

A Clockwork War: Rhetorics of Time in a Time of Terror

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Expressions of time have increasingly infused the rhetorical experience of post-industrial war, especially since 9/11. This essay demonstrates how these “signs of time” operate as one of three tropes: deadline/countdown, infinite/infinitesimal war, and the ticking clock. The persistence of such signs of time in public discourse can be seen as an expression of what Paul Virilio has called the “chronopolis,” a political universe textured by real-time communication technologies. The chronopolitical will exhibits certain autocratic traits at odds with democratic ideals, primarily the refashioning of citizen identity into that of the “contemporary.” The analysis here charts the autocratic rhetoric of the chronopolis as a critical democratic project.

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A battle is brewing over the politics of time.¹

Post-industrial war seems to be characterized by a certain obsession with the clock. We might mark the birth of this obsession on January 16, 1991, when George H.W. Bush initiated what William J. Small calls “a rarity, a war by appointment.”² Here, the U.S. so utterly dominated the field of conflict that the ability to schedule the war accompanied the ability to construct the war as a public relations event—that is, assuming that the annihilation of one army by another three hundred times its size can rightly be called a “war.”³

The naming of this war by appointment offers us a vivid starting point. Referring in his memoirs to Operation Desert Storm, General Norman Schwarzkopf praised the White House for its ability to “package an historical event.”⁴ He tells of an exchange

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he had with President Bush concerning what to name the war, even as the bombs continued to fall. Schwarzkopf suggested “The Five Day War.” Colin Powell, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, responded: “We’ll cease offensive operations, but there’s been a change. The President will make his announcement at nine o’clock, but we won’t actually stop fighting until midnight. That makes it a hundred-hour war.”⁵ The Hundred Hour War it was, with the length of fighting adjusted accordingly.⁶ Such doctoring was not possible with the Hundred Years War, the Thirty Years War, or even the Six Day War. This curious crafting not only demonstrates the prerogative of winners to write history in advance, but also the compulsion to stamp such events with a time signature.

This compulsion has persisted into the present century, ushering in a rhetoric of time that has come to claim a dominant role in civic discourse. The current essay charts the logics of these time rhetorics, with special attention to the years immediately following September 11, 2001. As the analysis will indicate, the events of September 11 marked a sharp increase in the appearance of “signs of time,” or public discourse animated by the specter of the clock.

To be sure, rhetoric and time have always kept close quarters, and war discourse is no exception. As Robert Hariman notes, the concern of rhetoric has been “essentially temporal” ever since it distinguished its ephemeral concerns from the timeless arts.⁷ Although the literature regarding rhetoric and time is voluminous, three main strands emerge. The first concerns rhetorical timing, which extends back to the ancient Greek sophistic notion of *kairos*, or “saying the right thing at the right time.”⁸ A second strand approaches time through the internal, performative dynamics of the text itself.⁹ A third strand, which comprises the majority of the literature on rhetoric and time, concerns the discursive construction of the temporal arc and moments within that arc.¹⁰

Although many of the ideas presented in this essay resonate with these three approaches, the “time” under investigation here constitutes a category that operates largely outside of timing, performed time, and narrative time. To this end, I take a step back to ask how rhetorics of time define civic space and how such discourses frame the necessity, desirability, and possibility of civic participation in questions regarding the use of state violence. Put differently, I trace a temporal shift in public consciousness at the procedural level. G. Thomas Goodnight’s notion of “public time” perhaps comes closest to capturing our current purview.¹¹ Like the more common notion of “public space,” public time might be said to function as a kind of operating system for public deliberation, circumscribing boundaries and openings for discursive action. I want to suggest here that a certain public time animates the “War on Terror” and that this discourse acts as a site of struggle between democratic and authoritarian politics. In an effort to understand this struggle, I chart discourses of control: how dominant voices use temporal rhetorics to shape a public environment hostile to deliberative possibilities. These temporal rhetorics of control have attained a central place in war discourse and can be viewed in the larger context of social militarization.

Three tropes of “time” work to construct an authoritarian politics: the deadline/countdown, infinite/infinitesimal war, and the ticking clock. On one level, each of these modes of “telling time” can be thought of as rhetorical strategies for disciplining dissent. In this regard, these tropes sometimes appear quite explicitly in a traditional argumentative context. Much of this rhetoric, however, operates under the surface of public discourse as the very grounds for discussion. Like time itself, these three tropes are as invisible as they are omnipresent, constituting the deep logics that yield visible public war discourse. Uncovering this gradual shift in time consciousness helps to clarify not only the meaning of a Hundred Hour War, but also the inscrutable and quasi-irrational state of public discourse from 9/11 through to the invasion and occupation of Iraq.¹² Before examining these tropes, however, I take a short excursion through the political universe that Paul Virilio calls the “chronopolis.” After describing this universe and its laws, I turn to the proliferation of time rhetorics in the post-9/11 world. I intend to show how the chronopolitical universe is inflected through dominant ways of talking about war. If Virilio’s vision of the chronopolis is futuristic, it is a future that is, in some measure, now.

Chronopolitics

By its very nature, war has always been a proving ground for authoritarian discourse. Writing in the first half of the twentieth century, sociologist Harold Lasswell famously advanced what he called the “garrison state hypothesis,” describing how a militarized culture develops and sustains itself. From this perspective, a typical garrison state features an economy of fear in the form of a “startle pattern” of official discourse, vast military spending, public martial ceremonialization, and an occasional spectacular bloodletting or military adventure.¹³ Lasswell’s vision perhaps remains the conventional mode of thinking about the ways in which a militarized state expunges populations of the democratic impulse.¹⁴

While this model still holds in a post-industrial context, certain late-twentieth-century developments have given the U.S. military apparatus timely access to the population’s attention. Between Vietnam and Operation Desert Storm, the time lag between filming a battlefield event and its television appearance was whittled down from two weeks to instantaneity.¹⁵ With the collapse of temporal distance into real time, the significance of Desert Storm not only lay in the spectacular image but also in the triumph of live coverage. Changes in military–press relationships have intensified this collapse. In contrast to the free-range reporters of the Vietnam War, Operation Desert Storm featured the press pooling system, a controlled conduit engineered by the executive for real-time perception management. The development of the mobile satellite videophone made possible a new arrangement for Operation Iraqi Freedom in 2003, the embedded reporting system, which further absorbed the press into the military apparatus as a highly responsive appendage. Embedding redoubled the forces of time, multiplying the number of live feeds available for the anchor in the studio to surf. Reporters now sped across the desert diffused into the very rhythm and pace of the war machine itself. The result was an excruciating and ecstatic immediacy, where

every screen sought to capture that most intoxicating of television admixtures: a banner marked “live” billowing over an advancing parade of death. Finally, the television war gradually colonized the clock. CNN’s symbiotic relationship with the military, in particular, showed that the real-time television war also tended toward a full-time television war. Just as Desert Storm had made CNN a financially viable 24-hour network in 1991, Operation Iraqi Freedom in 2003 solidified the viability of MSNBC and Fox News. Such developments increased the ability of the executive branch to manage the civic agenda with a certain temporal agility.¹⁶

These changes accompanied a general shift in public consciousness of time. In his investigation of the “real-time” desert wars, Andrew Hoskins notes that, since Desert Storm, “liveness” has become the prime news value, with all its emphasis on immediacy, presence, and experience. Between 1991 and 2003, war coverage experienced an exponential shift in favor of real-time coverage, making liveness the defining feature of the media war. Hoskins notes, “If one goes back and checks one’s own memory of the TV coverage from 1991, it is apparent how comparatively *slow* this reporting is.”¹⁷ Hoskins argues that actual news cannot keep up with the demand to fill the real-time 24-hour news cycle, resulting in “an increasingly contrived and shallow discourse covering for an absence of hard news.”¹⁸ In other words, war coverage tends to produce live reporters who have little or nothing to say. To fill the vacuum, the live war shifts its emphasis further away from rational understanding and toward the immediate corporal experience of the reporter in the field, where the value of “being there” trumps “being aware.” With the aid of multiple-feed live television, we approach the zero point of “medium” as a concept, as in the example of McLuhan’s famous lightbulb.¹⁹ At the zero point, the metaphor of the interface displaces that of the medium. The real-time war provides a venue for basking in the glow of a “liveness” that justifies itself if only by a reverence for light speed.

Perhaps no theorist has contributed more to the triangulation of war, speed, and screen than Paul Virilio. A student of Merleau-Ponty, Virilio takes a phenomenological approach to his assessment of the politics of communication technology, which he calls “dromology” (from the Greek *dromos*, “race”). At the heart of dromology is the notion that the post-industrial world is in the process of leaving the arena of geopolitics and entering the era of “chronopolitics,” which is a “realm of territorial development, [where] ‘time’ now counts more than ‘space.’”²⁰ Chronopolitics introduces a new set of crises to be managed, all of which develop coincidentally with the annihilation of space as a limit. The logistical problems accompanying the so-called “CNN effect” were perhaps early signals of these crises.²¹ Virilio suggests that traditional geopolitical conflicts are being retooled as conflicts between “globalized time” and “localized time.”²² The metropolis itself is in the process of urbanization from geospatial concentration to the chronopolis, a “*world-city*, the city to end all cities, a virtual city of which every real city will ultimately be merely a suburb, a sort of **omnipolitan** periphery whose *centre will be nowhere and circumference everywhere*.”²³

History also becomes a site of contestation, but not in the usual sense. History grounded in local time becomes a liability to the chronopolis, dead weight to be

jettisoned. What remains is a history defined by the shallow surfaces of real time, something akin to Debord's notion of the "eternal present" of the spectacle.²⁴ Virilio would have us consider the "gradual awareness of a geological layer *without memory*, as well as the breakdown, the telluric collapse, of knowledge of *the depth of the present*."²⁵ George Gerbner, writing about Operation Desert Storm in 1991, approached the same phenomenon from the angle of propaganda. The combination of real-time reporting and military-media collaboration, he argued, had reached a critical level in the production of the "Iraq War Movie." "The convergence of new communication technologies confers controls, concentrates power, shrinks time, and speeds action to the point where reporting, making, and writing history merge."²⁶ The result was what Gerbner called "instant history," the ability to construct history in real time and in accordance with the new chronopolitics. "Instant history" is a paradoxical term that suggests the annihilation of the past in the face of the real-time manipulation of events. In contrast to a history defined by local time, instant history is built for speed, utility, and plasticity.

For Virilio, war is not the "continuation of politics by other means," as the nineteenth-century strategist Carl von Clausewitz remarked.²⁷ Rather, war is a "police pursuit at a faster speed, with other vehicles."²⁸ Here "war" is a master metaphor that overcodes all aspects of life, extending from the logistics of battle to the logistics of the city and ultimately to the body itself. This "territorialization" or "urbanization" of the body represents for Virilio the dark shadow of the cybernetic human.²⁹ The subject body becomes an expression of the displacement of geopolitics by chronopolitics, generating a crisis of presence that moves from metabolic proximity (the animal body) to mechanical proximity (the transportation revolution) to electromagnetic proximity (telecommunications). The body thus experiences a paradoxical transformation. On one hand it is "cocooned" by the conveniences of the remote control. On the other, it experiences an indefinite expansion and the loss of spatial limits.³⁰

The displacement of space by time produces a new political subject. If the "citizen" is a product of geopolitics, the "contemporary" is the new political subject of chronopolitics. Along with theorists like David Gross, Virilio suggests that organs of mass media might well replace the nation-state as the primary mode of political identity.³¹ "[W]hat is left of the notion of *public* when the (real-time) public image prevails over public space?"³² Certainly, there have been efforts to reconcile the shift from space to screen.³³ What Virilio describes, however, is not just a shift in venue, but rather a shift in mode. The new politics is governed by speed, not where the word conflicts with the image, but rather where democracy conflicts with "dromocracy."³⁴ As the "citizen-soldier" is the ideal subject of the democratic nation-state, the "contemporary" is the object of a dromocratic regime. The dominant function of chronopolitics is thus the producing and harvesting of contemporaries. We find an analogy in the notion that the modern politics of assent have given way to a politics of attention in an age of media saturation.³⁵ Here, time replaces persuasion as the main political currency. Virilio notes:

To focus and concentrate on the public's attention is progressively to reorganize the public's regime of temporality, its *use of time*, much more than public opinion. The live image is a filter, not through the space and time of the screen, but first through its time: a mono-chronical filter that does not allow *the present* to pass away. We are in the grips of a videoscopic technology that has nothing to do with film analysis or the critique of domestic television, a logistics of perception necessary for the progressive acquisition of the neutral targets we have become.³⁶

First, note the resonance with Hoskins's suggestion that the word and image of live war coverage fade in the bright lights of the live medium itself. Second, Virilio uses the martial metaphor of "target acquisition" to characterize chronopolitical body-objects. The history of military technology has not only been about seeing and the advancement of optical targeting, but also the real-time coordination of targets. Such technologies of real-time telecommunication have exceeded traditional boundaries between soldier/civilian and homefront/battlefield, realizing the totalizing logic of what Virilio calls "pure war," or the martial territorializing of life itself, even down to the level of symbolic contest.³⁷ This notion has been idealized in the military doctrine of "full spectrum dominance" and is something akin to what Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri call the "military-vital complex."³⁸ War and the language of war increasingly concern themselves with processes of biopolitical production. For Virilio this translates into a will to produce contemporaries of the chronopolis.

The challenge of real time is thus to democracy itself. Democracy requires an interval, a space for deliberation and ethical reflection, as well as a complex of checks and balances. Dromocracy, on the other hand, is streamlined for speed:

Today, we no longer have time to reflect, the things that we see have already happened. And it is necessary to react immediately. Is a real-time democracy possible? An authoritarian politics, yes. But what defines democracy is the sharing of power. When there is not time to share, what will be shared? Emotions.³⁹

Elsewhere, Virilio speaks of the qualities of the chronopolis—of instantaneity and omnipresence—as the province of the divine, a sphere long known to be much more autocratic than democratic.⁴⁰ In this light, Virilio is an apostate of sorts, questioning the "technical fundamentalism" that he takes to have replaced nationalism as the mainline faith of the post-industrial state.⁴¹

Assuming that the state of worship itself is a product of seduction and proselytism, the following sections investigate the liturgies by which the chronopolis shepherds the fold, molding citizens into contemporaries. We find that a significant segment of public rhetoric concerning war has been colonized by the signs of time. The new language of time has insinuated itself into the rhetorical structure of the civic sphere, disciplining democracy to harmonize with logics of dromocracy. In making the transition from Virilio's thought to an analysis of chronopolitical discourse, it is important that we also mark some departures. First, while speaking in terms of ideology, control, and freedom, Virilio's vision does not include a substantive account of the discursive construction of the lifeworld. The following analysis thus attempts to describe key features of a chronopolitical rhetoric. Second, Virilio's thought harbors shades of technological determinism. His military machine is an expanding

black hole with the citizen skating precariously along its collapsing event horizon. We need not entertain debates about technological determinism to understand that technologies of real time condition the post-industrial political world. Moreover, we ought not succumb to a vision of an all-colonizing military apparatus, but instead emphasize that the temporal portrayal of the civic sphere is a site of struggle between democracy and authoritarianism, republic and chronopolis, citizen and contemporary. As such, the task here is to read temporal texts “at the front lines” to chart shifts in public time consciousness. Before describing how these temporal rhetorics behave, it is useful to acknowledge the recent proliferation of temporal signs in public discourse.

Signs of Time

History starts today . . .⁴²

Perhaps a sign of the times is the post-industrial fascination with “signs of time.” This fascination was evident among the neo-conservatives who wielded immense political power between 2001 and 2006. An influential think tank, the Project for the New American Century (PNAC), authored much of the philosophy that defined the neo-conservative strategy. In the 1990s, PNAC envisioned a post-Cold War “unipolar” world where the sole remaining superpower could claim dominance not only over land, sea, sky, and space, but also over time. This notion prepared the way for an America that could indeed stake out a century. PNAC penned an influential public document in 2000 called *Rebuilding America’s Defenses*. The document’s central strategy espoused the retooling of the American military to a lighter, swifter version of its Cold War self, with heavy emphasis on rapid deployment forces that could quickly dominate in “multiple theater wars.”⁴³ This would require a full realization of the cybernetic military—usually referred to as the “revolution in military affairs”—with time as its organizing principle. The idea of an “American century” followed in the footsteps of Francis Fukuyama’s “end of history.”⁴⁴ Appearing at roughly the same time following Operation Desert Storm, both Fukuyama’s “end of history” and Gerbner’s “instant history” seemed to find a nexus in the global *Pax Americana*, where a single political entity monopolized power to create and interpret history. In either case, history cannot wander far from its captors.

When the “New American Century” did arrive, it announced itself unmistakably with the signs of time, beginning with the designation of the initial event. The more cumbersome descriptions included a nonspecific noun anchored by the precise date, the events or attacks of September 11, signifying time’s possession of events. More colloquial designations boiled things down to an essential time signature: September 11 or 9/11. The attack also took on the universally recognized signifier, “the day that changed everything.” This resonated with Roosevelt’s “day that will live in infamy,” a phrase that suited the Bush administration’s attempts to shape the attack as an act of war rather than a crime. Whereas Roosevelt’s “day” is passive, however, the “day that changed everything” signifies an agency. This day casts itself as a protagonist in the

drama. In the collective act of naming, the prerogative to shape history had been confiscated from human hands by a tyrannizing clock. The world now appeared from the perspective of Walter Benjamin's angel of history, blown helplessly backward by a paradisaical wind into the future, Manhattan's smoldering Ground Zero passing underfoot.⁴⁵

In the Bush administration's newly-christened "War on Terror," time was more than a recurring theme. The constellation of terms began to take the shape of an epic struggle, beginning with a defining speech before a Joint Session of Congress on September 20, 2001. September 11 was a day so significant that it cleaved history into two, the president suggested, after which "night fell upon a different world." President Bush continued, "Some speak of an age of terror. I know there are struggles ahead and dangers to face. But this country will define our times, not be defined by them."⁴⁶ The struggle was an appropriate one for the end of history, where the final battle takes place at the final frontier, time itself. The speech was widely reprinted as "Our Mission and Our Moment," a title lifted from its most famous line.⁴⁷ As the most significant televised event in the wake of the attacks, the speech too demanded a time signature.

As the dust of 9/11 settled, a discourse of minutes sculpted the fateful day into finer detail. Rarely were the attacks recapitulated without reference to exact minutes of impact: 8:46 a.m. the first plane crashes into the North Tower; 9:02 a.m. a second plane hits the South Tower; 10:07 a.m. the third plane plows into a field near Shanksville, Pennsylvania.⁴⁸ The dramatic intrigue of 9/11 survivor stories was inversely proportionate to the number of minutes one was late to work that day. Reflecting afterward, Dan Rather wondered if such temporal obsessions might be "part of an understandable quest to discover that precise point in time, that bridging nanosecond, between life before and life after."⁴⁹ Likewise, one of the only criticisms to penetrate the armor of the "war president" in the aftermath of 9/11 was measured in minutes. After being quietly notified of the attacks at a schoolhouse photo opportunity, the president continued to read from a children's book, *The Pet Goat*, for a number of minutes. Michael Moore's *Fahrenheit 9/11*, the top-grossing documentary of 2004, suggested that Bush sat frozen in an awkward daze for seven full minutes after hearing the news. The film runs several segments of footage of the classroom event, each with a superimposed clock. *Fahrenheit 9/11*, the rejoinder to Moore's film, "refuted" this claim, arguing that the time span was really only five minutes. This quibble over two minutes stood strangely as one of the most prominent debates in the immediate years following 9/11. The only thing we know for certain, Roger Ebert noted in the *Chicago Sun-Times*, is that the applause for *Fahrenheit 9/11*'s screening at Cannes "last[ed] longer than Bush dawdled."⁵⁰

Initiation: Deadlines and Countdowns

And good evening, everyone. The whole world's eye is on the clock tonight. It is 3:59, the official time, Thursday morning in the city of Baghdad. In less than 10

seconds, it will be 4:00, and time will officially have run out for Saddam Hussein. It is now zero hour.⁵¹

A prime characteristic of post-Cold War global politics is not only the ability of one military superpower to control precisely a war's commencement, but also its capacity to announce these intentions publicly. This is only possible under conditions of extreme asymmetry, whereby it is inconceivable that the weaker power might act preemptively to defend itself.⁵² Under these conditions, a rhetoric of the deadline characterizes political discourse. In like manner, the dominant news media follow suit with the complementary rhetoric of the countdown. The deadline is an authoritarian discourse that preempts its own questionability. The countdown is a rhetoric of submission to the authority of the deadline. The two combine symbiotically to perform the primary ritual of chronopolitical participation, whose main theme is inevitability.

The status of the deadline had risen sharply since Desert Storm in 1991, which had but one January 15 deadline established by the United Nations Security Council. The lead up to the U.S.–British invasion of Iraq in 2003, in contrast, could be plotted by a multiplicity of deadlines. This effectively gave the matter of time an undeniable prominence. The first deadline appeared in late September, 2002, when the U.S. and Britain attempted to set a seven-day deadline for Iraq to “agree to disarm” or face the consequences of a military overthrow.⁵³ This first attempt failed, but a Security Council resolution reached on November 8, 2002, established a December 7 deadline for Saddam to make a full accounting of weapons and a February 21, 2003, deadline for Chief U.N. Weapons Inspector Hans Blix to deliver a full report to the U.N.⁵⁴ As February 21 approached, the U.K.'s *Financial Times* noted that the primary disagreement between France and the U.S. concerned whether the deadline ought to be extended to March 14. “The transatlantic divide is coming down to a question of timing—to be precise, a fortnight.”⁵⁵ After February 21, the U.S. began to push for a final U.N. resolution authorizing military force. On March 7, the U.S. issued its own ten-day deadline to Hussein, vowing military action even without U.N. authorization. Even at this point the U.S. already had 250,000 troops stationed in the Gulf.⁵⁶ By March 13, the world was quibbling over days. Undecided members of the Security Council suggested an extension of forty-five days. White House Press Secretary Ari Fleischer called the proposal a “non-starter,” signaling the administration's prerogative to set the clock. British Prime Minister Tony Blair's suggestion that war be postponed for a week, however, garnered a more sympathetic response from the Bush administration.⁵⁷

On March 16, President Bush issued a televised address proclaiming “that tomorrow is a moment of truth for the world,” a reference to the March 17 deadline the administration had set for Iraq. The White House press release for the speech featured this very line in its title, and the irresistible hook dominated the headlines.⁵⁸ On the evening of March 17, President Bush appeared on television from the White House to announce imminent war within forty-eight hours. On the heels of the “moment of truth,” the U.S. and British attack would come, Bush stated, “at a time of

our choosing.” This memorable line once again became the *de facto* title of the speech.⁵⁹ Indeed, one might chart the decade between Gulf Wars along the subtle shift in the field of time from “war by appointment” to “war at the time of our choosing.” The appointed bombing of Iraq commenced on March 21 at 1:00 p.m. Eastern Standard Time with the spectacular “Shock and Awe” campaign, providing the evening news cycle with plenty of fiery footage.

To complement the administration’s rhetoric of deadlines, a highly visible set of actual countdown clocks began to populate and dominate American news screens. The signs of time became most visible after the president set the 48-hour deadline. The “countdown to war” was not new, having originated in 1991 in conjunction with Operation Desert Storm. It was then that CNN initiated the “Showdown Iraq” motif, and CBS adopted a somewhat similar framing with its “Countdown to Confrontation.”⁶⁰ A decade later, Operation Iraqi Freedom intensified these practices. The chronophilic MSNBC made the countdown clock a fixture on the screen. This policy coincided with MSNBC’s coverage of the impending war being titled “Countdown Iraq,” which included segments called the “Showdown Lowdown” and the “Countdown Rundown.” CNN’s “Showdown Iraq,” Fox News’ “War on Terror,” and other network coverage featured bumpers replete with clocks. Graphics juxtaposed Baghdad time with Washington time, overcoding the local time of geopolitics with the real time of chronopolitics. Networks engaged in a fierce competition to maximize the effect of being “live” by being the first to exceed “the now,” to break the time barrier by heaping layer upon layer of real time onto the screen. The prominence of the rhetoric of the deadline is significant. While the deadline is obviously a diplomatic tool, the fact that the spectacle of the deadline has migrated to the center of news coverage marks the exclusion of democratic debate.

The call of the deadline, by way of its authority, demands the reply of the countdown. Participation in a countdown thus implies submission to the inevitability of authoritarian time. Insofar as civilian newscasters act as surrogates for the civilian population, the discourse of the countdown acts to displace the democratic will by the dromocratic will. In a dromocracy, the range of questions worth deliberating narrows to the one-dimensional axis of time barreling toward an inevitable resolution. Deliberation thus disappears as a possibility.⁶¹ In February of 2003, for example, MSNBC asked viewers to email their responses to this Countdown Question: “Will we be at war in two weeks?” Here, MSNBC apparently preferred to beg the question and jump to the technical question of “When will we go?” before addressing the civic question of “Ought we go?” By disguising itself as a point for democratic deliberation, furthermore, the question really asks viewers to submit to the foregone conclusions of the chronopolis by playing an inconsequential guessing game.

In a sense, television is the ideal medium of the countdown. As Virilio reminds us, the countdown ritual is rooted primarily in early technologies of the moving image and only secondarily in rocket science. The first countdown was invented by Fritz Lang and Thea von Harbou for the film *Une Femme sur la Lune* (1929). In this case, the countdown signaled the spectacular takeoff of a rocket built by Hermann Oberth,

a top German rocket scientist. This scene condenses the politics of time into a convenient image: the war machine provides the deadline; the camera produces the countdown. The ritual of the countdown is thus an expression of media technologies that find their primary power in the manipulation of time. Beyond the temporal powers of photography (capture) and cinema (kinetics), television adds a third power: real-time broadcast. In the “liveness” of real time, the countdown moves from the realm of representation to that of national enactment. That is, the countdown achieves the status of chronopolitical ritual in its rhythmic regimentation of a consciousness outside the vagaries of local time and space: 5 . . . 4 . . . 3 . . . 2 . . . 1. Gilles Deleuze identifies such collective temporal regimentation as a hallmark of the “control society,” which, unlike the “disciplinary society” that preceded it, finds its primary metaphor not in “molds” (disciplinary institutions) but rather in “modulations” (real-time management) of the body politic.⁶² In some sense, television news represents a continual flux of multiple, and sometimes competing, modulations. For Virilio, the very preference for *countdown* is a peculiar attribute of the screen: the “eternal return to the zero degree of history.”⁶³ Here at the zero degree, we find the synchronization of the collective gaze, the capture of life through the captivation of liveness. The countdown ritually enacts our submission to the sovereignty of authoritarian time all the while modeling devotion to our captors.

Continuation: Infinite and Infinitesimal War

[The war on terror] may never end. At least not in our lifetime.⁶⁴

I think . . . [the Iraq invasion] will go relatively quickly . . . weeks rather than months.⁶⁵

By 2005, “the War on Terror brand had grown sour,” as Christopher Simpson phrased it, and was in need of a makeover.⁶⁶ Presidential rhetoric since 9/11 had also outgrown its defensive posture, moving its focus from the fighting of terrorism to a Wilsonian rhetoric of spreading democracy, now the “calling of our time,” in President Bush’s words.⁶⁷ Simultaneously, a process was underway to supplant the “War on Terror” with a moniker perhaps more in tune with the calling of our time. The “Long War” had surfaced as a possible replacement in various military publications and neo-conservative literature.⁶⁸ The term went fully public when the president used it in his 2006 State of the Union Address. “Our own generation is in a long war against a determined enemy—a war that will be fought by Presidents of both parties.”⁶⁹ Bush had already foreshadowed a protracted military venture in the defining days following 9/11, with his September 20 “Our Mission and Our Moment” address to the Joint Session of Congress: “Americans should not expect one battle, but a lengthy campaign, unlike any other we have ever seen.” Now the idea had been formally named. The “Long War” had been used before, but only to describe a finite historical era.⁷⁰ The Long War christened in 2006, in contrast, had the quality of open-endedness and infinitude. It thus implied the indefinite extension of presidential war powers.

Although Orwellian in its rhetorical ambitions, the infinite, never-ending war has limits.⁷¹ First, the Long War soon loses meaning without its opposite: something akin to the prospects of peacetime. This confusion manifested, for example, in a *Fox News* interview shortly after the 2003 invasion. Anchor Greta van Susteren asked William Kristol of *The Weekly Standard* a question that had been making the rounds: “How will we know when the war is over?” The question, of course, was a remnant from a time when a war *could* be over. Kristol, one of the key intellectuals in the neo-conservative power bloc, fumbled for an answer: “Well, the president will tell us, you know? He tells—he tells us when the war begins, and he tells us when the war ends.”⁷² Having banished the prospect of peace along with anything that might externally signal the end of war, the Bush administration encountered the peculiar problem of having to persuade the public to grant the existence of a war. In a 2005 speech, Bush felt the need to defend this premise: “Make no mistake about it, we are at war. We’re at war with an enemy that attacked us on September the 11th, 2001. We’re at war against an enemy that, since that day, has continued to kill.” Later in the same speech Bush reiterated: “Make no mistake about it, this is a war against people who profess an ideology, and they use terror as a means to achieve their objectives.”⁷³ A few days earlier Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld voiced a similar defense: “Some ask, are we still engaged in a war on terror? Let there be no mistake about it. It’s a war. The president properly termed it that after Sept. 11. The only way to defend against terrorism is to go on the attack.”⁷⁴ The president felt the need to press the case again in 2007: “And this notion about how this isn’t a war on terror, in my view, is naive. It doesn’t—it doesn’t reflect the true nature of the world in which we live.”⁷⁵ Particular arguments aside, the administration’s insistence indicated the central crisis of the infinite war: a constant need for reification.

A second problem emerged. If the existence of a Long War is granted, it must contend with the charge that it describes a “quagmire.” Steering the public mind away from this term has been at the heart of military media strategy since Vietnam. “Quagmire” suggests a war that cannot be won, as in Walter Cronkite’s tide-turning words in 1968 that the U.S. military was “mired in stalemate.”⁷⁶ The designation of quagmire is a double threat to the ruling order. First, in terms of imperial policy, a quagmire represents an economic sinkhole, a waste of martial resources, and a strategic failure. This is undesirable war because it is unwinnable, an economic rather than ethical calculus. Second, a quagmire is undesirable because it affords time for dissent. A quagmire is a war that fails temporally to discipline the home front, a time-consuming, sluggish war entirely at odds with the pragmatic needs of the chronopolis.

Thus, if the Long War is to survive in its infinitude, it must find a balancing principle. The logic is simple if paradoxical: the infinite war must also be the infinitesimal war. The rhetoric of the infinitesimal war is a preemptive strike on the possibility of quagmire in public discourse. This rhetoric was first successfully implemented in Operation Desert Storm. In March, 1991, shortly after fighting had ended, George H.W. Bush proclaimed to a group of state legislators, “By God, we’ve kicked the Vietnam Syndrome once and for all.”⁷⁷ Kicking the syndrome meant that

policy makers had discovered the formula for a docile home front. Certainly a significant part of this formula involved portraying the war as an antiseptic enterprise.⁷⁸ The antiseptic war, however, is an effect of the real innovation: the triumph over time. Desert Storm had tested the public appetite for military intervention after Vietnam with the *timely* Hundred Hour War. Operation Iraqi Freedom in 2003 strived toward the ultimate ideal, a *timeless* war that was over before it had even started. The Germans had of course invented a version of the timeless war half a century earlier in the *Blitzkrieg*. Rather than a battlefield strategy aimed at an opposing army, the rhetoric of infinitesimal war is a lightning strike on the possibility of home front dissent. The trope works to suspend public deliberation by fashioning a war that is continually on the verge of ending, a “just war” by virtue of its being “just about done.” The war that is “always almost over” serves to discipline dissent on the principle that it is meaningless to protest against a war that very soon will not be.

Occurring within the larger framework of the *never-ending war*, therefore, is the rhetoric of the *ever-ending war*, which appears as a retreating horizon or an infinite series of finish lines. The timeline of endings began with the initial “Shock and Awe” bombing strategy on March 20, 2003. In terms of concentrated tonnage dropped on Baghdad, Shock and Awe resembled a German *Blitzkrieg*, but the Shock and Awe doctrine differed in its emphasis on psychological rather than material effect.⁷⁹ The primary technology of this blitz was not the bomb, but rather the camera emplacement positioned on the city’s perimeter. The infrastructure of real-time broadcast was designed to communicate the intensity of the event to the Iraqi army in order to compel an immediate surrender.⁸⁰ Arguably the real presence of Shock and Awe was not on the battlefield but rather in the living room, where it took on spectacular proportions to rival 9/11. From the beginning, the Bush administration actively flooded the public sphere with analyses, possible scenarios, and breathless anticipation of Shock and Awe. The event became a symbol of the infinitesimal war, promising to draw the entire venture into a containable one-night event of concentrated firepower. The Pentagon even called the event “A-Day,” which captured both the sense of beginnings (alphabetically) and endings (in the reference to “D-Day”) in a single sign.

On the heels of Shock and Awe came a series of endings, beginning with the felling of the statue of Saddam Hussein in Baghdad’s al-Firdos Square on April 10, an event staged and executed for live news cameras by army psychological operations.⁸¹ A May 1 announcement that “major combat operations have ended” followed, with the president calling forth the idols of speed near the beginning of the speech: “Operation Iraqi Freedom was carried out with a combination of precision and speed and boldness the enemy did not expect, and the world had not seen before.” He continued that the mission had been “one of the swiftest advances of heavy arms in history.”⁸² The December 14, 2003, announcement of the capture of Saddam Hussein signaled yet another ending. This was followed by the first post-Hussein elections to the Iraqi National Assembly on January 31, 2005. Two days later, the president delivered the State of the Union Address, the end of which naturally focused on the elections as the consummation of the war’s goals. Here, supportive members of Congress stood to

hold their purple index fingers high in the air, a reference to the Iraqis who had cast ballots and had their fingers marked purple to prevent multiple voting. The gesture also resonated with the “We’re number one!” exuberance of fans at the conclusion of a winning game. On June 8, 2006, the president announced the death of Abu Musab al-Zarqawi, the supposed al-Qaeda ringleader in Iraq, an event billed as the beginning of the end for the insurgency.⁸³ On November 5, 2006, the death sentence for Saddam Hussein was handed down by the Iraqi High Tribunal, which briefly sparked public support amidst a stagnating occupation.

The controversy surrounding the president’s May 1, 2003, speech declaring an end to major combat operations highlights the centrality of time in the politics of the Long War. In this ill-fated attempt to recreate something akin to the Hundred Hour War of 1991, the president spoke to the crew of the U.S.S. Abraham Lincoln aircraft carrier, with a massive banner emblazoned with “Mission Accomplished” hanging behind him. At first the Bush administration denied having produced the banner. Next, White House aides claimed that “Mission Accomplished” only referred to the specific mission of the aircraft carrier. Much later, Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld admitted to Bob Woodward that the banner had in fact been produced by the administration staff.⁸⁴ In 2004, when occupation deaths far exceeded initial combat deaths (594 versus 138 on May 1), White House chief strategist Karl Rove acknowledged that he “wished the banner was not up there” and that it “has become one of those convenient symbols [for criticism].”⁸⁵ The very existence of this consuming debate illustrates the tension of tense in post-industrial war. The scene was re-enacted in miniature in March, 2006, when *Time Magazine* ran a panel discussion article titled “Was It Worth It?”⁸⁶ Satirist Stephen Colbert made the article and the word “tense” the subject of his daily segment “The Word” a week later on his show *The Colbert Report*: “‘Was’ it worth it? This brings us to tonight’s Word: ‘Tense’; as in past tense; as in ‘I used to subscribe to *Time Magazine*.’”⁸⁷ The crisis of tense defines the rhetoric of infinite and infinitesimal wars. At times the paradox makes useful grist for controversy or satire. More often, one feels the tension in the rhythmic creed of the chronopolis: “The war is over. Long live the Long War.”

As popular support for the occupation fell, the rhetoric of infinite and infinitesimal wars settled into a discourse of “timelines” and “benchmarks.” Talk of a troop withdrawal entered the public discussion, particularly surrounding the Democratic takeover of Congress in 2006. The question became: If the military did not achieve its objectives of pacifying Iraq, when should the U.S. end the occupation? The administration argued that timelines send a message of defeat. Even talking about “surrender dates” (the administration’s preferred name for such measures) was a concession to the insurgency and a betrayal of the Iraqi people. These claims carried with them the character of the infinite war, which implicitly holds that the only losing war is a war that ends. Rather than submit to a timeline, the administration proceeded with a rhetoric of “benchmarks.” In 2007, as a condition of congressional approval for a troop increase, the Bush administration described eighteen such benchmarks to measure success in Iraq. A \$120 billion defense spending bill passed in May included a provision that the General Accounting Office (GAO) monitor the

performance of the benchmarks. In July the administration proclaimed success on eight of them. By September, the GAO reported that only three benchmarks had been met, with four others partially met. White House Press Secretary Tony Snow claimed that the report indicated success: “The real question that people have is, ‘What’s going on in Iraq? Are we making progress? Militarily, is the surge having an impact?’ . . . The answer’s yes. There’s just no question about it.” Other presidential spokespersons took an alternate tack, arguing that the GAO report did not accurately represent the situation in Iraq and that the White House would be forthcoming with a clearer assessment.⁸⁸ Under strain from increasing dissatisfaction, the rejection of timelines in favor of benchmarks represents a version of infinite/infinitesimal war rhetorics. The war marches on, even through a succession of endings.

Duration: Fatal Time and the Ticking Clock

I believe it is essential that when we see a threat, we deal with those threats before they become imminent. It’s too late if they become imminent.⁸⁹

While the chronopolis speaks with a voice of temporal authority, it must also answer to a higher power. Post-industrial war ultimately defers to the dominant metaphor of the ticking clock, most often expressed by the notion that the polity is “running out of time.” The ticking clock metaphor is less agential than the deadline. While the deadline is something to be scheduled, the ticking clock can be neither denied nor affected.⁹⁰ In this metaphor, time is sovereign and fatal. The ticking clock infuses public life with a nearness (in both time and space) that has come to characterize the sensibility inscribed by the War on Terror.

President George H.W. Bush’s January 16, 1991, speech announcing the start of Operation Desert Storm gave a glimpse of the rhetoric of the ticking clock. “Some may ask: Why act now? Why not wait? The answer is clear: The world could wait no longer.” The elder Bush proceeded with a parallel design, repeating several times the signature phrase, “While the world waited . . .” before listing Saddam Hussein’s crimes.⁹¹ The rhetoric of the ticking clock came into fruition following 9/11—the moment of traumatic impact that structured the universe of fatal time—reminding Americans of the important lesson of “the day that changed everything”: the only way to combat the ticking clock is to beat it at its own game and strike first.

The administration went public in 2002 with a policy of “preventive war,” a term that became synonymous with the “Bush Doctrine.” The policy radically broke with conventional norms and traditional just war theory. Whereas international law could justify a preemptive military strike under conditions of imminent threat, preventive war acts without imminent threat, giving the executive *carte blanche* to initiate military action.⁹² The president foreshadowed the idea in his State of the Union Address of January 29, 2002, where the specter of the ticking clock loomed large. “Thousands of dangerous killers,” the president warned, “schooled in the methods of murder, often supported by outlaw regimes, are now spread throughout the world like ticking time bombs, set to go off without warning.”⁹³ The nature of the new

adversary was a necessary foundation for future arguments regarding the doctrine of prevention. These arguments took two directions, both of which aimed at eliminating the usefulness of “imminent threat” as a criterion for distinguishing legitimate from illegitimate war.

The first argument initially appeared in the 2002 *National Security Strategy of the United States of America*. The tract defended the concept of preventive war on the grounds that a lethal combination of radicalism and technology defines the age. “We must adapt the concept of imminent threat,” the president wrote, “to the capabilities and objectives of today’s adversaries.”⁹⁴ From this perspective, and grounded in the War on Terror narrative, terrorists themselves are ticking time bombs set to go off without warning. Overcoding the adversary as already “imminent” annihilates any criteria for separating the impending from the remote. Only a tautology remains: If you want to know the imminent threat, look no further than “today’s adversaries.”

The second argument appeared in a June 2002 commencement speech delivered by President Bush to the graduates of West Point Academy. Due to new threats, the president argued, America cannot rely on the old Cold War strategies of deterrence and containment. Diplomacy and treaties are no good in the hands of unbalanced dictators, rogue states, and shadowy enemies. The only course is one of action: “If we wait for threats to fully materialize, we will have waited too long.”⁹⁵ Bush amplified this rhetoric in his 2003 State of the Union Address:

Some have said we must not act until the threat is imminent. Since when have terrorists and tyrants announced their intentions, politely putting us on notice before they strike? If this threat is permitted to fully and suddenly emerge, all actions, all words, and all recriminations would come too late. Trusting in the sanity and restraint of Saddam Hussein is not a strategy, and it is not an option.⁹⁶

In this second argument, the president suggested that the determination of imminent threat requires an interval for judgment between the appearance of the threat and the actual catastrophe. Because the new violent threat is so instantaneous, so unpredictable, and so ubiquitous, we no longer have the luxury of time to make such judgments. Insofar as any determination requires an interval for evaluation, the very nature of the new enemy renders the concept of imminent threat irrelevant.

The concept of imminent threat thus underwent the same double movement toward the infinite and infinitesimal that transformed the concept of war. In the first instance, the term expanded past any discernable limits, shedding any power of discrimination. No longer did the term describe a very particular and highly exceptional adversarial state. Instead, “imminent threat” became synonymous with “the adversary.” In the second instance, imminent threat approached meaninglessness insofar as it described a domain of judgment plunging toward that infinitesimal moment between detonation and explosion. The doctrine of prevention set its sights on destroying this particular ethical yardstick. Either imminent threat came to justify all actions or the polity had simply run out of time to consider it as a criterion for judgment.

Confusion regarding the status of imminent threat as a mode of judgment surfaced one year after the initial invasion of Iraq, when it became clear that the U.S. would not find the fabled weapons of mass destruction cited by the administration to justify the attack. At this time, virtually all parties conceded that Hussein was not an imminent threat when the U.S. invaded. The primary dispute surrounding the war thus became: “Did the Bush administration *claim* Iraq posed an imminent threat to the U.S.?” This discourse cannot properly be labeled a debate, however, because it involved incommensurable premises. Those critical of the president held “imminent threat” to be a meaningful criterion. The fact that the administration had repeatedly implied the existence of an imminent threat and invaded was at odds with obvious realities. Those supportive of the administration, on the other hand, did not hold “imminent threat” as a meaningful criterion. The question here was not whether Hussein had met the criterion, but whether the administration had actually uttered the words “imminent threat.” In the most technical sense, the administration did not.⁹⁷ Hidden beneath the morass of incommensurable arguments lay the real dispute, however, which concerned the status of time. This dispute was not about Saddam’s weapons, the administration’s claims, or even the legitimacy of the imminent threat criterion. Instead this was a dispute about the role of the ticking clock. The precise question: Is the adversary a ticking bomb or not? Is there time for the rule of law or not?

Soon after 9/11, Harvard law professor Alan Dershowitz popularized what came to be known as the “ticking time bomb terrorist scenario” for the justification of judicially ordered torture warrants. In 2002 Dershowitz devoted an entire chapter to this “thought experiment” in his book, *Why Terrorism Works*, where he discussed whether torture could be justified to extract information from a detainee in order to thwart an imminent bomb plot.⁹⁸ He proposed that it could be, borrowing the dilemma from an obscure 1973 philosophy journal article by political theorist Michael Walzer, although, as Dershowitz points out, some version of this utilitarian dilemma has been around since Bentham.⁹⁹ The argument first began to appear in November of 2001, but hit the talk show circuit in January of 2002, continuing with an enormous amount of exposure through to 2006. The dilemma, in its brevity, moralism, and shock value, made for superb television. Dershowitz’s persona as a civil rights lawyer and ostensibly reluctant witness gave viewers further permission to moot an otherwise taboo subject. Finally, Dershowitz’s preference for the “sterilized needle under the fingernail” as the primary image of torture made the discussion as comfortable as humanly possible.

The core of the ticking bomb terrorist scenario is neither the bomb nor the terrorist, but the ticking. The scenario asks us to grant a complex of improbable factors and press them into the narrowest sliver of time imaginable. This second aspect is essential to the dilemma. An argument dismantling the torture prohibition must begin as close as possible to the last tick before the explosion: to the temporal zero point. It is here where the politics of democracy come into clear view and begin to make ruthlessly calculable sense. Dershowitz’s ticking bomb terrorist scenario is not simply a novelty, but rather the representative anecdote in the rhetorics of the

Long War. The scenario masterfully distills the Bush administration rhetoric of imminence to its most skeletal, dramatic, and concrete form, before presenting it as a philosophical problem so insistent that it might well be strapped to its own ticking clock. In this way, the construction of urgency is directly related to the destruction of the rule of law. Here, at the temporal zero point, there are no rights, only utility; no deliberation, only authority; and no time, only real time. At the zero point, human rights clash with posthuman prerogatives. Here the cornerstone of the chronopolis is laid.

Not surprisingly, such a captivating and seductive plotline grew into its own television show. Just two months after September 11, 2001, the “counter terrorism” action series *24* began its six-season run. Each season features twenty-four episodes, each an hour long. A digital clock maintains a privileged graphical place on the screen and is perhaps the only reality in a world rife with the insanity of terrorism. The clock continues ticking off the seconds through commercial breaks, transcending television strictures and thus television fantasy. Leading up to these breaks the clock stands alone on the screen, issuing each second with a reverberant thud, an explosion all its own. Action takes place in real time, sometimes with multiple scenes playing on simultaneous split screens. The show compresses its drama between the urgency of the clock and the tough choices that Jack Bauer of the Los Angeles counter terrorism unit must make. The recurring themes of the show are variations on Dershowitz’s dilemma. Torture, Matt Feeney of the online magazine *Slate* notes, “occurs with astonishing regularity. On *24*, torture is less an unfortunate last resort than an epistemology.”¹⁰⁰ The central transaction of the show is simple. The payoff for contending with such urgent moral dilemmas is permission to engage vicariously in righteous acts of sadism alongside Jack Bauer. This is not just a private pleasure. Given its immediate resonance with the ticking bomb terrorist scenario, the show appropriately fed back into the torture debate. On Fox News’ *O’Reilly Factor*, radio talk show host Laura Ingraham took the popularity of *24* to be a “national referendum” on the public’s stomach for repealing the torture prohibition.¹⁰¹ Senator John McCain, himself a victim of torture as a Vietnam War POW, had publicly criticized the ticking bomb terrorist scenario as a rationale for lifting the prohibition on torture. McCain specifically criticized *24* and its unrealistic portrayals. Even so, the senator later made a guest appearance on *24*, joking beforehand about the methods of torture his character might employ.¹⁰² After all, this was one of the most seductive images of the age: the sacrificial scene of the torture chamber stamped with a ticking clock.

The 2006 mid-term elections carried the aesthetic further. The Republican National Committee, fearing the loss of both the House and the Senate to the Democrats, released a campaign ad with an entirely silent soundtrack aside from a ticking clock. Floating behind this feature were mottled images of Osama bin Laden and others reading speeches. Reminiscent of the “countdown” in President Johnson’s 1964 “Daisy Girl” ad, the ticking clock stops just as danger fills the screen: explosions and silhouetted militants on the prowl. In contrast to Johnson’s ad, however, where one only sees the spectacle of destruction, here one sees the perpetrators themselves

constituted in the background. The clock dominates the scene, saturating the field with an urgency provoked by infinite gradations of time. This combination of clock, threat, and absolute authority thus forms the archetypal myth that wears a thousand masks in the Long War.¹⁰³

The End?

I don't believe this just can continue on and on and on.¹⁰⁴

In this essay I have identified the rhetorical forms through which the chronopolis asserts itself as the new order of the ages, particularly those forms that have assumed a primary place in public life since 9/11. The first of these involves the initiation of war through the ritual of authority and submission structured by the trope of deadlines/countdowns. Second, near the symbolic center of the chronopolis is the paradox of the infinite/infinitesimal war, the ubiquitous, infinite war sustaining its own meaningfulness by punctuating itself with rhythmic endings, a rhetoric of the infinitesimal war. Finally, I examined the rhetoric of the ticking clock, which I argue is the enduring myth of the chronopolitical state. We might even elevate the myth to the status of the divine as it features the apotheosis of the clock as unmoved mover.

In a sense, the petroleum wars offered the ideal battleground for the overthrow of "time" by "real time." The symmetries of the scene seem to contain a code for unraveling history itself. How curious that this futuristic cyberwar fought at the "end of history" should be waged in a vast white silica expanse that shelters the black prehistoric fossil crude beneath. The sheer blankness of the glaring desert canvas perfectly accommodated the ability to construct the television war from the ground up—to paint the screen, so to speak. And perhaps it is a fatal motive of time itself that the real-time war's most spectacular moment was the "zero hour" blitz of Baghdad, a city in the region of Sumerian Babylon, the birthplace of the base sixty-number system that rings every clock.

The signs of time are indeed upon us. This is due to a certain conflict where one regime of time threatens to displace another. While the rhetoric of the chronopolis is deterministic, the advance of chronopolitics is not determined. Rather, the struggle between democracy and dromocracy will be a recurring contest over whether the political subject of the future will be a citizen of the polis or a contemporary of the chronopolis. Each political ontology implies its own set of values. Whereas democracy values representation and participation, dromocracy demands responsiveness to authority. Whereas democracy takes time to deliberate, dromocracy issues orders in real time. Indeed, democracy has always had to contend with autocratic forces. The age is defined, then, by the forms these forces assume. Whether it be the "countdown to war," the spectacle of 24, Dershowitz's austere philosophical dilemma, or President Bush's plain-spoken American pragmatism, the clock has turned its face toward the citizenry-at-large, appearing as all the visible signs of the chronopolis, summoning an entire arsenal of seductions and fears for the task of capturing the democratic will.

Notes

- [1] Jeremy Rifkin, *Time Wars: The Primary Conflict in Human History*, 1st Touchstone ed. (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1989), 10.
- [2] William J. Small, "The Gulf War: Mass Media Coverage and Restraints," in *The 1,000 Hour War: Communication in the Gulf*, ed. Thomas A. McCain and Leonard Shyles (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1994), 3.
- [3] Jean Baudrillard makes the case that Operation Desert Storm was only a "war" in simulacrum. See Jean Baudrillard, *The Gulf War Did Not Take Place*, trans. Paul Patton (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1995). See also Noam Chomsky, "The Media and the War: What War?" in *Triumph of the Image: The Media's War in the Persian Gulf—A Global Perspective*, ed. George Gerbner, Hamid Mowlana, and Herbert I. Schiller (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1992), 51–63.
- [4] H. Norman Schwarzkopf, *It Doesn't Take a Hero* (New York: Bantam, 1992), 470.
- [5] Schwarzkopf, *Doesn't Take a Hero*, 470.
- [6] Bosah Ebo takes this episode to be part of the overall packaging of the war in accordance with the conventions of televised entertainment. Bosah Ebo, "War as Popular Culture: The Gulf Conflict and the Technology of Illusionary Entertainment," *Journal of American Culture* 18 (1995): 23.
- [7] Robert Hariman, "Time and the Reconstitution of Gradualism in King's Address: A Response to Cox," in *Texts in Context: Critical Dialogues on Significant Episodes in American Political Rhetoric*, ed. Michael C. Leff and Fred J. Kauffeld (Davis, CA: Hermagoras Press, 1989), 205. Michael Leff points out that the relationship between time and rhetoric has "played a persistent and crucial role in the history of our discipline" extending back to the Cornell school's attempts to carve out a space for the study of oratory. Michael Leff, "Textual Criticism: The Legacy of G.P. Mohrmann," *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 72 (1986): 383.
- [8] See, in particular, Debra Hawhee, "Kairotic Encounters," in *Perspectives on Rhetorical Invention*, ed. Janet M. Atwill and Janice M. Lauer (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 2002), 16–35. See also John Poulakos, "Toward a Sophistic Definition of Rhetoric," *Philosophy and Rhetoric* 16 (1983): 35–48. A number of scholars have explored the various ways in which rhetors play to the flow of external time and events. See, for example, Edwin Black, "Electing Time," *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 59 (1973): 125–9; Barbara A. Larson, "The Election Eve Address of Edmund Muskie," *Central States Speech Journal* 23 (1972): 78–85; Bruce E. Gronbeck, "Rhetorical Timing in Public Communication," *Central States Speech Journal* 25 (1974): 84–94. Thomas B. Farrell extends this notion to decenter the rhetor within a cascading historical succession of discursive acts. See Thomas B. Farrell, "Knowledge in Time: Toward an Extension of Rhetorical Form," in *Advances in Argumentation Theory and Research*, ed. J. Robert Cox and Charles Arthur Willard (Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 1982), 123–53. Bitzer's foundational notion of the "exigence" harbors a strong temporal component: an "imperfection marked by urgency." Lloyd Bitzer, "The Rhetorical Situation," *Philosophy and Rhetoric* 1 (1968): 6.
- [9] Michael Leff, for example, emphasizes that each speech text contains its own internal "pattern of utterance." Leff, "Textual Criticism," 385. See also Michael Leff, "Dimensions of Temporality in Lincoln's Second Inaugural," *Communication Reports* 1 (1988): 26–31. A text's *dispositio* and use of tense can subtly perform its own underpinning ideology with urgency, patience, or a sense of "what's done is done." Celeste Michelle Condit, "Nixon's 'Fund': Time as Ideological Resource in the 'Checkers' Speech," in *Texts in Context: Critical Dialogues on Significant Episodes in American Political Rhetoric*, ed. Michael C. Leff and Fred J. Kauffeld (Davis, CA: Hermagoras Press, 1989), 219–41. J. Robert Cox, "The Fulfillment of Time: King's 'I Have a Dream' Speech (August 23, 1963)," in *Texts in Context*, 181–204.
- [10] Richard Vatz's critique of Bitzer implies that any temporality invoked in the "exigence" must itself be a rhetorical effect. Richard E. Vatz, "The Myth of the Rhetorical Situation,"

Philosophy and Rhetoric 6 (1973): 154–61. Apocalyptic rhetoric is perhaps the starkest genre of temporal narrativization with its sense of impending historic peripety. For example, see Barry Brummett, *Contemporary Apocalyptic Rhetoric* (New York: Praeger, 1991). For use of time in generating irony, see Robert E. Terrill, “Irony, Silence, and Time: Frederick Douglass on the Fifth of July,” *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 89 (2003): 216–34. Scholars working in the burgeoning field of public memory have made it their task to understand how collectivities rhetorically condition the present through commemorations of the past. This literature is vast, but there is a representative collection in Kendall R. Phillips, ed., *Framing Public Memory* (Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 2004).

- [11] Goodnight’s example is the public time invoked by Rachel Carson’s book *Silent Spring*, an important text in the early environmental movement. Carson constructs an emergency-oriented public time that must deal with the relatively rapid changes that humans have occasioned in long-term evolutionary processes. G. Thomas Goodnight, “Public Discourse,” *Critical Studies in Mass Communication* 4 (1987): 430.
- [12] In his analysis of one of the most significant rhetorical moments in the lead-up to the 2003 invasion, Secretary of State Colin Powell’s February 5 address to the UN Security Council, David Zarefsky finds that the mainstay argument was an “argument from ignorance” fallacy and that Powell’s evidence did not hold water. David Zarefsky, “Making the Case for War: Colin Powell at the United Nations,” *Rhetoric and Public Affairs* 10 (2007): 275–302. The implication of such an analysis is that logical soundness alone cannot account for the effective success of Powell’s speech. Certain discourses of time might account for the subsequent spike in public support for the invasion. Indeed, a rhetoric of impatience thoroughly infused and perhaps even constituted the thrust of the speech:

The issue before us is not how much time we are willing to give the inspectors to be frustrated by Iraqi obstruction. But how much longer are we willing to put up with Iraq’s noncompliance before we, as a council, we, as the United Nations, say: “Enough. Enough.”

Colin Powell, “U.S. Secretary of State Colin Powell Addresses the U.N. Security Council,” February 5, 2003, <http://www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2003/02/20030205-1.html>. Administration rhetoric in general suffered from a pronounced irrationality, such that it spawned a cottage industry of rational refutations. See David Corn, *The Lies of George W. Bush: Mastering the Politics of Deception*, 1st ed. (New York: Crown Publishers, 2003); Joseph C. Wilson, *The Politics of Truth: Inside the Lies that Led to War and Betrayed My Wife’s CIA Identity, A Diplomat’s Memoir* (New York: Carroll and Graf Publishers, 2004); Christopher Scheer, Robert Scheer, and Lakshmi Chaudhry, *The Five Biggest Lies Bush Told Us About Iraq* (New York: Akashic Books and Seven Stories Press, 2003).

- [13] Harold D. Lasswell, “The Garrison State,” *American Journal of Sociology* 46 (1941): 455–68.
- [14] For updates on the garrison hypothesis, see Harold D. Lasswell, “The Garrison State Hypothesis Today,” in *Changing Patterns of Military Politics*, ed. Samuel Huntington (New York: Free Press, 1962), 51–70. For reactions to improvements on Lasswell’s ideas, see Vernon Dibble, “The Garrison Society,” *New University Thought* 5 (1966–67): 106–15; Samuel J. Fitch, “The Garrison State in America: A Content Analysis of Trends in the Expectation of Violence,” *Journal of Peace Research* 22 (1985): 31–45.
- [15] In order to preserve its shelf life, footage typically had a generic quality. Heavy equipment also put distance between reporters and battle. William M. Hammond, “The Press in Vietnam as Agent of Defeat: A Critical Examination,” *Reviews in American History* 17 (1989): 315.
- [16] Longer-term trends have increasingly concentrated rhetorical power on the executive. See Jeffrey K. Tulis, *The Rhetorical Presidency* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1987). Carole Winkler argues that the ascendance of terrorism to a central place in American

discourse goes hand in hand with the increase in executive power. See Carol K. Winkler, *In the Name of Terrorism: Presidents on Political Violence in the Post-World War II Era* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2006), 4–7.

- [17] Andrew Hoskins, *Televising War: From Vietnam to Iraq* (New York: Continuum, 2004), 48.
- [18] *Ibid.*, 49.
- [19] Marshall McLuhan, *Understanding Media: The Extensions of Man*, 1st MIT Press ed. (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1994), 9. The light bulb illustrates the idea of “medium as message” most purely. Here, the structural presence of the cathode ray is a social schema whose “meaning” runs prior to the images flickering on its screen.
- [20] Paul Virilio, *Open Sky*, trans. Julie Rose (New York: Verso, 1997), 69.
- [21] See Piers Robinson, *The CNN Effect: The Myth of News, Foreign Policy, and Intervention* (New York: Routledge, 2002). See also Steven Livingston, *Clarifying the CNN Effect: An Examination of Media Effects According to Type of Military Intervention* (Cambridge, MA: Joan Shorenstein Center on the Press, Politics, and Public Policy, John F. Kennedy School of Government, Harvard University, 1997).
- [22] Virilio, *Open Sky*, 70.
- [23] *Ibid.*, 74; emphasis in the original.
- [24] Debord writes:

The society whose modernization has reached the stage of the integrated spectacle is characterized by the combined effect of five principal features: incessant technological renewal; integration of state and economy; generalized secrecy, unanswerable lies; an eternal present.

Guy Debord, *Comments on the Society of the Spectacle*, trans. Malcolm Imrie (New York: Verso, 1990), 11–12.

- [25] Virilio, *Open Sky*, 122.
- [26] George Gerbner, “Persian Gulf War, the Movie,” in *Triumph of the Image: The Media’s War in the Persian Gulf—a Global Perspective*, ed. Hamid Mowlana, George Gerbner, and Herbert I. Schiller (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1992), 244.
- [27] See Carl von Clausewitz, *On War*, trans. Terence Kilmartin (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1959).
- [28] Paul Virilio, *Speed and Politics: An Essay on Dromology*, trans. Mark Polizzotti (New York: Semiotext(e), 1986), 18.
- [29] “Territorialization” is a term coined by Virilio and later elaborated by Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia*, trans. Brian Massumi (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1987).
- [30] Virilio calls this loss of spatial recognition the “negative horizon.” See Paul Virilio, *Negative Horizon: An Essay in Dromoscopy*, trans. Michael Degener (New York: Continuum, 2005). The essence of this chronopolitical body was captured in a Microsoft slogan referring to the Internet near the turn of the twenty-first century: “Where do you want to go today?”
- [31] David Gross, *Lost Time: On Remembering and Forgetting in Late Modern Culture* (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 2000), 118–32. Virilio, *Open Sky*, 74.
- [32] Virilio, *Open Sky*, 18.
- [33] See Kevin Michael Deluca and Jennifer Peeples, “From Public Sphere to Public Screen: Democracy, Activism, and the ‘Violence’ of Seattle,” *Critical Studies in Media Communication* 19 (2002): 125–51; Kevin Michael Deluca, *Image Politics: The New Rhetoric of Environmental Activism* (New York: Guilford Press, 1999).
- [34] Paul Virilio, *Desert Screen: War at the Speed of Light*, trans. Michael Degener (New York: Continuum, 2002), 14.
- [35] The concept of an “attention economy” has been around since the 1970s, but it has gained interest in the new century. For a humanistic treatment of the role of attention in media

- flows, see Richard A. Lanham, *The Economics of Attention: Style and Substance in the Age of Information* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2006). The politics of attention have also been influential in marketing and business. See Thomas H. Davenport and John C. Beck, *The Attention Economy: Understanding the New Currency of Business* (Boston, MA: Harvard Business School, 2001).
- [36] Virilio, *Desert Screen*, 22.
- [37] Paul Virilio and Sylvère Lotringer, *Pure War* (New York: Semiotext(e), 1997).
- [38] Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri, *Multitude: War and Democracy in the Age of Empire* (New York: Penguin Press, 2004), 41.
- [39] Virilio, *Desert Screen*, 43.
- [40] *Ibid.*, 134.
- [41] *Ibid.*, 53. This idolatry of speed was featured, for example, in the U.S. Navy's recruiting campaign introduced in 2001, "Accelerate Your Life"; the main plotline was a worship of weapons.
- [42] Richard Armitage, Deputy Secretary of State, shortly after 9/11, responded to Mahmoud Ahmed, the head of Pakistani intelligence, who said there was "much history" between Pakistan and the Afghani Taliban to consider. Patrick Smyth, "Looking Over Powell's Shoulder with Unease," *Irish Times*, September 29, 2001, 12, <http://www.lexis-nexis.com/>.
- [43] Thomas Donnelly, Donald Kagen, and Gary Schmitt, "Rebuilding America's Defenses: Strategies, Forces, and Resources for a New Century," *Project for the New American Century*, <http://www.newamericancentury.org/rebuildingamericasdefenses.pdf>. See also Donald Rumsfeld, "2006 Quadrennial Defense Review Report," *Department of Defense*, <http://www.defenselink.mil/qdr/report/report20060203.pdf>.
- [44] Francis Fukuyama, *The End of History and the Last Man* (New York: Free Press, 1992).
- [45] Walter Benjamin, *Illuminations*, ed. Hannah Arendt, trans. Harry Zohn (New York: Schocken Books, 1969), 257–8.
- [46] George W. Bush, "Address to the Joint Session of Congress and the American People," September 20, 2001, <http://www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2001/09/20010920-8.html>.
- [47] George W. Bush, *Our Mission and Our Moment: Speeches since the Attacks of September 11* (Washington, DC: White House, 2001).
- [48] In remembrance of 9/11 one year after the events, for example, CNN told the story of Flight 93, which crashed into the Pennsylvania field. The transcript of the story reads like a ticking clock, with every sentence granted a time signature. See Paula Zahn, Miles O'Brien, and Aaron Brown, "What Really Happened to Flight 93," *CNN*, September 11, 2002, <http://www.lexis-nexis.com/>.
- [49] Dan Rather, "Introduction," in *What We Saw*, ed. CBS News (New York: Simon and Schuster, 2002), 9.
- [50] Roger Ebert, "Ovation for Moore's 'Fahrenheit' Lasts Longer than Bush Dawdled," *Chicago Sun-Times*, May 19, 2004, 70, <http://www.lexis-nexis.com/>.
- [51] Lester Holt, "Countdown Iraq for March 19, 2003," *MSNBC*, March 19, 2003, <http://www.lexis-nexis.com/>.
- [52] We can find a striking analogy to the infinite/infinitesimal war in the structure of asymmetrical warfare. On the one hand is the immovable object of the U.S. military machine, whose regular budget in 2005 was 48% of total world spending, and whose 2006 budget was projected to eclipse the rest of the world's military spending combined. See "2006 Yearbook," Stockholm International Peace Research Institute, <http://yearbook2006.sipri.org> (accessed August 5, 2007). On the other hand is the unstoppable force of the suicide bomber, whose very body is destroyed in the triggering of invisible or unforeseen weapons. As the military juggernaut approaches the infinite (or at least the unchallengeable), the suicide bomber approaches disappearance altogether.
- [53] John Henley et al., "Saddam 'To Get 7 Days to Open Sites,'" *The Guardian*, September 28, 2002, 1, <http://www.lexis-nexis.com/>.

- [54] For the conditions of the resolution, see “Under the Gun: Deadlines for Saddam,” *The Boston Herald*, November 9, 2003, 3, <http://www.lexis-nexis.com/>.
- [55] James Harding and Mark Turner, “Divisions Boil Down to Question of Timing,” *Financial Times*, February 18, 2003, 12, <http://www.lexis-nexis.com/>.
- [56] Kenneth R. Bazinet, “U.S. Counting to 10 on Iraq March 17 Deadline for Saddam,” *New York Daily News*, March 8, 2003, 5, <http://www.lexis-nexis.com/>.
- [57] Robert Lusetch, “Get Off the Fence, Orders Bush—Embattled Blair Seeks Extended Deadline for Saddam,” *The Australian*, March 13, 2003, 1, <http://www.lexis-nexis.com/>
- [58] “President Bush: Monday ‘Moment of Truth’ for World on Iraq,” White House Press Release, March 16, 2003, <http://www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2003/03/20030316-3.html>.
- [59] See George W. Bush, “President Says Saddam Hussein Must Leave Iraq within 48 Hours: Remarks by the President in Address to the Nation,” March 17, 2003, <http://www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2003/03/20030317-7.html>. This phrase became the title of an Operation Iraqi Freedom retrospective. See Todd S. Purdum, *A Time of Our Choosing: America’s War in Iraq* (New York: Times Books/Henry Holt, 2003).
- [60] Small, “Gulf War,” 4.
- [61] The rhetoric of inevitability is also represented by the Bush administration’s consistent reference to the virtuous “American resolve,” a feature that appeared on September 11 and accompanied presidential rhetoric throughout the War on Terror. See George W. Bush, “Statement by the President in his Address to the Nation,” September 11, 2001, <http://www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2001/09/20010911-16.html>.
- [62] Gilles Deleuze, *Negotiations*, trans. Martin Joughin (New York: Columbia University Press, 1995), 177–82.
- [63] Virilio, *Desert Screen*, 37–8.
- [64] Vice President Dick Cheney, October 19, 2001. See Bob Woodward, “CIA Told to Do ‘Whatever Necessary’ to Kill Bin Laden; Agency and Military Collaborating at ‘Unprecedented’ Level; Cheney Says War Against Terror ‘May Never End,’” *Washington Post*, October 21, 2001, A1, <http://www.lexis-nexis.com/>.
- [65] Vice President Dick Cheney, March 16, 2003. See “Vice President Dick Cheney Discusses a Possible War with Iraq,” *CBS’s Face the Nation*, March 16, 2003, <http://www.lexis-nexis.com/>.
- [66] Tim Harper, “New Name, Same Conflict,” *Toronto Star*, February 11, 2006, A12, <http://www.lexis-nexis.com/>.
- [67] George W. Bush, “Second Inaugural Address,” January 20, 2005, <http://www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2005/01/20050120-1.html>.
- [68] The “Long War” is largely attributed to General Abizaid, who took over General Tommy Franks’ position as chief of U.S. Central Command in the Middle East in July of 2003. See David Ignatius, “Achieving Real Victory Could Take Decades,” *Washington Post*, December 26, 2004, B1, <http://www.lexis-nexis.com/>. In 2005, the Heritage Foundation produced a book with “Long War” in its title: James Jay Carafano and Paul Rosenzweig, *Winning the Long War: Lessons from the Cold War for Defeating Terrorism and Preserving Freedom* (Washington, DC: Heritage Foundation, 2005). In late 2005, the outgoing Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, General Richard Myers, used the term in a press conference. See Bradley Graham and Josh White, “Abizaid Credited with Popularizing the Term ‘Long War,’” *Washington Post*, February 3, 2006, A8, <http://www.lexis-nexis.com/>. A month after the 2006 State of the Union speech, the Defense Department issued its *Quadrennial Defense Review Report*. Written by Donald Rumsfeld, the first page of this important public document begins by stating that the report appears “in the fourth year of a long war, a war that is irregular in its nature” (1). The document includes an entire section titled “Fighting the Long War” (9–18).
- [69] George W. Bush, “2006 State of the Union Address,” January 31, 2006, <http://www.whitehouse.gov/stateoftheunion/2006/>.

- [70] The sixteenth-century Hapsburg–Ottoman war has been called the “Long War” by historians. The period of American politics from 1914 to 1990 has been given the name as well. See Philip Bobbitt, *The Shield of Achilles: War, Peace, and the Course of History* (New York: Knopf, 2002), 21–68.
- [71] The public life of the “Long War” eventually met its official end in 2007 as the occupation of Iraq became a political liability. See Michael R. Gordon, “U.S. Command Shortens Life of ‘Long War’ as a Reference,” *New York Times*, April 24, 2007, 14, <http://www.lexis-nexis.com/>. Before the appearance of the Long War, the administration experimented with the “Global Struggle Against Violent Extremism” (G-SAVE), a decidedly righteous phrase introduced by the Pentagon in 2005 to replace the “War on Terror.” Although Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld championed the phrase, President Bush decided ultimately against such a re-branding.
- [72] Greta Van Susteren and Bill Kristol, “Analysis with Bill Kristol,” *Fox on the Record with Greta Van Susteren*, April 10, 2003, <http://www.lexis-nexis.com/>.
- [73] George W. Bush, “President Discusses Second Term Accomplishments and Priorities,” August 3, 2005, <http://www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2005/08/20050803.html>.
- [74] Richard W. Stevenson and Eric Schmitt, “President Makes It Clear: Phrase Is ‘War on Terror,’” *New York Times*, August 4, 2005, A12, <http://www.lexis-nexis.com/>.
- [75] George W. Bush, “Press Conference by the President,” May 24, 2007, <http://www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2007/05/20070524.html>. The day before, Democratic presidential contender John Edwards charged that the “War on Terror” was a “bumper sticker, not a plan.” Jim Morrill, “Critics Heap Scorn on Edwards; Speaking Fee, Remarks Draw Fire,” *News and Observer*, May 25, 2007, A3, <http://www.lexis-nexis.com/>.
- [76] Walter Cronkite, “CBS Evening News,” *CBS*, February 27, 1968.
- [77] Stephen Kurkjian, “Bush Focus: A Lasting Peace; U.S. Delays Truce Talks with Iraq,” *Boston Globe*, March 2, 1991, 1, <http://www.lexis-nexis.com/>.
- [78] See Margot Norris, “Only the Guns Have Eyes: Military Censorship and the Body Count,” in *Seeing Through the Media: The Persian Gulf War*, ed. Susan Jeffords and Lauren Rabinowitz (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers, 1994), 285–300.
- [79] See the original strategy document: Harlan K. Ullman and James P. Wade, *Shock and Awe: Achieving Rapid Dominance* (Washington, DC: National Defense University, 1996), <http://permanent.access.gpo.gov/websites/nduedu/www.ndu.edu/inss/books/books%20-%201996/shock%20and%20awe%20-%20dec%201996/>.
- [80] The strategy as executed largely failed to produce the desired “psychological effect” among Iraqi forces. This was due mainly to the fact that much of the underequipped Iraqi military had no access to the live video feed of the bombing. Peter Spiegel, “Air Force Chief Defends Campaign Despite Failure Swiftly to Unseat Saddam,” *Financial Times*, April 2, 2003, 2, <http://www.lexis-nexis.com/>.
- [81] See chapter 6, “Regime Collapse,” of the official army report released on May 1, 2003. Gregory Fontenot, E. J. Degen, and David Tohn, *On Point: The United States Army in Operation Iraqi Freedom* (Annapolis, MD: Naval Institute Press, 2005), 336–8. The report states:
- The Marine Corps colonel in the area saw the Saddam statue as a target of opportunity and decided that the statue must come down. Since we were right there, we chimed in with some loudspeaker support to let the Iraqis know what it was we were attempting to do. (337)
- [82] George W. Bush, “President Bush Announces Major Combat Operations in Iraq Have Ended,” May 1, 2003, <http://www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2003/05/20030501-15.html>.
- [83] Indeed, while the infinite war appears to require the longevity of an Osama bin Laden, the infinitesimal war requires the endlessly repeating demise of the “number two man.”

- [84] Bob Woodward, *State of Denial: Bush at War, Part III* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 2006), 186–7. See also James Rosen, “‘Mission Accomplished’ Defended,” *Minneapolis Star Tribune*, May 1, 2004, 19A, <http://www.lexis-nexis.com/>; “One Year Later, Bush Backs Iraq Speech on Carrier,” *Seattle Times*, May 1, 2004, A1, <http://www.lexis-nexis.com/>.
- [85] “‘Mission Accomplished’ a Mistake, Rove Admits,” *Milwaukee Journal Sentinel*, April 17, 2004, 9A, <http://www.lexis-nexis.com/>.
- [86] Nancy Gibbs, “Was It Worth It?” *Time*, March 27, 2006, 26, <http://www.lexis-nexis.com/>.
- [87] Stephen Colbert, *The Colbert Report*, Comedy Central, March 27, 2006.
- [88] “Report Finds Little Progress in Iraq,” *CNN.com*, September 4, 2007, <http://www.lexis-nexis.com/>.
- [89] President George W. Bush on *NBC’s Meet the Press*, February 8, 2004; see Tim Russert, “President George W. Bush Discusses Various Political, Social and Economic Issues,” *NBC’s Meet the Press*, February 8, 2004, <http://www.lexis-nexis.com/>.
- [90] When convenient, the rhetoric of the deadline defers to automaticity. For one example, see Secretary of State Colin Powell’s interview on *Meet the Press* with Tim Russert. Russert: “How close are we to war with Iraq?” Powell: “I do not know. I hope that we can avoid war. There is still the opportunity to avoid war. The president prefers a peaceful solution, but it is in the hands of Saddam Hussein.” Tim Russert, “Secretary Colin Powell Discusses the Situation with Iraq,” *NBC’s Meet the Press*, February 9, 2003, <http://www.lexis-nexis.com/>.
- [91] George H.W. Bush, “Address to the Nation on the Invasion of Iraq,” January 16, 1991, <http://www.americanrhetoric.com/speeches/ghwbushiraqinvasion.htm>.
- [92] Article 51 of the United Nations Charter gives states the right to self-defense and is generally the source for doctrines justifying preemptive defense under imminent threat. The distinction is generally made between *preemption*, which implies an imminent threat and is legal, and *prevention*, which does not imply an imminent threat and is illegal.
- [93] George W. Bush, “State of the Union Address,” January 29, 2002, <http://www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2002/01/20020129-11.html>.
- [94] George W. Bush, *National Security Strategy of the United States* (Washington, DC: White House, 2002), <http://www.whitehouse.gov/nsc/nss.html>.
- [95] George W. Bush, “Graduation Speech at West Point,” June 1, 2002, <http://www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2002/06/20020601-3.html>.
- [96] George W. Bush, “State of the Union Address,” January 28, 2003, <http://www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2003/01/20030128-19.html>.
- [97] In this regard, the Bush administration appears to have chosen its words with legalistic precision. The closest the administration came to overtly stating such a position was Rumsfeld’s 2002 remark, “Some have argued that the nuclear threat from Iraq is not imminent, that Saddam is at least five to seven years away from having nuclear weapons; I would not be so certain.” On another occasion, Rumsfeld said, “No terrorist state poses a greater or more immediate threat to the security of our people and the stability of the world than the regime of Saddam Hussein in Iraq.” See “Rumsfeld Feeling Heat for Claiming Imminent Threat,” *Houston Chronicle*, March 24, 2004, A15, <http://www.lexis-nexis.com/>.
- [98] Alan M. Dershowitz, *Why Terrorism Works: Understanding the Threat, Responding to the Challenge* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2002), 131–64. The thesis is continued in Alan M. Dershowitz, *Preemption: A Knife that Cuts Both Ways* (New York: W.W. Norton, 2006).
- [99] Michael Walzer, “Political Action: The Problem of Dirty Hands,” *Philosophy and Public Affairs* 2 (1973): 160–80. Bentham’s meditation on torture was first assembled from two main fragments by W.L. Twining and P.E. Twining, “Bentham on Torture,” *Northern Ireland Legal Quarterly* 24 (1973): 305–56. In reference to time, Bentham wrote that torture “ought not to be applied but in cases what admit of no delay” (313).
- [100] Matt Feeney, “Torture Chamber,” *Slate*, January 6, 2004, <http://www.lexis-nexis.com/>.

- [101] “What Constitutes Torture?” *The O’Reilly Factor*, September 13, 2006, <http://www.lexis-nexis.com/>.
- [102] Jeff Dufour, “McCain Tortures No One in ‘24’ Cameo,” *The Hill*, February 2, 2006, 9, <http://www.lexis-nexis.com/>.
- [103] The world owes some of its finer gradations of time to the practice of torture during the Middle Ages. The time it took to utter the Paternoster (Lord’s Prayer), the Miserere (51st Psalm), or the Ave Maria often sufficed as thumbnail measures of time in the absence of accurate and available clocks. Because they were useful in administering torture, Charles V, Holy Roman Emperor, decreed that they become official measures of time in 1532. Alexander Waugh, *Time: Its Origin, Its Enigma, Its History* (New York: Carroll and Graf Publishers, 1999), 42–3.
- [104] This was Secretary of State Colin Powell referring to the U.N. weapons inspection process in Iraq, March 8, 2003; see Bazinet, “U.S. Counting to 10,” 5, <http://www.lexis-nexis.com/>.

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