, beliefs, thoughts, or actions of a target audience).[60]

The social construction of security, argues Williams (2003), is analyzed through "securitizing speech acts" where threats become "represented and recognized."[61] As such, security is articulated as an "assemblage of practices whereby heuristic artifacts (metaphors, policy tools, image repertoires, analogies, stereotypes, emotions, etc.) are contextually mobilized by a securitizing actor."[62] The speech act constructs or imposes a particular way of perceiving a pre-existing reality through a security frame. The frame through which these symbolic tools are employed distinguishes the character of an existential threat. In this regard, the administrative elites (e.g.: state/security apparatuses) must convey threats to civil society in terms that will resonate with a given audience. As such, we must differentiate the way a threat is communicated between government officials and between government officials and civil society.

The focus is on the illocution – which can be read as the actual expressed act, and the act of writing or saying something, itself. According to Waever, the utterance of security *is* the act, for by saying it *something is done*.[63] This is a *securitizing move*. It is in the labeling of something as security that it becomes a security issue, by the sheer force

[59] Ibid., "A theory of securitization: origins, core assumptions, and variants." *Securitization Theory: How security problems emerge and dissolve*. New York: Routledge (2011), pg. 4
[60] Ibid., pg. 4-5
[61] Williams, "Words Images, Enemies," pg. 513
[62] Balzacq, "A Theory of Securitization," pg. 3
[63] Williams, "Words Images, Enemies," pg. 513, emphasis added

of the illocution. Borrowing from Habermas, the conditions for a successful speech act are outlined by Williams:

> Conditions for a successful speech-act fall into two categories: (1) the internal, linguistic-grammatical to follow the rules of the act (or, as Austin argues, accepted conventional procedures must exist, and the act has to be executed according to these procedures); and (2) the external, contextual and social-to hold a position from which the act can be made ('The particular persons and circumstances in a given case must be appropriate for the invocation of the particular procedure invoked').[64]

The claims that are likely to be effective, the forms in which they can be made, the objects to which they refer, and the social positions from which they can effectively be spoken are usually deeply "sedimented" (rhetorically and discursively, culturally, and institutionally).[65] However, in a purportedly intersubjective process like securitization, the purpose is to prompt a significant response from an audience; the perlocution is central to understanding how a particular public issue can change into a security problem. Mark Salter argues that "setting" plays a significant role in determining the variability of speech acts. For example, by using a dramaturgical analysis, he argues that social settings determine the mode, language, tropes, figures, and structure of a particular act.[66] For this reason, the construction of security is narrowly defined only in terms of the form of speech acts (or language) by dominant actors, thereby excluding other forms of representation like images and actual material or "performative" practices by a wider range of public actors, such as specific bureaucratic processes that are done under the label of security. On a similar note, while securitization can illuminate the processes through which some actors are empowered to *speak security* on behalf of particular

[64] Ibid., pg. 514
[65] Ibid.
[66] Salter. "When Securitization Fails," pg. 119

communities, as well as the extent to which "alternative articulators" of security are silenced or delegitimized.[67]

This is no doubt a very important observation in deepening the framework, as it desires to provide more comprehensive understandings of how security is constructed. Williams agrees that the formal and abstract nature of the Copenhagen School's approach has heretofore brushed over the "symbolic technologies" through which securitization can take place, such as different forms of technical and bureaucratic language, the repertoire of images and gestures that potentially represent 'security'. It also positions securitization in such a way that it can account for diverse audiences to whom securitization is addressed, or whom it affects, means that a speech act can be contextualized in its point of production and better explain its effectiveness. Seeing *con*text (instead of simply text) creates better understandings of what threat representations resonate with specific audience, and how they operate in different settings.

A speaker, therefore, must employ terms that resonate with an audience's experiences. To elicit a desired response, therefore, a securitizing actor must fuse the audiences beliefs with their own, requiring them to adjust their semantic repertoire to be sensitive to collective memories, constituted by predominant social views, trends, ideological and political attitudes that pervade the context within which participants are "nested."[68] This influences how communities perceive and symbolize urgency, and thus influences the kinds of language that is likely to facilitate a change in perspective. As

[67] MacDonald, Matt. "Securitization and the Construction of Security." *European Journal of International Relations*. Vol. 14, No. 4 (2008) pg. 568
[68] Balzacq, "A Theory of Securitization," pg. 11

Balzacq notes, politicians will always attempt to target an audience that has a direct causal connection to the referent object.[69]

Agency and Context(s)

The semantic repertoire of security is a combination of textual meaning and cultural meaning. This creates a "frame of reference" through which security acts can be understood. In other words, the performative dimension of security rests between the knowledge of the concept, acquired through language, and the knowledge gained through an interaction with previous and current situations. Balzacq argues that the force and character of a securitizing actors' illocution is contingent upon a "perceptive environment."[70] While it is noted that the definition of the concept of security is determined by its usage, the context serves to select, or activate, certain properties within the conceptual usage that justify its usage.

In the *intra-linguistic* context, context for a sign is established by language itself; that is, dialogue "creates a context that becomes a pre-supposable background for ongoing discourse."[71] What Balzacq refers to as 'proximate contexts' – and Salter, following Goffman, refers to as 'setting' – denotes the patterns, occasion, or genre within which interactions occur. Salter notes how the setting, and the perceived expectations and norms of the audience, will determine the structure of the discourse.[72]

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[69] Ibid., pg. 9, 5
[70] Ibid., pg. 13
[71] Mertz, Elizabeth. Richard J. Parmentier. *Semiotic mediation: sociocultural and psychological perspectives*. Orlando: Academic press (1985), pg. 5
[72] Salter. "When Securitization Fails," pg. 119

The perception of security in its *extra-linguistic* context is something that becomes circumscribed by the broader social relations, without which there would be no discourse at all.[73] Extra-linguistic contexts also ground expression, and thus prime the discourse, creating the boundaries of what is considered acceptable (or relevant) speech and action. In the words of securitization theorists, extra-linguistic conditions are essential to understanding the 'facilitating conditions' of securitization, and the environment in which speech acts are executed (and constituted). In the international relations literature, it is this idea of the extra-discursive power of images that Campbell implies to compel theorists to see that "images cannot be isolated as discrete objects but have to be understood as imbricated in networks of materials, technologies, institutions, markets, social spaces, affects, cultural histories and political contexts."[74] From this perspective, the "appearance" of an image (its structure) originates from a particular frame; the image is both *shaped by* and *re-affirms* culturally and historically contingent conditions realms of meaning and technologies. Images, in this context, do not simply represent but also constitute the reality we perceive.

The role of the "frame" is to "structure various properties of an entity or development under the same label – "threat" – by virtue of the conventions governing the usage of the concept and the conditions under which the its invocation is justified."[75] 'Utterances' are conceived as linguistic marks intended to recall or direct the attention of

[73] Mertz, "Semiotic Mediation," pg. 5
[74] Campbell, "Geopolitics and Visuality," pg. 361
[75] Balzacq, "A Theory of Securitization," pg. 14

an audience to some person, object, idea event or projected activity;[76] creative performative arguments pointing toward an external threatening referent subject.[77]

This is what enables security to be viewed as "symbol." A word or image is symbolic when it implies more than its obvious and immediate meaning, which often eludes explicitly rationalist methodologies as individuals often use symbolic terms to "represent concepts that we cannot define or fully comprehend."[78] Scientific instruments only partially compensate for the deficiencies of human senses. Symbols, according to Murray Edelman, always stand for something other than itself, objects that "evokes an attitude, a set of impressions, or a pattern of events associated through time, through space, through logic, or through imagination with the symbol."[79] The symbol's character as a sign "depends upon the meaning given by association of general ideas that connects sign and object (that is, a culturally imputed connection)."[80] In this case, images, or the utility of the visualization of certain icons and symbols, add to the perlocutionary force of a speech act by creating quickly comprehensible, expressive, and inflect and emphasize certain narratives over others in order to create an overwhelming relationship between issues, events, or subjects and the imperative for securitizing action. Furthermore, the symbol of security is 'isomorphic', meaning that while it is a naturalized or reified frame for perceiving events, the contours of meaning can vary and be shaped by current information about the context and the influence of the speakers discourse.[81]

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[76] Ibid.
[77] Ibid.
[78] Jung, Carl G. "Approaching the Unconscious." Carl G. Jung (ed.) *Man and His Symbols*. London: Aldus Books (1964), pg. 4
[79] Edelman, Murray. *The Symbolic Uses of Politics*. Urbana: U. Illionois P. (1964), pg. 6
[80] Mertz, "Semiotic Mediation," pg. 4
[81] Balzacq, "A Theory of Securitization," pg. 15

In sum: "the mobilization of security arguments requires a judgment of best fit between the state of affairs or a development and a voiced utterance…the manifest content of security discourse is usually a blueprint for a state of affairs: it relies on the audience to flesh out the missing details."[82] Images necessarily allow for different interpretations and, with this inherent ambiguity, do not seem like useful tools for securitization. Binding an interpretation to an image is intended to narrow the meaning, deprive them of their inherent ambivalence, and emphasize an alleged 'truth' to what is being viewed. While it still produces the possibility of argumentation, the proclaimed self-evidence of an image reduces it range of meaning. Moller argues that such claims to validity serve to

> narrow the range of possible interpretations of an image until ultimately one specific interpretation becomes a duty, is accepted by a given political community, and has to be accepted by individual members of this community in order not to exclude themselves from the community or be excluded by others.[83]

Discourse Analysis: production or performance?

As stipulated at the outset of this chapter, knowledge of securitizing practices can be developed through a pluralistic approach that recognizes the limitations and benefits of multiple approaches. Within securitization, studying discourses (as texts) assists in offering an account of the translation/transduction of threat images amongst actors, and across cultural contexts. It aims to capture a distinct social phenomenon, namely how problems become security issues. But as Balzacq notes, a survey of the securitization literature reveals that philosophical accounts and sociological accounts differ in their

[82] Ibid.
[83] Moeller, Susan D. *Compassion Fatigue: How the Media Sell Disease, Famine, War, and Death*. New York: Routledge (1999), pg. 185

understandings of what discourse is meant to achieve.[84] In philosophical accounts, he argues, the objective of discourse analysis is to "examine the constructive aspects of texts, to understand not only the discursive micro-dynamics of individual decisions but also the discursive foundations of social reality in which those decisions are located."[85] It investigates the production of norms, identities or decisions. The major caveat that may be read into this particular interpretation of securitization is the belief in the intrinsic power of language, an enigmatic force in which the "conditions of possibility of threats are internal to the act of saying security."[86] On the other hand, sociological understandings of discourse analysis focus upon how discourse "actively structures the social space within which actors act, through the constitution of concepts, objects, and subject positions."[87] The sociological position, argues Balzacq, is that it provides a thicker description of the securitization process, moving beyond texts *qua* texts to study, for example, bureaucratic procedures and practices, technologies, norms of a given profession, etc.[88]

Sociological critiques argue that because other forms of representation are excluded, or narration is privileged, the complete environment within which the speech act is projected is underspecified. Some theorists speak primarily in terms of practices, context and power relations that characterize the construction of threats. This view has helped securitization move away from the constraints of a "thin" version of social theory and toward a "thicker" understanding of the interactive processes of 'practice', a more specified category of 'audience', and thus established a push toward understanding the

[84] Balzacq, "Enquiries into Methods," pg. 40
[85] Ibid.
[86] Balzacq, "A Theory of Securitization," pg. 1
[87] Ibid. "Enquiries into Methods," pg. 40-1
[88] Ibid., pg. 41

effects of *securitization moves* (not simply their construction). Williams argues, however, that the importance of the Copenhagen School model is fore-grounded, not transcended by these critiques. The "sociological" position argues that because the post-structuralist readings of securitization do not conform to formal speech-act theory they conflate the illocution (the utterance) with the perlocution (the "consequential effects" of the act, aimed to evoke feelings, beliefs, thoughts or actions to a targeted audience), and thus obfuscates the role of the audience.[89] Balzacq argues that perlocution does not belong to the speech act, per se, because it is "the causal response of a linguistic act."[90]

This recognition, however, shifts the methodological focus from text to *con*text, and risks pushing the normative analytical debate back toward the approaches it was designed to overcome.[91] Buzan, et al, qualify their position by arguing that it can be difficult to address because security arguments are always hypothetical; about the future and future alternatives. The temporal orientation of securitization is such that it seeks to mobilize present means toward a future threat; that is, it combines a fear of an emergent threat with an immediate need to act. To assume that a model could predict these outcomes means that society would have to be "a closed, mechanical, and deterministic system."[92] Within this orientation, precautionary and preemptive thinking is often applied.[93] Moreover, establishing efficient causality, "in which you first separate factors and then show how one is the basic cause, or how they cause each other, or how they

[89] Ibid., "A Theory of Securitization," pg. 20
[90] Ibid., pg. 5
[91] Williams, "The Continuing Evolution of Securitization Theory," pg. 213, 214
[92] Buzan, et al, "Security," pg. 32
[93] De Goede, Marieke, Samuel Randals. "Precaution, preemption: arts and technologies of the actionable future." *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space*. Vol. 27 (2009), pg. 865

together reflect a more basic cause,"[94] cannot always be sufficient to grasp the effects of a securitization act.

The philosophical approach that the Copenhagen School uses provides a formal designation of what security is, and provides an "orienting device" for understanding what is happening in specific contexts.[95] The notion of 'risk' is key to understanding this. It is in the practice of securitization outlined above that something becomes a security issue, namely in the presentation of something as a threat. As Campbell applies the notion of risk derived from the insurance industry to argue the point further that danger, risk, and threats are not objective conditions, an effect of interpretation.

> Nothing is a risk in itself; there is no risk in reality. But on the other hand, anything *can* be a risk; it all depends upon how one analyzes the danger, considers the event...Danger bears no essential, necessary, or unproblematic relation to the action or event from which it is said to derive.[96]

Nothing is, therefore, intrinsically more dangerous than anything else unless it is interpreted as such. We come to learn about risk, danger and threats through the practices that embody a certain interpretation of 'security'.[97] This is not to say that there are no real dangers that exist. It does assert: "not all risks are equal, and not all risks are interpreted as dangers."[98] For example, Frank Harvey notes that research into threat perceptions reveals that fear is largely based upon the level of risk that people assign to specific

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[94] Connolly, William E. "Evangelical-Capitalist Resonance Machine." *Political Theory*. Vol. 33, No. 6 (2005), pg. 869
[95] Williams, "The Continuing Evolution of Securitization Theory," pg. 214
[96] Campbell, David. *Writing Security: United States Foreign Policy and the Politics of Identity*. Manchester: Manchester U. P. (1998), pg. 2
[97] McSweeney, Bill. "Security, Identity and Interests: a Sociology of International Relations." New York: Cambridge U. P. (1999), pg. 22
[98] Campbell, "Writing Security," pg. 2

events or behaviors, a function of, in particular, *familiarity* and *controllability*.[99] What Campbell draws attention to, therefore, is the way in which these assessments are based upon interpretative practice, and how these issues are articulated as threatening or risky. Moreover, Campbell extends his argument to note that a function of interpretation is the manner in which modes of representation coalesce around the referents marked as dangers. "Given the often tenuous relationship between an interpretation of danger and the "objective" incidence of behaviors and factors thought to constitute," he observes, "the capacity for a particular risk to be represented in terms of characteristics reviled in the community said to be threatened can be an important impetus to the interpretation of danger."[100]

On the other hand, Campbell notes that danger can be interpreted in the absence of an action or event. "The mere existence of an alternative mode of being, the presence of which exemplifies that different identities are possible and this de-naturalizes the claim of a particular identity to be the true identity"[101] can be enough to produce a threat. This entails the denotation of an existential threat – the threat to the integrity or survival of a particular referent object. Balzacq, therefore, is unsympathetic to the notion that securitization, or speech, can *create* a receptive audience, "by bringing it to consciousness of itself as a unified audience;"[102] an important constitutive principle.

Intertextual Strategy and Discourse Analysis

[99] Harvey, Frank. "The Homeland Security Dilemma: The Imaginations of Failure and the Escalating Costs of Perfecting Security." Prepared for: Canadian Defence and Foreign Affairs Institute (June 2006), pg. 16
[100] Campbell, "Writing Security," pg. 2-3
[101] Ibid., pg. 3
[102] Wiliams, "The Continuing Evolution of Securitization Theory," pg. 215

There is, however, another way of conceiving of discourse analysis that offers a way out of the debate observed by Balzacq that positions sociology and philosophy against one-another. The intra/intertextual approach is closer to the philosophical position, but offers a deeper understanding of how various texts combine to create a dominant narrative regarding an issue or event. Thus, what I offer here is not necessarily a challenge to the Copenhagen School's framework, but rather attempts a middle ground between the philosophical approach and the sociological approaches to securitization.

The *Intertext* is defined by Roland Barthes as the "space between;" the "multidimensional space in which a variety of writings, none of them original, blend and clash."[103] More directly, intertextuality views the texts that comprise a body of literature as embedded within a wider system of signs, situated in relation to other networks of cultural signifying practices. Texts are not self-sufficient, closed systems but instead must be viewed within ensemble of socio-historical practices of signification and meaning-creation. An intertextual strategy can assist in uncovering how discourse is constructed rather than existing as an unproblematic reflection of a given reality.

Some literary theories state that texts mediate the social reality they represent; that what is "social reality" emerges in the writing of the text and bears traces of its previous constructions in the history of the genre.[104] The meaning and value "imposed on the world is structured not by one's immediate consciousness, but by the various reality-making scripts one inherits or acquires from one's surrounding cultural/linguistic

[103] Der Derian, James. "The Boundaries of Knowledge and Practice in International Relations. James Der Derian and Michael Shaprio (eds.). International/Intertextual Relations: Postmodern Readings of World Politics." Lexington, MA: Lexington (1989), pg. 6
[104] Shapiro, Michael. "Introduction II: Textualizing World Politics." James Der Derian and Michael Shapiro (eds.). *International/Intertextual Relations: Postmodern Readings of World Politics*. Lexington, MA: Lexington (1989), pg. 11

condition."[105] According to Elana Gomel (2003), "Language, discourse, and narrative are sites in which the self is – precariously woven together out of the disparate strands of other people's stories."[106] As such, the constitution of the identity of a subject is bound in the stories we tell ourselves, and within a subjects community narratives of self-hood become internalized as scripts of behavior.[107] In short, "the familiar world cannot be separated from the interpretative *practices* through which it is made."[108]

According to Balzacq, textual analysis can emphasize the performative relations and internal coherence of a text (intratextuality), or can identify relationships among texts (intertextuality).[109] Of particular importance to securitization, intratextuality asks certain questions such as:

> What kind of action the text wishes to achieve (assertive, commissive, expressive, directive, or declarative); what representations are created by this or that particular action; what are the communicative purposes and domains of relevance of the texts; which heuristic artefacts are favored, for which meanings (metaphors, pictures, emotions, analogies, etc.); what "map" of world politics does it present; What kind of interactions are generated?[110]

Intertextuality reveals the patterned nature of representations, as captured in different ways depending upon the text. Meaning, as representation, is derived from the interplay between bodies of text. Given the fact that meaning is derived from multiple sources/texts, to adequately capture the breadth and depth of securitization, it is necessary to study various genres of texts, at various points in time, in various contexts.[111] Intertextualism, therefore, constitute 'generative narratives', or storylines, which provide

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[105] Ibid.
[106] Gomel, Elana. *Bloodscripts: Writing the Violent Subject*. Columbus, OH: Ohio St. U.P. (2003), pg. xiv
[107] Ibid., pg. xvi
[108] Shapiro, "Introduction II," pg. 11
[109] Balzacq, "Enquires into Methods," pg. 43
[110] Ibid.
[111] Ibid.

resources for actors to draw upon to give meaning to specific physical or social phenomenon. The storyline functions to establish linkages that may point toward a threatening phenomenon; once reified, a storyline can contribute to 'cognitive routinization' of action and perception; and finally, create contending coalitions around contrasting sets of common understandings.[112] For example, *events*, according to Campbell (1992), are not only what happens, but also that which can be narrated.

> Telling a story establishes order and meaning. Scripting a narrative, providing a sequentially ordered plot, a cast of characters, identifiable forces, attributable motivations, and lessons for the future, is one of the most common ways we ascribe intelligibility when confronted with the non-familiar…And among those political figures and scholars of international relations to whom narrative authority (author-ity) is granted, one can identify a favored narrative disposition.[113]

This is a direct challenge to the argument for epistemic realism, "whereby the world comprises material objects who existence is independent of ideas or beliefs about them."[114] Narration in this instance constructs history as something that speaks for itself; something that possesses a self-evident quality, making the purpose of analysis to identify the self-evident material causes so actors can adjust themselves within the realm of necessity they engender.[115] From this perspective, understanding world politics, and the events that constitute it, is thus an "interpretative-intensive activity."[116]

According to Campbell, we can come to know the construction of the world by interpreting how it is represented in official discourses, or how one discourse comes to

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[112] Ibid.
[113] Campbell, David. *Politics without principle: sovereignty, ethics, and the narratives of the Gulf War*. Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner (1993), pg. 7
[114] Ibid.
[115] Ibid., pg. 7-8
[116] Curtis, Neal. *War and Social theory: world, value and identity*. New York: Palgrave Macmillian (2006), pg. xv

dominate others. The resulting narratives weave these representations culled form different texts together to give them an overall coherence, and structure perception of issues, events, or other actors. Gursin's theory supports the assumption that all media forms and practices are interrelated. Movies, television, and the internet; sports, entertainment and news; academics, journalists, and popular texts; individual, collective, and mobile media cannot be studied in isolation, but "placed in relation to their patterns and flows of interaction as well as their incommensurabilities and discontinuities."[117] The key task of intertextual strategies, with a consideration for visual culture, is to understand how these complex pictures come together, and so considers various other mediums such as film, television, art, as various sites of articulation.

Toward a 'Pictorial Turn'

W.J.T. Mitchell has expressed a general dissatisfaction with the absence of an adequate theory about pictures. He argues that, at present what we have is a "motley array of disciplines – semiotics, philosophical inquiries into art and representation, studies in cinema and mass media, comparative studies in the arts" which converge on the problem of pictorial representation and visual culture,[118] but no unifying approach that addresses them holistically. This is partly due to the myriad definitions that accompany the term 'image'. At the most general level, an image is a likeness, motif or a figure re-presented in some medium, encompassing an assemblage of material, virtual and symbolic elements. It can have a physical presence (like a sculpture, for example), be represented through a material medium (like a movie, television, etc.), or can be a "state

[117] Gursin, Richard. *Premediation: affect and mediality after 9/11*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan (2010), pg. 5
[118] Mitchell, WJT. *Picture Theory: essays on verbal and visual representation*. Chicago: U. Chicago P. (1994), pg. 9

of the mind;" existing as apart of the imagination or memory embodied in the consciousness. When one speaks of images, therefore, a number of phenomena come to mind: "pictures, statues, optical illusions, maps, diagrams, dreams, hallucinations, spectacles, projections, poems, patterns, memories, and ideas as images."[119] For analytical purposes, the 'image' can be sub-divided into different categories: graphic (pictures, statues, designs), optical (mirrors, projectors), perceptual (sense data, "species," appearances), mental (dreams, memories, ideas, fantasmata), and verbal (metaphors, descriptions).[120] These categories are not neat and clean, however, and become further muddled given the extensive interdisciplinary attention each type invites. But what this does illuminate is a growing interest in the image as a category of fierce attention.

Mitchell has termed this shift a "pictorial turn" – akin to Richard Rorty's "linguistic turn" – that explores the "conventions and codes that underlie nonlinguistic symbol systems and (more important) do not begin with the assumption that language is paradigmatic for meaning.[121] The pictorial turn, according to Mitchell, looks at the way that modern thought is constructed around visual paradigms. "It looks at pictures "in" theory and at theory as a form of picturing."[122] This observation disrupts the notion of the image as transparent media through which reality may be represented to the understanding, and adds a political dimension.[123] Images are not, he argues, "stable, static or permanent in any metaphysical sense; they are not perceived in the same way by

[119] Ibid. *Iconology: Image, Text, Ideology*. Chicago: U. Chicago P. (1986), pg. 9
[120] Ibid., pg. 10
[121] Ibid. "Picture Theory," pg. 12
[122] Ibid., pg. 9
[123] Mitchell, "Iconology," pg. 8

viewers any more than are dream images; they are not exclusively visual in any important way, but involve multisensory apprehension and interpretation."[124]

Images, moreover, can also be regarded as a sign that presents deceptive appearances of naturalness and transparence concealing an opaque, distorting mechanism of representation, a process of "ideological mystification."[125] To Mitchell, the simplest way to put it is expressed by the following: "in what is often characterized as the age of "spectacle" (Guy Debord), "surveillance" (Foucault), and all-pervasive image-making, we still do not know exactly what pictures are, what their relation to language is, how they operate on observers and on the world, how their history is to be understood, and what is to be done with or about them."[126] The turn, therefore, is characterized by a 'paradox'. It is arguably occurring because of the overwhelming nature of the present culture of video and cybernetic technology, and electronic reproduction, which is developing powerful forms of visual simulation and illusionism, yet there is a "fear of the image," an anxiety regarding the power of images over the creators and its manipulators. For Mitchell, the 'pictorial turn' is not an answer to any of these questions, but a way of "stating the question" regarding the role of images in social theory.

Conclusion

This chapter provided an outline of the securitization framework, and addressed some methodological shortcomings. The framework draws attention to the ways in which threats are socially constructed through language, not immutable and irreconcilable conditions, and how the meaning of security can vary based upon the manner that it is

[124] Ibid., pg. 14
[125] Ibid, pg. 8
[126] Ibid. "Picture Theory," pg. 13

articulated. Discourse analysis plays a key role in this process, but it is narrow, ignoring how other symbolic resources can be employed within the communicative process that work with and beyond language hold potential to communicate a threat. These articulations are dependent upon context and setting, as well as the audience to whom the threat is being communicated. The pictorial turn, for Mitchell, is a way of stating the question of how images, in particular, can be dealt with in this circumstance.

Imaging in this regard can be viewed as enriching the securitization discourse. Taking Mitchell's notion of discourse as a form of picturing adds a deeper understanding to the concepts that comprise the semantic force of securitization, and the ways in which "picturing" discourse assists in creating a unified vision of what constitutes the threat to a specific referent object. The next chapter develops the concept of imaging in more detail, and relates it empirically to the political management of the issue of "new terrorism."

CHAPTER THREE

The Concept of Imaging: Complexity and Securitization

"There is no war without representation."

– Paul Virilio, *War and Cinema*

The previous chapter re-conceptualized the framework of securitization to make it more accommodating to viewing developments in visual culture and visual representation. Moreover, it revealed how the meaning of security is "fundamentally discursive."[127] This chapter will examine the role of the visual image, and how it is constructed, conveyed and received in relation to the practice of security and performance of securitization discourse vis-à-vis subjects, referent objects and events of violence. Iconographic representations provide policy-makers and media institutions a means whereby complex situations can be condensed into quickly communicable and easily comprehended images, to shape perception in a pre-given manner so as to provoke a desired response. The 'whole' of this process is termed imaging.

Imaging has received limited attention in the literature on contemporary security, since the "expansion" of the concept in the post-Cold War era (see: David Campbell; James Der Derian). Imaging is the act of constructing a particular perception of reality through the use of visual materials, which serve the purpose of "documentary evidence." Visual materials provide a way of enhancing the written or spoken word, and can be used to connect subjects in a particular way that works *beyond* mere description. On the

[127] Mutimer, David. *The Weapons State: Proliferation and the Framing of Security*. Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner (2000), pg. 19

subject of the Bosnian detention centers, Susan Moeller argues that the camera possesses an unmatched ability to communicate the reality of a story. "Text can allow us to 'imagine' what the Bosnian camps must be like," she argues, "but only the photographic evidence can make our nightmares concrete."[128]

However, images cannot simply be viewed as self-evident, neutral reflections of reality. While images serve to bring incorporeal ideas and structures of emotion into a corporeal setting – to give "evil a face"[129] – they must be problematized so as to provide a way for examining the constructions and performances of the social field, and the role they play in the structuring of discourses. The performative dimension entails that discourses actively constitute the objects of which they speak.[130] As such it moves the discussion beyond recognizing that ideational aspects construct material circumstances, and toward a more dynamic understanding of the relationship between the material and the ideational, namely how the procession of discourse constitutes real conditions for and circumstances of certain representations, meanings, identities, social relations and political assemblages.[131] Discourse and non-linguistic (read: aesthetic, pictorial) representations do not simply describe an object, but constitute it, shaping notions of self/other as well as the conditions for the possibility of action by making these complex phenomena more manageable, accessible and understandable.

[128] Moeller, Compassion Fatigue," pg. 258
[129] Der Deria, James. "Imaging Terror: Logos, Pathos, and Ethos." *Third World Quarterly*. Vol. 26, No. 1 (2005), pg. 26
[130] Bialasiewicz, Luiza, et al. "Performing Security: The imaginative geographies of current US strategy." *Political Geography*. Vol. 26 (2007), pg. 406
[131] Ibid.

Politics, Narrativity and Images

"History decays into images, not into stories."

- Walter Benjamin, *The Arcades Project*

Language and images are the primary way in which people experience an event, encounter a people, or engage with an issue. We experience events through media, second hand, acting more as virtual participant-observers rather than direct actors; an interpretive frame is often already in place with regard to the images we see and discourse we engage with. C. Wright Mills notes,

> The first rule for understanding the human condition is that men live in second-hand worlds. They are aware of much more than they have personally experienced; and their own experience is always indirect. The quality of their lives is determined by meanings they have received from others. Everyone lives in a world of such meanings. No man stands alone directly confronting a world of solid fact. No such world is available.[132]

Once issues and complex events are past, spatially and temporally distanced from the present moment, they are necessarily mediated.[133] Discursively created images, for Mutimer, structure how we think about political problems and solutions, making "problems" a site of contestation, mutually constituted by the interaction of actors and audiences. The images are used to structure and support an understanding of the problem, and a response or a particular call to action.[134] Looking more specifically at the function of narrative, discourse is the central means through which an understanding of complex

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[132] Said, Edward W. *Covering Islam: How the media and the experts determine how we see the rest of the world*.New York: Pantheon (1981), pg. 42

[133] Campbell, David. *National Deconstruction: Violence, Identity, and Justice in Bosnia*. Minneapolis, MN: U. Minnesota P. (1998), pg. 34

[134] Mutimer, David. "Reimagining Security: The Metaphors of Proliferation." Keith Krause, Michael C. Williams, ed. *Critical Security Studies: Concepts and Cases*. Minneapolis, MN: U. Minnesota P. (1997), pg. pg. 194

events is created. Narrative is a particular type of performance; a "meta-code" that exposes the creation of shared meaning. Facts are structured in a way that they become components in a particular story. Historical events, while they can be assigned specific time-space locations, and events that are observable and perceivable. Historical narratives are "verbal fictions, the contents of which are as much invented as found and the forms of which have more in common with their counterparts in literature than they have with those in sciences,"[135] yet qualify as an account of the real. Any set of real events can be 'emplotted' in a number of different ways, and can bear the weight of being told as any number of stories.[136] No given set or sequence of events is "*intrinsically* tragic, comic, farcical, etc.," but can be constructed as such by "the imposition of the structure of a given story types on the events, it is the choice of the story type and its imposition upon the events that endow them with meaning."[137] The effect of which is explanation.

Narrative does not simply reveal a ready-made story. As Campbell argues, events that come to be perceived as "real" are so because they are first remembered and then placed within a "chronologically ordered sequence."[138] The value attached to narrative is coherence, integrity and fullness that approach the image of everyday life. As Campbell argues, the documentary record to which historians turn for their grounded interpretations and common understandings of the historical record are themselves "linguistically mediated" and "imbricated with narrativized meanings, either by prior historians or the actors themselves."[139] Campbell uses the Holocaust as an instance of the inescapability of narrative.

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[135] Campbell, "National Deconstruction," pg. 35
[136] Ibid.
[137] Ibid.
[138] Ibid., pg. 36
[139] Ibid., pg. 40

> No single person can be said to have witnessed the whole marked by [the events the term signifies], which counsels us to recognize that its "truth or meaning, however we fashion the relation between those two very different concepts, cannot be proved by stitching together all the individual testimonies." However the issue of narrative is not restricted to a post factum shaping of events, for it was not straightforward "facts" that shaped the actions of both killers and victims in the Holocaust: "it was the structural, mythological and figurative apprehension these facts that led to action taken on their behalf," which means that "world views may have both generated the catastrophe and narrated it afterwards."[140]

Campbell, citing Hayden White, argues that the only grounds for preferring one narrative over another are decidedly *moralistic* and *aesthetic* questions. Knowledge essentially involves abstraction, interpretation and representation, making aesthetic questions unavoidable in the process of explanation. If one rejects the naturalist notion of objectivity, citing a correspondence between image and its external referent, the issue of aesthetics cannot be avoided.[141]

Frank Moller argues: "From an actor's point of view, the issue is not only one of correspondence between securitizing moves and collective memory but also one of shaping collective memories through, among other things, the practice of securitization so as to produce this correspondence in the first place."[142] Without this capacity to remember, securitizing events would unfold in a vacuum. Memory, Moller notes, helps us to assign meaning to incoming information to make sense of the world by integrating otherwise disconnected points in time into a single historical whole. The ubiquitous uses of visual media technologies permanently and pervasively expose individuals to images. In this scenario, social, cultural and political events "exist today only insofar as they mobilize and are mobilized by a network of complementary and overlapping media forms

[140] Ibid., pg. 40
[141] Ibid. "Geopolitics and Visuality," pg. 379
[142] Moller, "Photographic Interventions, in Post 9/11 Security Policy," pg. 184

and practices."[143] Moller assumes that the process of remembering is "influenced by images and the memory of images: each person carries with them a huge reservoir of images interfering with and influencing the perception and memory of every occurrence."[144] Susan Sontag notes that in the process of remembering: "Memory freeze-frames; its basic unit is the image."[145] In an era of information overload, she argues, "the photograph provides a quick way of apprehending something and a compact form for memorializing it."[146]

The remainder of this chapter explores how issues of security, specifically security related to terrorist events, are dealt with. A particular focus rests on how the semantic repertoire of securitization discourse is affected by archetypes, symbols and icons of violence, terror and horror, and assesses how political forces, embedded in a culture replete with (moving) images, reduce the complexity of dramatic events into easily communicable signs that constitute a particular 'threat image' of terror for the purpose of encouraging or justifying specific actions defending against it, and the consequences of this operation.

Imaging: Complexity, Legibility and Communication

Imaging is a pragmatic attempt to make a complex reality discursively more accessible. In *Seeing Like a State* (1998), James C. Scott argues that "legibility" is a central problem of modern statecraft. Much of early modern statecraft was devoted to "rationalizing and standardizing what was a social hieroglyph into a legible and

[143] Gursin, "Premediation," pg. 90
[144] Moller, "Photographic Interventions in Post 9/11 Security Policy," pg. 183
[145] Sontag, Susan. *Regarding the Pain of Others*. New York : Farrar, Straus and Giroux (2003), pg. 22
[146] Ibid.

administratively more convenient format."[147] Scott's logic applies to early improvement schemes under the auspices of a relatively decentralized population, but provides a useful reading of the nature of top-down, administrative rationality, and a foil for the impetus behind imaging. This type of simplification is a basic "given" of rational procedures of governance, and as Niklas Luhmann observes, a fundamental activity of social systems. The function of imaging is foregrounded in the notion of "complexity reduction," with the end goal of translating an uncertain environment into a negotiable and manageable format. Every social system argues Luhmann, is confronted with the challenge of having to design its own functionalities and to produce and reproduce its own operations.[148] What is presented is a dialectical challenge between structure and function, or the realization and reproduction of a network or system.

Luhmann argues that social systems are rational if they aim to reduce complexity. This applies to the infinitely complex and contingent environment of intelligence and security policy construction. To highlight this, Donald Rumsfeld's utterance at the NATO headquarters in 2002 is revealing in his assessment of the environment within which this process occurs. When asked about the "real situation" and the "facts" regarding the nature of the threat of terrorism and weapons of mass destruction in Iraq he replied:

> All of us in this business read intelligence information. And we read it daily and we think about it and it becomes, in our minds, essentially what exists. And that's wrong. It is not what exists.
>
> I say that because I have had experiences where I have gone back and done a great deal of work and analysis on intelligence information and looked at important countries, target countries, looked at important subject matters with

[147] Scott, James. *Seeing like a State: How Certain Schemes to Improve the Human Condition Have Failed*. Binghampton, NY: Vail-Ballou (1998), pg. 3
[148] Herting, Stephan, Lars Stein. "The Evolution of Luhmann's Systems theory with Focus on the Constructivist Influence." *International Journal of General Systems*. Vol. 36, No. 1 (2007), pg. 11

> respect to those target countries and asked, probed deeper and deeper and kept probing until I found what it is we knew, and when we learned it and when it actually had existed. And I found that, not to my surprise, but I think anytime you look at it that way what you find is that there are important pieces of intelligence information that countries, that spend a lot of money, and a lot of time with a lot of wonderful people trying to learn more about what's going on in the world, did not know some significant event for two years after it happened, for four years after it happened, for six years after it happened, in some cases 11 and 12 and 13 years after it happened.
>
> Now what's the message there? The message is there are no "knowns." There are things we know we know that we know. There are known unknowns. That is to say there are things that we now know we don't know. But there are also unknown unknowns. There are things we don't know we don't know. So when we do the best we can and pull all this information together, and we then say well that's what we see as the situation, that is really only the known knowns and the known unknowns. And each year, we discover more of those unknown unknowns. *It sounds like a riddle. It isn't a riddle. It is a very serious, important matter*.[149]

Taking Rumsfeld at his word, this purported understanding of intelligence gathering and interpretation served as a guiding principle behind the preemptive policy of the Bush administration in its treatment of the global war on terrorism and states harboring them. The absence of evidence, Rumsfeld argues, is not the evidence of absence. Yet introducing this type of complexity into the equation produces an even more complex environment for policy making. In what way can this condition be theorized?

In Luhmann's theory, the environment is understood as the realm outside the immediate social system, or hermetic circle, and at face value represents only chaotic matter and infinite possibility. Complexity thus describes a reality determined by selection of infinite possibilities. Something is complex if more possibilities exist than those that are actionable at a specific moment in time. Complexity forces systems to select with the goal being to "operatively" discipline the environment within which the

[149] "Secretary Rumsfeld Press Conference at NATO Headquarters, Brussels, Belgium." 6 June 2002; emphasis added.

system is located.[150] This does not mean total control, but rather a recognition of the increased complexity of the environment the policy maker faces – it is, in other words, a way of coping with the reality of impartial and incomplete information. The "picture" that is typically constructed is based upon *what is known as known and what is known as unknown*.

Communication for Luhmann is the fundamental element in society. However, his portrayal of communication is posited as a process of differentiation and classification. Communication produces operational closures that classifies the world, and stabilizes the boundaries of decision-making. Through communication, ambiguity and contingency are reduced; some possibilities are realized while others are excluded. Through communication, the world becomes relatively predictable, manageable, and operatively clearer. A co-emergent – ultimately discursive – process described as 'rendering technical' applies this notion of translating complex issues into targeted programs of intervention. The first step is to problematize, or the identification of threats and deficiencies that need to be combated or rectified. The second step is rendering technical,

> …a shorthand for what is actually a whole set of practices concerned with representing "the domain to be governed as an intelligible field with specifiable limits and particular characteristics"…defining boundaries, rendering that within them visible, assembling information about that which is included and devising techniques to mobilize the forces and entities thus revealed.[151]

Images serve as a map that mediates action. The image, in this regard, can be viewed as a general notion, ramified in various associations that holds the world together through

[150] McCarthy, Thomas A. *The Critical Theory of Jurgen Habermas*. Cambridge: MIT Press (1978), pg. 224
[151] Li, Tania Murray. *The Will to Improve: Governmentality, Development and the Practice of Politics*. Durham, Duke U. P. pg. 7

"figures of knowledge,"[152] scripting the imagination. The identification of a problem, Li notes, is linked to the availability of a solution.[153] Security practices are based upon and enacted with the tools and instruments available. As Balzacq notes, these are the social devices through which professionals of in/security think about a threat.[154] Regulatory tools, he argues, are essentially policy instruments that seek to normalize the behavior of target individuals; where capacity tools are the specific modes of imposing discipline.[155] These technical processes become institutions or "routinized sets of rules and procedures that structure the interactions among individuals and organizations."[156]

Through this type of communication, specific to physic and social systems, complexity is dealt with by creating meaning and problem definitions. As Luhmann posits, reality is produced by this mode of sense making.[157] However, this process does not take place in a vacuum. The creative, problem-solving imagination is "scripted" by different archetypal formations. The maps that comprise problem definitions do not only conform to an iconographic logic themselves, but the discursive impetus behind the construction of a societal "vision" is dependent upon archetypes as well. When strategically used, icons, archetypes and visual images are focusing tools, ascribing meaning to events that might otherwise be unknown or unrecognizable, confusing or complicated. David Mutimer, in similar fashion has detailed utility of discursive metaphors, wherein "*one thing is viewed in terms of another*," with the possibility of

[152] Mitchell, "Iconology," pg. 11
[153] Li, "The Will to Improve," pg. 7
[154] Balzacq, "A Theory of Securitization," pg. 16
[155] Ibid. pg. 17
[156] Balzaq, "A Theory of Securitization," pg. 16
[157] Luhmann, Niklas. *The Reality of the Mass Media*. Stanford: Stanford U. P. (2000), pg. 7

bridging "realms of discourse."[158] For Mutimer: "Metaphors compose the images used to structure and support our understanding of the problem and therefore our response to that problem."[159] It is a progressive sublimation of a discourse that is regarded as a synchronic structure in a metaphor space, presenting an intellectual and emotional complex in an instant of time. These ground the conceptual system into simplified terms, and while they do not specifically drive policy they provide a useful way of imagining it, and the consequences of actions/inaction.

Categorization, perception and politics go "hand in hand."[160] Take the example of the image of rogue states found in Stritzel and Schmittchen. The "rogue state" image has been an integral discursive policy tool since the 1970s, used to frame structural problems of international status quo posed by its irregular, or radical non-abiders, thus giving a "great variety of security problems a unitary frame."[161] Stemming from such terms as *crazy* state, *pariah* state, and *outlaw* state, rogue state holds a strong moral connotation of 'abnormal behavior', referring to illegitimate political representation and repressive leadership which acts as a criminal against its own people and thus a character that stands in marked contrast to Western/Liberal democracy.[162] Semantic parallels are also drawn to the notion of "rogue elephant," a term that describes unfounded aggressions of male animals due to an exorbitant production of testosterone, and as a result are isolated and attacked by other elephants. As Stritzel and Schmittchen note, the term "rogue elephant

[158] Mutimer, "Weapsons State," pg. 22, emphasis in original
[159] Ibid., pg. 20
[160] Edelman, Murray. *Constructing the Political Spectacle*. Chicago: U. Chicago P. (1988), pg. 82
[161] Stritzel, Holger, Dirk Schmittchen. "Securitization, Culture and Power: Rogue States in US and German Discourse." *Securitization Theory: How security problems emerge and dissolve*. New York: Routledge (2011), pg. 172
[162] Ibid.

state" was occasionally used in US media discourse.[163] Adding to this, however, one can argue that the pervasive or repetitious use of specific signifying device sediments the perspective and reifies it as an iconic or archetypical symbol.

Archetypal references, therefore, enhance the semantic repertoire of security utterances. Erwin Panofsky argues that symbols and icons create a relationship between the "visible event" and its "intelligible significance."[164] Archetypes are symbols that provide a framework for perceptual and emotional experience, predisposing individuals to see issues and events in certain ways, to have certain affective experiences, and/or to engage in certain categories of behavior. Their existence, according to Carl Jung, presupposes a collective unconscious. As a psychological category, the collective unconscious constitutes an "inherited" psychic system, beyond personal consciousness, of "collective, universal and impersonal nature, observable in all individuals yet not reducible to them. It consists, for Jung, of a collection of pre-existent archetypes or "symbolic figures" held in common and transmitted through communities by means of repeated engagements and "esoteric teaching"[165] Esoteric teachings can be taken to mean modes of understanding or comprehension limited to a small number of people with specialized knowledge, such as the generative narratives of a given community or social system. An intersubjective interpretation frames parts of social life in terms of an image, and it is through this construction that social life is populated with particular meanings.[166]

Archetypal images are embedded in a comprehensive system of thought that

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[163] Ibid.
[164] Panofky, Erwin. *Studies in Iconology: Humanistic Themes in the Art of the Renaissance*. Boulder, CO: Westview (1967), pg. 5
[165] Jung, Carl G. *Archetypes and the Collective Unconscious*. Trans. By R. F. C. Hull. New York: Princeton U. P. (1969), pg. 3-5, 43
[166] Mutimer, "Weapons State," pg. 7

ascribes a certain order to the world;[167] products of objective world experiences that assimilate into inner, psychic events. "The archetype," for Jung, "is essentially an unconscious content that is altered by becoming conscious and being perceived, and it takes its color from the individual consciousness in which it happens to appear."[168] At its base, archetypes operate as a "category of the imagination."[169] These images and ideas remain as the latent foundation of communities, serving as pre-structured "formulas" regarding symbolic communication that tap into and shape socially sedimented perspectives. Given the new means with which information and digital images can be captured and disseminated in real-time via new media technologies produce simultaneously experienced events.

Transferring this back to Scott's notion of the administrative state, he argues that certain intellectual filters are necessary in order to reduce complexity of social life to manageable dimensions. This activity is not necessarily a question of capacity, but a question of purpose: the schematized process of abstraction and simplification are disciplined by a number of objectives.[170] Accordingly, Scott argues that the logic behind the required shorthand is the pressing interest of the rulers.

> Certain forms of knowledge and control require a narrowing of vision. The great advantage of such tunnel vision is that it brings into sharp focus certain limited aspects of an otherwise complex and unwieldy reality. This very simplification, in turn, makes the phenomenon at the center of the field of vision more legible and hence more susceptible to careful measurement and calculation. Combined with similar observations, an overall aggregate, synoptic view of a selective reality is achieved, making possible a high degree of schematic knowledge, control and

[167] Jung, "Archetypes and the Collective Unconscious," p. 8
[168] Ibid., pg. 5
[169] Ibid., pg. 42-3
[170] Scott, "Seeing Like a State," pg. 23

manipulation.[171]

The epistemological position this entails, however, is not that these procedures directly reflect the reality of the referent object under scrutiny. Instead, it posits that this simplified image is not plainly a replication of *what is* but is also a creation of *what we want to be*. As Scott notes, the maps do not necessarily, or successfully, represent the actual activity of the society they depict; they represent the slice of it that is of interest to the official observer.[172]

Common Operating Picture: Imaging In/Security

With September 11, 2001 continuing to represent a watershed event in the popular consciousness and public imagination, engendering a method of governance that is responsive to – and constitutive of – fear, anxieties, and insecurities in political communities. Frank Harvey notes that against this backdrop, security and public safety is not simply another government deliverable – it is the most important one.[173] With the attacks – and the passage of the Schengen Agreement, a treaty between many European countries that allows exchange of law enforcement data base between agencies through centralized data-bases – concerns over the flow of peoples, goods, and information over borders have increased.[174] Consequently, states have fundamentally changed the ways that they police and monitor a mobile population and personal data. Homeland security in the age of terror – in conjunction with an ongoing revolution in Military Affairs (RMA), generally – views information (as system, technology and content) to be central

[171] Ibid., pg. 11
[172] Ibid., pg. 3
[173] Harvey, Frank P. *The Homeland Security Dilemma: Fear, failure and the future of American insecurity*. New York: Routledge (2010), pg. 23
[174] Zureik, Elia, Mark B. Salter. "Introduction." Zureik, Elia, Mark B. Salter (eds.). *Global Surveillance and Policing: Borders, security, identity*. Portland, OR: Willan (2009), pg. 1

to present alterations in global power; a force multiplier of security practice made possible by a desire for information dominance.[175] In other words, the reduction of complex security environments has been enacted by means of information and communications technologies, wherein successful management of the environment is attained only on the basis of complete transparency.

The Imagination of Risk and the Terrorist Image

The impetus behind the discourses of info-based security stem from a demand based in an economy of fear among the public, a political desire to avoid catastrophe, and a commercial supply of available technologies. This section attempts to map the discourse using various public relations material from high-profile security companies to unravel a discourse that is perpetually seeking to create and rectify "gaps" in security.

Risk and risk-management has been the primary means through which the war on terror has been articulated. The presumed apocalyptic potential of contemporary threats posed by terrorism underpins the call for precautionary or preemptive political action, legitimated under the auspices of extreme uncertainty.[176] Yet, as the 9/11 Commission assessed: "Imagination is not a gift typically associated with bureaucracies."[177] This resulted in the under-estimation of threats based upon failures in imagination, policy capabilities, and management.[178] Officials have thus set out institutionalizing imagination, at the recommendation of the Commission, envisioning innumerable threats,

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[175] Ferris, John. "The Biggest Force Multiplier: Knowledge, Information, and Warfare in the 21st Century." John Ferris (ed.). "Calgary Papers in Military and Strategic Studies." *Strategic Studies*, Vol. 1, 2008. Published by: Centre for Military and Strategic Studies, U. Calgary (2008), pg. 108
[176] de Goede and Randalls, "Precaution, Preemption," pg. 859
[177] Der Derian, "Imaging Terror," pg. 23
[178] Harvey, "The Homeland Security Dilemma: Fear, Failure and the Future of American Insecurity," pg. 65, emphasis in Harvey

potential vulnerabilities and security gaps, inducing a widespread fear of terror. "The threats are," according to de Goede and Randalls, "both ultimately manageable with the relevant action, but also feared to be inherently unstable and potentially catastrophic, requiring precaution and investments in risk modeling," and profiling techniques.[179]

A principle of preemption entails high risks and uncertain costs and benefits, and thus places currency in the capacity to anticipate many possible scenarios so as to prepare against an emerging threat. Preemption as a security practice, as de Goede demonstrates, requires a "resonating fiction of a disastrous future about to unfold."[180] This is embodied in a particular reading of the terrorist threat, a "script" that mediates and enables security practice. As Der Derian forcefully stated: People do not go to war only out of rational calculation, but also because of how they see, perceive, picture, imagine and speak of each other: that is, because of how the construction of difference of other groups, as well as the sameness of their own, takes on irreconcilable conditions of hostility."[181] The image, in this respect, is a "symptom" of something else that expresses itself in a countless variety of other symptoms.[182]

New terrorism is the archetype, the "fiction" that mitigates security. It is politically characterized as catastrophic, uncertain, and dispersed.[183] Within this distinction, the global security environment is understood to be transformed by technological change and the rise of non-state actors. Within this context, Western governments are much less certain "of whether and when they are secure, and how – and

[179] de Goede and Randalls, "Precaution, Preemption," pg. 859
[180] de Goede, De Goede, Marieke. "Beyond Risk: Premediation and the Post-9/11 Security Imagination." *Security Dialogue*. Vol. 39, No. 2-3 (2008), pg. 162
[181] Der Derian, "Imaging terror," pg. 32
[182] Panofsky, "Studies in Iconology, "pg. 8
[183] de Goede and Randalls, "Precaution, Preemption," pg. 861

to what extent and at what price – security can be achieved."[184] September 11, 2001, appeared to signify that informal violence has become globalized, just as formal, state-controlled violence became globalized in the 1950s with the advent of nuclear weapons. This evaluation commands a re-assessment of issues of sovereignty, territoriality, and the protective functions of the modern state.[185] Yet, unlike specific, state-based dangers, security threats are now much more elusive: they are "global, fluid, and dispersed."[186] De Goede and Randalls observe:

> Prevailing discourses of 'New Terrorism' marked by 'homegrown' terrorists, local, autonomous jihadist groups, or 'sleeper cells' work to convey the message that terrorism could strike anywhere, at any time. The presumed desire of new terrorism is to effect a maximum number of casualties, coupled with its supposed ability to strike anywhere, is what makes the uncertainty of the threat of new terrorism both urgent and actionable.[187]

This 'profile' is the operative icon of terror, embodied in al-Qa'ida. This 'pictorial stereotype' is and image that is "preconceived or over-simplified" and "repeated without change."[188] These images involve icons, which are figures that represent events or issues, and the attention they attract as "objects of out gaze" can potentially produce a range of effects depending upon the time and place of their use.[189]

Al-Qa'ida is distinguished by three main factors: a universalist ideology (based, presumably, in a fundamentalist sect of Islam), a world-wide network of operational and preparative cells, and the unpredictable nature and sizable scale of violence it seeks to

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[184] Rasmussen, Mikkel Vedby. "`It Sounds Like a Riddle': Security Studies, the War on Terror and Risk." *Millennium Journal of International Studies*. Vol. 33, No. 2 (2004), pg. 382
[185] Keohane, Robert. "The Globalization of Informal Violence, Theories of World Politics, and "The Liberalism of Fear." *Social Science Research Council*.
[186] de Goede, "Beyond Risk," pg. 157
[187] de Goede and Randalls, "Precaution, Preemption," pg. 861-2
[188] "The Iconography of Famine." Geoffery Batchen, et al (eds.) *Picturing Atrocity: Reading Photographs in Crisis*. London: Reaktion Books (2011) – *forthcoming*. pg. 2
[189] Ibid.

execute.[190] The large scale loss of life on 9/11, in particular, was astonishing. According to Rod Thorton, "old" terrorist aims were mainly to make a statement to gain political attention, not necessarily violence in and of itself and incite public antagonism.[191] For Thorton, old terrorism is characterized by "propaganda of the deed;" they want a lot of people watching, not a lot of people dead. Small acts of violence against the state were intended to cause the state to overreact and introduce draconian security policies, making them unpopular with the people and thus 'the people' would become sympathetic toward the terrorist cause.[192] The bipartisan 9/11 Commission stated that a new enemy is being produced, empowered by new technology with whom there is no hope of negotiating an alternative to force. Given the terrorist classifications noted by deGoede and Randalls – their wanton desire for destructive, their shadowy omnipotent presence, the fluidity of their dealings, etc. – the risk from terrorism cannot be eliminated, only "contained and managed."[193]

Constructing this terrorist profile creates a tangible referent object toward which to refer in discourses of securitization, a quickly communicable idea of the threat that is posed, but also allows for many disparate features to be viewed as "different heads of the same monster," becoming sites of furious displays of ideological and cultural contestation. [194] They are informed by the familiar, strategic and visual-aesthetic binaries: good v. evil; civilized v. barbaric; rational v. irrational; progressive v. backward. The nebulous construction of the "political enemy" is evoked to "arouse passions, fears,

[190] de Goede, "Beyond Risk," pg. 162
[191] Thorton, "Asymmetric Warfare," pg. 25
[192] Ibid., pg. 26
[193] Ibid., pg. 50
[194] Puar, Jasbir K., Amit Rai. "Monster, Terrorist, Fag: The War on Terrorism and the Production of Docile Patriots." *Social Text*. Vol. 20, No. 3 (2002), pg. 112

and hopes." Yet, unlike merely an adversary, which is accepted and legitimate political actors, political enemies are characterized by "inherent traits that marks them as evil, immoral, warped or pathological and therefore a continuing threat."[195] Terrorism, as of November 2010, still elides a satisfactory incorporation into a United Nations supported, legalistic framework, especially when distinguishing between "freedom fighters" or "state terrorism." Terrorism, instead, "has become a political epithet designed to place enemies beyond the pale as opposed to a technical term the purpose of which is to define certain criminal acts that violate the laws of war for which the perpetrators can be held accountable."[196]

The discourse of monstrosity supports the understanding of placing an individual beyond humanity. The monster, as a violent protagonist in horror fiction, represents the "humanly unthinkable," a subject who, in Judith Butler's words, stands for the embodiment of moral panic, as those who have committed deeds outside the pale of history.[197] The horrific images these deeds produce form images that are not easily erased, and the "availability" in collective memory provides an intuitive rule of thumb for the risk terrorists pose.[198] "Terrorist threats are rare, unfamiliar, uncontrollable, spectacular and dreaded (among other things)," Harvey notes.[199] This has consequences for the extensive over-estimation of risk and thus high perceptions of terrorist threats. For Murray Edelman, the symbolic construction of terrorist-as-political enemy (or as a 'monster'), the terrorist comes to pose a "real" existential threat. And hence the incentive is not necessarily to "win" encounters but to destroy the opponent.

[195] Edelman, "Constructing the Political Spectacle," pg. 67
[196] Deen, Thalif. "UN: Defining Terrorism." *Al Jazeera*. 24 Nov. 2010.
[197] Gomel, "Bloodscripts," pg. 2
[198] Harvey, "The Homeland Security Dilemma: Fear, Failure and the Future of American Insecurity." pg. 55
[199] Ibid.

(En) Visioning Information as Strategic Discourse

Homeland Security is tasked to deal with cycles of response to emergency situations: "detection, preparedness, prevention, protection, rescue, relief, recovery and reconstruction."[200] In each phase the data requirements for response will differ in spatial and temporal scales, it has been accepted that government agencies and citizens "need access to real-time, multiple types of general information, as well as accurate geospatial information in order to accomplish many of the tasks during an emergency response situation."[201] While it is acknowledge that new media/information and communications technologies cannot eliminate uncertainty, it can be put in the service of minimizing the disruptions uncertainty causes.

This can be perceived in conjunction with the rise in desire to exploit information technologies for offensive and defensive purposes. According to John Ferris, information warfare is about thickening the fog of war for our enemies while lifting the fog for ourselves to create a transparent battlefield wherein the enemy completely loses the ability to surprise.[202] The desire is to become all-knowing and all-sensing with regard to any change in the environment; a system that becomes wholly aware of day-to-day surroundings. As Ferris explains the position of "technological enthusiasts" on knowledge acquisition for decision-making:

> Thousands of nodes performing a full range of data collection, data fusion, analysis and command functions – all linked together through a robust networking system. Data will be collected, organized into usable information, analyzed and assimilated, and displayed in a form that enhances the military decision-maker's

[200] Sui, Daniel Z. "Geospatial Technologies and Homeland Security: An Overview." Danial Z. Sui (ed.). *Geospatial Technologies and Homeland Security*. London: Springer (2008), pg. 1
[201] Ibid.
[202] Ferris, "The Biggest Force Multiplier," pg. 110

> understanding of the situation. The architecture will also apply modeling, simulation, and forecasting tools to help commanders make sound choices for employing military force.[203]

The assumption is that with dominant battle-space knowledge (DBK), armed forces can comprehend and enemy, moving from uncertainty or incomplete erroneous information to "perfect" information.[204] The question in this regard is formulated clearly by David J. Betz: "what to do about opponents who eschew (for the most part) force-on-force combat, do not maneuver in open terrain, and possess no obvious physical operational center of gravity?"[205] The capacity to understand and interpret the "battlefield" has been intensively harmonized with modes of communication and representation; information (its control and dissemination) is viewed as a separate theater of warfare. Speaking about information warfare strategy, Betz argues that,

> …like maneuver theory before it, [network-centric warfare theory] holds the notion of speed in high esteem: information technology is meant to profoundly multiply the speed and effectiveness of command, control and communications allowing the achievement of 'information dominance' – getting inside your enemies OODA [Observe-Orient-Decide-Act] loop – which boils down to knowing more about him than he does about you in a more timely and exploitable fashion.[206]

As Der Derian notes, "Information and speed are the key variables in warfare: whoever has the fastest network wins."[207] In the RMA literature, "to be seen is to be shot and to be fast is to win,"[208] so a focus on speed is viewed as essential.

Geospatial technologies assist in completing the complete picture of the

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[203] Ibid.
[204] Ibid.
[205] Betz, David J. "The more you know, the less you understand: The problem with information warfare." *Journal of Strategic Studies*. No. 29, No. 3 (2006), pg. 507
[206] Ibid.
[207] Der Derian, "S/N: International theory, balkanization, and the new world order." James Der Derian (ed.). *Critical Practices in International Theory: Selected Essays*. New York: Routledge (2009), pg. 115
[208] Ferris, "The Biggest Force Multiplier," pg. 111

environment. These include a broad range of technologies for "collecting, storing, displaying, or analyzing geographical information."[209] According to Starlight Visual Information System (VIS), visualizing information is a powerful tool for analysis because it "enables humans to make rapid, efficient and effective comparisons."[210] Starlight posits:

> Human cognitive analysis is largely a matter of comparison: comparing various properties of items with one-another, and comparing such properties with prior knowledge. As the volume and complexity of information increases, however, human ability to make these kinds of comparisons mentally degrades rapidly.[211]

Developed by Pacific Northwest National Lab (PNNL), Starlight VIS – and systems similar to it – enables users to comprehend information and solve problems by generating pictures of relationships among items in large repositories. The software has multiple integrated visualization tools, which the system builds by integrating text documents, database records, web-pages, geospatial data, video and photos, etc. to create awareness in situations of high complexity or uncertainty. The resultant image is thus a structured piece of data from which further assessments can be made, or action taken. This approach is useful because, according to Intergraph's "Anti-Terrorism/Force Protection Solution," security planning must "anticipate intelligent, adaptive adversaries and large-scale emergencies that create terror and confusion, and complicate response by causing multiple, simultaneous incidents."[212] In these situations, the sheer volume of inputs is overwhelming, and provides a fragmented and confusing picture of the unfolding

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[209] Kwan, Mei-Po. "Affecting Geospatial Technologies: Toward and Feminist Politics of Emotion." *The Professional Geographer*. Vol. 59, No. 1 (2008), pg. 22
[210] "Starlight Visual Information System (VIS)." *Pacific Northwest National Laboratory*. 10 September 2010.
[211] Ibid.
[212] *Intergraph*. "Anti-Terrorism/Force Protection." Brochure, (2009), pg. 3

situation.[213] Intergraph's approach highlights key features to using software to envision threats and responses: integration of various resource; swift implementation; information sharing and system interoperability; and scalability so that data can be altered to display different levels of detail.[214] The desire for security itself is supported by iconic or stock representations of security in action: swat teams poised at the ready and fully outfitted in riot gear, uniformed men speaking on radios, and soldier in fatigues on patrol.

Politicizing Sight: Critical Considerations

In terms of the new political-economic restructuring of the last three decades, wherein nation-states are more attuned to security than to welfare, new technologies have been employed to become a part of the critical infrastructure of security and surveillance.[215] As such, the technologies do not have effects on their own, but once deployed their use starts to shape every-day behaviors and outlooks.[216] This is more widely a part of a growing trend made most explicit by Paul Virilio, who examines the underlying cultural belief in the power of technology to solve social, political and economic problems. This techno-fundamentalism stems from a historically and socially constructed notion of science that, radically stated,

> …is predicated on the positionality of a disembodied master subject with transcendental vision. With such disembodied and infinite vision, the knower is capable of achieving a detached view into a separate, completely knowable world. The kind of knowledge produced with such disembodied positionality denies the partiality of the knower, erases subjectivities, and ignores the power relations involved in all forms of knowledge production.[217]

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[213] Ibid.
[214] Ibid., pg. 5-6
[215] Lyon, David. *Identifying Citizens: ID Cards as Surveillance*. Cambridge: Polity Press (2010), pg. 7
[216] Ibid.
[217] Kwan, "Affecting Geospatial Technologies," pg. 24

This orientation allows attempts to ignore pervasive human subjectivities, emotions, values, and ethics – practices that are attributable to a particular understanding of science and objectivity.[218] This question is most explicitly addressed in the airport scanner debate, where digital "scans" were offered in security gates in lieu of a physical pat-down. According to the Canadian Air Transport Security Authority (CATSA), this technology functioned by projecting low-frequency radio waves over the passengers body, producing a three-dimensional, abstracted map of the human being, transferred to an anonymous, "trained and certified screening officer" who diagnose the image for potential threats. Computers, in effect, are the penultimate manifestation of a system operating solely on the basis of rational calculation, and complexity reduction. Yet computers are not autonomous technologies: intelligence is technologically facilitated yet analyzed by individuals or agencies – in short, by people. This raises questions regarding the nature of assessment, or how (visual) information systems can be assessed qualitatively.

Lousie Amoore politicizes the act of seeing in the context of the war on terror by arguing that "lines of sight" are also "lines that segregate and divide." Paul Virilio made similar claims by arguing that the landscape of places looks very different based upon the way it is approached. Basing his observations on gestalt psychology, in the act of perceiving, we systematically exclude the 'in between', or those forms which do not show themselves clearly in the relation to the familiarity of the form to its background. While this serves to construct a coherent visual field, this approach to vision simultaneously creates the fundamental basis of enmity; that is, the inability to engage

[218] Ibid.

with someone who sees the landscape differently.[219]

For Amoore, these 'dividing practices' as a means to render ways of life economic, making them amenable to management, trading or exchange.[220] Further, she notes how there is a peculiar "mode of attentiveness" that attends the affective states of the war on terror, a "watchful politics that are geared toward the anticipation of events, deploying a kind of precautionary principle that governs through the suspicion of a possible threat.[221] It is "vigilant": the sovereign 'looks out' with an anticipatory gaze.[222] The credibility of the visual is performed in the legal distinctions between eyewitnesses or photographic evidence, and of verbal accounts of the scene or event.[223] As mobile devices store more and more information about us – appointments, correspondence, personal photos and videos – police investigators are arguing that warrantless searches of these devices are "perfectly constitutional" during arrests.[224]

Contemporary articulations of sovereignty constitute "a visuality that categorizes and classifies people into images and imaginaries of many kinds."[225] Amoore's politicization of vision raises questions about the notion of vision as it is implicated in the representational practices that make state sovereignty possible, and the ways in which is shapes citizen identities.[226] David Lyon has noted in relation to identity that there are identities that we freely choose and those which are bestowed. State identification is

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[219] James, "Virilio," pg. 19
[220] Amoore, Louise. "Lines of Sight: On the Visualization of Unknown Futures." *Citizenship Studies*. Vol. 13, No. 1 (2009), pg. 19
[221] Amoore, "Vigilante Visualities: The Watchful Politics of the War on Terror." *Security Dialogue*. Vol. 38, No. 2 (2007), pg. 216
[222] Ibid.
[223] Ibid., pg. 220
[224] McCullagh, Declan. "Police push for warrantless searches of cell phones." *CNET News*. 18 Feb. 2010.
[225] Amoore, "Vigilante Visualities," pg. 218
[226] Ibid. pg. 217

"remote," "formal" and abstract," and may even be in tension with identities freely chosen. But making the distinction between identity and identification, Lyon illustrates, government management of identification is a means of categorizing and rationalizing public space (e.g. movement) and the bureaucratic functions of the modern state.[227]

Increasingly, under various forms of "risk management," ID regimes, using biometric data, is algorithmically coded, and used to ambiguously frame categories of "citizens" and "non-citizens."[228] These exclusionary practices sight the 'usual suspects': illegal immigrants, criminals, and would-be terrorists.[229] Put critically, states must "write" their security, which is dependent upon certain representational practices that identify and delineate an "us" from an "untrustworthy alien," notes Amoore, citing Campbell.[230] With regard to securitization discourse, these representational practices assemble a repertoire of images that serve as important discursive resources when communicating a "threat" to a particular referent object. Moreover: "Deciding exactly who these 'others' are and how to identify, categorize, and ban them or limit their movements"[231] is a key task for identification regimes, assisting securitization measures by using the information gathered provides the 'flesh' for the archetypal terrorist.

Moreover, geospatial "vision machines" re-present societies to the official observer in a visual way. Images acquired via satellite technologies assist in surveillance and reconnaissance, terrain mapping and 3D-Modeling and simulation exercises. This serves to create a unified operating picture from which situational awareness is

[227] Lyon, "Identifying Citizens," pg. 22-3
[228] Ibid., pg. 16-17
[229] Ibid., pg. 17
[230] Amoore, "Vigilante Visualities," pg. 218
[231] Lyon, "Identifying Citizens," pg. 17-8

deciphered and responses are coordinated to help manage land, people and infrastructure, and secure borders. The security field, in other words, is extrapolated from the "geosphere" to the "infosphere."

Techniques of imaging and image-literacy seek to relate the entire informational environment (e.g. "the aggregate of individuals, organizations, and systems that collect, process, or disseminate information, including information itself"[232]) is inextricably bound to images and processes of interpretive mediation. The National Geospatial-Intelligence Agency (NGA) is a department of Defense support agency and a member of the intelligence community (IC), developing images, and map-based intelligence for US national defense, homeland security and safety and navigation. The mandate extends this notion of visual surveillance by their capacity to locate anything on above, or beneath the earth's surface and display that information visually to provide a meaningful foundation for planning, decision-making, and action. As Campbell demonstrates, "the path from 'raw data' to finished intelligence report, is wholly reliant upon a practice of interpretation…The photographic representations, electronic intercepts, and human sources that are employed to collect data all rely upon a variety of interpretive codes to make sense of the material world with which they are confronted."[233] Before intelligence is distributed to the various levels of government (for further interpretation), this processing can involve language translation, deciphering, and various forms of imaging.[234]

In short, the watchful politics of the war on terror has come to use the image –

[232] Department of National Defence. Strategy Division. *Joint Vision 2020*. Washington: US Government Printing Office (2000).
[233] Campbell, "Politics without Principle," pg. 10
[234] Ibid.

broadly defined as a picture of a person, a visuality of a scene, or the pattern of data on a screen – precisely as the primal scene in which security intelligence is constructed and assessed, but also in the way it "recognizes and misrecognizes 'Other' people."[235] Amoore's work illustrates the precautionary and preemptive logics at play, wherein decision is taken on the basis of a mode of "seeing" that is captured by the screening of the population to establish norms and anomalies.

"Sighting" the Border

Mark Salter argues: "In terms of policing the population, the border is crucial in terms of constituting the population through the decision to admit or exclude and in terms of measuring and manipulating the quantities and qualities of the population trough citizenship, immigration, and refugee adjudication."[236] The "spatio-legal performance" of this claim is a deep structure of sovereign politics, and the "imaginary of borders" is implied in this conception of sovereign space.[237]

These sovereign performances are, foremost, tied to "human lines of sight," and are integrated with computer encoded visualizations that mask the appeals based upon certain structures of identity by advancing a visual economy as a means of appropriating, segregating, and singling out those who are potentially dangerous or those to whom we should pay greater attention."[238] The "screen" assists in "the appearance of a neutral and depoliticized form of calculation,"[239] so as to sort potential security risks from non-risks.

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[235] Amoore, "Vigilante Visuality," pg. 218
[236] Salter, "When the Exception Becomes the Rule: Borders, sovereignty, and citizenship." *Citizenship Studies*. Vol. 12, No. 4 (2008), pg. 366
[237] Ibid., pg. 365-6
[238] Amoore, "Lines of Sight," pg. 18-19
[239] Ibid., pg. 20

The "watchful politics" at work here is about foresight: namely, how the individual already resembles the crime before it is committed.[240] Or, in Gursin's words, it is an "attempt to prevent the future by premediating it."[241] For Amoore,

> The contemporary manifestation of such preemptive practices that 'invite one to anticipate what one does not yet know, to take into account doubtful hypotheses and simple suspicions'. This does not mean that suspicions or prejudices are deployed randomly to anticipate an uncertain or unknown future. Rather, the profiling of a 'norm' of behavior – whether via mobile-phone images or by CCTV [close-circuit television] footage or by passenger manifests on transatlantic flights – becomes algorithmic, it becomes encoded so that deviations can be identified and decisions be taken.[242]

The act of seeing is thus an act of preempting through algorithmic calculation to establish certain norms and anomalies by relating anomalies to a wider population and identifying their "degree of deviance."[243]

Security consultants specializing in force-multiplying media technologies facilitate interoperability by combining data from disparate sources, such as radar, sensors, alarms, cameras, and UAV (unmanned aerial vehicles) into a single view so that the sovereign observer can "detect and track incidents, dispatch agency resources, and support disposition of forces to respond to all hazards."[244] The information can even be "scaled," or reduced in breadth and complexity, into easily read visual representations.

> The algorithm appears to make the conversion of ex post facto evidence in the war on terror into a judgment made in advance of the event. The significant point here is that diverse data points or specified 'pixels' in a digital image are drawn together in association, producing a recognizable whole. Though the visualized image may bear no resemblance to the actual way of life of the person depicted, this scarcely matters because the digital alter ego becomes the de facto

[240] Amoore, "Vigilante Visualities," pg. 221
[241] Gursin, "Premediation," pg. 58; emphasis added
[242] Amoore, "Vigilante Visualities," pg. 221
[243] Ibid.
[244] *Intergraph*. "Border Security." Brochure (2009).

> person…'association does not imply a direct causal connection', but it 'uncovers, interprets, and displays relationships between persons, places and events.[245]

Enemies, in essence, are hiding in open and available information.[246] Catching them is a matter of joining the dots. The connections form a resonance that adheres to pre-structured perceptions of threat embodied in non-specific archetypal constructions of terror. These diverse elements of discourses of catastrophe and risk and scientific objectivity, images of terrorist attacks culled from collective memory, and the joined connections "blend, fold and emulsify and dissolve into each other"[247] to forge a qualitative assemblage that constructs a holistic picture of a threat, a virtual/potential image that ascends to the level of fact. This act makes it appear possible to translate probabilistic associations between people or objects into actionable security decisions, when in actuality decisions are made in the context of "doubt, foreboding, challenge, mistrust, fear, and anxiety."[248] In Amoore's words, "the personal computer…becomes a means of shoring up the visual as the sovereign sense, giving the appearance of a detached, smart and data-driven basis for decision."[249]

Consequences as Conclusion: Information Overload and Neurotic Citizens

This chapter has examined how imaging operates as a method for social systems, e.g. governments, to shape a particular narrative of securitization by reducing its complexity to various manageable images with predictable modes of action located therein. Translating this to the war on terror, imaging reveals the various discourses and

[245] Amoore, "Lines of Sight," pg. 22
[246] Amoore, "Biometric Borders: Governing Mobilties in the War on Terror." *Political Geography*. Vol. 25, No. 3 (2006), pg. 337
[247] Connolly, "Evangelical-Capitalist Resonance Machine." pg. 870-1
[248] Amoore, "Vigilante Visualities," pg. 221
[249] Ibid., pg. 222

visual technologies that construct a 'neurotic citizen' through risk modeling and scenario building that rely upon a particular monstrous archetype of terror as the harbinger of chaos, catastrophe and collective trauma that motivate a consensual support of government policy mediated by discourses of risk, failure and catastrophe and marked by vigilant "ways of seeing." To conclude, I would like to examine two issues related to a critical interpretation of imaging: information overload and the way in which these processes construct a "neurotic" political subject.

Paraphrasing Virilio, one might be prone to argue that with the invention of information systems and acquisition, we simultaneously invented the 'accident' of information overload. A dilemma that arises with regard to the argument is how to balance the input/output of information acquisition. As Luhmann has demonstrated, the purpose of any system is the reduction of complexity, while simultaneously not denying the complexity of the stimuli. This only serves to make the environment more comprehensible and hence manageable. But without a stop-gap on the acquisition of information from the environment, the system itself becomes murky and indistinguishable from the environment itself. Jean Baudrillard highlights the (postmodern) condition of information overload, by arguing that because we believe information automatically produces meaning, the opposite occurs – information devours meaning.[250] A world with more and more information equates to a world with less and less meaning.[251] With regard to security practice, Ferris notes that increasingly complexity creates "information pathologies": increasing specialization leads to

[250] Baudrillard, Jean. *Simulacra and Simulation*. Trans. Shelia Faria Glaser. Ann Arbor, MI: U. Michigan Press (1994), pg. 80
[251] Ibid., pg. 79

increasing demands for information, spawning new organizations and expands old ones to satisfy the demand for information, which in turn creates still more demand for which in turn creates more complexity, etc. "The cycle quickly becomes debilitating and [leads], at best, to severe congestion and overload."[252]

A systemic equilibrium must be reached. If we are to transcend the dilemmas noted above, we must find the temperance to embrace the paradoxes that embody them. As Ferris notes, with regard to intelligence uncertainty: "it is not merely about what is seen, but about how we see; not just about what w know but how we know that we know what we know; because of too few facts – and too many."[253] Uncertainty is an enduring condition, where problems can be solved, but solutions often create a host of other, unanticipated problems, and it becomes impossible to eliminate all of them at once.[254] However, this argument, based on a tempered and balanced assessment of risk and the limitations of human capacity, do not present a very tangible or realistic policy direction. Moreover, even if this position was articulated, it would probably enflame the existing perception of uncontrollability of the terrorist threat.

Imaging in securitization presupposes that methods of identification, and/or methods of "mapping" populations to produce effective intervention, are freighted with the impetus of security, which grounds political subjectivity of citizens in a dispositif of risk and risk management. We are made aware of the threats to our safety in imaged sites of interaction with citizenship, notably, the airport and the border. The image of a society guided by principles of risk posits that subjects within society "govern their conduct

[252] Ferris, "The Biggest Force Multiplier," pg. 114
[253] Ibid., pg. 112
[254] Ibid., pg. 112

through risk and governments primarily constitute themselves as safeguarding their subjects from these risks, and these risks transcend the boundaries of the state."[255] The labeling of these issues as social "problems," notes Murray Edelman,

> Signify who are virtuous and useful and who are dangerous or inadequate, which actions will be rewarded and which actions will be penalized. They constitute people as subjects with particular kinds of aspirations, self-concepts, and fears and they create beliefs about the relative importance of events and objects. They are critical in determining who exercise authority and who accept it.[256]

It has been further asserted through the lens of the 'risk society' that confidence in government depends upon the ability of officials to successfully manage risk and preserve societal well-being. In doing so officials must bestow attributes and interpretations onto the populace and define, in some respects, the nature of their "being" within the state. Acts of securitization, as Balzacq notes, are contingent upon the identification of "feelings, needs, and interests."[257] In doing so, securitizing actors develop "maps of target populations on both the stereotypes (of the referent subject) they themselves hold and those they believe to prevail among that segment of the public likely to become important to them."[258] If these societal stereotypes are sustained, it creates a mutually reinforcing image of a society under risk and pressures politicians to find solutions. Thus, when a discourse of risk predominates wherein threats are posed as being uncertain in their realization, but catastrophic in their significance, the referent subject is put on guard, or on watch, in a state of anticipatory vigilance.[259]

To discount this underestimates the subject, who does not simply make decisions

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[255] Isin, Engin. "The Neurotic Citizen." *Citizenship Studies*. Vol. 8, No. 3 (2004), pg. 217-8
[256] Edelman, "Constructing the Political Spectacle," pg. 12
[257] Balzacq, "A Theory of Securitization," pg. 9
[258] Balzacq, "A Theory of Securitization," pg. 9
[259] Isin, "The Neurotic Citizen," pg. 218

based upon rational forms of calculation but also upon a range of affects and emotions, and in the absence of complete or transparent information.[260] The communicative acts associated with security threats are both formal and moral, making support for policies contingent upon a rational as well as emotive calculation. Language eliciting support through moral means will rely upon certain images culled from collective memories to evoke a desired response.[261]

Societal insecurity, as observed in the homeland security dilemma, is exacerbated by the political and technological promise of zero-risk and the perfectibility of security, leading to impossible-to-fulfill expectations on security and spiraling government spending habits to meet these demands. "Washington," according to Harvey, "is becoming addicted to security because spending will never be sufficient to achieve absolute success in the war on terror, yet perfection will remain the standard politicians will claim to be trying to reach."[262] Isin considers the ripple-effect this has for individual subjectivity.

> The neurotic subject wants the impossible. It wants absolute security. It wants absolute safety. It wants the perfect body. It wants tranquility. It wants serenity. It wants the impossible. Yet, since it has also been promised the impossible, it cannot address its illusions. Thus, the neurotic subject articulates neurotic claims.[263]

Thus, we have reached an important impasse – a "dilemma" – within which governments encourage citizens to govern themselves based upon assessments of potential threats in a mutually reinforcing pattern of in/security and unachievable desires, based in framing

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[260] Ibid., pg. 219-20
[261] Balzacq, "A Theory of Securitization," pg. 9-10
[262] Harvey, "The Homeland Security Dilemma: Fear, Failure and the Future of American Insecurity." pg. 16; emphasis in original
[263] Isin, "The Neurotic Citizen," pg. 232

practices and political deliberation through an image of potential catastrophe.[264] This creates a situation whereby more production and more knowledge is called upon to manage the risks created. The self-conscious recognition of contingency and uncertainty does not lead to an abandonment of calculative technique: instead that results is the recognition of complex gaps in security and an insatiable quest for knowledge in the form of greater intelligence.[265] When this discourse predominates, society becomes vulnerable to the "emergence of gate communities, security industries, and an overall trend toward isolation and insularity,"[266] based in a desire to meet a constant flow of potential existential threats, framed always in uncertain, catastrophic, shadowy, monstrous ways. These appeals to make the "unknown unknowns" known rely increasingly on visual and discursive methods to image particular threats, visualize the enemy, and imagine many possible catastrophic scenarios so as to mobilize present awareness and future action.[267] The motivation is based in the political concern for "unacceptable damage," and the "accumulated uncertainties of terrorist intentions, capabilities, and targets.""[268] Yet doing so fosters fears not easily assuaged or dislodged form the collective conscious.

Harvey has noted in detail the consequences for policy that this holds. The imagination of an "omnipresent enemy who could be anywhere, strike at anytime and who in fact could be 'among us', fosters a un/productive economy of fear."[269] Yet, signs of failure, rumblings of catastrophe, etc. do not preclude or belie the activity that is the

[264] de Goede and Randalls, "Precaution, Preemption," pg. 867
[265] de Goede and Randalls, "Precaution, Preemption," pg. 867
[266] Isin, "The Neurotic Citizen," pg. 218
[267] de Goede and Randalls, "Precaution, Preemption," pg. 859-60
[268] Harvey, "The Homeland Security Dilemma: Fear, Failure, and the Future of American Insecurity,"pg. 67
[269] de Goede, "Beyond Risk," pg. 162

war on terror but rather produces a further impetus to *re*act – and concurrently for governments to "spend more."[270]

> Acquiring a much better understanding of how the public thinks about successes and failures in the war on terrorism is one of the most important but neglected dimensions of contemporary security policy. If we fail in this regard then the long war will be very difficult to manage, let alone win…if successes are simply too difficult to identify (or prove), and failures so easy to exploit, the only real policy option governments have left is to spend more to feed the *illusion* that something important is being accomplished.[271]

The following chapter will examine this consequence in more depth.

[270] Harvey, "The Homeland Security Dilemma: Fear, Failure and the Future of American Insecurity," pg. 67
[271] Ibid., pg. 50; emphasis added

CHAPTER FOUR

The Spectacle of Violence and Dilemmas of Imaging

This chapter evaluates the homeland security dilemma by examining policy construction as political spectacle, examining the potential of images to distort reality. Harvey illustrates through his theorizing of the homeland security dilemma the most rational courses of action serve to perpetuate the problem of in/security for fear of the political fallout of inaction, as politicians cannot be viewed weak on issues of national security. Policy makers, scholars, analysts, and journalists arrive at the conclusion that "security gaps are real and need to be addressed."[272] Given the paradoxes that attend deciding successes and failures to meeting these challenges, Harvey concludes that policy debates and action to fill perceived 'security gaps' is undertaken to provide a pacifying function; to give the public an illusion that something is being done.

Viewing Harvey's conclusions through the critical lens of the *political spectacle*, this reading views the creation of threat images as a primary mediator of social relations. Harvey observes that this "imagination of failure" plays a very integral role in the promulgation of fear in the context of a homeland security dilemma, visually translated by the media. However, it also improves vigilance lest we suffer the dramatic consequences. Articulated through a catastrophic discourse, images and fears of failure uphold the (rational) validity of this exercise – and that's the dilemma.

[272] Ibid., pg. 77

Images in the Homeland Security Dilemma

Some analysts hold that the attacks on September 11, 2001 were not primarily conducted to provoke real material damage, but *for the spectacular effect of it*.[273] Der Derian argues that terrorists, "outgunned, out manned and outlawed by states," rely upon more on the "intangible power of menacing symbols than on techniques of physical violence to achieve their goals."[274] Quoting P.G. Zimbardo, Frank P. Harvey notes that the power of terrorism lies in its "pervasive ambiguity," and is essentially about "making ordinary people feel vulnerable, anxious, confused, uncertain and helpless."[275] Further he notes "chaos is about the best outcome terrorists can ever hope to achieve, but that's enough" because of the disruptive effects it has on the public's collective psyche.[276] The investigative power of the camera underscores the representational role of technology in "illuminating the actions of terrorists, and, crucially, in the process sanctioning forceful responses."[277]

As Der Derian has observed, based upon its speed and pervasiveness media present the first public reading of events. He notes that in the cycling of the tragic images of destruction and loss during 9/11, the American political culture experienced a national state of emergency and a collective trauma that reached all levels of society.[278] The event was technologically driven, he argues, with organic modes of comprehension,

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[273] Zizek, Slavoj. "Welcome to the Desert of the Real!: Five Esays on 11 September and related Dates." Durham: Duke U. P. (2003), pg. 11
[274] Der Derian, "The Terrorist Discourse: signs, states and systems of global political violence." James Der Derian (ed.). *Critical Practices in International Theory: Selected Essays*. New York: Routledge (2009), pg. 73
[275] Harvey, "The Homeland Security Dilemma: Fear, Failure and the Future of American Insecurity," pg. 42
[276] Ibid., pg. 43
[277] Slocum, J. David. "Introduction: The Recurrent Return to Algiers." David J. Slocum (ed.). *Terrorism, Media, Liberation*. New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers U. P. (2005), pg. 23
[278] Der Derian, "In Terrorem: Before and After 9/11." Ken Booth and Tim Dunne. *Worlds in Collision: Terror and the Future of Global Order*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan (2002), pg. 104

deliberation, and understanding was outpaced by "the speed of the news cycle." Campbell describes the situation in the following way:

> Real events, in real time, offered up to use through the reality of television. Which then looped the video of those extraordinary one hundred minutes in which some 6,000 people were killed, and repeated it, and reused it, and recycled it endlessly, searing those images into the public mind.[279]

The "imagistic repetition" of the event of 9/11 served to produce a reality effect, and extend the duration of the collectively experienced trauma almost indefinitely.[280] By saturating every television screen, the images of destruction testified to the incomprehensibility of the event. Because of the visceral and visual attributes that attend this image of a violent event, its impactful place in our collective memory via its repetition, terrorism infiltrates the public imagination and easily governs our interpretation and response to risk and uncertainty beyond any purely rational calculation. Harvey has detailed the implications of the effects of failure on subsequent social and political behavior by arguing that the media tend to systematically focus on terrorist events that, in many minds correlate with the perception that governments are failing to protect citizens in the war on terror. Gursin's notion of premediation describes this condition, arguing that the media, too, operate as a preemptive regime in the war on terror, playing the part of predictive agents in the War on Terror. Yet, the lack of the media's capacity to evaluate threats, doing so in spectacular fashion (e.g. "If it bleeds, it leads.") characterize coverage that exaggerates the nature of the threats, and vigilantly explores the multifarious security gaps exposed.[281]

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[279] Campbell, "Imaging the Real, Struggling for Meaning." *911 InfoInterventions*. The Watson Institute for International Studies (Oct. 2001).
[280] Morris, Rosaland C. "Images of Untranslateability in the US War on Terror." *Interventions*. Vol. 6, No. 3 (2004), pg. 404
[281] Harvey, "The Homeland Security Dilemma: Fear, Failure and the Future of American Insecurity," pg. 44

The media, in other words, is a force-multiplier of terrorism, and hence, insecurity. This is in part attributable to a potential within images to serve as a site of manipulation over the contested boundary of meaning. Moller has argued that photographs are "too eloquent" to be used as straightforward tools from which to present a threat or a promise, insusceptible to simple meanings because of their inherent ambivalence. Because of this ambivalence, political interpretations seek to narrow the range of meaning that can be expressed. Elizabeth Dauphinee explains that the complex event known as 9/11 was extracted through the "chaotic debris" and the "affective flows of terror and disorder" by the aesthetic and visual witnessing that used "mechanical representation and digital manipulation, such a freeze-framing, and slow motion to reverse, spatialize and *petrify* violence."[282] Moller likewise observes that political discourse ossified the image of 9/11 by "continuously referring to the attacks as acts of terrorism and to the images of the attacks as proof of this interpretation."[283] The strategic aim, according to Moller, is to embed these claims in collective memory so that the administration can reference to legitimize counterterrorism policy. In doing so, however, the administration transformed 9/11 into an ahistorical collective memory of the event, characteristic of which is its simplicity: its possibility to see the event form a single, committed perspective without ambiguity.[284]

It is this process that creates the visual archetypes, for use in securitizing discourse. Edelman distinguishes between two types of symbols used in politics: referential and condensation. Referential symbols structure the logical space of political

[282] Dauphinee, Elizabeth. "The Politics of the Body in Pain: Reading the Ethics of Suffering." Security Dialogue. Vol 38, No. 2 (2007), pg. 144, emphasis added
[283] Moller, "Photographic Interventions in Post 9/11 Security Policy," pg. 186
[284] Ibid.

decisions, and serve as a basis for the manipulation of given events and issues. Whereas condensation symbols evoke emotions associated with a given situation, collapsing "patriotic pride, anxieties, remembrances of past glories, humiliations, promises of future greatness" into a single sign.[285] Viewing 9/11 and the associated terrorist threat as a realm of collapsed meaning is also evident in Harvey's observations regarding the "blurring" of homeland security and the global war on terrorism, which consequently means "that almost any type of foreign or domestic policy crises or error becomes relevant to perceptions of security (both external and homeland)."[286] This either lowers public confidence in government and/or raises pubic fears or anxieties.[287] "Inevitably," Harvey notes, "failures, deaths, collapsed buildings, crashed planes and falling bodies, etc. create and sustain our suspicions, anxieties, doubts and fears."[288]

The Spectacle: Image and/of Reality

Guy Debord's argument offers a starting point for viewing the relationship between image and reality, wherein the two are viewed as a dialectic rather than a dichotomy. In *The Society of the Spectacle* (1967), Debord argues: "In societies where modern conditions of production prevail, all of life presents itself as an immense accumulation of spectacles. Everything that was directly lived has moved away into a representation."[289] He understands human development as the impoverishment of life through "the dominance of the economy over society, such that we have moved from

[285] Edelman, "Symbolic Uses of Politics," pg. 6
[286] Harvey, "The Homeland Security Dilemma: Fear, Failure and the Future of American Insecurity," pg. 27
[287] Ibid., pg. 44
[288] Ibid., pg. 58
[289] Debord, Guy. *The Society of the Spectacle*. Trans. Donald Nicholas-Smith. New York: Zone (2002), Thesis 1

being to *having* to *appearing*."[290] Under the principle of commodity fetishism, Debord argues that the domination of society, comprised of "tangible as well as intangible things," reaches its fulfillment in the spectacle wherein the images imposes itself as tangible presence, par excellence.[291] As a highly developed form of abstraction and alienation, the spectacle is not simply a collection of images, but a social relation among people, mediated by images."[292]

The notion of the spectacle adheres to a particular vision of the "information revolution," which views the sheer volume and variety of information as overwhelming, and that the hype creates a reality that is distinct in itself. What is real is replaced by the image, or an appearance of reality – an essentially virtual experience. "The real," argues Gursin, "is no longer that which is free from mediation, but that which is thoroughly enmeshed with networks of social, technical, aesthetic, political, cultural, or economic mediation."[293] For Gursin, "social, cultural, and political events…exist today only insofar as they mobilize and are mobilized by a network of complementary and overlapping media forms and practices."[294] In Sontag's assessment and critique: "Reality has abdicated. There are only representations: media."[295] "Each situation," she notes, "has to be turned into a spectacle to be real – that is, interesting – to us."[296] But, as Harvey, Der Derian, and others note, this "simulacral projection" of terror through the economy of mass media boosts this sign power, and have potentially (or potent) destabilizing effects.

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[290] Campbell, David and Michael Shapiro. "Guest Editors' Introduction." *Security Dialogue*. Vol. 38, No. 2 (2007), pg. 132
[291] Debord, "The Society of the Spectacle," Thesis 36
[292] Ibid., Thesis 4
[293] Gursin, "Premediation," pg. 1
[294] Ibid., pg. 90
[295] Sontag, "Regarding the Pain of Others," pg. 109
[296] Ibid., pg. 109

These intuitions bring images beyond the realm of specific artefacts (pictures) mimetically refracting the world as it is and brings the ideational and the material in a more complex relationship with one another.[297] This situation, moreover, presents a more complex environment within which policy might be made. As Moeller notes, while foreign policy may not be altered, as such, the real-time airing of crisis images and acts of spectacular violence limit the time for internal governmental debate.[298] Governments, in short, must respond to these images – and the counter-responses, as Harvey (and much of the previous chapter) notes, can be equally as destabilizing.

With reality generated, mediated and simulated by technical means of reproduction, "truth becomes an instrument of and product of perception."[299] This technological mediation is not a neutral means of transmitting meaning or information; it is argued that forms of mediation hold the potential to actively transform conceptual or affective states."[300] The spectacle is a world vision which has become objectified; a worldview which has become "actual and materially translated."[301] At the root of this representation is a specialization of power, and monopolization on the "realm of appearance."[302] Media, themselves help to "construct and maintain assemblages of humans, technologies, and nature, at the same time that they emerge from and are part of the assemblages they maintain and construct."[303]

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[297] Campbell and Shapiro, "Guest Editors Introduction," pg. 132
[298] Moeller, "Compassion Fatigue," pg. 225
[299] Der Derian, "In Terrorem," pg. 104
[300] Gursin, "Premediation," pg. 6
[301] Debord, "The Society of the Spectacle," Thesis 6
[302] Ibid., Thesis 12
[303] Gursin, "Premediation," pg. 90

Gursin notes that, in terms of media practice, the logic of mediation was classified by its ability to present a picture of reality that did not bear traces of mediation; that what we witnessed was the world "as it is," or "free of distortions."[304] In fact, the double logic of new media is one of remediation: a condition by which "contemporary culture seeks simultaneously to proliferate and to erase mediation, to eliminate all signs of mediation in the very act of multiplying them."[305]

> The logic of remediation insists that there has never been a past prior to mediation and that there is no ontological difference between mediation and reality. All mediations are remediations, in that mediation of the real is always a mediation of another mediation.[306]

Television news transparency and documentary validity remain implicit in the medium. Luhmann has observed that media serve the role of "observation," and in doing so do not simply report reality, but construct it. Because our knowledge of society comes through the mass media, mass media simultaneously distinguish our conditions of existence by constituting what counts as information and non-information. "The claims," argues David J. Slocum, "are bound up not so much in the particular subject being represented (the reality of which may, indeed, be accepted or questioned), but in the process of mediation through which the depiction of objects and events are assumed to be empirically true."[307] Give the immediacy of television, the internet, and other networked technologies, "we see terrorism everywhere in real time, all the time," and in turn, "terrorism has taken on an iconic, fetishised and, most significantly, highly optical character."[308]

The "Aura" of Terror and Aesthetic Experience

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[304] Ibid., pg. 1
[305] Ibid., pg. 38
[306] Ibid., pg. 39
[307] Slocum, "Introduction," pg. 24
[308] Der Derian, "Imaging Terror," pg. 26

I use the term affect to mean the production/reduction of events in terms of their emotional reaction, which govern in many respects how people "think" about terrorism. This stems from the concerns of McLuhan, who notes that the meaning of the message is the change which it produces in the image; with its effects rather than meaning.[309]

Adriana Cavarero has cited the phenomenological aspects tied to terror and horror, distilling the nature in which individuals physically experience extreme sensations. Tracing the etymology, Cavarero notes that the terror is associated with feelings of a trembling body, a fear that compels a body to flee, and panic.[310] As she notes: "The contiguity of bodies makes masses particularly more susceptible to the contagion of terror, transmitting and heightening its effects;"[311] a characteristic well-established in the iconography of war, and associating terror as antithetical to order and control. Horror, on the other hand, is paralyzing. In horror there is no instinctive flight to survive, simply a frozen gaze at the disgust of violence at the spectacle of disfigurement and destruction.[312]

The tele-visual medium is described as an "instrument of simplicity" that operates under time and space constraints. This results, ultimately, in minimalist reporting styles that cannot communicate proper background or context; the compensation is in the use of images.[313] Media thus come to rely upon simple and emotional pictures that can be distilled into a plain and unmistakable message, invoking certain emotions which can drill themselves into the minds and hearts of the audience.[314] In complex situations – such

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[309] McLuhan, Understadning Media," pg. 26
[310] Cavarero, Adriana. *Horrorism: Naming Contemporary Violence*. Trans. William McCuaig. New York, Columbia U. P. (2007), pg. 4
[311] Ibid., pg. 5
[312] Ibid., pg. 7-8
[313] Moeller, "Compassion Fatigue," pg. 29
[314] Ibid., pg. 36

as political crises – an iconic repertoire of images that reside at the level of collective social experience can be employed to legitimate the term "crisis."[315] These images of crisis speak to a particular "structure of feeling;" seeking to communicate an experience that resonates in certain ideas and concepts irreducible to individual subjectivity.[316] As Sarah Amed argues, "the effect does not reside in the sign or commodity but is produced only as an effect of its circulation. The collective and communicative nature of emotion is demonstrated in the sociality of feelings, in the way in which one person's feelings can be visually and linguistically transferred to others and thus felt by others."[317] For effective reporting, argues Moeller, the images must be emotive enough to stir the individual beyond the level of "conscious intellectualizing," yet controlled enough to retain the viewers gaze.[318]

The visual impact of violence interferes with the ability to construct a coherent narrative and hence stable identities. Barthes' notion of "the third meaning" of the visual image is employed by Gomel to understand this. The "thing meaning" is a message without a code, a "denoted image" that exceeds the symbolic or representational function of a display and yet accounts for its power to hold the gaze.[319] The image is composed of elements that are untranslatable to a verbal narrative; the mutilated body is thus an object of a horrified and fascinated gaze. Ultimately, binding an interpretation to an image is a political function, intended to narrow the meaning and deprive the image of its inherent

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[315] Ibid., pg. 38
[316] Lai, Nelson. ""Barbarians"-in-the-Blogosphere: 'Race'- as -a - Political - Technology -of - Affect." Kumar, Ahbinava, Derek Maisonville (eds.). *Security Beyond the Discipline*: *Selected Proceedings of the Sixteenth Annual Conference of the York Centre for International and Security Studies*. York Center for Internaitonal Security Studies: York U (2010), pg. 84
[317] Ibid., pg. 84
[318] Moeller, "Compassion Fatigue," pg. 39
[319] Gomel, "Bloodscripts," pg. 4

ambivalence to emphasize an alleged truth to what is being viewed.[320] In Moeller's words,

> The fictions of the imagination are overwhelmed by the tangiblness of the picture. What reverberates in our memory is our empathetic response to the visual stimulus. We apply our intellect and reason to the evidence we see – and the way we respond, emotionally to…the "aura": an image's elusive, charismatic and sometimes haunting presence.[321]

Through its countless representations, argues Kia Lindroos, "terror becomes the systematic distribution of fear and horror that connects "image" and "reality" for political purposes."[322] For Lindroos: "The concept of aura highlights different aspects of the reflection on the *political sides* of images. The intent of the auratic project is intended to manipulate the subjective gaze of the viewer for ideological/political purposes."[323] This exposition is intended to refer to an authentic moment in time, or speak to a present arrangement of historical circumstances. The aura of originality offers "authentication" of the sign's origins – the moment of fear, death, grief, etc. While that precise moment cannot be transferred technologically, the image simulates a virtual experience we connect to, but with the digital reproduction of the image, it is scattered, reduced as a moment in itself by this distance reproduction creates.

The omnipresence of mobile technologies and media networks changes the notion of embodiment and identity – the relationship of "proximity, closeness, or intimacy to embodiment and speaks to the "decay of aura." As Gursin notes, social interactions are increasingly taking place outside the bounds of strictly physical space; within the sphere described by Virilio. Consumers interact cognitively and affectively with these networks,

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[320] Moeller, "Compassion Fatigue," pg. 185
[321] Ibid., pg. 39
[322] Lindroos, Kia. "The Aura of Terror?" Matti Hvyarinen, Lisa Muszynski (eds.) *Terror and the Arts: artistic, literary, and political interpretations of violence from Dostoyevksy to Abu Ghraib*. New York: Palgrave Macmillian (2008), pg. 64
[323] Ibid., pg. 68

as extensions of themselves.[324] Paul Virilio has noted that imaging apparatuses like television and video alter perceptual experience. The speed and fleeting movement of the images "liberate vision from the constraints of distance, of time and space."[325] The image is no longer confined to specific audiences by location, but rather by medium.

For McLuhan, visual, "hot" mediums are low in participation, extending one single sense in "high definition" by overwhelming it with data.[326] In Virilio's argument, contemporary media has effected "a shift from spatial and extensive (the spatiality of bodily experience, the extensivity of temporal duration) to the temporal and intensive (the exposure of light time and the intensivity of the exposed instant."[327] While the impression of proximity is entirely false, because it is so engrained in our viewing habits, we react to it as it were.[328] Benjamin has termed this the "scattering" of the aura, or its decay. This mode of interaction brings the subject of perception directly into the scene of the image-space in which the limits of the object and the viewing subject blur.[329]

Similarly, this proximity is brought closer because the viewer is not simply a detached observer, but an *active witness* to bloodshed and destruction. The vulnerability stems from the distance described in Benjamin's image-space. In Debord's reading of the spectacle, the relationship turns on the spectator *here*, and the image *there*, a one-way relation that defines an individual's identity through their position.

> Media spectacle, *as process*, produces a perpetual stream of images of catastrophe, conflict and disunity, while at the same time offering to the spectator

[324] Gursin, "Premediation," pg. 91
[325] James, "Virilio," pg. 51
[326] McLuhan, "Understanding Media," pg. 22
[327] Jamaes, "Virilio," pg. 53
[328] James, "Virilio," pg. 53
[329] Lindroos, "The Aura of Terror?" pg. 68

> a safe distance from all that instability that promises unity of experience and comprehension.[330]

Spectatorship in Lindroos' reading, is a passive, compact viewing group whose gaze is "easy to manipulate"[331] by an overflow, and constant supply, of images. The sense of common experience and of communit is created through conflicting and opposing activities: the terrorist acts and the military retaliation construct a fragile and temporal sense of commonality, sustained by fear, threats and other manifestations of power,[332] communicated through dichotomies, such as narratives of good v. evil, or friend v. enemy. are created to reduce the complexity and provide comprehension to incomprehensible events. This controversial maneuver, however, subsequently serves to reinforce the narrative constructions of the war on terror, and induce a perpetual sense of anxiety and vigilance.

Cautions as Conclusions: Trauma, Indifference and Spectatorship

The chapter has explained the negative consequences associated with imaging. Harvey has recognized in the homeland security dilemma how powerful images of failure affect public perceptions of government policy with regard to its conduct of the war on terror. However, this chapter offers an explanation to the overlooked problem of how the affective and emotive comes to surpass rational calculation. Much of this is attributed to the validity an image posses, assuming a powerful materiality because "what the word

[330] Slocum, "Introduction," pg. 26
[331] Lindroos, "The Aura of Terror?" pg. 72
[332] Ibid., pg. 73

can only represent the image proves."[333] But how does one portray war while not falling into a trap of compassion fatigue, disinterest or the objectification subject?

There is a "logistical" aspect to this argument that must also be considered. David Campbell urges us to consider the way narrative is a social activity, as well as a strategic way of conveying specific messages. Different activist networks and NGOs dealing with disaster relief and development, in particular, rely upon a need to simply and condense the shock and complexity of the events of suffering into appeals for attention, assistance, empathy and compassion – or, as often in the case, a combination of all three. The critique that is leveled against these appeals is that they come with a dearth of understanding, that what is often achieved is "compassion without understanding,"[334] as graphic depictions of victims are subjects stripped on dignity and a "story" of their own. As Elizabeth Dauphinee argues,

> …the imperative to make pain visible through contemporary technologies of visual representation actually works to contain and delimit the experience of pain by locating it so firmly in the distant and disconnected bodies of others that our ability to engage is related to that of observation, which severely limits the possibility of response.[335]

The media-logic that is used to visualize pain to validate political claims fetishizes suffering, thus denying the articulation of authentic sincerity. Helplessness and horror located in the image simultaneously demands a response but precludes an ability to alleviate the suffering depicted.[336] Imaging may be able to draw the viewer in and capture their attention, but it leaves one in an unstable position, as a spectator. The more precarious ethical position is articulated by Moeller, who notes that with the

[333] Der Derian, "Imaging Terror," pg. 35
[334] Campbell, "How does the media persuade us to give to charaties?" Blog (21 Feb. 2010).
[335] Dauphinee, "The Politics of the Body in Pain," pg. 140
[336] Dauphinee, "The Politics of the Body in Pain," pg. 145

overexposure of suffering bodies through an over-flow of images, coupled with the distance between the viewer and the suffering subject, viewers-as-spectators become "fatigued." Didactic images can numb as much as provoke response, causing people to turn away.[337] Media coverage that relies upon simplistic and formulaic strategies to capture the attention of an audience may actually result in the opposite: disinterest or apathy.

The dilemma associated with imaging terror and suffering becomes how avoid both trauma and indifference, and in addition maintain the dignity and experience of the subject from a fetishistic and objectifying gaze. As Moeller notes, however, this fatigue can actually reinforce formulaic coverage by "ratcheting up" the dramatic nature of coverage. Through the use of language, media outlets can label situations as "more extreme or deadly or risky than a similar past situation"[338] so as to keep audiences captivated.

Other literature critical of iconic representations of violence note de-sensitizing and de-materializing affects, inducing a fetishization of violence and the technologies of war that induce it. Part of this phenomenon is attributed to the discourse that surrounds "post-modern" warfare, which instills a "video-game sensibility," a virtualized reality that detaches the reality from the truth of war and violence itself. Der Derian observes in *Virtuous War* (2009), given recent advancements in military technologies it is argued that war can be conducted in a hygienic, almost surgical fashion, with no or minimal causalities. Put otherwise: "Virtuous war cleans up the political discourse as well as the

[337] Moeller, "Compassion Fatigue," pg. 36-7
[338] Ibid, pg. 2

battle fields."[339] Fought in the same manner in which they are represented, it promotes a vision of bloodless wars. Unlike other forms of war, virtuous war has a greater capacity to commute death, but to keep it out of sight and out of mind.[340] We learn how to kill but not take responsibility for it, to experience "death" but not its tragic consequences.[341]

Jessica Ramirez of *Newsweek* published an article in May 2010 that looked at the concept of 'war porn,' images and videos circulating around the internet that contain raw combat footage from the battlefields in Iraq and Afghanistan (sometimes spliced with music). They can range from a montage of rocket-propelled grenades blowing up infrastructure, or graphic depictions of dead insurgents killed in battle. The term is credited to Jean Baudrillard, who drew attention to the way in which the garishly explicit images of barbarity arriving from Iraq borrowed from the aesthetics and production values of modern porn.[342]

The consequences of this point to an important yet paradoxical situation. With regard to imaging, it presents the distorting effect simplifications have in that it reduces comprehension of "real" experiences of violence and war; however, with the new visual/aesthetic order present in new media technologies the reality of war is conceivably enhanced. "Unlike the photograph," argues Der Derian "the moving image creates a feeling that it more accurately depicts what it is representing, whether it does or not."[343] What gets lost is the moral complexity of war. Rameriez's article points to a video of American soldiers making fun of a dog eating a dead Iraqi. Quoting Bryant,

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[339] Der Derian, "Virtuous War," pg. xxxi
[340] Ibid., pg. xxxii
[341] Ibid., pg. xxxii
[342] Harkin, James. "War Porn." *The Guardian*. 12 Aug. 2006.
[343] Ramirez, Jessica. "Carnage.com." *Newsweek*. 10 May 2010.

> The behavior may be a coping mechanism for war, because they might have to normalize what is not normal in order to survive…But the people who watch this stuff can't know that, so they can't understand the entirety of what they're seeing…Yet these images will perpetuate a particular version of these wars. It is a version that does not treat the enemy as human, or life as valuable. It is a version that does not recognize the pain of some of the U.S. soldiers who pull the trigger. And as realistic as these videos might seem, they do not show war for what it actually is: terrifyingly real.[344]

'War porn' is designed to humiliate its victims and horrify its audience, not to titillate. However like pornography, adds James Harkin, "its producers heighten their sense of reality by videoing themselves in the act, while its audience does the same by ogling the videos."[345] The Gulf War was viewed by many as a media spectacle, but the present war in Iraq is portrayed as a first "first-person" war, fought by protagonists armed with digital cameras and access to the web.

Baudrillard, in his brief account of war porn, draws a very interesting conclusion that draws upon this notion of distanced observers. He argues that whether the images are true or false representations of the conflict are "irrelevant." Instead, Baudrillard interprets the impact of the images as being intricately implicated in the actual conduct of war itself. No longer do images represent the war because they have been "integrated" into it thanks to the advent of digital technology. Soldiers, like the embedded journalists are immersed in the image. "[The images] have become today as virtual as the war itself, and for this reason their specific violence adds to the specific violence of the war."[346] Thus, for images to become a true source of information, according to Baudrillard, they need to be separate from it. He states,

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[344] Ibid.
[345] Harkin, "War Porn."
[346] Baudrillard, Jean. "War Porn." Trans. Paul A. Taylor. *International Journal of Baudrillard Studies*. Vol. 2, No. 1 (2005).

> There exists in all this, in particular in the last Iraqi episode, an immanent justice of the image: those who live by the spectacle will die by the spectacle. Do you want to acquire power through the image? Then you will perish by the return of the image.[347]

The real scandal in Abu Ghraib, it can be argued, was not only the torture itself, but also the lack of action from higher-ups. As Moller points out,

> Regarding the notorious Abu Ghraib photographs, for example, it can be said that it was not the treatment of the captives as such but rather the uncontrolled and uncontrollable dissemination of photographic evidence of this treatment that was unacceptable from an official point of view and that required policy change.[348]

Part of the issue is the difficulty that comes with control over the images and video. As Ramirez notes, while the site has been shut down the flood of images is hard to dam given the real-time transmission capabilities; the narrative is far more complicated to control within the space of new media; however, the material that does leak through official nets and circulates around the internet and social networks arguably provides de-contextualized accounts of complex situations.

[347] Ibid.
[348] Moller, "Photographic Interventions in post 9/11 Security Policy," pg. 183

CHAPTER FIVE: CONCLUSION

In this thesis I attempted to adjust the lens of the securitization framework to make it more amenable to capturing the complex phenomena of contemporary visual culture. The rhetorical structuring of security discourse is increasingly posed within an environment wherein information and communications technologies visually mediate our relationship to politics and global events. In this context, I have examined how images of threats are constructed, transmitted and received. The concept of imaging, in particular, looks at how verbal and written discourses are enhanced by considering how complex situations are simplified into archetypal or iconic formations that make issues and ideas easily recognizable and communicable. As demonstrated, the intention of securitization discourses is to narrow the range of meaning that can be a particular issue of event. The purpose is to unite a common perception of a threat so that the protection of a particular referent object can occur. But there are unresolved issues with the concept of imaging, and images generally.

To paraphrase Mitchell, imaging cannot be viewed as the final comment on the role of images in securitization discourse. But an exploratory examination of this question posits the image as a site of political struggle for meaning, and shows that the image is not an innocent mediator or mere reflection of reality. The path toward an image-science' that Mitchell strives toward in the identification of a pictorial turn is still ongoing. While the turn is now believed widely to be a fact of advanced industrialized societies, practitioners are still attempting to decipher the emergent "ontology" associated with technical revolutions in image production and circulation. This is particularly salient to

dilemmas presented to policy makers who must come to understand these developments, and find ways of assuaging or replacing images of terror.

The critical examination of imaging showed how images used in securitization can be scrutinized for significance, iconic clarity, and effectiveness. These include trying to interpret the images that matter from the images that do not. While I have attempted to demonstrate how images structure communicative processes, it is a more difficult to decipher what images effectively participate within the structure of speech acts. Viewing images along a spectrum – from 3D visualized data to archetypal or stereotypical images – pinpointing a precise image in the flow of political discourse can be a difficult, if not arbitrary exercise. If this is the case, the question must be asked whether the role of the image in securitizing discourses has been overstated.

A similar issue considers the identification of security failure, and how it is constituted. This project offers a theoretical answer: that a failure to securitize is a failure of imaging, attributable to the inability of a securitizing actor to draw a correspondence between a threat and the interests and experiences of a relevant audience. In this regard, in what ways can be connect the technical aspects of imaging to iconic representations, and speculate the effects it has for the audience. Further contributing to this quandary is the relationship attached to the analytically differentiated "hidden" (or internal) versus the "public" (or external) face of securitization, and how the bridge between the two realms of discourse can be made. With a better understanding of this divide, it will be possible to see how images can be used in the context of a failure of securitization measures itself. Other schools of security studies – such as the Paris School's reading of governmentality

and the Aberystwyth School's positing of the link between security and emancipation – may be better suited in some respects to address these claims.

Following this, another noted difficulty is viewing images for security in their de-securitizing potential. As Harvey has noted, there are no "silver bullets" for addressing the homeland security dilemma he has detailed. We cannot, however, underestimate the force that imaging has in distorting both the terrorist enemy and the propagandized deed, as well as the attitudinal, emotional, and symbolic influence this has on policymaking. Addressing similar concerns, Campbell and Shapiro observe that while visual culture is implicated in new military strategies, it enables at the same time critical practices contesting those military strategies and perceptions.[349] Advocates who view the way forward in reducing insecurity, fear and anxiety are to find new ways of articulating the constitution of security communities. Desecuritization cannot be realized until a form of security can be constructed that is "based on the appreciation and articulation rather than the normalization of difference."[350] Enmity, as Der Derian has noted, is based largely upon how 'others' are pictured. Future examinations into the concept of imaging should look into unlocking this desecuritizing potential to assist in this process. For Moller, security community building would rely upon breaking with institutionalized orders of security production based on "fixed notions of 'self' and 'other' (because 'others' may easily be represented as 'threats')."[351] It has been noted that the public discourse of security may have a de-politicizing effect, and this is a claim that undercuts some of the Copenhagen School's primary assumptions about the securitizing process. Given the

[349] Campbelll and Shapiro, "Guest Editors' Introduction," pg. 132-3
[350] Moller, "Photographic Interventions in Post 9/11 Security Policy," pg. 182
[351] Ibid., pg. 182

argument put forth in this thesis, for images to have a truly de-securitizing potential the question is not quite how to alter them, but how to erase the ones that induce the anxiety, insecurity and fear; some images are not easily dislodged. Answers to this question are not as forthcoming.

On the broader platform of international relations theory, future theoretic development must continue to take account of new technical means of reproduction, real-time transmission and global circulation via the internet, which produce profound and potentially destabilizing truth-effects through the use of photographic and videographic imagery.[352] Der Derian's voice echoes loudest in observing the consequences this holds for political practice and international relations and security theory. He argues that the global networking of multi-media has become "unstoppable," believing the effects to be so accelerated so as to be beyond political and theoretical grasps.[353] Various imaging technologies progressively alter the structuring of (political) space, and the experience of (political) time.[354] High-speed, instantaneous exchanges of information alter the spatial and temporal structuring of the place of politics and perception.[355] The site of politics, in this reading, is "quasi-instantaneous communications, exchanges, and data transfers."[356] Interconnectivity creates a space for actors with varying identities, interests, and strength give a broader range of individuals voice beyond the "narrow stovepipe" of territorially based sovereign governments.[357] Given this, the most productive way forward to keep pace with these developments is through a pluralistic, not parsimonious, lens. While far

[352] Der Derian, "Imaging Terror," pg. 33
[353] Ibid. "The question of information technology in international relations." pg. 281
[354] James, "Virilio," pg. 92-3
[355] Ibid., pg. 98
[356] Ibid., pg. 98
[357] Der Derian, "The question of information technology in international relations," pg 286

from being "anti-theoretic," Der Derian argues that intellectual priorities should be directed toward the "more supple and strategic application of concepts" which perform rather than inform.[358] This thesis has attempted to position imaging as just such a concept.

[358] Ibid., pg. 281

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