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Anarchism, Anti-Militarism, and the Politics of Security

A thesis submitted to the University of Warwick for the degree of Ph.D.

Chris Rossdale

June 2013

Department of Politics and International Studies

Table of Contents

Acknowledgements	v
Declaration	vi
Abstract	vii
List of Abbreviations	viii
Introduction	1
<i>State Forms and Hegemonic Ontologies of Agency</i>	2
<i>Critical Security Studies</i>	4
<i>Anarchism and the Politics of Prefiguration</i>	5
<i>Researching Anti-Militarism</i>	8
<i>Chapter Outlines</i>	14
<i>Core Arguments</i>	18
Chapter One: Deconstructing Security	20
Part One: Critical Security Studies	20
<i>Mapping the Debates</i>	20
<i>The Agency Problematique</i>	26
Part Two: The Politics of Security	34
<i>Security and the State</i>	35
<i>The Subject of Security</i>	39
<i>Resisting Security</i>	45
Conclusion	49
Chapter Two: Anarchism	51
Part One: Introducing Anarchism	52
Part Two: The Politics of Prefigurative Direct Action	59
<i>Direct Action</i>	61
<i>Prefiguration</i>	64
Part Three: Poststructuralist Anarchism?	69

<i>Essentialising Anarchism</i>	74
<i>Anarchic Subjects</i>	80
<i>The Politics of Incompleteness: Beyond Theory and Practice</i>	83
<i>The Age of Security</i>	89
Conclusion: Towards an Ethnography	93
Chapter Three: Agents of Security?	97
Part One: Agents of Security	98
<i>The Place of Militarism</i>	107
Part Two: Disrupting Security/Insecurity	113
<i>Dances with Tanks</i>	113
<i>Hammertime</i>	118
<i>Militarised Subjects</i>	127
Conclusion: Spectacular Anarchism	130
Chapter Four: Prefigurations	134
Part One: Anti-Militarist Spaces and Scripts	137
<i>The Peace Camp</i>	137
<i>Rewriting Scripts of Contestation</i>	141
<i>Rewriting Scripts of Contestation #1: The Politics of</i>	
<i>Vulnerability</i>	142
<i>Rewriting Scripts of Contestation #2: The Academic Blockade</i>	146
<i>Rewriting Scripts of Contestation #3: The Politics of Humour</i>	147
<i>Workplace Conversion</i>	153
Part Two: Diversity of Tactics	157
Part Three: Consensus Decision Making	167
Part Four: Becoming Disobedient	173
Conclusion	179
Chapter Five: Issues in Anti-Militarism	181
Part One: Gender and the Politics of Incompleteness	183
Part Two: Legalism and Submission	192

Part Three: Disciplining the South	201
Part Four: Reperforming Security	203
Conclusion	212
Chapter Six: Prefiguring In/Security	213
Part One: Anarchism, Anti-Militarism, and the Politics of Security	213
Part Two: The Politics of Multiplicity	222
<i>Open Coalitions</i>	224
Part Three: Micro-fascism and Anarcho-becoming	232
<i>An Anarchy of the Subject</i>	235
Prefiguring In/Security	241
Conclusion	247
Bibliography	254
List of Interviews	272

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Declaration

No portion of the work in this thesis has been submitted in support of an application for another degree or qualification at this or any other university or other institute of learning. The thesis is entirely my own work.

Abstract

This thesis seeks to conceptualise an anarchist response to the politics of security. Understanding security as a discourse of conceptual and political mastery, and as therefore resistant to incorporation within a framework of emancipation, it argues that anarchism offers theoretical and practical resources through which creative insurrections in the political-metaphysical fabric of security might be made. The thesis is built around an ethnography of UK-based anti-militarist activism, interpreting a variety of practices, tactics and strategies through a conception of anarchism which emphasises prefigurative direct action and a ceaseless resistance to relations and discourses of domination and hegemony. Three central interventions in the logics of security are identified. The first involves the subversion of the hegemonic ontology of agency which can be identified across both traditional and critical understandings of security; those anti-militarists under examination do not appeal to ‘the state’ to redress their grievances and insecurities, preferring instead to ‘directly’ engage in practices of security. The second intervention emphasises those forms of anti-militarism which can be seen to subvert the security/insecurity binaries themselves, and to open spaces and possibilities beyond the totalising frameworks which constitute our contemporary politics of security. The third examines those moments and movements where, as they subvert these binaries, anti-militarists prefigure forms of subjectivity which displace those forms of rationality and relationality which underpin the politics of security (and militarism). Together these three interventions destabilise the politics of security in ways which offer powerful opportunities for rethinking and resisting contemporary forms of political domination and violence. This also functions as an argument about the politics of resistance, which is conceptualised here not as a programmatic, strategic or confrontational posture, but a tactical, prefigurative and anarchic exploration of becoming otherwise.

List of Abbreviations

AMN	Anti-Militarist Network
CAAT	Campaign Against the Arms Trade
CND	Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament
CIRCA	Clandestine Insurgent Rebel Clown Army
CSS	Critical Security Studies
DSEi	Defence & Security Equipment International
ELAAF	East London Against Arms Fairs
FNSG	Feminism and Nonviolence Study Group
MNS	Movement for a New Society
STAF	Stop the Arms Fair
TAZ	Temporary Autonomous Zone
PAZ	Permanent Autonomous Zone
SPAZ	Semi-Permanent Autonomous Zone
UKTI DSO	UK Trade and Investment's Defence & Security Organisation
WRI	War Resisters International

Introduction

There are few political concepts so fiercely celebrated, sought-after, imposed, denied and studied as that of security. It has, in awkward and contested form, become the horizon of possibility for the contemporary political imagination, an apparently self-evident aspiration around which all reasonable discourse must form, and on which all signifiers of progressive aspiration must hang. It has also become the mark of violence and dispossession, a tragic contradiction wherein the desire to protect and preserve existence must discipline and destroy life, erect and enforce borders, enshrine the tools and means of security as deities of the modern age and make domination the self-evident condition of liberation.

There are few political philosophies so marginalised, derided, feared and misunderstood as that of anarchism. Indeed, as an archetype of insecurity, it has regularly been mobilised as an image which makes necessary the apparatus and disciplinary technologies of security and the state. Nonetheless anarchism is also a powerful series of discourses which have the capacity to unsettle practices of domination and discipline, to effect breaks in the logic of hegemony and to prefigure alternatives in the cracks and fissures which emerge. It is a political theory and political practice (and a blurring of the lines between the two) through which relations of hierarchy, authority and submission are revealed and rejected, and from which a mobile and creative conception of resistance might proceed.

This thesis brings security and anarchism together. The intention is not to produce a discrete or coherent anarchist theory of security so much as to explore what an anarchist response, to and insurrection against, the politics of security might look like. To this end the thesis conducts an ethnography of UK-based anti-militarist activism, interpreting a diverse range of practices through a lens which asks how the politics of security and anarchism might animate and inform one another. As it explores this ethnography at these intersections, the thesis seeks to develop a conception of resistance which might contend with the politics of security (and militarism) without resting upon hegemonic or totalising political logics, and which might remain mobile and creative whilst retaining the capacity to make critical interventions.

State Forms and Hegemonic Ontologies of Agency

A key concern that guides this thesis is one which has become familiar in contemporary critical international theory, that is, that purported discourses, practices and projects of emancipation have so readily coalesced into forms of domination, produced tyrannies which sport and distort the mask and mantle of liberation. The force of calls to urgency or to pragmatism readily deflects attention from the subtleties by which logics of power and domination operate, such that the most ardently revolutionary or cautiously poised strategies for change so often signify a perpetuation of the same. The thesis will point towards some particular logics which operate within the context of resistance, particularly those of strategy and confrontation, as possible terms by which relations of domination are (re)produced even as they are resisted. First, it is important to note the position of the state form within this critical tradition.

The early anarchist critiques of the state were articulated precisely in order to highlight the concern that Marxist theories of social change, in their propagation of a revolutionary discourse which sought (and seeks) to capture and wield state power, did little to disrupt key forms of domination. As Mikhail Bakunin argued, ‘we [cannot] comprehend talk of freedom of the proletariat or true deliverance of the masses within the State and by the State. State signifies domination, and all domination implies subjection of the masses, and as a result, their exploitation to the advantage of some governing minority’ (2005b: 191). The thesis retains this scepticism of the state as a tool for or site of ‘emancipation’. Indeed, and in particular with reference to the politics of security, the state form is a deeply problematic social relation, no less pernicious and significantly more insidious than in anarchism’s nineteenth century prime. The recent history of (Western) states has seen the intensification of border regimes, the expansion of nationalist discourses, the normalisation of militarism and international aggression, the further development of disciplinary mechanisms and repression of dissent, and the familiar celebration and facilitation of capital in the service of privileged interests. The state form is, more than ever, intertwined with logics of nationalism, capitalism, patriarchy, security – forms of social relations which entrench domination and normalise the imposition of hierarchical authority, crafting a narrative of order which naturalises and sets itself against the chaos produced in the name of social progress and necessity (Spike Peterson 1992b; Ashley 1988; Newman 2007: 17-34; Day 2005; Brown 1992).

Such observations are not intended to retreat to the lyricism of the ‘cold monster’ which has characterised so much anarchist discourse, expressed most emphatically by Friedrich Nietzsche’s Zarathustra: ‘A state, is called the coldest of all cold monsters. Coldly lieth it also; and this lie creepeth from its mouth: “I, the state, am the people”’ (2006: 58). Whilst not to dismiss such formulations, they can tend to overstate the functional unity and ontological status of the state (Foucault 2007b: 109). Through the work of Michel Foucault and the German anarchist Gustav Landauer, amongst others, the thesis conceptualises the state as a form of social relation which makes possible particular practices of domination, discipline and authority, and argues that fetishizing the state can limit the possibilities for resistance, ignoring (and so perpetuating) the subtleties by which statist metaphysics are (re)produced.

A core intervention this thesis makes here is to mobilise the concept of a ‘hegemonic ontology of agency’. By this, I refer to the assumption that the ‘doing’ of politics (and, significantly, security) must eventually, ideally, derive from a singular and sovereign locus of legitimacy, such as the state. Political possibility is thereby framed within totalising and bounded imaginaries. Many critical approaches remain faithful to this hegemonic ontology of agency, engaging in contestation over the terms of particular agents whilst retaining the core logic; in such forms, ‘the state’ may be replaced (by a worker’s state, a world state), but the hegemonic ontology of agency is retained. The concept of a hegemonic ontology of agency is drawn from Richard Day’s genealogical reading of the logic of hegemony in radical political thought. He argues that the Gramscian strategy of mobilising *counter*-hegemonies does little to shift the centrality of hegemonic logics from political contestation, remaining faithful to the ‘*hegemony of hegemony*,’ by which he means the ‘assumption that effective social change can only be achieved simultaneously and *en masse*, across an entire national or supranational space’ (2005: 8, emphasis in original).

The understanding of agency used here does not assume agency to be a property held by an ‘agent’; rather, ‘agency’ is understood discursively, as a mobilisation of particular narratives which condition and delimit political possibility. As such, a hegemonic ontology of agency makes possible particular (statist) inclusions, exclusions and interpretations. Most significantly, the totalising aspirations of hegemonic discourses, whether statist, revolutionary, or otherwise, are such that the perpetual incompleteness of the project works to legitimate the domination, incorporation, and

closure of that which differs. Social practices and subjects must either be disciplined, folded within the hegemonic project, or be excluded, excised, written as precisely that which makes the totalising gestures of hegemony necessary. Political interventions which break with established terms of legitimacy quickly become images of extremism and insecurity; the border (between friend and enemy, revolutionary and counter-revolutionary) becomes a line which functions to preserve authority within. Critical approaches which preserve a hegemonic ontology of agency thereby hold within themselves precisely that rationality which serves to totalise, to dominate in the name of liberation. Such concerns are substantiated through a reading of Critical Security Studies (CSS).

Critical Security Studies

This thesis takes the sub-discipline of CSS as its point of entry. CSS is an ambiguous referent, although it is understood here to encapsulate those approaches which have developed in response to the traditional, rationalist theories which have tended to view (and produce) security in strictly statist, militarist, and exclusionary terms. This broad view of CSS, which draws on Keith Krause and Michael C. Williams' formulation from their 1997 volume *Critical Security Studies: Concepts and Cases*, extends across a range of epistemological and ontological perspectives and is, to use Richard Wyn Jones' pejorative but not incorrect formulation, defined 'by what it is not' (1999: ix). Though messy and ill-defined, work undertaken within the broad tradition of CSS has been of significant importance in revealing the counter-productive, disciplinary, Eurocentric, statist, gendered politics (to list but a few) involved in contemporary practices of security.¹ Furthermore this work has been highly productive in seeking to conceptualise ways and means through which more positive mobilisations of security (as collective, emancipatory) might proceed (Booth 1991; McDonald 2012; Nunes 2012; Fierke 2007: 186-205).

Without wishing to efface the important insights generated, this thesis suggests that there has been a significant shortcoming with respect to how agency is theorised by CSS scholars. As the first chapter sets out in some detail, much of the work undertaken

¹ For surveys of this literature see Vaughan-Williams and Peoples (2010), Booth (2005a), McDonald and Browning (forthcoming).

under the banner of CSS has adhered to a hegemonic ontology of agency, framing political possibility in ways which retain certain totalising and authoritarian presumptions, and operating to limit the interpretation of alternatives. The thesis seeks to disrupt this closure and to examine practices of anti-militarist activism which might be seen to operate *anti*-hegemonically, against hegemonic ontologies of agency.²

The thesis also argues, against much of the work undertaken in CSS, that the concept of security is an unlikely (and even dangerous) candidate for rehabilitation; its embeddedness within and reliance upon particular logics of power render it a discourse of conceptual and political mastery which underpins and makes possible violent and totalising political practices (Dillon 1996; Shepherd 2008: 64-77; Neocleous 2008). It is not, however, a logic that can be 'escaped' in any unproblematic way, so central is it to the contemporary political imagination. As such, the thesis seeks to conceptualise a resistance which exposes and exploits at the margins, which provokes and makes productive ruptures in the binary logics of security/insecurity. This is not to arrive at a stable alternative or a unitary formula for resistance; rather, it is to suggest that the field of possibility is not so neatly contained as the apparent terms of security and hegemony would permit. As such, the thesis seeks to retain an anarchic quality which effects or notes a series of openings without seeking to codify, close down, or (over-) rationalise them.

Anarchism and the Politics of Prefiguration

This thesis mobilises anarchism against hegemonic ontologies of agency. Whereas much of CSS works to incorporate unconventional actors or forms of intervention within a hegemonic (or counter-hegemonic) ontological framework, an anarchist perspective of the kind utilised here celebrates the dissonance and creative ruptures which might be produced when proceeding *anti*-hegemonically. This is not in the service of an alternative ontology of agency, but is intended rather as an intervention against embedded and totalising political narratives and standards, which are identified as signs and signifiers of authority and domination. The ethnographic explorations therefore

² I am explicitly using the formulation *anti*-hegemonic, rather than *non*-hegemonic, to signify that such interventions cannot in any straightforward way be seen to be free from or unaffected by the logics and seductions of hegemony. What is signified is not a successful project (which, as will become clear, is arguably a misnomer) but an imperative or commitment to resisting hegemonic social relations and projects.

prioritise those sites and practices which might be seen to disrupt or subvert the logic of hegemony.

These intentions and perspectives derive from the particular approach to anarchism taken in the thesis, which I outline in some detail in Chapter Two. This approach interprets anarchism not as a theoretical or practical orthodoxy, but as an anti-authoritarian series of discourses which promote disobedient and creative subjectivities, prefigurative explorations, perpetual critique, and an anti-representationalist ethos which resists hegemonic/statist ontologies of agency and which prioritises direct action. Whilst the primary argument running through the thesis is one which concerns security, this also functions as an argument about the politics of resistance; programmatic or totalising conceptions are critiqued, and in their place subversive, multiplicitous and disobedient practices are celebrated. The Enlightenment humanism often (perhaps mistakenly) associated with anarchism is rejected in favour of anarchic modes of subjectivity, an ‘anarchy of the subject’, which might displace totalising political imaginaries (Call 2002: 22).

The concept of prefigurative direct action plays a particularly important role in this thesis. By direct action is meant practices of intervention which proceed with the assumption that, in the words of Carol Ehrlich, ‘people must transform the conditions of their lives themselves – it cannot be done for them. Not by the party, not by the union, not by “organisers,” not by anyone else’ (1996: 180). The thesis will argue that this conception of direct action, which exemplifies the anarchist suspicion of representation and hegemonic ontologies of agency, demonstrates a powerful approach (and resistance) to the politics of security. Central to such a resistance is the sister concept of prefiguration, which signifies the conviction that resistance must reflect (or prefigure) the ends desired in the means employed to achieve them. To do otherwise is to abandon the tasks of being and becoming otherwise until some figurative (and often fictitious) later date, and so to perpetuate those social relations upon which wider structures of domination operate (Landauer 2010: 310-311). As the thesis will demonstrate, the attempts by anti-militarists to prefigure non-militarised social relations operate on precisely such terms.

The thesis will also argue that the concept of prefiguration operates (or might operate) at a more substantive level. The efforts to manifest a confluence between ends and means does not entail a rationalist calculation of means to embody predefined ends,

but a perpetual exploration in which speculative interventions in the direct of ‘ends’ are broken down and explored in the process of action, their authorities and ambiguities revealed. The commitment to prefiguration demands a ceaseless interrogation of the politics of resistance on the part of those engaged in such practices, an understanding that resistance is always produced within particular constellations of power, and that efforts to undermine relations of domination and totalisation must take account of the ways in which such relations are frequently (re)produced in the practice of resistance. In this sense it invokes what I call a politics of incompleteness, that is, a deferral of the notion of arrival, finality, or utopia. Whilst this is, clearly, a caution and a warning, it is also an urgent conception of prefiguration, a refusal to leave the project of becoming otherwise to some later point, a call to *begin*, an affirmation of creativity, and a refutation of the notion that ‘inaction’ is any more embedded within and compromised by power than ‘action’. It also operates, precisely, as a theoretical intervention, a form of criticality which continually investigates and reveals sites and relations of authority, subtleties of militarism, surprising reperformances of or dependencies upon the politics of security. It is a blurring of the line between theory and practice, a manifestation of practice-as-theory and, indeed, theory-as-practice.

Such a conception of prefiguration is also a tactical, rather than strategic, one; the exploration(s) of the nature of domination and authority within the context of resistance do not operate to produce general instructions, programmatic expectations, or ideal(ised) subjectivities, and where such metanarratives are produced they are also frequently criticised. Rather, prefiguration operates on a tactical level, marking context-specific possibilities and problems. This does not mean that large-scale politics are precluded; it does mean that prefiguration (at its best) intervenes against the imposition of such large-scale politics to direct the micro-level, to determine the subject and to militarise struggle.

The refusal to determine the subject of resistance raises one last conceptual intervention within the thesis, that is, the focus on the politics of subjectivity within the context of anti-militarism, and the evocation of an ‘anarchy of the subject’ against militarised forms of subjectivity. More or less explicitly, anti-militarists demonstrate an understanding that militarism, beyond its institutional and spatial forms, operates as a logic of the (abstracted, individualised, nationalised, hierarchised) subject. Prefigurative anti-militarist politics are in one sense mobilised precisely as a means by which to

displace militarised subjectivities and to explore and enact counter-subjectivities. Against such militarised subjectivities and with a sceptical position with respect to attempts to enshrine alternative hegemonies, the thesis looks towards an anarchy of the subject. This does not signify an ‘anything goes’ sensibility, demanding instead the constant interrogation, refusal and recreation of the self, attention to the ways in which our politics of being depends upon and reproduces the politics of security and militarism, and an anti-hegemonic ethos which prizes difference, otherness, and a critical attitude towards totalising discourses of strategy and fetishizing discourses of confrontation.

The two conceptual frameworks of security and anarchism will be further introduced and explored over the course of the first and second chapters, and throughout the thesis. Before turning to a more thorough outline of the arguments the thesis will make and the structure through which they will be made, it is apposite to offer some introductory remarks and reflections on the ethnographic content of the thesis.

Researching Anti-Militarism

In conducting an ethnographic study, the thesis does not seek to capture the truth or totality of those anti-militarist subjects with which it engages, or to formulate an assessment of capabilities or trajectories. Instead it sets out to interpret a heterogeneous set of practices through the intersecting lenses of anarchism and security, allowing these practices to exemplify, undermine, challenge or complicate these points of departure. There is an explicit attempt to blur the lines of theoretical and empirical content, to allow each to structure and condition the other. What results is a series of creative disruptions which are never purely empirical or purely theoretical, which remain sensitive to the ways in which social practices are always already deeply theoretical interventions, and to the embedded and contextualised nature of theory (Zalewski 1996).

The ethnographic style used here seeks to move beyond those approaches which treat ethnography as an empiricist data-collection method, a ‘thick’ and engaging writing style, or a ‘close to the ground’ epistemology which purports to move beyond discursive frameworks (Vrasti 2008). It mobilises a series of avowedly and explicitly

political interpretations which read the various anti-militarist practices and contexts with which it engages as discourses open to a multiplicity of potential narratives. In this sense, the theoretical explorations of Chapters One and Two (that is, security and anarchism) serve to signify and contextualise that which would otherwise remain implicit, setting the terms for an interpretive perspective which seeks to draw out those elements of anti-militarist practice which resonate with or complicate attempts to articulate anti-hegemonic responses to the politics of security.

Two particular politico-methodological commitments underpin this approach. The first is a commitment to draw out something akin to what Foucault has referred to as ‘subjugated knowledges’, that is, a series of understandings and perspectives which are marginalised, excluded, or rendered nonsensical within conventional or established discourses (1980: 81-83). Suggesting that important interventions into the politics of security are taking place beyond (and, indeed, against) the state form, and that they are taking place against the logic and interpretive hegemony of hegemony, is precisely to challenge the sedimented ontologies which persist even in critical approaches to the study of security. This is, of course, an approach with some precedent in critical International Relations (IR); the work of Cynthia Enloe in particular exemplifies the instinct to look in unlikely places (1996).³ Focussing on actors and practices which do not fit easily into conventional scripts about power and relevance is a productive means by which to unsettle the ‘layer of complicity’ which runs through conventional research subjects and epistemologies (Madison 2005: 1-16); indeed, it is these concerns which move Peter McLaren and Joe Kincheloe to class ‘critical’ ethnography as the appropriate method (as the ‘doing’) of critical theory (2005).

The second commitment draws from a critique of the Gramscian conception of the organic intellectual, the aligned scholar who might provide analysis and guidance to a political movement (Wyn Jones 1999: 153-163). Jeff Juris argues that ‘[w]hen so many activists practice their own theorizing, self-publishing, and electronic distribution, the traditional functions of Gramsci’s organic intellectual – providing strategic analysis and political direction – are undermined’ (2008: 22). Alongside this practical observation that the position of the organic intellectual is no longer necessary, one might suggest that there are powerful theoretical reasons for moving beyond the position of the

³ Although one might argue that Enloe’s empiricist approach limits her capacity to fully explore the disruptive potential of those with whom she engages (Vrasti 2008: 288-290).

organic intellectual; the rejection of *an* enlightened intellectual in favour of the multiplicity of activist theory and strategy which can be found on the internet, in ‘zines, in squats and social centres and so forth represents a broader move towards contingency, autonomy and difference as opposed to totalising conceptions of theory and strategy amongst activists. The position of the scholar should not be one of guiding, directing, or setting out those knowledges around which movements should cohere.

Instead, Juris suggests that ‘by providing critically engaged and theoretically informed analyses generated through collective practice...ethnography can provide tools for activist (self-) reflection and decision making while remaining pertinent for broader academic audiences’ (ibid.). On similar grounds, attempting to move beyond the conventions of ‘vanguardist revolutionary intellectual practice’, David Graeber argues that

[e]thnography is about teasing out the hidden symbolic, moral, or pragmatic logics that underlie certain types of social action; how people’s habits and actions make sense in ways that they are not themselves completely aware of. One obvious role for a radical intellectual is precisely that: looking first at those who are creating viable alternatives on the ground, and then trying to figure out what the larger implications of what they are (already) doing might be (2007: 305-306).

Graeber and Juris have both written in ways which attempt to do just this (Graeber 2009; Juris 2008). This thesis takes influence and inspiration from their approach. However, there is a sense (particularly with the work of Graeber) that it cedes too quickly to particular ontological and epistemological conventions in ways which risk a depoliticisation. Foucault’s approach is powerful here:

...the imperative discourse that consists in saying “love this, hate this, this is good, that is bad, be for this, beware of that,” seems to me, at present at any rate, to be no more than an aesthetic discourse that can only be based on choices of an aesthetic order. An so the imperative discourse that consists in saying “strike against this and do so in this way,” seems to me to be very flimsy when delivered from a teaching institution or even just on a piece of paper...[but] since there has to be an imperative, I would like the one

underpinning the theoretical analysis we are attempting to be quite simply a conditional imperative of the kind: If you want to struggle, here are some key points, here are some lines of force, here are some constrictions and blockages (2007b: 3).

An ethnography of the type mobilised in this thesis, focussed on an explicitly politicised interpretation, might work to contextualise its observations and interpretations not only within a normative political project, but precisely within the field of power relations within which it is constituted and, crucially, which it is always working to (un)make. Such an ethnography thereby focuses on how particular practices (and particular interpretive perspectives) intersect with, undermine, or stop short when confronted with the wider discursive field.

The purpose of the ethnography in this thesis is to highlight those anti-militarist practices which disrupt and/or reconfigure the politics of security, and to explore their ambiguities. From the perspective of those involved in anti-militarist practice, such a project might reveal some ways in which more or less conscious interventions are always already taking place beyond the immediate strategic or tactical context. From the perspective of those involved in the study of security, the project exposes a variety of ways in which security is always already being reimagined and resisted away from the extant theories of CSS, and suggests that its hegemonic ontology of agency renders it incapable of fully grasping the disruptive potential of such practices.

The ethnography focuses on specifically anti-militarist practice for three interrelated reasons. The first is that the relationship between militarism and security is a close one. Whilst security is perhaps not *necessarily* a militarist concept, the desire for security has often been expressed (and enforced) in militarist terms, and the social logic of militarism is founded upon and legitimated through discourses of security.⁴ Conversely anarchism has long defined itself by its opposition to militarism (an opposition by which it contrasted itself with Marxist opposition to specifically capitalist militarism). Emma Goldman referred to the military spirit as ‘the most merciless, heartless and brutal in existence’ (1996: 52) and Bakunin argued that ‘where military force prevails, there freedom has to take its leave’ (cited in McKay 2007: 411). In

⁴ As the thesis will make clear, both militarism and security are contested concepts. A number of conceptual approaches to militarism will be outlined, all of which reveal differing modes of resistance.

moving to read anarchism and security alongside one another, anti-militarist practice thus appears particularly pertinent. More practically, as will become apparent, anti-militarist practice in the UK offers a diverse and interesting series of sites and examples which animate, exemplify and undermine the more explicitly theoretical reflections. One shortcoming might be raised here, insofar as these anti-militarist practices are fewer in number than they have historically been, and are limited with respect to energy when compared with, for example, the environmental movement or the anti-austerity movement. However, this does not affect the conduct of the ethnography; the intention is to look at gestures, moments, experiments, micro-political prefigurations, rather than to encapsulate or signify some apparent revolutionary movement or total insurrection. The thesis proceeds upon the assumption that more might be gained by focussing in detail at particular political performances than by attempting to make generalisations and sweeping claims. Anti-militarist practices in the UK provide an ideal site for such a study.

This raises the question of who or what precisely makes up the anti-militarist 'movement'. This is a difficult question, rendered more so in light of the arguments mobilised in the thesis that militarism can be seen to operate at the level of the subject, and as such, that anti-militarist resistance can be seen to occur everywhere. Nonetheless one can roughly signify an intentional community (or series of communities) which seek to challenge, resist or subvert the politics of militarism. This ranges from NGO-level organisations such as 'War on Want' and 'Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament' (CND) to formal social movements such as 'Stop the War', down to more informal direct-action oriented groups. The particular focus in this thesis is on those practices which can be seen to effect a break with the logic of hegemony, in more and less spectacular senses; as such, the gaze will rest predominantly on the more informal direct-action oriented sections, although with some forays beyond.

When specifying the particular subjects of study, care has been taken to leave the question open, permitting spaces for surprise, overlap and spontaneity. While some particular groups continually return to the frame over the course of the ethnography, that which is interesting often takes place beyond the constitution of particular bounded entities, in sites of more temporary affinities, convergences and experiments. Nonetheless there are a series of groups or locations which are particularly important:

- ‘Smash EDO’: A Brighton-based group, active since 2004, who have carried out a diverse, direct action-focussed campaign against the EDO MBM factory in their hometown. Their tactics include weekly noise demonstrations, blockades, rooftop occupations and mass demonstrations.
- ‘Plowshares’ (or Ploughshares): A (broadly) Christian anti-militarist movement which (amongst a range of things) has become famous for actions in which small groups of activists physically dismantle weapons or military equipment, often with hammers and/or fake or real blood.
- The ‘Space Hijackers’: A London-based situationist-inspired group of ‘anarchitects’ who are well known for their (hilarious) subversive interventions. Whilst they have focussed predominately on the privatisation of public space, they have also engaged in a number of high-profile anti-militarist actions, several of which will be discussed.
- ‘Campaign Against the Arms Trade’ (CAAT): Alongside more traditional campaigning activities (i.e., Parliamentary lobbying and awareness raising), CAAT has a long history of facilitating direct action.
- The ‘Anti-Militarist Network’ (AMN): A network of direct action-oriented campaigns, including Smash EDO and ‘Trident Plowshares’,⁵ alongside ‘Target Brimar’, ‘Disarm DSEi’ and ‘Shut Down Heckler & Koch’ (three other groups who will be noted at various junctures).
- ‘Stop the Arms Fair’ (STAF) Coalition: A coalition which includes direct action groups, individuals, and some NGOs, the STAF Coalition was set up in 2011 to co-ordinate resistance to DSEi, the large arms fair which takes place biannually in London. Many of the actions described in the ethnography occur in resistance to DSEi.

As noted, there is a prioritisation of practices and groups which can be seen to effect a (not unproblematic, but important) break with the logic of hegemony. As such, much is left out, both with respect to which groups are looked at, and with respect to which practices from those groups are examined. This is emphatically not to suggest that those interventions which seek to petition the state, or to collect around the banner of international law, or which seek other pathways which adhere to the logic of hegemony are not worthy of attention or even support. However, as Chapters One and Two set

⁵ *Trident* Plowshares is an offshoot campaign of the Plowshares movement which campaigns specifically against the UK Trident nuclear weapons system.

out, such approaches limit political possibilities in particular ways; the intention here is to look beyond these limitations, to suggest that important refusals, openings, counter-conducts and disruptions might be found when reading against the logic of hegemony and security. This does not mean that the hegemonic performances of potentially or purportedly anti-hegemonic groups and practices will be overlooked, the tensions therein ignored (such is the subject of Chapter Five). It does mean, however, that these tensions will not be the starting point – a structural context which seeks to avoid the closures of cynicism without dismissing the important critical resources a sceptical attitude brings.

In practical terms, the ethnography has been conducted primarily through participant observation. Over the course of three years (and more informally before this) I have attended demonstrations, blockades, workshops, peace camps, pickets, die-ins, and so forth. Much of the discussion throughout the ethnography draws on first-hand experience, both with respect to the more ‘spectacular’ moments and actions, and to the quieter, less public but no less important spaces of training sessions, meetings, and other less visible sites. These first-hand accounts are supplemented with other examples from UK-based anti-militarist activism, alongside a series of interviews conducted with activists over the course of the study which serve to clarify and expand on some of the points discussed.

Chapter Outlines

The thesis contains six substantive chapters. As noted, the first two concern security and anarchism respectively. The first seeks to make two particular arguments which establish the approach to security and to CSS which will guide the thesis. It begins with a short outline of some key perspectives in CSS, seeking to demonstrate the hegemonic ontology of agency which can be seen to run throughout the sub-discipline. It is argued, in spite of those critiques mobilised against the position of the state as the referent object of security, that there remains a commitment to statist agency across the critical field. Even when this approach to agency is challenged, it is from a perspective which presumes (and so performs) the logic of hegemony. The second move of the chapter is to argue that the concept of security is too tightly interwoven with relations of domination to serve as a referent for progressive political praxis, and that more might

be gained by seeking to resist the terms of security/insecurity (which, I argue, function as a discourse of conceptual and political mastery).

The second chapter serves as a critical introduction to anarchism, as a means by which to establish the interpretive context through which the ethnographic chapters will proceed. The first half sets out an approach which takes anarchism as a heterogeneous theory (or set of theories) which remains deeply sceptical of political interventions or constellations founded upon representation or hegemony. Particular attention is paid to the politics of prefigurative direct action. The second half of the chapter looks in some depth at the moves taken over the past twenty years to bring anarchism into conversation with poststructural political theory, arguing that the tensions which have emerged from these conversations have reinvigorated debates about the place of authority within the anarchist tradition. I argue that the anarchist focus on the cultivation of disobedient, creative and subversive subjectivities, the place of perpetual critique, the refusal of theory/practice binaries, and the fetishizing nature of confrontation can be usefully animated at the intersections between poststructural and anarchist approaches. The chapter finishes by considering the ways in which the first two chapters set the terms for the ethnographic explorations to come.

The next three chapters move to consider the anti-militarist practices which are the focus of the ethnography. The first of the three, Chapter Three, explores a series of actions and interventions as disruptions to the logics of hegemony and security/insecurity. The first part looks at several examples which demonstrate ways in which activists have refused expectations and conventions of hegemony and representation, and performed security beyond (and against) the state. It then moves to consider some ways in which activists have specifically conceptualised militarism (as a network with specifically local dimensions) so as to render it more vulnerable to such anti-hegemonic interventions. The second part of the chapter looks at how this 'doing' of security is not a simple reperformance of the terms of security as they have been set out in Chapter One; rather, we can see disruptions to the terms of security/insecurity (and, indeed, order/chaos, sovereignty/anarchy), such that the terms might be denied their totalising force, if only temporarily. Particular emphasis is placed here on how militarism is conceptualised beyond institutional understandings, as a mode of subjectivity. The chapter ends by considering some ways in which the disruptions to security/insecurity outlined are unstable performances, subject to incorporation within

spectacular narratives which underpin and legitimate hegemonic political projects. One possible response to this incorporation is to consider the less spectacular performances which take place in the margins of such disruptions, setting the terms for Chapter Four.

The fourth chapter looks at ways in which, as anti-militarists disrupt and resist the logics of militarism and security, they can be seen to be engaging in prefigurative explorations. As noted, this is meant not in the sense of alternative programmes or revolutionary models, but as fragmentary gestures of possibility, counter-practices and counter-subjectivities which provoke reimaginings of the political. Four particular themes are taken up; the first concerns attempts made by activists to reframe spaces and scripts of contestation, from the gates of military bases to quieter and more private sites, in ways which are not predicated on authority, hierarchy, confrontation, militarism and so on. The second theme concerns attempts made by activists to affirm a 'diversity of tactics', the refusal to impose totalising standards of resistance in the negotiation of anti-militarist strategy. The third part focuses on the use of consensus decision making amongst activists, and the attempts to form social relations not predicated on exclusion or liberal individualism. The fourth and final section looks at the efforts made to cultivate disobedient subjects, against the obedience and submission necessitated by militarist and security-based modes of subjectivity. As a whole, the chapter seeks to bring together a series of (awkward, insufficient) attempts at becoming otherwise which demonstrate an understanding that attempting to resist militarism is pointless unless simultaneous efforts are made to displace the social logics which constitute and make possible militarism. These prefigurative gestures are not invoked as though they are somehow outside those politics they oppose; on the contrary, much is made of the fractious and frictionous nature of these attempts, their ambiguous and incomplete nature. Nonetheless it is argued that they represent important examples of *beginning*, of refusing to leave the task of becoming otherwise until some undefined later date.

The fifth chapter mobilises a series of critiques against the (perhaps overly-) optimistic assessments and treatments of the third and fourth. The chapter operates on the terms of the prefigurative principle which notes that attempts to become otherwise work only insofar as these experiments continually turn upon themselves to reveal and challenge latent or emergent authorities, hierarchies and forms of exclusion. The four broad critiques mobilised also serve to further reveal the complexities and diversities of the anti-militarist practices under study. The discussion turns first to consider the

gender politics of anti-militarism, suggesting that attention to the gendered nature of militarism is limited amongst activists, and that this limitation highlights the importance of a politics of incompleteness. The second section focuses on the legalism which might be identified amongst anti-militarists, specifically with respect to the tactic of voluntary submission, wherein activists make their own arrest a constitutive part of direct action. The ways in which such tactics can reinforce hegemonic imaginaries, and some possible responses, are considered. The third part of the chapter considers some ways in which anti-militarist discourses can rely upon problematic global North-South imaginaries when focussing unduly on arms transfers to repressive or ‘undeveloped’ states as opposed to transfers amongst ‘Northern’ states. Finally I consider some ways in which anti-militarist practice can reperform certain core practices and narratives of security/insecurity even as they engage in the task of resistance.

Whilst the particular structure of these three ethnographic chapters has some heuristic merit, it demands certain caveats. Most significantly, the order of these three chapters should not be taken to imply a linear temporality whereby we have the disruption (Chapter Three), then the prefigurative exploration (Chapter Four), and then the critique (Chapter Five); such a conception remains faithful to particular rationalities which should be problematised (as argued in Chapter Two). Rather, the three chapters emphasise particular tones of resistance which can more regularly be seen as coterminous within a context. Many of the examples taken to illustrate points in one chapter might operate in another; what emerges is not a *process* of resistance, but an ethos and culture of intervention and contestation which gestures towards a multiplicity of possibilities. The point is not to emphasise or enshrine particular forms or moments, but to demonstrate a means of challenging and rethinking the politics of security in ways which do not rely upon or (necessarily) reperform totalising political imaginaries.

The sixth chapter seeks to reflect on the politics of this three-stepped argument, considering the possibilities for a resistance which can mobilise assertions and particular politics without relying upon and reproducing foundational, universalising or hegemonic ontologies. It mobilises Judith Butler’s concept of the open coalition and Lewis Call’s notion of anarcho-becoming to set the terms for an understanding of resistance which prioritises multiplicity, affinity, and an anarchy of the subject. The chapter ends by suggesting that such an approach sets the terms for a powerful response to the politics of security/insecurity, and an unstable occupation of the

margins from which possibilities for becoming otherwise might be exposed and explored.

Core Arguments

This thesis makes three substantive arguments, two of which specifically concern the politics of security, the third relating more to questions of resistance. The first is to situate anarchism as a powerful critique of and insurrection against the politics of security. Through its persistent subversion of representational and foundational political categories, and through its cultivation of social relations and subjects against and beyond statist and hegemonic ontologies of agency, anarchism effects ruptures within predominant political orders. Its subversions of the security/insecurity and order/chaos binaries (amongst others) displace the totalising and disciplinary politics associated with these logics while creating spaces through which to explore ways of being and becoming otherwise. Care is taken to avoid making easy distinctions between anarchism as theory and anarchism as practice, the preference being to maintain that grey area which allows anarchism to function as a discourse of perpetual and radical prefiguration against domination. On such terms, anarchism is not put forwards as a theory which might operate alongside other theories within CSS; it is a destabilisation of the terms on which such theories operate, a necessarily unstable intervention which reveals and refuses the ontologies upon which much of the sub-discipline relies.

The second core argument is that, by interpreting a series of already existing practices (that is, anti-militarist direct action) through the lenses of anarchism and security, we can see that ways of (re)thinking and resisting the politics of security are always already taking place. The hegemonic ontology of agency which runs through much of CSS blinds it to the depth, breadth and disruptive and creative potential of those anti-militarist practices with which this thesis engages. The wide variety of disruptive and creative gestures on display demonstrates a rich and complex response to the politics of security which resists the confines of the security/insecurity binary, the logic of hegemony and a series of other totalising discourses. That CSS does not and, within its predominant onto-epistemological imaginary, *cannot* engage on such terms not only blinds it to such practices – it sediments prevailing expectations and ideas of security, hegemony, the state form, and so on. While those practices with which the

thesis concerns itself are not innocent of reperformances, contradictions and incorporations, this is not an invalidation of these reflections and possibilities; rather, such limitations make plain the precarious, limited and unstable nature of the interventions, emphasising the importance of mobility, creativity, and the prefigurative principle. Therein lies the third major argument contained in the thesis

The thesis argues that strategised and confrontational conceptions of resistance are in danger of delimiting the exploration of counter-subjectivities and thereby (re)perpetuating those onto-political forms they seek to contest. Logics of strategy are in danger of placing limits on the cultivation of counter-subjectivities, and retaining forms of domination within the context of resistance. Confrontation (as opposed to contestation) can tend to fetishise that which is opposed, drawing lines of ontological differentiation which obscure the role of subjectivity and moralise or render complete or innocent the politics of resistance. The thesis suggests that a more productive conception of resistance might come through the terms of prefiguration, and through the cultivation of anarchic modes of subjectivity, an anarchy of the subject. The former can operate as a principle and practice through which the authorities and totalisations of resistance might be revealed and broken down, preserving the important sense of incompleteness and the continual awareness of the ways in which resistance is always produced by and mobilised within particular relations of power, whilst still allowing (indeed demanding, immediately) the continual contestation of and creativity against relations of domination. An anarchy of the subject involves the ceaseless interrogation of and insurrection against the forms of subjectivity which are produced within and depend upon relations of domination, a critique of logics of strategy which reduce the social field to one of abstractions and totalisations (that is, to a militarised imaginary), and a refusal to impose totalising standards upon what subjects of resistance must be(come).

Chapter One: Deconstructing Security

The introduction outlined the intention within this thesis to explore the concept of security, and to consider the possibilities for a resistance which does not rely upon or reperform hegemonic or totalising political imaginaries. This chapter establishes the theoretical terrain from which these investigations proceed, pointing towards a series of limitations, opportunities and possibilities which will be taken up and developed further in later chapters. Whilst it functions to some extent as a literature review, the aim is not to capture the totality of particular debates and fields so much as to demonstrate particular trends, shortcomings or openings which might reward further pursuit and problematisation.

The chapter is divided into two parts. In the first, I examine the field of CSS as a means by which to demonstrate some particular characteristics which constitute many critical treatments of security. The discussion first takes Steve Smith's 2005 overview of the field as a useful model through which to conduct a brief survey. It then mobilises a critical reading of the literature which proceeds from the perspective of agency; I argue that, despite the surface-level critique of statism which can be found in much of the critical work, there remains a latent and limiting commitment to a hegemonic ontology of agency which disciplines explorations of possibility within particular terms.

The second part of the chapter examines the particular concept of security in more detail. Sceptical of approaches which seek to equate the concept with emancipation, or to fold it within other progressive projects, the discussion outlines several ways in which discourses of security intertwine with other political imaginaries predicated upon hegemony, statism and totality, marking it as a discourse of conceptual and political mastery. I explore the relationship between security and the subject, before considering the possibility for a resistance which seeks neither to rehabilitate, nor escape into a fictitious outside.

Part One: Critical Security Studies

Mapping the Debates

In an influential overview of the CSS field, Smith identifies six key approaches; the Copenhagen School, constructivist theory, 'Critical Security Studies' (referred to here as

the ‘Welsh School’), feminist approaches, poststructuralist approaches, and ‘Human Security’. As with any attempt to categorise a broad school of thought, Smith’s mapping draws overly simplistic boundaries and performs uncomfortable exclusions (not least the absence of postcolonial approaches from this schematic). Nonetheless his general account helps to establish some of the terms with which the discussions in this chapter (and thesis) progress, and will be drawn out here before the turn towards agency.

Identified initially for Barry Buzan and Ole Wæver’s focus on societal security, ‘the Copenhagen School’ has more recently been associated with Wæver’s work on ‘securitization’. Smith writes that ‘[f]or Wæver, security is best understood as a discursive act, as a speech act. By this he means that labelling something as a security issue imbues it with a sense of importance and urgency that legitimizes the use of special measures outside of the usual political process to deal with it’ (2005: 34). Security is seen as an extra-political state of exception, and the process of securitization, for Wæver, ‘results in a militarized and confrontational mind-set which defines security questions in an us-versus-them manner’ (ibid.). This has led to a concern for many with the ethico-political implications of whether, how and when to advocate ‘desecuritization’ and ‘securitization’ (Wæver 1995; Aradau 2004; McDonald 2008; Huysmans 1998; Elbe 2006).

Constructivist accounts have drawn on a fusion of social constructivism and security studies, founded on Alex Wendt’s observation that ‘anarchy is what states make of it’ (1992). As Smith observes, this has led to an understanding that ‘security is not something that exists out there waiting for analysts or politicians to discover it. Instead it is created by human intersubjective understandings, as the social world is something that is made and remade by those in it’ (2005: 38). This perspective has motivated a focus on the interventions made by conceptions of identity and culture in security politics. Smith criticises the limitations made in this intervention by constructivists, arguing that ‘the state is still the actor, and military security remains the form of security to be explained. All of this is to be undertaken using the traditional forms of analysis’ (2005: 39). In short, he sees constructivism as merely an adjunct to realist theories, which fails to challenge traditional epistemological, ontological and theoretical orthodoxies. Whilst there is merit to this criticism (made more forcefully and radically in Zehfuss 2002), it fails to consider the more critical turn amongst a number of scholars working with constructivist theory, notably the work of Karin Fierke (2007), Matt

McDonald (2008; 2012) and Jutta Weldes (1996). Whilst I would argue that they are ultimately susceptible to Smith (and others') criticisms, the turn towards post-positivist epistemologies should not be overlooked.

The Welsh School, derived predominantly from the work of Ken Booth and Wyn Jones, has a more explicitly normative angle to its approach, which focuses on the concept of emancipation. In his seminal 1991 article 'Security and Emancipation', Booth argued that the referent object of security should be individuals rather than states, and that emancipation should be the aim of security (indeed that emancipation, theoretically and empirically, *is* security). On the former point, he offers three arguments. The first is that many states are simply not 'in the business' of security, and that 'it cannot serve the theory and practice of security to privilege Al Capone regimes.' The second argument is that states are the *means* of security, not the *end*, and that it would be illogical to prioritise the security of the means to the detriment of the ends. The third argument is that 'states are too diverse in their character to serve as the bases for a comprehensive theory of security' (1991: 320). With regards to emancipation Booth argues that

[e]mancipation should logically be given precedence in our thinking about security over the mainstream themes of power and order..."Security" means the absence of threats. Emancipation is the freeing of people (as individuals and groups) from those physical and human constraints which stop them carrying out what they would freely choose to do. War and the threat of war is one of those constraints, together with poverty, poor education, political oppression and so on. Security and emancipation are two sides of the same coin. Emancipation, not power or order, produces true security. Emancipation, theoretically, is security (1991: 319).

This argument, which Booth has repeated and refined over time (1995; 2005b; 2007), has generated considerable debate throughout CSS.⁶ Whilst Booth's conception of how we might conceive of emancipation has changed somewhat over the past twenty years, Smith pulls together the essential features, arguing that for Booth, emancipation 'is not a universal timeless concept; it cannot be at the expense of others; and it is not synonymous with Westernization. Instead it has the following three roles: it is a philosophical anchorage; it is a strategic process; and it is a tactical goal' (2005: 42).

⁶ See for example Fierke (2007: 186-205), Neufeld (2004), and Wyn Jones (2005).

Wyn Jones' approach is more explicitly grounded in Frankfurt School Critical Theory. Alongside the concern with emancipation, he discusses the importance of both immanent critique as an intellectual tool for CSS (1999: 25) and the need for a Gramscian approach to the appropriate role of emancipatory-focussed ('organic') intellectuals (1999: 153-163). The concern with immanent critique has been taken up by a number of CSS scholars, including Eli Stamnes' critique of UN preventative deployments (2004) and Fierke's critique of the War on Terror (2007: 167-185). The normative focus and 'bottom-up' approach to security taken by the Welsh School offers substantial opportunities for the reconceptualisation of security within the critical field, and Booth and Wyn Jones' ideas have become influential across the theoretical spectrum. As such, a variety of critiques have been made of the project, notably that the conception of emancipation advanced does not challenge the Eurocentric and racist assumptions through which it emerged (Barkawi and Laffey 2006: 332), nor does it fully disrupt the discursive terrain of security (Aradau 2004: 399), or problematise statist ontologies of agency (a concern which will be more fully elaborated below).

There are inherent limitations when classing feminist approaches to security as a 'school' in any conventional sense; to do so risks re-establishing boundaries of exclusion, leaving 'the women' or 'the feminists' to make their intervention from the sidelines, overlooking the centrality of their critique to how we think and practice security. Nonetheless important insights and critiques have been generated by those working from gendered perspectives with respect to security. Smith notes that

...feminist work simply undermines the distinctions central to security studies as traditionally conceived. Not only does much of this work subvert the notion of the state as neutral actor, it also problematizes the identities of men and women by seeing masculinity both implicated in and constructed by the interrelated processes of militarism and patriarchy. Crucially, looking at security from the perspective of women alters the definition of what security is to such an extent that it is difficult to see how any form of traditional security studies can offer an analysis (2005: 47-48).

In short, without a gendered perspective, analysis of security becomes a fundamentally limited project (Enloe 1989, 1998; Tickner 2004; Sylvester 1994, 1996). Resistance to such a fundamental destabilisation from within the traditional schools has been fierce, with contributions including Robert Keohane's 1989 article 'International Relations

Theory: Contributions of a Feminist Standpoint’ demonstrating the difficulties faced when trying to assert disciplinary authority over the fundamental challenges offered by the insurrection of feminist perspectives. The importance of these interventions must not be restricted to a specific ‘theory’, and should instead be used to speak to the critical field more generally; as Lene Hansen’s critique of the Copenhagen school makes clear, the absence of gender-sensitive perspectives is a problem for critical as well as traditional approaches (2000). Furthermore, and while there is a strong sense of common purpose amongst feminists working on security, there are significant differences amongst feminist scholars; most significantly, perhaps, the differences between those such as Enloe who seek essentially to increase the visibility of women’s (non-)agency in the politics of security, and those, such as Annick Wibben (2011), Laura Shepherd (2008) and V. Spike Peterson (1992b) who, taking insight from poststructuralism, seek to reveal the discursive terrain through which gendered identities are produced and politicised.

Poststructuralist approaches represent perhaps the most radical collection of moves away from traditional security studies.⁷ Drawing on figures such as Foucault, Jacques Derrida, Giorgio Agamben, Butler and others, those writing from a poststructural perspective have sought to destabilise the claims to knowledge of traditional (and, more recently, critical) security studies. In particular, poststructuralist scholars have sought to destabilise discourses which establish the state as a sovereign authority with particular interests, boundaries, and identities (and so to destabilise particular ‘truths’ of security), arguing instead that such narratives are produced through particular (political) practices (Campbell 1998a, 1998b; Walker 1993, 1997; Ashley 1988; Dillon 1996; Dillon and Reid 2009; Edkins 2003; Weber and Lacy 2011). Through these interventions (and others), poststructuralists have sought to (re)politicise the established boundaries of security logic (Edkins 1999). The challenge to the ‘epistemological, methodological, and ontological assumptions of traditional security studies’ (Smith 2005: 49) has demanded a departure from the foundational assumptions on which much of security thinking (both traditional and critical) has relied, a move which has generated

⁷ Whilst, as noted, the boundaries drawn by Smith’s survey are problematic across the board, this is perhaps most significant or insufficient here, insofar as the terms through which ‘poststructuralist’ critiques are mobilised tend to resist such collective categorisation. Whilst these critiques will be mobilised throughout the thesis, the signifier will be resisted for precisely such reasons (with the exception of the explorations of ‘poststructuralist anarchism’ or ‘postanarchism’ in Chapter Two, where the use is, to some extent, inescapable).

considerable controversy. Booth in particular has been highly critical of poststructural approaches, chiding their ‘posturing against metanarratives’ for ‘[threatening] to marginalise the global downtrodden’ (2007: 178), and arguing that the poststructuralist approaches mobilise a ‘faux radicalism’ which ‘leave[s] power where it is in the world’ (2005c: 270-271). Wyn Jones, more sympathetic than Booth, claims that whilst poststructuralists do have some support for some form of emancipation, ‘none of the authors...actually engage with the nature of these alternatives in any serious way’ (2005: 218). The arguments in this thesis draw from a range of poststructuralist thinkers (both those concerned with security and those in other fields), and serve in part to suggest that these criticisms seriously misread the politics of poststructural critique.

Smith’s final approach within CSS, ‘Human Security’, represents a very different approach to the five others discussed. More policy-oriented than theoretical, it originated in a 1994 United Nations Development Programme report which equated security with the provision of basic needs (i.e., economic security, environmental security, health security, food security, personal security, political security and community security) (Kaldor 2007; Kaldor et al. 2007; Axworthy 2001; Griffin 1995; Olser Hampson et al. 2002). The concept is more closely tied to a desired shift in specific policy than the other approaches, leading to criticism from those such as Roland Paris who highlight the ‘slipperiness’ of the term, which risks becoming a legitimating discourse for elite priorities (2001).⁸ As Kyle Grayson argues, [h]uman security is conceived as a complement to existing power structures, mitigating some of their most abhorrent effects, without actually attempting to problematize their constitutive relations or what makes these possible’ (2008: 395).

This brief and broad survey demonstrates the complexity and variety of thinking which falls within the terms of CSS. Whilst it is by no means comprehensive, it serves to establish the debates from which this thesis proceeds. The question remains: how best to cut into the literature, to find the fault lines through which the silences and violences can be exposed, and the broader critique of this thesis explored? Some have divided the literature between those who wish to better define and implement security (in some, contested, emancipatory form), and those who seek to further disrupt the terms of security, viewing it as too embedded in the violent reproduction of the existing

⁸ See also Mark Neufeld (2004), Ryerson Christie (2010), and the debate between Nicholas Thomas and William Tow, and Alex Bellamy and McDonald (Thomas and Tow 2002a; Bellamy and McDonald 2002; Thomas and Tow 2002b).

(inter)national order (see for example Shepherd 2008: 64-77; Neocleous 2008; Burke 2007: 27-53). While I am sympathetic to this distinction (and to the latter point of view, as will be explored in the second part of this chapter), this is a well-trodden path. The following discussion will argue that useful insights and inroads can be identified by opening up the question of agency within CSS.

The Agency Problematique

Despite the various important interventions which have undoubtedly been made, and despite the claims to have moved beyond the statism of traditional approaches, CSS has, on the whole, adhered to a statist or hegemonic ontology of agency which limits the potential for rethinking and resisting the terms of security. After a brief note about the politics of theorising agency, the discussion moves to debates between Booth, Buzan and Bill McSweeney, and then Wyn Jones, as a means by which to highlight the statism which persists within CSS, with specific reference here to the Welsh School. The argument then shifts to look at how this statism can be seen to persist even in work which is critical of the more explicitly normative security agenda of the Welsh School.

Security studies, in both its traditional and critical variants, has generally focussed on ‘great powers’, those actors who are ‘self-evidently’ the driving forces of global politics. Whilst critical scholars have challenged realism’s blindness to those marginalised by the agency of great powers, this often happens in a context wherein ‘the weak are of interest but primarily as bearers of rights and objects of emancipation, that is, for their normative value in Western political theoretic terms’ (Barkawi and Laffey 2006: 333).⁹ The ways in which the marginalised are themselves involved in shaping global politics are obscured in a manner which further embeds the narrative of the powerful (whether ‘the West’, men, the entrepreneurial) as the sole (and, therefore, inevitable) progenitors of history. Other critical scholars have challenged this closure by highlighting the ways in which marginalised groups profoundly affect the functioning of international relations (Enloe 1996: 189-201) and, more challengingly, by exploring the ways in which a ‘great power’ narrative relies upon and sustains particular narratives of what it is to be powerful (and, by extension, marginalises alternative conceptions of how power might be conceptualised). As Walker writes, we might want to examine

⁹ On this point, Barkawi and Laffey explicitly cite Booth, alongside others.

marginalised social groups (for him, as for this thesis, critical social movements) ‘not in terms of some timeless notion of what power is but in terms of their capacity to alter our understanding of what power can be’ (1988: 146). In this sense agency should not be seen in conventional terms, as a property that is (or is not) held by an actor who is (or is not) agential. Such conceptions are always already political performances which prioritise particular conceptions of power (as well as masking processes of subject formation). It is more useful to conceptualise attributions of agency as ontological representations which reflect and produce particular imaginaries of power and relationality (through interpretations of responsibility, legitimacy, capacity, coherence), conditioning, delimiting and generating particular political possibilities. It is through such lenses that the enduring statism of critical approaches to security can be read.

In *People, States and Fear*, Buzan sought to broaden the concept of security to encompass more dimensions than the military considerations which occupied neorealist approaches. These extra dimensions, for Buzan, included political, societal, economic and ecological concerns (1991: 116-140). However, despite noting the ‘elusive character of the state as a behavioural unit’ (1991: 58) and acknowledging that states are ‘exceedingly varied’ (1991: 96), Buzan was firm in his conviction that the state itself should remain as the primary referent object of security:

Sound reasons justify this priority. States are by far the most powerful type of unit in the international system. As a form of political organization, the state has transcended, and often crushed, all other political units to the extent that it has become the universal standard of political legitimacy (1991: 58).

This focus on maintaining the state as the primary referent of security has been criticised from within CSS, most prominently by Booth (as noted above). A more thorough critique comes from McSweeney, who notes that Buzan’s argument is largely based on his acknowledgement that states are the most powerful instrument of security, but maintains that this does not justify making them the referent object ahead of individuals. He allegorises that whilst we might accept that nuclear weapons are a primary instrument of security (of some type), and might need to be secured in some way (through electric fences, patrol dogs, radar jamming equipment, etc.), it would be absurd to orient society around their protection (1999: 45-67). Buzan accepts the analytic shortcomings of maintaining the state as referent, but claims a methodological advantage in focussing on states. However, McSweeney gives strong reason for

suggesting that to think of them other than as means for the security of something more fundamental is illogical. In fact, as McSweeney notes, Buzan almost inverts the argument completely when he notes the need for strong states, accepting that ‘the suppression of sub-national identities might well contribute, in the long run, to the creation of stronger and more viable states’ (1991: 123).

McSweeney’s argument is important, and accords with the suspicion introduced above that accepting the primacy of the state simply because it is powerful has problematic implications. However, McSweeney does not deal with the question of agency, preferring to examine the politics of how referent objects are conceived, presumptively casting states as means to the security of a referent that is yet to be identified. The relationship between the state’s potential but contested status as an end of security, and its *presumed* status as a means, has been under-theorised in critical approaches to security; it is this largely unproblematised dominance of statist (and/or hegemonic) ontologies of agency which is the focus here.

Interesting tensions can be drawn from Booth’s explorations on the subject. His approach moves between an intense distaste for statist security agency, and an affirmation of its necessity. On the one hand, Booth is relatively firm in his scepticism about the capacities of states to ‘provide’ security, stating that ‘for the most part states fluctuate between the role of gangsters, prostitutes, fat cats, or bystanders’ (2007: 204) and that ‘[f]or many people on earth, life is “solitary, poore, nasty, brutish, and short” within their state, as a result of government policy or incompetence; such insecurity is in the nature of some states, and not only, as Hobbes famously said, in the state of nature itself’ (2007: 203). On the other hand, he argues that ‘[a]t this stage of history sovereign states exist at best as necessary evils for human society’ (ibid.) and that ‘[s]overeign states exist, and in some form will continue indefinitely, but they should never be “romanticised”’ (2007: 202). His assertion that states constitute a ‘necessary evil’ is broadly unqualified, save for the comment that ‘[l]ocally and globally there is a need for mechanisms for producing redistribution and welfare’ (2007: 205), a comment which does little to substantiate a logic which equates the *existence* of states with a *dependence* on states as the fundamental means (and possibility) of security.

Several points can be extracted from Booth’s discussions here which help to establish the agency problematique on which this thesis is based. The first is found in his passing reference to anarchism, which follows the warning about ‘romanticising’

states. He asserts that '[f]ew would go *all the way* with the anarchist position that states are an "extraneous burden" on society, and should be dispensed with, but more might accept Thomas Paine's view that society is "a blessing" in a way the sovereign state is not' (2007: 203, emphasis added). Forcing the broad tradition of anarchism into an 'all the way' dichotomy forecloses much of the potential challenge which might be offered by anarchism (explored extensively in this thesis); more important for the discussion here, however, is the way in which the dichotomy Booth erects, between dispensing and not dispensing with the state, implicitly demands the perpetuation of statism (as a necessary choice in the absence an immanent and hegemonic utopia). In Booth's misunderstanding (or misrepresentation) of anarchism we see a more fundamental dynamic of his ontology of agency, which is a commitment to a *hegemonic* principle which presumes the totalising nature of political intervention and possibility, which will either be subordinated within an existing order, or perform an 'all the way' break. This point can be extended by looking at Booth's conceptualisation of non-state activism.

Booth has mentioned the progressive role of Amnesty International (1997: 98-99), the positive impacts of 'donating money to a charity [and] working for an NGO' (2007: 198), and even discussed the global citizenship manifested in the direct action of the 'Seeds of Hope' women, who broke into a military base and damaged a Hawk aircraft which would otherwise have been sold by the UK to Indonesia (2007: 202-203).¹⁰ These three examples represent a broad spectrum of activism, from the relatively conservative structural position occupied by Amnesty International to the more radical direct action carried out by Seeds of Hope. What is interesting is the way in which Booth has cast these actions as *adjuncts* to statist agency, failing to consider the ways in which they might constitute a challenge to the ways in which we theorise and attribute agency in the context of security. In an introduction to a special issue of *International Relations* in which one of the Seeds of Hope women wrote about her experience, Booth approvingly refers to Tim Dunne and Nicholas Wheeler's hope for 'a progressive alliance between the moral awareness of cosmopolitan transnational civil society and enlightened state leaders' (Booth 2004: 6). For him (and Dunne, Wheeler and others), there is a place for civil society, but it is thoroughly disciplined within predominant ontologies of agency, folded into statist metaphysics.

¹⁰ The action will be discussed briefly in Chapter Five. For an extended discussion, see Zelter (2004).

This observation provides the foundation for much of this thesis; while Booth eschews the label ‘statism’, his approach to agency retains the hegemonic principle, failing to engage with the potentials beyond such totalising imaginaries, and incorporating potential examples and avenues within an ‘all the way’ dichotomy which establishes its horizon as a softening of the edges of state security practice (2007: 206).¹¹ One potential perspective on this approach is his adherence to what Richard Ashley has termed ‘heroic practices’ of international relations, relying on (whilst admittedly shifting and reforming) the underlying principle of a dichotomy between sovereignty and anarchy in political practice, which conditions

...modern discourses of politics, upon encountering ambiguous and indeterminate circumstances...to recur to the ideal of a sovereign presence...as an originary voice, a foundational source of truth and meaning...a principle of interpretation that makes it possible to discipline the understanding of ambiguous events and impose a distinction: a distinction between what can be represented as rational and meaningful (because it can be assimilated to a sovereign principle of interpretation) and what must count as external, dangerous, and anarchic (1988: 230).

Such a dichotomy enshrines a hegemonic ontology of agency which is always already legitimated in the project of asserting control over that which does not fit. With Ashley, I suggest that looking at non-state actors can be a challenging way to move beyond the constraints of such a dichotomy.

While criticising the capacity for poststructural theory to inform or inspire useful political interventions, Booth dismisses the scepticism of metanarratives by mobilising Richard A. Wilson’s analogy that ‘[r]ights without a metanarrative are like a car without seat-belts; on hitting the first moral bump with ontological implications, the passenger’s safety is jeopardised’ (Booth 2005c: 270). For Booth, totalising formulations of security and (/as) emancipation are central to his project. As he is sceptical of dispensing with metanarratives on rights, so we are left to assume his scepticism about non-totalising conceptions of agency. Non-state actors are co-opted through hegemonic logics and disciplined within heroic practices. The exploration of agencies which refuse

¹¹ The enduring faith in civil society as the agent within which might soften the edges of statism is, as Shepherd notes, ‘ideologically and normatively loaded with implications of [civil society’s] global reach, its civilized nature and its social form’ (2008: 67).

totalising conceptions of political practice and seek to affect without conquering, or without seeking legitimacy within an existing order, for Booth, must also be seen to be at risk of bumps in the road; they are precarious, unpredictable, unsecurable. This thesis suggests that it may be precisely those totalising conceptions of agency advocated by Booth which prohibit political exploration, and which make possible much of the violence legitimated in the endless pursuit of security and hegemony. A discussion of Wyn Jones' approach to the role of CSS scholars helps to further elaborate the concerns raised here.

In *Security, Strategy, and Critical Theory*, Wyn Jones argues that intellectuals committed to emancipation should consciously conceptualise themselves as organic intellectuals; 'if "all theory is *for* someone and *for* some purpose," then critical security studies is for "the voiceless, the unrepresented, the powerless," and its purpose is their emancipation' (1999: 159). He moves quite consciously away from the Gramscian conceptions of a fundamental revolutionary class and a vanguard party (1999: 156-159), and acknowledges that 'the role of theorists is not to direct and instruct those movements with which they are aligned' (1999: 161). Instead he argues that 'by criticizing the hegemonic discourse and advancing alternative conceptions of security based on different understandings of human potentialities, the approach is simultaneously playing a part in eroding the legitimacy of the ruling historic bloc and contributing to the development of a counterhegemonic position' (ibid.). Whilst these moves away from the Gramscian position are to be welcomed, Wyn Jones remains tied to the orthodoxy of invoking a *counter*-hegemony, a reliance which, in Day's terms, reasserts the 'hegemony of hegemony' which runs through much of Liberal and Marxist theorising on social change, and which assumes that 'effective social change can only be achieved simultaneously and *en masse*...through taking or influencing state power' (2005: 8). In this account, the task of critique and/or resistance must seek to conquer ontology, to establish its own dominance over the political. Whilst Booth's account remains with states, Wyn Jones' more open formulation points towards the wider logic of hegemony in operation here.

Day's critique, which will be explored in more detail in the next chapter, is based on a genealogical deconstruction of the logic of hegemony, and challenges us to think about agency through the practices of groups which act *non*-hegemonically (or *anti*-hegemonically). This is a challenge which will run through much of the thesis, the

disruptive potentials of which are explored in more detail below. For the purposes here, the central point to emphasise is the ways in which the ontology of agency at work within CSS not only retains a statist imaginary, but a hegemonic presumption which disciplines imaginations of possibility within a totalising framework.

The above considerations have suggested that some mainstream critical approaches to security remain tied to a statist and hegemonic conception of agency. While only a few authors have been considered in detail, similar patterns can be seen elsewhere in the critical field (for example, Thomas and Tow 2002a/b; Linklater 2005; Kaldor 2003; Tickner 2001: 96-125; Floyd 2007; Massicotte 2000). Whilst discussion thus far has focussed predominantly on those who retain some optimism about the emancipatory potentials of a rehabilitated conception of security, the following discussion suggests that the limitation explored here is not peculiar to such approaches.

It is useful at this point to distinguish more explicitly between those tendencies in CSS which seek to pursue a more emancipatory form of security, and those which are more focussed on disrupting and politicising mobilisations of security. Whilst such a dividing line is messy, opaque, and insufficiently attentive to nuance, it helps to further elucidate some of the points already raised. A number of arguments are raised within CSS which caution against the mobilisation of security as a progressive or emancipatory political project. In the second half of this chapter the discussion will focus on broader arguments about security as a discourse and logic which (re)produces the state form; here, the more limited (though not unconnected) arguments from Copenhagen School-linked approaches are worth rehearsing.

Claudia Aradau criticises those who seek to make emancipatory use of security, for forgetting that ‘security itself institutes a particular kind of politics’, insisting ‘that it is important to be aware of the politics one legitimizes by endorsing security’ (2004: 399). For her, the ‘Schmittian politics at the heart of security will reiterate the logic of enmity against “other others”’ (ibid.); the exclusionary nature of security prohibits a democratic politics. Others associated with the Copenhagen School have focussed on the militaristic politics which are often produced by the securitization of an issue (wherein we are led towards ‘seeing problems in terms of threat-vulnerability-defense’ (Wæver 1995: 64)) and, more broadly, with the ways in which securitization elevates an issue to the level of ‘panic politics’ rather than normal politics in a manner which renders it profoundly anti-democratic (Buzan, Wæver and de Wilde 1998: 34). In much

of this work one can discern nostalgia for a return to ‘normal’ politics. Buzan et al. seek to move issues out of a ‘threat-defence sequence and into the ordinary public sphere’ (ibid., 29), without fully exploring the ways in which this ordinary public sphere is itself implicated in the production of insecurity. Even Aradau’s more radical approach seeks to constitute desecuritization as ‘the democratic challenge to the non-democratic politics of securitization’ without significantly disrupting predominant ontologies of agency (2004: 400). Indeed, her designation of democratic politics as ‘defined in terms of equality and fairness, voice and slow procedures open to public scrutiny’ sounds remarkably liberal.¹²

This nostalgia for normal politics is disrupted by those such as David Campbell who reveal the means by which the state (and, as such, ‘normal politics’ broadly defined) is constituted through discourses of security (discussed more extensively in the next section), in a manner which might prompt Copenhagen School-oriented approaches to examine more fully their foundational ontolog(ies) of agency. However, such assumptions permeate even some poststructuralist work, forming a silent foundation even as discourses of security are problematised. For example, Kyle Grayson argues that attention to the biopolitics of human security might guide attempts to ‘govern responsibly’ (2008: 394), and Campbell advocates an (admittedly pluralized, non-nationalist) state (1998a: 238), performing an imaginary which presumes the enduring dominance of statist politics. This observation should be qualified with the note that, as many of the explorations within this thesis make clear, significant resources for disrupting hegemonic ontologies of agency can be found in poststructural approaches. In addition, there are poststructural approaches which do open up in anti-hegemonic directions, such as Roxanne Doty’s analysis of the role of US citizens in constituting US-Mexico border spaces (2007) and Marieke de Goede’s exploration of resistance to global finance (2005). In the latter, de Goede argues that ‘current calls for coherent resistance and programmatic reform tend to devalue the politics of making strange, which, according to Foucault, are indispensable to criticism and transformation’ and that ‘[h]ighlighting the plurality and ambiguity of dissent can contribute to overcoming the ‘fear and hopelessness generated by monolithic accounts of the

¹² McDonald suggests that the Copenhagen School’s formulation of securitization is ‘parasitic on a conception of a liberal-democratic state with associated political procedures’ (2012: 170n67), and points us towards Juha Vuori’s exploration of how securitization takes place in non-democratic contexts (2008).

“neoliberal project,” in which only broad-based counter-hegemonic challenges are considered purposeful’ (ibid., 389, citing Larner 2003: 512).

The points here are emphatically not made to suggest that those critical scholars who have remained wedded to a statist/hegemonic ontology of agency have not made important and vital contributions. Rather, it is to suggest that despite these contributions a significant limitation has been performed. On the whole CSS, whether by its silence on the matter or by its emphatic celebration, maintains an ontology of agency which maintains the state and/or a (counter) hegemonic principle. In advancing an approach which explicitly seeks to disrupt hegemonic ontologies of agency, this thesis seeks to explore praxes and possibilities unavailable within the onto-epistemological confines of much of CSS thinking.

Part Two: The Politics of Security

Mark Neocleous notes that critical approaches to security have approached the concept from a number of angles: ‘Security has been defined and redefined. It has been re-vised, re-mapped, gendered, refused. Some have asked whether there is perhaps too much security, some have sought its civilisation, and thousands of others have asked about how to ‘balance’ it with liberty’ (2008: 3). What much of the critical work on security lacks, however, is an appreciation of the ways in which security is imagined, tied to the fact that, ‘for all the critical edge employed by the authors in question, the running assumption underpinning the work is that security is still a *good thing*, still *necessary* despite how much we interrogate it’ (ibid., 3-4, emphasis in original). As a consequence, many of the logics which underpin and are legitimated by traditional conceptions of security remain entrenched within critical work (Grayson 2008). However, a number of interventions have been made which treat security ‘not as an essential value but as a *political technology*’ (Burke 2007: 28, emphasis in original), ‘a principle of formation’ (Dillon 1996: 16) which conducts political life in particular ways. While the Copenhagen School approach discussed above approaches the concept of security in a related way, they tend to do so (as noted) in a manner which preserves the ontological foundations of the international order. The discussion here focuses on those analyses which takes security not as a variable within a wider order, but as a series of logics intimately involved in the continual (re)production of that order. I argue that

moves to disrupt statist and hegemonic ontologies of agency need to contend with the ways in which discourses of security underpin political imaginaries predicated on conceptual and political mastery.

The discussion begins by looking at work which explores the relationship between (inter)national security and the state, suggesting with Campbell and Jenny Edkins that the state's existential status as the *a priori* agent of security depends on the continual production of insecurity, and with Shepherd that the constitution of the international itself extends from such moves. After briefly considering what this means for a political conception of security and insecurity, I look at Ashley's deconstruction of the sovereignty/anarchy binary as a means by which to consider how the political logic of security works alongside other regulatory dynamics. I then turn to Michael Dillon's work on security-as-metaphysics in order to argue that a problematisation of the politics of security should move beyond the deconstruction of state logics.

Security and the State

Examining the relationship between discourse and foreign policy, Campbell shows that discourses of security constitute fundamental representational practices in the state's process of becoming. He argues that 'with no ontological status apart from the many and varied practices that constitute their reality, states are (and have to be) always in a process of becoming. For a state to end its practices of representation would be to expose its lack of prediscursive foundations; stasis would be death' (1998b: 12). Such a perspective reveals the state's relation to danger and security to be intimately political; '[s]hould the state project of security be successful in the terms in which it is articulated, the state would cease to exist. Security as the absence of movement would result in death via stasis. Ironically, then, the inability of the state project of security to succeed is the guarantor of the state's continued success as an impelling identity' (ibid.). The state form depends, precisely, on the continual production of (images of) insecurity (and, as I elaborate further below, reveals the dependent relationship between security and insecurity). Edkins takes this perspective further, arguing that insecurity (which, taking a Lacanian approach, she argues to be essential) is discursively constructed as contingent: '[w]hen a security issue arises, what is happening is not that external threats are being recognized or new dangers assessed. It is something quite different that is taking place.

The inherent insecurity in the object concerned - generally the state - is being concealed. When something is impossible, one way of concealing that impossibility is to shift the blame somewhere else' (2003: 367). For Edkins, such a shift in blame occurred during the Cold War and after 11 September 2001. In short, the state project relies upon a fictive externalisation of its own inherent incompleteness; its status as the *a priori* agent of security relies upon the continual representation of the structural reality of insecurity as contingent. This fiction is not an innocent or apolitical process, relying upon and sustaining a political formation based around prediction, control and the *de facto* legitimacy of dominant power relations (ibid., 386). Edkins' insights are useful for thinking about security as a political technology which works first and foremost to legitimate the state, and make possible various forms of social control and political authority.

Shepherd shows that, as discourses of security function to produce the state, they also make possible the 'violent reproduction of the international' (2008: 72-75). As technologies of security/insecurity produce particular, politicised experiences of threat, safety and normalcy, they

...also reproduce the contours of the international...Security arrangements between states simultaneously act to posit states as unitary entities, to reproduce the identities of these states, to reaffirm security as the concern of states and to reproduce a particular configuration of "the international" in opposition to the domestic realm (ibid., 75).

In this sense, security/insecurity can be seen as a central dynamic in the constitution of the international, one which is deeply woven into the fabric of what have come to be seen as the immutable truths of world politics. Attempts to redefine security – at either the state, or international level – must contend with the ways in which it is precisely through discursive technologies of security that the (inter)national is (re)produced. This does not necessarily render such attempts impossible (though the discussion here remains deeply sceptical), but it does ask important questions with respect to what assumptions, logics and performances are imported alongside moves to redefine security. Most pressing for the concerns explored in this thesis are how ontologies of agency and forms of authority are preserved when security is remapped. Ashley offers some useful analysis here.

In examining how security relates intimately with political authority, Ashley's examination of the anarchy problematique in international relations reveals how discourses of security/insecurity exist alongside and intertwined with other powerful binaries. As introduced briefly above, he argues that the foundational logics of states as a force for 'security', legitimated in international relations through particular representations of insecurity (most importantly, international anarchy), has turned on a discursive construction he refers to as the 'heroic practice':

The heroic practice is as simple as it is productive. It turns on a simple hierarchical opposition: a dichotomy of *sovereignty* versus *anarchy*, where the former term is privileged as a higher reality, a regulative ideal, and the latter term is understood only in a derivative and negative way, as a failure to live up to this ideal and as something that endangers this ideal.

On the one hand, the sign of 'sovereignty' betokens a rational identity: a homogeneous and continuous presence that is hierarchically ordered, that has a unique centre of decision presiding over a coherent 'self', and that is demarcated from, and in opposition to, an external domain of difference and change that resists assimilation to its identical being. On the other hand, the sign of 'anarchy' betokens this residual external domain: an aleatory domain characterised by difference and discontinuity, contingency and ambiguity, that can be known only for its lack of the coherent truth and meaning expressed by a sovereign presence. 'Anarchy' signifies a problematic domain yet to be brought under the controlling influence of a sovereign centre...whether it be an individual actor, a group, a class, or a political community (1988: 230).

The principle of formation mobilised by security intersects with the dichotomies of sovereignty/anarchy (and, by implication, order/chaos and inside/outside) to produce a particular political common sense which tends to eradicate or incorporate the ambiguous within the dominant rationality.¹³ Security is not only central to the state's process of becoming, but is tightly woven with heroic practices which mobilises particular ontologies of agency, as rationally bounded, coherent, and as necessitating the

¹³ Whilst some (e.g., Edkins and Zehfuss 2005) argue that order operates alongside *disorder* as a regulatory binary, this thesis intentionally works along the contours of an order/*chaos* binary, chosen not to dismiss that which others mobilise, but as a means by which to emphasise the insufficiency (and productive role) of the anarchism-equals-chaos trope often encountered when drawing anarchism into a discussion.

incorporation and/or rationalisation of that which is outside. Ashley's statement that these relationships are not peculiar to states, but can refer to an individual, a class or a community, serves to highlight that such principles might be read beyond just the statist logics of traditional security studies. Dillon's work on the metaphysics of security helps us to take such insights forward.

Dillon works to reveal the foundational aspirations at the heart of discourses of security. He argues that security

...is not a fact of nature but a fact of civilisation. It is not a noun that names something, it is a principle of formation that does things. It is neither an ontological predicate of being, nor an objective need, but the progenitor instead of a proliferating array of discourses of danger within whose brutal and brutalising networks of power-knowledge modern human being is increasingly ensnared and, ironically, radically endangered (1996: 16).

While sensitive to the ways in which discourses of security sustain more particular, statist imaginaries, Dillon argues that the security project must be read within the context of Western metaphysics more broadly, where the imperative has been one of securing foundations, emphasising particular rationalist forms of (power/)knowledge (ibid., 14-19). From this perspective, security can be revealed as the Archimedian position from which the edifice of modern politics has been constructed, as a project fundamentally concerned with mastery, with the attempt to 'secure security' (ibid., 19-20); 'our (inter)national politics are the municipal metaphysics of the Western tradition' (ibid., 30).

For Dillon, the central principle of this politics is calculation, and so the political realm becomes

...a domain of calculability in which political practices become exercises in the political arithmetic of representation of the things to be secured and of the calculuses which will secure them. This makes of human being not merely an index of (inter)national security, but an index whose very indexicality has to be secured first if there is to be any (inter)national political arithmetic at all (ibid., 31).

Dillon notes that the defining maxim of modern politics has been: 'no security outside the State; no State without security' (ibid., 14). In the context of his exploration of security's status as a metaphysical aspiration, we might read this maxim not just as the fundamental discourse of statecraft, but as the prerequisite discourse for any claim to political legitimacy. On such terrain, political discourse which does not seek to master political life becomes nonsensical. Mastery here should be distinguished from control, although the two concepts are clearly not unrelated. Control, however, privileges the active domination of the political, whereas mastery allows us to conceptualise this (will to) domination in a more open sense, incorporating elements of control, conduct, submission and participation.

The will to mastery involves a process of conceptual domination which renders political space a function and form of security (which will, when realised, bring emancipation/liberty/truth/etc.). Attempts to resist security and hegemony which do not contend with security's status as a political-metaphysical project of mastery which conditions the possibility of politics run the risk of replicating such terms. It is in this sense that we might tie the politics of security to the hegemony of hegemony. The promise of security is predicated precisely on the attractive but impossible arrival of hegemony, whilst the aspiration towards hegemony involves the discovery or production of metaphysics, of (new) certainties. Whilst the relationship is not, necessarily, circular, it is to some extent interdependent. Such an observation is profoundly demanding; it not only casts severe doubt on the possibility of rehabilitating the politics of security (which, as the above discussions make clear, is an unlikely project), but insists that in our response to the politics of security we call into question the very foundations of our political, epistemic and metaphysical terrain; resistance to statist hegemony must occur alongside a resistance to totalising regimes of morality, truth, legitimacy, and so forth. The discussion will return to consider the question of resistance in this context, but first, it is important to explore in more detail the place of subjectivity within this problematique.

The Subject of Security

A response to the totalising effects and masteries of security must entail an appreciation of the ways in which security is involved in the production of political subjectivity.

Burke notes that ‘before we can rewrite security we have to properly understand how security has written *us*’ (2007: 31), and Walker writes that modern accounts of security define ‘the conditions under which we have been constructed as subjects subject to subjection. They tell us who we must be’, and that only in the context of discussions about the subject of security is it possible ‘to envisage a critical discourse which engages with contemporary transformations of political life, with emerging accounts of who we might become, and the conditions under which we might become other than we are’ (1997: 71, 78). In seeking a response to the politics of security it is important to explore the ways in which technologies of security rely upon and sustain particular forms of subjectivity, modalities of being which must themselves be called into question in any attempt to disrupt prevailing political imaginaries.

Pertinent for the discussion here is the retention of a managerial imaginary, the fixation on the desire ‘to “do” security better’ (Neocleous 2008: 4), to calculate, manage, conduct. Such an aspiration betrays an implicit authoritarian dimension, insofar as the referent object of security must be rendered securable. Dillon writes that

...by being secured something becomes something that it previously was not. The act of securing both invents and changes whatever is so secured. The flower picked is not the flower given. Similarly the state to be secured is not the secured state. Destruction, disfiguration, violence, transformation, and change must not only accompany this process, they must actually constitute it because that is how the thing to be secured is translated into the object susceptible to being secured, such that that then becomes that which is secured; that is to say, the secured whatever it is which now enjoys the substantive security. Yet, clearly, whatever it is, it is certainly no longer whatever it once was. For it is now secured. In short, for something to be secured it must be acted upon and changed, forced to undergo some transformation through the very act of securing itself. Securing something therefore violates the very thing which security claims to have preserved as it is. Securing an object is only possible on the condition that the integrity of the original thing is destroyed (1996: 123).

This violation, whilst often configured in outwardly technologised and depoliticised forms, is a deeply political act. Mark Neocleous shows how a genealogical approach can demonstrate the particular politics at work in such moves, revealing the politics of both security and the subject. His focus on a bourgeois, propertarian genealogy of security

leads him to the conclusion that ‘security entails the concept of police, guaranteeing as well as presupposing that society exists to secure the conservation of a particular kind of subjectivity...and the rights and property associated with this subjectivity’ (ibid., 31). Other genealogies are certainly possible (as Dillon’s work on metaphysics makes clear), but all, in some form, serve to constitute particular forms of subjectivity.¹⁴ In this sense, we have to see security and subjectivity as inextricably linked: ‘the history of security is a history of what it is to be a political subject and to be politically subject’ (Dillon and Reid 2001: 51).

To outline any totalising image of what the subject of security *is* would be to engage in a problematic reductionism which is unable to account for the multifarious ways in which security seeks to structure different lives and forms of living, and the ways in which it represents a more foundational ontological project which intersects with a multiplicity of subjects and subjectivising political logics. As such, the discussion over the next few paragraphs doesn’t seek to outline *the* subject of security, but to highlight some ways in which security impacts upon and is involved in the constitution of particular forms of subjectivity, as a means by which to contextualise and make possible the following explorations about the politics of resistance.

Foucault’s study of security as a technique of power which works alongside juridical and disciplinary mechanisms is of particular importance here. He shows how modern discourses of security function in ways distinct from sovereignty, which seeks to affect ‘individuals as a set of legal subjects capable of voluntary actions’, and from discipline, which targets ‘a multiplicity of organisms, of bodies capable of performances, and of required performances’ (2007b: 21). Security ‘is a way of making the old armatures of law and discipline function in addition to the specific mechanisms of security’ – mechanisms which conduct by means of regularizing and centrifugal pressures (ibid., 10, 45). Unlike legal techniques of power, which prohibit, and disciplinary techniques, which prescribe, security *permits* and *manages* political life within particular parameters. For Foucault, it is a technology of managing probabilities, minimizing risks (ibid., 19-20). Importantly in the context here, security takes (and makes) its object as a *population*, by which Foucault means ‘a multiplicity of individuals who are and fundamentally and essentially only exist biologically bound to the materiality within which they live’ (ibid., 21). Particular exceptions and infractions are

¹⁴ See also Lobo Guerrero (2011).

not pursued in the manner familiar to disciplinary modes of power – Foucault’s security depends on a certain measure of freedom (and a particular mode of freedom, that is, a regularized circulation which permits certain exercises of political economy) (ibid., 45-49). The principal objective is the population, not the individual or series of individuals, who ‘are no longer pertinent as the objective, but simply as the instrument, relay, or condition for obtaining something at the level of the population’ (ibid., 42). In this sense, security constitutes the subject both as population, and as a regularized phenomenon; as will be noted at various points, both conceptions offer challenges and opportunities for thinking resistance.

Another important theme which runs through explorations of the links between security and subjectivity is the ways in which discourses of security are bound up in the promise of existence. Burke argues that, across critical and traditional spectrums, security is ‘an overarching political goal and practice that *guarantees existence itself*, which makes the possibility of the world possible’ (2007: 28-9, emphasis added). Security is mobilised as the prior condition of experience (a feature which, as Neocleous notes, underlies the supposed antinomy between security and liberty so treasured by liberals, and which renders liberty always already subordinated to and constituted by security (2008: 11-38)). This relationship between security and existence is, of course, a corollary of the relationship between security and the Western metaphysical project, which proceeds upon particular assumptions about the subject and its (in)coherence. Three particular features of the relationship between security and the promise of existence bear exploration here; they are the way in which security determines and neutralises political action, the mobilisation of a protector/protectee binary, and the political technology of fear.

Neocleous notes that the invocation of the word ‘security’ serves ‘to neutralise political action, encouraging us to surrender ourselves to the state in a thoroughly conservative fashion’ (2008: 4). As it conjures images of existential threat, and tempting fictions of relief, it demands some level of obedience, compliance, participation and (frequently) violence. In such a context, security has become ‘the master narrative through which the state shapes our lives and imaginations (security risks here, security measures there, security police everywhere), producing and organising subjects in a way that is always already predisposed towards the exercise of violence in defence of the established order’ (ibid., 5). Foucault’s observation that this shaping (or managing) of

life does not necessarily occur in the more prohibitive, juridical, or prescriptive, disciplinary forms towards which we are generally more attuned, and that technologies of security work most effectively insofar as they permit and manage conduct ‘without prohibiting or prescribing, but possibly making use of some instruments of prescription and prohibition’, affords this management a measure of subtlety which renders it particularly effective (2007b: 45-47). This permissiveness is important in the turn towards resistance, insofar as technologies of security do not (must not) *eliminate* that which projects images of insecurity, but are legitimated and sustained precisely on the agonistic but mutually constitutive relationship between the two (as Dillon says, ‘It is only because it is contoured by insecurity, and because in its turn it also insecures, that security can secure’ (1996: 127)). Such a dynamic makes a security an especially powerful political technology, insofar as it is precisely in its incompleteness, and in challenges to its order, that the will to mastery is discursively possible. The exceptions (and resistances) which arise can serve precisely as legitimating discourses. The neutralisation of political action occurs not, then, in some (impossible) absolute standardisation, but in the making-productive of all action in a manner which regulates and conducts in particular and general forms. This particular dynamic will be explored at a number of points in the thesis, most notably in the conclusion to Chapter Three.

Spike Peterson looks at how discourses of security mobilise a protector/protectee binary, where subjects engage in ‘the exchange of obedience/subordination for (promises of) security’ (1992b: 50). She outlines a view of the (gendered) state as a racketeer, which produces the threat against which protection is then offered. Importantly, she argues that

...protection systems also reproduce non-participatory dynamics while obscuring accountability of protectees for maintaining boundaries, hierarchies, and identities that are the medium and outcome of protection systems. Distance from protector roles leaves decision making and threat assessment to those with particular interests that are only ambiguously related to "collective interests." Identification of the protected with their protectors (as opposed to other protectees), as well as identification of protectors with each other, further complicates alliance formation directed at transforming the system itself. Protection systems also distort the meaning of “consent” by both mystifying the

violence that backs up the systemic inequality and perpetuating the illusion of equality among parties to “contractual obligations” (ibid. 52).

Security is cast here as a Faustian pact in which obedience, to both the protector/emancipator and the system within which the protector is embedded and legitimated, is offered in exchange for ‘marginal improvements’ within the system (necessary because, in tragic form, such an exchange reproduces the ‘asymmetrical system dynamics’ (ibid.)). We might read such an observation in productive tension with Foucault’s scepticisms about overstating the problem of the state. He argues that the state, ‘doubtless no more today than in the past, does not have [the] unity, individuality, and rigorous functionality [often attributed to it]...After all, maybe the state is only a composite reality and a mythicized abstraction whose importance is much less than we think. Maybe.’ (2007b: 109). As noted above, he goes on to suggest that the central problem in modern society is not the state’s takeover of society, but the ‘governmentalisation’ of the state, by which he means the acceleration of a form of power ‘that has the population as its target, political economy as its major form of knowledge, and apparatuses of security as its essential technical instrument’ (ibid., 108). Foucault’s insights about governmentality are important here insofar as they set Spike Peterson’s insight against itself: protection systems are both participatory and non-participatory, simultaneously remaking and dispersing the state, wilfully insecure and wilfully secure. It is in this context that we might read Foucault’s characterisation of contemporary state power as a ‘tricky combination...of individualization techniques, and of totalization procedures’ (1982: 782). The subjects of this power are both subordinated *and* ‘free’, protected *and* endangered, participative *and* docile.

Burke argues that one of the means by which the relationship between insecurity and security ‘forms a powerful mechanism of subjectivity’ is the ways ‘in which images of fear and insecurity (at a personal, societal or geopolitical level – often all at once) can be used to manipulate individuals and populations (2008: 51). Such a reading was implied in the discussion above about the ways in which security neutralises political action; we might, however, look more fundamentally at how fear operates with respect to security. Through his reading of the relationship between Nietzsche and security, James Der Derian offers a valuable perspective here. Noting that ‘Nietzsche has suffered the greatest neglect in international theory’, he offers a critique of security as herd morality (2009: 151): ‘Nietzsche’s worry is that the collective reaction against

older, more primal fears has created an even worse danger: the tyranny of the herd, the lowering of man, the apathy of the last man which controls through conformity and rules through passivity' (ibid., 158-9). Highlighting the politics of the securitized, protected subject, Der Derian suggests that '[t]he "influence of timidity", as Nietzsche puts it, creates a people who are willing to subordinate affirmative values to the "necessities" of security' (ibid., 157), a logic which ensures that 'the security of the sovereign, rational self and state comes at the cost of ambiguity, uncertainty, paradox – all that makes a free life worthwhile' (ibid., 159). The will to security and its inextricable link with the spectre of insecurity demands a subordination of affirmative becoming, a herd morality which enslaves through its affirmation of life as slavery, which promises existence in exchange for life, the fiction of foundations in place of the perpetual project of political becoming. In such a context, fear serves to erect familiar boundaries: '[t]he strange and the alien remain unexamined, the unknown becomes identified as evil, and evil provokes hostility – recycling the desire for security' (ibid., 157).

Resisting Security

Edkins asks provocative questions about the refusal to entertain the foundationalism of security: 'Would it be overwhelming to exist without the shelter of a social fantasy? Such an existence involves facing, on a day-to-day basis, questions many of us prefer to forget, if we can. What would a world be like where the impossibility of security was acknowledged' (2003: 368-369). Gesturing towards the problems of hegemonic ontologies of agency, she suggests that 'for the new cosmology to be adopted and acknowledged in the public sphere would involve a shift away from the notion of sovereign state and sovereign individual upon which that sphere is currently based. It would entail the development of a new vision of political community, one that was not based on the coming together of discrete particles to produce closed systems' (ibid., 369). As the limitations with respect to theorising agency which can be identified in CSS make clear, the reluctance and/or a refusal to contend with such foundationlessness contextualises the desire to securitize in a more 'emancipatory' fashion. I suggest that, despite this, there remains space to disrupt rather than reaffirm the logics of security.

For Dillon, the task is to make security questionable, and to question it, in order to arrive at the threshold of the political. This questioning *must* begin at the level of

metaphysics – without this, the logics by which security dominates political space cannot be fully understood or challenged. Questioning security, for Dillon, allows us to reveal and challenge 'the technologising anti-politics of our current (inter)national politics of security' (ibid., 20). In the modern age, Dillon argues, we now know that neither metaphysics nor our politics of security can secure the security of truth or life - 'which was their reciprocating *raison d'être* (and *raison d'état*)' (ibid., 24):

Most importantly, we now know that the very will to security - the will to power of sovereign presence in both metaphysics and modern politics - is not only a prime incitement to violence in the Western tradition of thought, and to the globalisation of its (inter)national politics, but also self-defeating; in that it does not in its turn merely endanger, but actually engenders danger in response to its own discursive dynamic (ibid., 24-25).

To move forwards here, Dillon argues that we should rethink the limits generally imposed on political imagination, rendered through calculated approaches to the human species (i.e., the population), through technologies rooted in closure and submission, promoting 'that which keeps things in play...exciting a thinking, in particular, which seeks continuously to keep "open the play of [political] possibility by subtracting the sense of necessity, completeness, and smugness from established organ-izations of life", all of which are promoted by an insistence upon security' (ibid., 27, citing Connolly 1993: 153). We might open the political by interrogating the 'struggle of the duality' entailed in security/insecurity (ibid., 22), refusing the foundationalism and closure which the binary motivates and, in the context of such a refusal, attempting to find a place of play which overcomes depoliticisation and responds positively to the uncertainty uncovered.

Responding to (and seeking to displace) binary logics is, with good reason, a major concern for critical scholars. As Spike Peterson argues,

[a]s long as we remain locked in dichotomies, we cannot accurately understand and are less likely to transform social relations: not only do oppositional constructions distort the contextual complexity of social reality, they set limits on the questions we ask and the alternatives we consider. True to their "origin" (Athenian objectivist metaphysics), the dichotomies most naturalized in Western world views (abstract-concrete, reason-emotion, mind-body, culture-nature,

public-private) are both medium and outcome of objectification practices. Retaining them keeps us locked in to their objectifying-reifying-lens on our world(s) and who we are (1992b: 54).

Much of what follows proceeds on such terms. The binaries of security/insecurity, order/chaos, protector/protectee, sovereign/anarchy, and more, impose a theoretical domination which conditions political possibility in particular (hegemonic, statist) ways, and work quickly to incorporate challenges within their epistemic totality. The task of resistance must be to break down such binaries. One useful direction with regards to security here has been Burke's mobilisation of aporias.

Burke suggests that important opportunities have been generated by the proliferation of conceptions of security in the post-Cold War world. Noting, as many have, the conflict between many different formulations of security - stretched, heavy, conflictual, incommensurable - he resists the temptation to dismiss efforts because of their resulting epistemological overload, and instead identifies the resultant aporia uncovered by these humanist critiques (2007: 30). He continues:

[a]n aporia is an event that prevents a metaphysical discourse from fulfilling its promised unity: not a contradiction which can be brought into the dialectic, smoothed over and resolved into the unity of the concept, but an untotalisable problem at the heart of the concept, disrupting its trajectory, emptying out its fullness, opening out its closure. Jacques Derrida writes of aporia being an "impasse", a path than cannot be travelled; an "interminable experience" that, however, "must remain if one wants to think, to make come or to let come any event of decision or responsibility" (ibid., citing Derrida 1993: 16).

Burke further argues that

[i]t is important to open up and focus on aporias: they bring possibility, the hope of breaking down the hegemony and assumptions of powerful political concepts, to think and create new social, ethical and economic relationships outside their oppressive structures of political and epistemological order – in short, they help us to think new paths (ibid., 30-31).

Burke invites us to think and to create new paths, but to do so whilst remaining at the impasse. To do otherwise, i.e., to maintain fantasies of escape or rehabilitation, would

be to repeat the approach of much of CSS, to ‘leave in place (and possibly strengthen) a key structural feature of the elite strategy [which is opposed]: its claim to embody truth and to fix the contours of the real’ (ibid., 31). Instead, ‘the aporetic stranger “does not simply cross a given threshold” but “affects the very experience of the threshold...to the point of annihilating or rendering indeterminate all the distinctive signs of a prior identity, beginning with the very border that delineated a legitimate home and assured lineage, names and language...”’ (ibid., 30, citing Derrida 1993: 12-35).

In this sense, a disruption of security must remain at the threshold, neither choosing between ‘securities’ or affirming any ‘escape’.¹⁵ Such a concern is not dissimilar to the scepticism of seeking a response rooted in logics of (counter-)hegemony. Disrupting the terms of security/insecurity should be undertaken not as a means to reassert new hegemonic concepts, new securities, but as a means to opening new possibilities at the margins which refuse the metaphysical-existential aspirations which condition and make possible the authority (and domination) of security and hegemony. The epistemic order of security cannot be shaken if we simply seek a new, hegemonic order.

Burke offers a dual strategy for intervention here. The first part is the exploration of new ethical relations predicated on ‘a dialogue with the Other that might allow space for the unknown and unfamiliar’ (ibid., 53). The second, more relevant here, is to assert ‘the space for agency, both in challenging available possibilities for being and their larger socio-economic implications’ (ibid., 52). Resisting security requires tactics which empower individuals to recognise the implications of their embeddedness within security, ‘to challenge and rewrite’ that within which they are embedded, and to understand the possibilities for collective efforts to transform the ‘larger structures of being, exchange and power that sustain (and have been sustained by) these forms...As Derrida suggests, this is to open up aporetic possibilities that transgress and call into question the boundaries of the self, society and the international that security seeks to

¹⁵ Derrida argues that attempts to escape, that is ‘[t]o decide to change terrain, in a discontinuous and irruptive fashion, by brutally placing oneself outside, and by affirming an absolute break and difference’, are deeply problematic. About such strategies, he notes, ‘[w]ithout mentioning all the other forms of *trompe-l’oeil* perspective in which such a displacement can be caught, thereby inhabiting more naively and more strictly than ever the inside one declares one has deserted, the simple practice of language ceaselessly reinstates the new terrain on the oldest ground’ (1982: 135).

imagine and police' (ibid., 52-53). These important passages point towards the need for an approach to agency which seeks to affect and transform, but not to conquer.

Burke makes space for an approach which disrupts totalising political imaginaries (of security, order, subjectivity), which refuses to assert counter-hegemonies, and which approaches aporias of security as an opportunity to intervene whilst taking account for the violences of security. In this sense, resting at the impasse of security, occupying its borders and contours with insecurity, is not a move which abandons possibility; on the contrary, it is precisely a move which takes seriously the opportunity to explore possibility beyond the violences and authorities of security/insecurity. As Dillon argues, '[a]porias do not disarm. They empower. They do not negate. They provoke. They do not close down our capacity to respond. They open it up...The aporia of justice is thus also a beginning not an end. It does not silence. It incites' (2007: 92). As many of the explorations which follow will seek to outline, much can be gained if we remain at the margins and seek to break down the binary logics of security.

Conclusion

This chapter has established the reading of CSS and the understanding of security which guide this thesis. Several important positions have been established. The first is that CSS has, on the whole, been faithful to a hegemonic ontology of agency which sets particular limits on how it has explored possibilities within the context of security (both when seeking to rehabilitate or to reject discourses of security). Much of what follows seeks to explore what might be gained by refusing such an ontology. The second position has been to establish a critical perspective with regards to the concept of security. Against those approaches which seek to align the discourse with some conception of emancipation, it has been argued that security is too firmly embedded in logics of conceptual and political mastery to serve as a referent for political action, and that it may be more productive to think in terms of a resistance to the terms of security/insecurity. Such is the focus of the rest of the thesis.

The next chapter introduces anarchism as a theoretical perspective which offers useful direction in the context established here. With emphasis placed on anarchism's anti-authoritarian and anti-hegemonic qualities, and on the principle of prefigurative

direct action, I suggest that the mobilisation of anarchist interventions, critiques and subjectivities might be a powerful position from which to resist (and recreate) the politics of security. The explorations in these first two chapters thereby establish the frame(s) of interpretation through which the ethnographic content of later chapters is mobilised.

Chapter Two: Anarchism

This chapter introduces anarchism as a route through which resistance to the politics of security (as an onto-political technology of conceptual and political mastery) might be conceptualised and practiced. More specifically, it mobilises anarchism as a frame through which the ethnographic content of later chapters can be situated, focusing on those features of anarchism which most effectively animate an interpretation with respect to the intersections between resistance and security. Without wishing to marginalise the diversity of ways in which anarchism has been understood and practiced, I outline a particular approach which begins its analysis from the perspective of anti-authoritarian direct action, suggesting that it is from such a viewpoint that the wide range of practices, debates and dissonances which occupy the anarchist signifier might be most productively understood and mobilised in the context of this thesis. As such, and after a discussion about how anarchism has been understood more generally, the chapter begins its substantive analysis by exploring anarchist ideas about prefigurative direct action. The anarchist critique of statist and vanguard politics leads to an understanding that ‘emancipation’ cannot be achieved through logics of representation. For anarchists, the preference for prefigurative direct action has thus been at the centre of a theory and practice which seeks to avoid (and resist) the hegemonic ontologies which have plagued much of contemporary radical politics. Particular emphasis is placed on Landauer’s ideas about prefiguration; anticipating in many ways Foucault’s governmentality thesis, Landauer provides a lively and important theory of revolution which informs the arguments of the thesis in a variety of ways.

The second half of the chapter looks in detail at a particular series of debates in contemporary anarchist theory as a means by which to further clarify the approach to anarchism taken in the thesis. These debates concern the moves made by some to rethink or reenergise anarchism by bringing it into dialogue with poststructural (or, more broadly, postmodern) theory. As with the introduction of poststructural perspectives into IR theory, this move has been controversial. I tease out some of these controversies, with the intention being to think about how such debates offer resources for exploring the place of authority within anarchist theory. The discussion helps to frame arguments about the politics of subjectivity, authority, perpetual critique, and the theory/practice binary, all of which will be important in situating the ethnographic content of later chapters. Finally the section considers the charge that a ‘postmodern

turn' for anarchism blunts its capacity to respond to the post-9/11 security situation, taking the opportunity to tie the discussion here to the concerns of the previous chapter. The chapter ends by looking forward to the ethnographic content of the following chapters, discussing in more detail how the particular approach to anarchism offered here functions to frame the forthcoming explorations.

Part One: Introducing Anarchism

There is no established or fixed means by which to conceptualise anarchism. Whilst particular influences, lineages and traditions can be identified, care has been taken to allow borders to remain ambiguous, affinities fluid, differences and contrasts playful. As Tadzio Mueller notes, '[a] look at any flyer written by an anarchist group will usually reveal the coexistence of a variety of conceptual positions, some of which may even be mutually contradictory' (2011: 78). The intention here is not to provide a survey of various approaches (of which there are many), but to introduce and explore the particular conception which will be used in this thesis.¹⁶ Nevertheless it is useful to begin with some basic definitions, as a starting point for further discussion.

One influential statement of anarchist principles comes from Peter Kropotkin's article for the 1905 edition of *The Encyclopaedia Britannica*, where he states that

Anarchism...is the name given to a principle or theory of life and conduct under which society is conceived without government - harmony in such a society being obtained, not by submission to law, or by obedience to any authority, but by free agreements concluded between the various groups, territorial and professional, freely constituted for the sake of production and consumption, as also for the satisfaction of the infinite variety of needs and aspirations of a civilized being (2002: 284).

In a similar vein, Noam Chomsky argues that anarchism 'can be conceived as a kind of voluntary socialism', (2005: 133) and Errico Malatesta argues that anarchism refers to 'the condition of a people governing itself without benefit of constituted authority', necessary because the absence of government would imply 'natural order, harmony of

¹⁶ For surveys of anarchism (as both a theoretical and practical signifier) see Kinna (2005), McKay (2008), Gordon (2008: 11-46), Marshall (1993), Ward (2004).

everyone's needs and interests, utter freedom in solidarity' (Malatesta 2005: 355). These three writers, and others, place emphasis on anarchism as a state of being - a set of imaginations, insights or explorations of a future community (or, in the case of Colin Ward, a form of community already existing in everyday interactions (1982)) in which the absence and/or rejection of authority and domination forms the basis of political life.

Other writers place more importance on anarchism as an attitude towards or philosophy of action and resistance. Uri Gordon, arguing that 'anarchism' signifies a particular political culture, emphasises the 'shared repertoire of political action based on direct action, building grassroots alternatives, community outreach and confrontation' and the '[s]hared political language that emphasises resistance to capitalism, the state, patriarchy and more generally to hierarchy and domination' (2008: 4). On similar territory, Graeber suggests that 'Marxism has tended to be a theoretical or analytical discourse about revolutionary strategy; anarchism, an ethical discourse about revolutionary practice' (2009: 211).

This conceptual separation between anarchism as a form of political community and a philosophy of action is offered only to suggest different emphases which tend to arise - it is highly likely that all those cited would agree with one another at least to some extent and, as the chapter will go on to discuss, the vision and the philosophy of action are, to some extent, implicated with one another, and both grounded in a deep suspicion of hierarchical forms of organisation. In this vein, Graeber argues that anarchism should be thought of as a 'movement back and forth' between vision, attitude, and set of practices:

It's when the three reinforce each other - when a revulsion against oppression causes people to try to live their lives in a more self-consciously egalitarian fashion, when they draw on those experiences to produce visions of a more just society, when those visions, in turn, cause them to see existing social arrangements as even more illegitimate and obnoxious - that one can begin to talk about anarchism. *Hence anarchism is in no sense a doctrine. It's a movement, a relationship, a process of purification, inspiration, and experiment* (2009: 215-216, emphasis added).

This perpetual movement has found its voice through a persistent critique of authority and domination, whether in the guise of the state, capitalism, the vanguard party, organised religion, patriarchy, and so forth.¹⁷

The label 'anarchist' is itself a source of some ambiguity. While it might initially be tempting to simply take it to refer to an advocate of 'anarchism', this would be limiting, for a number of reasons. Graeber notes that the founding intellectual figures of anarchism (such as William Godwin, Max Stirner, Bakunin and Pierre-Joseph Proudhon) 'did not see themselves as creating some great new theory' and were 'more likely to see themselves as giving a name and voice to a certain kind of insurgent common sense, one they assumed to be as old as history' (2009: 213). In this sense, the label differs from those such as Marxism in its grounding in a spirit which cannot but exceed the boundaries of the signifier. Such a concern also runs in terms of influence; many of the tactics and ideas of current social movements, not least the alter-globalization movement of the early 21st century, have drawn from anarchism (Graeber 2002). A second issue with the 'anarchist' label is raised by Gordon, who cites Not4Prophet's refusal to self-identify:

Personally I am not down with any titles, tags, or designations. I've spent most of my adult life trying to find ways to do away with genres and borders and envelopes, so I think we are always better off if we don't label ourselves or allow anyone to label us. Anarchy or anarchism is really something we seek and live and struggle for, so it doesn't matter what we call ourselves (or don't) if we are in the midst of action doing it (2008: 13).

Day expresses both concerns when he differentiates between 'anarchists' (who explicitly self-identify) and 'anarchistic' elements within a group or series of tactics (2005: 20).

Though there is therefore considerable ambiguity attached to the terms anarchism and anarchist, there is also a remarkably resonant affinity performed by and implied in their usage, and strength drawn from their diversity. Figures ranging from Bakunin, Goldman, Proudhon and Kropotkin, to Stirner, Tolstoy, Landauer and Martin Buber have used the term to ground and animate a critique of authority and

¹⁷ Elsewhere Graeber argues that '[w]e are talking less about a body of theory than about an attitude, or perhaps a faith: a rejection of certain types of social relation, a confidence that certain others are a much better ones [sic] on which to build a decent or human society, a faith that it would be possible to do so' (2007: 303).

domination. Whilst their approaches were often widely divergent - Bakunin's libertarian Marxism, Stirner's individualistic egoism and Buber's dialogical spiritualism differ significantly - their shared concerns with respect to the alienation and dispossession produced by authoritarian or oppressive social relations are powerful, as is their commitment to the struggle for a (loosely defined) freedom unconstrained and undetermined by the state, socio-economic inequalities, and so forth. Though there are boundary-producing performances (as the fierce responses to the suggestions that 'anarcho-capitalism' can seriously be considered a form of anarchism make clear), anarchism has been relatively successful at resisting doctrinalisation.¹⁸

Within the context of this diversity, the central axis linking anarchist approaches has been the persistent critique of social relations founded on authority, hierarchy and domination. Most emphatically, this critique has been targeted at the state. Bakunin argued that '[i]f there is a state, then necessarily there is domination and consequently slavery' and that '[s]o-called popular representatives and rulers of the state elected by the entire nation on the basis of universal suffrage – the last word of the Marxists, as well as of the democratic school – is a lie behind which the despotism of a ruling minority is concealed, a lie all the more dangerous in that it represents itself as the expression of a sham popular will' (2005a: 178). Similarly, in a communiqué against the First World War signed by a number of important anarchists including Malatesta, Goldman and Alexander Berkman, it was stated that 'the anarchists' role in the current tragedy is to carry on proclaiming that there is but one war of liberation: the one waged in every country by the oppressed against the oppressor, the exploited against the exploiter' (Malatesta et al. 2005: 389), and the anarchist and pacifist Leo Tolstoy wrote that '[t]o deliver men from the terrible and ever-increasing evils of armaments and war, we want neither congresses nor conferences, nor treaties, nor courts of arbitration, but the destruction of those instruments of violence which are called Governments, and from which humanity's greatest evils flow' (1990: 86). Echoing Bakunin, Émile Henry emphasised the importance of including Marxist attempts to capture state power within

¹⁸ Iain McKay's contemptuous (and highly detailed) response to the question 'Is "anarcho"-capitalism a type of anarchism?' provides an indicative response. He begins his seventy-page rebuttal by stating that '[a]rguing with fools is seldom rewarded, but to let their foolishness to go unchallenged risks allowing them to deceive those who are new to anarchism...Anarchism has always been anti-capitalist and any "anarchism" that claims otherwise cannot be part of the anarchist tradition' (2008: 478).

such critiques, writing that 'essentially, socialism changes the established order not one jot. It retains the authoritarian principle' (Henry 2005a: 396).

Some (post)modern critics, notably Saul Newman, have claimed that anarchism is fundamentally limited in this series of critiques, because it casts 'the state as the essential evil in society, from which other evils are derived' (2007: 47). Whilst this charge will be discussed in more detail below it is important to note that, whilst anarchists have traditionally placed great emphasis on the state, this is because the state and its institutions are seen as 'the most extreme example of the use of authority in society' (Walter 2002: 35); anarchist thought has not necessarily been confined by such terms, and has mobilised critiques of property, patriarchy, morality, religion and more as social relations which entrench authority, conduct and perpetuate domination, and limit the exploration and cultivation of alternatives.

A key component of these critiques of authority has been the move to displace or denaturalise the discursive connection between organisation and authority. As Nicolas Walter argues, 'Anarchists actually want much more organisation, though organisation without authority. The prejudice about anarchism derives from a prejudice about organisation; people cannot see that organisation does not depend on authority, that it actually works best without authority' (2002: 38). He continues:

Without rulers to obey or leaders to follow, we shall all have to make up our own minds. To keep all this going, the multiplicity and complexity of links between individuals will be increased, not reduced. Such organisation may be untidy and inefficient, but it will be much closer to the needs and feelings of the people concerned. If something cannot be done without the old kind of organisation, without authority and compulsion, it probably isn't worth doing and would be better left undone (*ibid.*, 38-39).

Whilst, as will be discussed, it may be more productive to view anarchism as seeking a productive tension between organisation and disorganisation, order and disorder, consensus and dissensus, refusing the fictitious (and depoliticising) closures these terms represent (as Ward notes, 'the punitive, interfering lover of order is usually so because of his own unfreedom and insecurity' (1982: 31)), Walter powerfully invites a discussion about how order and organisation are conceptualised, particularly with respect to the

place of authority as a necessary prerequisite for both (rather than as specifying a particular, politicised form).¹⁹

One important contemporary exposition of the anarchist position on the critiques noted here, which guides the approach taken in this thesis, comes from Day's reading of the logic of and struggle against hegemony in radical thought. In his book *Gramsci is Dead*, Day notes the centrality of conceptions and analyses of hegemony for radical political praxis. By the logic of hegemony, he means

...a process through which various factions struggle over meaning, identity and political power. To use the words of Antonio Gramsci, a key thinker in this lineage, a social group which seeks hegemony strives to "dominate antagonistic groups, which it tends to 'liquidate,' or to subjugate perhaps even by armed force", at the same time as it attempts to "lead" kindred and allied groups (Gramsci 1971: 57). Hegemony is a simultaneously coercive and consensual struggle for *dominance*, seen in nineteenth- and twentieth-century marxisms as limited to the context of a particular nation-state, but increasingly being analysed at a global level (2005: 6-7, emphasis in original).

Day argues that the response to hegemony, in Marxist and liberal theory, and in radical social movements, has traditionally been to seek a *counter*-hegemony, to 'shift the historical balance back, as much as possible, in favour of the oppressed' (ibid.). Significantly he responds to the counter-hegemonic instinct by insisting that '[t]o argue in this way...is to remain within the logic of neoliberalism; it is to accept what I call the *hegemony of hegemony*. By this I mean to refer to the assumption that effective social change can only be achieved simultaneously and *en mass*, across an entire national or supranational space' (ibid., 8, emphasis in original). For Day, counter-hegemonic projects do little to displace the onto-political totalisations which underpin extant hegemonies, and are likely to rely upon and sustain relations of domination.

The previous chapter argued that CSS has, on the whole, remained committed to and complicit in the hegemony of hegemony. It also noted that the logic of security is itself implicated here, its promises dependent upon the impossible but attractive arrival of hegemony, hegemony's deferred but always approaching security conditional on the eradication of its perpetual excess. In this context, the mobilisation of a counter-

¹⁹ See also Ward (2011a).

hegemony, an alternative regime which promises emancipation and 'true' security, is only ever a limited challenge, which does not fundamentally displace the legitimation of and impulse towards authority, domination and mastery of its counterpart. An approach which seeks to mobilise anarchism against the politics of security must therefore begin precisely by seeking to resist or displace the logic of hegemony. Day suggests that such a move can be seen in those social movements who reject the hegemony of hegemony and demonstrate what he calls an '*affinity for affinity*', that is, for non-universalizing, non-hierarchical, non-coercive relationships based and mutual aid and shared ethical commitments [sic]' (ibid., 9, emphasis in original). He argues that those groups who display an affinity for affinity might help to displace, rather than reify, the hegemony of hegemony.

Tied to his twin reading of hegemony and affinity, Day explores the concepts of the 'politics of demand' and 'politics of the act'. The politics of demand is understood as a 'mode of social action [which] assumes the existence of a dominant nation attached to a monopolistic state, which must be persuaded to give the gifts of *recognition* and *integration* to subordinate identities and communities' (ibid., 14-15, emphasis in original); that is, as a form of social action which proceeds through petition and representation, which fetishizes relations of domination and, in the terms used here, mobilises a hegemonic ontology of agency. This is contrasted with a politics of the act, an alternative form which

...relies upon, and results from, getting over the hope that the state and corporate forms, as structures of domination, exploitation and division, are somehow capable of producing effects of emancipation. By avoiding making demands in the first place, it offers a way out of the cycle through which requests for "freedom" or "rights" are used to justify an intensification of the societies of discipline and control (ibid., 15).

A politics of the act prioritises experimentation, creativity and prefiguration. Throughout his book, Day gives examples of where the 'newest social movements', including anarchist groups, indigenous movements, postcolonial movements, queer identity groups and others are rejecting a reliance upon the politics of demand and exploring a politics of the act. His work serves to displace the assumption that the only possible means of political intervention are those which conform to the logics of

hegemony, and suggests that an affinity-based approach might hold more interesting possibilities.

It is important to resist the temptation to conceptualise the politics of demand and the politics of the act as secure and separate categories, as ways of distinguishing between fundamentally different types of actor and action, or as distinct properties of an intervention; this would bring us uncomfortably close to traditional conceptions of agents and agency. Day arguably falls into this trap, which may be a result of the somewhat cursory and uncritical attention he pays to the myriad groups identified within his study (although he does refer to the Australian Aboriginal movement as displaying ‘a hybrid logic, combining elements of both hegemony and affinity’ (ibid., 193)). Instead, we can see these categories as frames of interpretation which might help to unpick different trends and tendencies within a set of practices. As many examples in the thesis demonstrate, both dynamics can be seen in anti-militarist action, often simultaneously (or, at least, alongside one another). What Day offers is a lens through which to think about how different forms and practices of resistance undermine or reinforce dominant power relations, and to do so from a perspective wherein the distinction between hegemonic and anti-hegemonic resistances is mobilised to productive effect.

Day’s moves here should be read within the broader framework of anarchist approaches to political intervention. It is to these that the discussion now turns, to further contextualise what might be meant by a politics of the act, and to explore the important concepts of direct action and prefiguration.

Part Two: The Politics of Prefigurative Direct Action

Anarchists are involved in (and/or have intimately influenced) a wide range of social action, working on issues such as poverty (‘London Coalition Against Poverty’), union building (‘Industrial Workers of the World’), animal rights (‘Animal Liberation Front’), anti-arms trade activism (the Anti-Militarist Network, Smash EDO), anti-colonial movements (‘Anarchists Against the Wall’), anti-corporate groups (‘Corpwatch’, Space Hijackers) and many others. Many anarchists might work with several different groups, across such a spectrum (seeing the struggles as intertwined, separable only at significant praxeological cost). The tactics used, and the philosophies which underpin such tactics,

must be understood through, alongside, and constitutive of the wider theoretical perspectives.

A diverse range of tactical approaches have been employed in the name of anarchism, including assassinations (or 'propaganda by the deed'), general strikes, sabotage, civil disobedience, radical unionisation, building alternative communities and spaces, education and information dissemination, and many others. At the core of these strategies has always been the scepticism of political interventions based on authority and/or hierarchy, and those predicated on or disciplined through logics of hegemony. As noted above, Bakunin placed great emphasis on the dangers posed by those who seek to capture state power in order to emancipate the oppressed, claiming that '[l]iberty can be created only by liberty, by an insurrection of all the people and the voluntary organization of the workers from below upward' (2005a: 179). Against Marx, he claimed that society must evolve not 'in accordance with some ideal scheme devised by a few sages or servants' and must be a spontaneous expression of the masses (2005c: 208).²⁰

The refusal of logics of hierarchy and hegemony are bound up with the anarchist rejection of representation, which has been cast as an impediment to liberation and creativity. Todd May frames this critique well:

The crucial element...is the transfer of power. In order for liberation to occur, individuals and groups must retain their power; they cannot cede it without risking the loss of the goal for which all political struggles occur: empowerment. For anarchists, the goal must be reflected in the process; otherwise, the permanent possibility of distorting the revolutionary process will be imminent. Leninist vanguardism is anathema to anarchists, precisely because it represents the ultimate form of representation (1994: 47-48).

He continues:

The critique of representation in the anarchist tradition runs deeper than just political representation. Kropotkin, in an article on anarchist morality, wrote

²⁰ Elsewhere, he wrote that '[t]o allege that a group of individuals, even should they be the most intelligent and most well-meaning of individuals, will have the capacity to perform as the brains, the soul, the directing, unifying will of the revolutionary movement and the economic organization of the world's proletariat, is such an affront to common sense and historical experience, that one wonders, in amazement, how a fellow as intelligent as Mr. Marx could have come up with it' (2005b: 190).

that respect for the individual implies that "we refuse to assume a right which moralists have always taken upon themselves to claim, that of mutilating the individual in the name of some ideal." What motivates the critique of political representation is the idea that in giving people images of who they are and what they desire, one wrests from them the ability to decide those matters for themselves (ibid., 48).²¹

May's argument raises two important issues. One is the importance of reflecting the goal in the process, that is, prefigurative politics. The other is that anarchists have refused to confine their critique to particular institutions, as is sometimes suggested, understanding that authoritarian social relations are constituted through a dispersed array of (representational) social discourses. This latter point will be discussed further in the second half of the chapter. First, it is useful to consider the ways in which the anti-representationalist ethos of prefigurative direct action has been an important feature of anarchism.

Direct Action

Defined through a refusal to appeal to a 'higher power' to achieve one's ends, direct action exemplifies the anarchist scepticism of representational and hegemonic ontologies of agency. In short, direct action signifies an intervention which seeks to impact directly upon a situation; in David Wieck's terms, it '*realizes the end desired*' (1996: 375, emphasis in original):

To take a homely example. If a butcher weighs one's meat with his or her thumb on the scale, one may complain about it and tell him he is a bandit who robs the poor, and if he persists and one does nothing else, this is mere talk; one may call the Department of Weights and Measures, and this is indirect action; or one may, talk failing, insist on weighing one's own meat, bring along a scale to check the butcher's weight, take one's business somewhere else, help open a co-operative store, etc., and these are all direct actions. (ibid.).

In her discussion of anarchist direct action against the separation barrier the Israeli government is constructing in the West Bank, Polly Pallister-Wilkins provides a useful

²¹ See also Jesse Cohn (2006).

example of anarchist direct action. She examines the group Anarchists Against the Wall, who have worked with Palestinians to physically pull down or dismantle sections of the barrier. As opposed to other activist groups in Israel such as 'Peace Now', Anarchists Against the Wall are defined through 'a refutation of the assumption that as a collective of people hoping to change something they will take their claim to the state' (2009: 398). Pallister-Wilkins offers three reasons why they act 'directly' rather than appeal to 'legitimate' authorities; the first is the refusal to reinforce a politics of demand and so render power to dominant institutions, in this case the Israeli state; the second is the concern that the state simply does not listen; the third is the 'almost impossible task of identifying all those interest groups who have converged to benefit from the separation Wall and thus cast a large and almost impenetrable network of domination' (ibid., 402).²² It is for these reasons that the group refuse to appeal to the state to rectify the situation (whether through petition or direct participation in the 'political' process), and instead intervene directly, attempting to halt or hinder construction themselves.

Another important account of this ethos comes from Goldman's critique of the women's suffrage campaign, which she argued merely served to bring women into line with the violences and limitations of dominant political structures, and did little to disrupt central patriarchal attitudes; '[n]ow, woman is confronted with the necessity of emancipating herself from emancipation, if she really desires to be free. This may sound paradoxical, but is, nevertheless, only too true' (1969: 215). She writes that

[t]he right to vote, or equal civil rights, may be good demands, but true emancipation begins neither at the polls nor in courts. It begins in woman's soul. History tells us that every oppressed class gained true liberation from its masters through its own efforts. It is necessary that woman will learn that lesson, that she realize that her freedom will reach as far as her power to achieve her freedom reaches (ibid., 224).

Goldman further argues that 'if partial emancipation is to become a complete and true emancipation of woman, it will have to do away with the ridiculous notion that to be loved, to be sweetheart and mother, is synonymous with being slave or subordinate. It will have to do away with the absurd notion of the dualism of the sexes, or that man and woman represent two antagonistic worlds' (ibid., 224-225). Goldman's argument is that the freedom to partake in, or achieved through, the dominant political context is a

²² Pallister-Wilkins notes the specifically Foucauldian dimensions here.

limited and potentially counterproductive victory: '[e]mancipation, as understood by the majority of its adherents and exponents, is of too narrow a scope to permit the boundless love and ecstasy contained in the deep emotion of the true woman, sweetheart, mother, in freedom' (ibid., 217). Against these conventional conceptions of emancipation, Goldman insisted that anarchists 'believe with Stirner that man has as much liberty as he is willing to take. Anarchism therefore stands for direct action, the open defiance of, and resistance to, all laws and restrictions, economic, social, and moral' (ibid., 65). Instead of relying upon (and thereby reinforcing) dominant power relations, anarchists such as Goldman argue for a praxis which encourages people to directly break down, transform and recreate the conditions of their lives, to eschew representation, and to recognise the domination which accompanies hegemonic or sovereign political formations.

Many of the examples of UK-based anti-militarist activism explored in this thesis exemplify such refusals and affirmations. To emphasise them is not to deny that anarchists do sometimes appeal to (or seek to influence) dominant political structures; rather, it is to note that anarchists recognise the serious limitations (and possible counterproductive effects) of such approaches. As Day argues:

...every demand, in anticipating a response, *perpetuates* those structures, which exist precisely in anticipation of demands. This leads to a positive feedback loop, in which the ever increasing depth and breadth of apparatuses of discipline and control create ever new sites of antagonism, which produce new demands, thereby increasing the quantity and intensity of discipline and control...Clearly, the fundamental fantasy of the politics of demand is that the currently hegemonic formation will recognize the validity of the claim presented to it and respond in a way that produces an event of emancipation. Most of the time, however, it does not; instead it defers, dissuades or provides a partial solution to one problem that exacerbates several others (2011: 107-108).

Direct action should not be seen as a particular method or tactic; instead, it is a philosophy of intervention which refuses to have the terms of engagement set by predominant expectations and customs of political behaviour, rejects the expectations which accompany and reperform a hegemonic ontology of agency, and explores possibilities which might emerge in the conduct of such refusals. For anarchists, to do otherwise is to render resistance impotent in the face of the constitutive frameworks of

society, and give up the possibility of substantial change. As Sandra Jeppesen argues, '[direct action] is not a form of protest, it is a way of life' (2011: 156).

As noted, anarchist direct action takes many forms, including property destruction, blockades, and setting up co-ops to provide direct services. Many different tactics and types of direct action might be used in any one (or across several) campaigns. They range across various spectrums, from violent to non-violent, confrontational to non-confrontational, small to large.²³ They may seek publicity, but they may forsake this, finding value in action in and of itself. They may even challenge and subvert dominant conceptions of what it means to act 'directly', expanding the range of possible interventions and instantiating 'guerrilla movements of the imagination' (Gilman-Opalsky 2011: 106). Importantly, there is no particular form valorised above others as the more effective or valid approach; priority is given to a 'diversity of tactics' which allow those working within a particular context to determine the means of their intervention and exploration. This commitment to a diversity of tactics represents both the instinct that a multiplicitous approach is a more effective form of action in a tactical sense (Adams 2011: 134), and the refusal to establish a counter-hegemonic ontology of agency, allowing for difference and dissonance to remain productive.

The particular politics of various forms of direct action are explored throughout the thesis; here the concern is to highlight the *prefigurative* nature of direct action. All direct action, to a greater or lesser extent, seeks to directly refuse the imperative to appeal to the 'proper authorities', and attempts to prefigure more pluralised forms of political relationality. If, as Colin Ward argues, anarchists seek a 'society of participants' (1982: 26), this can only be achieved by participating thus (rather than petitioning the state for permission for more participation). This point, though important, begs a more substantive examination of prefiguration.

Prefiguration

Beginning with the criticism of Marx's preference for a hierarchical and centralised International, anarchists have emphasised the importance of prefiguration. Marianne Maeckelbergh states that 'practising prefiguration has meant always trying to make the

²³ The ambiguities of these concepts and axes notwithstanding.

processes we use to achieve our immediate goals an embodiment of our ultimate goals, so that there is no distinction between how we fight and what we fight for' (2009: 66). This has led to a strong focus on *process*, on attempts to organise in ways which reflect ideas of equality, autonomy and non-domination, and continual interrogation of the hierarchies and authorities which can arise within anarchist communities (and, indeed, in the social sphere more broadly). Throughout his 2009 book *Direct Action: An Ethnography*, Graeber demonstrates the constant self-scrutiny on the part of anarchists engaging in different forms of resistance, from the non-hierarchical organisation of meetings to expressions of solidarity during difficult moments at demonstrations. Gordon also gives powerful examples of moves made in the spirit of prefiguration, including the reorganisation of meetings and activist spaces in order to deal with overly masculinised contexts (and, more broadly, to confront inequalities of power as they are revealed) (2008: 47-77).

It is important to clarify that the attempts to seek a confluence between means and ends does not mean that the means of intervention are shaped in accordance with already defined 'ends'. Prefiguration is not a rational calculation or a bureaucratic impediment to effective political organising. Rather, it signifies a dynamic interplay whereby speculative and creative interventions in the direction of 'ends' are explored and deconstructed in the process of anarchist action. It is not so much the attempts to live utopias (of which, as I argue below, anarchists have remained sceptical) as it is the necessary (and necessarily problematic) attempts to imagine ways of being and relating otherwise, and to explore such speculations (often deeply critically). This reading of prefiguration will guide much of the analysis presented throughout the thesis, serving in particular to highlight ways in which anti-militarists prefigure critical counter-subjectivities as they displace the politics of hegemony and security.

Several interconnected reasons lie behind the prefigurative ethos. The first is the concern, already raised, that the manner in which action is performed will inevitably filter into the results - the means and ends are, in this respect, the same thing, and attempts to divorce them moves quickly into the trappings of Leninist vanguardism. Reflecting on her experiences in post-1917 Russia, Goldman insisted that

[n]o revolution can ever succeed as a factor of liberation unless the MEANS used to further it be identical in spirit and tendency with the PURPOSES to be achieved...To-day is the parent of to-morrow. The present casts its shadow far

into the future. That is the law of life, individual and social. Revolution that divests itself of ethical values thereby lays the foundation of injustice, deceit, and oppression for the future society. The *means* used to *prepare* the future become its *cornerstone* (1996: 402-403, emphases in original).

A second reason is the importance of experimentation, that is, the necessity of creating and exploring ways of being otherwise, revealing and exposing the authorities embedded within professedly emancipatory politics. This can involve demonstrating to others that authoritarian and hierarchical social relations are neither necessary nor desirable, and that they can be refused in productive ways. As Day argues, '[a]voiding the quest for masters requires some experience in alternatives to slavery' (2005: 34). The final reason is found in Landauer's philosophy of revolution, and bears more substantive exposition.

Landauer differed from many of his contemporaries in his refusal to conceptualise the state as a corporeal institution which can be destroyed. Instead he advanced a relational ontology which placed very different demands on what it means to resist. In his most well-known passage, he argues that

[a] table can be overturned and a window can be smashed. However, those who believe that the state is also a thing or a fetish that can be overturned or smashed are sophists and believers in the Word. The state is a social relationship; a certain way of people relating to one another. It can be destroyed by creating new social relationships; i.e., by people relating to one another differently.

The absolute monarch said: I am the state. We, who we have imprisoned ourselves in the absolute state, must realize the truth: *we* are the state! And we will be the state as long as we are nothing different; as long as we have not yet created the institutions necessary for a true community and a true society of human beings [sic] (2010: 214, emphasis in original).

Simply attacking abstracted notions of the state ignores the relational and participatory dynamics which make such forms of organisation and domination possible. Following from this view of power and the state which, as Day notes, was influenced by Nietzsche's method and critique of modernity (ibid., 124), Landauer insisted that forms

of protest which adhered to the logics and relations of that which was opposed would only ever serve to entrench the state form.

As James Horrox makes clear, Landauer advocated the creation of ‘functioning enclaves of libertarianism’ as a ‘prefigurative framework for emancipation’ (2010: 195). If participation in dominant systems and relations is unacceptable, and mere opposition a reification, then constructing alternative social relations as a means to weakening relations of domination is necessary. Landauer displays contempt for resistances not preoccupied with the task of creating society anew, feeling that the fetishisation of many of his contemporaries was a reactive position. Criticising anarchists who engaged in assassinations, he argued that ‘what drives them is vanity – a craving for recognition. What they are trying to say is: “We are also doing politics. We are not idle. We are a force to be reckoned with!” These anarchists are not anarchic enough for me’ (2010: 84).

To argue that Landauer was a fierce advocate of creativity is not to say that he rejected contestation, negation and destruction; discussing his admiration for Nietzsche, he applauds how ‘there was activity in Nietzsche’s spiritual quest, there was permanent destruction and creation, collapsing and rebuilding’ (2010: 64). It would be more accurate to say that Landauer was sceptical of *confrontation*, of resistance which defined itself only in opposition to (and so on the terms of) another force. Landauer certainly wanted to do away with the state, with totalising, hegemonic visions of politics, with violence, but he refused to let this overwhelm and define his desire to create something otherwise. Gilles Deleuze’s reflections on affirmation and negation in Nietzschean philosophy cast Landauer’s position well. He argues that, as a part of the project of transvaluation,

...the negative becomes a power of affirming: it is subordinated to affirmation and passes into the service of an excess of life. Negation is no longer the form under which life conserves all that is reactive in itself, but is, on the contrary, the act by which it sacrifices all its reactive forms. In the man who wants to perish, the man who wants to be overcome, negation changes sense, it becomes a power of affirming, a preliminary condition of the development of the affirmative, a premonitory sign and a zealous servant of affirmation as such (2005: 166).

Landauer is clear about his desire to bring down the world of old, but this, for him, has to be part of a creative endeavour. As Horrox shows, Landauer envisaged these project(s) of creation on both micro- and macro- scales, ranging from setting up soup kitchens and guerrilla gardening to larger social movements; indeed, Landauer's ideas were influential in the early Kibbutz movement (2010: 198). He differentiated his own position from that of the Marxists with reference to the tactic and philosophy of the strike, wherein he contrasted his own advocacy of an 'active general strike' in which participants take the tools of production and use them for their own needs with the 'passive general strike' which proceeds 'with arms crossed, which is proclaimed today and with a defiance whose momentary success is very uncertain and whose ultimate failure is absolutely certain' (1911).

Landauer's approach has been important in cautioning against the tendency of some to fetishise the state and so to privilege a reactive politics of confrontation which can only end up perpetuating dominant configurations of power. It demands recognition of the fact that everyday social relations are intimately bound up in the (re)production of the state, capital, patriarchy, and so forth. As Jun writes, '[t]o resist power as though it were somehow *elsewhere* or *outside* is merely to react against power. And as radicals of all stripes have witnessed time and again, such reactive resistance is either quickly defeated by extant power structures or else ends up replicating those power structures at the micropolitical level' (2011: 243). Landauer's insights, whilst demanding, are also stimulating: they push one to seek opportunities for prefigurative direct action anywhere and everywhere, a constant imperative to contract '*other* loyalties... *alternative* foci of power, *different* modes of human behaviour' (Ward 1982: 22, emphases in original). Again, this is an ongoing process which must continually turn sceptically back upon itself to identify latent and emergent exclusions, authorities and hierarchies; a ceaseless interrogation of and creative insurrection against social relations of domination.

Prefigurative politics goes some way to resolving a particular dichotomy which exists within anarchist political philosophy, expressed on the one side by Bakunin, when he states that 'I am truly free only when all human beings, men and women, are equally free. The freedom of other men, far from negating or limiting my freedom, is, on the contrary, its necessary premise and confirmation' (1971). The contrary position, put forward by Hakim Bey, is that to follow Bakunin's logic here is 'simply to cave in to a

kind of nirvana-stupor, to abdicate our humanity, to define ourselves as losers' (2003: 96). Bey's concern is that to suspend the experience of liberation in anticipation of some distant utopia condemns humanity to the present, to slavery. This dichotomy, between the social and relational demands implicated in a striving for freedom, and the dangers of collapsing into self-denial, might be undermined by the focus on prefiguration. Whilst responsibility to the freedom of others is a core ethical principle of anarchism, highlighted in Mitchell Verter's reading of Bakunin, Kropotkin, and Emmanuel Levinas (2010: 72-86), there remains a problematic dimension insofar that a suspension of any experience of freedom until 'then' is in danger of infinite deferral; in Landauer's terms, as 'long as the anarchists – no matter what school they adhere to – put an eternity between themselves and what they want to create, they will never create anything' (2010: 310). Prefigurative experiments with the possibilities of freedom, both for their own sake (see Bey's Temporary Autonomous Zone (TAZ), discussed below), and within the context of direct actions targeted elsewhere, offer a route through this tension between alienated and lived freedom. As Sergei Prozorov, discussing Foucault's ontological freedom, argues, the possibility of the experience of freedom requires liberation from the future; an overly codified telos of political practice functions as an instrument of subjugation in the present (2007: 149). Prefigurative politics are demanding: resistance must take account of its own internal configurations and the ways in which everyday social practice is directly implicated in the functioning of authority. However, in this imperative, crucial opportunities for lived experience are offered.

Part Three: Poststructuralist Anarchism?

Over the past twenty years there has been some debate about the possible intersections, shared concerns, productive tensions and mutually beneficial explorations which might arise from reading poststructuralist political theory and anarchism together. While a large number of writers have engaged with the challenges and opportunities offered, the central figures have been May, Lewis Call and Newman (who has sought to popularise the term 'postanarchism'). They have engaged with a range of thinkers including Foucault, Deleuze and Jean-François Lyotard (May 1994), Jacques Lacan and Derrida

(Newman 2001; 2007), and Nietzsche and Jean Baudrillard (Call 2002), amongst others, as a means by which to rethink anarchist theory and practice.²⁴

The moves here have been controversial, with many dismissing the project as elitist, pointless, self-indulgent and/or dangerous. In the remainder of this chapter I explore some of the debates here, arguing that the criticisms levelled at 'postanarchist' moves are often based on misunderstandings about the purpose and potentials contained therein. I suggest that the insights which come from poststructuralist theory can enrich anarchism, revealing sites of power and authority (and, as such, opportunities for resistance and prefigurative possibilities) which have remained hidden. However, I go on to argue that many of the criticisms levelled at so-called 'classical anarchism' by 'postanarchists' are themselves limited, and do not take account of the complexities of anarchist praxis which have, in many ways, anticipated the challenges discussed and, in some instances, moved beyond certain limitations imposed by Newman and others. Whilst the approach here (and throughout the thesis) is deeply sympathetic to arguments mobilised from a postanarchist position, I refrain from adopting the signifier, for two reasons. The first is that it is perhaps more useful to maintain a productive tension or interplay than it is to seek synthesis. The second, in slight contradiction to this first, is that it is more productive to view the 'postanarchist' challenges within the context of anarchist theory and practice, rather than asserting a separation which, as I show, limits postanarchism's capacity to engage with important resources from anarchism as it has been expressed.

Whilst the specificities of the postanarchist challenges will emerge throughout the course of the discussions here, it is useful to begin by laying out the basic form. The central critiques charge 'classical anarchism' for its supposed humanism and reductionist conception of power. Newman, citing Bakunin and Kropotkin, argues that '[a]narchism is based on a specific notion of human essence. For anarchists there is a human nature with essential characteristics' (2007: 38). Newman argues that anarchism has held this (essentially sociable, socialistic essence) as a pure point of departure from which to

²⁴ I agree with the sentiment behind the concern, raised by Süreyyya Evren, that tying 'postanarchism' to 'poststructuralism', rather than the 'more flexible' *postmodern* anarchism' is a limited move which privileges particular theoretical engagements and delimits the creative spaces which might be sought through art, fiction, and other theorists such as Luce Irigaray and Hélène Cixous who don't fall within the (already contested) signifier of poststructuralism (2011: 9). I am, however, just as suspicious of the limitations of the term 'postmodern', and stay with 'poststructuralism' here, if only to hold the space for exploring resonances with poststructuralist work in IR and CSS, as discussed in the previous chapter.

resist the imposition of artificial forces which corrupt human interactions: 'Anarchism is based on this clear, Manichean division between artificial and natural authority, between power and subjectivity, between state and society' (ibid., 39). He draws out the link between such a perspective and Enlightenment humanism. Newman argues that this logic risks reaffirming the place of power:

Anarchism tried to present a critique of political power using the language of Enlightenment humanism...this was ultimately self-defeating. As Stirner [who, for Newman, recognised such shortcomings] showed, power and authority are tied to the very humanist discourses and essentialist categories that were used by the anarchists to criticize it. By remaining within the epistemological and ontological framework of Enlightenment humanism, anarchism trapped itself within the confines of its own critique. As it accused Marxism of doing, anarchism itself merely challenged the form of authority, but not its place (ibid., 121).

Newman's argument is therefore that this humanism risks perpetuating authoritarian social relations, that the essentialising move affirms a Manichean logic which pits 'authentic' society against the dominance of the state (as the imposition of power, which corrupts this natural harmony).

This opposition is problematic, for Newman, because 'by pitting "living sociability" against the state, in the same way that Marxism pitted the proletariat against capitalism, anarchism shows, perhaps, that it has been unable to transcend the traditional political categories which bound Marxism' (ibid., 47); it secures the subject, presumes its exteriority from relations of power and so fixes these relations. He frames this critique through Nietzsche's analysis of *ressentiment* insofar as, while the relationship between the state and the anarchist revolutionary subject is one of antagonism, 'the two antagonists could not exist outside this relationship.' In positing a natural human essence corrupted by the imposition of power, anarchists adopt the position of Nietzsche's 'reactive man', unable to think or create themselves beyond the image of the state (ibid., 48).

A second objection to the essentialising move arguably made by 'classical' anarchists is offered by May. He argues that 'the naturalist justification [for anarchism] allows anarchists to assume their ethics rather than having to argue for them. If the

human essence is already benign then there is no need to articulate what kinds of human activity are good and what kinds are bad; those kinds of human activity unhampered by power and representation are good, while those kinds that are so hampered are - or at least are in danger of being - bad' (May 1994: 64).²⁵ The productive nature of power and the constitution of the subject are, from this perspective, insufficiently respected within the classical anarchist tradition.

Examples of such perspectives include Bakunin, who insists that the German proletariat had personal instincts which 'impelled them toward universal liberation, equality, and prosperity for all, but they were forced to work for the triumph of a pan-German state' (2005a: 146). Furthermore Henry argues that 'it is my profound conviction that two or three generations will provide enough to wrest man away from the influence of the artificial civilization to which he is subject today and return him to the state of nature, which is the state of kindness and love' (2005b: 402), and Kropotkin wrote that 'the great majority of mankind, in proportion to their degree of enlightenment and the completeness with which they free themselves from existing fetters will behave and act always in a direction useful to society just as we are persuaded beforehand that a child will one day walk on its two feet and not on all fours, simply because it is born of parents belonging to the genus *homo*' (2002: 102-103). May's concern is that ethical contestation and deliberation are suspended on such terms - justifiably so if the concrete source of violence has been definitively identified, and the productive nature of power ignored.

Despite these criticisms, May and Newman remain supportive of the anti-authoritarian sensibilities, projects and traditions which accompany anarchism. For them (and others), the challenge lies in seeking the capacity for an anarchism which resists essentialising terms, which does not rely upon foundational or metaphysical precepts. There are a variety of approaches taken from this starting point. May argues that, through dislocating the place of authority from the state, and adopting a more Foucauldian and Deleuzian approach to the subject and power, the capacities of anarchism as a tactical philosophy of resistance might be intensified. Dissolving the revolution/reform binary, he argues that such an approach offers opportunities for

²⁵ May's account of anarchism here is more nuanced than Newman's. Whilst Newman applies this logic to 'anarchism' as a whole (arguably essentialising anarchism - a point which will be taken up below), May is aware that there are important counterexamples to, for instance, anarchist humanism (he cites Goldman here), but argues that 'the fundamental drift of anarchism' has followed the logic he identifies (May 1994: 64).

resistance which might avoid the self-denial that plagues conceptions which focus exclusively on the state and which might explore the co-constitutive nature of micro- and macro-politics; politics 'must inevitably be a politics of diffusion and multiplicity, a politics that confronts power in a variety of irreducible and often surprising places' (1994: 95). In short, May explores spaces for a tactical theory of resistance which resists hegemonic appropriations and seeks out diffuse and varied oppressions and sites of overcoming. Spaces of creativity and prefiguration proliferate, beyond the boundaries of classical categorisations.

Newman takes a different approach, seeking a non-essentialist point from which to resist, untainted by the Manichean dualisms between power and resistance (he argues that such a point might be found through engaging with both Stirner and Lacan). Elsewhere, Call analyses science fiction such as *Battlestar Galactica* (2010) and *Buffy the Vampire Slayer* (2011) to show how our social imaginaries and representations already contain spaces for thinking and effecting a break with hegemony, a crisis of authority. Andrew Koch argues that Nietzsche provides useful guidance for a poststructuralist justification of anarchism, predominantly through the genealogical approach which renders contingent dominant assumptions about knowledge, values and other political categories, thereby displacing the state's foundational metaphysics (1993). Others, such as Critchley and Verter, have argued that Levinas's focus on the authoritarian effects of ontological totalisation, and on the ethical possibilities of infinite responsibility, provide useful guidance (Critchley 2008: 120-123; Verter 2010: 67-84). Still others have placed these meta-theoretical reflections to the side in order to argue that 'postanarchism' is primarily a lens through which the ethics and politics of resistance can be explored and enacted closer to 'the ground' (Mueller 2011).

As the above shows, those who write about anarchism from a poststructuralist perspective cannot be said to have a coherent, unifying approach - rather, the provocation is that the anti-authoritarian aspirations of 'classical' anarchism, whilst important, might take into account the various explorations of authority which have taken place within the context of poststructuralism (which, as Campbell notes, has been fundamentally 'animated by an anti-authoritarian spirit' (1998a: 22)). Importantly, these explorations have suggested that the anarchist approach to power needs to be called into question, and that a view of power as a suppressing force which undermines the natural human capacity to live and flourish is insufficient, both insofar as power is seen

by Foucault and others to be productive rather than merely suppressive (and, therefore, both implicated beyond the boundaries of the state-as-institution, and constitutive of anarchist subjectivities as it is constitutive of authority), and insofar as the ethico-political limitations of positing essence need to be addressed.

The response to this challenge has been mixed. Some, such as Gordon, have acknowledged the validity of the critique, but cautioned that 'post-structuralist anarchism remains an intellectual preoccupation, limited to a handful of writers rather than being a genuine expression of, or influence on, the grassroots thinking and discourse of masses of activists', and noted that, in its way, anarchism has had indirect influence on the development of poststructuralism itself (Gordon 2008: 43).²⁶ Others, such as Day, have been more sympathetic, both in examining the arguments on their own terms and in highlighting the links between the theoretical approach here and practices of resistance outside the academy (Day 2003: 58-72). Still others have been highly critical.

There are two central responses to the 'postanarchist' challenge. The first is that Newman and others frame their intervention against an essentialised view of anarchism (in the process mobilising the frustrating signifier 'classical anarchism'), which fails to take into account the ways in which many 'classical' anarchists have anticipated these challenges. The second response argues that postanarchism removes the ground for effective resistance, particularly in the context of an increasingly authoritarian political culture. The discussion here engages with the first critique, that the postanarchists posit a false distinction, the complexities of the debate helping to set out many of the positions with which this thesis proceeds. Towards the end of the chapter I consider the second critique as a means by which to draw the concept of security back into the frame.

Essentialising Anarchism

A number of writers have argued that the critiques mobilised by Newman, May and others are based on limited and essentialised images of anarchism (Franks 2007; Cohn

²⁶ On the influence of anarchism in the development of poststructuralism, see also Evren (2011: 5-7), Jason Adams (2003), Jun (2012: 165-167) and Alan Antliff (2011). Antliff suggests that, as anarchism has much to learn from poststructural work, those writing from poststructural perspectives might find much of use in anarchism.

2006; Antliff 2011). Whilst there are undoubtedly examples of Enlightenment humanism and fetishising analyses of power to be found in anarchist literature, to reduce the entirety of anarchism to those examples risks obscuring much that is of value. To highlight this point is not to suggest that insights drawn from poststructural political philosophy cannot help to intensify, enliven or problematise anarchist praxis, but that these contributions and interlocutions are most effectively pursued from a perspective which takes seriously the variety and sophistication of anarchist thought. The following discussion outlines some of the arguments which have proceeded here, seeking to establish several points; first, that anarchism is indeed more complex than Newman and May permit; second, that poststructural political philosophy can help to enliven anarchism; and third, that what matters here is less the ‘truth’ of any particular philosophy than those critical resources which can help to develop theory in new and productive directions. This last point sets the direction for the remainder of the chapter, which sits at the intersections between anarchist and poststructural perspectives in order to further situate the interpretative framework which guides the thesis.

Benjamin Franks argues that claims about anarchism’s fundamental commitment to Enlightenment humanism are based on selective quotations and a de-historicised approach (whilst acknowledging that ‘there are examples of essentialism in anarchism, which are worthy of criticism’ (ibid., 134)). Importantly he refuses Newman’s claim that anarchism is fundamentally dependent on an essentially co-operative subject. Süreyya Evren concurs, noting that anarchists have approached the subject from a number of perspectives, and cites Peter Marshall’s observation that some anarchists ‘insist that “human nature” does not exist as a fixed essence. [...] and the aim is not therefore to liberate some “essential self” by throwing off the burden of government and the State, but to develop the self in creative and voluntary relations with others’ (Marshall 1993: 642-643, cited in Evren 2011: 13).

However, acknowledging that a variety of positions exist amongst anarchists does not invalidate May’s concern that there is still a problematic *tendency* towards an essentialising humanism in anarchism (1994: 64). Mueller raises similar concerns when he notes that, explicitly theoretical debates aside, discourses of human essence have become a problematic part of the anarchist image and imaginary and do operate in anarchist/activist spaces in directly oppressive ways, enforcing conformity to an ideal in ways which mask patriarchal and other attitudes (2011: 81). That the ‘postanarchist’

challenge and the resulting debate have called attention to the politics of such essentialisms is to be welcomed. Furthermore the depth to which philosophers writing in the poststructural tradition have pursued such questions offers resources for more attuned and incisive explorations; May offers a pertinent example when he cites Kropotkin's celebration of Pinel 'as a liberator of the insane, failing to see the new psychological bonds Pinel introduced and which Foucault analyses' in *Madness and Civilisation* (2011:43).²⁷

Two responses might be made to Newman's claim that anarchism's fundamental reliance upon a Manichean dualism causes it to cast 'the state as the essential evil in society, from which other evils are derived', and therefore to fall 'into the same reductionist trap as Marxism' (2007: 47-48), refusing the capitalism/proletariat binary but retaining a logic which identifies a singular originary source of domination and a privileged/vanguard subject of resistance. The first response is to highlight the ways in which anarchists have acknowledged and responded to a multiplicity of forms and source of domination. Franks notes (amongst other examples) Goldman's resistance to patriarchy and Kropotkin and Murray Bookchin's environmentalism (2007: 135), to which might be added anarchist concerns with sexualities (Heckert and Cleminson 2011), education (Ward 2011b) and more. Goldman highlights the nature of morality as a technology of domination, arguing that 'no other superstition is so detrimental to growth, so enervating and paralyzing to the minds and hearts of the people' and that just as religion 'paralyzed the mind of the people...morality has enslaved the spirit', providing security for the rich more successfully 'than even the club and gun.'²⁸ Importantly these multiplicitous sources and forms of domination and authority are not reduced to their relationship to and functional role underpinning the state. Powerfully here, Ward cites Bakunin's comment that 'there is no fixed and constant authority, but a continual exchange of mutual, temporary and, above all, voluntary authority and subordination' (1982: 39).

As with humanism, examples of anarchist fetishisations of 'the state' can certainly be drawn from the mass of literature. However, as anarchists have

²⁷ See Foucault (2001: 242-264).

²⁸ As she continues, Goldman demonstrates her Nietzschean sympathies. Begging a refusal of the self-enslavement performed through commitment to morality, she insists that 'Morality has no terrors for her who has risen beyond good and evil. And though Morality may continue to devour its victims, it is utterly powerless in the face of the modern spirit, that shines in all its glory upon the brow of man and woman, liberated and unafraid.'

acknowledged multiple forms of oppression, many have also acknowledged the micropolitical and relational nature of power and domination. Indeed, as noted above, the political and philosophical positions which underpin the place of prefigurative politics in anarchism in part demonstrate such a logic, exemplified by Landauer's dictum that 'the state is a social relation [which] can be destroyed by creating new social relationships' (2010: 214). Kropotkin provides a similar perspective when he argues that

[t]o give full scope to socialism entails rebuilding from top to bottom a society dominated by the narrow individualism of the shopkeeper. It is not as has sometimes been said by those indulging in metaphysical wooliness just a question of giving the worker 'the total product of his labour'; it is a question of completely reshaping all relationships, from those which exist today between every individual and his churchwarden or his station-master to those which exist between trades, hamlets, cities and regions. In every street [sic], in every hamlet, in every group of men gathered around a factory or along a section of the railway line, the creative, constructive and organizational spirit must be awakened in order to rebuild life – in the factory, in the village, in the store, in production and in distribution of supplies. All relations between individuals and great centers of population have to be made all over again (1896: Section X).

Whilst anarchism is not immune from the charge that some advocates have engaged in reductive readings of power, to suggest that such reductionism captures anarchism's essence is unhelpful.

As it is important to note that anarchism is more complex and sophisticated than Newman, May and others might allow, it is equally important not to ignore those points at which they do identify problematic discourses within anarchism. One such example here comes from Franks' account; while establishing that anarchism does not hold a narrow or unitary conception of power, he insists that class dominance has justifiably been a central concern for anarchists: 'class domination...was (and is) one of the major forms of control' (2007: 135). This is perhaps uncontroversial; as May argues, '[n]o one, particularly not anarchists, would deny that a change in the relations of economic production would have profound effects upon society' (1994: 54-55). The important caveat, as May continues, is that '[w]hat *is* denied is the move from that evident truth to the claim that society, and the question of revolution, must therefore be defined in terms of those relationships of production (or any other set of privileged

relationships)' (ibid., 55). Franks does move away from this perspective; however, he does so in a way which still privileges a certain secure view of traditionally oppressed groups (with, of course, class at the top).

To problematise this is not to deny the oppressions which run along these axes, but to caution against the accommodating yet defensive nature of Franks' critique which secures the categories and thus forecloses the possibility that poststructuralist anarchists might seek to challenge the nature of such categories as themselves implicated in patterns of power, and themselves open to challenge (Newman 2007: 171-172; Day 2005: 188). In doing so, Franks fails to acknowledge what a poststructuralist-informed perspective can reveal, that is, that metanarratives of class, the state and so forth, whilst highly important, can function to obscure the more subtle effects of power. Call cautions on this point, arguing that,

[s]ince these omnipresent elements of microscopic power remain largely invisible to conventional forms of radical analysis, one could argue that they actually represent a greater threat than the more obvious, traditional forms of power. Micropower is also more easily internalized than macropower, and because of this, micropower presents two unique dangers. First, it is extremely hard to get rid of, because it flourishes and flows within and between individual subjects. Second, internalized micropower saves capital and the state a great deal of work. Thanks to the internalization of power, we carry out the project of oppression largely within the framework of our own consciousness. From this perspective, the engines of capital and state, ominous as they are, seem epiphenomenal and perhaps even a bit superfluous (2002: 16).

Franks' account accepts the terms of the challenge only insofar as they do not undermine that which can be found in 'classical' anarchism, obscuring the possibility that poststructuralist concerns raise issues about the essential categories through which domination is traditionally identified, and expose more subtle, micropolitical and centrifugal forms of power. This, of course, includes discourses of security.

In adopting a sceptical stance towards such metanarratives, it is pertinent here to say a few words about nature the state form specifically. Landauer's critique of confrontation drew directly from his concern that conventions of revolution and resistance tend to fetishise the state, to assume and thus enshrine its ontological or

metaphysical status. Anticipating Foucault, Deleuze and others, his relational ontology emphasises the micropolitical constellations which (re)produce the state form. This does not, of course, mean that the state is therefore rendered irrelevant; displacing its ontology does not mean ignoring the fact that the state is an abstraction for which and through which subjects obey and kill. It does mean extending one's analysis such that the state form can be recognised beyond specific intuitional contexts to encompass everyday practices and forms of representation, subjectivity, and domination, and particular images of security, hegemony, and so forth. As Jamie Heckert argues, 'the state may be considered that name which we give to the oppressive effects produced through decentralized relations of domination, surveillance, representation and control' (2011: 199). Recognition of the subtleties of desire, dependence and domination which constitute the state form (and security) might be precisely that which is needed to move beyond the tendency of resistance to reproduce that which it opposes. Call argues that this is, in part, Foucault's project; in looking for the state at more subtle levels than 'the state', and cautioning against the presumption of functional unity, Foucault avoids the tendency to fetishise the state, considering instead the possibility that 'the state remains in place because no radical theory has ever accounted for underlying power relationships which exist prior to the state and which make the state possible in the first place' (2002: 74). Exploring deconstructions of and resistances to the politics of security might be read precisely as a contribution towards such a project.

On the one hand, then, the essentialising gestures made with respect to how anarchism is signified in the 'postanarchist' project should be subject to critique, foreclosing as they do important features and dynamics of anarchist thought. This need not mean, however, that the critical resources which can be mobilised by bringing poststructural political philosophy into dialogue with anarchism should be dismissed. Indeed, the concerns raised by Newman, May and others, about the ways in which authority functions within some anarchist approaches, should be read as themselves *precisely* anarchist concerns; this is the continual struggle implied within the anarchist conception of prefiguration. That anarchism should adapt and change as discourses of authority are revealed (both internally, externally, and precisely at the delineation between the internal and external) is neither controversial nor novel, and that the project of those such as Foucault and Derrida can help to reveal previously underexplored discourses of authority might be welcomed within the anarchist context, even as (and precisely because) they deconstruct that context. Much of the

contemporary anarchist literature takes such a perspective, engaging with a rich diversity of sources and traditions without seeking disciplinary or theoretical closure. As Jun suggests, rather than establishing and defending theoretical encampments and orthodoxies, ‘it is better to view poststructuralist ideas as potential ingredients for the development of new anarchist recipes’ (2012: 165).

In thinking through these questions it is important not to fall into the trap of attempting to determine what classical anarchists ‘really meant’, to assume that we can place ourselves neatly into the specific epistemological terms through which anarchists such as Bakunin and Proudhon wrote (Call 2002: 68). However, and I take this to be the meaning of the arguments of those such as Evren and Franks who have responded to Newman and others on this count, there is much to be said for returning to classical texts as a means by which to reimagine what it means to resist, to create, to become otherwise. On such terms (and as a means by which to raise the question of anarchism and subjectivity away from the problematic terrain of humanism), we might look towards Goldman’s conception of the anarchic subject.

Anarchic Subjects

Goldman’s critique of morality and her insistence on self-emancipation have already been introduced. Here the intention is to read Goldman as a lively and provocative advocate of mobile, multiplicitous and seditious subjectivities. As Hilton Bertalan makes clear, Goldman has been largely overlooked as an anarchist theorist, attention focussed on her personal and political life at the expense of her theoretical contributions (save somewhat patronising acknowledgements that she ‘introduced’ a feminist element to anarchism) (2011: 209-211). Goldman’s absence from most anarchist surveys (or, rather, her presence as a perpetual footnote) is conspicuous. Kathy Ferguson argues that the moves to see Goldman as an ‘emotional’ rhetorician and propagandist, rather than as a theorist in her own right, represents ‘an implicit and highly conventional gendering in the distinction between the emotional activist and the theoretically sophisticated intellectual, a recapitulation of patriarchal gender codes that inhibits both our reading of Goldman’s political thinking and our ability to engage theories as kinds of practices’ (2004: 31). Against this marginalisation, which obscures Goldman’s valuable contributions and sets problematic boundaries for what can be considered theory (a

series of boundaries this thesis seeks to disrupt), I suggest that it is productive to view Goldman – both with respect to her lived practice and her various lectures and essays – as an important anarchist theorist.

As Bertalan notes, ‘Goldman was not interested in subjects who sought arrival at a final cognitive-theoretical resting point. Goldman’s anarchism was a political philosophy with currents that rejected the desire for foundations, naturalist bases, fixed subjects and prescriptions, instead, in a decidedly Nietzschean move, favouring the unknown’ (2011: 222). In this, he links her with Deleuze, Butler, and Gloria Anzaldúa, and suggests that she might function as a bridge between classical and postmodern anarchisms (ibid., 216). She evades the critiques made by Newman and May, advocating an anarchism which ‘did not predict or initiate a single and dramatic political shift, but rather, was constantly renewed by the context and conditions of resistance and the collectives and individuals taking part in struggles’ (ibid., 218).

Elements of Goldman’s thought will be discussed throughout the thesis; for the purposes here it is pertinent to cite her (controversial) attack on what many of her comrades took as the axiomatic agent of liberation, ‘the masses’, as a means by which to demonstrate her particular ideas about subjectivity and resistance:

That the mass bleeds, that it is being robbed and exploited, I know as well as our vote-baiters. But I insist that not the handful of parasites, but the mass itself is responsible for this horrible state of affairs. It clings to its master, loves the whip, and is the first to cry Crucify! the moment a protesting voice is raised against the sacredness of capitalistic authority or any other decayed institution. Yet how long would authority and private property exist, if not for the willingness of the mass to become soldiers, policemen, jailers and hangmen...Not because I do not feel with the oppressed, the disinherited of the earth; not because I do not know the shame, the horror, the indignity of the lives the people lead, do I repudiate the majority as a creative force for good. Oh, no, no! But because I know so well that as a compact mass it has never stood for justice or equality. It has suppressed the human voice, subdued the human spirit, chained the human body. As a mass its aim has always been to make life uniform, gray, and monotonous as the desert. As a mass it will always be the annihilator of individuality, of free initiative, of originality (1996: 77-78).

She approvingly cites Emerson: 'I wish not to concede anything to [the masses], but to drill, divide, and break them up, and draw individuals out of them.' Goldman acknowledges that her perspective here will not be popular ('no doubt, I shall be excommunicated as an enemy of the people' (ibid., 44)), but proceeds nevertheless, developing a firm commitment to multiplicity and difference, a refusal 'to prescribe the usual ridiculous palliatives which allow the patient neither to die nor to recover' (ibid.). Demonstrating her Nietzschean sympathies, she repudiates the herd, with its reactive dynamics, and dares independence and creativity, displaying no interest in converting people to the correct 'side', to any particular counter-hegemony, and instead provoking a dissenting subjectivity, an individuality which refuses easy programmatic codification.²⁹

Goldman desired that we resist the reactive dynamics demanded of capital, of states, of oppressive forces, and develop the courage to affirm our own becoming, to create our own rules, moralities and laws, never finally and always with passion and beauty in mind. In this space, she (alongside Landauer) can be seen as epitomising that trend within anarchism which insists that social change is always already a question of the subject, and is not one which should seek to enforce hegemonic ontologies of resistance. The anarchist imperative is, for her, a perpetual and disruptive creativity, a commitment to endless subversion which, as it seeks to break down hegemonic political imaginaries, can begin to explore and enact new relations of affinity.

On the specific question of resistance, Jun draws a pertinent connection between poststructuralism and anarchism here. He argues that for Foucault, to actively resist 'is to enter into a relation with oneself, to reconstitute oneself, to create oneself anew. Through this process, extant power relations are challenged and new forms of knowledge emerge,' finishing by suggesting that 'Bakunin and Kropotkin could not possibly have put the point better' (2011: 243). In this sense, we can agree with Call that 'postmodern anarchism declares...an *anarchy of the subject*,' that the 'postmodern subject is and must remain multiple, dispersed, and...schizophrenic,' and even that this 'anarchy of the subject encourages the preservation and cultivation of difference and Otherness within the postmodern project' as a means by which to guard against the coming of a totalitarian subjectivity (2002: 22). Chapter Six expands on such

²⁹ This does not mean that Goldman was an individualist in the liberal sense (to which she refers to as 'rugged individualism...the straitjacket of individuality' (1996: 112)). Rather, we might read this within the context whereby anarchists have traditionally welcomed the tension between communalism and individualism which troubles political theorists, as a 'dynamic which will drive anarchism forward into uncharted areas' (Sheehan 2003: 78).

possibilities in detail. Here, suffice it to note that Goldman's powerful account demonstrates the resources for thinking (and becoming) otherwise which can be drawn from anarchism.

The Politics of Incompleteness: Beyond Theory and Practice

One significant element of anarchist thought has been the focus on perpetual struggle, on the violence immanent to any and all claims to resolution. This is a point on which Newman and May's accounts might be subject to critique, insofar as they can ultimately be seen to rest on foundational precepts. Newman claims, through Stirner and, in particular, Lacan, to have located the grounds for a 'genuinely non-essentialist politics of resistance to arise' (2007: 157). Whilst he does pay heed to this 'non-place' as a site of undecidability, he criticises Foucault's notion of permanent resistance and Deleuze and Guattari's idea of revolutionary desire for being 'either too ambiguous, or too essentialist, for a clearly defined, non-essentialist project of resistance' (ibid., 159). Similarly he is concerned that poststructuralism on its own offers 'little possibility of a coherent theory of political action' because it 'offers no real outside to power' (ibid.). There is some merit to Newman's approach; his argument that anarchism must be freed (or, on the terms established here, must be free) from a grounding in essential identities is persuasive (ibid., 164), and his response to Kropotkin's assertion that 'inner contradiction is the death of ethics' with the claim that 'inner contradiction is the very *condition* of ethics' is important (ibid., 167, emphasis in original). However, his apparent desire for coherence and his criticism of ambiguity seems to be, to some extent, a limiting move which fails to consider the possibility that these moments of incoherence and ambiguity may be important sites of becoming in the context of political resistance.

Newman's focus on the need for a secure, non-essentialist point of departure for resistance points to a move towards resolution which runs the risk of seeking a new essential place of resistance 'defined by its structural resistance to essential foundations and dialectical logics which try to determine it' (ibid., 162). The shortcoming lies in the desire for a *structural* resistance to essential foundations which, whilst in some ways compelling, runs the risk of evacuating the need for the essentially problematised and always corrupted concept of resistance to be engaged *in situ*, always in a place of potential and probable essentialism. In short, despite allusions to anti-essentialism, the

overconfidence and (admittedly incomplete) completeness of Newman's approach is troublesome. May also displays a problematic approach to the question of resolution when he dedicates much of his final chapter of *The Political Philosophy of Poststructuralist Anarchism* to the argument that poststructuralism contains meta-ethical commitments to an analytic rational-universalist approach. As Day argues, '[b]y the final curtain [of May's book], Lyotard, Deleuze and Foucault have been hopelessly crushed under the weight of a descending Habermasian machine' (2005: 168).³⁰

I would suggest that non-'post' anarchists have gone further here. The characteristic focus on action, often (though not always) missing from 'postanarchist' accounts, has motivated an ethical commitment to continually problematise the potential violences of any particular intervention, and to recognise its necessarily incomplete character. As I argued above, this is a crucial component of a prefigurative political imaginary, a central feature of any theory and practice which seeks to disrupt the place of authority. Ward, paraphrasing Landauer, argues that 'every time after the revolution is a time before the revolution for all those whose lives have not got bogged down in some great moment of the past. There is no final struggle, only a series of partisan struggles on a variety of fronts' (1982: 26). Similarly Henry argued that 'the absolute liberty which we demand is forever adding to our ideas, drawing them on towards new horizons...and making them overspill the narrow boundaries of any regimentation and codification (2005b: 398), and Proudhon argued that 'absolutism...is odious to reason and to liberty' (2005: 86).

These statements should be seen to contextualise those anarchist declarations about liberty, freedom and emancipation which often appear to recede into a classical liberal position. This is not to suggest that such statements should not be problematized on such grounds; it is, however, to insist that for anarchists such as Goldman, Landauer, Henry and others, the priority is not a particular idea of what freedom 'is', but an instinct which seeks to continually overthrow and transcend the authorities and limitations of any particular order. As Buber (referring to both his own and Landauer's conception) writes:

Socialism can never be anything absolute. It is the continual becoming of human community in mankind, adapted and proportioned to whatever can be willed and done in the conditions given. Rigidity threatens all realization, what

³⁰ A point made more substantially by Jun (2012: 175-181).

lives and glows to-day may be crusted over to-morrow and, become all-powerful, suppress the strivings of the day after (1958: 56).

On similar terms, Rudolf Rocker insists that

Anarchism is no patent solution for all human problems, no Utopia of a perfect social order, as it has so often been called, since on principle it rejects all absolute schemes and concepts. It does not believe in any absolute truth, or in definite final goals for human development, but in an unlimited perfectibility of social arrangements and human living conditions, which are always straining after higher forms of expression, and to which for this reason one can assign no definite terminus nor set any fixed goal. The worst crime of every type of state is just that it always tries to force the rich diversity of social life into definite forms and adjust it to one particular form (2004: 15).

Whilst anarchism is often seen as, in some ways, a project concerned with utopia, this is emphatically a highly politicised utopia. This point is made well in Ursula le Guin's anarchist science fiction novel *The Dispossessed*, which may be read as an anarchist cautionary tale about the violences of any political community which purports to arrival or completeness.

In *The Dispossessed*, a utopian anarchist society has developed into a dystopia, precisely *because* it is an utopia. Work is socialised, individual choice is emphasised and yet balanced with social concerns, institutions are collectivised and there is no formal coercion. However, the sedimentation of this society, the non-politicised nature of the terms upon which it is set, and the ways in which the nature of thought, freedom and subjectivity are produced within established and socially salutary boundaries raise questions about the price of social harmony. The society is, to some extent, what many anarchists would desire, and yet it leaves a bitter taste in the mouth. It is not political, nor contingent; it is a totalitarian society masked by its own libertarian pretensions, by its satisfaction in and compliance with the 'emancipated' hegemony (1975). In actuality, anarchists have indeed remained cautious on such fronts. As Landauer argued, '[t]he difference between [anarchists] and the communists is not that we have a different model of a future society. The difference is that we do not have any model. We embrace the future's openness and refuse to determine it' (cited in Kuhn 2010: 35). Even Kropotkin, often read as the anarchist who places most emphasis on future society, is

careful to espouse socialism as a form of political agency, which ‘will have to choose *its own* form of political structure’ (2002: 185, emphasis in original).

Crucially the position of the anarchist in the perpetual struggle is not sacrosanct; Nicolas Walter cautions that ‘anarchists must always struggle against [authoritarian] tendencies, in the future as well as the present, and among themselves as well as among others’ (2002: 39), and Malatesta acknowledges that ‘[a]s a government we [anarchists] would not be worth any more than the others. Perhaps we might even be more dangerous to freedom, because, so strongly convinced as we are of being right and doing good, we could tend, like real fanatics, to hold all who do not think or act like us to be counter-revolutionaries and enemies of the public good’ (1995: 123). Day argues that an anarchist ethics of infinite responsibility

...will mean remembering that despite what may be a very real commitment to anti-oppression struggles, those of us who are privileged benefit from our positions in oppressive structures, primarily through not having to worry about the effects they have upon our own theory and practice. Infinite responsibility means being aware of this privilege and refusing/diffusing it to the greatest extent possible. More than anything, though, it means being willing to hear that you have not quite made it just yet, that you still have something to learn (2005: 201).

As anarchism gestures towards a perpetual and creative insurrection against domination and authority, even its own, it conjures no ‘pure subject of resistance’ as Newman alleges (2007: 48), but acknowledges the situated and non-innocent nature of those involved in struggle.

This focus on perpetual struggle is noted in Newman and May. However, it is limited in their accounts because they fail to explore the ways in which anarchism might operate to break down distinctions between theory and practice. It is such an approach which enables Newman to describe anarchism as ‘the moral compass of radical politics’ (2010a: 259), a theoretical reductionism which contrasts sharply with Ward’s suggestion that anarchism ‘is not a programme for political change but an act of social self-determination’ (1982: 143). When Newman argues that his approach casts anarchism as an empty signifier which allows it to be ‘structurally open to a multitude of different struggles’, he reveals a theoretical parochialism which ignores the fact that anarchism

has historically been present across different struggles, that anarchism has *always* been embedded in and specified through particular contexts (Newman 2007: 164; Prichard 2010a: 378).

Newman makes this parochial perspective more apparent when he suggests that his approach opens the possibility for 'the anarchist ethics of resistance to authority [to] signify other struggles, like feminism, or the struggles of the disabled, consumers, the unemployed, the young, the old, environmentalists, the mentally ill, welfare recipients, [etc]' (2007: 165). In fact, anarchism and anarchists have been involved in such struggles, and struggles under these banners have on occasion been anarchist/ic, for a long time. The focus on locating a theoretically secure place of resistance seems to blind Newman to the fact that the concentration on prefigurative ethical struggle and multiplicitous sites of resistance in both classical and contemporary anarchist praxis might itself constitute a powerful response to the challenges he rightly offers to anti-authoritarian theory, and might do so in a way which does not replicate a hierarchy of theory over practice, interpreting anarchist practices/experiences as simply applications of theory (Evren 2011: 11). In consciously practicing a resistance to totalisation and resolution, and committing itself to perpetual struggle against the possibility of further authoritarian moves, anarchist practice is thus an important site for a poststructuralist approach to reading anarchism.

Indeed, and as a means by which to blur the divide between theory and practice, we might read spaces of prefigurative direct action precisely as sites of theory. In a sense, this is the project of this thesis, taking seriously Jeppesen's challenge for postanarchist theory to engage more substantively with 'non-academic' theory (2011: 151-152). As I noted above, at their most powerful, prefigurative spaces function to engage in a ceaseless interrogation of the forces of exclusion, authority and power. Though few read Foucault or Landauer, anarchists have a 'strong and salutary tendency to see oppression and domination everywhere, and to attack it vigorously' (Mueller 2011: 91). Though many might self-identify in terms which Newman and May would (with good cause) critique, the logic of anarchist spaces often transcends such terms. As Mueller notes, it 'takes only one hour-long meeting during which one's supposedly power-free proposal is ripped to shreds by people arguing that it oppresses women, newcomers, older people, physically challenged people, immigrants, or whomever, for the realization to hit home that nothing one could ever say would be devoid of power'

(ibid.). Whilst I would suggest that he is perhaps over-optimistic about the extent to which anarchists do indeed remain so vigilant, that anarchist contexts do often function in such ways is powerful; indeed, it is vital. Jun reconnects anarchism with poststructuralism here, arguing that

Deleuze, like Foucault, like the anarchists, emphasizes experimentation on the one hand and eternal vigilance on the other...Our experiments may lead to positive transformations, they may lead to madness, they may lead to death. What starts as a reckless and beautiful affirmation of life can become a death camp. It is not enough, therefore, to experiment and create; one must be mindful of, and responsible for, one's creation. The process requires an eternal revolution against domination wherever and however it arises (2011: 245).

Allowing practice to operate as theory (and vice versa) allows such experimentations to remain mobile, continually turning on themselves to reveal fresh lines of becoming and new forms of domination which must be overcome.

Thus far, the argument has proceeded on the logic that that the 'postanarchist' project might be seen as, simply, anarchism, exemplifying the spirit of continually identifying and critiquing configurations of power. Such a perspective should not be taken to imply a reconciliation between anarchism and poststructuralism; there are tensions between the two which might be more productive when left intact. One aspect of poststructural critique, which has been stated strongly in CSS and IR theory more broadly, is a posture of caution or cynicism towards expressed possibilities of 'ethical' programmes, resistances, and imaginaries (Walker 2010; Campbell 1999). Commonly held strategies for change are problematised and supposedly innocent categories and concepts are found to be intimately involved in the (re)production of authority and domination (Derrida 1982: 135). Anarchists should take these interventions seriously; they are motivated by important anti-authoritarian concerns, and raise issues which, though largely absent from 'classical' anarchism, are nonetheless important. This line of thought, however, goes both ways. Anarchists refuse the equally political limitations of immobilisation, the danger that scepticism or cynicism reaches the point where it motivates a spirit of 'non-intervention' which contains its own problematic logics. Both anarchists and poststructuralists would, indeed, refuse the distinction between 'intervention' and 'non-intervention', action and inaction, highlighting the ways in which 'inaction' is always itself a political position, a legitimisation of and participation in

particular systems of authority, for which we must take responsibility. This is an important tension; cynicism and a suspicious attitude towards cynicism and suspension are both crucial. There is, of course, some analytic slippage here; both anarchism and poststructuralism are contested domains with opaque boundaries and significant overlap. Nonetheless holding this tension, and respecting the common purposes, might be one productive way in which to explore the two traditions.

The Age of Security

A second major critique of the moves to bring poststructural political philosophy and anarchism together has been that the poststructural position removes the grounds for effective resistance. Mueller notes that this challenge is at times rather simplistic in its tone, dismissing (for instance) Foucault as a 'petty-bourgeois nihilist, who, having deconstructed everything ends up with nothing to hold on to' (a criticism which Mueller suggests is 'the theoretical equivalent of the familiar branding of anarchists as brainless "rent-a-mob" types with no positive proposals' (2011: 83)). There are, however, more engaged versions of the critique. Franks provides one such example. He argues that poststructuralist approaches to anarchism have diminished in relevance in what he terms 'the age of security'. He asserts that, on September 11, 2001, the 'heroic phase of postmodernism' ended (2007: 139), and that changes in the political and economic culture which followed the attacks signified a move towards greater state control, centralisation, and surveillance:

Thus, many of the cultural assumptions that underlie many postanarchist theories have been undermined...The heroic nomenclature of postmodernism, of flexibility, openness, pluralism and risk-taking, has moved towards a more politically and philosophically conservative disposition, in which the dominant political terminology stresses safety, security and fixed identity and shared 'universal values'. In the face of this authoritarian turn, the favoured tactic of postanarchists, seeking flight rather than contestation, seems inadequate, as exodus is not always possible or desirable (ibid.).

In viewing poststructuralist analysis as tied to a particular historical period, specifically to the 'era' of postmodernism, Franks dismisses its relevance to contemporary theory and struggle, instead offering a conception of security as a totalising form of anti-

politics which has been so successful that it demands a head-on contestation. Almost echoing Booth, he suggests that postanarchist approaches offer little to serious responses to authority/security, casting them as luxury for less austere times. As has been established, such a reading is in danger of sedimenting totalising logics; Franks writes off attempts to investigate the micropolitics and metaphysics of security, assuming and so enshrining its totality. The following discussion expands on this point, drawing the wider discussions together as a means by which to establish the context for the following chapters.³¹

Franks establishes a dichotomy between the postanarchist tactic of 'flight' and his preferred approach, 'contestation'. This simple reading enables him to dismiss the former as outdated and/or irresponsible, thus legitimating 'contestation'. I would suggest, however, that this dichotomy itself must be rejected, insofar as it operates to attribute particular meaning to both 'flight' and 'contestation' which effaces the complex interplay between the two which runs throughout both anarchist and poststructural theory. In establishing the dichotomy, Franks cites both Newman's discussion of Deleuze and Felix Guattari's search for new lines of flight and Bey's TAZ. When studying these two examples, it is clear that they cannot be read in his dichotomous fashion.

Newman sums up Deleuze and Guattari's argument, whereby

[r]ational thought is state philosophy: "Common sense, the unity of all the faculties at the center of the Cogito, is the State consensus raised to the absolute." The state is immanent in thought, giving it ground, logos, providing it with a model that defines its "goal, paths, conduits, channels, organs." According to this analysis, most political philosophy - including even anarchism - based on a rational critique of the state and a Manichean division between "rational" society and "irrational" power, would be considered state philosophy. It leaves the place of state power intact by subjecting revolutionary action to rational injunctions that channel it into state forms. For Deleuze and Guattari, if

³¹ In considering the ways in which anarchism might inform a response to the politics of security, I am sidestepping those approaches which seek to mobilise anarchism as a theoretical approach to International Relations more broadly (see Prichard 2007, 2010b, 2010c; Goodwin 2010; Falk 1983, 2010; Weiss 1975). Whilst they contain much that is of value, they do not engage substantively with the question of security, nor the role of prefigurative direct action as an intervention in the international.

the state is to be overcome one must invent new lines of political action, new *lines of flight* that do not allow themselves to be reterritorialized by rationality (2007: 99, emphasis in original, citing Deleuze and Guattari 1988: 376, 434).

Read in context, the appeal to 'flight' cannot be understood as a withdrawal from the urgent need to engage with and contest the problem of the state, but as an awareness of the dangers of perpetuating the state form through logics of resistance which do not undermine its governing rationality, as a flight from the micropolitics and foundational metaphysics which make possible the state and other relations of domination. Such concerns are just as important when considering the politics of security; an approach to resistance which does not seek to disrupt the binaries of security/insecurity, order/chaos, inside/outside, which does not seek lines of flight which might elude these metaphysics and provide spaces for imagining otherwise, runs the risk of re-establishing precisely those politics. Such flight cannot be distinguished from contestation; indeed, it is a crucial component of contestation (just as much as contestation is a crucial component of such lines of flight – a point explored at length throughout this thesis).

Whilst elements of Bey's TAZ, defined as a temporary withdrawal from formal structures of control to experience and practice autonomy, might appear initially as forms of hopeless flight, Bey does not let the idea rest there. He specifically argues that

[t]he TAZ is an encampment of guerilla ontologists: strike and run away. Keep moving the entire tribe, even if it's only data in the Web. The TAZ must be capable of defense; but both the "strike" and the "defense" should, if possible, evade the violence of the State, which is no longer a *meaningful* violence. The strike is made at structures of control, essentially at ideas; the defense is "indivisibility", a *martial art*, and "invulnerability" - an "occult" art within the martial arts...As to the future - Only the autonomous can *plan* autonomy, organize for it, create it (2003: 100, emphasis in original).

The specific tactics involved in the TAZ can and should be discussed and challenged (indeed Bey himself, in the introduction to the 2003 edition of *T.A.Z., The Temporary Autonomous Zone, Ontological Anarchy, Poetic Terrorism*, withdrew his faith in the internet as a potential site of resistance (ibid., xi)). However, it cannot be simply argued that Bey advocates 'flight' as 'exodous' on any level but a tactical and temporary one which remains embedded in struggle. Indeed, and as the discussions earlier in this chapter

about prefiguration make clear, such ‘flights’, when understood merely as the space – whether conceptual, physical or otherwise – wherein anarchists might turn the process of resistance back upon itself, are a crucial component of a resistance which seeks to avoid perpetuating that which it opposes.

What emerges from looking in more depth at these conceptions of flight is that they are not at all incompatible with contestation, nor are they unconcerned with the violence of state power. They might be read, however, as cautioning against a contestation which emulates the terms of that which is contested. As Bey argues, ‘[a]bsolutely nothing but a futile martyrdom could possibly result now from a head-on collision with the terminal state’ (ibid., 98). This is, of course, an insight with considerable precedence in anarchist theory, with Landauer’s critique standing as an important marker here. It demands that we differentiate between *contestation*, i.e., an engagement which seeks to render redundant, obsolete, or ineffective, and *confrontation*, which stands as a particular form of contestation which, in its deployment of oppositional ontologies, tends to reify or fetishise that which is opposed.

If we refuse Franks’ dichotomy between contestation and flight, opportunities for resistance beyond his terms are revealed. Anarchistic modes of resistance to the logics of security might be more effective when they seek to undermine the foundational logics of security, exploring counter-subjectivities and displacing hegemonic ontologies of agency. Rather than remaining within an oppositional logic which provides few resources for thinking otherwise and accepts the terms and cartographies of security as they are given, insurrections against the totalising logics of security might proceed precisely by refusing those traditional concepts of resistance which pit a homogenous ‘us’ against a totalised ‘them’, and prefiguring alternatives which contest and subvert the politics of security whilst displacing, disrupting, or seeking lines of flight which elude its constitutive and regulatory logics. In casting such approaches as ‘indicative of a particular (rather comfortable), elite position, rather than one which seeks out alliances of the oppressed to create new, anti-hierarchical social relations’ Franks fails to explore the possibility that the deconstruction of state and security logics might be the *condition* of forming alliances which explore anti-hierarchical relations.³² His refusal to explore micropolitical forms of power, which might distract from traditional metanarratives of class and state, prohibits him from considering the

³² Franks’ specific target in this comment is Baudrillard’s analysis of the state as simulation.

ways in which the two are interrelated, and that possibilities for resistance proliferate under such analyses. Opportunities for thinking a resistance which refuses the subjectivities, rationalities and performances constitutive of contemporary security politics are displaced precisely and paradoxically in the name of such resistance. Rather than explore opportunities for becoming otherwise, Franks disciplines anarchist approaches to security within traditional political categories (which are themselves bound up in the metaphysics of security), and limits the possibilities which might otherwise be explored. The approach of this thesis over the coming chapters seeks to contest such a disciplining move.

In particular, I argue that anarchism provokes us to displace the security/insecurity binary itself, in a manner which reveals its violent fictions and defers (or even reflects back) its threats and ever-proliferating dangers. A disruption of the terms of security/insecurity might be seen to occur through a positive rejection of the former and an ironic subversion of the latter. Expected images of security (i.e., those associated with regularity, hegemony, predominant conceptions of legitimacy, lawfulness) are refused, ignored, violated; those practices and institutions through which narratives and promises of security are produced and guaranteed are cast as illegitimate, insufficient, or undesired. This refusal, however, does not then produce those images of insecurity and chaos which might be anticipated; these are deferred, and in their place we see contingent but productive explorations of affinity and solidarity: relationalities and subjectivities which, in their refusal of foundations and their affirmation of possibilities in the spaces exposed, expose a productive fracture at the margins of security. This argument, which seeks in Dillon's terms to expose and make playful the 'struggle of the duality' of (in)security, will be explored in detail over the coming chapters (Dillon 1996: 22).

Conclusion: Towards an Ethnography

This chapter has provided a detailed introduction to anarchism. Focussing on the praxis of prefigurative direct action, it has argued for an approach which promotes the perpetual and creative subversion of authority, totality and domination. The first section introduced some key themes within anarchism, and acknowledged (and celebrated) the heterodox and often contradictory nature of various trends and themes within anarchist

thought and practice. The chapter then moved on to emphasise the nature of anarchism as a theory of prefigurative direct action, placing particular importance on Landauer's theory of the state and revolution. The third part of the chapter examined the debates about the potential relationship between poststructural political theory and anarchism, highlighting the ways in which anarchism mobilises a politics that cultivates subversive and disobedient subjects, that tends towards perpetual incompleteness, and that undermines the theory/practice binary. The final section returned to the politics of security, to suggest that the approach to anarchism mobilised here offers particular resources for resistance in the contemporary context.

The discussions in this chapter, alongside those from the last, open various avenues for the progression of the thesis. Primarily, the approach taken here sets up the ethnographic approach of later chapters. Anarchism offers a conceptualisation of resistance which refuses the totalising gestures associated with CSS; the deferral and subversion of hegemony, the mobilisation of a prefigurative imaginary and the cultivation of radical counter-subjectivities are important components of a resistance which might continually subvert the tendency to re-perpetuate relations of domination. The theoretical explorations here establish the terms for the more situated examination of the following chapters; it forms the lens or framework through which the anti-militarist practices can be subject to interpretation.

Such an approach is not intended to label the anti-militarist practices which will be explored as necessarily 'anarchist'. More importantly, it is not meant to arrange a division of the movement, to root out the 'good anarchist' and 'bad statist' (and, indeed, 'good anarchist' and 'bad anarchist') trends. As John Holloway cautions,

...the practice of the left is repeatedly to commit suicide by ignoring, denying or destroying...lines of continuity [between different resistances]: by condemning reformism. [...] Rather than creating sharp divisions (between the guerilla leader and the housewife alone on a Saturday night, for example), we need to find ways of making visible and strengthening these lines of continuity that are often so submerged (2010: 34-35).

Whilst this is an important point, it should not prohibit critique in the name of unity. Rather, it cautions against a critique from purism or orthodoxy. There is clearly an explicit theoretical and practical commitment to anarchist ideas in the thesis.

Nonetheless, as was noted above, the signifier cannot but exceed the signified. Anarchist ideas can be found in unlikely places, and ideas of direct action, prefiguration and anti-authoritarianism are commonplace across many diverse groups and actors. Even more traditional NGOs in the anti-arms trade movement, such as CAAT, are important sites of resistance in the context established here. Drawing out the ambiguities, the productive tensions and the lines of affinity which might be found is of particular importance. Furthermore, the intention of the thesis is not to suggest that those aspects of the movement which do not adhere to the approach to anarchism outlined here are to be dismissed. Rather, it is to interpret the movement from a self-consciously embedded position which might offer important opportunities for rethinking the politics of security. Other examinations of the anti-arms trade movement which come from alternative theoretical perspectives offer their own unique insights.

Taking these first two chapters forward, several avenues are highlighted which might be animated in various ways through examining anti-militarist practices. In the first instance, the anti-hegemonic nature of prefigurative direct action intervenes against the closures identified in CSS, and shifts the terms through which security can be understood and practiced. More substantively, in its mobilisation of prefigurative direct action anarchism can be seen as provoking a disruption of the logics of security/insecurity, a refusal of the roles and regulations which constitute the totalising (anti-)politics of security. Such explorations will be the subject of Chapter Three.

Another avenue is the ways in which anti-militarist practices can be interpreted as generating and exploring counter-subjectivities which displace militarist conceptions and conventions of contestation, power, and being. Whilst partial, tentative and imperfect, such explorations serve as mobilisations of possibility, examples of creative beginnings which may inspire further prefigurative gestures. This is not to suggest that anti-militarists offer blueprints for alternative societies, or attempts to signal fixed routes forward – this would, as the above makes clear, be deeply problematic. Rather it is to suggest that more subtle indications and incitements can be located, which carry with them the possibility of becoming otherwise. This will be the subject of Chapter Four.

The third avenue concerns those ways in which practices of resistance are inevitably constituted within and (often) reproductive of precisely those relations they might wish to displace. The fifth chapter will consider some ways in which anti-

militarist practices can be seen to reproduce particular social logics. Rather than take the form of a critique, the explorations therein focus on the ways in which attempts to resist might (more and less) imperfectly contend with and be constituted by those social discourses which intersect with and underpin aspects of contemporary militarism.

Chapter Three: Agents of Security?

The approach to anarchism set out in the previous chapter forms a frame of interpretation which focuses attention on prefigurative direct action, mobilisations of disobedient and creative subjectivities, and perpetual insurrections against domination, authority and totalisation. This chapter argues that, cast through this lens, practices of UK-based anti-militarist direct action can be understood as resistances to or disruptions of logics of security/insecurity. In the first instance this takes place where anti-militarists refuse statist and hegemonic ontologies of agency and perform security beyond (and against) the state, subverting and rewriting dominant standards of conduct, legitimacy and possibility. Beyond these anti-hegemonic gestures, anti-militarists can be seen to challenge the security/insecurity binary itself, and the forms of subjectivity with which it is bound. Whilst this resistance to the politics of security is an unstable one, it is nonetheless a crucial move in conceptualising a resistance which does not rest upon totalising political categories (particularly those of security and hegemony), and which can engage in the urgent tasks of creating and becoming otherwise.

The first half of this chapter examines how we might conceptualise anti-militarist direct action as signifying alternative types of security agency. In the opening section I use the case study of the ‘EDO Decommissioners’ to make the argument that some forms of anti-militarist activism can be seen to disrupt the hegemonic ontology of agency so embedded within CSS. The discussion reflects on what this might mean, and on how the analysis might be extended to other forms of anti-militarist action. The next section examines how activists have mobilised particular readings of militarism which seek to uncover possibilities for forms of agency which resist the alienation of narratives embedded in totality and centrality, focussing on attempts to narrate militarism as a localised and networked political form.

The second half moves beyond this insurrection of alternative agencies and ‘better’ securities (which, in leaving the concepts of security and agency largely unproblematised, might reinforce more than they disrupt) to explore how such disruptions do not simply ‘do’ security more effectively, but subvert the security/insecurity binaries, rendering them contingent, playful and insufficient. It explores how anti-militarist activity might be already taking up the challenge to disrupt in the margins, to reconfigure political imaginaries, and to perform a security politics which resists the limitations of a binary of security/insecurity. Exploring two particular

case studies which help to draw out this logic, the discussion finishes by looking at how the nature of militarised subjectivity is called into question through these resistances. In the conclusion I argue that the preceding sense of possibility should be tempered by acknowledging the problem of recuperation and incorporation; i.e., that the logic of security functions effectively to fold challenges into its constitutive framework. Two responses are proffered. The first, advancing one of the central arguments of this thesis, is the indispensability of continual disruption, the fragility and vulnerability of resting points, of 'secure' spaces. The second, which helps to set the terms for the following chapter, is the importance of those 'non-spectacular', less visible disruptions and creativities which imagine ways of becoming otherwise which might be less prone to incorporation.

It is important to highlight again that the empirical explorations here are not intended to represent the totality of anti-militarist activism, or even the 'truth' of any one subset. Whilst more direct action-oriented activism is privileged, the concern is to draw out a particular set of practices and possible interpretations which might intervene at and against the politics of security. There is no pretence to objectivity; instead, an avowedly (and, as the previous two chapters have served to situate, an explicitly) political reading is mobilised, which affects both which actions, groups and trends are discussed, and precisely what elements are examined. This is emphatically not done uncritically, as Chapter Five makes clear. It is, however, partial, and subject to (and, hopefully, welcoming and accommodating of) critiques and counter-readings in light of this partiality. It also does not ignore or dispense with contrasting interpretations of anti-militarist practice (drawing on Anna Stavrianakis (2010) and Cynthia Cockburn (2012) in particular). There is, of course, no singular mode of disruption, nor any exemplary case. Instead, we see multiple forms and formulae which enact rewritings in various creative, spectacular, problematic and productive forms.

Part One: Agents of Security

At midnight on 17th January 2009, in response to the Israeli assault on Gaza, Harvey Tadman, Elijah Smith, Tom Woodhead, Ornella Saibene and Bob Nichols broke into the EDO-MBM factory in Brighton with the aim, in Smith's words, to 'smash it up to the best of [our] ability'. EDO makes a VER2 mechanism which is designed for the F16

fighter and used by the Israeli Defence Force. Machinery used to make release mechanisms (these carry and eject missiles from fighter planes and unmanned drones) and an assembly area for electronic components were put out of action. In a documentary made by *Press TV*, one of the Decommissioners described the action:

Well we smashed what we could, we broke manufacturing equipment, we threw computers out the windows, we broke hard drives, anything we could get our hands on actually, we tried to smash, because we wanted to stop the factory from working completely. We then put our hammers down and waited peacefully to be arrested (The Big Story 2010).

Over the course of an hour and a half, the five caused £300,000 of damage. This was not just a symbolic action, but a self-conscious desire to actively intervene and halt the production of military equipment, to break the supply chain which ended with the Israeli military.

They were all arrested, along with several supporters who were outside the factory. Throughout the action and the resulting court case (in which all of the defendants were acquitted, though not until several had spent considerable time in prison) they claimed that their actions were legal, and that they had acted after normal democratic means had failed. Saibene justified her actions by stating that ‘if the law and the police can’t do anything about it, it’s about time somebody else did’ (The Big Story 2010). The action came on the back of (although distinct from) a long running campaign against the presence of the factory in the city, under the name Smash EDO, which, alongside weekly vigils, had been ‘complemented by peace camps, marches, mass demonstrations, direct action, sabotage, roof occupations, street theatre and petitions calling for the closure of the factory’ (EDO Decommissioners Pamphlet 2009: 3). In court, the Decommissioners argued that, as they had sought to prevent a greater crime, their actions were legal, an argument which was accepted by the jury. This is an argument which activists often attempt to use, and which is generally refused by judges. However, there are a number of occasions when it has been successful (this tends to be more common in cases with juries), such as in the cases of the ‘Raytheon 9’ (Raytheon 6 cleared’ 2008), Seeds of Hope (Zelter 2004), and ‘Pit Stop Plowshares’ (Laffin 2003: 80-81).

The EDO Decommissioners' actions were, most clearly, an attempt to *directly* disrupt the ability of the Israeli state to wage war, and the ability of EDO-MBM and the UK government to facilitate this war. The argument here is that, in this direct disruption, they also signified and enacted an important rewriting of the politics of agency. They refused the mediation of their actions through statist and representative ontologies, displacing (and so indicating the failure of) the hegemonic principle. In this respect, they were 'doing' security politics in a manner alien to much of security studies, which permits (and relies upon) the participation of 'ordinary' people only within a particular, regulated and well-defined context. This dynamic might be said to have occurred both at the level of 'action', of their direct intervention in networks of militarism and the arms trade, and at a broader level of provoking popular imagination about the role of ordinary people (and the nature of responsibility) in the context of security practice. They practised and preached the realm of security politics as the *agentic* concern of ordinary people, not solely in the traditional context of political representation (in various forms) but as a direct and practicable normative concern. The hegemonic ontologies of agency which have remained largely unproblematised by CSS scholars were undermined; traditional political structures were shown to be insufficient and/or ignorant to the task of acting to prevent (or at least limit) the assault on Gaza, and 'direct' alternatives were employed. The 'security' of traditional political processes was rendered impotent; ordinary people were able to intervene in ways the state would or could not.

Such interventions are a central feature of anarchist theory and practice, prefiguring a 'society of participants' in ways which serve both to limit the violences of extant politics whilst exploring alternative ways of being (Ward 1982: 26). We can see in the EDO Decommissioners a refusal to adhere to a 'politics of demand', and in its place a 'politics of the act' which performs dissenting conceptions of responsibility, legitimacy, possibility, and security. Whilst in many ways exceptional, and unlikely to be specifically mimicked by many, the use of simple tools grounds the action in opposition to the grand narratives of the state form; in Philip Berrigan's terms, '[t]he hammer...confines us within human limits – we are not superpeople nor do we embody the fantasies of Hollywood or Washington plutocrats' (cited in Laffin 2003: 7). Its directness, 'the hallmark of a really successful action' according to one interviewee, has earned 'the Decommissioning' a reputation as one of the most significant contemporary moments of UK-based anti-militarist activism (Interview C).

In provoking a reimagination of the politics of agency, the EDO Decommissioners were not calling for people to ‘join’ their group, to unite under their banner as a platform for challenging militarism. The group itself was not a sovereign presence which would permit such a reading; it was a temporary collective defined by a common task, united by its action and through the resulting court case and media attention. In an interview with one of the participants, he told me that the group only came together over three days (with the initial idea arising on the Monday, and the action taking place on the Thursday), and derived from nothing but the common urge to do ‘something’ (Interview E). It was a group constituted through the affinity of action whereby shared ethical commitments form the basis of intervention and community. In this case, the affinity was temporary (and, as my contact went on to explain, limited – tensions emerged within the group as they progressed through the court case). Other ‘affinity groups’ might endure through time and undertake multiple actions and campaigns together. Importantly, both disrupt hegemonic ontologies of agency, seeking and enacting direct interventions whilst displacing the imperative to sovereign presence.³³

Ward, discussing the virtues of such forms of organisation, examines the ‘Spies for Peace’, a group of activists who, in 1963, broke into a secret government bunker and photographed and copied documents which revealed for the first time the government’s plans for how it would fight a nuclear war, and to govern in its aftermath.³⁴ It was illegal to publish the information which had been uncovered, ‘yet all over the country it appeared in little anonymous duplicated pamphlets within a few days, providing an enormously interesting example of *ad hoc* federal activity through loose networks of active individuals’ (Ward 1982: 52). Such practices exemplify a contingent attitude towards organising towards action, ‘coming rapidly into being and if necessary disappearing with the same speed, but leaving behind innumerable centres of activity, like ripples and eddies on a pond, after a stone has been thrown into it’ (ibid.). Membership in the dispersed networks through which the information spread was not

³³ Murray Bookchin notes that affinity groups are ‘intended to function as catalysts within the popular movement, not as “vanguards”; they provide initiative and consciousness, not a “general staff” and a source of “command”’ (2004: 144).

³⁴ Walter, whose identity as one of the Spies for Peace would remain a secret until after his death, provides an in-depth (if carefully de-personalised) account of the action (2011).

granted, or applied for, but taken and used by those who felt affinity. This made it very hard to break down (ibid., 57-58).³⁵

Such configurations move beyond the tactical advantages of being difficult to police or regulate (although this is clearly not unimportant). They also function as an *invitation* through their refusal to assert sovereign presence. Anyone can take part in such an action; no membership or mediation is required, nor should it be. One does not need to join a party, the government, or other traditional, (counter-) hegemonic platform in order to intervene; one's participation does not imply a totalising performance. Clearly, this is an ideal-type formulation which places to the side two crucial (and interrelated) points, namely the ways in which resistance is constituted within dominant relations of power, and the ways in which activism performs its own series of exclusions. Nonetheless the attempts to displace a hegemonic ontology of agency are important; individuals and groups are encouraged to take action without deference to the representative principle (and often with little attention to or respect for juridical logics), to prefigure a politics of participation which renders the state form unstable, its foundational claims inadequate or unnecessary.

In this sense, then, the EDO Decommissioners were not simply enacting a singular resistance, although it would be misguided to overlook the significant impact of their actions – production at the factory was stalled for a number of weeks. They were performing an ontology of agency which demonstrated and urged intervention by so-called ordinary people, and which allowed 'security' to be articulated beyond particular 'legitimate' sources. This is just one of a variety of such examples; in particular, it follows the example of many Plowshares actions in seeing small affinity groups disrupting military production or emplacement at military bases and weapons factories (Laffin 2003).³⁶ It is, clearly, not unproblematic. As later discussions will explore, amongst other features, legalistic discourses and the heroism of the act might all be subject to critique. It is also important not to over-privilege particular types of action. Many other types can be identified, each with their own complex politics, provocations, possibilities and exclusions. Other forms of anti-militarist direct action include blockades, citizens' weapons inspections, anti-recruitment activities, organising

³⁵ According to Walter, the name 'Spies for Peace' was chosen 'partly as a serious shorthand summary of [our] position, and partly as a frivolous joke at the expense of the Communist front organizations which used such titles' (Walter 2011: 105).

³⁶ Although it should be noted that the group was keen to disassociate itself from Plowshares actions, which have a more spiritual element (Interview E).

conscientious objection, and so forth. They can include hundreds of people, and they can involve just one.³⁷ We might also look beyond conventional conceptions of direct action. Whilst they are of clear importance, there is a danger that they rest on too narrow an understanding of 'directness', marginalising the more circumspect, the less spectacular; to the list above, we can add examples ranging from awareness raising and education to more radical explorations of counter-conduct. The important point is, therefore, not necessarily about how 'direct' an action is (a misnomer which runs the risk of perpetuating dominant imaginaries about what it means to act politically), but about how different actions and interventions might provoke explorations, imaginations and performances against and beyond hegemonic, representative and sovereign ontologies of agency.

It is also important to recognise the specifically empowering dimensions activists frequently identify in practices of direct action. In my interview with one Decommissioner, while also noting the stressful nature of the resulting course case, they told me that they had found the action empowering. This was a common theme for interviewees. During a group interview one, referring to his experience of blockading a road leading to a military base, noted that the action gave them a new-found 'sense of worth', a belief that he had the capacity to intervene politically in a manner supposedly unavailable, while another referred to the empowering dimensions of conducting her own defence in court (Interview D). In a workshop aimed at introducing their campaign, the Manchester-based Target Brimar group explained that they had chosen a campaign based on direct action precisely because it was felt to be a more empowering route than petitioning the state. One interviewee summed up his politics by explaining that

...we're not going to get what we want by politely asking the ruling classes for it, ever, and you could argue that you're not going to get it by direct action either because only .01% of the population will ever actually take that step. But if we're not going to win either way, I know which brick wall I'd rather be banging my head against, because it'll give me more self-respect to not be asking for it (Interview F).

³⁷ In 1985 Plowshares activist Tom Hastings 'entered a wooded area in Michigan's upper peninsula and sawed down one of the poles carrying the Navy's...transmitter antennas which are used to coordinate the communications, command, and control process of all nuclear submarines in the US' (Laffin 2003: 26-27).

The nature of such ‘empowerment’ will be taken up further in the fourth chapter, where the discussion will explore the moves made by anti-militarists to cultivate disobedient subjectivities. For now, it is important to note both the ways in which direct action in this sense functions as an ethic of the (resisting) subject, and the ways in which this ethic displaces or renders partial simplistic characterisations of effectiveness or directness.

Before moving to the next section, two additional points might be noted. The first is that these interventions are of course subject to control, discipline and, often, repression from ‘official’ agents of security. The sense of possibility and the provocation to intervention occur in a context (and often in a form) whereby technologies of security function at their most acute. This has a number of implications; one is that much of anti-militarist time is spent attempting to subvert, overwhelm or evade police officers, security guards, etc. At such moments we often see a struggle to articulate precisely who the ‘real’ agents of security are, and what the ‘real’ nature of security is. One example of this struggle emerged at an attempt to carry out a citizens’ weapons inspection at the EDO-MBM factory in the summer of 2012, as part of the Smash EDO ‘Summer of Resistance’.

Dressed in white boiler suits (mimicking the attire of ‘official’ UN inspectors), around sixty of us gathered in Brighton in order to carry out the weapons inspection. After marching as a bloc from the town centre to the factory, we found the narrow road to the gates blocked by a heavy police presence. Whilst we were not contained (or ‘kettled’), the police had positioned themselves in such a way that it would be impossible to reach the factory and carry out the inspection. However, in doing so, the police had also blockaded the factory, preventing all deliveries. Had the situation ended here, it might already have signified a noteworthy example by which to explore autoimmunity in the context of security politics. A group of six activists took things further, however, by revealing that the dummy missiles several of them had brought as props were in fact well-disguised arm tubes.³⁸ Refusing to allow the police’s surprising show of force to define the situation – even though the situation had already become a blockade of sorts – they chained themselves together and lay in the road in front of the police barricade.

³⁸ An arm-tube is a cylindrical device popular for those who want to chain themselves together quickly in a particularly obstructive manner.

On the one hand, there was little reason for this action – the factory was no more or less impaired as a result. On the other hand, this was less about the blockade than the performance of agency, the signification that the police were playing *our* game. Certainly the atmosphere changed quickly; on first arriving at the barricade there had been an air of frustration, a sense that we had little answer to the forceful physical presence of the police. The activists' own blockade reversed this to some extent, and introduced a more affirmative dimension (not least because it highlighted the absurdity of the police's securing gesture). The police appeared to feel the same, and moved quickly to untangle this inversion. Within around ten minutes of the activists' counter-blockade forming, a section of riot police had arrived, forced the rest of us away from the barricade, and proceeded to arrest the six. It took around an hour to complete the arrests (which were hindered as far as possible by the rest of the activists), and for the situation to revert to the original, police blockade.

Both the police and the activists might coherently claim success in this context; the police stopped the activists from carrying out their stated aims, the activists in stopping the factory from functioning as usual. My suggestion here is that we might see the situation as precisely a contestation over who is 'enacting' security (and so, of course, what 'real' security in such a situation would be). For the police (and many others), allowing activists to attempt to gain access to private property, with no official permission, would be anathema. For the activists, discourses of law and order function not to provide security but to mask the normalised insecurities of the state and militarism. Much of anti-militarist resistance represents at some level this discursive struggle. That the police were eventually successful in clearing the activists' blockade in the example given here is, in such a context, not particularly relevant; the irony had performed its task, and politicised the question of agency and security.

The second point in conclusion is that the logics privileged here should not be seen in isolation. Whilst my intention here is to draw out a particular politics, the ways in which this intersects with other approaches cannot be ignored. As Cockburn makes clear, one of the virtues of the anti-militarist 'movement' is its diversity, incorporating a range of action from lobbying, to protest, to direct action, and so forth (2012: 4). Whilst there are clear tensions across different axes, there is also a respect for difference, a refusal to impose any totalising framework on action, and a faith that the multiplicity which might be cultivated will be a productive one. Such a dynamic is often referred to

as a ‘diversity of tactics’, although we see its expression in academic contexts under different labels, such as Jason Adams’ ‘constellation of oppositions’ (2011). It signifies the attempts to affirm both that different forms of direct and anti-hegemonic action will be preferable to different individuals and groups, *and* that there can be spaces wherein those who pursue more traditional, hegemonic approaches (whether parliamentary, representative, etc) might work in common with more radical elements.³⁹ One important example to note here is CAAT, an NGO which operates across this spectrum, serving to facilitate both direct action and parliamentary lobbying. In a culture where NGOs are treated with some suspicion by activists, CAAT is widely respected, and plays a major role in organising direct action to disrupt the biannual London-based DSEi arms fair.

Through the case study of the EDO Decommissioners, alongside other examples, this first section has argued that we might view anti-militarist direct action as performing a break with, indeed a disruption of, statist and hegemonic ontologies of agency. Against the expectations to petition the state, to manifest a politics of demand which, in Day’s terms, is liable to increase ‘the quantity and intensity of discipline and control’ (2011: 107), anti-militarists show that alternative possibilities might be expressed, that the identification of a site of insecurity is not necessarily a gesture which turns towards the state. Insofar as CSS remains faithful to particular, hegemonic imaginaries with respect to the politics of agency and security, its capacity to understand these performances remains limited.

To some extent, we might view the activists under discussion as ‘doing’ security, refusing the mediation of hegemonic ontologies of agency and of prior conceptions of legitimacy presumed by CSS, and rewriting ontologies of agency. That a company is selling arms which are being used in a war considered to be unethical, unjust, or illegal, and is not being prevented from doing so by the ‘appropriate authorities’, is both an indication that these authorities are not appropriate, and a call to intervention, a call to ‘do’ the security which others are not. This is not to suggest that the situation is simple; a disruption of hegemony is not self-evidently ‘emancipatory’ or anti-authoritarian, and the politics of anti-militarism are not straightforwardly ‘anti-hegemonic’ nor immune from the systems of power within which they are constituted. Nevertheless, and

³⁹ It is useful to restate the caveat from Chapter Two that these distinctions are loose, heuristic, and often mask the fact that both logics are often present within any particular context – a series of complications drawn out at various points in this thesis.

building on the theoretical reflections of the first two chapters, the resistances and prefigurations explored here and throughout the thesis offer important resources for thinking beyond the state form, beyond hegemonic political imaginaries. However, such moves are insufficient if the logic of security remains unchallenged; this will be the subject of second half of this chapter. First, it is useful to explore the particular ways in which anti-militarists narrate the place of militarism.

The Place of Militarism

In many ways, the forms by which anti-militarists narrate militarism are unremarkable. In activist contexts one can expect to hear references to capitalism, imperialism, statism and so forth; militarism is conceptualised, relatively simply, as the systems through which wars are waged, resources allocated, citizens conscripted, and capital protected and advanced. Without wishing to marginalise the importance of such analyses, this chapter draws out two important additional features of the narrative. One concerns the relationship between militarism and subjectivity, and will be discussed towards the end of the chapter. The other concerns how anti-militarists conceptualise militarism as a network, placing a premium on the ways in which militarism is a 'localised' political form, and present in surprising places. Such narratives are, to an extent, crucial for the forms of resistance mobilised; if the *place* of security and militarism is abstracted, alienated, restricted to the corridors of Westminster and Whitehall, then 'ordinary' people cannot make an intervention without seeking to occupy or convince the occupiers of such places, without strengthening the state form and perpetuating hegemonic political imaginaries.

The Manchester-based Target Brimar provide a good example of how militarism is conceptualised by activists; at an anti-militarist gathering in the city, organised by CAAT, activists explained that understanding militarism as a network is central to their campaign. They outlined how they chose the relatively small company Brimar (who make screens and viewing equipment for Apache helicopters, used in Afghanistan, Iraq and Gaza) in part because there was a chance that they may actually succeed and close the factory down, thereby breaking the 'Military-Industrial Complex' at a comparatively weak (but important – only two factories produce the screens, and Apache helicopters cannot fly without them) point. This possibility, they explained, was

felt to be more appealing than taking action against the well-guarded military bases such as Faslane, which are a more traditional site of protest.

Target Brimar's literature places significant focus on 'the network', and Brimar's place within it, one pamphlet emphasising that 'Brimar is a small cog in the war machine. A cog located in Greater Manchester' (Target Brimar undated). Similar logics can be seen underpinning the EDO Decommissioners action and the Smash EDO campaign; in their publicity, both have used a tagline which reads: 'Every bomb that is dropped and every bullet that is fired has to be made somewhere and wherever that is, it can be resisted'.⁴⁰ Such narratives suggest an important disturbance, a creative political intervention which demonstrates that the depoliticising story of a security politics located in alienated, centralised and bureaucratised realms is not necessary, and which insists that counter-narratives which situate sites of security as accessible and vulnerable are possible. This is not to suggest that such narratives are therefore unproblematic (for instance, as Martin Coward argues, the network trope is itself implicated in a series of war-enabling ontological frameworks (2009)); however, it does show one way in which the rewriting of agency reframes the place of militarism itself.

The focus on 'the local', in particular, is important. In a segment recorded for BBC's *The One Show* in early 2011, one of the founders of the Shut Down Heckler & Koch campaign took a reporter on a tour of Nottingham to show him the various arms companies operating in the suburbs (The One Show 2011). Similarly, at the CAAT National Gathering in November 2010, a workshop entitled 'What to do about the arms company on your doorstep?' discussed how local people can conduct research into and take action against local arms companies. The message was that people should seek to find out which arms companies are operating in their own communities and to begin from this point. The website of Disarm DSEi, a group who organise resistance to the DSEi arms fair, hosts, through Google maps, a tool to do just that. For them, it provides an opportunity to target DSEi exhibitors away from the impregnable ExCeL Centre in London where the main event takes place, building on the network theme introduced above (Disarm DSEi 2009).⁴¹

⁴⁰ CAAT have also used this tagline.

⁴¹ The example of DSEi in this context is particularly interesting, insofar as there is some contestation amongst activists on the question of localisation. A number of activists and groups, amongst them East London Against Arms Fairs (ELAAF), an anti-militarist group located near to the ExCeL centre, expressed some discomfort with CAAT's preference for targeting

It is important to note that these moves do not signify a fetishisation of the local of the sort critiqued by Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri, amongst others (2000: 43-46), but a recognition that the local/global dichotomy is problematic, that narratives which expel 'the local' from understandings of security, militarism and war serve to defer popular participation. This is why Target Brimar, at the CAAT gathering, referred to militarism as a simultaneous 'local and global' phenomenon, with each predicated on and constituted by the other. They noted that this understanding was inspired by Smash EDO (as was much of their campaign), who have made similar claims about their Brighton-based focus. As the Smash EDO film 'On the Verge' makes clear, one important facet of the campaign has to build links with local communities (SchMOVIES 2008). Similar ideas were expressed by the Raytheon 9 in Derry who, after carrying out an action not dissimilar to that of the EDO Decommissioners, highlighted the shared context with respect to the ongoing war in Lebanon and Derry's own historical experiences of violence (McCann undated: 7).⁴² As one interviewee with many years of experience in local campaigning explained, the local connection 'makes it easier for people to make a connection between what [a factory/business] is doing and how that's affecting somebody in another part of the world', easing the alienation people tend to feel from such political events (Interview H). The localisation narrative is in this sense one which builds on the sense of possibility mobilised by the network trope, in part by raising a particular sense of responsibility: the war may be distant, and perhaps too complex for the question of intervention to be thinkable, but the local dynamic cuts through this, demanding some form of reckoning. This sense of reckoning is further advanced by extending the network to incorporate unconventional sites of militarism.

One unconventional site which has become a common target for activists over the past few years is the 'Baby Show', an exhibition which attracts large numbers of young families, so chosen because the owner of the event, Clarion Events, also owns the DSEi exhibition. Various protests have taken place to highlight the links. The Space Hijackers, a London-based group of 'anarchitects' who have become famous amongst

government support for the arms fair (and so holding demonstrations at Parliament and at various government offices). ELAAF have insisted that the arms fair is, for them, a *localised* issue, and that to focus only on the government is insufficient. Whilst CAAT have agreed, the extent to which protests should focus on different locations is a matter of continual debate.

⁴² During Israel's 2006 assault on Lebanon the Raytheon 9 broke in to Raytheon's office and caused considerable damage in an attempt to hinder Raytheon's sale of 'bunker-busters' to the Israeli army. As with the EDO Decommissioners, they were eventually acquitted by a jury.

activists for their situationist-inspired actions to reclaim and reframe public space,⁴³ held an action in 2008 during which they invited visitors to visit other Clarion events: '[d]ressed in our smartest attire, we paced the entrance to Earls Court chatting to glowing mothers and cheerful fathers about the fact that Clairion cater for both extremes of the human experience, both life, and death' (Space Hijackers undated-b). Dressed as elves, activists have also targeted Clarion's 'Spirit of Christmas' exhibition, mobilising similar ironic narratives (Viesnik 2009). When activists learned that the National Gallery had entered into a sponsorship relationship with the Italian arms manufacturer Finnmechanica, a campaign to 'Disarm the Gallery' started, and activists have also dressed as dinosaurs and targeted the Natural History Museum when it hosted a reception for arms dealers during the 2012 Farnborough Air Show (CAAT 2012).

Several dynamics can be seen in such narratives; notably, it creates opportunities to stress the diffusion of militarism throughout society in a manner which disrupts the illusion of 'safe' or 'non-political' spaces, and so demands some engagement beyond the usual confines of security politics. It also allows activists to highlight tensions which might not be found within conventional militarist spaces; it is on such terms that the major narrative of the Disarm the Gallery campaign was the incongruity between the destruction of war and the Gallery's supposed status as a site of creativity and beauty. This particular campaign was successful and, in October 2012, the National Gallery ended its relationship with Finnmechanica.

In rendering dispersed and unusual places as nodal points in the wider networks of militarism and the arms trade, opportunities are opened for expressions of agency which might not otherwise be possible. It constitutes a rewriting which opens spaces to resist which remain hidden when one begins from centralised conceptions of security and militarism, which beg responses which reify representative and sovereign politics. As Cynthia Enloe argues with respect to military bases, the consent of local people is a crucial part of what allows militarism to function, but this is necessarily obscured, hegemonic ontologies of agency predicated on masking such dynamics (1989: 67). Revealing them is thus an important component of resistance.

⁴³ Whilst often referring to themselves simply as anarchists, the Space Hijackers' principle concern is 'the hierarchy that is put upon us by Architects, Planners and owners of space' (Space Hijackers undated-a), therefore, 'anarchitects'.

There are two important responses to the arguments presented here. The first is that, if isolated, they present an overly spatialised conception of security and militarism; this possible issue is redressed by situating the argument within the contexts explored in the next part of this chapter, where the relationship between security, militarism and subjectivity is explored in more detail. The second response to these arguments, identified by both detractors and adherents, is that they are almost always insufficient. As Day argues, action of the sort explored here

...shares a limitation common to all actions that seek to impede the flows of state and corporate power: while they may be successful in the short term in particular cases, over the long term and in the majority of cases, the impeded flow tends to find another outlet. One forest isn't cut, but another is; one family isn't deported, but dozens are denied entry to avoid further disruptions to the immigration system. This problem is inherent to direct action to impede flows and will not go away (2005: 33).

Enloe raises similar concerns about resistance to bases. When they are forced to close, they are likely to reopen elsewhere; usually, they end up where the population is either unable to, or disinclined to, resist. She provides the example of the relocation of NATO training flights to 'isolated' regions in North Canada, where the indigenous Innu population was powerless to resist, despite the problems they faced as a result (1989: 80-81).⁴⁴ The response to this challenge is demanding, but crucial to any attempt to displace the hegemony of hegemony, to move beyond totalising conceptions of political possibility. As Day continues, '[h]owever, if this kind of action proliferates sufficiently, the flows overall will start to decay beyond the ability of systems to control and manage them' (2005: 33). Direct action cannot remain exemplary; this merely entrenches political imaginaries predicated on representation. Its status as a refusal of hegemonic ontologies of agency demands that it proliferates into 'everyday' understandings of political participation (a point which must stand alongside the caveat noted above that 'directness' itself is a concept which must be treated with some degree of circumspection).

⁴⁴ Cockburn makes a similar point about resistance to US military presence in Japan, made more difficult because many of the bases have been placed out of (political) visibility in Okinawa, where the indigenous Ryukyans receive little support from the more powerful mainland peace movement (2012: 165).

To return to the EDO Decommissioners, this attitude was expressed by Woodhead in his article in their pamphlet explaining his motivations. He argues that '[i]f even a tenth of those who marched in London had acted like the brave Fairford five and disabled the fighter jets on British soil it would have become very difficult for our government to have waged such a murderous crusade' (2009: 17).⁴⁵ In the same pamphlet Ciaran O'Reilly, a well-known Plowshares activist and Catholic Worker, stated that 'I truly believe that if 1% of the people who marched against the war in '03...had gone into nonviolent resistance in the spirit of [Martin Luther] King, [Daniel] Berrigan and the EDO 9 [i.e., the Decommissioners] and the other 99% had remained in proactive solidarity the governments and corporations would have a tough time waging their wars' (ibid., 25). Provocatively he cites Daniel Berrigan, one of the founders of the Plowshares movement: 'Because we want the peace with half a heart and half a life and will, the war, of course, continues, because the waging of war, by its nature, is total – but the waging of peace, but our own cowardice, is partial' (ibid., 24).⁴⁶ There is here a sense that the small, singular actions are important, making direct impacts and expanding horizons of possibility, but that unless they proliferate they will only ever be partial. Such a call for proliferation is tied into and even synonymous with the imperative to disrupt hegemonic/statist ontologies of agency and proceed with a sense of the possible not disciplined by depoliticising conceptions of responsibility and representation.

The discussions in first two parts of this chapter open a number of challenges, confronting and rewriting the relationship between agency, hegemony and security. In particular, traditional conceptions of representation are refused, subverted, or simply ignored. Statist and representative ontologies of agency are rendered insufficient (either as a given, or through their failures to deal with particular situations), and more 'direct' forms are explored and enacted. Security is dislocated from the hegemonic and sovereign terms of the 'securer', and performed in a manner alien to much of CSS. Groups and individuals are, in a sense, conceptualising and exploring alternative, anti-hegemonic ontologies of security agency.

⁴⁵ The 'Fairford Five' were a group of Plowshares activists who, in the build-up to the 2003 Invasion of Iraq, broke into RAF Fairford and used hammers and bolt cutters to disable fuel tankers and trailers used for carrying bombs.

⁴⁶ The brothers Daniel and Philip Berrigan were Catholic priests who were both active in the anti-Vietnam war movement and who were instrumental in forming the Plowshares movement. They both wrote extensively and so, to avoid confusion, I use their full names when referencing them throughout the thesis.

However, the analysis cannot rest here, with a new ‘type’ of security agent. First, it is important to reiterate that the concept of agency is used here advisedly, even ironically, to delineate particular ontological representations of political action and organisation, whether hegemonic, statist, etc., which in turn produce differing understandings of possibility, responsibility, legitimacy, and so forth. Used in this way, agency refers not to ‘agents’, but to how different forms of politics are (not) made possible in the articulation of intervention. Second, while ‘doing security’ differently might in some ways be preferable, it leaves the logic of security intact, with its regulatory, totalising and exceptionalising tendencies largely (though perhaps not wholly) unchallenged, its politics and metaphysics of mastery unimpeded. However, to see the groups and actions discussed as simply ‘doing security’ is severely limited; it is to remain wedded to an approach to examining social movements which, in Walker’s terms, asks how they ‘fulfil established expectations of what they must be and must become’, rather than exploring ‘how they contribute to the reconfiguration of the political’ (1994: 674-675). The more interesting challenge enacted might not be the resistance to a *particular* sovereign order of security, but to the disruption of security as a sovereign order. This is not to suggest that such groups are operating ‘outside’ the logics of security, but that they may be mobilising a disturbance at the boundaries, a contestation which denaturalises, ridicules and subverts the will to mastery or hegemony involved in the concept of security.

Part Two: Disrupting Security/Insecurity

Dances with Tanks

The groups discussed here can be interpreted as doing something quite different from asserting a ‘true’ way to enact security. One possible route into exploring this is to examine the (sometimes, but not always, ironic) manifestations of self-evidently ‘insecure’ situations and practices; such situations can be read as productive disruptions of the security/insecurity, order/chaos and sovereignty/anarchy binaries. Exploring these also leads us to a space through which such resistances can be understood as enactments of prefigurative politics, as explorations of subjectivity and relationality which disrupt the place of authority. As indicated above, it is through such routes that the explorations move beyond overly ‘direct’ conceptions of direct action to the

(arguably more radical) challenges of being or becoming otherwise. This section begins by providing two contrasting examples which suggest how the disruption of security/insecurity can be seen to operate. The first concerns the attempt by the Space Hijackers to sell a tank outside DSEi in 2007. The second is a mass demonstration held by Smash EDO in October 2010.

On the morning of 11th September 2007, during the DSEi arms fair, the Space Hijackers attempted to leave their storage yard in an 8.5 tonne tank. Rumours that they would be doing so were widespread, and there was significant police presence outside. After negotiations and a small scuffle, the police agreed to let the Hijackers onto the road, and to escort them to the ExCeL Centre where the 'exhibition' was taking place. However, after a short time, they were pulled over and subject to a roadside inspection which, given the nature of the vehicle and the situation, was likely to take up a considerable portion of time and render their action impossible:

Time for plan C!

Bristly [Pioneer⁴⁷] informed the police we had an important announcement to make, and that we would have to delay the inspection. Leaving them by the roadside, he clambered onto the bonnet of the tank, and was passed a microphone through the gun turret by agent Hardcastle. Craig connected him to the sound system and turned down the music.

"Ladies and Gentlemen, I'm afraid I have a sad announcement to make. It seems the Police are doing everything in their power to delay us today, and prevent our perfectly legal vehicle from driving on the road. It basically looks to us like they are going to prevent us at every turn, and doubtlessly find some odd reason as to why our vehicle isn't able to drive. Basically Ladies and Gentlemen, we don't want to hold you up any longer as the worlds largest arms fair is happening, and the police seem more interested in stopping legitimate protest than stopping some of the most corrupt and nasty people on the planet."

"Ladies and Gentlemen, we have just had a very important phone call from two of our agents who couldn't be here today. Apparently our SECOND TANK, a great big tracked 60 tonne tank has just left its location and is rolling towards the fair as we speak. We suggest you follow our agents and go to meet it"

⁴⁷ Members of the group all have their own 'agent name'. Bristly Pioneer is the most prominent member of the group, and might be considered the intellectual leader.

Cue chaos! The shock on the faces of the assembled police at this point was a picture, as they reached for radios and dived into their vans the scene was amazing. Within 2 minutes 90% of the police had flown off down the A12 in a bid to find our second tank, the Hijackers quickly pedaling along too and the various press hailing cabs to join the chase [sic] (Space Hijackers 2007).

The surprise second tank was able to get to the ExCeL centre, where the group attempted to auction it off:

We proudly announced that after years of struggling against the arms dealers and police, we had seen the error of our ways. That the governments £400,000 support for the fair, not to mention the £4,000,000 worth of police provided, was obvious support for a business which has no regard for human life, and certainly takes no responsibility for it's actions. If arms dealers can come to London and sell weapons to regimes regardless of how these weapons are going to be used, then why shouldn't we follow suit? We therefore announced to the assembled crowd that we would be auctioning off our tank to the highest bidder, regardless of their intentions. If they so chose to drive it through the police lines and into the fair itself, we would be taking no responsibility [sic] (ibid.).

Anarchists in a tank might, for many, signify an archetypal situation of insecurity. The abject and public failure of the security forces to prevent the tank from moving around London even more so. Nevertheless the situation is clearly an ironic performance, an inversion of two forms. In one, the absurdity of the auction outside the exhibition serves to highlight what the Space Hijackers felt to be the wider, 'ordered' absurdity within. In another, the time and resources spent by the police attempting to stop the tank stands in contrast to the privileged status of those they were protecting, the attendees at the exhibition.

The decision to use a tank was a clear invitation to the police to intervene, but again, in two different ways. For the police, it was an invitation to secure, to redraw the lines of order and chaos, to assert sovereignty in the face of anarchy. For the Space Hijackers, it was an invitation to play a game, to subvert easy narratives of security and insecurity and revel in the (tragic) comedy, in absurdity. In this absurdity, the terms of insecurity are politicised as the state's role in guaranteeing security is rendered partial –

both insofar as the target of their securitising gesture is ridiculous, and because they failed even in this partial attempt to secure. The state's 'order' is mocked by a gleeful and ironic chaos, which reveals the constitutive (and political) *disorder* at the heart of the state's security system – specifically, in this case, the international arms trade. We see not a competition of securities, as indicated in the first part of this chapter, but a competition of (ridiculous) insecurities, in the face of which one can choose either the self-defeating attempt to re-secure (both ill-fated and indicative of the militarist politics at work), or one can choose to play games in the interstices. The logics of security/insecurity are thus rendered strange and contingent, and yet simultaneously a serious and important site of intervention. Whilst the police play a hapless game of cat-and-mouse, genuine arms dealers are selling weapons systems legally and with the full protection of the state.

Play is an important political concept, even though (or perhaps precisely because) it resists general categorisation or codification within wider conceptual frameworks. Rose Pfeffer, following Nietzsche, suggests that 'play represents an activity that does not aim at any practical utilitarian need and ends, being unconcerned with good and evil, truth and falsity' (1972: 207, cited in Perez 1990: 15). As Jun makes clear, it plays an important role in both Foucault and Deleuze's critique of representation, wherein relational concepts are subordinated to totalizing ones: 'difference to identity, play to presence, multiplicity to singularity, immanence to transcendence, discourse to knowledge, power to sovereignty, subjectivation to subjectivity, and so on' (2012: 164). For Jeppesen, '[a]narchist theory, like anarchist practice, at its rhizomatic roots, is about play. From playing anarchist soccer to sex and gender play and playing with words to playing with a diversity of tactics, playing with the legalities of border-crossings, or playing with fire – play has always been an anti-authoritarian practice' (2011: 158). The Space Hijackers' game can be read as precisely this anti-authoritarian play, which critiques the politics of security *and* the (utilitarian, totalising) rationalities through which critique is disciplined (and dismissed). Dillon (re)connects this to the politics of security when considering the limit through which security and/as metaphysics forms the horizon of our political imaginary. For Dillon, we need to approach this limit

...in terms of the closure of what it is possible for us to say, do and be in virtue of the operation of it. The question of the limit has therefore to be posed in a way that invokes a thinking which resists the siren calls of fatal philosophers and

historians alike. That is why limits have to be thought differently, and why the question concerning limits has to be posed, instead, in terms of that which keeps things in play (1996: 26-27).

The Space Hijackers might conceivably be situated in such terms, questioning the limit in a manner which keeps the rationalities of security/insecurity in play; against 'a security simply ordering to order' (ibid., 25), they excite a sense of the playful which disturbs the (dis)order of security and reveals the (complex but not closed) possibilities of insecurity.

A prescient metaphor for the Space Hijacker's playful game of cat and mouse might be a dance, a movement around the city both spontaneous and yet with its own sense of precarious rhythm. The metaphor calls to mind Goldman's famous quote, 'If I can't dance, I don't want to be part of your revolution', and the broader affirmation of perpetual motion and nomadic subjectivity. The dance is not singular (Goldman stated that she wanted to dance herself to death), but an affirmation of perpetual movement, an ongoing confusion and conceptual transvaluation which eludes capture and closure. Through such a reading, the resistance to security enacted is specifically and intentionally uncodable, and all the more powerful for it. It is an attempt to enact an experience of becoming, of escape, which renders the disciplinary effects of the binaries of security/insecurity, order/chaos, sovereignty/anarchy, staid and incapable of adequately accommodating a politics of affirmation. On the question of affirmation (and as Hilton Bertalan argues, not dissimilarly from Goldman), Nietzsche placed great importance on dance as an image through which 'to explain perpetual and creative epistemological shifts' (Bertalan 2011: 214). Deleuze's interpretation of Nietzsche on this point is powerful in the context here: 'in relation to Dionysus dance, laughter and play are affirmative powers of reflection and development. Dance affirms becoming and the being of becoming; laughter, roars of laughter, affirm multiplicity and the unity of multiplicity; play affirms chance and the necessity of chance' (2006: 183).⁴⁸ In the face of

⁴⁸ Franz Fanon picks up on the intersections between dance and revolution, but is considerably more sceptical: 'On another hand we see the native's emotional sensibility exhausting itself in dances which are more or less ecstatic. This is why any study of the colonial world should take into consideration the phenomena of the dance and of possession. The native's relaxation takes precisely the form of a muscular orgy in which the most acute aggressivity and the more impelling violence are canalized, transformed and conjured away. The circle of the dance is a permissive circle: it protects and permits. At certain times on certain days, men and women come together at a given place, and there, under the solemn eye of the tribe, fling themselves into a seemingly unorganized pantomime, which is in reality extremely systematic...the huge

the security forces the Space Hijackers performed dance, laughter and play in a manner which demonstrated the violence of the state's (dis)order and (in)security whilst affirming their own creative politics of dis/order and in/security.

Hammertime

The second example here differs in several ways from the first; however, despite obvious dissimilarities, it too might be interpreted as mobilising disruptions of the security/insecurity binary. It concerns a mass demonstration against the EDO factory in Brighton, named 'Hammertime' in jubilant reference to the action of the EDO Decommissioners and their recent acquittal.

In October 2010 I joined around three hundred others in an attempt to 'besiege' the factory in Brighton (as Gaza has been besieged) and shut it down. It was to be a more confrontational action than most, and the callout stipulated that attendees should dress in black and wear face masks. Sleeping in a local squat with a large number of other activists who had come from outside Brighton, we awoke in the morning to find the house in which we were staying surrounded by several lines of riot police who, after a brief standoff, escorted us (*en masse*, so as to avoid activists escaping into the woods adjacent to the factory) to a designated protest zone they had established in a field near to the factory. Taken to a large field and momentarily left alone by the police, we joined with those protesters who had not stayed at the squat, but who had nonetheless convened at the field. When the police started to reform around the group, we turned and ran up a large hill into the woods which separated us from the factory. We walked quickly through the woods with police officers following us at a moderate distance, and emerged into another field above the factory. As we entered, we saw a line of police moving uphill towards us from the direction of the factory. Most of the protesters ran uphill away from the police; I joined a group of around twenty-five who were moving

effect of a community to exorcise itself, to liberate itself, to explain itself. There are no limits – inside the circle. The hillock up which you have toiled as if to be nearer to the moon; the river bank down which you slip as if to show the connexion between the dance and ablutions, cleansing and purification – these are sacred places. There are no limits – for in reality your purpose in coming together is to allow the accumulated libido, the hampered aggressivity to dissolve as in a volcanic eruption. Symbolical killings, fantastic rites, imaginary mass murders – all must be brought out. The evil humours are undammed, and flow away with a din as of molten lava...When they set out, the men and women were impatient, stamping their feet in a state of nervous excitement; when they return, peace has been restored to the village; it is once more calm and unmoved' (2001: 44-45).

downhill with a reinforced banner attempting to break through police lines and reach the factory. We were unsuccessful, and were surrounded by police and held in the field for over an hour, at which point we were taken back to the designated protest site, where we were told we would be able to come and go freely.

After a slow walk back, we were escorted into a fenced area a hundred metres from the factory, where a large number of the other activists had also been taken. After a few minutes, however, we realised that the police were attempting to form a perimeter around the area, and jumped over fences to escape. At this point, a chaotic situation emerged, small groups of activists running around the nearby roads and housing estate, the police attempting to kettle as many as possible. I was contained a number of times, and immediately ‘uncontained’ as the officers surrounding the group I was with decided on a different target. Whilst remaining in the same place, exhausted and interested to witness the situation, I was contained and freed, secured, unsecured and re-secured, several times over a twenty minute period. Cries of ‘stay together’ and ‘we’re stronger united’ by protesters were ignored and followed variously and spasmodically, with similar police instructions – to activists and one another - equally ineffective. With attempts to reach the factory itself rendered impossible by a large portable wall (of the type ironically blockaded in the citizens’ weapons inspection described above), groups of activists sought to escape back towards Brighton town centre (where several people had superglued themselves to Barclays Bank, who hold considerable investments in the arms trade), but few were successful and, finally the police managed to contain a large number (around fifty), all of whom were arrested (and, a short while later, ‘de-arrested’).

This mass action was, clearly, very different from the Space Hijackers’ more light hearted intervention; more confrontational and, in different ways, more and less participatory. While we might draw a number of insights, the interest here lies in the politics of the ‘insecure’ situation. As with the Space Hijackers and their tank, the image of three hundred black-clad anarchists wearing face masks attempting to shut down a factory (incidentally, the factory was shut down for the day before the event had even started – such is the reputation of Smash EDO’s mass demonstrations) fits neatly into any conventional understanding of insecurity. The corresponding refusal to submit to the attempts by police to secure the situation, to restore order and facilitate ‘legitimate’ protest, reinforces this perspective. Such an interpretation, whilst valid, is only partial. In one sense, this is for similar reasons to the first example, i.e., that the police

expended considerable resources in their attempt to control and limit the protest and protesters in the name of protecting a factory which might be said to be itself a considerable source of insecurity (as the jury in the EDO Decommissioners court case had affirmed).⁴⁹ There is, however, a more substantial reason why simplistic narratives of security and insecurity are insufficient in this case. Beyond grand narratives, whereby the police invoke the insecurity of the activists, and the activists the insecurity of the police and the arms trade, we instead see a productive confusion of (in)securities, which are multiple, diffuse, contingent, and crucial for understanding the creative disruptions enacted.

There are a number of examples which might be taken from the action to draw out this point. Several were made apparent when I was contained in the field after trying to break through police lines down the hill. Sat with around twenty-five others, none of whom I knew, a spontaneous community emerged. The following is an extract from my fieldnotes:

I join a group of about 25 who are gathered around the banner trying to force a way through lines downhill (I am exhausted by this point!). As we push, police push back, quite aggressively. One girl falls and is injured (and arrested). The mass tries to de-arrest her, but to no avail.⁵⁰ Police form around us and kettle; several attempts are made to escape, but police have more numbers, and are more willing/able to use force. They link arms around us. Behind us, up the hill, a smaller group is kettled, but many more are still loose; we've tied up a lot of police and acted as a useful distraction.

After a few minutes, police (complete with FIT⁵¹) tell us we're in breach of a section 14 order, which he hands out.⁵² People sing loudly while he talks, and refuse the bits of paper.⁵³ They tell us they will escort us to a designated protest

⁴⁹ Some activists on the day speculated that the considerable numbers and aggressive conduct of the police was, in part, revenge for the recent acquittal of the EDO Decommissioners.

⁵⁰ 'De-arresting' is, literally, a physical attempt to prevent the police from arresting an activist, and is a particularly intense form of solidarity, given the risk to those involved. Rarely (though sometimes) successful, it carries significant symbolic importance.

⁵¹ 'Forward Intelligence Team'

⁵² Section 14 of the Public Order Act 1986 allows the police to impose conditions on public assemblies, including the number of people who may take part, the location of the assembly, and its maximum duration.

⁵³ It is a common myth amongst activists that such behaviour invalidates the instruction. It does not.

zone (now about a mile away). We all sit down immediately, and link arms. Police threaten arrest, and the group ignores them. We stay here for around an hour. There is a lot of funny banter and singing, some are reading books, there is an odd rapport with the police (both friendly and less so), lots of cigarette smoking and sharing of rolling equipment. Police keep offering to escort us down. We continue to ignore them; there is a sense of indignation that we must be mediated by the police. There is genuine fury from some towards the police, that they are treating us like this in the name of defending EDO.

Eventually the police promise that they will let us keep our face masks on, will not film us, and will give us freedom to come and go from the designated protest zone. Feeling that we have little option, the group reluctantly agrees to be escorted back.

There are a number of important dynamics here. The instinctive attempts to ‘de-arrest’ (i.e., pull back) the girl who was arrested, and the insistence on keeping masks on, are important forms of solidarity (even though some are not so concerned with keeping a mask on throughout an entire protest, doing so is a form of support for those who are – it makes it harder for individuals to be identified, and renders their actions, whilst individual, a part of the whole).⁵⁴ The instinctive singing and linking of arms are indicative of the spontaneous community which arose. During the hour I chatted, shared what food, water and tobacco I had, and joined in protest songs.⁵⁵ This was an entirely temporary community; I could not tell who the people sat around me were, knew only their eyes and their voices, and knew that the comfort we provided one another was transient. This fact, however, did not stop people within the group from placing their fates in the hands of one another for a few short moments.

A casual reading of the situation might signify a traditional situation: an insecure force rendered secure by official authorities. It is notable that, as one interviewee made

⁵⁴ This is not to suggest that any action taken by one person is therefore supported or affirmed by others, but that there is a desire to work out the ethics and implications within the community, rather than permit state forces to arbitrate.

⁵⁵ David Graeber, discussing the sharing of cigarettes by activists, suggests that it is indicative of a wider culture. Smoking ‘creates a constant mobilization of feelings of need, discipline, sharing, and desire. Usually for every three or four activists who smoke, or might, there’s one who actually has a pack...The distribution of cigarettes, lighting them off others, etc., becomes a constant willed collapse of autonomy...One is dependent on communal good will and sharing for what one *really* desires most urgently in the world, at least at that moment’ (2009: 265). That most activists in the UK tend to smoke roll-ups only adds to this dynamic.

clear, for many the day was viewed as something of a failure precisely because the police were relatively effective in holding people and preventing them from reaching the factory (Interview A). Without wishing to fall into simplistic narratives of what it means to ‘succeed’ when the terms are so opaque, we might think about what such failures offer; as Judith Halberstam makes clear, failure can be a potent political space from which to think critically:

Under certain circumstances failing, losing, forgetting, unmaking, undoing, unbecoming, not knowing may in fact offer more creative, more cooperative, more surprising ways of being in the world...failure allows us to escape the punishing norms that discipline behavior and manage human development with the goal of delivering us from unruly childhoods to orderly and predictable adulthoods. Failure preserves some of the wondrous anarchy of childhood and disturbs the supposedly clean boundaries between adults and children, winners and losers (2011: 2-3).

Despite the surface traditionality of the situation, the ‘successful’ security gesture, and in the context of those failures, a closer look reveals multiple and intersecting lines of security and insecurity, the terms rendered contingent and deeply political. The affinities which were generated in this short time are not predicated on a will to conquer, to enact a counter-hegemony to the police’s narrative of security, but rather show an openness to come together as a contingent unit for a temporary set of purposes. There is a rejection of hegemonic and statist conceptions of security, refusing to submit to the instructions of the police on even basic terms, but the supposed social disintegration of insecurity is also deferred; instead, we see indications of a positive politics of anarchy, a productive series of affinities, political possibilities articulated beyond and against the terms of hegemony and mastery.

One particular moment, which occurred when we were being escorted from the squat at the beginning of the day, serves to further emphasise this point. We had reached the edge of the field which contained the designated protest zone, and were made to wait for a few minutes, before being told to continue walking. In the context of collective dispirit at having followed police instructions thus far, the group spontaneously sat down and refused to move. There was no particular strategy or reason; merely the desire to do the opposite of whatever it was that the police instructed us to do. Rather than simply proceed on such *ressentiment*-laden terms, however, the

space was used positively. After a few awkward minutes, one activist stood, and started talking about his particular experience of organising anti-militarist campaigns. After he finished, another stood and spoke about their visit to Palestine, describing the repression that they had witnessed. For around twenty minutes we sat, listened, and shared stories; the police, awkwardly, listened. Again, this moment arguably occurred within the context of failure, but signifies a response which transformed the space, and affirmed a collective spirit which would, even in a partial and transient sense, refuse the delimitations of security/insecurity and explore marginal experiences.

These relations of affinity were not formed in isolation. Rather, the various tasks of planning for actions involve the production of contexts wherein such relations can be mobilised and explored to positive effect. Amongst other examples, this can include the presence of ‘action medics’, trauma support centres, and the use of squats and social centres as communal bases (whether for preparation before, sanctuary during, or debriefing after actions). During most large-scale direct actions several people will run an arrest support centre, noting where arrestees have been taken, contacting friends and solicitors, and making sure that witness statements are taken. At the Hammertime action a number of activists operated as Legal Observers, sporting high-visibility jackets, taking copious notes, and advising people of their legal rights when necessary. Several activist groups (such as ‘Green and Black Cross’ and ‘Activist Trauma Support’) exist for the sole purpose of providing such support roles. The affinities within the kettle are indissociable from these contexts – they make possible and facilitate such explorations, and are themselves important examples of affinity-based direct action.

Christine Sylvester makes a similar series of points with reference to the Greenham Common Women’s Peace Camp, which became ‘the bustling point of energy for a good anarchic system where in the absence of rule-governed expectations, there was room to change what and where one was properly supposed to be through actions at the fences of assigned place’, and to do so in a manner which affirmed difference, ‘refusing to interrupt or to force conformity on others in the name of “the” cause’ (2002: 260-261). We might, then, see the Hammertime action not as advancing a counter-hegemonic conception of security so much as relieving the terms of their totalising force, undermining sovereignty/anarchy binaries by mobilising a politics of anarchy which highlights the regulative dimensions involved in totalising narratives of security/insecurity. We see both an inversion of traditional binaries and a disruption

which robs these binaries of their totalising force. In this disruption, spaces for exploration and creativity are revealed.

In the use of face masks and all-black attire, and the collective indiscipline of the mass, the action here makes use of the Black Bloc tactic popularised through the anti-summit actions which came to characterise the alter-globalisation movement. Discussing such tactics, Day makes arguments not dissimilar to those mobilised here. Taking the tactic to be the most ‘spectacular example of a creative direct action to impede the flows of state and corporate power’ (2005: 29),⁵⁶ he argues that it offers a challenge

...to the monopoly on invisibility and silence, with its active ignorance of the command not only to behave well, but to be available to be *seen* behaving well. In refusing to follow the rule of transparency which guides the societies of control, Bloc subjects represent glaring exceptions within the domesticated and privileged strata of the global North. Not only has the system of cybernetic regulation failed to modulate their behaviour properly, but they also seem to be immune to self-discipline, fear of physical punishment, and verbal and physical attacks by other activists and academics [sic] (ibid.).

Bloc subjects refuse to adhere to hegemonic understandings of security, whether those expressed by ‘official’ sources or by other activists. Instead, they create their own temporary terms, and act in accordance with them for as long as might be necessary and/or desirable. Through general misbehaviour, occasional property damage and a refusal to submit to the police (or, indeed, the authority of would-be counter-hegemonic forces), the Bloc exhibits an approach which fails to accord with most dominant conceptions of security, which avowedly refuses to be secured. However, this does not necessarily entail a descent into ‘insecurity’.

As Graeber makes clear, the Bloc cannot be adequately explained through the appeals to nihilistic confusion or chaos often invoked when discussing it. Contrary to media representation, Black Bloc activists at the 1999 alter-globalisation protests in Seattle were mostly ‘fastidious about their dedication to nonviolence’, even in the face

⁵⁶ The term ‘spectacular’ is ambiguous in this context. As will be discussed below, anarchists have remained sceptical of spectacular action, which is particularly vulnerable to incorporation within the images of security and the state.

of physical violence from other activists angry with the Bloc's window-smashing tactics (Graeber 2009: 497):

Still, for those who have taken part in [Black Bloc] actions, the really critical thing is the sense of autonomy created by an emphasis on solidarity and mutual defense. When you join a Black Bloc, you render yourself indistinguishable from all other participants. You are in effect saying, "Any act done by any of us might as well have been done by me." At the same time, you know that each one of those other participants is looking out for you, watching your back, that while everyone is trying to avoid arrest, the one situation in which most will be willing to risk arrest will be to save you from being arrested. It's precisely this that, for so many, makes Black Bloc tactics feel so liberating: it is a way to create one, fleeting moment when autonomy is real and immediate, a space of liberated territory, in which the laws and arbitrary power of the state no longer apply, in which we draw the lines of force ourselves (ibid., 407).

In this sense, the Bloc manifest a secure insecurity, in which the terms of both are made arbitrary, contingent, liable to be discarded and replaced with another reading at any moment. The Bloc constitute a challenge to totalising conceptions of political action and legitimacy, and a construction of modes of intervention and self-discipline founded in the affinity for affinity.

Such a reading is strengthened if we view the Bloc in context. Graeber describes the events when he was trapped by police in a town square with a large group of Black Bloc activists. Expecting a mass arrest, he was unexpectedly freed when the 'Revolutionary Anarchist Clown Bloc' arrived, at the same time as the 'Billionaires for Bush or Gore'. In front of police lines (i.e., outside the area in which the Bloc were held), the Clowns and the Billionaires engaged in an ironic scuffle:

The clowns begin a silly dance, chanting "Anarchy for Everyone, We are Here to Make it Fun!" The leader of the Billionaires, one Phil T. Rich, strides in shooing them away, "Good lord, why don't you all do something worthwhile with your lives? Go find someone to work for you!" Several Billionaires then walk up to police officers and start trying to shake their hands; two have wads of fake money and are attempting to shove large amounts of it in police hands and pockets, thanking them loudly for their suppression of dissent. Two get

jumped by clowns, causing a few cops to move to intervene, only to be physically held back by their companions.

In the ensuing confusion, the Black Bloc escapes (*ibid.*, 417).

Here, the deeply contrasting tactics of the Bloc, the Clowns and the Billionaires intersect to the benefit of all but the police (with the exception of those police who enjoyed the scene, perhaps not an unimportant element). The practices of security/insecurity manifested by activists in the different groups are varying and, for both individuals and groups as a whole, may have differed from day to day, or even situation to situation. They are kept in play, focussed through relations of affinity, and inscribed through acts rather than demands. This should not be taken to suggest that such practices are unproblematic. As the conclusion below and the discussion on reperforming security in Chapter Five make clear, the Black Bloc tactic is vulnerable to charges that it perpetuates that which it is mobilised to oppose. However, such vulnerability (which arguably afflicts all attempts to resist) need not smooth over the rupture such interventions effect, the space of openness and possibility beyond the totalising terms of security. It is in such spaces that we might begin to become otherwise.

We should read these disruptions of security/insecurity within the context of those interventions against hegemonic ontologies of agency introduced above. As the various groups under discussion subvert particular binaries, they also refuse that which underpins security, the hegemonic imaginary which permits demands, totalising visions, and regulated participations, but which cannot accommodate a politics of the act, a form of action which intervenes *in spite of*, rather than through accepted political channels, and which does so in a manner not predicated on mastery. As Day argues,

...many of the most vibrant elements of contemporary radical activism are driven by a common political logic that escapes the categories of traditional social movement theories. Unlike revolutionary struggles, which seek totalizing effects across all aspects of the existing social order by taking state power, and unlike the politics of reform, which seeks global change on selected axes by reforming state power, these movements/networks/tactics do not seek totalizing effects on any axis at all. Instead, they set out to block, resist and render redundant both corporate and state power in local, national and

transnational contexts. And in so doing, they challenge the notion that the only way to achieve meaningful social change is by way of totalizing effects across an entire 'national' or 'international' society. That is, they are undoing the hegemony of hegemony that guides (neo)liberal and (post)Marxist theory and practice (2005: 45).

These groups practice unpredictability, contingency, a refusal to submit to established logics of political action (and respect for property). Booth insists on metanarratives as the condition of intervention; those discussed hitherto in this chapter have suggested that undermining such metanarratives of security is, at least in the cases here, a prior condition of resisting and reforming dominant political imaginaries. Traditional narratives of security are not subverted to demonstrate the truth of an *other* totality, but to render the concept of security as statist, authoritarian and totalising, insecure. In Burke's terms, the epistemic order of security is uncovered, and ways of 'doing' at the margins are opened up and politicised. This is, clearly, not an 'escape' from the logics, which inescapably define any contemporary political intervention, but an attempt to render them partial, ridiculous and, perhaps, powerless. It is a mobilisation of the 'strange', which traditional and many critical narratives cannot permit; a conception of intervention which seeks terms which resist sovereign orders and which prefigure a politics which opens affirmation beyond the terms of dominant orders and frameworks of the political.

Militarised Subjects

Whilst emphasis has been placed here on the disruptive nature of various interventions, they must not be abstracted from the prefigurative dimensions central to much of contemporary anti-militarist direct action. In the previous chapter I identified three interrelated reasons why prefiguration has been central to anarchist direct action; all coalesce around the need - practically, ethically, ontologically - to experiment with and enact ways of being and becoming otherwise. Landauer's dictum that 'we will be the state as long as we are nothing different' instils a heavy and urgent burden, but also frees activists from simplistic narratives of 'success' and 'failure'; in Uri Gordon's terms, '[p]refigurative politics...represents a broadening of the idea of direct action, resulting in a commitment to define and realise anarchist social relations within the activities and

collective structures of the revolutionary movement itself (2008: 35). Shutting down a factory or breaking down the spectacular logics of security are important, but only within a context wherein direct action intervenes at the level of being, at the everyday relations and performances which constitute the state form and other forms of social hierarchy. This is important both in the terms of what social imaginaries are produced through action, and how discourses of hierarchy and authority are identified and broken down *amongst* activists. Gordon continues:

The effort to create and develop horizontal functioning in any collective action setting, and to maintain a constant awareness of interpersonal dynamics and the way in which they might reflect social patterns of exclusion, are accorded just as much importance as planning and carrying out campaigns, projects and actions. Considerations of efficiency or unity are seldom alleged to justify a weakening of this emphasis. The development of non-hierarchical structures in which domination is constantly challenged is, for most anarchists, an end in itself (ibid.).

How such explorations work in practice is discussed in more detail in the next chapter. Here the focus lies on how anti-militarists conceptualise militarism beyond institutional and spatial understandings, expanding it to incorporate processes of subjectification and forms of social relation.

Wolfi Landstreicher provides a succinct account of how militarism can be seen to operate as a form of subjectivity. He argues that

...militarism is not just war as such. It is a social hierarchy of order givers and order takers. It is obedience, domination and submission. It is the capacity to perceive other human beings as abstractions, mere numbers, death counts. It is, at the same time, the domination of strategic considerations and efficiency for its own sake over life and the willingness to sacrifice oneself for a “Great Cause” that one has been taught to believe in (2009: 85).⁵⁷

In this he echoes the ‘classical’ anarchist thinker Rocker’s comments in *Nationalism and Culture*, where he argues that

⁵⁷ The name, Wolfi Landstreicher, is a pseudonym for the editor of *Willful Disobedience*, an anarchist pamphlet published between 1996 and 2006.

[m]ilitarism and a military establishment are not the same thing...Militarism is to be appraised first of all as a psychic condition. It is the renunciation of one's own thought and will, the transformation of man into a dead automaton guided and set in motion from without, carrying out blindly every command without being conscious of his own personal responsibility. In one word, militarism is the meanest and most degraded form of that slave-spirit raised to the status of a national virtue which despises all the rules of reason and is devoid of all human dignity (1937: 399).

Such conceptualisations, which find affinities in various academic approaches, particularly the attention given by feminists to intersections between gender and militarism (Spike Peterson 2010; Hunt and Rygiel 2007; Via 2010; Sjoberg 2007; Cohn 2000; Huston 1982; Enloe 1989: 93-123; Ülker 2010), have significant implications for resistance. They insist that merely targeting institutional arrangements is insufficient; resistance in this context demands an engagement with abstraction and calculation, with the place and flow of authority and obedience, with the ways in which subjectivity is implicated in and performative of precisely that which is resisted.⁵⁸

Such understandings led Philip Berrigan, who himself spent time in prison for breaking into a military base and damaging nuclear warhead nose cones, to view resistance as a process fundamentally concerned with demilitarizing the self. For him, '[w]e try to disarm ourselves by disarming the missiles' (cited in Laffin 2003: 3). As Landstreicher goes on to argue, 'destructive attack is a legitimate and necessary response. But to militarize this struggle, to transform it essentially into a question of strategies and tactics, of opposing forces and numbers, is to begin to create within our struggle that which we are trying to destroy' (2009: 86). In this sense, the prefigurative dimension is not an additional concern, but is precisely about disrupting those terms through which militarism is produced.

⁵⁸ Pertinently Rolando Perez cites Robert Pirsig here: 'To tear down a factory or to revolt against a government or to avoid repair of a motorcycle because it is a system is to attack effects rather than causes; and as long as the attack is upon effects only, no change is possible. The true system, the real system, is our present construction of systematic thought itself, rationality itself, and if a factory is torn down but the rationality which produced it is left standing, then, that rationality will simply produce another factory. If a revolution destroys a systematic government, but the systematic patterns of thought that produced that government are left intact, then those patterns will repeat themselves in the succeeding government. There's much talk about the system. And so little understanding' (Pirsig 1975: 888, cited in Perez 1990: 53-54).

Whilst the discussions above show particularly public examples of prefigurative direct action which intervene against particular ontologies of agency and constitutive logics of security/insecurity, less visible examples are of no less importance. The importance of consensus (or other participatory) decision-making systems, of skills sharing workshops, of paying attention to gendered, racialised and other exclusionary and oppressive forms of behaviour (all of which will be examined in more detail in later chapters), lies in the imperative to begin to live differently, to experiment with and enact other ways of being and becoming. As Day argues, '[e]ach moment living differently, each quantum of energy that the neoliberal societies of control do not capture and exploit, is indeed a contribution to the long-term construction of alternative subjects, spaces and relationships' (2005: 163). Just as security and militarism are constitutive of and dependent upon particular forms of subjectivity, so is resistance often precisely an intervention (however awkward or partial) against these modes of being. This is, of course, not in the name of any totalising anti-militarist counter-subjectivity; such conceptions serve to establish their own authorities and oppressions, to replicate the terms of 'The Cause' towards which all rational 'radical' subjectivity must be configured. The thesis will go on to argue that the rejection of security's existential and political guarantees, and the attempts to open spaces at the margins to explore and enact other ways of being, is precisely an opportunity to explore subjectivities which remain multiple and incomplete, which refuse to establish hegemonic standards of legitimacy or spaces of authority, and which affirm difference in a manner which produces lively, powerful and creative forms of resistance which might continually displace the logics of militarism.

Conclusion: Spectacular Anarchism

This chapter has pointed towards a number of disruptions, suggesting that they can be seen as interventions against logics of security and militarism which open spaces to explore alternatives committed to resisting politics of hegemony, mastery and authority. As they reveal the violences which accompany predominant conceptions of security, order, and sovereignty, they unsettle those ontologies of agency which preserve the state form. However, this optimistic assessment should be tempered insofar as it engages insufficiently with the ways in which discourses of security have been shown to capture

and regulate political mobilisation.⁵⁹ In short, the binaries of security/insecurity, order/chaos and sovereignty/anarchy function effectively to incorporate challenges within their constitutive framework; the terms shift quickly, either to recuperate resistance within the higher ideal (the human security framework sits neatly here (Neufeld 2004; Grayson 2008)) or (more pertinent for the discussions here) to subordinate it within the lower, to emphasise its chaos, its anarchy.

Richard Gilman-Opalsky argues that a particular image of anarchism, ‘a kind of spectacular anarchism’, has operated in such a manner, helping

...to acculturate widespread acceptance of the “normal person,” the “citizen-subject” who is “upstanding” and law-abiding at all times...The idea of anarchy is abused and deployed as an epithet, not only to discredit anarchism as such, but to reinforce the acceptance of its opposite – the existing state of affairs and its promises of security, and a more moderate political consciousness (2011: 15).

In this sense, the interventions explored above are in danger of precisely perpetuating the terms of security, of helping to constitute a narrative wherein resistance is either welcomed and incorporated into a celebration of liberal democratic principles, or constructed precisely as the image against which this liberal democracy legitimates itself. As Heckert argues, ‘the character of the dangerous outsider is a necessary figure in state storytelling. What would police, politicians and demagogues do without the promiscuous woman, the queer, the paedophile, the terrorist, the potentially dangerous activist who crosses borders and defies laws?’ (2011: 203). To recall Ashley’s framing, heroic practices operate to reconstitute the state-security form (and, indeed, the anarchic international).

There are two ways in which we might respond to this challenge. The first is to acknowledge, indeed insist, that disruptions of the sort envisaged here, these attempts to provoke ‘guerrilla movements of the imagination’ to borrow Gilman-Opalsky’s phrasing (*ibid.*, 106), must not rely on formulaic, predictable and secure narratives and tactics. As Stephen Shukaitis argues, paraphrasing Alexander Trocchi, ‘the act of having a set definition of an insurgent practice is very much necessary part of the

⁵⁹ Acknowledging these dynamics of capture should be seen as a separate form of critique to that of examining the ways in which practices of resistance are themselves produced in the context of an onto-political framework which has the politics of security and militarism sutured within it. Whilst there are clearly connections between these critiques, the latter is explored more specifically in the fifth chapter.

process of containing it [sic]', thereby, whilst guarding against over-cynicism, there is a need to recognise 'the way in which conventions of dissent (for instance marches, sit-ins, sloganeering, civil disobedience, street theatre) both make forms of social action more readily recognizable, but also through the easy recognition can make them more easily containable by that very definition' (2009: 214). Gilman-Opalsky makes a similar point, arguing that the 'historical significance of civil disobedience must be well understood, but not rehashed in organizational form – new organizational forms are necessary...At mass demonstrations in the US and Europe, the much maligned Black Bloc is actually on the right track, if only they could come back each time in a manner too unusual to make them immediately identifiable *as the Black Bloc*' (2011: 107, emphasis in original). As Rolando Perez writes, 'so-called "marginal language" eventually becomes established, codified, and semiotically signifying. The only way to solve this problem is for the an(archist) to destroy his or her own form of expression immediately, so as to make repetition and incorporation impossible' (1990: 57).

The point can also be made with reference to Foucault's approach to security, which consists in the management, regularization and conduct of political life, and which (to proceed with Dillon's interpretation) relies upon the securing of human being's 'indexicality' (1996: 31), enacting 'the detailed knowledgeable strategies and tactics that effect the constitution of life and the regulation of the affairs of populations' (Dillon and Reid 2001: 48). As Newman argues, the unpredictability of dissent is a crucial feature in disrupting the operation of such knowledge strategies (2011: 173). The imperative, then, is towards a perpetually evolving, mobile and imaginative series of resistances which continually seek to outflank narratives of security/insecurity, to displace the discipline of the order/chaos binary, to recognise and evade the knowledge strategies through which dominant (and dominating) political technologies are operating. Resistance is never complete, nor is its form finally determined. In affirming this, and taking on the associated challenges, lies the possibility to resist incorporation within discourses of security. Here, the Space Hijackers serve as a particularly important group; as the example above and those in later chapters serve to show, their imaginative resistances serve precisely to resist such codification, to confound simplistic characterisations of anarchy and insecurity.

The second response to the question of incorporation concerns the politics of the 'everyday'. Though an opaque and slippery term, everydayness here is used in a

manner similar to that of the situationists, who saw it as a space of political resistance which was not instantly subject to the spectacular logics of capitalism. As Shukaitis makes clear, their concern was to develop ‘a model of resistance based on submerged networks of invisible connections that would elude the constantly becoming-image of capitalist development and its ability to integrate forms of resistance to its image array’ (2009: 194). In thinking about how predominant political imaginaries might be disrupted, it is important to give space to those less visible spaces, inspirations and relations which are often the site of more successful and less-readily incorporated transformations. This does not mean that more dramatic, visible moments ‘do not have any importance, particularly in the generation of new dramatic and mythical imagery’, but rather cautions against ‘the tendency to reduce the entire and much larger process of social transformation to these particular moments’ (ibid., 15-16). In this vein, the following chapter looks at ways in which creative transformations are prefigured in the less spectacular, more invisible spaces of anti-militarist action.

Chapter Four: Prefigurations

The previous chapter looked at how anti-militarist activists might be read as intervening to problematise the terms of security/insecurity, disrupting hegemonic imaginaries and those disciplinary binaries which underpin the contemporary political imagination. In doing so, they mobilise a politicisation of the terms with which they engage, and a recognition that attempts to resist these politics involves (often antagonistic) insurrections of subjectivity which might displace militaristic, hegemonic and authoritarian social relations.

This chapter explores these insurrections of subjectivity in more detail and argues that, as they disturb the security of security, anti-militarists are actively exploring alternative social relations. The chapter therefore explores a series of creative gestures which, though differing in form, style, and content, all signify attempts to construct or contract ways of becoming otherwise. The anarchist concept of prefiguration guides the chapter, framing the interpretations in a way that highlights those features which interweave a sense of the possible with the continual recognition and subversion of those authorities and hierarchies which emerge. It serves to further demonstrate that moves to prefigure social relations against the terms of security and militarism can be found in spaces and theoretical territories unfamiliar to CSS. Furthermore it highlights how these prefigurative gestures are situated precisely in ways which seek to avoid replicating the governing rationalities of that which is opposed, affirming a politics of *contestation* rather than *confrontation*, and so pointing towards a resistance which defers the tendency to perpetuate the social relations which underpin forms of domination.

The intention is not to signal any coherent programme or an ideal anti-militarist subject towards which activists aspire, nor is it to claim that the situations and practices under discussion are ‘sufficient’, or free from the effects of power. Rather, it is to interpret a variety of (messy and incomplete) already-existing practices as works in progress in the context of what Simon Critchley calls the contemporary ‘labour of politics’, that is, the ‘construction of new political subjectivities, new political aggregations in specific localities, a new dissensual *habitus*’ (2008: 112) (an invocation we might take without his corresponding ‘appeal to universality’ or ‘hegemonic glue’ (ibid., 114)). In Foucault’s terms, ‘the target nowadays is not to discover what we are but to refuse what we are. We have to imagine and to build up what we could be... We have to promote new forms of subjectivity through the refusal of this kind of individuality

which has been imposed on us for several centuries' (1982: 785). As noted in Chapter One, these should be read not as explorations 'beyond' or 'outside' the logics of security, but as marginal experiences which might take advantage of those ruptures revealed in the previous chapter to affirm other ways of being, intensifications and transformations, screams of affirmation (Mueller 2011: 76) which prefigure social relations (with others and with oneself) not based on hegemony, authority, hierarchy, abstraction, and so on. Whilst these are viewed within their particular context, they are not necessarily contained there; as Shukaitis argues, '[m]oments of minor mutation, while often occupying a seemingly insignificant role within the larger social fabric, act as a fulcrum on which larger transformations in collective imagination are initiated' (2009: 14).

The concept of prefigurative politics was outlined in Chapter Two, where emphasis was placed on Landauer's theory of revolution, his insistence that the state form is a social relationship which will be broken down as other forms of relation are enacted. Horrox recounts Landauer's position thusly:

Though necessarily centralist, bureaucratic and coercive, state power is...not something that can be "smashed" by a radical overthrow of capitalist institutions; rather, as the product of the will of the masses at a given time, it is something carried within each and every human being and will therefore subsist (only) to the extent that human interaction takes the form of this particular relationship that supports it (2010: 192-193).

Landauer wearied of those anarchists 'who speak incessantly of all the obstacles we are facing and of what we must do to overcome them', not because we are not caught in 'spider webs – if we were not, then our cooperatives, settlements, and federations would do the most incredible things', but because the language that truly counts is the 'language of example and beginning' (2010: 310-311). Whilst there are elements of Landauer's thought which might be subject to critique, including a tendency at times towards an overly programmatic conception of resistance, and a conservatism which saw him fiercely seeking to retain (amongst other things) traditional family structures (Kuhn 2010: 31), his insistence that creativity must be at the core of radical politics, and his emphasis on *beginnings*, are pertinent.

Prefigurative politics, understood as the insistence that the means mobilised in projects of resistance must reflect the ends desired, should not be narrowly conceptualised as the rational configuration of means to align with predetermined ends. Rather, it is the process by which the speculative mobilisation of possibility might be explored and broken down within the context of resistance. The attempt to enact a politics which moves beyond relations of authority must constantly run against, make visible, and contest those authorities and hierarchies which will emerge in the process, which are woven throughout the social form. Prefigurative politics might then be understood as a process through which we come to know ourselves, to refuse ourselves, and to be(come) otherwise.

On this point, it is important to note Day's caution against some liberal conceptions which, having acknowledged that the personal is the political, then move to bracket the state form rather than mobilise a challenge to it (2011: 104), reversing rather than displacing the public/private distinction. As the structure and form of the discussion makes clear, this is not the intention here; rather, it is to acknowledge the work done in the more everyday and invisible spaces of anti-militarist action to explore modes of subjectivity which break down those relations on which militarism and security depend and through which they operate to conduct life. They are experiments which, while imperfect (and, as Chapter Five makes clear, often mobilised within a context wherein dominant political logics re-emerge), demonstrate at the very least a commitment to *beginning*.

To this end, the chapter is divided into four parts. The first looks at a variety of anti-militarist spaces and forms or scripts of contestation, ranging from temporary autonomous zones such as peace camps to directly contested spaces – die-ins, blockades, and so forth. The purpose is to highlight some of the ways in which such spaces and scripts demonstrate explorations of political communities and contestations beyond traditional political frames. The second part examines the attempts on the part of activists to affirm a 'diversity of tactics', that is, the refusals to impose totalising standards of resistance in the negotiation of anti-militarist tactics and the (contested, complex) attempts to construct a politics which affirms the space for diversity whilst not abandoning collective political purpose. In the third section, the use of consensus decision making, common amongst anti-militarists, is explored, with an emphasis on how consensus processes can produce alternative forms of interrelation amongst

subjects. Finally, I look at the discourses of ‘empowerment’ which accompany discussions of direct action, and the means by which activists seek to confront their own sense of obedience and respect for authority, suggesting that such processes represent important instances and practices of desubjectification.

Part One: Anti-Militarist Spaces and Scripts

The Peace Camp

As Jenny Pickerill and Paul Chatterton point out, the generation of autonomous spaces, whether temporary or more permanent, is an important feature of the desire in contemporary radical politics to explore and enact alternatives beyond the logics of the state and capital, to conduct ‘organic experiment[s] in autonomous politics’ (2006: 240). As with other prefigurative experiments one does not find blueprints for an alternative, nor calm utopias; instead we see awkward and ambiguous attempts to glimpse or envisage life as it might otherwise be lived. A related concept in contemporary anarchist theory, introduced briefly in Chapter Two, is that of the Temporary Autonomous Zone (TAZ), developed by Bey to signify those spaces in which the desire to live otherwise can be explored without ceding to the potentially depoliticising temporality or totality which arrives with traditional conceptions of revolution.

The TAZ is not an exercise in isolation, it is ‘an encampment of guerrilla ontologists: strike and run away...The strike is made at structures of control, essentially at ideas’ (2003: 100). Furthermore it is not only a geographical exercise, but ‘a psychospiritual state or even existential condition’ (ibid., x). It is an explosion and exploration of possibility:

We recommend it because it can provide the quality of enhancement associated with the uprising without necessarily leading to violence and martyrdom. The TAZ is like an uprising which does not engage directly with the State, a guerrilla operation which liberates an area (of land, of time, of imagination) and then dissolves itself to re-form elsewhere/elsewhen, *before* the State can crush it. Because the State is concerned primarily with Simulation rather than substance, the TAZ can “occupy” these areas clandestinely and carry on its festal purposes for quite a while in relative peace. Perhaps certain small TAZs have lasted whole

lifetimes because they went unnoticed, like hillbilly enclaves – because they never intersected with the Spectacle, never appeared outside that real life which is invisible to the agents of Simulation...The TAZ is thus a perfect tactic for an era in which the State is omnipresent and all-powerful and yet simultaneously riddled with cracks and vacancies (ibid., 99, emphasis in original).

The idea of the TAZ echoes Landauer's stress on the need to *begin*, to experience and develop the idea of autonomy liberated from the abstract promises of utopia and the theoretical closures of purity or over-scepticism (or, in Bey's more forthright terms, 'Plot & conspire, don't bitch & moan' (ibid., 63)).⁶⁰

Bey is careful not to set limits on what specifically constitutes a TAZ (which can range in size 'from, say, a double bed to a large city'); expressions can be seen across a range of contemporary anarchist movements, 'in the form of momentarily reclaimed streets, summit convergences or occupations to block environmental destruction' (Day 2005: 36). Graeber notes that 'the experience of a wild moment of collective poetic inspiration or even a particularly good party becomes the basis of a theory of the [TAZ]' (2009: 221). The idea of the TAZ has been broadened to incorporate those of the Permanent and Semi-Permanent Autonomous Zone (PAZ and SPAZ respectively).

Whilst perhaps not so blessed with the spirit of festival with which Bey signifies the TAZ,⁶¹ peace camps can be read within these terms. Peace camps (and other 'gatherings') can take place in the shadows of the military establishment, as with the Greenham Common Women's Peace Camp and the Faslane Peace Camp (which, having been running for over thirty years, is perhaps an example of a PAZ or SPAZ), or in more invisible, interstitial, spaces. They tend to hold a dual purpose, serving to facilitate actions targeted at relevant institutions (either as a base of operations, as with the Faslane Peace Camp, or by providing a convergence, training and planning space)

⁶⁰ The concept of autonomy, important but not innocent of particular liberal, patriarchal concerns, will be discussed in more detail in Chapter Six.

⁶¹ 'Participants in insurrection invariably note its festive aspects, even in the midst of armed struggle, danger, and risk...The sixties-style "tribal gathering," the forest conclave of eco-saboteurs, the idyllic Beltane of the neo-pagans, anarchist conferences, gay faery circles...Harlem rent parties of the twenties, nightclubs, banquets, old-time libertarian picnics - we should realise that all these are already "liberated zones" of a sort, or at least potential TAZs...The essence of the party: face-to-face, a group of humans synergize their efforts to realize mutual desires, whether for good food and cheer, dance, conversation, the arts of life; perhaps even for erotic pleasure, or to create a communal artwork, or to attain the very transport of bliss – in short, a "union of egoists" (as Stirner put it) in its simplest form – or else, in Kropotkin's terms, a basic biological drive to "mutual aid"' (103-104).

whilst allowing participants to explore alternative modes of political community. With respect to the latter, they demonstrate many similarities with other radical convergence spaces, such as no-borders camps, climate camps and anti-summit camps. In practice, this tends to mean a lack of any formal hierarchy and a firm (and, usually, relatively successful) commitment to share organisational responsibilities and chores amongst participants. Decisions about the running of the space are made collectively, often by consensus, and a significant amount of energy tends to be spent exposing and confronting hidden forms of privilege and exclusion. Time is split, depending on the specific needs and desires of participants, between the organisation of the space, education, training and workshops, and preparation for and carrying out 'direct' action (notwithstanding the attempts in this thesis to blur the lines between more and less spectacular and 'direct' direct action).

One regular example of such spaces comes from the 'Peace News' gatherings, which take place once or twice per year.⁶² Up to two hundred participants live together for five days, focussing on learning, on forming new friendships, and on enjoying the participatory space. Decisions on the running of the camp are made collectively at morning meetings, chores (including gathering firewood, helping in the kitchen, running the crèche, staffing the welcome tent) are shared, and a respectful and collective ethos is built. At one gathering I attended, in the summer of 2011, I attended workshops on topics ranging from masculinity and militarism, drones, the relationship between obedience and war, community based campaigning, effective blockading techniques, and the politics of Harry Potter. In the evenings were films, poetry readings, and a fully stocked bar. Whilst the space is not particularly confrontational with respect to the institutions of militarism, particularly when compared to some of the spaces discussed below, it is nonetheless an important example, a short lived but valuable experience of living otherwise.

This is not to suggest that the space was unproblematic, that hierarchies did not emerge, that exclusions were not performed. Indeed, and as I recount more fully in Chapter Five, I was at one point involved in an eviction which served, to some extent, to establish quite firmly the boundaries of the camp and its politics of security (though, as I will go on to argue, in a manner which differs in important ways from

⁶² Peace News is a pacifist magazine which has been published in the UK since 1936. It stands 'For Nonviolent Revolution'.

traditional/statist bordering practices). In the context of these problems, which signify again the interstitial, marginal quality of such spaces (as opposed to any suggestion that they occur ‘outside’ predominant political imaginaries and power relations), the camp signifies an attempt to break down those social logics which underpin militarism. As Pickerill and Chatterton conclude, it is in the face of emergent hierarchies and exclusions that such spaces may be at their most valuable; ‘[w]hile no easy answers to these issues exist, addressing them is the bedrock of making autonomy. Interstitial living can also be a source of creativity, producing hybrid, flexible and transient identities, challenging the norms we live by and creating potent new interactions’ (2006: 742).

The prefigurative gestures of these spaces can be at their most intense when they occur in tension with more explicitly militarist contexts. The famous camp at Greenham Common stands as a powerful example here. As Sylvester argues, it ‘highlight[ed] the ways that subjectivities usually refused place in IR can become the basis of empathetically negotiated actions that strike at IR’s core – realist defense. It also show[ed] that homeless refusers of the protector/protected *raison d’être* can develop a politics of empathetic cooperation that translates into organizational practices unknown to IR’ [sic] (2002: 260). It was on such terms that the women at Greenham Common ‘eschewed usual political conventions such as voting, designating leaders, and organizing committees, and operated well within anarchy’ (ibid., also Cockburn 2012: 37-38). However, it was at the tense border between the peace camp and the military base that these prefigurations resonated particularly strongly. As Enloe notes, ‘[a]ny military base is designed to be secure. By cutting the fences, dancing on the missile silos, challenging charges of trespassing in court, the Greenham women managed to transform the very meaning of a base, and of public security. A military base easily penetrated by a group of non-violent women was no longer a military base’ (1989: 79).

As well as penetrating the border between the two sites, Sylvester shows that the women *transformed* the nature this border in their relations with soldiers:

Mutual homelessness around these fences raised the prospect of respectful negotiation as an alternative to life on either side. Moreover, daily negotiations at the fence were usually respectful. Rather than denounce or curse the soldiers or women on the other side, each often engaged in “normal” banter with the other about family, weather, and mutual conditions of security. Defences came down. Common scripts were (potentially) revealed (2002: 261).

In these examples, the prefigurative nature of the peace camp and the exploration of possibilities beyond the expected form of political contestation served precisely to question and undermine the nature of the military base, to reveal its contradictions and expose its tensions. The following discussions explore a range of other examples of prefigurative politics within contested spaces, interventions which attempt to call alternative subjectivities and imaginaries into being in the face of traditional scripts and expectations.

Rewriting Scripts of Contestation

Subverting expected scripts of contestation has been a long-standing feature of anarchist modes of intervention; the refusals of demands, parliamentary representation, and hegemonic imaginaries are all based on the understanding that the form of contestation cannot be divorced from the desired ends (however honest ones intentions towards those ends might be). Such is the basis of the prefigurative imaginary. The following discussions look at a number of instances which might be seen to subvert the expected, confrontational (and so fetishising) nature of contestation, performing and prefiguring alternatives. Three examples are explored; the use of the die-in tactic, a particular blockade of the Faslane naval base, and the mobilisation of humour as resistance.

Before turning to these, however, it is useful to highlight the fact that those disruptions explored in the previous chapter operate precisely on these terms. I discuss another Space Hijackers example below; a few words with respect to the Smash EDO mass demonstration are apposite here. We might in that case see a three-layered subversion with respect to the expected script of contestation. In the first, the expectation of taking one's grievance to the state was dismissed (as pointless, as rendering power to a violent institution, and as a tactically misguided reading of the networks of power). In the second, the expectation of deferring to the police (and, more broadly, of subscribing to dominant narratives of order and citizenship) was ignored as we ran out of kettles, into the woods, into the housing estates. In the third, the expectation that such a contestation represents the pure chaos which demands and legitimates the state's order was displaced, and spaces of creativity and affinity were formed. All three, whilst not unproblematic, disrupted the script of security and

contestation, opening spaces for rewritings at the margins. As the discussion at the end of the previous chapter made clear, such disruptions are unstable and liable to be folded back into discourses of security/insecurity; nonetheless they are moments of possibility which offer a glimpse of alternatives in the margins of the political fabric. There are other such moments.

Rewriting Scripts of Contestation #1: The Politics of Vulnerability

The first example of renegotiating contestation comes from the die-in tactic, a regular feature of anti-militarist action. At its most basic, a die-in is a form of demonstration in which participants simulate death. Within this basic frame, there are many possible variations; a die-in can indeed be purely theatrical or it can be used to directly blockade something; it can be large or small, and perhaps involve costumes and props (fake blood is not uncommon). Often a statement will be read aloud during the die-in to explain the situation to the public. Music might be played (during one die-in in which I participated in 2008, one activist played funeral music on her violin to provide a macabre atmosphere), or there may be silence. Activists can choose to remain on the ground until removed, or to leave of their own volition. It is one of the most common forms of anti-militarist action.

Though often dismissed as a theatrical accompaniment to more serious action, the die-in can be read as a mobilisation of what we might call a politics of vulnerability. A politics of vulnerability refers to those actions which seek to make the sense of vulnerability – fragility, contingency, dependency – productive. Such mobilisations, examples of which might include Edkins and Véronique Pin-Fat's discussion of the practice of lip sewing amongst refugees and the Chipko movement's practice of hugging trees to stop them from being felled (Edkins and Pin-Fat 2005; Shiva 1989: 67-77), cut powerfully through the expected narrative of contestation, which very often consists precisely in the masking of vulnerabilities. These politics do not automatically subscribe to dominant expectations of how politics is 'done', instead asking questions about what it means to be powerful, to be successful, to mask vulnerability. They open spaces to think about the onto-politics of contestation.

The discussion here will focus on two particular die-ins in which I have been involved. The first took place at the University of Manchester in May 2011. BAE

Systems were scheduled to run a one-day workshop in the maths department. In response, around twenty of us went to the building where the session was to take place and, while several remained outside to distribute leaflets, fifteen of us slipped inside. Once there, we lay on the ground in front of the doors to the room in which the event was to take place with large cardboard tombstones resting on our bodies. Each tombstone provided information about BAE Systems' arms sales to repressive regimes in the Middle East and North Africa, already in the public eye following the popular uprisings in that area. While we expected this particular part of our protest to end when the meeting began, it became apparent that the event had stalled. Those students who were planning to attend the talk displayed apparent discomfort about stepping over our prostrate bodies, despite BAE Systems staff encouraging them to do so. They stood awkwardly around the fringes of our sprawled mass, clearly unwilling to pick their way through. We remained on the floor. The stalemate continued for around twenty minutes, at which point the BAE Systems staff decided to cancel the event. We were not expecting such a significant response; die-ins are generally regarded as an accompaniment to more obstructive direct actions. Here, a combination of factors including the well-made tombstone signs, the direct blockade of the room and the intense public focus on arms trading between the UK and repressive regimes led to a situation in which the discomfort produced by the activists had powerful effects.

The second example here comes from a demonstration in Nottingham in February 2010. As part of a Peace News Winter Gathering, we spent an afternoon in the city centre raising awareness about the nearby Heckler & Koch distribution warehouse. There were about twenty of us, and we developed a routine that we repeated continuously around the city centre for a number of hours. Around five of us would crouch underneath a large tarpaulin, against which was placed a large sign asking 'What is Heckler & Koch Hiding?' After a few minutes, by which time a number of people would have gathered to watch, the noise of gunfire was played through some speakers, and we fell to the ground. The tarpaulin was then removed to reveal our bodies. While we did this, other members of the group gave out leaflets and talked to passers-by about the company and its presence in Nottingham (about which most people were not aware, and which Heckler & Koch have been keen to mask). This second example differs in a number of ways from the first. While the former sought to mobilise a direct sense of discomfort or shame in potential attendees, the latter seeks to draw in ordinary members of the public. It was more demonstrative than obstructive,

finding its value primarily in the question ‘What is Heckler & Koch Hiding?’ The question, and the ‘to be revealed’ nature of our position under the tarpaulin caught people’s attention, and led to a number of conversations.

In both cases, the die-in itself plays several important roles. The first is to ask demanding questions, explicitly in the case of the latter, but perhaps more insistently in the former. The decision to walk into a room became a political one, and attendees were forced to confront the wider implications of BAE Systems’ work in a space where, previously, they would not have had to. In this dynamic two further, interrelated aspects are revealed. The first is the representative nature of the action. The die-in is a mirror of distant and forgotten deaths, and an attempt to represent them precisely at the point at which they are simultaneously produced and effaced. Nottingham city centre is a place for shopping, not for remembering the violence produced by businesses operating nearby; representing those deaths forces discomfort and provokes an onto-political examination of this space and the normal politics within (Stierl 2012). Similar dynamics infuse the die-in in the university; is a workshop focussed on solving abstract mathematical problems truly so innocent or apolitical? Within this representation, there is a rewriting of the politics of distance, a mobilisation of the localism observed in the previous chapter, a blurring of the local/global divide. The die-in functions as a means by which to represent foreign suffering, to reintroduce it into spaces from which it has been erased, to reframe space and challenge the prospective employee or shopper to confront the consequences of political practice without the distance of distance.

There are clearly problematic dimensions here. The legacy of representation in this context is uncomfortable, and claims to be more ‘correctly’ or ‘ethically’ representing the victims of Western militarism are in danger of reinforcing logics of superiority and capability. Indeed, in solely representing them as victims (indeed, as passive victims who call forth only the decision of whether or not to take passage over their immobile bodies), particular North-South global imaginaries are reproduced at the very space in which they might be resisted. Furthermore, these attempts to represent are ridiculous in their inadequacy, in their inability to convey anything but the most fleeting of recognitions and discomforts; the bodies themselves do not intervene, and the brutality they convey is muted, muffled (Muppidi 2012: 11-27). In these senses, while those who suffer at the sharp end of militarism are represented, this remains inadequate, and tied to familiar, problematic tropes.

A charge of passivity might also be made. The concern is sometimes raised that die-ins, while occasionally striking visually, are limited in their capacity to make ‘real’ interventions and effect ‘concrete’ refusals (in the light of this critique the die-in at Manchester would be cast as a surprising exception which, to some extent, it was). At the die-ins in Nottingham, some of the participants were clearly uncomfortable with the non-provocative nature of the intervention, and one interviewee, who was arrested following a die-in at the 2011 DSEi arms fair, expressed the concern that he ‘gave [himself] away cheaply’ (Interview F). Whilst not wishing to dismiss these concerns (the politics of voluntary submission to arrest will be taken up in the following chapter), there is arguably an affirmative gesture in the performance of the die-in. While the subject is, to some extent, a passive figure, there is an active dynamic in this passivity.

In the willingness to exhibit vulnerability in a public space, often lying at the feet of police and security guards, we see a refusal to replicate conventional and expected logics of socio-political contestation, a disavowal of practices which might be associated with militarism, and a determined intervention *despite* these evasions. In expressing vulnerabilities – one’s own and others effected by militarism – and insisting on the political potency and powerful nature of those vulnerabilities, there is an affirmation of one’s own distinct practices of power and resistance. That we felt empowered as we lay on the floor in front of a seminar room, while those who stood and watched felt unable to act as though they otherwise would have done, is a surprising but important inversion of expected political logics. To express vulnerability as a legitimate and powerful response to militarism is to refuse to replicate militarism’s logics of confrontation and instrumentality, and to experiment with and express responses and dynamics which explore a fundamentally different kind of politics. This does not mean that concerns about capacities, passivities and problematic strategies of representation are not relevant, or that the mobilisation of vulnerability would overhaul militaristic political imaginaries. It does suggest, however, that there is an active and productive dimension which should not be effaced, and which signifies attempts to think beyond the expected terms of contestation.

Rewriting Scripts of Contestation #2: The Academic Blockade

The second example of renegotiating contestation concerns a particular blockade, in which we can see a number of productive subversions. It took place in 2007 during 'Faslane 365', a year-long 'rolling blockade' of the naval base organised by activists as a means by which to reenergise the UK peace movement. The year was a major event within the UK anti-militarist movement, and beyond. A diverse range of groups, including members of the clergy, lawyers, students and artists took responsibility for individual blockades, as did area-based groups. By the end of the year, over 1150 people had been arrested while attempting to block access to the military base (Zelter 2008: xvii-xxiii, 229-230).

The particular moment in focus here took place in January when over one hundred people held an 'academic blockade' at the compound gates. Rather than blockade in the traditional manner, participants held a seminar for scholars concerned about nuclear weapons. Papers were circulated, name badges were printed and a whiteboard was used. Panellists gave their papers as they would have done at any other conference, followed by questions and answers. In this manner, participants (from a wide range of disciplines, involving non-affiliated scholars, graduate students and professional academics) simultaneously discussed nuclear weapons while placing their bodies to prohibit their use. As two participants write, 'it was a blockade in which scientific discussion blocked the work of the base! This is a beautiful form of action, one in which our words and deeds are aligned, one in which our theoretical discussion is our political practice' (Kenrick and Vinthagen 2008: 155). Furthermore, 'it was about transforming words into deeds without losing the capacity of words and discussion to open out the space for us to think deeper about the problem we are confronting and about a range of possible solutions and responses' (ibid., 155-156). Thirty-two participants (sixteen students and sixteen academics) were arrested and spent the night in police cells, where they formed 'break-out groups' and continued their discussions from the day's seminar (ibid., 159).

There is a deeply creative subversion of space here, an unusually sharp manifestation of theory and/as practice which refuses the alienation of thought and the confines of the university. As Kenrick and Vinthagen note, the event was

[n]ot relevant in the narrow ways defined by our university audit culture which sees relevance in terms of student ‘employability’, league table positioning and business measurements; but relevance in the far broader sense of refusing to turn relationships into numbers, and instead making the space with students and colleagues to reflect on the world and to work to reclaim the global and intellectual commons of democratic debate and accountability from those who insist that ‘there is no alternative’ to current practice (ibid., 160).

Furthermore, the event highlighted and distanced itself from the high levels of military and arms trade funding in modern universities (ibid., 165-166), prefiguring new spaces on the tarmac outside a military base. An important site of militarism was converted, albeit only for a few hours, into a space of education and possibility. The transient nature of the space reveals the difficulties of creating such situations (both with respect to the base, and to the university), but this does not dismiss them. Their logics can resonate beyond the moment, whether with the academics challenged to consider their situatedness more carefully, or with the police officers who were drawn to ask questions, or with the local activists who found a rare opportunity to engage academically with topics often enclosed within university buildings and publisher paywalls. In this action, the space was contested through an intensification of multiple overlapping contexts which revealed one another’s contradictions, and permitted an excited exploration of community in the fractures of these contradictions – operating at the level of the military base, the university, and arguably even the prison (which was converted, albeit temporarily and with obvious limitations, into a collaborative space). The base was blockaded by a prefigurative praxis which intervened in both more and less ‘direct’ terms, challenging political scripts on a variety of levels.

Rewriting Scripts of Contestation #3: The Politics of Humour

The third example in this section concerns the use of humour in anti-militarist resistance. Humour is an important anti-militarist tactic, running along the lines of what de Goede, from Foucault, refers to as the politics of ‘making strange’, confusing simplistic narratives of ‘us’ and ‘them’ while subverting the mythical foundations of legitimacy on which particular institutions and rationalities (for her, those of finance and capital) rest (2005: 380-382). She argues that laughter ‘is more than a superficial attack

or helpless gesture in the face of the power of financial institutions: it has a potential to shake the discursive foundations of modern financial rationality' (ibid., 381).⁶³ A similar case can be made with respect to the rationalities of militarism and security. Furthermore this assault on the rationality of dominant political orders, at its best, occurs in a manner which subverts normal forms of contestations and celebrates an anti-hegemonic absurdity.

The example of the Space Hijackers' tank protest from the previous chapter might serve as one such example here. Their contribution to the 2011 DSEi protests provides another. Without revealing their true identity or intent, they established a false company under the name 'Life Neutral Solutions' and advertised themselves to both families and the defence industry. To the former:

You've heard of the importance of being carbon neutral? Well, being Life Neutral is the same - but with people. For every life lost as a result of the use of products from our member organisations, we make sure that a new life flourishes. Join today and your next child could be a Life Neutral™ child (Space Hijackers 2011a).

Life neutral benefits include IVF, private education, private health care, nappies and formula, and 'access to top universities'. On their defence industry-facing publicity, they took a slightly different line:

Join the frontline of an exciting new arena in the Corporate Social Responsibility landscape.

The information age has created a new landscape of consumer awareness. So it's no surprise that customers are becoming increasingly mindful of adverse publicity that has become associated with some defence products in recent years. **Life Neutral Solutions** offers a unique range of bespoke strategies to respond to this changing marketplace. We harness the needs of an increasingly discerning client-base, to provide opportunities for reputational enhancement.

Become one of a growing number of **life-neutral** (TM) brands. By sponsoring births in Western countries, you can **life-offset** the collateral effects of defence operations in third-world conflict zones (Space Hijackers 2011b).

⁶³ See also Odysseous (2001).

Space Hijacker members in suits and branded t-shirts advertised the company on the streets around the ExCeL centre where DSEi takes place. A website was created, and an advert was placed on a large billboard. They were invited onto the BBC World Service to discuss the company, where they revealed the prank.



(‘Offsetting Human Lives – towards an ‘ethical’ Arms Trade?’ 2011)

The claims to ethical responsibility from the arms industry are subverted by following them to an absurd but *almost* believable (neoliberal) excess. The tendency for Western lives to be privileged, ethically and financially, over others is highlighted, and communicated to members of the public simply by approaching them to ask whether they would consider joining the scheme. As with the tank, the violence of the arms trade is deconstructed through a mimicry which successfully conjoins the absurd and the credible; Western lives funded by distant wars.

Space Hijacker-style pranks are relatively uncommon, and particularly well suited to the kind of analysis being conducted here. However, they do not have a monopoly in this area, and examples can be found elsewhere. When the Smash EDO campaign was handed an injunction preventing them from protesting on the road outside the EDO factory, they held a ‘Carry On Up The Injunction’ demonstration, in which activists dressed as a particular security guard (with whom they had been having

problems) and chased each other around outside the factory serving injunctions and making Nazi salutes. Following this, and banned by the terms of the injunction from taking pictures of the security guards (which made it more difficult for them to hold security guards to account for assault) they held a life drawing class, painting pictures of the factory and security guards (SchMOVIES 2008).

Mocking the arms trade and militarism more broadly forms part of the everyday practice of anti-militarism; the direct action news magazine *Schnews* has a collection of satirical images on its website (Schnews undated), a book of subversive cartoons has been published (Room 2003), and the activist-comedian Mark Thomas's writing and shows on the arms trade are immensely popular amongst activists. His routines rest on the absurdities of the arms trade (told in a manner which evoke anger and amusement in equal measure) and anecdotes about his activism, which has included 'kidnapping' a coach-load of arms dealers by offering them a free ride from their hotel to DSEi, and establishing a fake PR firm which advised military juntas on how to deal with difficult questions from Amnesty International (Thomas 2006). Other examples can be found in the protests against the Baby Show and the Spirit of Christmas Exhibition, noted in Chapter Three, which serve to satirise the apparent disjuncture between the arms industry and these supposedly more innocent pursuits, often by highlighting the ways in which capitalism and 'free market' logics connect the two.

The 'Clandestine Insurgent Rebel Clown Army' (CIRCA) are an interesting case here insofar as they have made the comedic subversion of militarism, order and expected scripts of contestation the model through which *all* of their interventions (which largely fall within the rubric of the alter-globalisation movement) have taken place. Dressing half as clowns and half as soldiers, they reveal the (tragic) comedy of war and the potency of laughter:

We are **clowns** because what else can one be in such a stupid world. Because inside everyone is a lawless clown trying to escape. Because nothing undermines authority like holding it up to ridicule. Because since the beginning of time tricksters have embraced life's contradictions, creating coherence through confusion. Because fools are both fearsome and innocent, wise and stupid, entertainers and dissenters, healers and laughing stocks, scapegoats and subversives. Because buffoons always succeed in failing, always say yes, always

hope and always feel things deeply. Because a clown can survive everything and get away with anything.

We are an **army** because we live on a planet in permanent war – a war of money against life, of profit against dignity, of progress against the future. Because a war that gorges itself on death and blood and shits money and toxins, deserves an obscene body of deviant soldiers. Because only an army can declare absurd war on absurd war. Because combat requires solidarity, discipline and commitment. Because alone clowns are pathetic figures, but in groups and gaggles, brigades and battalions, they are extremely dangerous. We are an army because we are angry and where bombs fail we might succeed with mocking laughter (CIRCA undated, emphases in original).

As Graeber's reflection on his fortuitous liberation through the confusion caused by warring Clowns and Billionaires noted in the previous chapter makes clear, the tactical frivolity manifested by CIRCA can have surprising, amusing and delightful effects.

The creative capacity of all of these examples and more is expressed well by Shukaitis, who notes how actions of humorous overstatement 'have found ways that scramble the expectations and normal flow of social life, and thus at least for a second open a possibility for some other form of communication and interaction to occur' (2009: 71). Indeed, it is not only *overstatement* which is powerful in this context; as one interviewee argued, simply asking uncomfortable questions, when accompanied by euphemistic, dismissive or uncompromising responses, quickly becomes farcical. His specific example concerned the recent BAE Systems Annual General Meeting (a popular event on the anti-militarist calendar, to which single-shareholding activists are legally permitted to attend and ask questions of the board) at which he had been present. One activist asked the BAE Systems chairman about weapons which had been sold to Saudi Arabia, and which had been observed when the Saudi army entered Bahrain in early 2011. Amidst laughter, the chairman repeatedly and ridiculously attempted to deflect the question and champion Saudi Arabian sovereignty (Interview B). The activist who (repeatedly) asked the question, another interviewee, told me that she was later berated by one 'real' shareholder for 'making a mockery' of the event (Interview A). In this instance, the role of comedian is effectively offered to the BAE chairman, whose compliant self-caricature reveals the limitations of, and makes strange, the rationalities upon which BAE Systems depends.

As with those other modes of contestation explored in the thesis, humour operates at the more and less spectacular levels, from the more disruptive interventions at the Baby Show to the quieter everyday spaces of a comic book or angry joke. It serves to expose and render unstable the rationalities which sustain militarist politics, mobilising a sense of the absurd which is explicit in the resistance (anarchists in a tank, clowns, kidnappers, armed babies) and thereby revealed in the militarist target. Beyond this destabilising gesture there is a prefigurative dimension insofar as humour intervenes in a manner which avoids the 'active nihilism' and 'pious humorlessness' which is often the expected (and, as such, always already dismissed) quality of some forms of contemporary protest (Critchley 2008: 124). It does not attempt to mimic expected ontologies of contestation, preferring instead to delegitimize conventional systems of power by revealing their falsehoods, fictions and contradictions. On such terms, the laughter which results is not just relief at the destabilisation - it is a cry of affirmation which refuses to become that which it opposes, to seize the moment of absurdity in order to mark the (collective) desire to be (and contest) otherwise. In a sense, then, it is a politics of vulnerability.

There is an anti-hegemonic quality insofar as humour does not impose its alternative but, at its best, presents the strangeness of previously stable narratives to the imagination and withdraws, leaving behind a confusion of incoherences. This is not to suggest that humour is by definition anti-hegemonic or 'emancipatory'. It is often not. It is instead to accord with de Goede's more modest conclusion that 'joking, laughter and carnival *can be* important politics of dissent in an era when...political legitimacy...depends upon...rationality and coherence' (2005: 389, emphasis in original), and to suggest that this importance might depend in part on the ways in which humour can subvert expected scripts of contestation.

The above three examples serve to demonstrate ways in which anti-militarists subvert expected scripts of contestation, refusing confrontation on the terms of that which is opposed and intervening in ways which explore and provoke the imagination of alternatives. As noted at the outset, the observations here might apply across many other examples expressed throughout the thesis. Although they are not by definition anti-hegemonic or anti-authoritarian, and whilst they are limited in many ways, they can be seen to fracture stable onto-political scripts of contestation through their sense of possibility, their affirmation of intervening otherwise. In this sense, they are important

instances of beginning to think and act otherwise, of prefiguration against and beyond militarised social relations.

Workplace Conversion

One final example of the efforts to create anti-militarist spaces and scripts concerns the various discussions which take place around the idea of workplace conversion as a potential solution to the considerable employment which occurs within the sphere of the arms trade. While few substantive examples of conversion exist, the notion that arms factories *could* be converted (ideally, occupied by workers and converted) and used for more socially productive purposes is a popular one. This popularity can, however, tend to obscure the complicated class politics which accompany it, and which run through much of anti-militarism. Attention to such politics reveals the potential for workplace conversion to operate precisely as a discourse productive of counter-subjectivities.

In 1996 activists established a peace camp outside a factory in Coventry owned by Alvis Car and Engineering Company Ltd, at which the company manufactured tanks which were sold to Indonesia. Amongst a number of other actions and demonstrations organised by the camp, activists produced large pictures which represented (and sought to provoke the sense of possibility of) workplace conversion; on one day, they would hold up a picture of a tank, the next, change the picture slightly, such that it eventually represented a train. Workers at the factory had been instructed not to interact with those at the camp, and these pictures were a creative means by which to communicate that the target of the camp was not the workers' jobs so much as the specific product the factory was geared towards making (Interview H).

The motivations behind messages such as these were summed up in a 1993 CAAT report on conversion:

Central to winning support for an end to the arms trade is offering a viable future to those whose livelihoods depend on arms production. At a time of deepening unemployment and cuts in military spending many people who work in the military industry feel they are faced with the choice of either producing weapons or the dole queue. Thus, conversion is always important in preventing military

jobs from becoming the basis of lobbying against disarmament (McMahon and Williamson 1993: 1).

The idea of conversion holds considerable purchase amongst activists; when raised during meetings or in conversation it invariably draws enthusiastic and approving nods and comments. The sense that a productive solution to military production could be achieved in such a manner has been further animated by the potential connections between the anti-militarist and environmental movements with regards to the notion that jobs in militarised industries could be converted into so-called 'green jobs'. As one interviewee, who has undertaken considerable research on such possibilities, enthused, arguing in favour of conversion defers the conventional image of anti-militarists as hostile to jobs and working class issues, and permits more 'positive' arguments to be mobilised (Interview B). Such possibilities are intensified when mobilised alongside the efforts made by anti-militarists to refute the argument that the arms trade creates jobs. Activists respond to such claims by noting the high levels of subsidies involved in arms exports and the capital-intensive nature of arms production, insisting that the 'jobs argument' is both false *and* marginalises political and ethical concerns (CAAT 2009).

The images produced by the conversion argument are compelling; in one move, military production halts, socially useful production rises, jobs are maintained and even created, and the economy grows and greens. In addition (and it is here that tensions are usefully drawn out), the supposed incompatibility between anti-militarist politics and trade union/working class-based politics might be overcome. However, behind these images, there is little substance or activity. Whilst reports are produced which emphasise the potential economic, social and ethical benefits of conversion (Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament 2010; McMahon and Williamson 1993), campaigning at the grassroots level is limited. Whilst this is for a range of reasons, the discordance between trade union and anti-militarist politics bears some exploration here.

Stavrianakis sets out some ways in which the interests of trade unions often conflict with anti-militarist politics. Whilst noting the limited integration of trade unions into decision-making structures on issues of arms production policy planning, she stresses that 'trade unions call for fundamentally similar measures as arms capital: given the mandate of trade unions to protect the jobs of their members, it is unsurprising that the unions call on the government to dedicate more resources to the arms industry...Rather than trade unions arguing against arms capitalists and the state,

therefore, we see them arguing for essentially the same thing' (2010: 88). She further argues that '[t]here is a significant degree of cross-class support for military production...with the effect that it becomes difficult for critiques to be articulated that are simultaneously anti-export (or particular exports) and pro-worker' (ibid., 88-89). It is, of course, in the face of such challenges that workplace conversion is articulated as a potential route forwards. However, when articulated without a corresponding interrogation of the divergent subject positions which underpin the contrasting perspectives, stasis is all but inevitable.

Donna Haraway provides some guidance here. She argues that modern weapons technologies are

...as hard to see politically as materially. They are about consciousness – or its simulation. They are floating signifiers moving in pickup trucks across Europe, blocked more effectively by the witch-weavings of the displaced and so unnatural Greenham women, who read the cyborg webs of power so very well, than by the militant labour of older masculinist politics, whose natural constituency needs defence jobs (1991: 153).

Whilst arguably making her own essentialising gestures, Haraway usefully shifts the terms of the debate by displacing, without dismissing, the question of class. The problem is not the essential interests of an essential class, but the particular ways in which a certain intersection of (gendered, militarised) interests and identities has been allowed to operate as a stable discourse of class. In fact, as many anarchists and anti-militarists have argued, working class interests might be seen to be actively harmed through military production and exports (Landauer 2010: 218-221; Bakunin 2005a: 13-20). The task becomes one of shifting the discourses through which class, identity and interests are articulated, such that the 'natural' affinity between arms producers and working class interests becomes denaturalised.⁶⁴

Whilst anti-militarists often criticise the discourses of trade unions with respect to such a task, anti-militarist practice is itself often complicit in sedimenting particular narratives. One interviewee's awkward reflection on his ('detrimental') experiences

⁶⁴ This is, in a sense, a small-scale example of the task facing much of radical political praxis, which seeks to displace the supposed harmony of interests and identities produced by social democracy.

talking to workers outside arms company premises is instructive here. He recalls that his actions amounted to establishing an account which insisted that

...”we’re moral, you’re immoral, you should be on the dole.” There was no attempt to find common purpose, to find common values, to recognise common humanity; [no sense that] building an ongoing relationship with these people is going to be a good idea. [They were left to think that] here is an arrogant middle class kid, who’s probably on benefits (which I was), who’s telling me that I shouldn’t be in a position to look after my family, and telling me that he’s a better man than I am (Interview J).

Whilst many are careful to posit a distinction between trade unions and ‘the working class’ (the former often reliant upon traditional conceptions of interest and identity, the latter being more open to competing articulations), similar accounts can be found elsewhere. The argument that arms trade workers should quit their jobs because the UK has a reasonable social safety net is one that I have heard a number of times, as is the broader claim that trade union and/or working class politics is a pointless or unfruitful avenue for anti-militarism, the essential interests therein unlikely to produce affinities.

I will go on to argue that this is perhaps an unproductive perspective; however, it is important not to reduce it to a ‘middle class activists vs. working class workers’ trope. Whilst a large number of activists do identify as middle class, and (as the quote above makes clear) are to some extent aware of the privileges and performances entailed therein, many others self-identify as working class. Not only does the middle class activists vs. working class workers trope marginalise (certain aspects of) their experience; it further entrenches the discursive convergence between working class interests and militarism by externalising all that opposes such militarism into the awkward domain of ‘middle class-ness’ irrespective of socio-economic and cultural origin, and presuming the status of militarism as a prior or privileged feature of working class identity.

The interviewee quoted above suggested that a more productive route might be to patiently and persistently highlight collective possibilities, rather than moralise from ‘our’ position and discipline ‘their’ interests. The discourse of workplace conversion might be understood within this framing, as a means by which to break down essential class identities and interests and articulate alternatives which do not dichotomise,

exclude, or entrench. To do this, however, it should be understood as more than a useful policy suggestion; it is a narrative which breaks down particular essentialised tenets of class identity, which has a more (anti-)foundational effect. As such, workplace conversion might be understood (and mobilised) as part of a wider series of interventions which seek to deconstruct the supposedly natural affinity between working-class interests and military exports, and which do so in a manner which refutes the essentialising gestures made by activists with respect to working-class and/or union-based politics. Much more might be said about workplace conversion, which remains broadly under-theorised; in particular, the extent to which it is a discourse which sits within, or offers a challenge to capitalist social relations demands further consideration. The intention here is to suggest that it might serve as a discourse which reveals particular possibilities as it denaturalises certain forms of subjectivity.

The first part of this chapter has highlighted a series of anti-militarist spaces and images which call forth the imagination and prefiguration of subjects and practices which serve as explorations against the terms of militarism. They have been noted not as alternatives in any concrete or absolute sense, but as experiences and experiments which might, in margins and interstitial spaces, gesture towards the possibility of becoming otherwise. They signify refusals of the roles (as workers, shoppers, lecturers, or simply as subjects of particular systems of rationality) imposed upon us and (re)performed by us as subjects of security and militarism, and as a series of affirmations that things could be otherwise (even though those resisting might not exactly be sure how). However, these practices cannot be treated in isolation, as abstracted and individualised moments of possibility; they are made possible and produced through wider sensibilities which characterise anti-militarism. One such sensibility which is of particular relevance here is the culture of ‘diversity of tactics’, which will be the subject of the next discussion.

Part Two: Diversity of Tactics

In anti-militarist contexts one frequently encounters reference to the importance of a ‘diversity of tactics’, signifying that there is no one correct means by which to take direct action, nor should there be. Diversity of tactics is a principle which seeks to establish terms by which individuals and groups can take action in accordance with their own

needs, desires and limitations while remaining in solidarity with those who chose other approaches. Whilst neither uncontroversial nor unproblematic, it represents an important site of prefigurative exploration. In the first instance, this is because it demonstrates a certain commitment to forms of political organisation which do not impose totalising or hegemonic standards of legitimacy and which do not enforce conformity in the name of 'The Cause'. Against the tendency of CSS to understand responses to the politics of security through a conceptual framework which remains faithful to hegemonic ontologies of agency, diversity of tactics invites anti-hegemonic political imaginaries.

The work of affirming the place for a diversity of tactics involves building a context wherein participants retain autonomy within the collective space. This instinct forms part of a broader trend in contemporary anarchism. As Gordon argues,

[a]s a result of the immense diversity of movements, campaigns and approaches which gave rise to contemporary anarchism, the movement itself came to be based on diverse, ad-hoc coalitions – giving rise to a pluralist orientation which disemphasises unity of analysis and vision in favour of multiplicity and experimentation...This ushered in a bottom-up approach to social theorising, and a parallel interest in manifold creative articulations of social alternatives. The anarchist movement's roots in a diversity of subcultural experiences such as the punk and New Age movements discouraged conformity and encouraged valuing diversity in the types of social and cultural orientations that could be envisioned for a non-capitalist, stateless society (2008: 42).

This refusal to set prior determinations on what subjects in-and-of resistance must 'be' is, clearly, a limited affair: resistance consists precisely in the critique of particular subjectivities and practices, and the failure to turn such critique inwards is, as the thesis has already established, deeply problematic. Furthermore setting the boundaries of resistance and solidarity, determining who is 'in' and who is 'out', is itself an indefinite project which should be subject to ongoing processes of critique. It is in this tension, between the affirmations of diversity and the importance of constant critique, that a second prefigurative dimension of a diversity of tactics emerges; a conception of radical subjectivity which remains mobile, multiple, and critical, but which nonetheless continues to form chains of solidarity and affinity, to explore and experiment with political connections. This second point will be discussed more extensively in the sixth

chapter; here, the discussion will focus on drawing out the ambiguous attempts to affirm diversity of tactics amongst anti-militarists.

Whilst the diversity of tactics ethos has historical precedent (for example, see Bertalan on Goldman, 2011: 226), contemporary articulations developed through the large alter-globalisation mobilisations at the beginning of the 21st century. Gordon suggests that it was infighting over the issue of violence in the ‘movement of movements’ which led to calls for a diversity of tactics:

...many NGO figureheads and communist spokespeople chimed in, complaining that the anarchists were ‘distorting the message of the protests’. As a result, a breach of solidarity was perceived in many grassroots and direct-action groups. Especially after Genoa, many activists who would not normally condone violence saw the stock denunciations of the anarchists as an expression of gross insensitivity and lack of solidarity with hundreds of traumatised and imprisoned activists, playing along with the G8 leaders’ and corporate media’s obvious divide-and-conquer strategy of separating ‘good protesters’ from ‘bad protesters’. As a result, many grassroots activists now began refusing to denounce anarchist violence, eroding the position of the ethos of non-violence in their discourses. This was replaced by the call for diversity of tactics – a measure taken in order to move beyond seemingly irreconcilable debates and towards cohesion and solidarity in the horizontally organised, direct-action end of the alternative globalisation movement, which now felt abandoned and isolated (2008: 84).

Graeber notes that, following the 1999 protests against the World Trade Organisation in Seattle, some activists boasted at having pointed out Black Bloc activists to the police for arrest, and others ‘accused the Black Bloc of violating solidarity by refusing to take part in meetings or abide by the agreed-on code of conduct’ (a code of conduct which Black Bloc activists themselves had not agreed upon) (2009: 293). In this tense and divisive context, a diversity of tactics stands as the condition of possibility of a ‘movement’ (however ambiguous) which does not either turn against itself, or enforce totalising standards on action, a counter-hegemonic ontology of agency.

There are clearly problematic elements involved in the affirmation of a diversity of tactics. In particular, many feel uncomfortable at the prospect of enacting solidarities

with those employing tactics with which they disagree (whether strategically, tactically or ethically). Although critique is not shut down, silent complicities can emerge. Similarly, few would accept the logic that *any* action undertaken against a common opponent is to be affirmed. In this sense, there is always a limit to solidarity, a negotiation at the margins, a struggle to take account of the inside(s). The discussions below seek to show some ways in which this is worked out amongst anti-militarists. The suggestion is that, whilst the examples are fractuous, this is not a sign of failure but precisely a taking seriously the contradictory but crucial imperatives at play.

This thesis has already pointed towards a wide variety of anti-militarist tactics, more and less disruptive, legal and spectacular. Significant attempts are made to fashion a common discourse and purpose which finds space for this variety without privileging particular approaches. The Smash EDO campaign has, since its inception, emphasised the importance of a ‘toolbox of tactics’, which have included those examples already discussed alongside weekly noise demonstrations outside the factory, street theatre, readings of the names of the dead, phone blockades, etc. (SchMOVIES 2008). The ethos can also be found in the principles of the (now largely defunct) Anti-Militarist Network (AMN). Established in 2008 and comprised of groups including Target Brimar, Disarm DSEi, Smash EDO and Shut Down H&K, the network is based around four principles:

- The network organises along the principles of autonomy and non-hierarchy
- We embrace a diversity of tactics
- We will not publically condemn other peoples actions [sic]
- We have a respect for life (Anti-Militarist Network 2008).

Particularly significant in these principles is the agreement to refrain from publically condemning one another’s actions, and the absence of a commitment to nonviolence. The network, comprised of groups who ‘believe in the necessity of direct action’ in the terms of one interviewee, does not itself organise actions (thereby avoiding the imperative to establish particular tactics), instead serving to provide a basis for mutual solidarity and support amongst its constituent parts (Interview F). Despite this, and as I explore below, these principles were not uncontroversial.

Another example of diversity of tactics amongst anti-militarists can be found in the STAF coalition, which exists to organise campaigns and direct action against DSEi.

The coalition involves groups including CAAT, Disarm DSEi, War on Want, 'London Catholic Worker', Trident Ploughshares, 'East London Against Arms Fairs', the 'Student Christian Network' and more, alongside individual members, all of whom have committed to working together along the principles of diversity of tactics. In the coalition, CAAT are undoubtedly the dominant group in terms of resource commitment; this is significant, as CAAT's facilitation of a diverse range of resistances is a central part of its action and ethos. Indeed, the theme of its 2010 National Gathering was 'diversity of action to end the arms trade'.

The emergence of the ethos of diversity in the STAF coalition can perhaps be best explained with reference to a particular moment, at a STAF gathering in June 2011. It was the first major event for the coalition, organised to provide spaces for activists to meet and prepare for DSEi 2011. The introduction to the one-day event was familiar in its affirmation of difference and diversity; participants were reminded to be aware of hidden privilege and not to assume the gender identity of other attendees, spaces were made available for activists to run their own sessions, and so on. It was in this context that the first event of the day was introduced, a 'spectrum line' exercise designed to allow people to meet other likeminded activists (who might then plan actions together). Spectrum lines are a common feature of activist gatherings, and function as a means to start conversations about particular issues. In response to a question or statement, participants are invited to position themselves on an imaginary line (or grid) on the floor, and to explain their stance. For example, at the Peace News Summer Gathering in 2011, a spectrum exercise asked us to stand between two points depending on whether participants had a positive or negative reaction to the term 'hero'. Rarely do people stand at either extreme, and people tend to move around as they hear the positions of others and respond to their arguments. It is thus an exercise in fluidity, listening and appreciating the diverse range of viewpoints held by those bound more or less tightly by a sense of common purpose.

The particular spectrum line under discussion here focussed on the tactical preferences of participants. One of the first questions asked whether or not activists would or would not be prepared to lock themselves to a bus full of arms dealers (to stop them reaching the arms fair, an action which took place during DSEi 2007). We began to move around the room, with a sizeable portion of the group moving towards the 'yes' end. However, before anyone began discussing the relative merits of different

positions, a number of people began to voice their discomfort. To the agreement of most, if not all of those present, it was argued that the exercise was unnecessarily divisive, that it might appear to establish a hierarchy of action and a culture of machismo as participants felt compelled to affirm the most dramatic and spectacular actions. People were keen to avoid beginning the day with the assertion that some activists are more valuable or 'impressive' than others. One argued that those people holding a banner, talking to members of the public, taking pictures and handing out leaflets are just as fundamental to the overall coherence of the action as those lying under the bus, and that to divide those involved misses what is valuable about a diverse approach to political action. This particular intervention drew almost unanimous support, displacing what one interviewee referred to as 'front line fetishism' (Interview B). It is perhaps significant that the calls to abandon this exercise on these grounds came largely from those who had gravitated towards the 'yes' end of the room.

We cautiously agreed to try one more question. This time, we were asked about individuals' feelings towards the tactic of lobbying politicians. Most clustered towards the 'negative' end of the room, while around a third dispersed along the line, with only a few standing at the extreme 'positive' end. However, when asked why they were so sceptical, all those standing at the negative end refused to give specific answers beyond the fact that it wasn't 'for them', and insisting that their position did not mean that they disrespected the choices of those who do find value in lobbying. The exercise was productively disrupted as participants insisted on affirming the space for diversity as a priority ahead of particular tactical choices and debates. Importantly, this does *not* mean that discussions about the usefulness of differing tactics did not take place, but rather, that these took place within a context which had been shaped through the principles of diversity.⁶⁵

This openness was not performed or affirmed easily. Discussing the spectrum exercise with a group of participants after the event, most acknowledged struggling with, on the one hand, publically resisting the valorisation of particular forms of action and, on the other hand, holding strong opinions about different tactics (whether positive or negative). In the same discussion, participants referred to attempts to 'raise' their consciousness, before quickly taking back their words and seeking to find a way of

⁶⁵ It should be noted that I have been at other events where similar questions have not prompted such a response, although there are usually a series of awkward glances, uncomfortable giggles, and seditious muttering.

expressing their personal struggles against alienation in a way which did not establish them 'above' others (Interview D). There is a continual tension between seeking change, of the self and beyond, and seeking to guard against the exclusions, hierarchies and suspension of self-critique which can result from secure conceptions of the emancipated subject. This tension might be seen as a particularly productive and creative space, where resistance is situated within a contested but sincere desire to prefigure alternative and open spaces. That one of the first acts of a gathering organised to coordinate resistance was to deconstruct its own space and the possible exclusionary dynamics contained therein demonstrates important prefigurative explorations.

Part of the tensions which define the space within which a diversity of tactics is negotiated concern debates about what, for activists, constitutes 'the political'. I have already suggested that, for many anti-militarists, broad conceptions of the political which encompass spaces and subjectivities which might normally be overlooked are important. However, in this broadness there is arguably a tendency to perform a public/private distinction which might be subject to critique. Eleanor Wilkinson's reflections on the place of queer politics within activist groups help to develop this point. She notes how activist approaches to queer politics often reflect liberal discourses of tolerance; 'these groups felt that they were being inclusive, and therefore there was no need to take the discussions of these issues any further' (2009: 39). She cites one interviewee describing their experience of a group discussion of radical sex:

...when discussing queer politics the issue of radical celibacy came up. One person was like 'I don't get [celibacy,] I mean if not having sex was going to free Tibet then I'd stop having sex, but it's not, so I don't see the point.' Pretty much everyone in the group agreed with him...The dominant line is like, why does it matter who you fuck, or who you're sleeping with...and yeah, I get this, and I even support this view...but at the same time, maybe I actually think it does matter y'know? (ibid).

We might take this beyond questions of queer politics specifically and interpret Wilkinson as identifying a private/public distinction made by activists, whereby 'private' political performances are subordinated to 'public' ones.

An argument which developed during the group interview noted above demonstrates how such logics are manifested (and resisted). One participant was

expressing his admiration for Catholic Worker activists in the US who routinely make the ‘sacrifice’ of spending large stretches of time – up to twenty years – in jail for anti-militarist activities (primarily property damage). Another expressed discomfort at the tendency to valorise such activities, not because they are not important, but because the valorisation (and even mythologisation) of such sacrifice can tend to marginalise more subtle and everyday political practices (and privilege particular aggregations of arrest counts, bruises and broken windows). Her specific concern was the ways in which the responsibilities (and politics) of parenthood and child-rearing are under-respected in anti-militarist contexts, the valorisation of the heroic and spectacular serving to discipline ‘effective’ anti-militarism and subordinating ‘private’ experiences. The argument, which continued for some time, was resolved when the various participants agreed that particular people and actions can be respected without necessarily marginalising other forms of intervention, but, crucially, with the (by then universally agreed) caveat that more ‘domestic’ or ‘private’ roles are under-respected in anti-militarist politics. Whilst this conclusion is not particularly novel, it does demonstrate how public/private logics can operate to complicate the negotiation of a diversity of tactics, alongside the affirmative (rather than merely permissive) work involved in generating such a context.

The question of violence is important here. As noted, it is through difficult debates about the place (and definition) of violence for activists that diversity of tactics has become important in contemporary movements. For anarchism, the question of violence and its legitimacy has been a divisive one which has, for better or worse, persisted throughout its history (Goldman 1996: 256-373; Gelderloos 2007; Gordon 2008: 78-108; Walter 2002: 43-47), producing violent revolutionaries, radical pacifists, and much ambiguity. The intention here is not to give an account or appraisal of these debates, but to indicate some ways in which tensions regarding the place of non-violence are found amongst anti-militarists.

Much of anti-militarism activism, historically and contemporarily, is signified precisely through its opposition to the use of violence, a lexicon which frequently mobilises the terms of ‘non-violence’, ‘pacifism’, and ‘peace’. While pacifism and peace are important referents with their own particular histories, the focus here lies in the concept of non-violence, used widely (and often attached to ‘direct action’ to produce ‘non-violent direct action’, or NVDA) by activists to express a particular politics.

Through the prefigurative principle that means and ends cannot be coherently separated, and that ends will be defined by means, many activists insist that direct action should remain non-violent. In this imperative, particular definitions of violence might vary, although ‘violence’ against property is not a concept recognised by many (one of the EDO Decommissioners stressed to me that the group made a commitment to nonviolence before the action (Interview E)). In response to suggestions that nonviolence might be associated with passivity (as has been the case with pacifism, perhaps unfairly), adherents insist otherwise. Several activists told me that they see themselves as mobilising ‘*active* nonviolence’, a modification mobilised to emphasise the affirmative politics contained therein. The Feminism and Nonviolence Study Group (FNSG)’s pamphlet develops this point further, arguing that nonviolence ‘is much more than simply an absence of violence. It is both a principle and a technique, a set of ideas about how life should be lived and a strategy for social change’ (1983: 28).

In refusing to return violence with violence in the practice of political contestation, there is a series of affirmations which intersect with the politics of vulnerability noted above;

...nonviolence means a willingness to take personal risks and, at times, to bear suffering without retaliation...Nonviolence does not say that nobody gets hurt, that violence won’t be meted out to us, nor that the last vestiges of institutionalised violence are going to be given up without a fight. But it *does* say that real lasting changes can be made in this way, and that in the long term fewer people, and other forms of life, will be destroyed (ibid., 29).

Cockburn, exploring the history of the nonviolent conscientious objectors movement ‘War Resisters International’ (WRI), adds an important perspective here: ‘[t]o some [nonviolence] might suggest passivity, but this was far from WRI’s meaning. From the start they interpreted nonviolence as an energetic, risk-taking and creative process: *direct action for change*’ (2012: 48, emphasis in original). For WRI, nonviolence was not so much a constraint as a limit-condition through which they explored political possibilities beyond the terms of militarism. Importantly this was enacted without collapsing into simplistic or dogmatic conceptions of nonviolence, or refusing to form connections with those who did not share the same position (ibid., 63-65). The principle of nonviolence can therefore be understood on the terms set out earlier in this chapter, as a renegotiation of the politics of contestation.

The question of violence amongst contemporary UK anti-militarist groups is complex. CAAT, founded upon the principle of nonviolence, insists that any direct action associated with it adheres to a series of nonviolent action guidelines (CAAT undated). Trident Ploughshares are also emphatic about their commitment to nonviolence, as is Peace News (which is published by WRI). Others have voiced concerns about commitments to nonviolence. Stavrianakis critiques NGO-level conceptions of nonviolence, arguing that the incorporation of violence against property into definitions of nonviolence perpetuates capitalist social relations (2010: 175-176). More relevant to the argument here is the concern that discourses of violence and nonviolence are in danger of disciplining dissent in uncomfortable ways, imposing totalising standards of legitimacy, and facilitating the division and subsequent repression of activists (in ways noted at the outset of this section). In a workshop on direct action skills, one member of Disarm DSEi explained that the group refuses to affirm a principle nonviolence not because they believe in the necessity of violence, but 'because it's up to individuals to decide what is appropriate' in given circumstances. It is precisely the refusal to enact a hegemonic ontology of agency which matters here. In such terms, the violence/nonviolence binary might be broken down. Jeppesen suggests that we can see this happening in the diversity of tactics-based actions of the alter-globalisation movement, where city-wide actions involved dividing maps up into 'green', 'yellow' and 'red' zones in which different codes of action could occur both separately and together (2011: 156; see also Graeber 2009: 143-199). Anti-militarist actions in the UK have, on similar terms, been known to have spaces differentiated between 'fluffy' and 'spiky' principles.

The refusal of organisations such as Disarm DSEi and Smash EDO to proceed under the rubric of nonviolence has generated some tensions. Founding discussions for the AMN were stalled because some groups, principally Trident Ploughshares, did not want to be part of a coalition which did not have nonviolence as one of its core principles, whereas others, principally Disarm DSEi, did not want such a principle. Eventually, the principle of 'respect for life' was adopted, a 'political fudge' in the terms of my contact, which allowed some passage through these issues (although Trident Ploughshares did not become full members). More significantly, as a means by which to deal with these questions, it was agreed that the AMN would operate as a network, rather than a coalition; practically, this meant that it would not itself organise events, but would facilitate communication, solidarity and affinities amongst the constituent groups

and individuals (Interview F). The principle that constituent groups would not publically criticise one another was also adopted, in order to avoid the forms of division seen in the alter-globalisation movement and which found its anti-militarist equivalent when Kate Hudson, chair of CND, publically denounced Black Bloc activists following a demonstration in Strasbourg, stating that '[t]hese people are no part of our movement. They are an obstacle to effective resistance and must be isolated and recognized for what they are: wreckers whose actions turned the mass of people against our campaigns' (cited in Cockburn 2012: 147).

As indicated at the outset, diversity of tactics demonstrates two prefigurative dimensions within anti-militarist activism. The first can be seen through the work involved in producing spaces, contexts and relationships which refuse to establish totalising standards on intervention, which resist setting limits on what subjects in-and-of resistance must 'be'. This might include cautions against valorisations and criticisms which exclude, marginalise, and set up hierarchies which privilege particular (often more spectacular) forms of action. The struggles involved in such processes are often creative interventions through which activists reflect upon and reshape their own spaces. The second form of prefigurative explorations are found at the limits of this diversity, where attempts to find common purpose break down and the limits of affinity and solidarity are made manifest, as was the case with the AMN. The struggles to determine with whom solidarity might be shared and to negotiate (and hold in contingency) the boundaries of affinity constitute crucial processes, important and creative moments of self-examination and political negotiation. Importantly, they operate in a manner which resists to some extent the temptation to return to a hegemonic ontology of agency or legitimacy. In Chapter Six, I go on to suggest that such moments might be a fruitful space from which to conceptualise forms of political subjectivity which remain continually contingent, mobile, self-critical, and which nevertheless form chains of affinity, exploring relations which prefigure alternative forms of political community.

Part Three: Consensus Decision Making

This section offers some reflections on the use of consensus processes by anti-militarists. The popularity of consensus decision making in contemporary activism has been well documented elsewhere (most extensively in Graeber 2009: 300-354), and it is

as common in amongst anti-militarists as elsewhere. I will suggest that consensus processes offer an important example of the ways in which affinity-based relations are conducted amongst activists in ways which break down the atomisation and abstraction which characterise traditional decision making systems (and which have been identified as features of militarised subjectivities). These practices demonstrate again the importance of a focus on process within the prefigurative imaginary, and the continual identification and interrogation of authority which runs through such processes. I will also identify some important criticisms which have been mobilised against consensus decision making. Rather than employing ethnographic research of my own, these points are illustrated through the observations of others.

As Graeber notes, meetings are important spaces for activists:

In a way, they are more important even than the actions themselves, since actions involve confrontations with hostile forces, and meetings are pure zones of social experiment, spaces in which activists can treat one another as they feel people ought to treat each other, and to begin to create something of the social world they wish to bring out (2009: 287).⁶⁶

Consensus processes represent one such experiment. As an experiment, it is important not to focus too much on particular rules or forms of consensus decision making; whilst various guidelines that groups might use to arrive at common positions exist (e.g., Seeds for Change undated), what matters more is the ethos which accompanies attempts to generate such formal processes (and which, as we shall see, often necessitate their subversion).

The basic ethos of consensus decision making concerns the commitment to reach a decision which can be recognised and accepted by all involved. As opposed to contexts wherein decisions are reached by voting, and where votes across a particular threshold represent closure, consensus processes ask substantially more of participants. Most importantly, they insist that minority viewpoints must be taken into account, that misgivings cannot be bypassed by a vote, that non-exclusion is a principle important enough to take precedence over the imperative to reach decisions. Indeed, the decision

⁶⁶ The wider approach to prefiguration taken in this thesis demands a certain level of scepticism with regards to the notion of a 'pure' zone of experiment, which may be charged with invoking an outside to power liable to obscure the relations of oppression which operate within activist and anarchist spaces.

itself is often of secondary concern, the centrality of process and prefiguration maintained. It is therefore not a form of decision-making which can be applied successfully in the context of traditional security concerns; therein, perhaps, lies some of its appeal. This does not mean that consensus processes always take a long time – at consensus training sessions, activists frequently practice making ‘quick fire’ decisions, based on hypothetical scenarios (one common example: ‘you are chained to a factory gates when the police inform you that an ambulance, which will arrive in one minute, needs to get into the factory. What do you do?’). It does, however, mean that the emphasis of the discussion is often radically different.

Marianne Maeckelbergh emphasises the prefigurative dimension of consensus processes, which function as a means by which to conduct non-hierarchical relations, wherein the place of leadership and authority is continually challenged and resisted, exclusions explored and confronted. The prefigurative dimension demands that the means by which any decision is made is held to be just as, if not more important than any particular decision which emerges. She cites the Marxist social theorist, Alex Callinicos' bemusement at such an arrangement:

On 11 October 2003, Alex Callinicos of the SWP [Socialist Workers Party] and Project K wrote the following in an email:

I've been reading the debate about the London Social Forum with some bemusement. Most of the discussions by focussing on process rather than substance, miss the point. The important question is: What is the politics of the London Social Forum?

The reply to Alex's email was:

What Alex doesn't seem to understand is that for many people, this movement is **PRECISELY** and primarily about process. The movement towards another world must be democratic, transparent and accessible, lest we become what we are fighting against (2009: 75, emphasis in original).

What we see here is a contemporary restatement of those divisions identified in Chapter Two between anarchism and Marxism, where the former highlighted the myopia of the latter's strategic rationality and emphasised prefigurative struggle. Consensus decision

making operates to prevent the emergence of hierarchies and exclusions within the context of resistance; to ignore such imperatives, adherents insist, is to give up on the possibility of being otherwise, to emulate and so become that which is opposed.

Two particular prefigurative gestures can be taken from the commitment to consensus. Graeber points towards both when he argues that,

...where voting encourages one to reduce one's opponents' propositions to a hostile caricature, or whatever it takes to defeat them, a consensus process is built on a principle of compromise and creativity, where one is constantly changing proposals around until one can come up with something everyone can at least live with (2007: 302).

The first point to draw out here is the development of relationalities beyond atomistic, realist and liberal conceptions. Entering into consensus process with others involves making commitments to modes of recognition which transcend the assumption that decisions involve the abstraction, marginalisation and defeat of others, that they are premised upon mastery. It involves the cultivation of subjectivities which can be vulnerable to the concerns, opinions and fears of others, which can be shaped in the encounter, and which do not only explore problems from the position of the ego, of self-interest and, crucially in the context here, in abstract and totalised conceptions of 'strategy'. A good consensus process proceeds from the assumption, in Nancy Hirschmann's terms, that 'people will really listen to what others say, will attempt to incorporate those views into themselves, and indeed become somewhat transformed by that incorporation' (cited in Sylvester 1992: 168).⁶⁷ The second prefigurative dimension involves the creativity which results from such recognition; because proposals which do not generate consensus cannot be taken forwards, participants are forced to think more fully about ideas, to generate solutions which can appeal to everyone. The imperative to focus on problems can also generate surprising moments of creativity which can unite what initially appeared as intractable positions (Sylvester 1992: 168; Graeber 2009: 303-304).

⁶⁷ This she contrasts with "Liberal dialogue" of political theory [which] is an interaction of two totally separate individuals who have particular points of view and try to "win" by convincing the other person: it again replicates the struggle for recognition, to have your views recognized without recognizing the other' (cited in Sylvester 1992: 168).

Some, such as Critchley, have suggested that the anarchist focus on consensus is misplaced, that 'behind [the goal of consensus] stand unquestioned and simply liberal conceptions of freedom and autonomy' (2008: 127). This is a perspective which leads Critchley to favour strategies of dissensus. However, such a critique remains wedded to a Habermasian approach, which views consensus 'as something always achievable through the magic of language use, and therefore somehow always-already achieved' (Day 2005: 189). Day challenges such a move, arguing that anarchist conceptions of consensus view it as a process rather than a state, something to be worked on and struggled with. As Gordon shows, such struggles are always contentious, difficult, imperfect, and contextualised to the point where an approach to the consensus process which works in one situation may prove useless or even violent in another (2008: 47-77).

Whilst Critchley's characterisation of anarchism is limited, his scepticism of Habermasian conceptions of consensus is important. It leads him to argue for dissensus, for an alterity which provokes a perpetual contestation which 'disturbs the order by which government wishes to depoliticize society' (2008: 129). Similar arguments are made by Call, who argues that

...large-scale consensus could only come into being through the exclusion and suppression of dissenting voices. This exclusion always represents a theoretical violence; sometimes it involves a physical violence as well. In any case, a healthy polity requires not consensus but rather the endless interplay of radically dissenting voices (2002: 39).

Furthermore Wendy Brown argues that,

[u]nlike Habermas, we can harbour no dreams of nondistorted communication unsullied by power, or even of a "common language" but we recognize as a permanent political condition partiality of understanding and expression, cultural chasms whose nature may be vigilantly identified but rarely "resolved," and the powers of words and images that evoke, suggest, and connote rather than transmit meanings (1995: 50).

The introduction of dissensus with and alongside consensus is valuable; it makes possible the expression of solidarity alongside a diversity of tactics, and guards against the violence of completeness.

Examples of the space provided for dissensus were provided above in the discussions on diversity of tactics. A further example comes from Graeber's discussion of Black Bloc tactics at Seattle, noted in Chapter Three. Graeber points out that Bloc activists were generally committed to nonviolence; this could not, however, be read as an unproblematic adherence to consensus. Rather, it signifies an ongoing process of self-reflection and contextual awareness, which often for the Bloc finds its value in the absence of consensus. Consensus does not operate as a sovereign or hegemonic logic of the form supposed by Critchley; its potential radicality is contained precisely in the fact that it is not predicated upon compulsion, that it is operative within a context which *also* celebrates dissensus and diversity, which proceeds through an affinity for affinity, to recall Day's phrasing. Consensus is, in this sense, not a logic of security, where the decision, space, or trajectory of a community or coalition are mastered, nor one of insecurity, where the celebration of dissensus brings chaos. It is an interstitial ethos which seeks to include and to recognise, but which respects and even applauds its own failure. It is marked by the perpetual desire and effort to reach decisions and enact practices which prioritise inclusivity and equality, and the acknowledgement that such desires and efforts will fail and *must fail* if the anti-hegemonic character of these practices is to persist.

A series of critiques have been directed at consensus processes by anarchists. Andrew Cornell, reflecting on the experiences of 'Movement for a New Society' (MNS), a US-based organisation active in the 1970s who popularised many of the tactics and strategies now commonplace amongst activists (including consensus decision making), argues that 'consensus hindered MNS's ability to evolve with the times and correct for defects in its strategy, since the requirement that everyone agree to change made staying the same the default position' (2011: 174). The fetishisation of consensus had profoundly conservatising effects. Wilkinson highlights the danger that the desire for consensus can involve pressure to agree, to write out or overlook conflict in the desire to reach decisions (2009: 39). Gordon addresses similar concerns when he discusses the ways in which hidden exclusions can operate in spaces which might adhere successfully to formal rules of consensus decision making. Implicitly critical of the idea that any 'correct' way to enact non-hierarchical politics is possible or desirable, he argues that the focus on public, visible consensus meetings as the cornerstone of ideal-type decision making spaces is problematic because it marginalises those who feel uncomfortable speaking in front of large meetings. Moreover, 'privileging the Plenary erases and de-

legitimises the manifold forms of using power that women have developed in response to patriarchy, and the ways in which many people find it most comfortable to empower themselves' (2008: 75). Both Wilkinson and Gordon's concerns are that focus on the formal processes of consensus can tend to marginalise the *ethos*, which might require more active, creative, and critical perspectives. I would suggest that these three critiques (which are some amongst many) demonstrate the importance of understanding consensus process in continual interplay with dissensus, in a manner which refuses and subverts its own conservatism, which celebrates the interruption of its own harmony, and which continually focuses a critical lens upon itself.

Other, powerful criticisms of consensus exist. To those above, we might add George Lakey's concerns that 'culturally working-class people – I'm working class myself – are more likely to get impatient with the amount of time that consensus characteristically takes than middle-class people are' (cited in Cornell 2011: 120-121), and Iain McKay's celebration of alternative forms of direct democracy as less totalising alternatives (2007: 40-43). Without wishing to marginalise the importance of these critiques and cautions, I suggest that the use of consensus is important; it demonstrates the desire to prefigure particular forms of political relation (i.e., non-exclusionary, anti-hierarchical), and itself operates to conduct encounters and relations in ways which run contrary to those principles of abstraction and individualism upon which militarism depends. I would also suggest that the shortcomings identified might be contested not by abandoning the position of consensus, but by noting that they result from limited applications which find their shortcoming precisely in the failure to celebrate consensus as inextricably interwoven with the principle and practice of dissensus.

Part Four: Becoming Disobedient

The final section of this chapter looks at the ways in which the practice of direct action might be read as a cultivation of disobedient subjectivities, a development of discourses of freedom which refuse expectations of conduct, individuality and discipline, and which are less amenable to contemporary technologies of security. Again, this is not in the pursuit of any particular counter-subjectivity, but precisely in the exploration of ways of being which might resist totalising or hegemonic demands on the subject, in the

mobilisation of anarchic becoming. It sets the terms for the more expansive considerations of Chapter Six.

When discussing the politics of what he terms ‘counter-conduct’, Foucault explains his reasons for not using the language of ‘disobedience’ or ‘dissent’. The latter is avoided for fear of the ‘process of sanctification or hero worship’ which can accompany the term dissident, which blinds us to the specificities and reproductions of self-professed ‘dissidents’ (2007b: 202). The former term he avoids not because it is not important – ‘the problem of obedience is in fact at the center of all this [sic]’ – but because it is too negative; ‘these movements that I have tried to pick out definitely have a productivity, forms of existence, organization, and a consistency and solidity that the purely negative word of disobedience does not capture’ (2007b: 200). Whilst this is an important point, and reflected in much of this thesis, the concept of disobedience remains useful; Foucault acknowledges as much when he speaks of critique as ‘the art of voluntary inservitude, that of reflected intractability’ (2007a: 47), and in his wider recognition of ‘our ceaseless involvement in the construction of diagrams that we dream of fleeing’ (Prozorov 2007: 21). As a practice, disobedience has been an important feature of anarchist theory, both insofar as it is a crucial feature in the resistance to authority, and in the instinct, best expressed by Goldman, that it is ‘the *struggle* for, not so much the attainment of, liberty, that develops all that is strongest, sturdiest and finest in human character’ (1996: 49), that is, that resistance to authority is itself an important site of self-creation.

To affirm the place of disobedience in the context of this thesis is not to rest at the logic of transgression, to mirror (and, thus, affirm) the place of obedience. May cites Deleuze on such terms:

Deleuze explains that the concept of transgression remains tied to the very significations against which it transgresses: “The signifier is always the little secret which has never stopped hanging around mummy and daddy....The little secret is generally reducible to a sad narcissistic and pious masturbation: the phantasm! ‘Transgression’, a concept too good for seminarists under the law of a Pope or a priest” (1994: 114, citing Deleuze and Parnet 1987).

Rather, and as with many of the arguments presented in the thesis, it is to understand disobedience as an important feature of the process of becoming otherwise, as a means

by which to open spaces in which anti-hegemonic and anti-authoritarian politics might be explored. It is to cultivate, in Newman's terms, a '*discipline of indiscipline*' (2010b: 46, emphasis in original) which weakens the politics of security and militarism of their totalising force, refuses their governmentality (Foucault 2007b: 46-47). Whilst there is no positive programme attached to the concept of disobedience *per se*, the discussion here suggests that spaces for creativity are opened, that in the 'insurrection of the self against the identities and roles imposed on us by the state' which is involved in these processes of disobedience and desubjectification (Newman 2011b: 118-119) more particular relations are developed, explored, prefigured.

In the previous chapter I argued that respect for authority and practices of obedience might be seen as logics of subjectivity through which militarism is constituted. As such, practices of disobedience can be read as seeking to effect distance between the subject and militarism. At least, this might be one way of interpreting Philip Berrigan's claim that '[w]e try to disarm ourselves by disarming the missiles' (cited in Laffin 2003: 3). Many of the examples explored thus far refer explicitly to forms of disobedience, whether to the law, the police, or even to one another. To them might be added the explicit policy held by Smash EDO, Disarm DSEi and others not to negotiate with the police (Stavrianakis 2010: 176). Beyond simply listing instances of disobedience, however, one might look more closely at the considerable efforts of anti-militarists to confront their own instinctive obedience and respect for authority and to cultivate practices of indiscipline, explorations of self-refusal and self-creation which operate precisely on the terms under discussion here.

The idea of recognising and 'unlearning' one's respect for, deference to, and deployment of authority is a common topic of discussion amongst anti-militarists, as a feature of resistance which demands conscious and sustained effort and energy. As with other practices, it can be seen in more everyday spaces and in more spectacular moments of direct action. The former often operates as a subtext to situations of the sort explored in this chapter, and so time spent at a peace camp or exploring alternative decision making processes functions as a negotiation of one's relationship with and being within forms of authority, as a series of practical experiments in deferring deference.

Direct action which brings activists into confrontation with more formal sources of authority, usually the police or security guards, is conceptualised explicitly as

a practice through which activists come to terms with (and refuse) themselves. Whilst for some, refusing to follow the instructions of police is an unproblematic gesture, for others it is an ordeal; beyond confident expressions one can often discern shaking hands and sweaty foreheads. One interviewee's reflections on his arrest for blockading an arms trade facility are pertinent here:

It was a big thing for me, it was something that I worked up to over years. I'm not...I've never been that good with confrontation, especially not with authority figures, possibly because I was brought up in a very authoritarian family...it really goes against my grain to stand up to a big scary policeman and say "no I'm not going to move." It's something that, at demonstrations over the years I've pushed myself a bit further and a bit further, because I think it's important for my personal development as much as anything else, to be able, when I think something is wrong, to stand up for it.

Obviously these are very personal reasons, and each one on that action would have had their own reasons. The fear of arrest had stopped me, had held me back on previous demonstrations, and I felt that...I've got to pop my cherry really...I've got to...I can't have this fear of what the system will do to me hanging over me. It's about time...I came to believe in the necessity of direct action, and that means sacrifice, and people have to be punished by the state...be prepared to be punished by the state, otherwise we're not going to get anywhere, and I think there's only a few thousand people at most in this country who a) appreciate that and b) are prepared to do that, and I think that's very precious and the more people who are prepared to break the law in a principled way the better, and I think once I realised that, I thought 'I've got to step up and do that' (Interview F).

Set within this context, the particular action to which the interviewee is referring is not an isolated incident, but a part of a longer-term process of becoming (disobedient). This is a line of thought which often emerges in conversation with activists. It also forms a significant theme within activist training events.

Training is an important activist practice, and several groups (including 'Seeds for Change' and 'Rhizome') exist purely to run training workshops and sessions. These can cover topics including consensus decision making practice (and facilitation),

recognising and confronting privilege, DIY lessons for building blockading equipment, the art of ‘de-arresting’, etc. It is not uncommon for TAZs such as peace camps to have some training sessions organised, and groups will often organise whole-day training events prior to direct actions (whether as a means by which to get to know other participants, to practice different tactics, or to make plans). Anna-Linnea Rundberg stresses that it is important not to see training as being merely (or even mainly) about a hierarchical process of knowledge transfer (2008: 110). It is as much ‘about exploring your personal hopes, fears and responses in the context of taking direct action’, as well as forming relationships with those with whom you will take action (ibid., 110-111).

The particular training exercise relevant to the argument here is one I have participated in a number of times, and is one which accords with Rundberg’s claim. The exercise, usually seen in more practically-oriented sessions, focuses on preparing activists for encounters with the police or security guards. Participants pair-up and role-play encounters wherein one plays the authority figure and the other, themselves. Usually the activist playing the police officer will begin with polite (even pleasant, or ‘supportive’) requests for the activists to cease their hypothetical action, and progress to more assertive, forceful, and even aggressive instruction. Activists focus on their responses. There is no model form of conduct in the situation: while some may attempt to remain calm whilst refusing to comply, others might be sarcastic; some may wish to remain silent, others might try to reason with the officers, or explain themselves. Most responses signify various means of practicing disobedience. Though the specificities of the different responses are not unimportant, the importance here lies in the time and attention given to cultivating the practice of disobedience, and to doing so in a manner which celebrates a diversity of (creative) responses.

As the training example makes clear, this cultivation of disobedience, whilst most obviously concerning one’s relationship with oneself, is not a simply individualised affair. It is more productively conceptualised as part of the politics of disrupting hegemonic political imaginaries, with the cultivation of solidarities and affinities, with particular practices and discourses of freedom and free association. For example, this sense of disobedience fits well with the instinct to attempt to de-arrest fellow activists during the course of actions, or the collective vulnerability involved when performing a die-in. The cultivation of disobedient subjectivities cannot be extricated from the more positive relations which are produced and which have been explored throughout this

chapter; disobedience is a rupture through which affinities are prefigured, through which the discipline of the state form is undermined, and through which anti-hegemonic counter-subjectivities might be mobilised. This constitutes both an assault on militarism and its intricate relationship with obedience and authority, and an invitation to refuse the depoliticising narratives and subjects enforced through the politics of security.

As a caveat, it is important to acknowledge that the cultivation and celebration of disobedience can quickly become a site of valorisation and heroisation. One interviewee expressed discomfort at what she sees as the racist dimensions involved in the self-aggrandisement of white activists getting arrested ‘in defence of’ others (Interview D), while Cockburn points towards the masculinities involved in heroic narratives, particularly those involving arrest and jail (2012: 57), and one of the EDO Decommissioners, when questioned about the fact that his own actions have been valorised to some extent, expressed concerns that the action ran the risk of making direct action profoundly inaccessible; indeed, his preference is a focus on education over more spectacular actions (Interview E). Whilst attempts are made under the rubric of diversity of tactics to displace these narratives, they remain problematic, particularly within the project of cultivating disobedience.

For some passage through this difficult issue, we might look towards Ewa Jasiewicz’s comments on the ambiguities of personal limits and responsibility. Writing about the EDO Decommissioners, she argues that:

‘Enough’ is relative, and ‘enough’ is subjective and incredibly personal, but, a tentative attempt to unpick the crushing pressure of guilt – guilt on all our backs, all over the world, of an impotence and a sense of failure to influence, and a struggle build the means and the movements, to influence change – I think a tentative definition of enough could be, to transgress, to cross our own lines of possibility.

Our own lines of what we believe we can and cannot do have been authored by others and adopted by ourselves. Lines drawn by authorities, re-inscribed with violence and drawn thick with the threat of detention, imprisonment, the denial of everything that makes life worth living; contact with loved ones, freedom of movement, a natural stimulation of our senses through interaction with our

natural environment, our sense of identity, all radically curtailed and undermined through incarceration. And death, the final line, the full stop imposed by absolute power onto the living bodies of those daring to resist, armed or unarmed, lives slammed shut by surveillance plane missiles zapped them into the ground. F16s exploding houses full of people. Ended. All ended. A line drawn under their lives. But where are our lines? 'Enough' will be an ever extending horizon, the edge always away ahead of us, but we will never get close to where we need to be as a critical mass to effect change unless we cross our own lines of fear [sic] (2009: 15).

Leaving to one side more specific debates about the politics of responsibility (see for example Warner 1999; Campbell 1999), the important point here is the negotiation between the imperative to intervention and disobedience, and the refusal to make this imperative abstract, strategic, reliant upon those technologies of the subject and responsibility which underpin militarist imaginaries. Instead, the challenge becomes a continual struggle and development of the subject in/and the social, which respects diversity and autonomy, and yet always demands more. The cultivation of disobedience in this sense involves the continual becoming of the subject, the never-ending struggle against authority which leaves no room for heroes and yet offers unending victories and creativities. The challenge is no longer a singular resistance to a singular authority, but a continual becoming and overcoming which renders disobedience a constant and creative practice.

Conclusion

This chapter has examined a variety of practices which can be interpreted as prefigurative explorations and experiments, and has suggested that these gestures point towards ways of becoming and relating otherwise – not in the simplistic sense of forming coherent or strategic projects, but as imaginations and provocations which might resonate beyond their specific situation to refigure understandings of contestation, power, militarism, and so forth. These experiments are varied; more and less spectacular, mobilising differing conceptions of 'directness', invoking different ranges of possibility. They are raised here not to suggest their sufficiency or completeness, but to highlight the ways in which the margins exposed in Chapter Three

and elsewhere might be operating as sites of prefiguration in which the creative tasks of resistance are always already taking place, in which forms of subjectivity and relationality which refuse the terms of security/insecurity (and of militarism) might be being explored, however awkwardly. In its commitment to a hegemonic ontology of agency, CSS is prone to obscure, ignore or rationalise and incorporate such explorations; I would suggest that substantially more can be gained when allowing them to remain awkward, incomplete and disruptive.

Prefigurative politics cannot proceed with a sense of innocence or completeness; its power lies precisely in the fact that it continually turns upon itself, exploring, enacting and beginning precisely so as to expose those relations of domination and authority which emerge in the process of resistance. That resisting subjects cannot claim to sit outside of the power relations against which they resist is taken not as a mark of impossibility, but as a sign to intensify and deepen processes of critique, refusal, and (in this critical sense) creativity. Whilst the discussions have pointed towards such processes at various points in this chapter, a more substantive exploration forms the project for Chapter Five, where the discussion will consider a series of problematic logics within anti-militarist activism and explore some ways in which activists do and do not confront such logics.

Chapter Five: Issues in Anti-Militarism

The previous two chapters have mobilised an interpretation of anti-militarist activism which situates and explores a range of practices at the intersections of security, anarchism, and prefigurative direct action. I have suggested that through these interpretations we might see an array of disruptions and possibilities which challenge particular onto-political imaginaries within the context of security (and militarism), most notably the place of hegemony and the state form. The focus has been not on grand strategies or programmatic blueprints, but on a variety of micro-political interventions which signify and explore ways and politics of becoming otherwise. The sixth chapter will go on to discuss the politics of the anti-hegemonic ethos in more detail, focussing on the nature of affinity, the generation of limits, and the nature of anarchic subjectivities. First, this chapter highlights and discusses four critiques which might be directed against anti-militarist practices.

The most obvious critique of those groups and actions explored in the previous chapters is that the disruptions and rewritings are few and far between, small counter-practices in an onto-political framework overwhelmingly concerned with the tasks of producing and entrenching militarist policies and subjects, with securing security. One could plausibly make the case that the examples offered here are irrelevant in the face of dominant hegemonic imaginaries. Whilst such critiques demand urgent and careful attention, they are in danger of missing the point of analysis of this type, which is not seeking to conduct a rational-empirical analysis examining the capabilities of social movements. Indeed, such analyses run the risk of enforcing a strategic and formal rationality which marginalises the subtle and everyday (re)imaginings contained within and articulated through resistance, and which adheres to established ideas about what it means to intervene, to resist, to be. Even so, there is in the thesis an implicit argument for proliferation, not necessarily of the groups discussed here, but of resistances which challenge, confound and rewrite the logics of security, militarism, and so forth.

The critiques mobilised in this chapter are more specific, concerning some ways in which logics of security and militarism are reperformed within the context of resistance. I discuss four problematic dynamics which tend to arise in anti-militarist practice. In the first section the (limited) gender politics of resistance are examined. The second section looks at legalistic tactics and discourses mobilised by activists, whilst the third investigates the ways in which problematic global North-South imaginaries are

reproduced. Finally the ‘security’ practices activists mobilise, i.e., those modes by which activists defend themselves and their spaces, will be explored.

These problematic dimensions are highlighted for three interrelated reasons. The first is to explore a sympathetic critique of the movement, to think within an embedded context about the limitations which are performed. This is not to adopt the position of the Gramscian enlightened intellectual, providing instruction and strategy directed towards the construction of a counter-hegemony. Rather, it is to offer reflections and readings which may (and may not) cohere with broader practices of self-critique which proliferate within the movement. Much of the material drawn upon in this chapter comes from perpetual conversations amongst activists, whether online, in person, in print or quietly and furiously to oneself. Self-critique (both as an individual and as a movement) is a central and vital tenet for many activists, in part for the reasons outlined in earlier chapters. In this sense, then, the discussion here is an attempt to enter into and alongside an ongoing process, and to do so with specific reference to the politics of security.

The second reason for undertaking this critique is that, in uncovering various tensions, a more subtle picture of the diverse, contradictory and multifaceted nature of ‘the movement’ than has hitherto been outlined emerges. Different individuals, groups and tendencies perform limitations in different ways, and criticise one another on these terms. What then emerges is not a set of common problems which undermine the possibilities expressed in earlier chapters, but a complex web of practices which reinforce, challenge, problematise and produce both one another and the wider disruptions which might be mobilised.

The third motivation here, a function and context of the first two, lies in the importance of understanding how practices of resistance are always already constituted within the power relations they seek to challenge. As has been argued, contemporary political subjectivities are intimately bound up with and produced by logics of security and militarism. I have argued that practices of resistance can be read as (awkward) attempts to come to terms with this situatedness and to prefigure counter-subjectivities. However, such attempts demand a continual interrogation, an interminable inquiry into the reperformances, fidelities, servitudes and submissions which emerge within resistance and which can serve to reinforce that which activists might wish to undermine. This continual interrogation is synonymous with that spirit of prefiguration

which mobilises resistance while holding the subject of resistance in a contingent and exploratory manner, as both a source of violence and a site of possibility. Therefore, far from compromising the forms of resistance discussed, these critiques amount to an instance of process-driven prefiguration, an example of how the continual insurrection against domination which runs through the anarchist ethos can be mobilised in the practice and interpretation of struggle.

Part One: Gender and the Politics of Incompleteness

In this section I argue that the gender politics of anti-militarism are complex, contested, imperfect and, crucially, incomplete. Following a brief discussion of Greenham Common Women's Peace Camp, the discussion will look at several examples through which a critique might be mobilised against anti-militarist activism on the question of gender, focussing in particular on ways in which the tendency of (some) activists to identify themselves as 'good' or 'ethical' agents can obscure complicities in the reproduction of problematic gender performances. The discussion goes on to highlight some particular examples wherein practices of resistance highlight and critique the intersections between militarism and gender and sexuality. Finally, I argue that we might read the specific contestations which take place here through attention to the politics of incompleteness and perpetual disruption.

Raising the question of gender in relation to UK-based anti-militarism inevitably draws activists to recall Greenham Common, and the explicitly gendered anti-militarist politics of the 1980s that it came to represent. Cockburn traces awareness of the intersections between gender and militarism back further, citing Mary Wollstonecraft's observations that 'militarism threatened women by reinforcing masculine habits of authority and hierarchy. "Every corps," she wrote, "is a chain of despots...submitting and tyrannizing without exercising their reason"' (2012: 23). Despite women's involvement in the peace movement from the early 19th century, however, Greenham Common was the first time that gender was acknowledged as a serious anti-militarist concern on any large scale (ibid., 23-42). Whilst the separatist politics and sometimes essentialist analyses of Greenham were not uncontroversial amongst activists, it was significant both because it insisted upon the place of a gendered analysis within the context of anti-militarist activism with respect to the relationship between gender and

war, and because it challenged the ‘assumption in the peace movement that men in it are somehow different from other men and therefore exempt from oppressive behaviour and sexism’ (ibid., 44).⁶⁸ Cockburn cites one activist’s reference to the Greenham year as a ‘good learning time’ for activists working at the intersections of gender and militarism (2012: 41-42).

IR feminists have, of course, paid significant attention to the ways in which gender and militarism intersect, to ‘the role of masculine identity in effectuating and legitimating war’ (Spike Peterson 1992a: 15).⁶⁹ Despite this, as Cockburn argues, ‘the implication stressed by feminists – that transformative change in gender relations, and particularly in forms of masculinity, is necessary work for peace – is not easily accepted in the mainstream’ of anti-militarism (2012: 16). In my interviews all women and some men made reference to the prevalence of macho attitudes and overly masculinised spaces within anti-militarist contexts, making particular reference to the ‘alternative machismo...which assesses people’s commitment on the basis of how often they resist arrest or go to jail’ (FNSG 1983: 44-45), a dynamic noted before with respect to diversity of tactics. One interviewee noted the tendency of meetings or discussions concerning the arms trade to descend into a ‘look at my huge dick of arms trade knowledge’ contest, neatly summarising another issue raised by a number of interviewees wherein masculinised competition for supremacy within the space undermines the non- or anti-hierarchical aspirations noted in the previous chapter (Interview G).

On this point, one particular example stands out. I was involved a meeting in which we were attempting to discuss the nature of militarism with respect to Naomi Klein’s *The Shock Doctrine* (2008). The discussion was introduced and facilitated by one of the EDO Decommissioners, and there were eight men (including myself and the speaker) and three women present. The speaker was interrupted continuously throughout his talk (i.e., before the discussion portion of the meeting had begun), always by men, adding their own experiences and pieces of advice/information; the space quickly began to feel competitive, with ad-hoc contributions steadily becoming

⁶⁸ For a defence of the separatist politics of Greenham (that is, the policy of excluding men from certain core aspects of the camp), see Cockburn (2012: 38-39). For a powerful critique of the essentialist identities associated with Greenham from within the feminist peace movement, see FNSG (1983: 46-49).

⁶⁹ For example, alongside those noted in Chapter Three, see Enloe (1989: 65-92; 2007), Sjoberg and Via (2010), Hutchings (2008), Klein (1999), Nagel (1998).

longer and more tangential. When the discussion portion of the meeting did formally begin, the space became even more dominated by the men present (all of whom, myself aside, were fifty and older), and even less relevant to the questions posed by the speaker. Within twenty minutes of the one hour session, two of the three women had withdrawn from the discussion and were helping to chop vegetables for dinner at a nearby table. There was no discernable awareness of this uncomfortably apposite tableau from other participants and little response when I pointed out that we were continually drifting off topic; the competitive dynamic remained present throughout the rest of the hour. It might be possible to draw some inference from the fact that most of the men present were over fifty, and that almost all of them had some military background (not uncommon for older men in the anti-militarist movement), but this would require a far more specific study of this issue. However, there are undoubtedly significant gendered exclusions enacted here, to the point where people were driven away from the discussion.

Another example came during the Peace News Summer Camp in 2011, during which there was an all-male workshop on ‘militarism and masculinity’ (the idea for this had been raised following a workshop at the previous year’s camp run by one of the authors of the FNSG pamphlet referenced above, during which participants had discussed possible reasons for the absence of an all-male feminist anti-militarist group). The workshop was instructive on three counts; with respect to participants’ feelings about feminism itself, their (lack of) consciousness with respect to intersections between gender and militarism, and the problematic sense of completeness which can tend to accompany political activism. During a spectrum line exercise in which participants were invited to express their feelings about feminism (ranging from positive to negative), the majority clustered in the middle. Comments focussed largely on the ‘extremes’ of feminism, with more ‘moderate’ varieties of feminism acknowledged briefly, but brushed aside in the rush to emphasise ‘cultish’ and ‘matriarchal’ tendencies and to eschew the ‘by women for women’ nature identified in much of feminist politics. More important than the particular charges levelled at feminism (misguided though they might be) was the palpable sense of paranoia which ran through these comments, the instinct to discipline feminism within acceptable terms. I was left to wonder whether similar reactions would have been provoked had the exercise focussed on anarchism, socialism, or even liberalism.

One participant, raising the topic of women-only spaces, suggested that they are no-longer necessary because women had surely by now built up enough confidence to join with men ('at least, men like us'). Whilst perhaps not unproblematic, and certainly not uncontroversial (Cockburn 2012: 38-39), the politics of women-only spaces go far beyond 'building confidence'; rather than engaging with the reasons why some activists have chosen to operate in women-only spaces, such a narrative serves to exonerate men ('at least, men like us') and to marginalise the responsibility to take account for (and develop alternative) masculinities. The instincts and positions expressed represent a closure wherein the contours of the subject are secured, the engagement with feminism and its challenges disciplined in a manner which calls to mind Weber's charge of male paranoia in response to Keohane's attempts to incorporate feminist IR within the rationalist paradigm (1994).

Set in this context, the following discussions in the workshop with regards to the intersections between masculinity and militarism were muted and confused, many participants wholly unconvinced that the subject merited consideration. The suggestion that people might form an all-male feminist group to explore possibilities for anti-militarist masculinities was met with uncomfortable glances and sniggers. Whilst this example is not necessarily representative of the entire anti-militarist movement (or of everyone present at this workshop – conversations afterwards revealed that others had felt similarly uncomfortable), it does demonstrate a series of perspectives which can be found in anti-militarist spaces.

Beyond the problematic nature of anti-militarist spaces we might point towards the conspicuous absence of campaigns and direct actions which point towards and reveal the specifically gendered politics of the arms trade and militarism more broadly. Whilst there are in fact examples of resistance to machismo amongst anti-militarists which complicate the picture (some of which I note below), this rarely carries over into more demonstrative actions; the sense is that, whilst many activists place great emphasis on revealing and confronting gendered logics in private, few feel the need to make the connections with militarism a visible part of their actions (and certainly not to the extent seen at Greenham and other contexts in the 1980s). As noted in previous chapters the violent, neoliberal, contradictory, imperialist and capitalist dimensions of militarism are highlighted regularly; gendered logics, less so.

There are some exceptions to this silencing which bear discussion. While they are by no means unproblematic they demonstrate that awareness of and attention to the gendered logics of militarism is present to some degree. One example concerns an apocryphal tale recounted by Mark Thomas:

...amongst arms dealers who travel the world hawking their wares, DSEi has a rather unique reputation: apparently it attracts more protestors than any other arms fair in the world. And I might proudly add that an industry insider informed me that “by and large we have a much better class of protestor too”. Though my source did qualify this statement with this tale: “At a defence event in Australia the antis [protestors] turned up in a huge papier-mâché penis, with loads of protestors inside it. So there is this huge pink thing, which they called the Penis of Peace, out on the street as part of the demonstration, when suddenly the penis breaks away from the main demonstration and charges at the main doors of the defence fair. Unbeknownst to the police, inside the Penis of Peace is a battering ram. So the Penis of Peace charges at the doors, breaks through the doors and gets into the fair, where the protestors jump out from under the penis and start running around the place causing chaos. More than that, all the protestors were naked and covered in olive oil, so the security had a bugger of a time trying to grab and hold onto them, to chuck them out” (2006: 136-7).

Although I have heard this story recounted a number of times, there is no reference to it in any Australian newspapers from the past thirty years (during which time, there have been highly successful mobilisations in Australia against arms fairs), and no references in text or online which do not lead back to Thomas’ account. Nonetheless the status of the story as an important and often-traded myth suggests that the gendered disruption captures imaginations which are playful, subversive and aware that arms fairs are deeply gendered sites.

The Space Hijackers have also pointed towards the gendered nature of the DSEi exhibition. When holding the tank auction discussed in Chapter Three, several of the Space Hijackers wore bikinis and draped themselves over the tank, highlighting both the use of sex to sell weapons (common within DSEi itself), and the wider link between

weaponry and gendered imaginaries.⁷⁰ More outrageously, at DSEi 2005 the Space Hijackers boarded a train carrying arms dealers to the fair and, with a selection of sex toys as props, explained to onlookers that dealing in arms may be a sign of sexual repression; ‘don’t use your rocket to kill, use it to thrill’, they urged, giving out leaflets such as these:

**Have you inspected your rocket recently?
Are you worried about your weapons capabilities?**

**IT'S TIME TO LEAVE THE ARMS INDUSTRY BEHIND
IT'S WHAT'S BETWEEN YOUR LEGS THAT COUNTS!**

There's no longer any need to compensate for your short range weapon with destructive products, with the wealth of adult toys and marital aids available in the current market you and your partner need no longer go unsatisfied.

**WHY CARPET BOMB?
WHEN CARPET BURNS ARE MORE FUN!**

Special DSEI Discount

CONCENTRATE
ON THE ROCKET
IN YOUR PCKET

**DOES YOUR LITTLE WEAPON LET YOU DOWN WHEN YOU ARE UNDERCOVER
AND ATTEMPTING TO PENETRATE ENEMY LINES FROM BEHIND?**

**AS A WEAPONS MANUFACTURER YOU MUST REALISE THE
IMPORTANCE OF RELYING UPON IMPROVEMENTS IN
TECHNOLOGY. THE SAME GOES FOR THE BEDROOM.**

**MRS ARMS DEALER NEED NO LONGER ROLL OVER
FRUSTRATED, SIMPLY STRAP ON A LARGER ROCKET WITH
A BIGGER PAYLOAD. DON'T BE AFRAID TO ADMIT YOUR
WEAKNESSES. PERHAPS THE SOONER YOU REALISE THIS
THE SOONER YOU WILL CHANGE TO A MORE PRODUCTIVE
CAREER.**

**STOP FINGERING YOUR TRIGGER AND HANDLING YOUR GRENADES
YOUR WIFE IS FEELING LEFT OUT!**

(Space Hijackers 2005).

⁷⁰ See Cohn (1987).

Taking the 1960's anti-militarist slogan 'Make Love, Not War' to ridiculous extremes, the Space Hijackers revealed the always already gendered space of the arms trade. In doing so, however, they also reproduced deeply problematic gendered imaginaries, making their point in a manner which does little to undermine particular hegemonic and heteronormative conceptions of masculinity, and relying upon narratives which equate successful gender performance with (hetero-) sexual prowess. That the arms dealer's wife, 'Mrs Arms Dealer', is encouraged to continue to be docile, receptive and sexualised, but to so be in the name of peace rather than war, serves to stabilise particular, patriarchal narratives of agency. In response to such narratives, we might look towards the queer activist group 'Sparkles Not Shrapnel'.

Sparkles Not Shrapnel was formed in the run-up to DSEi 2011 with the intention of increasing queer visibility at anti-militarist demonstrations. In part, this was as a means by which to create a safer space for queer activists; as one member explained:

Everyone in the founding group of some six people were "experienced" protesters but had found protests surprisingly unpleasant at times: it may seem odd but people can be "right on" when it comes to peace, but can be (to put it kindly) thoughtless or (at worst) actively oppressive when it comes to trans or gay issues. The Police are especially hostile (and Sparkles experienced that first hand during the DSEi action, and was nearly shattered by the heavy handed approach from the Police [who harassed, detained and searched members of the Sparkles Not Shrapnel affinity group whilst ignoring many others] (Interview K).

In addition to increasing queer visibility within the anti-militarist movement, the desire to 'bring the gay' to actions (in my interviewee's terms) involves the commitment to what is termed 'tactical frivolity', where joy and fun are used 'as a tactic and strategy to resist war – because these are too often absent from anti-war protesting, and "camp" has always been a way to clown around with the stuff that society takes seriously' (Sparkles Not Shrapnel undated). On such terms they have demonstrated outside Clarion's Holiday & Travel Show wearing holiday outfits and wielding glitter guns and outside the National History Museum (which was hosting a reception for arms dealers) with an inflatable 'genderqueerosaurus'. As the Sparkles Not Shrapnel website states, 'queer is not an adjective, it's a verb: queerness is about disruption of ordinary ways of

doing things, of patriarchy, and of oppressive structures, while war is both oppressive, and the means by which these oppression is reproduced and perpetuated [sic] (ibid.).' Whilst Sparkles Not Shrapnel are a small and fledgling group, they demonstrate an important (and very visible) intervention which raises questions and narratives often marginalised within these spaces.

In noting the above examples as exceptions to the rule, the discussion here should not be taken to suggest that anti-militarist activists pay no attention to the gendered nature of their spaces; on the contrary, it is rare to encounter a situation in which the subject is not raised in some fashion. During one direct action workshop, we were invited to share our fears and anxieties as a means by which to break down the machismo which can accompany such processes; during another, time was set aside for a women's caucus which brought back proposals for how the space (and pace) might be reconfigured in ways which minimized gendered exclusions. Graeber gives an account of changing behaviour in activist meetings which, whilst incommensurate with the more critical accounts provided above, and whilst perhaps slightly optimistic, captures a noticeable trend:

Where once the style was to thrust oneself forward and speechify, where once the performance of militancy and what one might call theoretical virility seemed omnipresent, one observes a very self-conscious effort to self-effacement. Men, especially, tend to lean back instead of forwards; they do so especially while speaking. They tend to make constant little gestures of deference to the larger group. Any sign of macho posturing, oratory, or general self-importance will tend to be noticed, and widely criticised offstage (2009: 334).

The argument here is not, therefore, the gender politics of anti-militarism are 'bad', but that they are insufficient. In one sense, this is uncontroversial. Beyond this more obvious sense, however, there is an important argument about the relationship between subjectivity, prefiguration and incompleteness which needs to be drawn out.

In 1983 the FNSG argued that 'there is an assumption in the peace movement that men in it are somehow different from other men and therefore exempt from oppressive behaviour and sexism' (44). As the discussion above demonstrates (and as a number of interviewees made clear), such assumptions persist, albeit perhaps less often or less explicitly. One powerful example from outside anti-militarism activism comes

from an article in *Do or Die*, a journal published from within the environmental movement between 1992 and 2003, where the author discusses the ‘patriarchy-dominated environment’ of a protest camp. Acknowledging the broadly constructive nature of the site, she argues that there were a number of sexist dynamics at the camp, ranging from traditional divisions of labour ‘regressing back to an almost medieval level whereby women quietly get things done on a regular basis, and males seem incompetent of even lifting a sponge’ to a ‘free love ideal’ with which women felt compelled to conform, in the name of liberation and the free subject (Anonymous 1988). When ‘blatantly’ sexist behaviour was pointed out, men tended to respond with surprise.

Focussing on the insufficiencies of anti-militarist approaches to gender is not to marginalise more encouraging developments, but to defer the sense of completeness which can often be identified in activist spaces, wherein the assumption of one’s status as an ‘agent of emancipation’ obscures those logics of oppression and domination within which one is embedded. The belief that ‘men like us’ are different from ‘men like them’ is liable to interrupt the sense of incompleteness which might maintain focus on the situatedness of the activist subject within relations of power, and on the capacity for discourses of resistance, emancipation, anti-militarism, etc., to serve as alibis for (masculine) self-exemption.

In Chapter Two, I suggested that this focus on incompleteness has been an important feature of anarchist thought (Day 2005: 201; Mueller 2011: 81; Rocker 2004: 15; Walter 2002: 39). It is also important for the wider argument mobilised in this thesis. In a first order sense, this is because the assumption that one is not complicit in reproducing that which one is seeking to break down (whether in relation to gender, authority, hierarchy) can mask precisely those practices whereby one is doing just that. More fundamentally, the understanding of prefigurative direct action at work here involves the continual subversion and creation of sites and subjects of resistance, an ongoing series of explorations which seek to uncover authorities and possibilities in the process of resistance. The assumption of completeness fixes the contours of the ‘emancipated’ and ‘emancipatory’ subject, closing off avenues of interrogation and presuming that resistance is a state of being, not becoming. In this sense, and without wishing to marginalise the importance of highlighting the gendered exclusions and silences on their own terms, we might read the observations above as disrupting claims

to completeness and reemphasising the importance of the restless subject of prefiguration.

Part Two: Legalism and Submission

Despite frequent practices of disobedience with respect to the law and the police, a variety of legalist discourses can be identified in anti-militarist practice. Often these concern the right to protest, the (il)legal status of the arms trade, and the importance of international law, all of which might be subject to a critical reading. The discussion here will focus on one particular set of practices – what I will call ‘voluntary submission’ - as a means by which to draw out some ways in which the (problematic) politics of legalism are navigated. By voluntary submission I mean those actions and practices in which activists acknowledge the certainty (or extreme likelihood) of arrest/conviction, and proceed nonetheless. As will be made clear, this might be for a number of reasons. After outlining some examples of voluntary submission, I suggest that the practice should be problematized insofar as it reaffirms a politics of hegemony and a juridical spectacle of security. Such an analysis functions both as critique and as a means by which to understand ways in which discourses of security operate to co-opt resistance. The final part of the discussion suggests a number of ways in which activists respond to such problematisation, serving to further signify the complexity of these issues and to suggest some possible routes forward.

We might view the Plowshares (or Ploughshares) movement as an exemplary case of voluntary submission. The movement began in the US in 1980 when the ‘Plowshares Eight’ entered the General Electric plant in Pennsylvania where the nose cones from the Mark 12-A nuclear warheads were manufactured: ‘With hammers and blood they enacted the biblical prophecies of Isaiah (2:4) and Micah (4:3) to “*beat swords into plowshares*” by hammering on two of the nose cones and pouring blood on documents’ (Laffin 2003: 1, emphasis in original). Since then, there have been over 75 Plowshares actions in a number of countries, all of which aim ‘to empower ordinary citizens to peacefully tear down the machinery of violence and to build up respect for fundamental human rights’ (Zelter 2009: 21). Most have focussed on doing damage to military equipment, and this has ranged from symbolic actions to those designed to cause the maximum possible damage (a dynamic introduced after the ‘Harriet-Tubman Sarah Connor Brigade Disarmament Action’ cased \$2.75m damage to a NAVSTAR military satellite, ‘thereby challenging plowshares and the wider disarmament movement

to go beyond symbolic witness in addressing the war machines key technologies' [sic] (Laffin 2003: 49)). Plowshares activists are widely respected, and some actions (such as the Seeds of Hope one) are important referent points in UK anti-militarist history.

Much can be said about the Plowshares movement, not least with respect to its explicitly religious dimension – Daniel Berrigan wrote of the Plowshares Eight that, prior to the action, '[w]e passed several months in reflection and prayer and discussion: a wearying but, as we judged, absolutely crucial process' (1987: 291), and his brother Philip Berrigan claimed that '[b]eing imprisoned for one's convictions is a Christian phenomenon above all' (1970: 185). The focus here, however, lies on Plowshares activists' conception of 'witness', and the corresponding practice of accepting arrest and the legal process as an inherent feature of direct action. As Laffin notes, 'Plowshares activists, accepting full responsibility for their actions, remain at the site of their action so that they can publicly explain their witness' (2003: 2). This is undertaken in the spirit of refusing to 'conceal the truth of what happened' (ibid., 6). The example of the 'Griffiss Plowshares' action from 1983 shows the lengths some Plowshares activists have gone in complying with established routes of responsibility. Seven activists entered Griffiss Air Force Base in New York and hammered and poured blood on a B-52 bomber and on B-52 engines. After remaining unnoticed on the base for several hours, they approached security guards and turned themselves in, eventually receiving prison sentences ranging from two to three years (ibid., 18-19). In 1985 Plowshares activist Tom Hastings sawed down a US Navy transmitter antenna in an isolated part of Michigan's upper peninsula; the next day, he also turned himself in to the local sheriff, eventually receiving a prison sentence. The Pit Stop Plowshares group who, in 2003, damaged parts of a US military base in Ireland in protest against the war in Iraq, knelt praying whilst waiting to be arrested.

Once arrested, Plowshares activists tend to adopt different levels of cooperation, though most refuse to accept bail conditions prohibiting further actions and refuse to pay fines, preferring to bear witness in jail. On the court cases which result, Angie Zelter (one of the Seeds of Hope activists) argues that

[e]very trial is important because each one confronts the state and the legal system where they are most vulnerable – on a major law and order issue. We have won many of our cases and we have found that the more we rely upon ethical and legal arguments and the more 'effective' (capable of actually stopping

the illegality – i.e., damaging the weapons themselves) the action is the more likely we are to persuade juries to acquit us... Traditionally the law has been used against the ‘people’ rather than the ‘state’ – predominantly against the poor and disadvantaged. Yet now, the people have turned this around and have openly challenged the whole legal basis, and thus legitimacy, of the Armed Forces – one of the pillars of the State (2009: 21).

In going to such lengths to incorporate arrest as part of the process of direct action, Plowshares activism stands as an extreme example (one group of interviewees gasped when I told them about the Griffiss Plowshares activists turning themselves over to the police). However, the practice of voluntary submission does have significant precedent elsewhere in anti-militarism.

The Faslane 365 campaign was largely comprised of groups forming blockades which invited (and, in over 1150 cases, received) arrest. A number of actions discussed throughout this thesis, including the academic blockade of Faslane, the EDO Decommissioning, the citizen’s weapons inspection at EDO and the Raytheon 9 all involved elements of voluntary submission. Two logics intersect in the justification of such submissions. In one, arrest stands as a tactically unavoidable consequence of the action, perhaps because the most efficient means of blockading a road is to use one’s body, or because one cannot feasibly complete an act of property damage without detainment. In the other, arrest stands as an (ethical or tactical) end in itself. A pertinent example here might be those activists who publically refused to fill in their census forms (on account of Lockheed Martin’s involvement in the census process); one interviewee expressed her dismay that, despite having been featured on the news publically burning her census form, she had not faced prosecution (Interview G).

While we can make analytical distinction between the two logics, they are often not clearly separable. One example by which to demonstrate this comes from an action in which I was involved during Faslane 365. While most of the group took up ‘non-arrestable’ support roles (stopping traffic, liaising with police, taking pictures, providing moral support), twelve of the group were arrested for blockading the road leading to the naval base. Beginning at around 7am (rush hour), the blockade began when six of the group lay in the road, two of them connected at the neck by D-locks, the other four connected by arm tubes. The police, who arrived quickly, informed the six activists that they could choose either to end the blockade straight away or to face arrest. Having

discussed the matter at length prior to the action, all six refused to move. It then took around forty minutes to cut through the various blockading devices and to arrest everyone. Shortly following this, six more from the group walked into the road, linked arms, and refused to move; they too were arrested.

The arrests can be read in two ways. In the first, they were an unavoidable consequence, a tactical sacrifice without which the blockade would have lasted no more than a few minutes. In this sense, the blockade itself was the point, and the submission an uncomfortable but necessary component. In the second reading, the arrest was itself the aim. In part, this was because one of the tactics of the rolling blockade was to tie up bureaucratic resources to the point where the base itself became unsustainable, the courts clogged and the police overwhelmed. Other reasons were shared during the long discussions preceding the action itself, including a desire to bear witness in court, a wish to demonstrate strength of feeling about nuclear weapons, and a desire to experience arrest in a relatively safe setting. The voluntary submission was in this context then both an instrumentally necessary feature and an end in itself.⁷¹ In other cases, one logic might take precedence over another.

It is important to note that submission should in these cases be differentiated from cooperation, and one can often see instances of refusal even in the act of submission. For example, when facing arrest it is common for activists to ‘go floppy’, a practice where arrestees lie on the floor and relax their muscles, thereby requiring up to four officers to carry them. Employed by most of the arrestees at the Faslane 365 action, it is a practice both tactically useful with respect to prolonging a blockade and symbolically significant.⁷² Another example can be seen when activists decide before actions that, if arrested, they will collectively refuse to provide their names and addresses; whilst to do so individually would probably prolong ones internment, mass disobedience may have the opposite effect. Refusals to adhere to bail conditions, and to pay any fines, demonstrate further the distinction between submission and more active cooperation.

⁷¹ It is perhaps interesting that, reflecting on the action with a number of participants, one claimed that his opinion has changed over time, and that he now views the practice of seeking arrest as an end in itself as distasteful (while acknowledging the value of the experience of arrest) (Interview C).

⁷² Pertinent to the discussion from the previous chapter about cultivating disobedience, ‘going floppy’ is often a feature of training sessions where the instinct to comply with instructions to accompany an arresting officer, or to become rigid in refusal, are discussed and (hopefully) dispelled.

This thesis has already argued that interventions which include some form of voluntary submission can function to subvert narratives of militarism, security and hegemony. However I would also argue that those actions wherein arrest is an aim in itself, particularly Plowshares-style actions, can also serve to *reinforce* hegemonic and statist political imaginaries. Although the legitimacy of state actions is being (radically) challenged, the legitimacy of the state as the arbiter of ‘responsibility’, ‘truth’, and ‘accountability’ is being performed (even if, more privately, it might be critiqued). Whilst disobedience is being celebrated, this is done so in a way which routes it through the state, which remains faithful to a politics of confrontation and which delimits prefigurative explorations by proceeding with the assumption of the (sovereign) state. Whilst activists who undertake such actions often identify ‘the state’ as precisely the problem, actions which seek arrest serve at some level to reinforce its metaphysics, its inevitability, its conceptual hegemony as the horizon of political possibility. The limit of disobedience is enshrined precisely in the image of the state form.

Even those actions which practice voluntary submission as a *tactical* feature might be subject to such a critique; in one sense, this is a variant of the concern that resistance can often serve to reinforce spectacular logics of security and the state. In this case, the activist performs and reinforces their status as a juridical subject, where court dates, legal aid applications, uncomfortable conversations with employers and prison come to occupy time and imagination. Whilst, as I will go on to suggest, this is not straightforwardly ‘bad’, it might operate to constrain prefigurative explorations; as one’s conduct is incorporated into the realm of legal contestation and (often) legalist discourse, the opportunity to explore modes of politics, disobedience and becoming which might disrupt or subvert hegemonic imaginaries is tempered. Landauer’s scepticism of confrontation operated precisely on these terms, wherein co-optation (by whatever means) within conventional political rationalities and ontologies disrupts the task of developing affinities which might produce alternatives (Horrox 2010: 195).⁷³ In one sense, this is less a critique than a diagnosis of processes by which resistance is co-opted. However, in seeking to understand how different forms of resistance might and might not displace particular political logics, it is important to understand the limitations performed in acts of voluntary submission.

⁷³ For a similar critique, see Odysseous (2011: 449-450).

There are a number of responses to these critiques which serve not as a means to dismiss them but to demonstrate their complexity and some possible routes forward. The first response is that fighting one's case through the courts can be an opportunity to turn the system against itself, to subvert expected procedure by receiving affirmation from within the state framework. To this end activists appeal to international law (particularly regarding nuclear proliferation) and 'just cause' defences where a crime is permitted to prevent a greater crime from taking place. There have been a number of high-profile cases where such a defence has been successful, notably the EDO Decommissioners, the Raytheon 9, Seeds of Hope and Pit Stop Plowshares. In all of these cases, the defendants were acquitted (or 'vindicated' in Raytheon 9 member Eamonn McCann's terms ('Raytheon 6 cleared' 2008)). In such situations it is felt that an important feature of the court proceedings is to convince the judge to allow 'affirmative' defences, a rarely successful but politically significant struggle. In the majority of cases judges refuse to have topics such as international law raised, and ignore them when they are. Nonetheless, the *attempt* to pull in such factors is important. During the court proceedings for the above noted blockade of Faslane defendants produced arguments covering such topics as nuclear proliferation, international aggression and religious necessity. One even read out Thoreau. That the judge ignored such pleas was not a surprise, indeed he was *expected* to do just this, to demonstrate their non-grata status within the legal system. In this sense, two options are available, and in both the activists can claim a partial victory. In one, an acquittal both challenges the legitimacy of official practice and establishes a public precedent which others might follow. In the other the refusal to hear and/or accept the defence reveals the limitations of dominant practices, signifying the particular politics of the legal system.

Many feel an aversion to arguments of this sort; as a Target Brimar leaflet states (in bold), 'That Brimar's business is legal does not make it moral' (Target Brimar undated). There is a feeling that challenging legality leaves too much intact, produces discourses which cede the terms of legitimacy too easily.⁷⁴ We might take the Raytheon 9 as an example here; whilst they might be seen to have undermined hegemonic ontologies of agency, in their legal discourses they reperformed totalising and statist political logics. The use of slogans such as 'War stoppers are the real crime stoppers' and 'Resisting war crimes is not a crime', and appeals to make the international arms

⁷⁴ The Smash EDO film *On the Verge* demonstrates the extent to which even radical campaign groups employ legalistic discourse (SchMOVIES 2008).

trade illegal, reinforces a politics (and, indeed, a security) reliant upon juridical logics, inverting dominant discourses rather than engaging in the challenge to resist and dispel (McCann undated: 9). This is not to deny the potential value in such statements, but to highlight their ambiguous and perhaps limited nature, the ways in which their useful pragmatism might at some level reinforce conventional political imaginaries.⁷⁵

The second response to my critique, which ties closely to the first, is that the focus on trial by jury does to some extent involve a recasting of legitimacy. Generally reserved for cases where a significant amount of property damage has been caused, activists insist that one is more likely to be acquitted when the case is heard by a jury (the Raytheon 9, Seeds of Hope, EDO Decommissioners and Pit Stop Plowshares cases all fall into this category), as juries are more likely to be sympathetic to claims of necessity and ‘affirmative defences’ than judges. Tactically, then, there are advantages here, to the point that legal training sessions often reference the amount of damage one should cause to receive a trial by jury. However, beyond tactical considerations there is a broader politics insofar as the desire to seek affirmation from peers rather than from a judge opens the question of legitimacy and ontologies of agency beyond that of the sovereign securer. At the CAAT gathering in Manchester in 2011, during a discussion lead by Target Brimar about legal strategies, a number of activists expressed the desire to be held accountable by ‘ordinary people’ rather than politicised magistrates. This might connect again with the focus on localism; discussing the matter with one of the EDO Decommissioners, he noted that the jury were ‘our peers in the community’, mobilising a sense of legitimacy more attuned to local dimensions.⁷⁶ Whilst this is still clearly problematic, preserving as it does a legalistic ontology of agency, it is perhaps not an unquestioning adherence to legalism or hegemony as such.

The third response is that voluntary submission and the legal discourses which often accompany it can create spaces for direct action which might otherwise not have existed, opportunities by which to engage in prefigurative explorations in spite of the reperformances already involved (Newman 2010a: 270). In December 2010, a number of activists from Smash EDO locked themselves to the factory gates, prohibiting workers and delivery drivers from gaining access (not an uncommon action). What was

⁷⁵ See also Rosedale (2010: 499).

⁷⁶ It should also be noted that he emphatically stated that, whilst the affirmation of the jury was important in practical terms and with respect to their wider campaign, he was ready to go to prison and did not feel that the legitimacy of the action truly hinged on the legal outcome.

unusual was that the police made no attempt to remove the protestors, and EDO's managing director was forced to angle grind through part of the perimeter of the compound to create a new entrance ('EDO Blockaded Again' 2010; 'Update from EDO blockade' 2010). Activists felt that the recent acquittal of the EDO Decommissioners, and the accompanying decision by the jury that EDO's sale of weaponry to Israel constituted a war crime, had meant that EDO was resistant to going back to court to defend itself. In this sense, then, pushing and expanding the limits of what is legal can serve as a strategy for expanding spaces in which direct action is possible.

Many activists' participation in Faslane 365 might be seen along similar lines. For a large number, including most of our group, this was their first experience of arrest. That it was a particularly safe environment in which to get arrested was not unimportant; Strathclyde police are well respected and used to dealing with protestors at the base, a large support mechanism had been established to assist arrestees with legal and practical advice, and the vast majority of arrestees were released without charge (fewer than a hundred were charged). In this sense Faslane 365 became, in part, an advanced training session for those who wished to take part in future direct actions. Many participants (although by no means all) had never worked with affinity groups, had never planned an action of this sort, and had never refused to obey police instructions. Through the predictability of the space, the police and the judicial system, a space was created to experiment with illegal direct action. Whilst this is clearly problematic for a variety of reasons, it is also, to an extent, a productive dynamic; it served to build confidence and provide experience in a way which has empowered many to carry out more actions. Several have remarked in conversation that Faslane 365 was a formative experience for them, and that much of their current activism can be traced back to it. A critical perspective on such a dynamic is important; embracing the security system built around the Faslane base is an uncomfortable contradiction. There is, however, an ironic subversion here, a tactical and contingent occupation of state security as a platform from which to disrupt its sovereign status.

We might also view this response through a lens which attempts to demystify juridical subjectivity and temper its disciplinary mechanisms. One interviewee, who had just spent a week in prison (following arrest for a die-in and his subsequent refusal to pay the small fine imposed), suggested that the fear of prison was problematic and that

there may be advantages if the stigma were dispelled. Making it emphatic that his point related to the UK prison system (i.e., that he was not making light of more punitive conditions in other parts of the world), he suggested that ‘there’s a whole bunch of people who could quite easily go to prison, it wouldn’t be a big deal for them, they wouldn’t find it a horrible experience...quite an interesting experience really...and knowing that you have that ability or option maybe expands the tactical opportunities available.’ He acknowledged that this would not be for everyone, nor should it be valorised above actions, but that the self-discipline which the threat of prison and punishment effects might be deferred to some limited extent (Interview I).

The three responses discussed here suggest that, in exploring the legalism and voluntary submissions involved in anti-militarist activities, simplistic lines between undermining and reconstituting juridical, hegemonic and sovereign logics cannot be drawn. However, there remain problematic elements. Discussing the matter with one activist, he admitted to finding the practice deeply uncomfortable (despite having participated in such actions himself in the past), both because offering oneself up to the state ran contrary to his principles, and because he saw it to be a form of action enmeshed in class and race privilege. This is not an uncommon attitude, and many prefer to participate in actions (such as the Hammertime demonstration discussed above) in which the refusal to be secured within juridical terms forms a core part of the action.

It is important to note that the categories here are slippery and that even those activists who remain sceptical of voluntary submission are forced to confront their status as juridical subjects; the practice of disobedience and direct action makes this, to some extent, unavoidable. It is through this lens that we might interpret, for example, the ubiquitous practice of writing the number of an activist-friendly solicitor on one’s arms prior to any action wherein arrest is a possibility, a self-inscription which signifies one’s subjectivity, albeit a defiant signification which refuses the expectations of obedience and conduct which constitute the sovereign order (Foucault 2007b: 98). Often those involved in campaigns and actions end up spending more time focussing on legal issues than anything else. The discussion here is not intended as a critique of this practice (which is arguably the condition of possibility for finding spaces for action within the contemporary political system), but as an acknowledgement of its limitations and constraints on the exploration of counter-subjectivities.

To reveal this complexity and to point towards some problematic features should not be read as a critique from a position of purity; insofar as resistance is (at least to some extent) constituted within predominant power relations, it will *always* be problematic. Indeed, and this point has been made in various ways throughout the thesis, this always-problematic nature might be taken as precisely that which provides resistance with its energy and critical resources. The different attempts to chart pathways through the critiques mobilised here can be read in precisely such terms. Doing so also opens spaces to (re)connect them with the disruption of security; the various routes being taken here can be read as contrasting disruptions of the security/insecurity and order/chaos binaries, intervening in diverse ways such that the totalising logics might be rendered unstable or partial, discourses and mechanisms of security undermined, those of insecurity, subverted. That these disruptions are themselves partial and unstable is, as has been argued, not necessarily a problem in itself.

Part Three: Disciplining the South

This third, shorter section makes a specific critique with respect to the tendency of anti-arms trade activists to reproduce particular problematic tropes with respect to global North-South imaginaries. Anti-arms trade activists are prone to mobilise a list of states that function as the self-evident ‘baddies’ through which the violences of the arms trade are made apparent. It is to some extent regarded as a skill that, when given the name of a particular arms company, some people can recite a list of obviously ‘bad’ customers; for instance, that BAE Systems have sold to Indonesia, Colombia, Morocco, Tanzania, etc. To qualify for the list countries tend to have some combination of internal human rights violations, a record of international aggression, and low development ratings (by conventional measures). The strategy might be used when speaking to the media, or to potential employees at counter-recruitment actions; both are situations where conversations tend to be fast paced, and the need to quickly establish the questionable ethics of a particular company is paramount. CAAT regularly use the strategy. In a two-page spread detailing their *This is Not OK* campaign against UKTI DSO (the government body which aids arms companies in conducting international sales), they state that staff ‘[tour] the world to recommend UK weapons at arms fairs hosting delegations from Zimbabwe, Burma, Rwanda, China’ and secure “high level”

interventions to encourage authoritarian and corrupt regimes like Libya and Algeria to buy our weapons' (CAAT 2011: 9). Disarm DSEi, in the 'What is DSEi' section of their website, state that 'Delegations invited by the UK include countries involved in conflict & human rights abuses and those with desperately underfunded development needs, including Indonesia, Iraq, Angola & Colombia' (Disarm DSEi undated).

In examining the strategies of the major anti-arms trade NGOs, Stavrianakis makes an important critique of the focus on arms exports to the global South. She argues that '[a]rguing for an end to controversial exports – which are usually exports to the South – without a wider argument about the structure of military power in international relations leaves the military dominance of Northern states intact and does nothing to challenge hierarchical North-South relations' (2010: 59). Such dynamics lead to a 'depoliticisation of militarism within the European world' (ibid., 111) and the 'production of the South as a site of intervention and its resultant disciplining' (ibid., 114). A similar issue is identified by Pinar Bilgin and Adam David Morton, who highlight the ways in which the 'failed states' discourse (upon which the list approach clearly relies) sustains 'inherently unequal structural relationships' between 'Western' 'zones of peace' and non-'Western' 'zones of conflict'. Indeed, they suggest, this is a discourse crucial to the legitimacy of the arms trade industry (2002: 69). While Stavrianakis identifies these issues in the context of NGO discourse, the above examples suggest that similar dynamics can be found in more direct action-oriented sections of the movement.

It would be to go too far to suggest that there is an *unproblematic* replication of such discourses here. Discussing CAAT, the one crossover group between those examined here and in her work, Stavrianakis argues that CAAT does go further than most NGOs insofar as it locates the problem in 'the relationship between arms capital and the state within the UK' (ibid., 59), where others locate it more firmly in the South. Alongside this she notes the 'ongoing debate within CAAT about the extent to which it should focus on militarisation at home' (ibid., 82). However in practice, when these discussions translate into campaigning material (of the sort cited above), CAAT's focus has remained on arms exports to the South (ibid., 59). In conversation activists acknowledge the limitations of such an approach. However, they also argue that when trying to enlist support for campaigns, starting with such deep rooted issues is unlikely to be particularly successful, and that it is more productive to first establish the ethical

or moral equation (Interview B). This is a tension felt by many activists who seek to balance their own more radical perspectives with the desire not to alienate potential supporters.

Clearly, this practice is not ubiquitous. Faslane 365 was targeted directly at the nuclear proliferation of the British state, Plowshares actions have almost exclusively targeted militarism in 'Northern' states, including the UK, the UK, Sweden, Germany, Australia and New Zealand, and Target Brimar and Smash EDO focus on militarism as an elite network – looking at specific issues, such as the Israeli assault on Gaza, through a systemic lens. Nonetheless a narrative which, in Stavrianakis' terms, 'disciplines the south' can be identified in the discourses of direct action groups in ways not dissimilar (although perhaps more contested and varied) to NGO approaches. That it is justified through reference to strategic considerations is important; it reveals the limitations of strategy, the shortcomings of those approaches which proceed on the terms of, rather than through seeking to displace, more foundational political imaginaries.

Part Four: Reperforming Security

The final part of this chapter will examine some of the ways in which anti-militarist practice can tend to reproduce or impose fairly conventional conceptions and performances of security. The discussion will draw on a series of examples to suggest that the disruptions of the logics of security identified thus far must be seen to occur in a context always haunted by and vulnerable to the re-emergence of those very same logics. Nevertheless it will also suggest that the situation is, again, more complex than might initially appear.

The first example which will be explored concerns the activist practice of 'security culture', a concept which arrives already weighted with irony in the context here. More a sensibility than a clear or bounded series of practices, security culture refers to those measures taken in response to attempts by state or corporate actors to monitor, control and repress resistance. It ranges from the familiar black masks worn on demonstrations and the common practice of turning off mobile phones during meetings to pamphlets which advise against gossip, offer advice on how to recognise infiltrators, and highlight the ways in which forms of oppression which operate *within* activist communities can make them more vulnerable to infiltration (Anonymous 2001).

Newman suggests that such practices can be read in the context of resistance to security:

Freedom must be discovered *beyond* security, and this can be achieved only through practices of political contestation, through forms of resistance, through modes of collective indiscipline and disobedience. For instance, the refusal and subversion of surveillance, and even the surveillance of surveillance, become part of a new language of resistance that expresses the desire for a life that no longer seeks to be “secured” (2011b: 171, emphasis in original).

On the one hand, there is much that is of merit in such a formulation (which accords with the wider arguments put forward here). However, on the other, it is important to pay attention to the ways in which practices of evasion can simultaneously operate as forms of exclusion, closures which engage in troublingly familiar discourses of security and insecurity. Asking too many questions, or inviting people to share past experiences of activism, or jotting down notes during meetings,⁷⁷ are practices likely to be treated as suspicious. More substantially, preparation for actions which demand surprise or which tend towards illegality usually occurs in closed settings, within relationships of trust.⁷⁸ As with other direct action movements, anti-militarists are aware of the ongoing likelihood of infiltration or surveillance, and of the trauma experienced when other activists (and, indeed, friends) have turned out to work for arms companies or for the police.⁷⁹ The temptation to guard against such vulnerability and trauma by identifying and securing against particular images of insecurity is powerful.

Despite such temptations and closures one encounters many moments wherein an effort is made to keep anti-militarist spaces open, to refuse to efface this vulnerability. In Chapter Three I noted the surprising conviviality that can be found even in the faceless spaces of a Black Bloc. Similarly most meetings are open to the point at which even newcomers have the power to block decisions, a not insubstantial vulnerability, and one maintained even in the face of probable infiltration. Most activists affirm the importance of such openness on the count that to suspend such practices

⁷⁷ Alas!

⁷⁸ For two examples of significant anti-militarist actions which could not possibly have taken place without such secrecy, see Walter’s notes on the Spies for Peace (2011) and Ann Hansen’s memoirs of her experiences blowing up a cruise missile factory in Canada (2002).

⁷⁹ In 2003 CAAT’s national campaign and events co-ordinator, Martin Hogbin, was exposed as a BAE Systems spy. He was the secular godfather to one activists’ son, and a close friend of many involved in anti-militarist campaigning. The emotional fallout still resonates.

would be to play into the hands (and logics) of the state; it would be, in the terms of IR, to grant licence to realism's cynicism. The resulting oscillations between openness and closure represent a tactical negotiation wherein the need to resist state or corporate surveillance and the imperative to remain open and vulnerable are varyingly accommodated, the totalising or self-defeating gestures of either alone demanding a ceaseless interrogation of the security politics at work. This is not to suggest that every exclusion or closure performed in the name of security culture should therefore be treated unproblematically. On the contrary, it is to argue that these exclusions are deeply problematic, on the verge of reperforming precisely that which must be resisted, but to acknowledge that this is not the end of the story.

The use of masks and clothing which obscures the identity of individuals within a crowd represents an interesting example here. On the one hand it exemplifies the refusal Newman identifies; when indistinguishable from those around you, and thereby (to an extent) freed from the disciplinary gaze of the police, one is unsecurable in an important sense. In Chapter Three, when discussing the Hammertime demonstration, I noted that the act of wearing a mask constitutes an act of solidarity with others; this is precisely a collective refusal of security. It allows for a simultaneous expression of the individual and the collective, whereby the collective produces and makes possible the actions of the individual, and the individuals together mobilise a collective anti-security. The leaflet handed out to activists before the action states that '[w]e cover our faces not to threaten and intimidate, but to represent the faceless victims of the arms trade and to protect ourselves from intrusive surveillance. We will not be numbered, catalogued or controlled'.

The masks are not, however, just means of hiding; they are affirmations, gestures towards forms of solidarity and subjectivity beyond the state's images of security. Graeber recalls seeing a particular series of masks during the alter-globalisation protests in Québec City in 2001:

A fair number of people in fact are already masked up: not so much for security reasons (there seem to be no police anywhere) as because they have, by far, the coolest bandanas ever: which, if folded in half, cover the bottom half of your face with a life-size picture of the bottom half of someone else's face. I start noticing them everywhere: they come in red, orange and yellow.

Ben already has one, in orange. He proudly displays it: one side is the happy side, with a big smiling face; the other has a face with its mouth taped closed behind barbed wire.

[...] Inscribed on the margin, in French and English, are the following lines:

We will remain faceless because we refuse the spectacle of celebrity, because we are everyone, because the carnival beckons, because the world is upside down, because we are everywhere. By wearing masks, we show that who we are is not as important as what we want, and what we want is everything for everyone (2009: 147-148).

Such masks, of course, differ significantly from the more familiar images of Black Bloc outfits. As noted, the Black Bloc aesthetic might be criticised as having been sufficiently folded back into the spectacular logics of security, as conforming and falling too neatly into completed narratives and images of insecurity to function as an effective disruption *any more*. This is not to suggest that it has never had this quality, but to highlight the importance of resisting (or acknowledging the shortcomings of) conventions of dissent which lose their disruptive impact over time. Rather than a resistance to the terms of security, the Black Bloc tactic arguably has the effect of uncritically reproducing images which strengthen those narratives which underpin the state form, producing metanarratives whereby activist security equates to state insecurity and vice versa in a manner which does little to disrupt such terms.⁸⁰

It is important to note, however, that the advantages and transformations which might occur through the use of indistinguishable Blocs are not consigned to the colour black or the exhausted image of the Black Bloc. CIRCA, whose conduct actively subverts militarist imaginaries, stand as one important example here. As they state,

[w]e are **clandestine** because we refuse the spectacle of celebrity and we are everyone. Because without real names, faces or noses, we show that our words, dreams, and desires are more important than our biographies. Because we reject the society of surveillance that watches, controls, spies upon, records and checks our every move. Because by hiding our identity we recover the power of our

⁸⁰ It might also be suggested that the all-black aesthetic has a militaristic tone, although this is a complex issue which will not be discussed here.

acts. Because with greasepaint we give resistance a funny face and become visible once again (CIRCA undated, emphasis in original).

In dressing half as clowns and half as soldiers, CIRCA provoke imaginaries ‘neither here nor there, but in the most powerful of all places, the place in-between order and chaos’ (ibid.). Another example comes from the Italian ‘Tuté Bianche’, who attended alter-globalisation protests in white overalls and inflatable body armour (such that they could withstand physical assault from the police and, in many cases, literally roll through police lines). In the citizens’ weapons inspection described in Chapter Three we all wore white overalls and chemical masks, an aesthetic which resists incorporation within the security/insecurity binary precisely because it conjures images of real UN weapons inspectors, and ambiguously mobilises their legitimacy.⁸¹

Defending selves and spaces against challenge can quickly raise the spectre of security, the organisation and constitution of the subject against the image and imposition of insecurity. Such challenges might be seen to operate beyond conflict with the state’s politics of security to ask particular questions of the subject in-and-of resistance. Taking such questions deeper is a crucial move in seeking to displace a politics of security/insecurity which is founded not only alongside the state, but as a wider discourse of conceptual and political mastery. The following paragraphs therefore consider a particular moment at a peace camp, where I was involved in evicting a number of fellow activists, to explore the ways in which boundaries were (and were not) performed along particular lines.

⁸¹ Attempts are made to suggest that the colour black has some more essential or deep rooted resonance which should be preserved. As one writer puts it: ‘Why is our flag black? Black is a shade of negation. The black flag is the negation of all flags. It is a negation of nationhood which puts the human race against itself and denies the unity of all humankind. Black is a mood of anger and outrage at all the hideous crimes against humanity perpetrated in the name of allegiance to one state or another...Black is also a color of mourning; the black flag which cancels out the nation also mourns its victims – the countless millions murdered in wars, external and internal, to the greater glory and stability of some bloody state...It mourns not only the death of the body but the crippling of the spirit under **authoritarian** and hierarchic systems; it mourns the millions of brain cells blacked out with never a chance to light up the world. It is a color of inconsolable grief.

But black is also beautiful. It is a colour of determination, of resolve, of strength, a color by which all others are clarified and defined. Black is the mysterious surrounding of germination, of fertility, the breeding ground of new life which always evolves, renews, refreshes, and reproduces itself in darkness.

So black is negation, is anger, is outrage, is mourning, is beauty, is hope, is the fostering and sheltering of new forms of human life and relationship on and with this earth’ (anonymous 1996: 31-32, emphasis in original).

I had been staying at the Peace News Summer Camp for around three days when, on the Friday afternoon, around eight people from a nearby anti-coal protest camp came to visit the site and hear music from the activist band 'Seize the Day', who were to play that evening. They were clearly very drunk upon arrival and the atmosphere, previously relaxed and friendly (as observed in Chapter Four) changed notably, becoming tense. One of the new arrivals had a dog with him which, given the large numbers of children on the campsite, was against the safe space policy. He was therefore asked to take it off the site, which he did at first. Shortly after their arrival, one of the organisers approached a friend and me to ask whether we would help by staying with the welcome tent at the entrance to the site. She acknowledged, quietly, that she and the other organisers were aware that they may well have to remove the newcomers at some point; a number of people were coming to her to express discomfort about their intimidating behaviour.

Standing by the welcome tent, my friend and I spent the next period of time confronting and turning back the owner of the dog, who was by this point very drunk and determined to bring his dog onto the site. Although he was becoming increasingly aggressive we continued to explain that he was welcome to come onto the site, but that he would have to leave his dog at the gate. On one occasion, more physically confrontational than others, he aimed sexually abusive comments at a woman standing nearby. It was at this point that one of the organisers reluctantly began to arrange transport, such that the man could be taken back to his own protest site. During this period, people were becoming increasingly stressed; the supportive atmosphere had broken down, and uncomfortable conversations about the politics of eviction were taking place.

Following the removal of the man, I withdrew for a short time to write some notes. When I returned, about an hour later, several more of the activists from the coal camp were being evicted. I never learned the precise nature of the final straw, but at the camp meeting the next morning we are told that, after a number of infractions and many complaints, they were given a final warning and eventually asked to leave. The whole story (without personal/individual details) is relayed to the camp and an hour of the day's schedule is given over for those who want to discuss what happened and the processes which led to the eviction.

There is a clear security politics here. For a short while I was a security guard, policing the borders and upholding the rules (No Dogs!), and providing comfort and reassurance to those administering the space through my confident and masculine presence. I was excluding some for the protection of others, maintaining order by demarcating the (context) specific boundaries of chaos. Whilst, as I suggest below, there are differences to traditional forms, it remains that in the exploration of a space which sought to be open and refuse the instrumentalities and authorities of militarism, we felt compelled to secure the borders and eject those who (over-) disrupted the equilibrium within. The optimism of the space and its commitment to experiment with alternative ways of living was tempered by the apparent necessity of borders, police, rules and masculinities.

There were, however, important differences from conventional conceptions of security. One such difference was that the decision and practice of evicting (and so performing the camp's borders and their politics of security), whilst deemed necessary, was not affirmed easily or unproblematically. There was no recourse to a juridical logic whereby the fact that the rules had been broken justified the eviction without question. Discussing the matter with other attendees, I was struck by the extremity of the discomfort on the part of most (albeit not all) campers; whilst everyone seemed to feel that the least bad option had been chosen, the situation was still experienced as an indictment of a purportedly libertarian and open space, as a tragedy of the camp and its politics.

There was an atmosphere of profound uncertainty within the certainty, probably in no small part fuelled by the well-targeted insults shouted by the evicted men and women as they left the camp: 'middle class wankers!', 'you're no better than Tesco's!' The point is that despite the closure, the affirmation of the border and the delineation of the limit through which the ontology of the camp was constituted, the *question* of the limit remained open. In looking inwards at how the moment constituted (and corrupted) the camp, and at the uncomfortable experience of bordering practices (not insignificantly, bordering practices targeted against those whom many considered *allies*), the impulse to secure the gesture of security (or the subject of security) was deferred. I felt that, were a similar situation to arise, the camp would have gone through the same

ordeal again, rather than carry out a more efficient bordering practice against a stabilised image of insecurity.⁸²

This example is one amongst many others; evictions from such spaces are not uncommon. The purpose here is not to condemn or vindicate, but to highlight some ways in which logics of security re-emerge, and to further suggest that their re-emergence does not necessarily signify parity with traditional, statist-metaphysical practices. I would tentatively suggest that the commitments to non-exclusion, consensus, diversity and so forth can work precisely to maintain openness in the light of the (conceptual and spatial) bordering often demanded by (and performative of) situations of security/insecurity. Another example helps to further demonstrate this point.

This example draws from a recollection provided by one interviewee, about a dilemma with which she found herself confronted while living on a peace camp outside the Alvis factory in Coventry in 1997 (Interview H).⁸³ One night, while most of those involved in the camp were at a planning meeting with supporters away from the campsite (so as to avoid being overheard), a group of travellers with a small child arrived at the site and said that they needed to camp for the night. Despite their promise to leave the next morning, they failed to do so. The Alvis management (who, up to that point, had been reasonably tolerant of the camp's presence - the degree to which the camp should have been more or less antagonistic, with less or more chance of staying in place and being able to raise awareness, was another matter of debate) were quick to let those at the peace camp know that, if they failed to convince the travellers to leave, they would all be evicted. A number of difficult discussions took place over the next few days. Some thought that they should not ask the travellers to leave 'as they were always being moved on and we shouldn't behave like that too'. Others thought that they should not risk the entire camp being evicted, for everyone to lose their homes. The group was unable to reach a consensus as to what they should do, despite the Alvis management becoming more insistent. Eventually, without saying anything to those camping, one of the camp's supporters paid the travellers £100 to leave. The management erected posts so that no other vehicles could park.

⁸² This is, of course, conjecture, and in danger of marginalising the trauma experienced by many of those involved in organising the camp, who experienced the situation more acutely than I did. It would be difficult to condemn an instinct towards further closure on their part.

⁸³ This is the same camp noted during the discussion about workplace conversion in Chapter Four.

This is a difficult situation for which there was no obvious or easy resolution. An inescapably violent decision on the part of the peace camp had to be made, either to evict the travellers themselves, or for everyone to face eviction together. Clearly it is important not to lose sight of the wider context here, i.e., that the limited options were such because Alvis themselves made it so. However this is not in itself an alibi. In one sense the eventual resolution – paying the travellers to move on - is deeply uncomfortable. While perhaps preferable to the more obvious options, it still functions to legitimate the situation enforced by Alvis and to operate within this narrow context.⁸⁴ On the other hand, there are powerful dynamics here. That the man who engineered the compromise was not involved in the particular deliberations at the camp meant that this pathway did not necessarily interrupt the valuable discomfort prompted by the situation and the ways in which it called the politics of the camp into question.⁸⁵ Participants were forced to confront the borders of the camp, both with regards to its purpose and intersectional, tactical and ethical relationships with other struggles, and with respect to the ways in which spaces of resistance are always inescapably constituted within wider discourses of militarism and security. In particular this example emphasises a powerful feature of consensus decision making processes; that the participants were forced to find common ground (rather than quickly proceeding through a majority vote) meant that this discomfort was allowed to gestate, to come to form an inescapable part of the onto-politics of the camp, rather than pass by as an isolated event. This can be frustrating, tedious, traumatic, alienating, and exclusionary. It can also function as a means by which the metaphysics of security are deferred to some extent; the act of securing is secondary to the interminable process of working out what is to be secured (and whether or not it is even worth securing).

The discussion here has suggested that, even in the process of resisting particular discourses of security/insecurity, we can see a series of reperformances. Whilst these reperformances are not unproblematic, they are also more complex than a simple replication of that which is opposed, and point towards an ongoing process, an

⁸⁴ This is not to suggest that the decision was therefore ‘wrong’, but to maintain a politically embedded discomfort as a means by which to highlight the very violence enforced by the context.

⁸⁵ My contact noted that those living at the camp were particularly glad that someone from outside the core group took the instinct here (where more usually supporters would follow the wishes of those living at the camp). That this person was someone liked and respected by all at the camp was not insignificant on this count either.

incompleteness of the subject, which might defer the closure and mastery of conventional conceptions of security.

Conclusion

This chapter has identified four broad critiques which might be targeted against anti-militarist practice from the perspective of the arguments being made in this thesis. It has argued that, with respect to gender, legalism, North-South imaginaries and security, there is much that might be identified as problematic. It has also suggested, however, that the situation is substantially more complex than these critiques might indicate, and that viewing anti-militarist practice through the lens of these critiques is a productive way to draw out and explore these complexities. Part of the purpose of this chapter has been to highlight some ways in which a prefigurative imaginary might turn inwards to identify (and contest) those authorities, exclusions and dominations which arise or are revealed within the context of resistance. The following chapter explores the political nature of such an imaginary, and the ways in which it might aid in the process of conceptualising politics (and subjects) which resist the terms of security/insecurity.

Chapter Six: Prefiguring In/Security

This thesis has argued that the practices of UK-based anti-militarist activists can be seen to challenge the politics of security beyond the terms of CSS, and reveal the contributions which can be made from an anarchist perspective. It has pointed towards a series of theoretical and practical interventions which have, in various ways, sought to displace political formations based on hegemony, totality and domination, and to prefigure alternatives which might expose and explore (beyond) the limits of dominant political constellations and relations. This chapter seeks to bring these discussions together, and to use them as a jumping off point from which to think more directly about the possibility of resistances which do not rely upon or slide back towards those politics they seek to undermine and overcome.

The chapter is divided into two halves; the first draws the arguments made thus far together, tracing a core narrative which moves from security to anarchism, and which then explores anti-militarist activism as a means by which to demonstrate, develop and explore the nature of resistance in this context. Three central interventions - the displacing of the hegemonic principle, the subversion of the order/chaos, security/insecurity binaries, and the prefigurative exploration of anti-militarist subjectivities – are highlighted as significant features which emerge from the ethnographic study. The second half of the chapter moves to think more explicitly about resistance, exploring the possibilities for political interventions which might draw lines and make assertions whilst remaining open, partial and anti-hegemonic, and whilst deferring the seductions of security and hegemony. Through Butler, Call and others, I argue for a politics which keeps its critical limits mobile (and which is therefore always both incomplete and radically creative), which cultivates an anarchy of the subject, and which promotes the concept of prefiguration as a site of perpetual contestation, critique, invention and exploration.

Part One: Anarchism, Anti-Militarism, and the Politics of Security

The first chapter argued that the concept of security must be called into question. Rather than view security as a value or property (as we see amongst some, e.g., Booth 1991), security was conceptualised as a mode of governing (Neocleous 2008: 4) or a political technology (Burke 2007: 28), which reveals and promotes particular political

logics. Central to such logics has been the relationship between security and the state; as Dillon argues, the defining maxim of modern politics has been ‘no security outside the State; no State without security’ (1996: 14). Beyond (and constitutive of) this relationship has been the status of security as a mode of governmentality, a form of conduct which regulates and manages political life, in concert with juridical and disciplinary logics (Foucault 2007b: 46-47). The images and impulses of such governmentality are sustained through security’s intimate, dependent relationship with insecurity, and the metaphysical aspirations revealed through this relationship and its desire for mastery (Dillon 1996: 14-20). I noted a series of binary logics with which that of security/insecurity is intertwined; in particular, sovereignty/anarchy, order/chaos, protector/protectee. Together, they form ‘a package which tells you what you are as it tells you what to die for, which tells you what to love as it tells you what to defend (*dulce et decorum est pro patria mori*); and which tells you what is right as it tells you what is wrong’ (Dillon 1996: 33).

Particular attention was paid to the nature of security as a discourse reliant upon and determinative of the subject; as Dillon and Reid write, ‘the history of security is a history of what it is to be a political subject and to be politically subject’ (2001: 51). Der Derian, mobilising Nietzsche, argues that the ‘fear-driven desire for protection from the unknown’ which constitutes the ‘desire for security’ constitutes a form of self-enslavement, whereby ‘people...are willing to subordinate affirmative values to the “necessities” of security’ (2009: 156-157). He asserts that the ‘security of the sovereign, rational self and state comes at the cost of ambiguity, uncertainty, paradox – all that makes a free life worthwhile’ (ibid., 159). Such subjects are both participatory in their regulation, circulation and obedience, and radically individuated and depoliticised.

Whilst acknowledging that some have proceeded by arguing that the discourse of security can be reclaimed within a framework of emancipation (McDonald 2012: 50-51; Nunes 2012), the argument here has avoided such tendencies. The commitment of much of CSS to a hegemonic ontology of agency suggests that certain totalising imaginaries pervade attempts to chart routes forward from the critiques of security mobilised throughout the discipline, and I would suggest that a more cautious stance is necessary if this trap is to be avoided. The subtleties, depths and intimacies through which the metaphysical-existential promises of security operate render attempts to capture these discourses likely to reperform more than they disrupt (Grayson 2008;

Neufeld 2004). Instead, I argued that it may be more productive to mobilise a resistance to the terms of security/insecurity.

Such a resistance could not be classed as an ‘escape’, a move again liable to perpetuate the logics by which security structures life. Instead, the discussion emphasised an exploration at the limits of security, a provocation and politicisation of the terms of security and insecurity (and, indeed, sovereignty and anarchy, order and chaos, and so forth) which might signal and provoke ways of being and becoming otherwise. I suggested that an approach which moves neither outside, nor settles within, the politics and promises of security might offer a new way of thinking about and responding to such logics. It is on such terms that the argument turned towards anarchism.

In Chapter Two I argued that anarchism can be read as a series of discourses which promote disobedient and creative subjectivities, prefigurative explorations, perpetual critique, and an anti-representative ethos which refuses hegemonic and statist ontologies of agency and which prioritises ‘direct’ action. I suggested that together these features produce a two-stepped disruption of security. In the first, the hegemonic ontology of agency so central to traditional and many critical approaches to security is displaced; anarchism prompts a reimagination which sees security performed, conceptualised and negotiated in a multiplicity of sites and contexts. Whether through direct action to limit the imposition or continuation of practices and policies which cause insecurity, or through more constructive relations of mutual aid and solidarity, anarchism envisages an approach to security which carefully and continually seeks to defer the state form, which refuses the alienated ontologies of agency which route intervention through traditional (juridical, sovereign) spaces. The second disruption involves displacing the security/insecurity binary itself; by refusing the expectations placed on conduct faithful to images of security and order (e.g., hegemony, lawfulness, representation), and by simultaneously subverting the corresponding narratives of chaos and insecurity, anarchism questions the naturalness of the terms, calling their supposed authority into question. In this displacement (which, as the discussion at the end of Chapter Three made clear, is radically unstable), I suggested that we glimpse possibilities beyond the terms of security and insecurity as they are understood.

After these opening chapters on security and anarchism the thesis moved on to explore the questions raised in more detail, conducting an ethnographic interpretation

of UK-based anti-militarism activism. This deliberately situated investigation did not seek to unveil the truth or objective nature of its object nor to capture the totality of practices which awkwardly combine to constitute anti-militarism. Rather, it looked for openings, refusals, counter-conducts, possibilities, signs of disruption and imagination which might provoke the sorts of thinking and becoming otherwise envisaged in the opening chapters. Its partiality is its politics, and whilst the study is not uncritical of that with which it engages, it begins by drawing out and focusing upon those spaces wherein the politics of security might be resisted most emphatically and creatively. In practice, this has meant a focus on direct action groups such as Smash EDO, Disarm DSEi and the Plowshares movement, and on those networks and institutions through which they can be seen to operate, such as CAAT and the AMN. Taking anarchism as an interpretive (and critical) framework, the conduct of the argument has actively sought to displace the theory/practice divide, embracing the theoretically rich character of practical experiments and the practical impact and imaginative purchase which runs through the theoretical perspectives established.

The ethnographic study has been outlined in three stages, though care must be taken here; whilst the breakdown in emphasis is useful in a heuristic sense, it should not be taken to imply a linear temporality, whereby we have the disruptions (Chapter Three), then the prefigurative possibilities (Chapter Four), and finally the turn to critical reflection (Chapter Five). Rather, the three chapters emphasise particular tones of resistance which can more regularly be seen as coterminous within a context (specificities permitting). It is on such terms that many of the disruptions explored in Chapter Three also operate as examples of prefiguration, many examples of prefiguration involve (indeed, necessitate) significant processes of self-critique, and contrasting examples of self-critique demonstrate different approaches to disrupting security/insecurity. What emerges is not a specific *process* of resistance, but an ethos and culture of intervention and contestation which suggests multiple possibilities (in fact, demands them, precisely because those prefigurations and disruptions expressed are context-bound and irreducible). In this wide array, I suggest that three particular moves emerge (at least, emerge within the context established in the first two chapters), which are worthy of further restatement.

The first move is the disruption of the hegemonic principle. As noted, much of CSS remains committed to the logic of hegemony (whether in the form of the state or

some *counter*-hegemonic system). The hegemonic ontology of agency identified in the first chapter is one way in which to view this; whilst contrasting mobilisations of agency can be seen across the critical field, they all presuppose or gesture towards some unifying or totalising standard of legitimacy. Day has termed this the ‘hegemony of hegemony,’ that is, ‘the commonsensical assumption that meaningful social change – and social order itself – can only be achieved through the deployment of universalizing hierarchical forms, epitomized by the nation state, but including conceptions of the world state and other globalized institutions as well’ (2011: 96).

This concern with hegemony is linked with a suspicion of political action based in making demands or appeals; as Day argues, ‘every demand, in anticipating a response, *perpetuates* these structures, which exist precisely in anticipation of demands. This leads to a positive feedback loop, in which the ever increasing depth and breadth of apparatuses of discipline and control create ever new sites of antagonism, which produce new demands, thereby increasing the quantity and intensity of discipline and control’ (2011: 107, emphasis in original). Such concerns lead to a focus on what Day calls a ‘politics of the act,’ but which is more broadly referred to here as prefigurative direct action.

When the EDO Decomissioners caused hundreds of thousands of pounds worth of damage to the factory in Brighton, when thousands of activists stopped the Faslane Naval Base from functioning as usual, and when hundreds of activists establish a peace camp and experiment with alternative ways of living they are, to a certain extent, serving to displace the hegemonic principle. Rather than appealing to the state to take their grievances, ideas or perspectives on security politics into account they are enacting them, and refusing (as illegitimate, dangerous or insufficient) the state’s monopoly on security (and the state’s institutional guarantors of security). Blockading a factory is undertaken not only to generate publicity and reveal the limitations of the state-security apparatus, and to invite further action (though these features cannot be discounted); it is, precisely, to blockade the factory, as an intervention valuable on its own terms. Furthermore these activists are not sovereign entities who seek to take state power, or to coalesce into a counter-hegemony. They come together through relations of *affinity*, negotiating context-specific explorations and declarations of security and insecurity. We can read this as a rupture in the hegemonic ontology of agency, an insistence that

intervention (and, correspondingly, security) might be performed in localised, context-specific, non-totalising forms.

We should (cynically but not unimportantly) note the persistent spectre of the hegemonic logic throughout these interventions – whether in the swift move to arrest and prosecute those involved (of course, a move which backfired in the case of the EDO Decommissioners, but not before those involved had experienced a certain level of disciplinary force), the totalising (legal and other) discourses mobilised by activists, or the ways in which direct action often works alongside and intersected with more traditional, demand-based discourses.⁸⁶ Such concerns should not be ignored; as I argued in Chapter Five, acknowledging and exploring these issues is a crucial part of the process of resisting and subverting them. Nonetheless this cynical posture should not serve to marginalise or render redundant the basic point itself; I would suggest that allow it to do so is to perform precisely the closure in the exploration and imagination of possibilities which has made space for the enduring strength of the hegemonic principle. Whilst remaining critical, then, we should allow the rupture to stand as an invitation against and beyond the hegemonic ontology of agency which persists in CSS (and, as Day notes, across much of liberal and radical political theory (2005: 70-84)).

The second move in the study has been to identify those features of anti-militarism activism which can be seen to subvert the security/insecurity, order/chaos binaries. These binaries are intricately woven into the processes of representation which constitute the state form, and serve to conduct political participation and intervention in particular ways. As Edkins and Zehfuss have noted, order is not a neutral condition or property; its relationship with its subordinate term operates to mask the particular politics involved in any ordering gesture (2005: 456-459). In Chapter Two, I argued that anarchism has worked to displace the discursive connection between organisation on the one hand, and sovereignty and authority on the other, a series of interventions which disrupt the heroic practices that Ashley argues work to constitute the international. It is tempting to take this argument forward to suggest that anarchism provides the ground for an order free from domination, helps to answer Ashley's question: 'how can order be constructed *in the absence of an orderer?*' (1995: 94-95). Whilst this is an important question, the suggestion here is that maintaining a straightforward

⁸⁶ As noted in Chapter Two, Day's distinction between a politics of the act and a politics of demand is rarely clear cut, and should be viewed as ways by which contrasting emphases and performances might be drawn from a situation.

commitment to a 'better' order is liable to preserve hegemonic imaginaries, masking processes of ontological totalisation. In its binary form, order persistently mobilises the spectre (and subject) of chaos as a regulatory dynamic; such a depoliticising and naturalising gesture cannot be legitimated simply because an alternative order has been chosen. Rolando Perez is powerful here, noting that,

[t]he outsider is always a threat, for it is he or she – the misfit – who usually questions the *order* of things. And as we all know everything must always be “nice, neat, and orderly” for a paranoid machine, and especially of course if that paranoid machine happens to be military, political, or economic. In Albert Camus’ *Caligula*, after Caligula has *ordered* the poets to read the poems he turns to Cherea and whispers: “you see, organization’s needed for everything, even art.” That’s why the political “will to order” is usually a will to violence and oppression (1990: 19-20, emphases in original).

To repeat Buber’s warning,

[s]ocialism can never be anything absolute. It is the continual becoming of human community in mankind, adapted and proportioned to whatever can be willed and done in the conditions given. Rigidity threatens all realization, what lives and glows to-day may be crushed over to-morrow and, become all-powerful, suppress the strivings of the day after (1958: 56).

What is needed, then, is not a better, order, but the refusal of the terms through which the order/chaos binary operates to regulate political conduct. As discussed above, a similar argument might be made with respect to security/insecurity.

Many of the actions and activists explored throughout the thesis mobilise such a disruption. They reject that which is supposed to constitute order and security; obedience to the law, respect for property, a demand-making polis. Their organisation is not predicated on hierarchy or sovereignty, and prioritises disobedience, dissent, diversity. They run from the police, drive tanks through London, break into military bases and damage equipment. Nevertheless, this rejection of order and of security, this indiscipline and disruption, does not rest at the level of transgression or inversion (which, as acknowledged in Chapter Four, merely serves to redraw the lines through which security/insecurity and order/chaos are constituted). We do not see a collapse into familiar images of chaos and insecurity (which are often merely images involved in

the production of what we understand to be order and security). Instead we see moves to fashion something more affirmative and exploratory in the spaces between the binaries; relations of affinity, solidarity and responsibility are built in ways which resist and reject the totalising-metaphysical aspirations of security, the presumptions of hegemony, the false promises of representation, and the fiction of order.

These gestures can be ironic, as with the Space Hijacker examples, and they can occur in more and less spectacular settings (with differing effects, vulnerabilities and shortcomings). What is most important is that they contest the politics of security in ways which refuse to be confined within the binaries, which signal ruptures, openings, possibilities beyond the totalising, hegemonising logics through which much of political life is conducted. That these displacements are unstable, partial, and prone to reincorporation is not unimportant, and a fruitful line for critique. This instability is not, however, a flaw to be 'avoided' or 'corrected'; as argued at the close of Chapter Three, to avoid the regularization and incorporation of life (and dissent) which constitutes contemporary security politics, resistance must remain mobile, refusing programmes and conventions, and celebrating this very instability as the condition of possibility of deferring the totalities against which it struggles (Dillon 1996: 31; Newman 2011b: 173; Shukaitis 2009: 214).

The third move has been to identify the prefigurative exploration of anti-militarist subjectivities. The thesis has sought to take seriously Landauer's dictum that 'we are the state! And we will be the state as long as we are nothing different' (2010: 214), and Call's concerns that '[a]s long as the Enlightenment's version of subjectivity is permitted to present itself as an unassailable, universally valid truth, we must remain within the political order which that subjectivity implicitly sanctions' (2002: 78). Chapter Two argued that anarchism is a discourse rooted in the exploration and mobilisation of becoming otherwise, and on such terms the ethnographic explorations (particularly in Chapter Four) sought to draw out those practices which might undermine, reimagine or move beyond militarist forms of subjectivity. Exemplifying Foucault's statement that '[p]robably the principle objective today is not to discover but to refuse what we are' and that '[w]e have to promote new forms of subjectivity while refusing the type of individuality that has been imposed on us for several centuries' (1982: 785), the reconfigurations of space, authority, relation, legitimacy and contestation all serve as explorations of counter-subjectivities.

Such explorations might serve to take account for and resist the ways in which militarism, security and the state form are logics which depend upon and sustain particular forms of subjectivity, and therefore open the possibility of an intervention which is not destined to replicate that which it opposes. Again, these processes are not innocent, nor are they sufficient in any straightforward sense; they do, however, gesture towards a conception of resistance which refuses the means/end rationality which brackets (and therefore reproduces) the subject, which recognises the pervasive and micropolitical nature of power, and which remains committed to the 'language of example and beginning' (Landauer 2010: 311), to prefigurative explorations which seek to explore and enact the politics of becoming otherwise.

Together these three moves – displacing the hegemonic principle, subverting the security/insecurity binaries, prefiguring anti-militarist subjectivities – represent an interpretation which emphasises the ways in which anti-militarist practice remains committed to contesting and reimagining in forms which seek to resist the perpetuation of the logics through which militarism is constituted and deployed. This is partial, both insofar as there are further explorations which could proceed from such a perspective, and because contrasting interpretations are very possible. The intention here has not been to capture the totality of anti-militarist practice, but to explore how an anarchist interpretation and disruption of security might proceed (and, indeed, already be proceeding). Before moving towards conclusion on this point (and others), however, some further discussion is necessary.

The ethnographic explorations have placed some premium on the refusal to determine what the subject of resistance must 'be', on creating spaces through which a diversity of approaches might be articulated, and on privileging those resistances which similarly mobilise the space for diversity. There is a slight issue here, however, insofar as such privileging itself constitutes a particular choice, involves the closure of other possibilities, and insofar as all resistance involves the critique of particular forms of subjectivity. We are faced with what, on initial reading, appears contradictory; on the one hand, commitment to a foundationless, anti-hegemonic and anti-authoritarian resistance which seeks to avoid making sovereign declarations, and on the other, a series of particular decisions, commitments, exclusions, and (often spectacular) refusals and interventions. The following section will suggest that it is in the tensions here that we might articulate a politics of the in/secure subject, of resistance to and of in/security.

Part Two: The Politics of Multiplicity

Through its readings of security, anarchism, and anti-militarist activism this thesis has continually emphasised those trends, traditions and tendencies which resist, eschew and defer political possibilities predicated on hegemony, authority, and domination. It has done so in a manner which deliberately avoids making firm or complete statements about what subjects of resistance should look like, which resists the temptation to articulate their content beyond general terms. Whilst this is an important aversion, it must not conceal the more explicit politics which guide and emerge from this study of resistance. In short (and as always), there *is* content to this openness, closure to this anarchy, and it bears exploration. The following discussions, mobilising Butler, Call and others, seek to articulate a politics of in/security which, building on the sensibilities expressed throughout the thesis, proceeds with critically held limits, an anarchy of the subject, and a commitment to prefigurative exploration.

Graeber argues that, in contrast to Marxism, anarchism has always resisted the tendency towards an intellectual vanguardism which would permit the imposition of complete standards for analysis and strategy (2007: 302-306). Bakunin, discussing the Paris Commune, argued that ‘only through ongoing spontaneous action of the masses, groups and associations of the people could [social revolution] be mounted and prosecuted to its fullest extent’ (2005c: 206), and asks

...what brains are mighty enough and massive enough to encompass the infinite multiplicity and diversity of substantive interests, aspirations, wishes and needs, the sum of which represents the collective will of a people, and mighty and massive enough to devise a social organization capable of satisfying them all? That origination will never be anything other than a Procrustean bed upon which the more or less pronounced violence of the State will compel society to stretch out (ibid., 207).

This sensibility, that such totalising gestures reproduce the state form, can be found throughout anarchism (and critical thought more broadly), and motivates a desire to affirm a multiplicity of action and being. It is for such reasons that Day criticises Agamben’s theory that the coming community will arise from the class contradictions in the advanced stages of consumer capitalism. Instead, he prioritises a more open conception, arguing that ‘the coming communities are more likely to be formed in those

crucibles of human sociability and creativity out of which the radically new emerges: radicalized and ethnicized identities, queer and youth subcultures, anarchists, feminists, hippies, indigenous peoples, back-to-the-landers, ‘deviants’ of all kinds in all kinds of spaces’ (2005: 183).

In seeking to resist common standards for action, to displace ‘any plane of signification that would pretend to encompass us,’ as Verter (who explicitly links Bakunin to Levinas on this point) puts it (2010: 76), there is a need for more than sheer proliferation: ‘multiplicity not only demands diversity, but also refuses the domination and centralization of a single form of organization, resistance, interaction or identification’ (Bertalan 2011: 224). Bertalan’s point is that the refusal to impose totalising standards is one which must be continually affirmed and practiced, that constant vigilance on this point is necessarily.

Two particular mechanisms through which imposing particular standards on subjects and practices of resistance can reproduce the state form are particularly pertinent. The first, noted at various junctures in the thesis, is that, in Shukaitis’ terms, ‘the act of having a set definition of an insurgent practice is very much necessary part of the process of containing it [sic]’ (2009: 214). Seeking to resist the incorporation of resistance within the spectacular logics of the state form demands that the question of what dissent ‘looks like’ remains open. The second is that the cultivation and exploration of counter-subjectivities depends upon the refusal to impose pre-existing models which, in Landauer’s terms, are ‘too often merely rational and stuck in our current reality to serve as a guiding light for anything that could or should ever be in the future’ (2010: 89). On this, Rosi Braidotti is particularly pertinent:

...there cannot be social change without the construction of new kinds of desiring subjects as molecular, nomadic, and multiple. One must start by leaving open spaces of experimentation, of search, of transition: becoming-nomads.

This is no call for easy pluralism, either – but rather a passionate plea for the recognition of the need to respect the multiplicity and to find forms of action that reflect the complexity – without drowning in it (1994: 171).

Firm boundaries and preconceptions can keep us from looking in hidden or unlikely places, and from welcoming acts of disobedience on the part of subjects refusing their constitution in militarism, statism, patriarchy, and so forth. As Haraway observes,

‘illegitimate offspring are often exceedingly unfaithful to their origins. Their fathers, after all, are inessential’ (1991: 51).⁸⁷ Similarly Bertalan argues that ‘the foreclosure of the unknown not only prevents people from becoming revolutionaries, it also serves to stop revolutionaries from becoming’ (2011: 217).

In responding to the ‘urgency to elaborate alternative accounts [of subjectivity]...to invent new frameworks, new images, new modes of thought’ (Braidotti 1994: 1), it is important that the particular politics of these subjectivities are not displaced by this desire for multiplicity. As Haraway argues, in the (vital) consciousness of the failures and violences of totalising ontologies, ‘we risk lapsing into boundless difference and giving up on the confusing task of making partial, real connection. Some differences are playful; some are poles of world historical systems of domination’ (1991: 160-161).⁸⁸ Similarly David Couzens Hoy notes that the ‘poststructuralist readings of Nietzsche continually run up against the problem of delimiting proliferation, a problem that also troubles attempts to implement the Nietzschean and Derridean notion of infinite play’ (2004: 41-42), and asks whether we can retain a commitment to multiplicity without it reducing to sheer proliferation, overwhelming any more focussed ethico-political explorations (ibid., 46). The following discussions will outline some ways in which this commitment to multiplicity can run alongside and through shared political projects, maintaining the space for commitments and communities in ways which do not rely upon totalising ontologies, and which ‘avoid the trap of pure nomadism’ (Day 2005: 187).

Open Coalitions

Many of the anti-militarist practices explored throughout this thesis have taken place in the context of political coalitions, ranging from more institutional organisations such as

⁸⁷ Perez suggests that the ‘true child is she who surpasses her parents, she who goes beyond them to such an extent that eventually she leaves them behind as she walks into the desert as the first true nomad’ (1990: 23).

⁸⁸ Haraway further suggests that ‘epistemology’ is about ‘*knowing the difference*’ (ibid., emphasis in original). I would suggest that epistemology here might be more about recognising the ways in which one has *always already decided* which differences are good and bad, and breaking this down; one is always already making political decisions, performing subjectivities, enforcing ontological differentiations and standards. If we are ourselves constituted as militarised subjects (as Haraway acknowledges we are), born of militarism, capitalism, statism, and so forth, then our first task has to be taking our lack of innocence seriously, and working to understand the lines we draw.

CAAT to more informal groups such as the AMN and the Spies for Peace. Whilst an important means by which affinities and solidarities are explored, coalitional politics also involve certain problematic logics. This section will first outline some of these problems, focussing on the ways in which they may serve to undermine the multiplicities advocated above, and constrain the exploration of counter-subjectivities; it will then mobilise Butler's conception of the open coalition as a means by which to conceptualise a coalitional politics which might refuse such closures whilst cultivating the exploration of autonomies and affinities.

Coalitional politics are always at risk of erecting sovereign boundaries whereby clear and universal distinctions are set between those on the inside and those outside. Decisions regarding with whom solidarity should be shared, what 'positions' will be taken on various matters, and what tactics will be supported all serve to establish these limits. While these closures are, to some extent, unavoidable, they are not innocent, codifying space in ways which solidify exclusion, establishing and enforcing the boundaries of ethico-political contestation, and demarcating the lines by which the subject of-and-in the collective is defined.⁸⁹ Wilkinson shows that prior determinations of what gets to count as political within a community of resistance often mask the (for her, gendered and sexualised) authorities and power relations of the space (2009); the broader discussions on gender and anti-militarism in Chapter Five further demonstrated the potential for exclusions to operate within supposedly 'liberatory' (or even 'liberated') spaces and coalitional contexts. There, the conception of completeness was highlighted as a rationality through which such exclusions operate; such logics are particularly relevant for analysing the shortcomings of coalitional frameworks.

The inscription of affinities within uniform or complete frameworks of coalition has been a serious problem for progressive political praxis. Day argues that this can be seen across much of liberal and postmarxist pluralism, pointing towards Hardt and Negri's popular conception of the multitude, which 'gloss[es] over too many real differences and struggles that are encountered by those trying to come together against neoliberalism, while inhabiting disparate regions, positions in political-economic structures and racial/cultural/secual identifications' (2005: 178). In these situations, a commonality is presumed which obscures the varied and intersectional ways in which

⁸⁹ Such concerns clearly relate to the discussions about reperforming security from the final part of Chapter Five; I suggested that the examples explored served as cases wherein boundaries were not codified or solidified even as they were enforced.

people experience oppression (usually at the expense of those whose marginalisation is the most acute); it is on such terms that socialist feminists ‘were forced kicking and screaming to notice...the non-innocence of the category woman’ (Haraway 1991: 157; see also hooks 1982 and Moraga and Anzaldúa 1983). It cannot be sufficient to dismiss this experience as an uncomfortable legacy; it represents the violences (both theoretical and physical) which tend to result from any attempts towards large-scale consensus (Call 2002: 39). As Call argues, ‘a healthy polity requires not consensus but rather the endless interplay of radically dissenting voices’ (ibid., 39-40).

Fixed or secure boundaries of coalition can also tend to obscure important spaces of relationality and responsibility, and enact closures on the subject. Butler argues that attempts to posit ontological difference obscure the ways in which the subject exists in a co-constitutive relationship with that outside of itself. The resisting subject (whether individual or coalition) is never an innocent category; secure ontological differentiations can serve to obscure engagement with this non-innocence, and alleviate resulting understandings of responsibility. The logics through which coalitions operate draw ontological boundaries which presume, at some level, to differentiate that which is interior and that which is exterior (as superior and inferior). Within a context wherein the subject of resistance is also a subject of security, militarism, patriarchy, and so forth, such differentiation is deeply problematic, potentially serving to limit ethico-political reflection and to secure the subject through a process which ‘moralizes a self by disavowing commonality with the judged’ (Butler 2005: 46). Pertinently Butler cites Adriana Cavarero’s reflections on the place and function of the pronoun ‘we’; ‘many revolutionary movements...seem to share a curious linguistic code based on the intrinsic morality of pronouns. The *we* is always positive, the *plural you* is a possible ally, the *they* has the face of an antagonist, the *I* is unseemly, and the *you* is, of course, superfluous’ (Cavarero 2000: 90-91, cited in Butler 2005: 32, emphases in original). This sceptical reading (which, for Cavarero, leads her to advise against the use of the pronoun) renders these revolutionary movements on strikingly similar grounds to much of traditional IR theory, and sets the stage for very conventional terms of security.

Butler offers some routes forward from these issues through her conceptualisation of the open coalition. Concerned with the ‘totalizing gestures of feminism’ (2006: 18), Butler acknowledges the tendency for the

...coalitional theorist [to] inadvertently reinsert herself as sovereign of the process by trying to assert an ideal form for coalitional structures *in advance*, one that will effectively guarantee unity as the outcome. Related efforts to determine what is and is not the true shape of a dialogue, what constitutes a subject-position, and, more importantly, when “unity” has been reached, can impede the self-shaping and self-limiting dynamics of coalition (ibid., 20).

Against this uncomfortable aspiration to completeness, she outlines an open coalition:

Perhaps a coalition needs to acknowledge its contradictions and take action with those contradictions intact. Perhaps also part of what dialogic understanding entails is the acceptance of divergence, breakage, splinter, and fragmentation as part of the often tortuous process of democratization...Without the compulsory expectation that feminist actions must be instituted from some stable, unified, and agreed-upon identity, those actions might well get a quicker start and seem more congenial to a number of “women” for whom the meaning of the category is permanently moot...Coalitional politics requires neither an expanded category of “women” nor an internally multiplicitous self that offers its complexity at once...An open coalition, then, will affirm identities that are alternately instituted and relinquished according to the purposes at hand; it will be an open assemblage that permits of multiple convergences and divergences without obedience to a normative telos of definitional closure (ibid., 20-22).

This ‘antifoundationalist approach to coalitional politics’ renders the coalition permanently incomplete, predicated precisely on a refusal to secure the subject, on the celebration of its own opacity. Importantly this does not abandon the possibility for collective action; on the contrary, it expands such possibilities dramatically insofar as it refuses to impose totalising standards upon action and solidarity and celebrates a multiplicity of affinities and identities (which ‘can come into being and dissolve depending on the concrete practices that constitute them’ (ibid.)).

One cannot appropriate Butler’s ideas here and strip them of their explicit attempts to articulate a *feminist* politics without caution. However, her account resonates with the wider arguments mobilised in this thesis. The rejection of a sovereign approach to coalition and the unmasking of the situated and non-innocent nature of ‘unities’ accords with the positions taken here, as does Butler’s concern that political action

which rests upon (rather than opens space to challenge and subvert) dominant forms of subjectivity delimits and deradicalises the political possibilities of coalitional politics. Most importantly, Butler comes close to the politics of affinity when she suggests that, in the space left empty by not enforcing coalitional ‘unity’, ‘provisional unities might emerge in the context of concrete actions that have purposes other than the articulation of identity’ (2006: 21). Recalling the explorations of the ‘diversity of tactics’, we can see attempts by anti-militarist activists to affirm contingent coalitions which facilitate political action and intervention without foreclosing the dissonances and divergences which constitute such spaces.

The AMN might be read as an open coalition in Butler’s sense; action proceeds on the logic of affinity, mobilised by those individuals or groups who decide together to intervene in a particular way. Very few general ‘rules’ are laid down, beyond those principles which insist on the ‘autonomy’ of different groups (on which more below). The most stringent of these principles is the one which states that groups and individuals should not publically criticise one another.⁹⁰ The aim is not convergence, an eventual final position or consensus; it is to provide mutual facilitation and support, a forum in which affinities can be sought as the space for difference is asserted in a manner which defers closure, which remains incomplete.

Care is needed when taking the open coalition outside of its specifically feminist articulation, and the mobilisation here is not intended to suggest that a similar (or even remotely comparable) contestation over various and conflicting identities is experienced amongst anti-militarists. Nonetheless, this friction may be precisely where using the open coalition in this context is most provocative; it demands that ‘we’ situate questions and diversities concerning strategic choices, tactical limitations, organisational forms – those decisions and differences which tend most explicitly to divide anti-militarists – as questions of subjectivity. This does two things. The first is to highlight the ways in which an anti-militarist open coalition refuses central logics of militarism by refusing totalising conceptions of unity, narrow and subordinating conceptions of strategy (i.e., strategy as confrontation), and the impulse towards exclusion in the name of ‘The Cause’. The second is to mark again the ways in which questions of resistance are always simultaneously questions about who we are, and who we might otherwise

⁹⁰ As noted, this led to some tension given the decision not to add ‘nonviolence’ as a principle, and some groups decided not to join the coalition.

be(come). An open coalition allows for the exploration of autonomies and affinities in ways which preserve their anti-sovereign character; indeed, it could be argued that an open coalition *is* the practice of autonomy and affinity, where both are seen not as properties of a relationship, but as *etia* which guide and enliven prefigurative explorations.

The concept of autonomy is of particular importance of activists, for better and for worse. The AMN is defined as ‘a non-hierarchical, UK-wide network of *autonomous* campaigns, groups and activists’ (Anti-Militarist Network 2008), peace camps are designated as ‘(temporary) *autonomous zones*,’ and the desire to respect the autonomy of constituent members underlie attempts to affirm a diversity of tactics within coalitions. Autonomy is mobilised to signify precisely those attempts to affirm multiplicity and difference within the context of coalition (wherein constituent parts and subjects remain autonomous), and is therefore of particular importance here. At the same time the concept of autonomy has a deeply contested history which has seen it bound up with liberal and masculinist subjectivities, as self-determining, preserved by its capacity to obscure (often violently) the marks of its relationality with and dependence on ‘non-autonomous’ (subordinated) feminised subjectivities (Brown 1995: 156-8).⁹¹ Furthermore the declaration of autonomy can signify precisely that sense of completeness which has been problematized here, the signification of a community as ‘autonomous’ serving to draw lines which obscure the ways in which forms and practices of domination operate in such spaces. It is on such terms that Graeber suggests that autonomy is ‘simultaneously the greatest anarchist value, and the greatest dilemma’ (2009: 266).

The concept of autonomy need not be abandoned as liberal subjectivities are problematised and dismantled; indeed, in revealing the liberal fiction of autonomy (which, following Butler and Landauer, we might see as a depoliticising impediment to ethical reflection and social resistance), a more embedded, exploratory and creative understanding might be sought. As Shukaitis writes, autonomy ‘is not something that is possessed by an individual subject so much as a relation created between subjects; that is, it is a form of sociality and openness to the other created through cooperative relations...Autonomy is more a notion that is useful in mutual shaping and crafting of

⁹¹ See also Sylvester (1992).

the social field, rather than something that precedes it' (2009: 18).⁹² Newman adds to this conception, arguing that 'by autonomy, I do not mean a fully achieved situation of freedom and independence, but rather an ongoing project, a continual invention and experimentation with new practices of freedom, conducted associatively, producing alternative ethical relations between the self and others' (2011a: 277). Autonomy becomes a ceaseless project of exploration, identification, and experimentation. It is indissociable from attempts to explore logics of subjectification, insofar as it demands that we interrogate the logics through which our relationality (and therefore responsibility) is constituted, and look to build projects which interrupt and escape relations of hegemony, authority and domination. Such explorations might serve to displace the 'false autonomy' which paradoxically renders the liberal capitalist subject 'quintessentially susceptible to disciplinary power' (Brown 1995: 19), whilst keeping the question of the coalition (and of autonomy within and beyond the coalition) open.

The logic of affinity might be treated similarly. Unlike a politics based on traditional hegemonic conceptions of identity, relations of affinity resist stasis and naturalisation (Haraway 1991: 156), demanding a constant attention to possibilities for explorations of solidarity and responsibility. As Day puts it,

[a] politics of affinity...is not about abandoning identification as such; it is about abandoning the fantasy that *fixed, stable*, identities are possible and desirable, that one identity is better than another, that superior identities deserve more of the good and less of the bad that a social order has to offer, and that the state form should act as the ultimate arbiter of who gets what (2005: 128).

In the way it has been used in this thesis, as a counterpoise to the logic of hegemony, the concept of affinity arguably overreaches. Day's aspiration for affinity-based relationships, 'that is, for non-universalizing, non-hierarchical, non-coercive relationships based and mutual aid and shared ethical commitments [sic]' (ibid., 9, emphasis in original), is clearly an optimistic one, and liable to fall into the traps of completeness. However, like autonomy, affinity is more appropriately conceptualised as

⁹² I am suspicious of Shukaitis' additional suggestion that '[t]he assumption of the existence of autonomy, whether by individuals or collectively, might well be an important precondition in creating conditions for its emergence' (2009: 18). Such assumptions displace the vital need to deconstruct hegemonic liberal conceptions of autonomy. It is the recognition and deconstruction of autonomy as a heterogeneous and politicised concept which might transcend the liberal assumptions on which particular (and depoliticising) conceptions of autonomy rest.

an ethos, as a work-in-progress in the efforts to displace the hegemony of hegemony. Conceptualising it thus serves to displace narratives of ontological differentiation which can come to constitute the nature of a coalition; it also places the question of politics before, rather than after, the articulation of a coalitional ‘we’.

Foucault, responding to Richard Rorty’s charge that he does not appeal to a ‘we’ which might ‘constitute the framework for a thought and define the conditions in which it can be validated’, suggests that

...the problem is, precisely, to decide if it is actually suitable to place oneself within a “we” in order to assert the principles one recognizes and the values one accepts; or if it is not, rather, necessary to make the future formation of a “we” possible, by elaborating the question. Because it seems to me that the “we” must not be previous to the question; it can only be the result – and the necessarily temporary result – of the question as it is posed in the new terms in which one formulates it (1991: 385).

As Call argues, ‘the Foucaultian’s emphasis on diversity does not preclude the possibility that [a subject] might place herself within a “we” – but she must be careful to do so only in a tactical and provisional way’ (2002: 63). Affinities have a temporary, tactical and exploratory character, displacing the expectation that interventions must be totalising and that coalitions must be aspiring sovereigns. Conceptualising affinities (and autonomies) in this way allows for a continual interplay of perspectives, indeed for debates and contestations which might reveal the limitations and violences which are performed amongst activists, without disciplining such debates within the presumption of unity.

The discussion here has sought to outline some ways in which collective political interventions might proceed in a manner which strives to identify and resist the closures often enacted by coalitional forms. More fundamentally, it has begun to suggest some ways in which a commitment to multiplicity and openness can be articulated in a manner which retains a particular politics. Mobile conceptions of autonomy, affinity and coalition allow explorations and interventions whilst deferring the centralisation and standardisation of particular modes and strategies. Whilst these are important steps, they do not help to conceptualise more firmly how, within a context of foundationlessness, particular practices, tactics and subjects might be

criticised in a manner which does not collapse back towards totality. For this, the discussion turns towards Call.

Part Three: Micro-fascism and Anarcho-becoming

If a coalition must serve as a site of perpetual exploration of relationalities, responsibilities, autonomies and affinities, how can it also articulate particular politics, set limits, make judgments? If 'we' are seeking a politics of resistance which refuses to allow totalising standards of analysis or strategy to define the prefiguration of counter-subjectivities, by what measure is such prefiguration to be explored? In this section, I argue that we should be suspicious of approaches which offer straightforward, programmatic or ontological solutions. Instead, the tension Call draws between micro-fascism and anarcho-becoming offers an approach which permits (indeed, demands) political judgments and interventions to be made in a manner which perpetually displaces any stable or metaphysical grounding for such judgments. The discussion moves on to consider the place of anarchic subjectivity in such a context, looking first at what might be meant by an anarchy of the subject, and then at how we might criticise confrontational and strategic formulations of resistance from this perspective.

Day demonstrates one common answer to the question of how judgments might be made when he argues that the ethically committed subject 'abandons the position of pure nomadism – some things *are* thrust out, namely racism, sexism, homophobia...perhaps capitalism and the state form as well' (2005: 186, emphasis in original). Whilst this is a tempting position, it is not unproblematic insofar as it functions to obscure explorations of relationality, reintroducing the logic of ontology in a manner which may serve to bracket the subject of resistance. It implies that those who are not 'thrust out' may be innocent of their participation in racism, sexism, the state form and so forth when, as has been noted at various points throughout the thesis, such performances and complicities are often faint, hidden, and dangerously masked by narratives of purity or completeness. In Butler's terms, it is a list that enacts lines of ontological differentiation which serve to obscure relations, responsibilities and opportunities, and establish roles of judge and judged; in such a schema, condemnation 'becomes the way in which we establish the other as nonrecognizable or jettison some aspect of ourselves that we lodge in the other, whom we then condemn' (2005: 46).

This is emphatically not to argue that resistance to capitalism and the state form is not of urgent necessity, but rather to suggest that the confident ontological differentiation at work here may impede such a resistance.⁹³

For her part Butler, considering how one might choose between the appeal to as-yet unrecognised rights by Hitler and by the anti-apartheid movement, argues that '[w]hen we come to deciding right and wrong courses of action in that context, it is crucial to ask: what forms of community have been created, and through what violences and exclusions have they been created?' (2004: 225). This is a more attractive approach than Day's, precisely because it does not rely on a preordained list functioning to establish lines across which subjects and practices are 'thrust'. It demands a context-sensitive and politically engaged negotiation in each particular case. Call's intervention takes such a perspective further.

Call implicitly refuses the continuum Day establishes between a 'pure nomadism' which, in the refusal of all closure, cannot make political interventions, and the more contingent nomad who can confidently 'thrust out...those whose practices perpetuate division, domination and exploitation' (2005: 186). His approach is powerful because he maintains a commitment to the crucial moment of political closure, to the decision, without sacrificing the ceaseless and restless ontological disruption which refuses closure. He recognises the danger that 'if all essence, all fixed being, all laws of states and subjects are to be swept away in the torrent of becoming' we run the risk of 'becoming-fascist' (2002: 52). Such a concern is made more acute because the

...real horror of fascism grows not, perhaps, out of the fact that it can seize power at the macropolitical level; any state can do that. What is peculiarly horrific about fascism is the way that it penetrates the smallest nooks and crannies of the social organism...able to divert many of the supposedly liberating streams of personal becoming, sucking them down into the seemingly irresistible gravity-well of an ethical-political black hole (ibid.).

⁹³ In Day's defence, his position here is not at all ignorant to such concerns. He points to a groundless and infinite responsibility, arguing that 'as individuals, as groups, we can never allow ourselves to think that we are 'done', that we have identified all of the sites, structures and processes of oppression 'other there' and, most crucially, 'in here', inside our own individual and group identities' (2005: 200). While there is much to be commended here, it leaves unchallenged the violence which is marked precisely at the delimitation of what is 'in' and 'out' of 'our' space.

Call suggests that the danger of becoming-fascist might form the limit of radical becoming, of anarchic openness. He bypasses the notion of being 'more' or 'less' nomadic, instead understanding the experience of creativity, mobility and prefigurative exploration as one which is always already ceaselessly encountering its limits:

The possibility of fascism does not strip becoming of its anarchistic implications. Rather, microfascism should be understood as the limit which defines becoming, grants it a definite (albeit fluid and flexible) shape, and prevents it from dissipating into a politically meaningless gasp of chaos...I would say of anarcho-becoming and microfascism [that] they have a definite relationship – not dialectical, to be sure, but spiralling. The threat of microfascism is what motivates anarcho-becoming, what makes it possible, and indeed what completes it. Anarcho-becoming is thus locked into a permanent duel with micro-fascism, but ironically this duel is actually crucial to the anarchy of becoming, for it is what channels and focuses that anarchy into a coherent program of political self-creation...*Kill your inner fascist* – this single, minimal limit opens up incomprehensibly vast vistas of becoming, for there are surely a billion ways to fulfil this prescription (2002: 52-53, emphasis in original).

The tension between radical (or anarcho-) becoming and micro-fascism invites us to consider a limit which refuses to become an alibi for completeness or differentiation, which gives no secure guidelines, identities or guarantees, and which is simultaneously deeply demanding and yet profoundly open to creativity. The limit of microfascism does not reproduce the ontological totalisation or the deferral of responsibility which are risked when taking Day's approach. It arrives as a constitutive and mobile singularity which permits a deeply political (and creative) resistance, which demands both antagonistic contestation and a ceaseless willingness to deconstruct such contestation. It allows political assertions, articulations and interventions which continually defer the arrival of (micro-) totalisations.

Following Nietzsche and Deleuze, Call is concerned to 'abolish the conditions of thinking which make the state possible in the first place' by exploring those forms of counterthought which seek to refuse hegemonic rationalities and subjectivities (ibid., 51). The anarcho-becoming discussed here forms a part of such a project; the continual affirmation and creation against and beyond the fascisms of everyday life (to borrow Foucault's phrasing), a ceaseless project of diagnosis and exploration. It permits no

fixed or hegemonic forms (whether as state or coalition), understanding humans ‘not as beings with fixed essences but rather as selves-in-process’ (ibid., 52). Call approvingly cites Perez’s observation that ‘the overman or over(wo)man is she who no longer needs the State, or any other institution, for that matter. She is her own creator of values and as such the first true an(archist)’ (Perez 1990: 20, cited in Call 2002: 52).

The apparent tension between the desire for openness and the need to make particular decisions and judgements is therefore not one to be resisted, deferred or explained away through a checklist of ontologising exceptions against which ‘we’ might define ‘our’-selves. It is one which should be introduced into every moment, decision, and reflection, and celebrated not as an impediment, but as precisely that which makes intervention and resistance both possible and radically creative. This is a crucial step in the formulation of a resistance which refuses to totalise; this anarcho-becoming is, however, predicated on an anarchy of the subject which bears further elucidation.

An Anarchy of the Subject

The suggestion here is that a radical politics of the sort envisaged in this thesis should promote an anarchy of the subject. This is not an affirmation without specific content; rather, it is a concept which reflects the disruptions of the security/insecurity, order/chaos binaries reintroduced at the beginning of this chapter; i.e., that in the refusal of the images of the subject produced through narratives of order and security we see not a mirroring gesture reflecting images of chaos and insecurity, but a displacement which refuses the metaphysical/hegemonic aspirations of much of contemporary politics. An anarchy of the subject does not involve an ‘anything goes’ sensibility which functions only to preserve (and, in its uncriticality, most likely reproduce) the sovereign status of order and security; its content is more subtle, though no less radical. The discussion here will first elaborate what might be meant by an anarchy of the subject, before going on to note some problematic ways in which this anarchy is deferred in the practice of radical politics, notably through narratives of strategy and confrontation, and suggest that this deferral might be resisted.

In Chapter Two I highlighted Goldman’s conception of anarchic subjectivity, placing particular attention on her call for insurrection against all totalising, programmatic and hegemonic standards of being, for a radical and creative exploration

of the self. Similarly to Goldman, Call argues that ‘postmodern anarchism declares, beginning with Nietzsche, an *anarchy of the subject*. The postmodern subject is and must remain multiple, dispersed, and...schizophrenic.’ He further argues that this anarchy of the subject ‘encourages the preservation and cultivation of difference and Otherness within the postmodern project,’ a cultivation which might guard against the coming of totalitarian subjectivities (ibid., 22).

There are of course resonances with the Deleuzian mobilisation of nomadism here, with a project of perpetual decoding, of ironic, joyful, subversive, elusive becoming which refuses crystallisation and abhors fidelity to conventions and expectations, even those of ‘dissent’ (Hoy 2004: 30). It is on such terms that Bertalan cites Deleuze and Guattari:

Form rhizomes and not roots, never plant! Don’t sow, forage! Be neither a One nor a Many, but multiplicities! Form a line, never a point! Speed transforms the point into a line. Be fast, even while standing still! Line of chance, line of hips, line of flight. Don’t arouse the General in yourself! Not an exact idea, but just an idea (Godard). Have short-term ideas. Make maps not photographs or drawings. Be the Pink Panther, and let your loves be like the wasp and the orchid, the cat and the baboon (Deleuze and Guattari 1983: 75, cited in Bertalan 2011: 222).

Bertalan also cites Goldman’s statement that ‘when it is said of a man that he has arrived, it means that he is finished’ (ibid.), to point towards her (and by implication his own) anarchism as ‘a political philosophy with currents that reject...the desire for foundations, naturalist bases, fixed subjects and prescriptions, instead, in a decidedly Nietzschean move, favouring the unknown’ (ibid.). From these perspectives, the anarchic subject emerges as a perpetually mobile and creative force, which must continually identify and disrupt her constraints and stases.

In the midst of these breathless exhortations, however, it is important not to marginalise the often slow, cautious and difficult processes by which the subject comes to know (and thus refuse and recreate) itself. Heckert argues that ‘[p]romoting difference is not to advocate “anarchy” in the sense of a lack of ethical standards, but anarchy in the sense of people deciding for themselves, in relation with others, how to live their lives without being told (or telling themselves) that they are doing it wrong’

(2011: 200), and that ‘when people say that Foucault’s turn to the care of the self is a conservative, individualistic, bourgeois [sic] or liberal move, I am in disagreement. For the care of the self, in my experience, is a letting go of the enclosed self, of self-consciousness, of that which is both the effect and the foundation of the state’ (ibid., 204-205). His gentler pace invites an introspection which, though less heroic or spectacular than Deleuze and Guattari’s invocations, questions the ways in which ‘we’ are complicit in the reproduction of the state form when our subjectivities depend on what we assume the truth of ourselves to be, rather than exploring as productive our inconsistencies, instincts and unnarratable possibilities. In this sense, an anarchy of the subject is about the constant interrogation, refusal, and recreation of the self (however defined); such a sensibility is both radically open, accommodating of countless forms, energies and tempos, and provides the resources to critique those modes of being which reproduce images of security and insecurity, order and chaos.

The following paragraphs outline one important way in which such a critique might be mobilised. The shortcomings of conceptions of resistance which oversubscribe to discourses of strategy and confrontation have been indicated at a number of points in the thesis. Identifying them more substantively in the context of the wider discussion here is useful for a number of reasons; the first is that it demonstrates how commitment to an anarchy of the subject can mobilise a critique of particular subjectivities, the second is that it further elucidates the particular politics of an anarchy of the subject, and the third is that it sets the terms for the final section, which will explore in more detail the place of prefiguration with respect to the arguments advanced here.

Landauer is at his most acerbic when he chastises the tendency of anarchists to rely upon logics of confrontation:

The anarchists have always been far too fond of systems and attached to rigid, narrow concepts. This, in fact, is the final answer to the question as to how anarchists can find value in the killing of fellow human beings. They have become used to dealing with concepts instead of real people. They have separated humanity into two static and hostile classes. When they kill, they do not kill human beings but concepts – that of the exploiter, the oppressor, the representative of the state. This is why those who are often the kindest and most humane in their private lives commit the most inhumane acts in the public

sphere. There, they do not feel; they have switched off their senses. They act as exclusively rational beings who – like Robespierre – are the servants of *reason*; a reason that divides and judges. This cold, spiritually empty, and destructive logic is the rationale for the death sentences handed down by the anarchists. But anarchy is neither as easily achievable, nor as morally harsh, nor as clearly defined as these anarchists would have it. Only when anarchy becomes, for us, a dark, deep dream, not a vision attainable through concepts, can our ethics and our actions become one (2010: 91).

A similar perspective was noted when discussing Landstreicher's perspectives on militarism in Chapter Three, in his claim that 'to militarize this struggle, to transform it essentially into a question of strategies and tactics, of opposing forces and numbers, is to begin to create within our struggle that which we are trying to destroy' (2009: 86).

Whilst assassinations are a tactic largely consigned to anarchism's past, the retreat to concepts and abstraction in the service of strategy is not unheard of; the language used to describe fascists and police ('scum', 'pigs', etc.) might stand as one common example. This is, of course, not to suggest that fascism and (/as) policing are not practices which should be contested; rather, it is to insist that forms of response which rely upon abstraction and dehumanisation are liable to reperform precisely that which is resisted, and establish lines of ontological differentiation which are prone to prohibit the exploration of relationality and responsibility. As Butler argues, '[i]f we forget that we are related to those we condemn, even those we *must* condemn, then we lose the chance to be ethically educated or "addressed" by a consideration of who they are and what their personhood says about the range of human possibility that exists, even to prepare ourselves for or against such possibilities' (2005: 45). Landauer's observation that those who are often the kindest and most humane in their private lives commit the most inhumane acts in the public sphere has uncomfortable resonances with Booth's reflections on his life as a realist, his public life as a strategist at odds with his more reflective, uncertain private self (1997).

Goldman intervenes on similar terms here. In her controversial essay 'Minorities Versus Majorities', she argues that

[i]f I were to give a summary of the tendency of our times, I would say, Quantity. The multitude, the mass spirit, dominates everywhere, destroying

quality. Our entire life – production, politics, and education – rests on quantity, on numbers...In politics, naught but quantity counts. In proportion to its increase, however, principles, ideals, justice, and uprightness are completely swamped by the array of numbers...That is the only god, - Success. As to what expense, what terrible cost to character, is of no moment (1969: 69).

As was argued in Chapter Two, neither Landauer nor Goldman denied the urgent need for political contestation, for struggle, resistance, direct action, revolution. Their scepticism lay with *confrontation*, that is, with what they saw to be the resentment-laden attempts to reduce ‘the enemy’ to concepts and abstraction, to engage in strategic thinking which replicated the logics they opposed, to abandon the project of cultivating disobedient, creative subjects and instead to adhere to outmoded logics of political intervention. I would suggest that, in this scepticism, they anticipated some of Foucault’s major insights.

Foucault’s well-known indictment of socialist biopolitics in *Society Must Be Defended* bears remarkable similarities with Landauer’s concerns. Foucault argues that

[w]henever...socialism has been forced to stress the problem of struggle, the struggle against the enemy, of the elimination of the enemy within capitalist society itself, and when, therefore, it has had to think about the physical confrontation with the class enemy in capitalist society, racism does raise its head, because it is the only way in which socialist thought, which is after all very much bound up with the themes of biopower, can rationalize the murder of its enemies. When it is simply a matter of eliminating the adversary in economic terms, or of taking away his privileges, there is no need for racism. Once it is a matter of coming to terms with the thought of a one-to-one encounter with the adversary, and with the need to fight him physically, to risk one’s own life and try to kill him, there is a need for racism (2004: 262).

On the question of confrontation Foucault’s position is complex, but sceptical. He insists that ‘[domination] is a strategic situation more or less taken for granted and consolidated by means of a long-term confrontation between adversaries. It can certainly happen that the fact of domination may only be the transcription of a mechanism of power resulting from confrontation and its consequences’ (1982: 795). Elsewhere, and further revealing his sceptical view of strategy, he says:

If I were asked for my conception of what I do, the strategist being the man who says, “What difference does a particular death, a particular cry, a particular revolt make compared to the great general necessity, and, on the other hand, what difference does a general principle make in the particular situation where we are?”, well, I would have to say that it is immaterial to me whether the strategist is a politician, a historian, a revolutionary, a follower of the shah or of the ayatollah; my theoretical ethics is opposite to theirs. It is “antistrategic”: to be respectful when a singularity revolts, intransigent as soon as power violates the universal (2002: 453).

Foucault, like Landauer and Goldman, is sceptical of conceptions of strategy and confrontation, which offer little in the way of disrupting biopolitics - and of course, in this sense, little for disrupting the logic of security either (Newman 2011b: 173; Dillon and Reid 2001: 47-51). Their fidelity to ‘regularizing’ modes of power (Foucault 2004: 247) enshrines a (racist) abstraction more likely to reproduce that which is opposed – militarism, security, the state form - than to break it down.

In one sense, this scepticism of confrontation and strategy is another pathway into exploring the cultivation of anti-militarist subjectivities. Chapter Four placed some premium in drawing out modes of contestation which refuse the slide towards confrontation, and in examining attempts to displace abstracted conceptions of strategy which threaten to delimit the experience and exploration of becoming otherwise. As the discussion about coalitional politics earlier in this chapter makes clear, this scepticism of strategic and confrontational politics is emphatically not intended to render impossible collaborations and co-ordinations, schemes and plots. Rather, it is to situate such interventions as *tactical* moves, which hold no aspirations for hegemony, grand strategy, the transcendence and subsumption of micro-politics within the macro-political imaginary. It is to refuse to represent as one critiques the representation of the state, to acknowledge the counter-productive nature of the impulse to ‘do politics’ in the manner associated with the state form, militarism, and the hegemonic imaginary (May 1994: 54).

The discussions here have suggested one way in which commitment to an anarchy of the subject can mobilise a critique of particular forms of subjectivity, as delimiting the cultivation of and potential for multiplicity, and reperforming strategies of abstraction upon which the state form, militarism and security depend. An anarchy of the subject, then, is not a boundless concept which can neither criticise nor delimit; it

is one which seeks, enacts and celebrates difference, disobedience, multiplicity and exploration whilst intervening (towards itself, beyond, and at the boundaries of itself and beyond) to delimit that which imposes hegemony, representation, abstraction, domination – the becoming-fascisms which underpin totalising political projects. The chapter has in this sense arrived a particular approach to the subject, albeit one which seeks to refuse the instantiation of particular forms of subjectivity. The discussion cannot, however, rest here; the general nature of these considerations, whilst necessary in some senses, are liable to render the suggestions and speculations overly idealised, romanticised or, worse, facile. The final part of the chapter, therefore, returns to the concept of prefiguration as a practice through which the aspiration towards anarchic subjects might be explored.

Part Four: Prefiguring In/Security

Reflecting on the nature of resistance (in its instantiation as a Foucauldian *problematique*), Brown notes that resistance ‘goes nowhere in particular, has no inherent attachments, and hails no particular vision,’ and that, by itself, ‘does not contain a critique, a vision, or grounds for organised collective effort to enact either’ (1995: 49). Situating this apparent shortcoming, she argues that

[c]ontemporary affection for the politics of resistance issues from postmodern criticism’s perennial authority problem: our heightened consciousness of the will to power in all political “positions” and our wariness about totalizing analyses and visions. Insofar as it eschews rather than revises these problematic practices, resistance-as-politics does not raise the dilemmas of responsibility and justification entailed in “affirming” political projects and norms (1995: 49).

There is much that can be said about such a diagnosis. What this final section will suggest is that the concept of prefiguration might offer routes through which the dilemmas of responsibility and justification can be explored and negotiated in ways which are committed to ceaselessly resisting totalising analyses and visions. In Chapter Two, prefigurative politics was defined as a dynamic interplay where speculative and creative interventions in the direction of ‘ends’ are explored and deconstructed in the process of anarchist action. It is not the attempt to live utopias, nor the abandonment of contestations; it indicates attempts to imagine and enact ways of being and relating

otherwise, to cultivate counter-subjectivities, and to explore these various figurations. As Chapter Four makes clear, commitment to prefigurative politics involves the continual search for authorities, hierarchies and abstractions which emerge in the space of resistance; as such, and by definition, prefigurative politics does not aim towards completeness or finality. It is a process by which we come to know ourselves, to refuse ourselves, and to become otherwise.

The examples explored throughout Chapter Four, from peace camps to die-ins, might all be interpreted as examples of prefigurative politics. What concerns us here is less the success of those particular processes (which, as indicated, is a complex question) than the consideration of how the prefigurative imaginary might function in the ways suggested above, i.e., to help articulate resistance in a manner which does not totalise, which actively subverts logics of confrontation and strategy, and which can accommodate and celebrate an anarchy of the subject. First, I suggest that prefiguration is a mode through which the revolution/reform dichotomy can be dissolved. The discussion moves to the preservation of self-doubt and incompleteness within a prefigurative imaginary, and then to consider the importance of contradiction, irony and conflict within such a framing. Finally, I return to security, to suggest that prefiguration might be the mode through which the anarchic subject displaces the terms of security/insecurity.

Prefiguration can be targeted towards a number of binaries and used in the service of their subversion. For instance, the theory/practice hierarchy is undermined powerfully when 'practice' operates as a site through which authorities are exposed and alternatives explored, when resistance (whether on paper, in meetings, or on the streets) conceptualises itself as a deconstructive endeavour. The revolution/reform binary is of particular interest, insofar as it serves to discipline much of radical political praxis. Whilst anarchism has mobilised discourses of revolution throughout its history it also provides tools to rethink the binary, precisely through the concepts of direct action and prefiguration. Refusing to cede 'liberation' or 'emancipation' to the future (a deferral which, as Bey makes clear, is liable to trap us in the present, or to establish new totalities (2003: 96-99)), anarchists have sought to expand the spaces for 'free action' in the present, insisting that anarchism is not a programme but an 'act of social self-determination' (Ward 1982: 143).

Landauer is a key figure here. His insistence that '[a]narchy is not a matter of the future; it is a matter of the present. It is not a matter of making demands; it is a matter of how one lives' (2010: 87) should be read not as an abandonment of the future, but as the recognition that to do otherwise than to seek to be(come) otherwise in the present *is itself to abandon the future*, to reperform those social relations which perpetuate domination. Day convincingly argues that Landauer's perspective here, whilst anti-revolutionary (at least, anti-revolutionary in the totalizing, masculinist sense which has come to define the concept), is not adequately captured within the language of reform. Whilst reform, in its search for marginal improvements and concessions, is liable to legitimate and reenergise dominant power systems, Landauer's conception of prefigurative direct action seeks emphatically and precisely to sap energy from dominant power systems (Day 2005: 123-124). The specific means by which this sapping might be carried out, and the various pitfalls and reperformances, involve tactical (rather than strategic) decisions and discussions. These decisions and discussions, their speculations, explorations and tentative experiments, are themselves the domain of prefigurative politics.

One issue which arises when attempting to break down the revolution/reform binary is the question about the extent to which gains 'won' within the context of predominant systems of power can aide in the process of seeking radical change. Newman, for instance, suggests that making demands on the state, e.g., for higher wages, equal rights, not to go to war,

...does not necessarily mean working within the state or reaffirming its legitimacy. On the contrary, demands are made from a position outside the established political order, and they often exceed the question of the implementation of this or that specific measure. They implicitly call into question the legitimacy and even the sovereignty of the state by highlighting fundamental inconsistencies between, for instance, a formal constitutional order than guarantees certain rights and equalities, and state practices that in reality violate and deny them (2011b: 114).

Although this thesis has proceeded from a perspective which remains deeply sceptical of making demands upon the state, Newman's argument (which itself pays little heed to the revolution/reform binary) is important. When read against Day's concerns that every demand perpetuates dominant systems of power (and so, to stop the state from

waging war, we might disrupt and damage its war-making capabilities, or work more substantively to break down the militarised imaginaries, relations and obediences which make the state's wars possible), what emerges is not a strategic direction or a general rule, but a series of possibilities, concerns, dangers; a tactical problematique.

Day acknowledges the importance of making such explorations tactical, cautioning against over-establishing his own anti-hegemonic perspective:

I want to make it clear that I am not advocating total rejection of reformist or revolutionary programs in all cases; to do so would be to attempt to hegemonize the field of social change. Rather...I am citing what I see as the historically established *limited prospects* for these modes, and arguing that non-hegemonic strategies and tactics need to be explored *more fully* than has so far been the case (2005: 215, emphases in original).

Prefiguration can be read as the exploration and negotiation of such problematiques, one which will reveal no blueprints, but which continually investigates the opportunities and authorities which may be expected, encountered, and enacted. In this sense, it remains anti-hegemonic, responsive to the concerns of those involved, context specific, and deeply theoretical.

Brown offers support for this prefigurative conception of resistance when she calls for the generation of feminist spaces within which to explore competing conceptions of 'the good': 'Unlike Arendt's, these spaces cannot be pristine, rarified, and policed at their boundaries but are necessarily cluttered, attuned to earthly concerns and visions, incessantly disrupted, invaded, and reconfigured' (1995: 50). Pointing back to the open coalition, and to the explorations at the close of Chapter Five, she further insists that '[o]ur spaces, while requiring some definition and protection, cannot be clean, sharply bounded, disembodied, or permanent: to engage postmodern modes of power *and* honor specifically feminist knowledges, they must be heterogenous, roving, relatively noninstitutionalized, and democratic to the point of exhaustion' (ibid., emphasis in original). The incompleteness towards which she points, and which has been emphasised throughout this thesis, is crucial.

Jun captures the spirit of a perpetually self-problematising prefiguration well when he argues for 'experimentation on the one hand and eternal vigilance on the other', warning that

[o]ur experiments may lead to positive transformations, they may lead to madness, they may lead to death. What starts out as a reckless and beautiful affirmation of life can become a death camp. It is not enough, therefore, to experiment and create; one must be mindful of, and responsible for, one's creations. The process requires an eternal revolution against domination (2011: 245).

Refusing to cede to dreams of fixity, he continues: 'Whatever goodness is created along the way will always be provisional, tentative and contingent, but this is hardly a reason not to create it. Anarchism is nothing if not the demand that we keep living' (ibid., 245-246). Within this constant experimentation and vigilance, Butler reminds us that the inevitable failure of self-knowledge, the inescapable opacity which results when the subject turns inward, is a crucial and productive failure, which establishes our subjectivity as relational, responsible, and perpetually incomplete (2005: 42). Whilst a more substantive discussion of the ethical implications of Butler's insights cannot be accommodated here, it is important to note that the inevitable insufficiency of the perpetual process of self-diagnosis which prefiguration demands is itself a call to celebrate and maintain incompleteness. Again, this is where the anarchic subject must guard against the strategic pragmatism of abstraction and ontological differentiation.

In this incompleteness, there is a celebration of contradiction, irony, and (agonistic) conflict. Celebrating the non-totalising potential of unities of affinity, Haraway insists that a cyborg world is 'not afraid of permanently partial identities and contradictory standpoints. The political struggle is to see from both perspectives at once because each reveals both dominations and possibilities unimaginable from the other vantage point' (1991: 154). In cultivating and celebrating multiplicity, prefigurative politics invites contrasting, conflicting and contradictory explorations which reveal, variously and incommensurably, opportunities and problems in a variety of spaces. The logic of affinity maintains the anti-hegemonising nature of such explorations; their suspicions and conclusions are not sovereign, and are welcomed into dialogue and conflict free from the exhausting constraints imposed by the desire for the illusion of unity. Diversity of tactics can exist alongside collective explorations and engagements. Call celebrates nomadic and deconstructive thought, insofar as it 'insists upon its right to remain perpetually fluid, malleable, and provisional. It uses guerrilla tactics against the "total war" strategy of the *logos*' (2002: 71, emphasis in original). A prefigurative

politics which aims to cultivate and explore an anarchy of the subject and its becoming might operate as precisely such an insurrection.

This chapter began by reiterating the resistance to the terms of security which has been mobilised in this thesis. The considerations of prefiguration recall this resistance, promoting the cultivation, exploration and mobilisation of provisional, tactical and mobile interventions which seek to refuse the hegemony, regularization, and metaphysical aspirations which accompany the binaries of security/insecurity. Anarchic subjects work to refuse the existential guarantees of security as fictions and fixities which dull the creative potential and blunt the political radicality of anarcho-becoming. Prefiguration offers the conceptual space to explore politics free from (or, rather, resistant to) such constraints.

In affirming perpetual incompleteness, rather than seeking to discipline or secure against it, prefiguration opens the possibility of resisting the perpetuation of the state form, and does so in a manner which affirms a radical conception of responsibility and interrelation. In striving to refuse the institutionalisation or imposition of 'better', 'emancipatory' or 'revolutionary' orders, and in deferring discourses of strategy, prefiguration holds the possibility of resisting the tendency for radical political praxis to reperform logics of domination and hegemony. Furthermore, in affirming a politics which resists hegemony, completeness, order and strategy, the anarchic subjects of prefiguration do not celebrate those images of insecurity and chaos which operate precisely to reaffirm the state form; rather, they explore and imagine at the margins. We see neither security nor insecurity; in a sense, we see an occupation at the limits of the two, a mobilisation of in/security which enacts a politics resistant to the binary. Of course, this is a perpetually unstable occupation which, as many examples from the thesis demonstrate, is never free from the effects of, nor innocent of performances in the service of, security/insecurity. Nonetheless the act of occupation stands as a crucial political moment, a rupture which begs exploration, a breakage which indicates the potential for being otherwise, and a call to explore possibilities beyond the poverty-stricken existential guarantees of security, hegemony, and the state form.

Conclusion

There is an uncomfortable irony in the move to conclude that which has insisted upon the importance of incompleteness. Prefiguration and anarchic forms of subjectivity are concepts and conducts which operate precisely in resistance to conclusion, which (in Landauer's terms) 'embrace the future's openness and refuse to determine it' (cited in Kuhn 2010: 35). It is, of course, useful to highlight some central arguments and contributions which have been made through the interpretations and discussions in this thesis. However, I do so not only to summarise, but to make clear several issues which have remained under-acknowledged. In so doing, I engage that prefigurative spirit which, in the process of exploration and imagination, turns inwards in order to recognise those exclusions and authorities which emerge. Furthermore, I suggest that that which emerges might offer further opportunities to build upon the arguments mobilised thus far.

I first highlight the major arguments of this thesis before noting several contributions to academic literature which have been made. I move then towards that which has remained largely silent, noting in particular the lack of substantive discussions on the work of Derrida and Deleuze (and, importantly, the tensions between the two), the problematically confined nature of the ethnographic study, and the lack of an in-depth interrogation of the concept of solidarity. Whilst these issues exceed the scope and focus of the thesis and as such have been left to one side, I suggest that the arguments which have been made might help to frame them in ways which permits useful and novel (re)interpretation. Such is the line of flight, or re-opening, in the closure of this conclusion.

This thesis has made three substantive arguments. The first is that anarchism, theoretically and practically (and at the effacing of the lines between theory and practice), might function as a lively and provocative insurrection against the politics of security. Its persistent recognition of and resistance to totalising or hegemonic political discourses and its subversion of the security/insecurity and order/chaos hierarchies imbue it with both a more incisive critique of domination and a more active sense of possibility than is found in much of CSS. This does not locate anarchism as a discrete theory of security, but as a theoretical practice and practical theory which mobilises perspectives, interpretations and creativities unavailable within the dominant onto-epistemological framework of CSS.

As such, the second argument has been that the interpretations which can be made from an anarchist perspective demonstrate that anti-militarists are (always) already creatively resisting and reinterpreting the politics of security. The theoretical explorations of Chapter Two are intensified, and their accompanying critique of CSS made ever more urgent, when it appears that these reflections reveal much that has remained hidden. CSS's hegemonic ontology of agency and consequent tendency to incorporate (activist) social practices within particular frameworks limits our political imagination and presumes (and so performs) the hegemony of hegemony. As the prefigurative explorations discussed throughout the thesis make clear, such incorporation is by no means necessary.

The third argument has concerned the politics of resistance. As hegemonic ontologies of agency within the context of security have been problematized, so have strategic and confrontational conceptions of resistance. Conscious throughout of the tendency for resistance to recreate or perpetuate that which is opposed, I have argued first that confrontational logics tend to reify dominant social relations and draw lines of ontological differentiation which obscure the role of subjectivity, moralising rather than questioning the subject, and that strategic understandings of resistance can place totalising and hegemonising limitations on prefigurative exploration. Instead, I have argued for an understanding of resistance which emphasises prefigurative direct action, forms of contestation which subvert confrontational (and militarised) rationalities, and a multiplicitous and perpetually incomplete conception of radical subjectivity. Together these constitute a conception of anarchism which refuses programmes and conventions and which engages in a perpetual resistance to and becoming against domination. It is on such terms that the conceptual and political mastery which is framed within and mobilised by the politics of security/insecurity might be approached in a manner which resists its violences and which keeps open the play of possibility.

The academic contributions made by this series of arguments speak predominantly to CSS. First, in highlighting hegemonic ontologies of agency I have sought to suggest that the claims to have moved beyond the statism of traditional security studies are limited. Moreover I have done so in a manner which demonstrates that this statism can be contested without the 'all the way' break into utopia which Booth claims would accompany such a move (2007: 203). Second, displacing this hegemonic ontology of agency opens epistemological resources for CSS such that it

might engage with social practices in ways which do not presume and perform the hegemonic principle. I would suggest that doing so can reveal the multiple ways in which security is being reimagined and resisted 'on the ground'. These are, of course, insights which feminists and poststructuralists have highlighted on numerous occasions, although rarely with attention to the ways in which hegemony operates here, or to the purchase of prefigurative politics (Sylvester 2002: 260; Enloe 1989: 79; Doty 2007). The third contribution, therefore, is to recognise the critical political resources and interpretive power that anarchism can bring to the study of (and resistance to) security, revealing underappreciated practices and often overlooked sites and relations of domination. Along the way, I have sought to demonstrate that these anarchist perspectives can be articulated in concert with other critical approaches.

The thesis also contributes to the burgeoning literature in contemporary anarchist studies. Primarily this involves raising and critically engaging with the politics of security, a conversation which has been noticeably absent. More important, perhaps, is the contribution which comes from a theoretically focussed study which refuses to establish a firm distinction between theory and practice. Substantive mobilisations of theory-as-practice and practice-as-theory are rare, with the work of Day and Graeber standing as notable, if partial, exceptions. As such, it is a substantial contribution of this thesis that it follows through here and engages with its various referents in the manner that it does. Indeed, in seeking to articulate in some detail the theoretical content of prefiguration as a mobilisation of an anarchy of the subject (another contribution) it is crucial, reimagining what theory and practice might be(come).

Having acknowledged these contributions, the rest of this conclusion seeks to highlight several routes forward from this point, establishing some questions and frameworks made possible by the explorations thus far. Whilst the work of Derrida and Deleuze has not been engaged directly (with a tradition leading from Nietzsche and Landauer to Foucault providing more explicit guidance), the two are deeply influential on many of those with whom I have thought, critiqued and intervened. They haunt the thesis, occasionally visible, more often remaining beneath the surface. Derrida's influence is most explicit in the approach to security (and resistance) drawn from Dillon and Burke, and in Newman's approach to postanarchism. More substantively the conception of security/insecurity with which the thesis proceeds, and the commitment to a disruption at or in the margins, has a distinctly Derridean timbre. Deleuze's

influence runs through the anarchism of Call, Jun, Bertalan and Day, amongst others, and as such influences the focus on multiplicities, the specific interpretation of prefiguration, and the conception of anarchic subjects which emerges. The anti-militarist counter-subjectivities are conceptualised precisely as lines of flight from the militarised rationalities of confrontation and strategy, epitomising Foucault's summary of Deleuze and Guattari's *Anti-Oedipus*: 'Prefer what is positive and multiple, difference over uniformity, flows over unities, mobile arrangements over systems. Believe that what is productive is not sedentary but nomadic' (1983: xiii).

The specific intentions and focuses in the thesis have precluded an in-depth exploration of Derrida and Deleuze's respective corpuses. As such, I have consciously avoided expressing points and possibilities in their terms except when necessary. I would suggest, however, that much might be gained from doing so. In particular, the potential for prefigurative direct action to operate as a form of deconstruction is implied in the thesis, and would benefit from more substantive consideration. This dual presence/absence is rendered more provocative when set alongside the tension that some have drawn between the approaches of Deleuze and Derrida, that is, between philosophical approaches which emphasise ontological abundance and ontological lack respectively.⁹⁴ As Lasse Thomassen and Lars Tønder argue:

[E]xisting literature has failed to appreciate the way in which the conceptualization of radical difference has led to significantly different versions of radical democracy – what we refer to as the ontological imaginary of abundance and the ontological imaginary of lack respectively. These two imaginaries share the idea of a radical difference and the critique of conventional conceptualizations of universality and identity; yet they also differ in the manner in which they approach these questions. For instance, they disagree on whether political analysis should start from the level of signification or from networks of embodied matter. And they disagree on the kind of politics that follows from the idea of radical difference: whereas theorists of lack emphasise the need to build hegemonic constellations, theorists of abundance emphasise never-receding pluralisation (2005: 1-2).

⁹⁴ Whilst some, such as Norval (2005), have seen Derrida as emphasising abundance, I am more inclined to follow William Connolly in stressing the role of responsibility and lack in Derrida's approach (2005). As most who write on this debate are keen to stress, this is a matter of subtleties, emphases and unstable imaginaries, about which there can be no definitive or stable perspectives.

I do not wish to engage in the particularities of the debates herein (except perhaps to disagree with Thomassen and Tønder that theorists who emphasise lack necessarily emphasise the need to build hegemonic constellations), but rather to highlight that this tension might be seen to run through this thesis.⁹⁵

The interpretation of security/insecurity is founded precisely on the incompleteness of the concept, its conceptual and political mastery operative through its perpetual failure to adequately signify the social field, the forms of subjectivity it produces marked by their always-unfinished, always-unsecured, nature. The disruptions (or, should we say, deconstructions) of the security/insecurity binary are marked by their lack, by the awkward gestures towards an outside or beyond that cannot (and must not) be reached, by their occupations of the margins of being, seeking transformations which both escape and remain trapped. They are (re)significations marked by their particular, collapsing occupation of unstable ontological frames, affirming their perpetual failure as the condition of possibility of non-totalising social relations. Nonetheless there is also a focus on abundance, on prefigurations which are immanent to the social relations of militarism and security, on lines of flight which deterritorialise ontologies of security and hegemony in a multiplicity of directions. Whilst May and Newman have sought to defend ‘abundance’ and ‘lack’ in turn (2002; 2011), May celebrating the definitiveness and collective endeavour of the former, Newman the ethical resources of the latter, I would suggest that much could be gained by acknowledging the interplay between the two. This is, at least, one direction in which the theoretical explorations of this thesis might be further developed.

That the anti-militarist ethnography has been restricted to the UK is deeply problematic. Whilst on the one hand it has facilitated an in-depth and engaged study, it has also served to draw particular boundaries, not least those of the state (and the subject of the state). While relations between activists have been discussed, these have stopped short at the border and so marked the prefigurative explorations with a particular, nationalised horizon which in many cases constitutes a problematic simplification and limitation. A second direction in which the arguments might be further extended is thus in moving beyond this nationalised imaginary. Such a project

⁹⁵ For significant contributions to these debates, see Tønder (2002), Widder (2000; 2005), Mouffe (2005), Laclau (2005).

would also lead towards the third development, which would be to open up the question of solidarity.

As with the figures of Derrida and Deleuze, the concept of solidarity haunts this thesis; it underpins understandings of autonomy, affinity, diversity of tactics and the open coalition, and has long been a central anarchist principle. In the move to bring non-UK-based anti-militarists into the equation, and so to raise questions about transnational anarchic subjectivities, the contested concept of solidarity would come more insistently into the frame, demanding an exploration and interrogation more detailed than has been offered here. I would suggest that this is an important opportunity; solidarity (beyond liberal and cosmopolitan conceptions) has been under-theorised in CSS and in critical IR more broadly, despite its clear purchase for progressive praxis (for exceptions see Steans 2007; Jabri 2007). Whilst this thesis has not engaged in such a theorisation, I would suggest that it has opened up useful pathways for developing anti-universalising and anti-hegemonic formulations. Furthermore, the apparent site of tension between Deleuze and Derrida, presence and lack, cuts precisely at the terrain on which solidarity might be articulated on the terms I have established: non-totalising relations of dependence, vulnerability, affinity and affirmation between subjects as a radically creative and perpetually incomplete endeavour. I would suggest, then, that the thesis opens up useful pathways through which the question of solidarity might be explored in ways deeply relevant to current debates in radical political theory and critical IR theory.

This thesis began by making clear what is at stake in the theoretical investigations herein, by situating its politics and by identifying a series of social forms, relations and discourses in urgent need of critique. It therefore seems appropriate to finish by reiterating these issues. On the one hand, the concern has been to call into question totalising political discourses of all forms, to suggest that resistances which seek new hegemonies are at endless risk of re-establishing relations of domination, and that claims to completeness mask the relationalities and complicities that are frequently found beneath the surface. On the other, the focus has been on more specific discourses and relations of power, specifically the state, security, and militarism. There is, of course, a significant interconnection between these levels; the metaphysics of the state and security are produced precisely through narratives of (absent) hegemony. It is at the frictions between these levels that militarism is most emphatically and brutally

(re)produced, heroic narratives of approaching or threatened hegemony and paranoiac narratives of security/insecurity constituting the social (and international) field as one of ceaseless violence and domination. It is such dynamics that the arguments herein seek to disrupt, cut, resist, escape, transform. Whether this is at any level possible depends on locating and confronting the hegemony of hegemony and insecurity of security/insecurity in as many sites and contexts, and in as many ways, as can be found. It is my hope that I have located a few, and gestured towards other possibilities, in ways which may advance the ceaseless and crucial project of *beginning*.

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List of Interviews

Interview A: Interview with an activist, London, April 2011.

Interview B: Interview with an activist, London, May 2011.

Interview C: Interview with a group of activists 1, London, June 2011.

Interview D: Interview with a group of activists 2, London, June 2011.

Interview E: Interview with an EDO Decommissioner, Bristol, July 2011.

Interview F: Interview with an activist, London, October 2011.

Interview G: Interview with an activist, London, February 2012.

Interview H: Interview with an activist, Leicester, March 2012.

Interview I: Interview with an activist, Hastings, July 2012.

Interview J: Interview with an activist, Hastings, July 2012.

Interview K: Interview with an activist, via e-mail, September 2012.

All interviewee information has been kept anonymous, due to the sensitive and/or personal nature of the context.