

Citizenship After the Death of the Public Sphere

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Abstract: Transformations in our understandings of citizenship are closely related to what is meant by the 'public sphere' and the illusory concept of 'public consent' to which so many political decisions refer. This essay describes how 'liberal democracies' have inherited the notion of a public sphere free for rational debate and political expression that has today all but disappeared, subsumed within a climate of acquiescence, consumption, and fear. I do this with particular reference to the manner in which the 2003 US/UK invasion of Iraq was, and continues to be justified, but more generally to the institutional and discursive tactics of the 'war on terror' as the ultimate paradigm of this de-politicised mode of citizenship. I conclude with some suggestions of how this climate is producing alternative modes of political participation, including the re-invention of (political) public spaces through the emergence of global mobilisations of resistance and protest.

1. Introduction: The Great Persuader and the Vulgar Masses

"A Prince should take great care, therefore, that nothing issues from his mouth which is not imbued with the five aforementioned qualities. To see him and hear him, he should seem all-merciful, all-trustworthy, all-integrity, all-humanity, all-religion. Nothing is more important to seem to have than this last quality. Generally speaking, men judge more by their eyes than by their hands, because everybody can see, but only a few can feel. Everyone sees what you seem, few feel what you are like...for the common people are always impressed by how things seem and by the way things turn out, and in the world there is nothing but common people. When the many are comfortably settled, the few will find no way in." (Machiavelli, *The Prince*)¹

The day after Tony Blair delivered his impassioned speech to parliament calling for MPs to endorse an Anglo-American war on Iraq in March 2003, Britain's newspapers were unanimous in describing the speech as a defining moment in restoring the credibility and integrity of the prime minister and democracy. The Daily Mirror, for example, despite being in full swing of its anti-war 'phase', wrote: "...we do not question (Blair's) belief in the rightness of what he is doing. It is one thing to have principles others disagree with, another altogether to have no principles ... Mr Blair and Robin Cook have helped to restore the integrity of parliament at this crucial stage in the nation's history. Both have made compelling arguments on each side of this debate - and both have been listened to with respect."² The entire spectrum of mainstream media, irrespective of their views on the morality of the impending war, were so mesmerised by the rhetoric of one speech that they found its *effect*, that is, its ability to instil a confidence that 'he believes in what he is doing', to take precedence over what he actually said. Given that the main focus of the Mirror's - along with most other anti-war commentators at the time - criticism of that integrity had been towards the lack of democracy in the government's stance on the war and the illegality of its independence from UN support, what could have changed in those respects from hearing two speeches? What kind of opinion of the role of parliament, traditionally the arena in which political experts are given the chance to test their ideas of governing against rational argument, is given credibility by a rhetoric that was never publicly challenged by experts on the issues pertinent to Iraq (such as UN inspections, the effects of sanctions, middle-east politics etc.)?

Before that parliamentary speech, Blair appeared on Newsnight to various citizen groups in an attempt to 'engage with the public'. Whilst what he said has been severely condemned by experts of its content³, what is remarkable is not the use of lies in generating public support but the fact that the structures of communication chosen to present these lies (Jeremy Paxman is hardly an expert on Middle East politics) were taken to be a fulfilment of parliament's accountability and engagement of the public with the correct facts. The arena of discussion, therefore, was somehow able to present the decision to go to war as simultaneously outrageous and entirely ethical. If opinion polls are to be believed, and public opinion swung dramatically in favour of the war once it had started and was being 'won', it begs an enquiry into the assumptions behind this nebulous entity known as 'public opinion'. What processes, natural or manipulated, lay behind this movement? Was it really the impression that at the very least the decision makers had strength in their own convictions and had listened to the reasoning of the dissenters? And in the light of evidence that it was entirely *false* evidence that formed the basis for war, does anything fall from the perception of public confidence in a government's motivation? Does all become forgotten because the show was entertaining enough?

This study attempts to take seriously the question of *who* Blair thought he was kidding when he presented his 'compelling evidence' for the necessity of going to war, understanding the active

popular resistance to the war on Iraq to be a significant shift in what people demand from the bearers of political truths. The tactics of New Labour spin doctors in fabricating the illusion of a consensual, engaged, and democratic process in the run up to what Edward Said has called “the most unpopular (war) in history”⁴ do not, perhaps, represent any radical change in the mode of electoral politics in a post-industrial age. But they do open up important questions about the recent transformations in modes of citizenship when juxtaposed against emerging alternatives to the popular conception of democratic participation in so-called liberal democracies. Five months after Blair’s “sexed-up” dossier and one month before his commons speech, London saw arguably the biggest protest march of its history, alongside an estimated 30 million people worldwide⁵, condemning war on Iraq. When war began, continued marches, acts of civil disobedience, road blockades, strikes and occupations were organised around the country to attempt to disrupt ‘business as usual’ whilst the government waged war, but went largely unreported. The monumental efforts in ‘public relations’ from British and American governments after those protests showed the relationship between political information and public opinion entering a new phase. It could be said that, in comparison with wars in the past, the 2003 invasion significantly raised the stakes for the bearers of public truth: anti-war groups and individuals became experts in media lies and government propaganda, and the government went on an all-out offensive in producing (I do not use the term rhetorically) whatever ‘hard evidence’ its audience demanded. The war was opposed with arguments that not only preceded the invasion, but anticipated the use of propaganda before the government was able to execute it⁶. Never before has the questioning of a politics of information and the manufacturing of consent⁷ taken such a front-seat in the discourse surrounding a war long before it had even started. It was also a kind of race to remain in step with a fast unravelling tragedy since September 11 2001.⁸ ‘Typical’ sites of critical debate and political information were read and seen alongside an explosion of multiple sources of information and the prominence of tactics in discrediting and satirizing those of the mainstream sources of information such as government statements and the national media. What these outbursts of alternative information demonstrate is the desire to seek alternative sources and sites of ‘opinion’ to those that are assumed in social institutions. The traditional notion that ‘the media’ are a vehicle for public information and represent some semblance of public opinion therefore provokes a sense of identity crisis – what should we believe? What do we think? Who shall we allow to speak on our behalf? Does the ‘mainstream’ represent us anymore? Tony Blair’s desperate struggle since that challenge to maintain his reputation as the ‘great persuader’⁹ is testimony to this. But the development of his style of moral/political performances simply play an essential role in the wider transformations of political rhetoric since the birth of the ‘war on terror’, in order to forge ever more reductionist assumptions about who the public is and what is expected of them. What it exposes, as I shall argue, is that citizen participation is today more analogous to the marketing of a product for popular consumption, than the practice of democratic, critical debate. The construction of public opinion involves important developments in the processes of production and consumption that occur beneath the surface level of who *speaks* and who *listens* in social life.

2. Who are The Public? Where do they come from?

“The things that are discussed (in government) are things that (people) don't much care about, like questions of character or questions of reform, which they know aren't going to be implemented. So that's what's discussed, not what people care about. And that's pretty typical, and it makes sense on the assumption that the role of the public, as the ignorant and meddling outsiders, is just to be spectators. If the general public, as it often does, seeks to organize and

enter the political arena, to participate, to press its own concerns, that's a problem. It's not democracy; it's what's called "a crisis of democracy" that has to be overcome."

(Noam Chomsky)¹⁰

Hannah Arendt, in the context of discussing the infamous Pentagon Papers¹¹, famously suggested that the only people at risk of "complete manipulation" of information are presidents and prime ministers, since it is they who saturate their own political environment with advisors, spin-doctors and other interpreters of 'outside reality' and see very little for themselves. If this is still, and perhaps much more so the case, then where does that leave a believing public, and what remains for the engagement of the (post)modern citizen in political life? The Vietnam triggered, in fact, the first major wake-up call to governments that waging unpopular wars meant, as Hannah Arendt observed, engaging with the concept of a public 'psychology' – predicting, in other words, with some precision, what it takes to achieve public acceptance. Over forty years on, this legacy takes on new dimensions within an international political environment many are rushing to categorise as 'post-democracy'¹². The hallmarks of this categorisation are typically the gradual decline in traditional sites of citizen participation and the increasing association of the role of 'autonomous' citizen as that of consumer, and whose influence on public policy is replaced by that of the markets. As Colin Crouch puts it, the 'commercialization of citizenship' simply fits into a perfectly logical progression of the specific model of *liberal* democracy whose first truly global marketing strategy came out of cold-war ideology. In the new post-democratic model of citizen participation, "while elections certainly exist and can change governments, public electoral debate is a tightly controlled spectacle, managed by rival teams of professionals expert in the techniques of persuasion, and considering a small range of issues selected by those teams. The mass of citizens plays a passive, quiescent, even apathetic part, responding only to the signals given them. Behind this spectacle of the electoral game, politics is really shaped in private by the interaction between elected government and elites that overwhelmingly represent business interests."¹³ In what sense, then, is it still possible to speak of a 'public' attributable to opinions, consensus, participation, or knowledge? Much social analysis implicitly assumes it to be a *tabula rasa*, a blank sheet upon which political truths become inscribed, and this is particularly problematic in the light of the concept of post-democratic citizenship. If participation is reduced to patterns of spectatorship and consumption, what hope is there that it might "enter the political arena, to participate, to press its own concerns" (Chomsky)? To consider the possibility that new modes of citizenship still reside in the problematic category of the public, we need a critique of those conditions, both institutional and discursive, that give rise to this apparently malleable and coercive subject. To reach below the surface level of the *effects* of public opinion involves asking not only what institutional means make possible the malleable world of 'a public', but the conceptual and discursive assumptions that make it possible for society's communicators to refer to an incontestable and homogenous mass of moral and social viewpoints. How, for instance, in the context that I have chosen, was the UK's popular outrage at an illegal war transformed, as soon as the bombing began, so easily into an obligation towards patriotism – supporting 'our boys' and therefore no longer challenging the legitimacy of their actions – that dared not be challenged outside the most 'extremist' anti-war critiques¹⁴? Are we talking about the same public in both instances?

Perhaps the first target of deconstruction should therefore be the principle vehicle of the communicators themselves, the 'mainstream media'. The notion of mainstream is itself controversial in this respect, since its processes of excluding and including beliefs or information are perceived to be a principal element of the creation of an acceptable and identifiable 'public' and mode of 'publicness'.¹⁵ The concept of a mainstream has been closely identified with the collusion of power to form a homogenous realm of the 'prevailing current of thought', linking

the hidden agendas of news reporting with market interests and the politically established order (such as Rupert Murdoch's well-documented support for Tony Blair's election in 1997). John Pilger echoes a long legacy of journalistic experience when he claims that those who aspire to the freedom of the 'free press' "risk becoming eased out of the 'mainstream'...exiled to the margins. In the UK, examples abound in which the renowned 'liberal' press has attached itself to a prevailing ideology, by sanitizing a fundamentally unjust world order and unjust acts in the vocabulary handed down to it. It is, however, predominantly in what the mainstream fails to say, rather than in what it says, that attracts the most criticism of its servility to power and the assumptions about the relationship of that power to a public. Who decides what is newsworthy and what people want to hear or read? Why, for instance, is it the case that "only 3 per cent of peak-time programmes feature *anything* about the majority of humanity"¹⁶ or that political analysis follows the demands, not of the 'big' issues affect peoples lives (how much news coverage is given, proportionally, to nuclear weapons proliferation, say, or climate change-related disasters?) but of marketable, sensational news? "...Democratic accountability and vision are replaced by a specious gloss, the work of fixers known as 'spin-doctors', and assorted marketing and public relations experts and their fellow travellers, notably journalists. A false 'consensus' is their invention..."¹⁷ Television of the war on Iraq surprised no one in these respects, and, if anything, simply set new precedents for the war on terror as a whole, in the establishment of public relations as the simple fabrication of a palatable reality. More journalists than ever (around 7,000 'in theatre'¹⁸) appeared, and yet were more censored by the military than ever. Large-scale dumbing-down of the gruesome reality of 'collateral damage' was replaced by sensationalist reporting of the 'siege of Baghdad', or the 'Battle for Babylon' by journalists, as Robert Fisk sees it, "...back to their old trick of playing toy soldiers, dressing themselves up in military costumes for their nightly theatrical performances on television.... The orchestration will be everything, the pictures often posed, the angles chosen by 'minders'..."¹⁹ After the statue-toppling sensation, opinion polls were said to have finally swung in Blair's favour in a "patriotic surge", symbolising "a sweet political moment for Blair"²⁰ and bitter anti-war feeling replaced by flowers on Blair's' doorstep. ICM polls showed that after the fall of Baghdad "the proportion of those who disapprove of military action has dropped to an all-time low of only 23% - less than half the level of eight weeks ago. In contrast, support for the war has risen from a low of 29% in mid-February to 63%...one of the most dramatic shifts in public opinion in recent British political history."²¹

How should the 'spectacular' use of news reporting help us understand the new conditions of citizenship and the construction of a public consensus? Who is able to speak on its behalf? On the most basic level this can be explained in terms of *ownership* of the production of the truth of public opinion. As John Pilger and others have argued, there is an instituted collusion of media with neo-liberal elites that own it, but also from the stealth by which the economic order that underpins them becomes part of a normal state of affairs to be conveyed through the appearance of 'news'. Normality can be produced by an omission of pertinent questions surrounding any issue, such as the massive inequalities of rich and poor that underpin the 'new world order' against the massive hikes in military spending of UK and US governments. It can also be produced by repeating the discourse of established authority, like the suggestive rhetoric of 'wars' on terrorism, on drugs, or on crime. There is still, therefore, a prevailing assumption in analyses of the 'production of news' and the 'editorial function' that inasmuch as it is able to affect public opinion, news follows a pattern of reproduction that favours "the definitions of the powerful".²² These definitions fit more squarely with (for example) politicians or business elites simply because all news favours the structural and presentational convenience of having "primary definers". These are communicators well-versed and socially positioned to use the press as a vehicle for their discourse, who have already decided the terms of engagement, what

issues are to be addressed and which omitted, to the effect that “counter-definers” (such as protesters) are labelled as extremist and irrational because they fall foul of the “closure of the topic around its initial definition.”²³ This suggests, moreover, that whatever the best intentions of journalists, the *process* of manufacturing news inescapably attempts to voice a ‘common opinion’ alongside that of a “dominant ideology”, a silent allegiance to power that greatly diminishes the critical intentions of a news-consuming public.

Even if we grant Pilger the right (which is far from obvious) to say that “there is a critical intelligence and common sense in the way most people arrive at their values”²⁴, the production of a *public* value cannot be simply defined as the convergence of many individually reached conclusions, as if people were isolated from social life in order to reach their views. It can only be understood within the context of the contingent emergence of a public, constructed with specific tools and social sites given for that process. The historical roots of a concept of the ‘public’ are inseparable from a history of ‘public information’ and its collusion with a certain social and economic order. It did not arise outside of social privilege and domination. Thus, the word ‘public’, despite, etymologically at least, being generally descriptive of that which is open and accessible to all people in distinction to that which is ‘private’, is rarely intended to mean *generally* open. As Habermas notes, the emergence of the concept within the organisation of the Greek *Polis* was bound to the distinction of ‘citizens’ (distinct from women and slaves, for instance) participating in the state and expressing “freedom and permanence...an open field for honourable distinction” through the instituted public sphere.²⁵ It seems that since those times the concept of ‘public’ has always had something to do with a hierarchical distinction: In the fifteenth century European royals were the representative ‘public body’. Again, in the bourgeois ‘civil society’ in the eighteenth century the public sphere was associated with the concept of a critically engaged public that could openly think for itself was still defined by those that controlled the ‘instituted’ (and restricted to the reading classes) practices of publicity such as literary discussions, the publicizing of letters, and secret societies and lodges.²⁶ This makes sense when it is considered that published ‘news’ reporting only emerged officially as an aide to the “commercial traffic” of trade between regions²⁷ and only became ‘public’ news when capitalist expansion took on a public dimension. But simply because the role of the press expanded to include a critical interest in political issues does not mean that it became independent of those originally economic concerns. The common interest of businesses and state authorities to be in control of what the press says can be traced, says Habermas, as far back as the seventeenth century where figures such as Richelieu used the new ‘Gazette’ as an ‘intelligence agency’ in the service of court ordinances.²⁸ Despite the subsequent moves of press groups to be independent of state authorities, and the role that journals and pamphlets played in the Chartist and anti-absolutist movements, interpretations of a public voice have consistently been associated with property ownership. The rise of attempted democratic representations of the will of the ‘people’ since the French revolution held the contradiction of defining the public as the realm of universal rights alongside a bourgeois intellectual view that it was property-owning (male) individuals alone that had the right to direct that sphere. And so also have the institutions that turned private concerns into public ones (the rise of the welfare state) always been held in tension within the conditions of free-market capitalism. The ‘political’ element of a critical public in a democracy depended on the freely competing reasoning of autonomous beings (in the Kantian understanding), but this notion was, in the nineteenth century, an autonomy that meant self-sufficiency, which in turn meant someone with property or land.²⁹

Habermas describes the way in which an increasingly politically engaged public sphere, expressing the right to share in the ‘universal’ rational capacity of social contribution, and in places of early socialist experimentation defining public life as synonymous with political life³⁰,

was fatally undermined by the emergence of ‘liberalism’ as a dominant ideology. The ‘Laissez-faire’ ideology advocated by thinkers like J.S. Mill and Alex de Tocqueville and embraced by free market capitalism is essentially a rejection of the public sphere as a rationalised political domain. Political engagement, by contrast, was, according to liberalism, subsumed within a philosophy of history that presupposed a ‘natural order’ that the will of the people need not define other than to affirm the principle in general: “...there was to be a natural basis for the public sphere that would in principle guarantee an autonomous and basically harmonious course of social reproduction.”³¹ It introduces the concept of hegemony, and importantly the hegemonic *process* by which a ‘public’ comes to endorse or *consent to*, the conditions of its own enslavement – that is, by a distinction between the public and private sphere dictated by authorities in whose interest it is to describe a particular political order as natural, normal and harmonious. The historical roots of a concept of the public are therefore instructive insofar as they show what limitations and ‘hidden agendas’ are contained in the institutions society has inherited as vehicles for a ‘people’s voice, or the access to political information. Habermas notes that the first publications of parliamentary debates have their origins in journalists being sneaked into parliamentary sessions and repeating whole transcripts from memory before their presence became legal. In the light of the amount of information that has brought Whitehall’s weaknesses and scandals to light through leaked documents, little has changed in this respect. It is also clear that, despite the appearance of huge gains in a ‘free’ press in liberal democracies since the nineteenth century, the same obsession within statecraft of controlling, monitoring, and using it to its own ends, and the same compulsions to restrict the social ‘sites’ of that critique, remain. Since their institutionalisation, places of political debate such as seventeenth century coffee houses were eyed with fear by the authorities. In today’s urban environment, public places for congregation, interaction and political expression that do not stand under the glare of state surveillance or private interests (the shopping mall replacing the public square) are becoming increasingly hard to find.

It is also important to see how the contemporary construction of a consenting public maintains itself through the illusion of defending popular democracy from the vagaries of individual or elite control. In the case of the nineteenth century, Habermas notes that liberals like Mill and Tocqueville feared the broadening public sphere because what had been, with the guarantee of the theories of thinkers like Rousseau and Kant, a social harmony based on the dissolution of conflict by the “compulsion of reason”, would turn into larger-scale social conflict powered by the coercion of mass opinion. The Danish philosopher Søren Kierkegaard was another bourgeois thinker horrified at the prospect of public opinion smothering the sovereignty of the individual. His life was a dedicated assault on the “press” and the populist movements surrounding the nineteenth century European revolutions. He laid the blame squarely at Europe’s love affair with Hegelian philosophy, which, relativising the infinite value of the “single individual” to the objective telos of the ‘world-historical process’, provoked a concept of citizenship obsessed with the ‘ballot’, a kind of deification of the majority. But what makes Kierkegaard’s anti-democratic³² and often elitist stance instructive is his insistence that the ‘established order’ is only completely corruptive when it sanctions the absolute ‘truth’ of collective opinion, rather than any opinion in particular. The Public, then, simply doesn’t *exist* as a bearer of truth, a domain reserved for the “existential pathos”³³ of the individual. The concept of a ‘press’ compounds this absurdity because it encourages everybody to be a nobody, to define truth by ‘abstraction’: “...even the most eminent individual is a trifle in the face of an abstraction, even if the latter notoriously arises through some individual’s calling himself ‘the editorial staff’.”³⁴ It was not the force of a majority, but the *illusion* of a majority that replaced the need for individuals to form a collective base for expressing their own opinions. And yet even if we take Kierkegaard’s worries seriously, they only seem to pale in comparison with the consequences of

what it means to ‘be public’ in today’s post-democratic culture of mass media where almost everything seems to take on that role. It is clearly no longer a choice between a collective over individual form of citizenship but a collective against its own fabricated mirror image, misrepresented and misinformed through the vehicle of ‘mass culture’.

The historical legacy of Europe’s liberal agenda is the usurpation of the attempt of nineteenth century reformers of the public sphere (through the labour unions, for instance) to extend its influence to the political realm, by defining the public sphere primarily as the free (even when regulated throughout the periods of ‘interventionism’ and ‘protectionism’) exchange of commodity with less interference from state authority. Habermas appears to be nostalgic for a time when the ‘liberal’ bourgeois public sphere expressed the freedom of private individuals to come together through certain sites of critical debate (the eighteenth century ‘world of letters’ for instance), even when those sites privileged some over others (the reading classes). But this is because the demise of the ‘public sphere’ altogether through the sell-off of its political and ‘regulating’ responsibilities to the interests of capital, signalled the gradual privatisation, not only of the public sphere, but of life itself. The problem, in other words, with the identification of a public voice that is able to challenge or endorse the message of social power / the ‘established order’ goes far beyond Kierkegaard’s worries because it has already been co-opted by the interest of an increasingly smaller circle of private interests. The single individual, through this ironic twist, is re-instated as sovereign, but that sovereignty is an illusion far removed from the freedom of an *existential pathos* – it is the illusion of a distinction between the world of private, family intimacy from the occupational ‘world of work’. In a post-liberal or neo-liberal era, that amounts to the worst of both worlds: a private world which has withdrawn into itself and has no chance of becoming a critically-engaged public sphere, and a private world of work, regulated not by the state but the interests of a few individuals.

The absurdity of a vehicle of ‘public opinion’ therefore crystallises Blair’s dilemma, alongside all the others trying to ‘sell’ the new political conditions of the war on terror to their own citizens: how to present a course of action that cannot (for security or diplomatic reasons, for instance) be challenged on the basis of rational, accountable debate with the appearance of exactly that – a rational, accountable debate. The first lesson to be learnt from Blair’s success (putting aside how it may also have been the start of his downfall) is that the public whom Blair addressed were not poised on the edge of all the latest sources of information on world-politics and therefore all the more critically aware for it. There is still a myth that the explosion in mass media enterprise means a reduction in the hegemony of a few news sources. There is today a common perception that our ‘network society’ is characterised not by ‘homogenised messages’ but the formation of multiple social identities that ‘pick and choose’ their sources of truth, but this impression is at best naïve. Multiple sources of information, in the first instance, do not mean that a homogenised message is avoided, though it may force it to change shape to fit changing markets. Pilger, for instance, has long since argued that the veneer of ‘neutrality’ has been, in this country, the tactic by which left of centre news sources have prevented a huge number of the public from seeing exactly *what* is being legitimised, or ‘allowed to be considered normal’ by the media’s ‘not taking sides’. Many multiple news sources can do this in many different ways and still produce a message that is ‘homogenous’ to the legitimisation of one established order. Secondly, the public whom Blair had in mind to ‘engage’ with his argument could rightly be said to be the public that has *ceased to exist*, if the original concern of defining public from private, that which is critically engaged in social life, is to be preserved. People’s private lives do not contribute to the creation of a public domain because they are cut off from it, and the power of (particularly non-literary) mass media is making sure this rift widens: “...a pseudo-public sphere of a no longer literary public was patched together to create a sort of super-

familial zone of familiarity.”³⁵ In this sense the Iraq war could only become ‘popular’ through the everyday acceptance of a *non-debate* and the accompanying attempts, through staged discussions, expert panels, editorial letters, radio phone-ins, to assuage the anger of powerlessness that this might provoke. This is what makes Blair’s last-ditch efforts to ‘go live’ on the BBC’s *Newsnight* with his reasoned approach and moral integrity, so fascinating. Did anyone really believe that Blair saw the Q & A session as a two-way process, that he was hearing the concerns of his ‘public’ and affected by them, or that he was willing to stake his reputation and career on the commons vote, or, as is more likely, are these the vehicles of replacing the sphere of the active public by a spectacle of the reason-based arrival at political ‘truth’? The substance of Blair’s address to his studio audience could, in this sense, be translated as, ‘in a world of the de-politicised public, *what does this war have to do with you?*’

3. Capitalising on Fear: a New Model of Citizenship?

What makes people consent within this illusory public sphere? The popular assumption that people’s political and moral judgements are simply at the mercy of a few powerful gatekeepers of information flows who control public belief like puppets is misleading. In an age where modes of communication are inseparable from structures of power, and those permeate not one-way flows of information but the infrastructure of culture itself, it is not enough simply to point to the modern-day vindication of Joseph Goebbels’ insight that *no matter how preposterous a statement is, if you broadcast it loudly and often enough, people will come to believe it*. Repetition, and other rhetorical tactics, is one aspect of influencing opinion, but presents only one side of the production-consumption relationship of consent. Also needed is an understanding of manipulation that draws more on Foucault’s concept of ‘governmentality’, that is, the proliferation of disciplining ‘strategies’ in which all are caught, including the way people govern themselves, or otherwise expect a certain level and mode of engagement with political life.

It is interesting to note, for instance, just how far the propaganda industry has come, by hearing Hannah Arendt suggest, in the context of the Vietnam war as ‘PR campaign’ that despite its aggressive form of psychological exploitation, still “people...cannot be manipulated – though of course they can be forced by terror – to “buy” opinions and political views.”³⁶ If the Iraq war demonstrated anything, it was that we now have both: the ability to instil the permanence of terror at the same time as a barely perceptible level of social normalisation. On the one hand, the way in which 9/11 has paved the way for a predictable ideology of ‘national security’ is nothing other than the logical application of the immanence of destruction, and fear of destruction, that is built into the very fabric of the imperial-style form of security that is Pax Americana. The new characteristic of our contemporary modes of governmentality, therefore, is the conscious manipulation of a ‘politics of fear’. From the use of anti-terror legislation as a pretext for reducing civil liberties and demonising minorities, to the capitalisation of a climate of fear, such as the marketing of aggressive-looking SUV vehicles at the outset of war on Iraq³⁷, the war on terror functions both as the new paradigm for social control, and as condition of political participation. It can be summarised as the controlled anticipation of terror, in all its manifestations as disaster, crisis, violence and apocalypse, as a precondition of social order. More fundamentally, the war on terror reveals more than anything else, what kind of order it is conditioning. Here, the production of socially ‘useful’ fear marks a departure from the legacy of previous propaganda campaigns, such as the red scare during the cold war or even the anti-German propaganda used to bring Americans into the second world war³⁸. To wage a war with no end, as even Dick Cheney has called the war on terrorism³⁹, is to guarantee the legitimation of a state of permanent surveillance, control and social conditioning that was previously undreamed

of, though its immanence to the political sphere of the 'new world order' has been obvious to many. As Deleuze and Guattari wrote as far back as 1987: "The war machine finds its new object in the absolute peace of terror or deterrence. It is terrifying not as a function of a possible war that it promises us, as by blackmail, but, on the contrary, as a function of the real, very special kind of peace it promotes and has already installed. It no longer needs a qualified enemy but, in conformity with the requirement of an axiomatic, operates against the "unspecified enemy", domestic or foreign... There arises from this a new conception of security as materialized war, as organized insecurity or molecularized, distributed, programmed catastrophe."⁴⁰ On the other hand, the effects of a politics of fear in shaping the very norm of citizen participation necessary to maintain social order are achieved by the creation of a state of permanent emergency without the accompanying sense of hysteria that would threaten the social fabric upon which is based. What distinguishes the paranoia of being watched from the paranoia of being permanently physically at risk, is that whilst the former tends to internalise the effect of fear, the latter effects a form of internalising the fear itself, in order to 'get on with life' in the face of constant risks. In the wake of the terrorist attacks on New York, President Bush himself appeared in TV commercials, urging Americans to "live their lives" by going ahead with plans for vacations and other consumer purchases: "The president of the US is encouraging us to buy," wrote marketer Chuck Kelly in an editorial for the Minneapolis-St Paul Star Tribune, which argued that America was "embarking on a journey of spiritual patriotism" that "is about pride, loyalty, caring and believing" - and, of course, selling. "As marketers, we have the responsibility to keep the economy rolling," wrote Kelly. "Our job is to create customers during one of the more difficult times in our history."⁴¹

A politics of fear, in other words, is determining and not just deterring. The logic at work here is simply a continuation of the process of de-politicisation suggested throughout this analysis. The critical public is gradually transformed into an army of consumers, consumption being the definitive act of 'getting on with your life' in the face of disaster. Both the war on terror and the success of late capitalism represent the ability for people to internalise crisis and a kind of rationalised and even spiritualised violence through a redefinition of what 'public participation' means. Everyday life is *fearful* therefore in the sense that it embraces disorder and insecurity as the only option available to it. Habermas described it as a shift from a "Culture-Debating to a Culture-Consuming Public"⁴². Brian Massumi's penetrating contemporary development of this critique in *The Politics of Everyday Fear* also suggests that what unites the character of the 'spectacle' in society with the identities cast by a culture of consumption is the ability to fight the inevitable passing of time, to guarantee, through one's acquisitions and purchases, the 'timeless' quality of buying, the act that holds off the moment of accident, and "insures against death."⁴³ Does this mean that people desire 'things' as a means of putting off the fear of disappearing, of being nothing? A culture of acquisition and consumption - buying and having things - is therefore associated by the virtualisation of impending disaster. We fill in the present, becoming immortalised through commodities that we own and will go on having the right to own. How is fear used to pacify a sense of disorder and a loss of faith in the 'system'? An unstable capitalist world may make us keep falling, but by buying into the logic of consumption, we put off indefinitely the inevitable crash-landing. As Massumi says, "When we buy, we are buying off fear and falling, filling the gap with presence-effects. When we consume, we are consuming our own possibility. In possessing, we are possessed, by marketable forces beyond our control. In complicity with capital, a body becomes its own worst enemy."⁴⁴ The selling of war, and especially the war on terror as state of *permanent war* has therefore demonstrated very well how easy it is to buy opinions, and in doing so it has exposed the extent to which a logic of capitalist control in conditions of post-modernity- summed up by Hardt and Negri as "every difference is an opportunity"⁴⁵ (for the market) - has permeated 'public life' to the extent that people are

witnessing a selling off – or privatisation – of life itself. We might say that the function of social life has itself become incorporated, or co-opted, into the promotion of its own enslavement by that order, or the self-creation of a public that denies itself.

This is in part to vindicate Pilger's constant barrage of associations between the 'economic elite' and its 'media cohort', his way of defining the 'new world order'. But to another extent, Pilger only scratches the surface. For to understand why people consent is to ask not why people are only told certain things (the hegemony of a communications industry) but why they do *not* say things to the contrary (the disciplining of discourse). The mass protests against the war in March 2003, for instance, were a bandwagon that few newspapers wanted to miss, and they duly represented the 'public opinion' as anti-war and pro-active. A few weeks later, when war had started, the continuation of protests, boycotts, strikes and road blockades opposing war fell off the media shelf of public observation. In the end, this tactic of turning a blind eye to dissidence and focussing on 'official' news once the war had become public property, worked. Momentum of the anti-war protests failed under the weight of disempowerment, but not simply because it had failed to stop a war. It failed to sustain a dissenting voice because it spoke it to an established order that doesn't allow those voices of dissent to function in the way people conduct their lives, perceive themselves, or simply speak from day to day. This institutionalisation of passivity epitomizes the 'publicity' of Blair before he declared war just as it does parliamentary politics itself. If it had anything at all to do with public debate then it was in the *discussion of the discussion*, the documentation of the parliamentary meeting, its myriad reporting, deconstruction of spin, analysis of who won and lost on points of rhetoric and opposition-bashing. The post-modern paradigm for Debord's original concept of the 'society of the spectacle' is indeed the masking of reality, the 'negation' of real life⁴⁶. The real innovation, though, is not the reinvention of life as a cycle of productivity and consumption, but the affirmation of the reign of bio-power, the production of the illusion of choice and participation, manufactured by the appearance of diverse spectacles and the installation of 'trivial' oppositions, as much for sports entertainment as for elections."⁴⁷

With the marriage of corporate control and the mass media, it is of little surprise that the subjects of 'public information' – people watching TV and listening to Radio, day in and day out – cannot separate what they are told is 'information', and what is being sold to them, through advertising or sponsorship. Television, in particular, is, as Manuel Castells says, a "leveller of content": "...the price to be paid for a message to be on television...is to accept being mixed in a multi-semantic text whose syntax is extremely lax. Thus, information and entertainment, education and propaganda, relaxation and hypnosis are all blurred into the language of television...(the) normalization of messages, where atrocious images of real war can almost be absorbed as part of action movies..."⁴⁸ Just as governments may sell off public services to private investment, means of communication follow suit, but in this case what is at stake is the very means of participation in the public realm and the possibility of criticising it. If the fabric of society is saturated by the logic of the markets and the imperative of consumption, the means of maintaining this 'order' are the concern of businesses no more than state authorities, because the interiorization of private concerns and the creation of a 'pseudo-public' realm of critique has proven to be the most sustainable guarantee of a compliant, unquestioning 'public'. This, and not the use of 'terror' or the simplistic carrot and stick approach, is how to understand how a war could be sold to an anti-war 'public'. This is also why, for Hardt and Negri, "communicative production and imperial legitimation march hand in hand and can no longer be separated. The machine is self-validating, autopoietic – that is, systemic."⁴⁹

4. Reclaiming the Public: Citizenship as Protest

So far, answering the question *why people consent* has led to an almost nihilistic exposition of public practice in post-democratic social life. The “informational colonization of being”⁵⁰ that Habermas spoke about has triumphed, in this respect. The very language we use and concepts we employ get caught up in a legitimation of domination, from the use of concepts of ‘normal’ social behaviour and ‘world order’, to the concept of citizenship in terms of consumers, to the banalization of violence through safe, acceptable ‘just-war’ language and the unavoidable hegemony of the reign of ‘truth’ in our speech. As Massumi says, ‘democratic’ society “is not moral, just managerial. What it demands of its bodies is a practical acceptance of certain parameters of action, rather than a principled conformity to an absolute idea.”⁵¹ But this merely provokes the question of what happens when that containment is broken, when official news is disregarded or subverted, when public opinion fills streets and not radio phone-ins. In other words, when an alternative, engaged public attempts to reclaim its place. Today a truly fascinating opening of new social sites of critical debate is emerging through the internet and other media, but is no less the target of police and intelligence agencies. The frequency by which police forces target communications offices of protest movements bears testimony to this, from the Indymedia offices that suffered violent police raids at the protest camps against G8 summits in Genoa and Evian⁵², to similar experiences at the offices of the International Solidarity Movement in occupied Palestine⁵³, congregations sharing information that doesn’t pass a censorship check is still one of the greatest threats to an authority’s control of ‘public’ information. But despite the escalation of this form of repression, it at least demonstrates a latent desire on the part of citizens to re-invent modes of participation and ‘being public’. Most large-scale demonstrations of the past few years have entertained a discourse that tries to redefine who the ‘we’ of the protests are, who the ‘people’ are, to the extent that a kind of reclaiming of the meaning of citizenship could be said to be at the heart of ‘New Social Movements’ in the twenty-first century. In a climate where more geo-political decisions are taken by fewer and fewer representatives than ever, it is appropriate that popular slogans have centred on this theme: ‘*we are the people*’; ‘*this is what democracy looks like*’; ‘*they are eight, we are millions*’,. Also representative of this desire for new public-ness is the emergence of ‘World’ and ‘European’ ‘Social Forums’, and a new wave of ‘People’s Assemblies’ that replace traditional sites of congregation and debate.

The emergence of these trends in protest movements also reflects a desire to challenge the continual erosion of public *spaces* as a sphere of contestation and debate. The processes of depoliticisation that this study has outlined has an unavoidably spatial dimension, but is nowhere more evident than in the culture of obsessive security, the criminalisation of dissent and the creation of exclusion zones to deter the escalation of popular protest at symbolically critical sites such as the Houses of Parliament buildings or G8, WTO, IMF or World Bank summits, which as the summit in Gleneagles testified to, must rely on increasingly remote and impenetrable locations and the costly deployment of police and army resources from around the country. In a global order often described, in its financial and power flows, as ‘deterritorialised’⁵⁴, this battle for space is a powerfully symbolic as well as practical one. The palpable desperation of protest that wants to ‘reclaim the streets’ and ‘reclaim the commons’, is a significant reminder that even if global capitalist power has transcended geography, the popular consensus upon which it is founded still *lives* and works in those spaces. And what people are beginning to see in those spaces is an increasingly paranoid and violent erosion of the freedoms they were instituted to protect. Global protest movements are waking up to the disembodied reality of global politics, in response, through an exploration of mobility and fluidity of bodies. Not only the desire to be

seen and heard, therefore, but the constant promise to be present and evade disappearance, to make known its political desires wherever power meets, is what constitutes the ‘publicness’ of public protest today. As Hardt and Negri put it, the ‘multitude’ is a source of constant antagonism to empire precisely because of its fluidity of movement across boundaries, *and* of ideas across social identities⁵⁵. Would Habermas want to say that the protesters of the past decade’s global justice and anti-capitalist mobilisations are taking back something stolen from them in the nineteenth century? Just as in the nineteenth century European political issues were dominated by electoral reform, i.e. the “enlargement of the public”⁵⁶, and provoked a great mistrust by liberals of ‘mass opinion’, so the twenty-first century emphasis of anti-capitalist protests on reclaiming a (radical) political dimension to ‘the public’ is met with a suspicion that such an over-spill of public resentment at the ‘global order’ should remain ‘out-of-bounds’ to the realm of public expression. It represents a “crisis of democracy” to the established order.

If the ‘success’ of the new modes of citizenship enshrined in a depoliticising politics of fear is guaranteed by the apparent normality of that system and the lack of alternatives, then alternative modes of citizenship concerned to rediscover the space and discourse of public politics must reveal the absurdity and contingency of ‘normal’, acquiescent political life. Hardt and Negri’s contention that the current world order engenders a manipulation of public consent through the “local effectiveness of the regime”⁵⁷ sets out this task in terms that makes sense within my original: the problem of how ‘the most unpopular war in history’ came to appear at times to tap into the semblance of ‘public consensus’. The appearance of an acquiescent, generally accepting public sphere to the most outrageous political decisions are possible because the barbarity of those decisions are hidden from the immediate, immanent grasp of the public sphere. There is an everyday appearance of order and naturalness of locally specific regimes – the functioning of a local economy, the institution of a police force ‘doing their job’, the integrity of ‘our boys’ obeying military commanders in a desert far away, and the disinterestedness of a journalist writing and taking photos about what they see in front of them. This fits entirely within the scheme of the bio-political production of information ‘consumers’ and ‘spectators’ in a society of control. The voice of dissent of 2 millions citizens, as a response to Blair’s reasons for waging war, however temporary and fragile, represented a breach in this internalised sense of ‘order’ in which consent is manufactured, and this is also why it did not last long. The daily consumption of mediatised atrocities has a powerful socialising effect, and the banalisation of the war once it had started, with the ever-shortening sound bites and homogeneously doctored ‘safe’ images reaching TV sets across the country, was no different to the process of normalising the morally outrageous that takes place on our screens and broadsheets everyday. What remained, however, and must be sustained in the momentum of the anti-war movement’s broad-based popularity, was an awareness that the producers of public consent were visibly shocked by the demands of the public. This enlightenment, this surge in mistrust at the rationale of government policy, and proliferation of arguments, enquiries and analyses of the *structures* by which public consent has been manipulated, is nothing so revolutionary or utopian as a mass awakening, a breaking of chains or stepping outside the ‘Matrix’ of bio-power propaganda. Nevertheless, it can be said that it accompanies a gradual decline in perceptions of democracy that is emerging in response to the manipulative style of publicity politics or the practices of post-democracy.

5. Conclusion

I have shown that the concept of a public sphere free to critically debate and articulate social and political concerns autonomously of the state, has been surreptitiously removed, whilst maintaining its illusion within the construction of a consuming and spectating public sphere. The conditions of these 'normal' modes of citizenship are therefore the legitimation and repetition of a highly controlled and selective means of communication as well as the physical production of social spaces. Periodic breaches of a lack of confidence in these locally 'successful' regimes, however, such as mass demonstrations, strikes and riots, are always important evidence that this grip of normalisation is not absolute: after friction, cracks appear, people refuse the self-perpetuating cycle and challenge the legitimacy of a certain social logic. If communication, as Hardt and Negri suggest, subsumes structures of education, culture and public information into the "continuous and complete circulation of signs"⁵⁸, that effectively disables the motivation to *change* anything, then the possibility for a critical public consensus, or at very least its disentanglement from a passive, unreflective one, is only possible where these breaches of participation in ordinary, ordered, and 'safe' channels of communication occur. A mistrust of the mainstream media and the established order that it fails to question or undermine is only one small aspect of this, but it is a beginning. A whole grid of symbolic tactics of pacifying and marketising the public sphere is in place and only really becomes apparent when individuals attempt to break its symbolic normality, whether that means the anti-capitalist satirical 'subvertising' of advertisement space, or mobilising millions of people to articulate opposition and make accountable government decisions, or the campaign to 'reclaim the Media' in the work of Indymedia and other information sources. Those breaches, which are occurring all the time, are not grand awakenings from a matrix of domination, but they do represent the creation of places of exchange and expression in which a public sphere is finally able to see its own antagonistic place in social life and therefore have some control over its future.

Pilger's hope is being partly vindicated by these processes. Given the chance, people do not believe only what they're told. 'Giving the chance' is the challenge this study has thrown up, however, because it is founded on a critique of social communication that inscribes self-enslavement, through a spectacular logic of acquirement and consumption, into the very discourse from which opinions and beliefs can be formed. In this sense Arendt was wrong to say that opinions cannot be sold; they were sold on a massive scale to Blair's favourite audience - those who found invading Iraq to be morally outrageous, and yet some how normalised into a scheme of world order that praised Blair for his moral courage and upheld their faith in the integrity of parliament. But she was right in saying that, at least for Vietnam, the grounds upon which people will consent against their own judgement are continually open to miscalculation. Support for the 2003 invasion of Iraq was also miscalculated, as the upsurge of protests and sustained criticism testified to. And if miscalculations of the strong are always an assurance that the weak continue to raise the stakes and 'learn their game', the next gamble of consent-producing communicators will be this: Will the demands for truth and an increasing semblance of public accountability have risen, will the rush to the streets (as one of the only spaces of critical publicity left, perhaps?) anticipate the next war even quicker and hit the country even harder? Or will the imperial logic have been to let people rage for a while and then, after the dust has settled, frustrated and dejected at the impotence of their banners and speeches, become acclimatised to perpetual war, and the passive consumption of the morally outrageous?

¹ Niccolò Machiavelli, *The Prince* trans. Stephen J. Miller (London: Everyman, 1995) p.98

² The Daily Mirror, quoted by David Edwards, "*Falling at the Feet of Power: Blair's Sincerity and the Media*", Media Lens, March 21 2003

³ Blair was consistent in contradicting, publicly, the statements of former UN weapons inspectors Scott Ritter that Iraq was “fundamentally disarmed” by December 1998, that his team was not forced out but withdrawn amid admissions of CIA infiltration and spying (intelligence that was used to bomb Iraq in Operation Desert Fox in December 1998) and that before he was asked to leave Hans Blix had reported that more time was needed and that Iraq was being more cooperative with them than they ever had – David Edwards, *Blair’s Betrayal, part 1* Media Lens, Feb 10, 2003 (http://www.zmag.org/content/AntiWar/edwards_blairpt1.cfm)

⁴ Edward Said, *Who’s in Control?* El Ahram, 6th March 2003

⁵ *Millions Worldwide Rally for Peace* The Guardian, February 17, 2003

⁶ see Robert Fisk, *The War of Misinformation has Begun* (<http://www.medialens.org/>)

⁷ The phrase belongs to Noam Chomsky and Edward Herman in *Manufacturing Consent: the political economy of the mass media* (New York : Pantheon Books, 1988)

⁸ Stop The War Coalition was formed only ten days after the twin towers were attacked, when 2,000 people met in London in response to a newspaper ad, anticipating the US programme of retaliation and seeing the urgency of mobilising resistance before the public became brainwashed into accepting wars as the only solutions to hand. Subsequent demonstrations against the bombing of Afghanistan did not take long to read between the lines of UK/US diplomacy and oppose a planned invasion of Iraq, at least a year before it actually occurred. Actions of resistance to the war was planned, mobilised and reported by independent media sites such as Indymedia, Active Resistance to the Roots of War (ARROW), Stop the War Coalition, CND, AntiWar.com, Act Now Stop War End Racism (ANSWER), Media Workers Against War, Iraq Body count, and many others, including local groups and religious organisations.

⁹ Polly Toynbee, *Did Blair lie to us?* The Guardian, March 30, 2003

¹⁰ Noam Chomsky, *Control of Our Lives*, Lecture in Kiva Auditorium, Albuquerque, New Mexico, February 26, 2000 (quoted in www.zmag.org)

¹¹ The Pentagon Papers were leaked US Government documents detailing the US’ involvement in the Vietnam war, in particular the admission that the US had no plan to end the war. It had huge influence on the deterioration of public confidence in the US Government.

¹² See Colin Crouch, *Post-Democracy* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2004)

¹³ *Ibid* p.4

¹⁴ Note that the demonization of George Galloway as a ‘traitor’ and ‘traitor’ followed because he was one of the only MPs to be consistent in his views of the legality and morality of going to war, before it as during it.

¹⁵ John Pilger, *Hidden Agendas* (London: Vintage, 1998) p.487

¹⁶ *Ibid* p.2

¹⁷ *Ibid* p. 5

¹⁸ Robert Fisk, *The War of Misinformation has Begun* (<http://www.medialens.org/>)

¹⁹ *Ibid*. Nothing characterised this orchestration better than the farcical toppling of Saddam’s statue in the ‘fall of Baghdad’ that baited the whole spectrum of waiting media. The Mirror, once again showing a preference for jingoistic sensationalism over a consistency of its views, showed a close-up of the American soldier draping the stars-and-stripes (taken from the Pentagon attacked on September 11 2001) over Saddam’s figure with the words ‘STATUE OF LIBERTY’ (The Daily Mirror, 10th April 2003), and, like most other papers, proceeded to discuss how the ‘Pax Americana’ would unfold, as if the prize scoop signalled an end to the conflict, at least in terms of ‘big news’. It was referred to as “their Berlin wall moment” and compared to the toppling of statues that marked the mass uprisings in Hungary 1956 (despite the fact that the people of Iraq did not do this – an invading force did). The Daily Telegraph printed that “The tyrannical rule of Saddam Hussein was brought to an end by the American-led coalition yesterday amid wild scenes of jubilation in Baghdad from many of his own people...Thousands of ecstatic Iraqis gave US forces a tumultuous welcome in the capital before turning on the symbols of the regime that had lasted for 24 years, tearing down statues and pictures of the old dictator, pelting them with rocks and smashing them to pieces.” (The Daily Telegraph, 10th April 2003). In fact, aerial photos show that there were approximately 150 people in the plaza, which was sealed off by Marines who are suspected to have ‘chosen’ the pro-American Iraqis who celebrated, incidentally, right next to the Palestine Hotel where the international media was based. (*The Photographs tell the Story*, <http://www.informationclearinghouse.info/article2842.htm>). Days later, against the wishes of US forces, the Kurds in Kirkuk toppled another statue of Saddam themselves (NBC11, 10th April 2003, but this was not ‘our’ news and was therefore ignored by mainstream media.

²⁰ London Reuters, April 10, 2003 (<http://uk.news.yahoo.com/030410/80/dxgz4.html>)

²¹ *The Guardian*, April 15 2003

²² Hall, Critcher, Jefferson, Clarke and Roberts, *The Social Production of News: Mugging in the Media* in Stanley Cohen and Jock Young (eds), *The Manufacture of News* (London: Constable, 1973) p.351

²³ *Ibid* p.349

²⁴ John Pilger, *Hidden Agendas* (London: Vintage, 1998) p.11

²⁵ Jürgen Habermas, *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere* trans. Thomas Burger (Polity Press, 1989) p.4

²⁶ Ibid p.35

²⁷ Ibid p.16

²⁸ Ibid p.22

²⁹ Ibid p.109

³⁰ Ibid p.129

³¹ Ibid p.130

³² The idea of 'people's government' is, he says, the "true picture of hell" (Søren Kierkegaard, *Papers and Journals: A Selection*, trans Alastair Hannay (Middlesex: Penguin, 1996) p.302) worse even than dictatorship, since a tyrant can be toppled or opposed in the silence of one's heart. In a democracy, the tyrant *is* the masses and drowns out that silence with the 'untruth' of "ten thousand roaring people" (ibid p.292) Another, more helpful insight is the parallels he draws with herd mentality and the press. Kierkegaard vilified the press as much as he did – and for the same reasons - the established 'clergy', for its claim to represent public opinion and thereby express opinions that "belong to none and yet to all" (ibid p.335)

³³ Søren Kierkegaard, *Concluding Unscientific Postscript*, ed. & trans. Howard V. Hong and Edna V. Hong (New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1992) p.394

³⁴ Søren Kierkegaard, *Papers and Journals: A Selection*, trans Alastair Hannay (Middlesex: Penguin, 1996) p.502-3

³⁵ Jürgen Habermas, *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere* trans. Thomas Burger (Polity Press, 1989) p.162

³⁶ Hannah Arendt, *Crises of the Republic* (New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1972) p.8

³⁷ "Psychiatrist Clotaire Rapaille, a consultant to the automobile industry, conducted studies of post-war consumer psyches for Chrysler and reported that Americans wanted "aggressive" cars. In interviews with Keith Bradsher, the former Detroit bureau chief for the New York Times, Rapaille discussed the results of his research. SUVs, he said, were "weapons" – "armoured cars for the battlefield" - that appealed to Americans' deepest fears of violence and crime." - Sheldon Rampton and John Stauber, 'Trading on Fear' in *The Guardian* July 12 2003

³⁸ Chomsky points out that the first "coordinated propaganda ministry" was set up by the British government during the First World War to try and convince American intellectuals of the "nobility of the British war" and draw the nation into it³⁸. The Wilson government's contribution was to follow suit, setting up its own propaganda agency (the Committee on Public Information) which succeeded in "turning a relatively pacifist population into raving anti-German fanatics who wanted to destroy everything German. It reached the point where the Boston Symphony Orchestra couldn't play Bach. The country was driven into hysteria." Noam Chomsky, Interviewed by David Barsamian, Znet (<http://www.zmag.org/weluser.htm>)

³⁹ "It is different than the Gulf War was, in the sense that it may never end. At least, not in our lifetime." – Richard Cheney, quoted by Bob Woodward, Washington Post, October 21, 2001

⁴⁰ Gilles Deleuze & Felix Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus* quoted in Brian Massumi (ed), *The Politics of Everyday Fear* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1993) p.219

⁴¹ *The Guardian* July 2003

⁴² Jürgen Habermas, *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere* trans. Thomas Burger (Polity Press, 1989) p. 159

⁴³ Brian Massumi, *Everywhere You Want to Be* in Brian Massumi (ed), *The Politics of Everyday Fear* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1993) p.9

⁴⁴ Ibid p.12

⁴⁵ Michael Hardt & Antonio Negri, *Empire* (London: Harvard University Press, 2000) p.152

⁴⁶ Guy Debord, *La société du spectacle* (Paris: Gallimard, 1992) p.164

⁴⁷ Ibid p. 40

⁴⁸ Manuel Castells, *The Rise of the Network Society* 2nd edition (London: Blackwell, 2000) p.365

⁴⁹ Michael Hardt & Antonio Negri, *Empire* (London: Harvard University Press, 2000) p.34

⁵⁰ Jürgen Habermas, *Theory of Communicative Action* quoted in Michael Hardt & Antonio Negri, *Empire* (London: Harvard University Press, 2000) p.34

⁵¹ Brian Massumi, *A user's Guide to Capitalism and Schizophrenia* (London: MIT Press, 1992) p.123

⁵² 'Indymedia Offices Raided Across Italy' (<http://www.statewatch.org/news/2002/feb/15italy.htm>) ;

(http://dispatch.indymedia.it/article_info.php3?lang=fr&id_article=177)

⁵³ (<http://www.peacenews.info/news/article/154?PHPSESSID=7a7147a4d8e02c4fcd22ab722698f5ed>)

⁵⁴ See, for example, Gilles Deleuze & Felix Guattari, *Anti-Oedipus* (London: The Athlone Press, 1984)

⁵⁵ Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri, *Multitude* (New York: The Penguin Press, 2004)

⁵⁶ Jürgen Habermas, *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere* trans. Thomas Burger (Polity Press, 1989) p.133

⁵⁷ Michael Hardt & Antonio Negri, *Empire* (London: Harvard University Press, 2000) p.343

⁵⁸ Ibid p.347