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Encountering violence: terrorism and horrorism in war and citizenship

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Publication date

01-09-2014

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Citation for this work (American Psychological Association 7th edition)

Weber, C. (2014). *Encountering violence: terrorism and horrorism in war and citizenship* (Version 1). University of Sussex. <https://hdl.handle.net/10779/uos.23412623.v1>

Published in

International Political Sociology

Link to external publisher version

<https://doi.org/10.1111/ips.12056>

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Article (Unspecified)

Weber, Cynthia (2014) Encountering violence: terrorism and horrorism in war and citizenship. *International Political Sociology*, 8 (3). pp. 237-255. ISSN 1749-5679

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Full Citation:

Weber, Cynthia (2014) *Encountering violence: terrorism and horrorism in war and citizenship*. International Political Sociology, 8 (3). pp. 237-255. ISSN 1749-5679

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This paper was presented at 'The Political Life of Things' workshop organized by Martin Coward, Angharad Closs-Stephens, Debbie Lisle, and Emily Jackson at the Imperial War Museum, London, December 3, 2010. Thanks to the organizers and to Terrell Carver, Francois Debrix, Anne-Marie Fortier, Jan Selby, Laura Sjoberg, Lisa Smirl and two anonymous referees for their helpful comments on this paper.

Encountering Violence: Terrorism and Horrorism in War and Citizenship

Abstract: This article introduces Adriana Cavarero's concept 'horrorism' into IR discussions of the relationship between war and citizenship. Horrorism refers to a violent violation of vulnerable humans who are defined by their simultaneous openness to the other's care and harm. With its motif of physical and ontological denigration, horrorism offends the human condition by making its victims gaze upon and/or experience repugnant violence and bodily disfiguration precisely when the vulnerable are most in need of care. This article argues that horrorism complicates disciplinary understandings of contemporary violence, which tend to see only terrorism but not horrorism in war and which generally neglect to theorize how violence – and particularly horrorism – is embedded in and exchanged through state/citizen relationships. To elaborate these arguments, the article analyses three pieces of war art – Jeremy Deller's 'Baghdad, 5 March 2007', Don Gray's mural 'Operation Iraqi Freedom', and a still image from Cynthia Weber's film 'Guadalupe Denogean: "I am an American"' – that, by taking the War on Terrorism as their subject, demonstrate how war makes visible the terror and horror in state/citizen relationships. It concludes by reconsidering how encountering signs of horrorism might broaden our frames of war and further our empathic vision toward the precarious victims of horrorism or might confirm the patriotic allegiances of imperial citizens to their states in ways that further bind their citizenship to state political and economic violence and narrow the scope for genuine empathy.

Key Words: Citizenship, Horrorism, Terrorism, War, State Violence

Article:

‘More important than thought, there is “what leads to thought”...impressions which force us to look, encounters which force us to interpret, expressions which focus us to think.’

-- Gilles Deleuze (1972:161)

Not long ago, I visited the exhibition 'Baghdad, 5 March 2007' at the Imperial War Museum in London. This exhibition by Turner Prize-winning artist Jeremy Deller featured a car that had been destroyed some years earlier by a truck bomb on Al-Mutanabbi Street in Baghdad, the site of a then-thriving book market (Figure 1).



Figure 1: Jeremy Deller in the Imperial War Museum with his work 'Baghdad, 5 March 2007', a car salvaged from a Baghdad market bombing. Photograph: Jonathan Hordle/Rex Features.

Finding Deller's exhibition in the museum that day came as no surprise, as the exhibition had been widely advertised. What shocked me was finding another piece there that offered a very different aesthetic engagement with the US-led War in Iraq - Don Gray's mural 'Operation Iraqi Freedom' (Figure 2). This mural is painted on the side of the Collins Computer Innovations store in Twentynine Palms, California. It depicts the First Marine Division crossing from Kuwait into Iraq, the toppling of the statue of Saddam Hussein in Baghdad, and the dramatic rescue of US POWs in the early days of the war.



Figure 2: Mural 'Operation Iraqi Freedom' by Don Gray. Photograph: Gerald Thurman

The Imperial War Museum had not acquired this mural, nor had museum curators reproduced it or an image of it in an exhibition. Rather, it was Jeremy Deller's project that smuggled this mural into the museum, for an image of this mural shares the cover of Jeremy's book (Figure 3) about his project with 'Baghdad, 5 March 2007' and with the motor home that towed this bombed car around the US from public space to public space in an attempt to spark conversations about the US-led War in Iraq. Copies of the book were for sale in the museum shop.

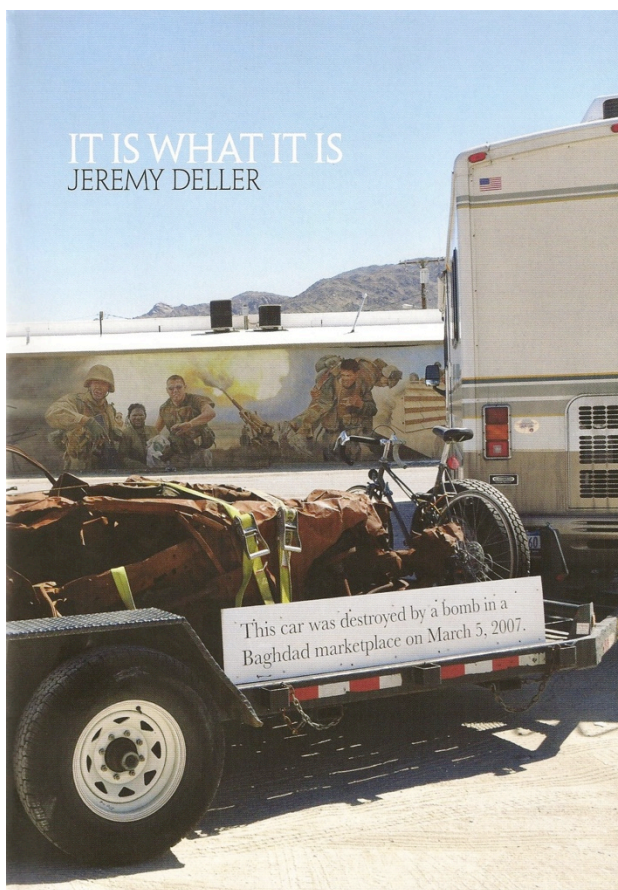


Figure 3: Cover of Jeremy Deller's book *It is what it is*, published by Creative Times.

I immediately recognized this mural. Not only had I seen it before; I had used it in my own work. I was led to this mural by Retired Marine Master Gunnery Sergeant Guadalupe (Lupe) Denogean when I was in Twentynine Palms making a film about Lupe as part of my project about unsafe post-9/11 US citizens (Weber, 2007a; 2011). Lupe is the soldier who inspired the fast-tracked citizenship program. This program rewards foreign soldiers serving the US honourably in the War on Terror with the rapid processing of their US citizenship applications. Lupe lives in Twentynine Palms, and he suggested we do some filming with him in front of this mural (see Figure 4). I filmed Lupe in 2007, three weeks after the Al-Mutanabbi Street book market bombing.



Figure 4: Retired Marine Master Gunnery Sergeant Guadalupe Denogean in front of Don Gray's mural 'Operation Iraqi Freedom', Twentynine Palms, California. Film still from Cynthia Weber's film 'Guadalupe Denogean: "I am an American"'

Since I stumbled upon this mural a second time, I have not been able to let it go. As 'an encountered sign' – a sign that is more felt than thought (Deleuze, 1972:166) – the mural and its affective grip on me have become "a shock to thought": a jolt that does not so much *reveal* truth as thrust us involuntarily into a mode of critical inquiry' (Massumi, 2002:23). This shock has led me to consider not what these artworks represent – either individually or as a collection – but what these pieces *do* politically and ethically (Shapiro, 2008, 2012). How do they work individually and together? What might they make us think *because* they make us feel? What are their ethico-political effects?

Perhaps because my own contribution to this aesthetic collection was produced in the context of a project on US citizenship and perhaps because I was reading Adriana Cavarero's book *Horrorism* at the time¹ I visited the Imperial War Museum, my chance encounter with these three pieces has led me to consider the violence inherent in not only war but also in citizenship. For me, this violence is apparent because of how terror and horror are highlighted, occluded, and exchanged between and among these artworks.

To explain and explore these connections, the remainder of this article does four things. First, it introduces Cavarero's concept of 'horrorism' into IR discussions of the relationship between war and citizenship. Horrorism refers to a violent violation of vulnerable humans who are defined by their simultaneously openness to the other's care and harm. With its motif of physical and ontological denigration, horrorism offends the human condition by making its victims gaze upon and/or experience repugnant violence and bodily disfiguration precisely when the vulnerable are most in need of care. Second, it argues that horrorism complicates disciplinary understandings of the relationship between war and citizenship by demonstrating how war makes visible the terror and horror in state/citizen relationships. Third, it illustrates this argument through its analysis of the mural 'Operation Iraqi Freedom', Jeremy Deller's 'Baghdad, 5 March 2007', and a still image from my film 'Guadalupe

Denogean: “I am an American”’. Finally, it concludes by reconsidering how encountering signs of horrorism might broaden our frames of war (Butler, 2010) and further our empathic vision (Bennett, 2006) toward the precarious victims of horrorism or might confirm the patriotic allegiances of ‘imperial citizens’ (Wolin, 2006) to their states in ways that further bind their citizenship to state political and economic violence and narrow the scope for genuine empathy.

Terrorism and Horrorism in War and Citizenship

Terrorism is a term that is ubiquitous in contemporary discussions of violence. Terrorism generally refers to the use of violence, threat and fear by non-state actors for political purposes. This is how states understand terrorism, and this is how states define much of contemporary violence directed toward them and their citizens. Yet our current obsession with terrorism obscures what might be an even more profound form of contemporary violence, horrorism. This is the argument Adriana Cavarero makes in her book *Horrorism: Naming Contemporary Violence* (2009). Cavarero argues that lumped into what we call terror or terrorism is something else that might be called horror or horrorism. We fail to see this horror because we look at contemporary violence from the perspective of the warrior, be s/he the soldier or the suicide bomber. But, as Cavarero explains, ‘If we observe [violence like that of] the scene of massacre from the point of view of the helpless victims rather than that of the warriors,...the picture changes....More than terror, what stands out is horror’ (2009:1).

The differences between terror and horror are not just down to the point of view of the person doing the naming. According to Cavarero, terror and horror have distinct etymologies, physics, and aims. Etymologically, ‘terror’ has its roots in the Latin verb for trembling and the Greek verb for fear. What is captured in this etymology of terror is the physics of terror. Cavarero suggests that the important point about terror ‘lies in what we might call the instinctual mobility associated with the ambit of terror’ (2009:5). Elaborating, she explains:

Acting directly on them, terror moves bodies, drives them into motion. Its sphere of reference is that of a menace to the living being, which tries to escape by fleeing. This menace is directed, substantially, at life itself: it is a threat of violent death. He who is gripped by terror trembles and flees in order to survive, to save himself from a violence that is aiming to kill him’ (2009:5).

The trajectory of terror, then, is that of a body experiencing ‘total fear’, ‘absolute disorder’, and ‘loss of all control’ – a body in panic – that is fleeing away from death and toward survival. Survival is the aim of the terrorized body. But, as Cavarero notes, individual bodily responses to terror can be dangerous to other terrorized bodies. Think, for example, of stampedes of terrorized bystanders rushing away from a bomb, trampling one another in the process. In these instances, Cavarero suggests, ‘You could even say that collective panic brings the physics of terror to complete fulfilment, inasmuch as it forces bodies to turn the very violence that, sweeping them along in the rush of flight, has transformed them into a killing machine against one another’ (2009:5-6).

If terror gives us fearful bodies fleeing for their very survival, horror gives us repulsed bodies frozen in their tracks. We see this in the etymology, physics, and aims of horror. Etymologically, horror derives from the Latin and Greek verbs that denote ‘primarily a state of paralysis, reinforced by the feeling of growing stiff on the part of someone who is freezing’. Unlike the physics of terror that puts bodies in motion, the physics of horror excludes movement, apart from the bristling of one’s skin or the hair on one’s head which is a physical reaction to both cold and fright. But this fright is not the same as the fear terror provokes. Writes Cavarero, ‘There is something of the frightful here, but, more than fear, horror has to do with repugnance’ (2009:7). Her example here is the Greek mythological figure of Medusa, the

female severed head with hair of snakes that turns those who gaze upon her into stone. It is Medusa's horrific appearance that repulses her viewers. As with terror,

'[v]iolent death is part of the picture [in horror], but not the central part. There is no question of evading death. In contrast to what occurs with terror, in horror there is no instinctive movement of flight in order to survive, much less the contagious turmoil of panic. Rather, movement is blocked in total paralysis, and each victim is affected on its own. Gripped by revulsion in the face of a form of violence that appears more inadmissible than death, the body reacts as if nailed to the spot, hairs standing on end' (2009:8)

If the aim of terror is to kill the body and the aim of the terrorized is to flee from death, the aim of horror is 'to destroy the uniqueness of the body, tearing at its constitutive vulnerability. What is at stake is not the end of a human life but the human condition itself, as incarnated in the singularity of vulnerable bodies' (2009:8). Horror, then, attacks the human condition itself by demanding its victims gaze upon the 'unwatchable', 'the spectacle of disfigurement, which the singular body cannot bear' (2009:8). Dismemberment, then – of the human body and of the human condition – is a central motif of horror, for 'through extreme violence, [it is] directed at nullifying human beings even more than at killing them...' (2009:9).

Cavarero's invocation of Medusa here is central to her argument. Not only does Medusa symbolize the horror of dismemberment and link horror to the gaze. Medusa also grounds horrorism in the figure of the woman. Indeed, among the reasons Cavarero coined her neologism 'horrorism' is because women have (more visibly) become perpetrators of contemporary violence (2009:29), whether as suicide bombers or prison guards at Abu Ghraib. What makes their crimes horrific is how from Greek mythology to modern liberal philosophy women are figured as those who provide care more than harm, making the harmful woman – and especially the harmful mother – a horrific figure. That we understand the story of another Greek mythological woman Medea – a mother who killed her children (the helpless ones) one by one as she looked each in the eyes and then dismembers their dead bodies – as horrific grounds Cavarero's claim about maternal horror. By harming those who she ought to *and* does care for, Medea represents for Cavarero 'the generative nucleus of horror' (2009:27). For where we expect only care, we find both care and harm.

Medea's story clarifies what vulnerability means for Cavarero. Vulnerability is about being simultaneously exposed to the other's care and harm. As Cavarero puts it, 'Irremediably open to wounding [violent death or death by neglect] and caring [receiving sustenance], the vulnerable one exists totally in the tension generated by this alternative' (2009:30; my brackets). Horrorism, then, is not about exercising 'gratuitous cruelty' because 'care always weights in the balance, the more so in that it is drastically negated' (2009:27). What is horrific is that the vulnerable is wounded or neglected precisely when it is most in need of care, as the infant would be by an uncaring mother. This form of denigration of any vulnerable body is – as much as physical dismemberment - what violently strikes at human dignity and at the human condition itself.

Cavarero's placement of the vulnerable subject irredeemably open to being wounded or neglected and being cared for at the centre of her analysis of contemporary violence is not just dependent upon her reading of Greek mythology. It also owes debts to Thomas Hobbes description of the mother-infant relationship in the state of nature, where the vulnerable infant's helplessness means its survival at least initially depends upon the care of its mother. Cavarero explains that to provide the helpless infant any hope of surviving in a state of nature, 'Hobbes is forced to attribute to the mother a power over her offspring that, abandoning the general lupine nature of mankind, plays on the alternative between saving it and destroying it' (2009:23). In making this move, Hobbes' reading of the mother-infant relationship

‘admits violence but also care’ into the state of nature, which is both surprising and exceptional in this place/time that Hobbes describes as a war of every man against every other man (2009:23). Following Hobbes and Cavarero, then, the possibility of care punctures this terrifying place/time of absolute violence before social contracts and civil institutions arise, thereby reinforcing Cavarero’s claim that the vulnerable human is open both to death by violence or neglect and to sustaining care. While fear/terror, then, might be the motivating factor for the survival strategies of most vulnerable bodies in a Hobbesian state of nature, horror creeps in because care and its inhumane withdrawal enter the state of nature through the mother-infant relationship.

Because Cavarero mines ancient Greek and modern Hobbesian mythologies for their figurations of women and mothers, one could argue that Cavarero reifies stereotypes of women as maternal and of the maternal as caring. Of course, not all women are mothers, not all mothers are caring (Sjoberg and Gentry, 2010), and not all care comes from either women or parents. Therefore, horror and horrorism might not be justifiably anchored in the female and, as Cavarero insists, be epitomized by ‘the face of a woman’ (2009:13). Read more generously, though, one might make an alternative suggestion about Cavarero’s use of traditional female and maternal figures – that is it not about stereotyping women and the maternal as carers but about recovering these traditional stereotypes and reworking them to demonstrate how the archetypal caring mother ‘is intimately entwined with the destructive nature of violence’ (Cassinger, 2010:83).

Following this second path, what Cavarero’s reworked archetypes of the caring mother alerts us to is how figurations of the maternal not only sneak care into places/times marked by ‘absolute violence’ like a Hobbesian state of nature or the scene of a suicide bombing; they also sneak violence into places/times marked more by care than by harm like the modern liberal sovereign state. As a result, it is possible to find terror and horror within both Hobbes mythical war of every man against every man that Realist IR scholars (mis)read as the state of international relations and within the archetypal feminized sovereign state (Elshtain, 1993; also see Hutchings, 2000; Blanchard, 2003) and its state/citizen relationships.

Cavarero’s emphasis is on making the first move – showing how terror and horror are both part of contemporary war and violence (also see Debrix and Barder, 2012). In contrast, my emphasis is on making the second move – showing how both terror and horror as Cavarero describes them are also a part of citizenship. This is a harder case to make because of how we generally think about citizenship. While citizenship certainly places obligations upon political subjects of a state, citizenship – especially modern liberal citizenship – is more often than not regarded as an unqualified good because it is seen to bestow rights and care upon citizens. Even though contemporary neoliberal states increasingly provide citizens with less actual care and more pathways to self-care (Foucault, 1991), this form of citizenship is nevertheless preferable to no citizenship. For citizenship itself is often regarded as the very thing that can transform vulnerable bodies into safer bodies that enjoy the projection and the care of a state (see discussion in Nyers, 2010; also see Weber, 2008).

Following how Cavarero complicates the traditional relationship between the maternal body and its offspring, I want to suggest that the body politic – which is traditionally caricatured as maternal in relation to its citizens (Elstaine, 1993)– opens its citizens and would-be-citizens to both the care *and* harm of the sovereign state. Where the state wounds or neglects those vulnerable bodies that are most in need of its care, the violence and indeed the horror in the state/citizen relationship is most apparent. I will make this argument by turning to the war art that opened this article.

Three Pieces

The three pieces analysed in this section have several things in common. They are all war memorials that have ended up in museums of one sort or another. They all engage with the second US-led War in Iraq. They all happen to be in the same place – a side street in Twentynine Palms, California – but they were never all there at the same time. Finally, I have either visited these pieces or (in one case) produced the piece. But what most unites them is that together they propelled me to think critically about the terror and horror in state/citizen relationships, make most apparent by war.

To explore how these three pieces separately and together occlude, emphasize, and exchange terror and horror in relation to war and to citizenship, I begin by examining the mural ‘Operation Iraqi Freedom’, adding one piece at a time to my analysis until I have considered how each piece in this collection functions in relation to the others and how the collection functions as a whole. I suggest that the terror and horror in war and in citizenship becomes increasingly apparent as we move from the mural to the blown-up car to the blown-up body of Lupe Denogean. While the mural occludes the terror and the horror in war and in citizenship by celebrating the heroic ideal of a soldier’s patriotic duty to open her/himself up to wounding on behalf of their state and places the duty of care on the soldier in relation to the state, Deller’s car read as the symbolically dismembered body of the helpless victim restores terror and especially horror to these relationships. What it emphasizes is that care is missing from those who are most vulnerable to horrific violence, less because they have been neglected by their state than because the state lacks the ability to fulfil its promise to care for its citizens by protecting them from horrific violence. Finally, the film ‘Lupe Denogean: “I am an American”’ and the soldierly body of would-be US citizen Lupe Denogean itself convey how the terror and horror of war became the currency exchanged by would-be US citizens to gain US citizenship in the context of the US-led War on Terror. For it was only by availing their bodies to horrific violence that Lupe and other would-be citizens after him became eligible for fast-track US citizenship and the (sometimes mythical) care it secured for them.

‘Operation Iraqi Freedom’

‘On 21 March, 2003, the First Marine Division crossed from Kuwait and began “Operation Iraqi Freedom”. This mural is dedicated to the men and women of the Armed Forces, especially the Marines and Sailors from the Marine Corps Combat Center in Twentynine Palms depicted here’.
--- Dedication on Mural ‘Operation Iraqi Freedom’

Don Gray’s mural ‘Operation Iraqi Freedom’ (see Figure 2) takes its name from the first code name of the second US-led War in Iraq. The mural shows events at the start of this war, which became a major battleground in the larger post-9/11 US-led War on Terror. Yet what is interesting about this mural is how it depicts the War on Terror without depicting terror itself.

This is not to say that the mural’s scenes instead show bodies that are static or frozen, indeed horrified. Quite the contrary, the mural is full of activity – of getting US forces into Iraq, Saddam Hussein out of power, and US soldiers out of captivity. But all of this action is about showing US responses to the terror and terrorism inflicted upon it, rather than showing terror or terrorism itself as it is officially defined. For what might be terrifying – scenes of the targeting and killings of US soldiers or of Iraqi soldiers and citizens, the blowing up of buildings, the firing of artillery directed toward viewers of the mural, and the general chaos of war – is absent. Instead, what viewers see is a story in three, albeit narratively dissociated parts – of US advances, occupation, and rescue – that seems like storyboard panels for a Hollywood blockbuster that the film’s director imagines as a coherent whole and that US audiences have long been tutored to consume as such.

The fragmentation of the mural, then, does not display a horror and horrorism that might ‘destroy the uniqueness of the body’ and ‘the human condition’ (Cavarero, 2009:8) generally or the US body politic and some unified condition of symbolic US being. Nor do the mural’s individual panels show the bodies of US soldiers subjected to ‘total fear’, ‘absolute disorder’, or ‘loss of control’ (Cavarero, 2009:5). Instead, the individual bodies of soldiers are organized into a military Corps that is itself carrying out what appears to be a well-crafted, orderly attack on a US enemy and rescue of US POWs that more broadly might be read as a rescue of the US body politic that was horrifically wounded by the 9/11 terrorist attacks. As such, the mural depicts antidotes to terror and horror that, while represented as disparate scenes, cohere within a unifying, forward-moving US narrative of self-rescue and self-care, otherwise known as ‘the US mission’.

Any doubts about this interpretation of the mural are likely to be tempered by the words of the US Commanding General of the First Marine Division Major General James N. Mattis, who led these troops into battle. Painted into Gray’s mural as a sort of plaque that appears at the end of the action scenes, Mattis is quoted as saying, ‘For the Mission’s sake, our country’s sake, and the sake of the men who carried the division’s colors in past battles – who fought for life and never lost their nerve – carry out your mission and keep your honor clean. Demonstrate to the world there is “No Better Friend, No Worse Enemy” than a U.S. Marine’. His words appear beneath a brief description of the operation and its dedication, quoted above.

Mattis’ words work against the stated intentions of muralist Don Gray, who sought to focus ‘on the confusion of battle’ and on the ‘anguished faces and bravery of our Marines’ in ways that do not celebrate war.² For Mattis’ words offer viewers a way through this confusion and a way to overwrite anguish with honor. From this commander’s perspective, this mural is all about the mission and the men who honorably fight for life by standing up for Corps and country without ever losing their nerve. It is not about terrorized Marines, much less about terrorized Iraqi civilians fleeing from violent death. The effect of these images and words is to glorify the duty of the soldier/citizen to embrace their patriotic duty to put themselves in harms way and die for their country in the heat of battle if necessary. As it appears in Gray’s mural, this heroic ideal of dying for one’s country is cleansed of death altogether. For what the mural depicts are scenes in which heroic soldiers act on behalf of life and the living, while no one in the mural is actually shown dead, dying, or being targeted for death.

Mattis’ message is well placed – both on the mural and in the town of Twentynine Palms – to tame competing interpretations of the mural. On the mural, Mattis’ message appears in the far right-hand corner at eye-level. Reading the mural from left to right, Mattis’ words are the final visual viewers encounter. As such, these words are positioned at the very point where viewers might begin to reflect on the mural as a whole and the violence it celebrates more generally. By placing Mattis’ words not only at the far end of the mural but also in a plaque that stands outside of the action itself, Mattis’ words stand outside the action, as if they were a neutral description of rather than political judgments upon what viewers see and should think about in the mural.

Mattis’ words of course are not unbiased, but in the town of Twentynine Palms, California, where the mural is located, they resonate with the presiding biases of the town’s inhabitants. For Twentynine Palms is a US military town which is home to the world’s largest military base, where every US Marine is trained before taking up an assignment elsewhere. Painted on the side of a store that sits on the main street leading to the military base, the mural is unmissable to anyone driving away from base into town. And, of course, most of those driving by are US Marines and their families.

This is not the only mural on display in Twentynine Palms. Rather, in this desert town that markets itself as ‘an oasis of murals’, ‘Operation Iraqi Freedom’ is the town’s 20th mural. As such, this mural is both an ordinary object among other ordinary objects in this town turned public art museum and a special

acquisition because it is directed specifically toward the thousands of US Marines who train for military combat in Twentynine Palms, the resident veterans who served on this mission or missions like it, and the children of military families who are considering signing up for military service. As such, 'Operation Iraqi Freedom' functions like the vast majority of other war memorials function – as both an advertisement for war and as a commemoration of war.

But what is unique about this war memorial is how this mural located among 'an oasis of murals' functions as an oasis in the War on Terror. Like most war memorials, this mural withholds scenes of the terror and horror of war from its viewers and directs them toward celebrating the US mission in Iraq and celebrating the heroic ideal of dying for one's country. It specifically does this by offering viewers scenes of occupation and overthrow without death and by offering scenes of rescue at the hands of friendly Marines without any resistance from the enemy. In this way, 'Operation Iraqi Freedom' not only cleanses the honor of those US Marines who fought in this battle; it cleanses the citizen's obligation to die for their country and the wider War on Terror itself from terror and horror. In general terms, this is not unlike how the majority of official war memorials function. But unlike most war memorials, 'Operation Iraqi Freedom' was commissioned, completed, and dedicated while the US-led War in Iraq was ongoing. As such, the mural offers both a place and a time of sanctuary away from the terror and horror of the ongoing War on Terror and War in Iraq and a moment of respite from the violences inherent in state/citizen relationships. Rather than expressing the violences of war and citizenship, then, 'Operation Iraqi Freedom' serves as a refuge from these violences.

It is precisely this refuge and respite from the terrors and horrors in war and citizenship that Jeremy Deller's exhibition 'Baghdad, 5 March 2007' challenges.

'Baghdad, 5 March 2007'

'I think that's what war art is...it's a way of bringing back home the horror of it [war], if you want, or the visceral elements of it'.
--- Jeremy Deller (Deller to Snow, 2010)

While the mural 'Operation Iraqi Freedom' is painted and plaqued from the point of view of the warrior, 'Baghdad, 5 March 2007' (see Figure 1) takes the perspective of the innocent victim of war. Part of what makes Deller's exhibition so striking, though, is that this innocent victim of war is a car that was transfigured beyond recognition by a truck bomb that exploded in a Baghdad marketplace and killed 38 Iraq civilians. This blown up car, like these blown up civilians, is a piece of 'collateral damage' in the US-led War in Iraq. For even though it was not a US bomb that destroyed this car, it was the US-led War in Iraq that provided the wider context for this explosion. In the resulting massacre, this car and these Iraqi civilians were not merely 'killed'; they were nullified. Their obliterated bodies – and what Cavarero would call their 'obliterated singularity' – testify to how the violence of horror goes beyond death, beyond terror by 'destroy[ing] the uniqueness of the body, tearing at its constitutive vulnerability' (2009:8).

Deller's decision to exhibit this car rather than exhibit images of the fragmented bodies of the Iraq civilians killed in its vicinity is not meant to lessen the horrors of this scene. As Deller explains, 'The way I looked at it, a destroyed car is effectively a body. Because on the news in the West at least, they will never show the bodies that [are] burnt and dismembered, but they always show cars. And I just thought, well the car is actually the body. That's actually what we should see. We should see a dead person when we see a car like that' (Deller on Snow, 2010). Others who have looked upon this car see

the dead human bodies around it. As one viewer put it, 'I see this car and all I can think about is how it got to be in this shape and how many people died nearby' (Alae Yaseen, quoted in Deller, 2010:26). What we have here, then, is the disfigured body of a car that might either stand in for or evoke images of fragmented human bodies.

What makes Deller's bombed car so horrific is not only the death and dismemberment of human bodies and the human condition that happened all around it. What is also horrific about this bombed car is how it bears witness to the horrors that occur both in the context of a foreign occupation and, more generally, in the wake of every state's failure to care for its citizens by protecting them absolutely from the other's harm. These citizens are not soldiers fighting in some foreign battle. They are ordinary citizens whose visit to a book market made them victims of and/or witnesses to a massacre.

The unseen mutilated bodies of dead Iraqi citizens lurking in the vicinity of this bombed car haunt any straightforward application of the heroic ideal of dying for one's country, particularly in the context of such a massacre. These Iraqi citizens did not die for their country. They just died. And their deaths were not only tragic. They were horrific. This is firstly because their conditions as humans and as civilians were attacked through a horror that – more than disfiguring their bodies – nullified them as humans and as civilians. It is secondly because these defenceless, helpless victims who experienced harm were those most in need of care, either by their state or by the US state that occupied Iraq.

By taking all of this into account, Deller's bombed car seems to do more than just serve as a rallying cry by some for the state to better protect their citizens. More than this, it evidences the brutal fact that states will not or cannot protect their most vulnerable citizens. What this means is that the violence Deller's bombed car exhibits is of a kind that is 'tearing at [the] constitutive vulnerability' (Cavarero, 2009:8) in the state/citizen relationship, a relationship that is both sutured and ruptured by the violence of the War on Terror generally and the War in Iraq specifically. For all of these reasons, then, Deller's exhibition 'Baghdad, 5 March 2007' might be experienced as a frozen reminder of the 'unwatchable', 'the spectacle of disfigurement, which the singular body [be it human or be it the violently fused bodies of the state and citizen] cannot bear' (Cavarero, 2009:8). Yet because of its witnessing to the horrors inherent in both war and citizenship, it is a frozen object that freezes our gaze upon it.

Originally displayed in the US, 'Baghdad, 5 March 2007' does what Deller claims war art ought to do. It brings the horror of war back home to the warring state. 'Baghdad, 5 March 2007' is horrific in a US context not only because in seeing it, US viewers might well see blown-up human bodies and destroyed promises of citizen protection and care at the hands of the state. It is also horrific because US culture is a car culture, one based upon the principle of mobility every bit as much as it is based upon the principle of individuality. Indeed, inherent in US understandings of individuality is mobility – either outward across vast frontier lands or upward toward achieving economic aspirations. By confronting US viewers with an automobile that lacks automobility, Deller's blown-up car translates the traumas of a US foreign war into terms that can be readily appreciated as traumatic by a US viewing public.

As disturbing as this might be to the US public, what might be even more disturbing is how Deller restored mobility to this immobile object. He did this by towing the blown-up car on a trailer across the length of the US, stopping in public spaces along the way to engage people in conversation about the car and the war. The trailer also carried a sign that read, 'This car was destroyed by a bomb in a Baghdad marketplace on March 5, 2007'. Helping Deller conduct this conversation were three fellow travellers – an Iraqi citizen who frequented the Al-Mutanabbi book market, a US Army veteran who fought in the second US-led War in Iraq, and a US art curator. One of the places they stopped was in Twentynine Palms, California, in front of the mural 'Operation Iraqi Freedom'. It is a photograph from this stop that adorns the cover of Deller's book detailing this journey (see Figure 3).

As Deller explains, part of the point of exhibiting the blown-up car in US public spaces was to relinquish control over what the exhibition might mean. Deller's book details responses from right-wingers who embrace the exhibition on the terms that the car evidences what the US is fighting against in Iraq and why the US war is necessary to keep this kind of violence out of the US to responses from left-wingers who sometimes incorporated the exhibition into their anti-war protests and other times criticized Deller for not making the exhibition more explicitly anti-war (Deller, 2010:26). The reaction in Twentynine Palms was potent, if minimal. US art curator Nato Thompson describes it like this, 'We pulled the RV alongside a mural in honor of the Marines serving in the current war in Iraq. A marine in full fatigues drove by and flipped Lonnie off. It was a nice beginning, but that turned out to be the ending of that stop as well. No one' (Thompson, 2010:174).

We can only speculate as to why this Marine reacted as s/he did. What might have offended them was not only the juxtaposition of two very different memorials to war – a bombed car from the Iraq War and an official commemorative mural to that same war. What also might have offended them is precisely how this juxtaposition transfigures both the mural 'Operation Iraqi Freedom' and its function as a refuge from the terrors and horrors of war and of citizenship.

In the photograph of this scene that appears on Deller's book cover, the transfiguration of the mural is achieved by overlaying 'Baghdad, 5 March 2007' in the foreground over the image of the mural 'Operation Iraqi Freedom'. This layering robs the mural of having the first or last word on the US-led War in Iraq. This is the case not only because these two very different memorials to war appear in the same space at the same time. More so, it is because this montage of image over image transfigures the mural 'Operation Iraqi Freedom' from a background story about the war painted on/in stone to a palimpsest whose meanings multiply as each new layer of story/scene is laid upon it.

Indeed, as it appears on Deller's book cover, what we see is not only image over image, exhibition over exhibition, memorial over memorial. What we also see is text over text. For if you look closely at this image, what you will see is that the plaque that attempts to discipline the meaning of the actions depicted on the mural through the interpretive lens of the Commander of this mission is written over by the motor home pulling the bombed car. The result is that, apart from the book title and author's name, the only text that appears in this image is the sign describing the bombed car, 'This car was destroyed by a bomb in a Baghdad marketplace on March 5, 2007'. And while Deller's name might signify to some the body of work of this Turner-prize winning artist, the title of his book gives nothing away. It simply reads, 'It is what it is'. This title reads ironically in relation to the mural 'Operation Iraqi Freedom' that appears just below it on the book cover. For this mural is no longer quite what it was before Deller's unique motorcade arrived on/in this scene.

Deller's act of montage that lays horror over the active erasure of terror and horror does more than just conjure up the violences in the War on Terror and the War in Iraq and the violences in the state/citizen relationship. It interrupts the unifying narrative tacked onto the mural that attempts to transform this place and this time of war and war preparation into a refuge and respite from the terrors and horrors in war and citizenship. In so doing, it highlights the violence in such narratives, be they textual, pictorial, and/or otherwise material.

'Guadalupe Denogean: "I am an American"'

'To get blown up is a heck of a way to become a citizen, but if that's what you've gotta do, that's what you've gotta do'.

--- Retired US Marine Master Gunnery Sergeant Guadalupe Denogean (quoted in Weber, 2007a)

In the film ‘Guadalupe Denogean: “I am an American”’, Retired US Marine Master Gunnery Sergeant Guadalupe (Lupe) Denogean stands before the mural ‘Operation Iraqi Freedom’ as one of those Marines the mural references who made their way from Kuwait to Iraq by tank. Lupe’s account of his passage across the desert offers details that are missing from the mural – about how his tank was hit by an enemy missile and about how the attack left Lupe seriously injured.

In the still photograph from this scene (Figure 4), viewers cannot see that Lupe was a casualty of the war memorialized by the mural he surveys. Nor can they see of the extent of Lupe’s injuries. For Lupe’s physical dismemberment is not immediately apparent in this image or in the full scene as it runs in the film. We cannot see his shattered eardrums, the shrapnel embedded throughout his body, or his missing finger. And we cannot deduce from this scene that the missile that hit Lupe detached him not only from parts of himself but from the US Marine Corps as well, because his injuries were so severe that he was forced to retire. These facts were disclosed in earlier scenes, and so they accompany Lupe on his inspection of the wall. As he slowly walks from panel to panel, Lupe does not speak of the terrors and horrors of war but of his attachment to the US Marines, to the US-led War in Iraq, and to how these attachments led him to become a US citizen.

This is Lupe’s story. Lupe was a resident alien in the US of Mexican descent who had been serving in the US military for nearly 20 years. Lupe had applied for US citizenship many times, but because his address changed because of his military transfers before his applications could be processed, he was never able to become a US citizen. While in a military hospital recovering from injuries he received in the US-led War in Iraq, Lupe was asked the perfunctory question, ‘Do you have any requests?’ He replied, ‘Can you make me a citizen?’ Lupe’s request was seized upon by the Bush Administration. Within three days, Lupe was a US citizen, President George W Bush attended his swearing in ceremony, and the seeds of the fast-track citizenship program were sown. This program rewards immigrants who are legally resident in the US by fast-tracking their US citizenship applications in exchange for their honourable military service in the US War on Terror.³ This promise of fast-tracked citizenship in exchange for military service became a central tool in the recruiting of non-US citizens into the US military, particularly poor resident alien Hispanics and Filipinos (Alvarez, 2006).

Understood in the context of the fast-tracked citizenship program he inspired, Lupe symbolizes not only the heroic soldier and the good immigrant whose love of and loyalty to the US made him emblematic of what patriotism ought to look like in what was then a US deeply divided over the War on Terror. Lupe’s sacrifice for what became his country took on a messianic dimension. For having died a symbolic death on the battlefield – one that stripped him of his livelihood as a US Marine – Lupe was reborn as a US citizen. Through his US citizenship, Lupe found not mere compensation for his injuries but salvation from his 26-year status as a non-US citizen living and working in the US. He expresses his gratitude in this phrase, ‘*I am the American Dream*’ (Weber, 2007a).

As profound as this experience was for Lupe, its implications for others are even more profound. For Lupe’s suffering – symbolized by his wounded body and symbolic death – created a new way to gain US citizenship for other precariously placed legal immigrants aspiring to the American Dream. Unlike Lupe, they did not (necessarily) have to lose their livelihoods to ascend to citizenship. For Lupe’s sacrifice and request were enough to wash away their similar situations. As a result, all they had to do was follow Lupe’s example of availing their bodies to horrific violence by serving the US honourably in the US-led War on Terror in exchange for becoming eligible for fast-tracked US citizenship and the (sometimes mythical) care it might secure for them.

From the perspective of the US state and from the perspective of Lupe the warrior, Lupe's story seamlessly extols the virtues of a soldier's willingness to die for the country they love and a state's benevolent treatment of all those who follow this virtuous, even righteous, path. Akin to the plaque painted into the mural 'Operation Iraqi Freedom', Lupe's story becomes another unifying narrative that sutures the violence inherent in war and in citizenship into a happily-ever-after tale that can be related to US citizens and can be aspired to by non-US citizens. For this is a story about achieving a longed-for attachment to a loved country and the symbolic maternal care it promises by offering the immediate sacrifice of military service with all of its incumbent risks of harm in return for the promise that one's life after military service will be made more secure thanks to a fast-tracked citizenship application. As such, it is a story about running toward the goal of becoming a citizen and has very little to do with running away from, much less being frozen in one's tracks in the face of, violent death.

But if we shift our perspective from the state and the warrior to that of the vulnerable human being, this narrative ruptures. And what can be seen more clearly in it are the terrors and horrors in war and citizenship.

Lupe's body provides us with such a perspective. Yes, his is the body of the warrior. This is how he understands himself, and this is the point of view through which he narrates his story. And while Lupe's soldierly body was by no means the most vulnerable of bodies on the Iraqi battlefield, his non-US citizenship status transformed his wounded body into the body of an extremely vulnerable human being.⁴ Even if Lupe's physical disfigurement does not strike every onlooker as horrific, his wounds were enough to detach Lupe from the two pillars of his professional existence – the US Marine Corps and the US state. Lupe's attachments to Corps and Colors are evidenced by a shot in the film Lupe staged himself. It shows a smiling Lupe positioned midway between two miniature flags – the US flag and the US Marine Corps flag (Figure 5). Lupe struck this pose after he gained US citizenship and after he was re-employed on the US Marine Corps base as a civilian defence contractor, a job that is only open to US citizens.



Figure 5: Lupe Denogean's Flag Shot from the film 'Guadalupe Denogean: "I am an American"'

While, for Lupe, a part of him is anchored in each one of these flags, the reality is that he has never been both US Marine and US citizen simultaneously. He has always been somewhere in the middle. Before the missile attack, Lupe was a US Marine who was not a US citizen. After the attack, Lupe was a US citizen who was no longer a US Marine. And there was a short moment when Lupe knew he was (or was about to be) neither.

It is in this brief moment that the terror and horror of war and of citizenship re-enter the frame, albeit symbolically. For this is the moment when Lupe's severely injured immobilized body is caught between the end of his service to the foreign country he loves and his unprocessed legal status as a citizen of the country that he so deeply cares for but that in this specific moment offered him more harm than care. Not only is Lupe incapable of running; he has nowhere to run. I imagine this must have been a horrific moment for Lupe. That Lupe found a fairytale exit from this horror through an off-handed reply to the routine question, 'Do you have any requests?', is only part of his story. The other part of his story is the suffering that made this exit urgent. In the film, Lupe explains, 'I've heard it said many times by friends of mine that it's ironic that you have to get injured to become a citizen. And basically, that's the only way it was recognized. If I wasn't hurt, we'd still be in the same situation that we were before'. Then, laughing, Lupe adds, 'To get blown up is a heck of a way to become a citizen, but if that's what you've gotta do, that's what you've gotta do'. What Lupe's comment underscores is how care creeps into the state/would-be citizen relationship only because the state has first exposed the would-be citizen to a potentially horrific wound.

Here, then, is the violence in the state/citizen relationship, made most visible by war and made tolerable for Lupe by time and by humour. We hear it in Lupe's comments, and I think we see it in Lupe's simultaneous attachment to and detachment from the US Marine Corps as he surveys the mural 'Operation Iraqi Freedom'. This is what, for me at least, the juxtaposing of Lupe and the mural suggests – the violences of war and of citizenship that cannot be whitewashed or joked away. These violences might be faint, even somewhat abstract, but for me they are palpable.

These violences become even more palpable when the mural 'Operation Iraqi Freedom' is used to link Lupe bombed body and the film about his passage into US citizenship to Jeremy Deller's bombed car. For as an object whose violence is horrific, Deller's blown-up car might be seen as the innocent bystander who, as a witness to the acts of warriors, silently protests against any narratives that try to recuperate these acts within a discourse of heroism. This does not mean that soldiers and those who resist them do not exhibit individual acts of bravery. It means that in their deployment of horror, they commit crimes against the living that do more than kill humans; they destroy the human condition. As Cavarero would put it, these crimes are ontological. Cavarero makes this point by returning to the figure of Medusa, who she describes as the 'primordial nucleus of violence' that 'looms forth, compelling all attention'. Writes Cavarero about Medusa, 'The mythic face of horror, she directs back at the warriors the most authentic image of their ontological crime, stripping them of any heroic pretext' (Cavarero, 2009:13).

In a story about the terrors and horrors in war and in citizenship in which Deller's car is an horrific Medusa-like figure that destabilizes the heroic narratives of both 'Operation Iraqi Freedom' and of the fast-tracked citizenship program, heroism does not just disappear. Instead, it is both relocated and tragically reformed, especially in Lupe's story. For Lupe's heroic act was not to serve the US in war and to suffer horrific injuries as a result. His heroic act was to somehow shake himself out of his horror – of no longer being an able-bodied US Marine and never having been a US citizen – so that it did not forever freeze him in this non-place with his life intact but his livelihood (like his body) in pieces. Lupe's heroic act, then, was to do what horrorism does not allow – to animate himself just long enough to struggle for

survival in the face of a horror that threatened to keep him paralyzed. Uttered from this place, Lupe's request, 'Can you make me a citizen?', is not (just) an act of patriotism. It is a desperate, terrified, plea for help from a broken soldier who by fleeing the violent death of his livelihood asks the state to repay him with its care.

However much it was glorified by the Bush administration to evidence the care of the US state toward its vulnerable patriotic would-be citizens, Lupe's story still has a tragic ending. For while Lupe's request may have delivered him out of both horror and terror, it delivered to the US military a much more willing pool of recruits – legal immigrants who feared for their futures in a US that was not only fighting a War on Terror but also a War on Illegal Immigration that often targeted them as well. On the promise of a more secure after(military)life, these anxious resident aliens opened themselves up to the other's harm – where 'the other' was as much the US state they wished to join as it was the enemies of the US state. Like Lupe, some of them did receive US citizenship as a result. Also like Lupe, many of them were left disabled as they passed from non-citizenship to citizenship. And some became US citizens only after they died (Weber, 2007b). When I think of them, I think of Lupe's potent request, 'Can you make me a citizen?' as, in Cavarero's words, '[t]he individual reaction of flight from violent death [that] is transformed into the collective production of death itself' (Cavarero, 2009:5).

The dead and dismembered bodies of fast-tracked and posthumous US citizens are among those I see when I look at Lupe's blown-up body and Deller's blown-up car.

Conclusion

The intelligence always comes after, it is good when it comes after, it is good only when it comes after.'
Gilles Deleuze, (1972:166-7)

Taking Adriana Cavarero's discussions of terrorism and horrorism in war as its point of departure, this article traced how three pieces of war art – three encountered signs – led me to consider the constitutive vulnerability in the state/citizen relationship, a relationship that is both sutured and ruptured by the violence of the War on Terror generally and the War in Iraq specifically. It argued that horrorism complicates disciplinary understandings of the relationship between war and citizenship by demonstrating how war makes visible the terror and horror in state/citizen relationships.

If Deleuze is correct that encountered signs – signs that are more felt than thought (Deleuze, 1972:166) can become 'a shock to thought' (Massumi, 2002:23) that yield new intelligence as a result of our encounters with them, then what remains to be considered is not only what this new intelligence might be but how it might propel us into (in)action. I want to suggest two possibilities – one optimistic and one sceptical.

Optimistically, encountering signs of contemporary violence in US state/citizen relationships might 'thrust us involuntarily into a mode of critical inquiry' (Massumi, 2002:23). One might be, as I was, propelled to think *because* I felt the ethico-political implications of these three pieces of art read together and read through Cavarero's concept of horrorism. Taking seriously Cavarero's challenge that we *see* contemporary violence differently and employing Cavarero's lens to see horrorism in this triangulation of war art, I was able to explore how the violences in war and citizenship not only overlap but rely upon one another, in ways that IR scholars generally overlook. This led me to think critically about the political mechanisms and contexts that link war and citizenship and the ethical implications of making military service a pathway to citizenship.

Seeing this collection in this way, I am not only positioned to challenge how war and citizenship are framed (Butler, 2010). By taking seriously ‘what art itself might tell us about the lived experience and memory of trauma’ (Bennett, 2005:2) – the trauma of Lupe Denogean surely but also the trauma of all those evoked by Jeremy Deller’s blown-up car and Cavarero’s innocent victims of horrorism – I am positioned to develop what Jill Bennett calls ‘empathic vision’, a way of looking at the traumas and horrors contained in contemporary violence and constitutive of state/citizen relationships with ‘an empathy grounded not in affinity (*feeling for* another insofar as we can imagine *being* that other) but...a *feeling for* another that entails an encounter with something irreducible and different, often inaccessible’ (Bennett, 2005:10). The inaccessible here is the horrorism that they experience and that I merely look upon.

Which leads me to ask some more sceptical questions. What made it possible for me not only to see horrorism in these artworks and – upon seeing this horrorism – be shocked into critical thought? I suspect the answer lies in my positioning as an academic, as a filmmaker who created one piece in this collection, and as a person who for several days engaged in an intimate conversation about war and citizenship with the person I was filming. Absent these very unique circumstances, might others fail to see horrorism here? Or, if they do see horrorism, might they have dramatically different responses to it?

The soldier who came across Deller and his team with their bombed out car parked in front of Don Gray’s mural and gave them the finger offers one illustration. But what about the many who don’t even take the time to see? What about the many others who, if they do see, disconnect themselves from what they see by not reacting at all, so that what they see does not pervade upon their idealized understandings of states, war, and citizenship?

In her discussion of Cavarero’s book, Rebecca Dolgoy offers an insightful analysis of who these disconnected viewers might be and how they might act when confronted with horrorism. Taking on Cavarero’s suggestion that it is the horrified innocent victims who are statuesquely frozen, Dolgoy writes:

...it is not those frozen in place by the instances of contemporary violence who are the real statues. Rather, it is those far away who, connected to the violence of the contemporary world by the stream of selected imagery and commentary, are the greatest casualties of the horrorist gaze: they are frozen in implacable immovability. In a sense, these disconnected, affluent statues are the most horrifying aspect of the violence in contemporary society, because they comprise those who push buttons and form the human extension of violent machinery without even looking into the eyes of those affected by it to those who consume the evening news. Those who live in relative peace and prosperity increasingly cannot see their reflections in the mirror of contemporary violence. If all members of contemporary society are frozen in place, then complacency, collaboration, and implication by lack of resistance are the ultimate expressions of this frozenness (Dolgoy, 2011:154).

The citizens who Dolgoy describes echo those Sheldon Wolin calls ‘imperial citizens’. The imperial citizen is one ‘who accepts the necessarily remote relationship between the concerns of the citizen and those of the power-holders, who welcomes being relieved of participatory obligations, and who is fervently patriotic’ (Wolin, 2006:565). Imperial citizens may rarely if ever have political (much less ethico-political or critically political) reflections about war and citizenship. Their confrontations with horror and horrorism may simply confirm their patriotic allegiances to their state and further bind their citizenship with state political and economic violence, if unknowingly. As such, they may settle for a sense of ‘the good’ that is good only for them and refuse to extend their empathy beyond themselves, their families, or their nations.

This, one might argue, makes the ethico-political potential of art and of theory all the more crucial. But it also reminds us that shocks to thought can lead as easily to retreats from critical thought and empathic feeling as they can to active confrontation and empathic vision. What matters here is not only that we encounter horrorism but *how* we encounter horrorism and what we *do* when we see it. If encountered signs of terror and horror are to lead us to critical thought, they must do so in a way that demands, in Dolgoy's words, that we '[look] straight into the eyes of the horror Caverero conveys' and come to 'the realization that the stone statue is really an ice sculpture that can only be melted by the active confrontation of Medusa head-on' (2011:154).

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¹ Thanks to Francois Debrix for suggesting I read Cavarero.

² http://www.oasisofmurals.com/Iraqi_Freedom/DonGray2/dongray2.html, downloaded December 1, 2010.

³ Qualifying resident aliens always had the right to apply for US citizenship, but because the process could take up to four years and because applicants had to maintain the same address during these four years, US military personnel routinely had their applications rejected because with each new posting came a change of address. The fast-tracked citizenship program reduced the processing time down to six months, which worked well with the schedules of military personnel.

⁴ Lupe's vulnerability could also be read through Judith Butler's notion of precarious life (2006), where what is unbearable is to realize one's own vulnerability through one's relationships to others. In Lupe's case, that vulnerability is expressed in his relationships to the US Marine Corps and the US state. Also see Weber on 'unsafe citizens' (2008).