

UC Santa Cruz

UC Santa Cruz Electronic Theses and Dissertations

Title

Governing Bodies: Gender and the Politics of Corporeal Weaponization

Permalink

<https://escholarship.org/uc/item/3f36t38f>

Author

Lyness, Claire Frances

Publication Date

2015

Peer reviewed|Thesis/dissertation

UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA

SANTA CRUZ

**GOVERNING BODIES: GENDER AND THE POLITICS OF CORPOREAL
WEAPONIZATION**

A dissertation submitted in partial satisfaction
of the requirements for the degree of

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

in

POLITICS

with an emphasis in FEMINIST STUDIES

by

Claire Lyness

September 2015

The Dissertation of Claire Lyness
is approved:

Professor Ronnie Lipschutz, Chair

Professor Vanita Seth

Professor Anjali Arondekar

Tyrus Miller
Vice Provost and Dean of Graduate Studies

Copyright © by

Claire Lyness

2015

Table of Contents

1. Introduction.....	1
a. “Unmanned”.....	1
b. Absent presences.....	14
c. Governing bodies.....	22
2. Chapter 1: Writing the Female Suicide Bomber: Suicide Bombing, Terrorism Studies and Governmentality.....	32
a. Terrorism studies.....	37
b. Towards a governmental analysis of terrorism studies.....	41
c. Governing female suicide bombers.....	58
d. Conclusion.....	65
3. Chapter 2: “Bad Stomachs” and Dirty Protest: The Armagh Prison Protest, 1980.....	67
a. Introduction.....	67
b. Armagh as historical absence.....	79
c. Voices from the Grave.....	89
d. Writing the no-wash protest.....	99
e. Menstrual blood.....	112
f. Pauline McLaughlin.....	122
4. Chapter 3: Unhealthy Eating: Women Hunger Strikers and the Pathologization of Protest.....	129
a. “Sisters of Terror”.....	130
b. Two strange disciplines.....	151
c. Pathological protest.....	166
d. Starvation as spectacle.....	177
e. Conclusion.....	182
5. Epilogue: The inextricable.....	186
6. Bibliography.....	197

Abstract

Governing Bodies: Gender and the Politics of Corporeal Weaponization

by

Claire Lyness

This dissertation engages with women's participation in three practices of political violence – suicide bombing, dirty protest and hunger striking. These practices all entail the weaponization of the body in distinct ways and are often placed beyond the scope of acceptable forms of violence. They are associated with “terrorist” subjects and are deployed against the state. I argue that the transgressive quality of these modes of corporeal weaponization is further amplified when the perpetrators are women. Following feminist scholarship on gender and political violence, I attend to the question of agency and consider how it is precisely the erasure of feminine bodies from the space of political violence which may conversely constitute a unique form of political agency.

Female suicide bombers, for example, are often cast as particularly lethal weapons because of their capacity to use feminine embodiment (usually feigning pregnancy) as a disguise. In such representations, women's bodies carry with them the significations of the private sphere – domesticity, nurture and care – and therefore are not read as violent actors. The association of femininity with the private sphere is what constitutes the deadly “undetectability” of the female suicide bomber. In the first chapter of this dissertation, I argue that the terrorism studies literature that engages with the figure of the suicide terrorist attempts to recapture suicide terrorism as a rational phenomenon with an identifiable strategic logic so that the suicide bomber may be effectively governed. At the same time, however, these literatures produce the female suicide bomber as a singularly risky subject who, because of her feminine embodiment, frequently exceeds attempts to govern her.

In the second chapter I shift to a different comparative site – the period of conflict in Northern Ireland known as the “Troubles.” I argue that this formation can

be read alongside the contemporary War on Terror, as many of the techniques and modes of counterterrorist governmentality recur across these two sites. I look at the dirty protest in Armagh prison undertaken by thirty Republican prisoners in 1980. I examine the conditions of historical absence that have constituted the women's protest as marginal to the men's protest at the Maze prison, which has since featured heavily in Republican commemorative tropes. I argue that attempts to understand the protest as reclaiming or "seizing control" of the women prisoners' bodies from the disciplinary regime of the prison often unintentionally reiterate a vision of the subject that is guaranteed by a mind/body dualism. Here the body is read as a passive, inert materiality that is animated only by the lively, willful mind. The problem with such accounts is not only that this dualism has functioned to historically exclude certain groups – including feminized and racialized subjects – from political life, but that it cannot account for certain modes of agency in which the body exerts a force of its own kind.

Finally I engage with the cases of Marian and Dolours Price, two IRA prisoners who went on hunger strike (and were force-fed) in HMP Brixton in 1974. The sisters' were eventually released in 1980 and 1981 reportedly suffering from anorexia. Finding the co-signification of women hunger strikers with anorexia or eating disorders to be a common one, I consider the feminist literature on anorexia and argue that the case of the Price sisters' disrupts the distinct boundary between pathology and protest. I argue that this has consequences for our understanding of political agency in hunger striking more generally and provokes further consideration of the agency of the body in such practices of resistance.

Acknowledgements

The writing of this dissertation would not have been possible without the support of so many people. I want to begin by thanking my committee members, who have shown patience and generosity with me throughout this long process. I am grateful for the mentorship and guidance of Ronnie Lipschutz, who has frequently inspired me to pursue lines of thought previously unconsidered, often reflecting his own broad curiosity and knowledge-base. Vanita Seth's humor and intelligence has buoyed me up at various points over the past six years, and her faith and interest in me during my time in Santa Cruz has been invaluable. Finally, I have to thank Anjali Arondekar, who has frequently pushed me, sometimes in painful ways, throughout the course of my graduate student career. Her exacting concerns and comments are written all over this dissertation and I would not be the scholar I am now without her intervention. I also want to thank Dean Mathiowetz, Carla Freccero and Cristina Masters for shaping my thinking at various moments of my graduate career, either in seminars or as readers of this project in the very early stages. I am grateful to Cindy Morris, Sarah Arantza Amador and Megan Thomas for all their invaluable help in administrative matters and for navigating with me the bureaucratic maze of being an international graduate student.

I also have to thank the friends I've made here in Santa Cruz, without whom I literally would not have made it through graduate school. It still seems miraculous that I arrived in Santa Cruz six years ago not knowing a single person and experiencing such

culture shock, but now it feels like home. I thank Sam Cook, Nishita Trisal, Omid Mohamadi, Steve Araujo, Randy Cota, Holly Johnson, Sarah Mak, Jan Kotowski and Aleixo Gonçalves for all the wonderful conversations, barbecues and glasses of wine we have shared. I have to give a special shout out to my running buddy Sandra Harvey. The memories of those morning runs on West Cliff are some of my favorites of Santa Cruz, and her care and support throughout this whole process has been a lifeline.

I also want to express my gratitude to all the friends and family back in Belfast who have provided me with encouragement and at times much-needed distraction from academic life. I want to thank Beth Armstrong, Rebecca Mairs and Angela Rainey for all their love and loyalty. Especially my BFF Angela, with whom I stayed various times in London while doing archival research. I have to thank my partner, Michael Magee, for all the multiple ways he has supported me, cared for me and kept me calm, of which there are far too many to count. Finally, my parents Patricia and John Lyness, who have shown such faith in me and done everything they can to help me along this process. I am grateful in particular to my father John, whose own voracious curiosity and boundless enthusiasm for research has inspired this project in so many ways, it is to him that I dedicate this dissertation.

Introduction

“I may not have been on the ground in Afghanistan, but I watched parts of the conflict in great detail on a screen for days on end. I know the feeling you experience when you see someone die. Horrifying barely covers it. And when you are exposed to it over and over again it becomes like a small video, embedded in your head, forever on repeat, causing psychological pain and suffering that many people will hopefully never experience.”¹

“Unmanned”

In February 2013, a study produced by the US Defense Department revealed that contrary to previous reports, the pilots of drone aircraft were affected by mental health issues at the same rates as pilots who were directly deployed in Afghanistan and Iraq (Dao 2013). The results of the study were widely reported in the US media and provoked considerable debate about the physical and mental toll that the constant operation of Predator and Reaper bombers, so essential to the US government’s drone war, was having on its military personnel. Circulating within such debates were fears about the unrelenting technological advancement of warfare, in which drones seem to function, as one journalist describes it, “as an avatar for all of our technological anxieties – the creeping sense that screens and camera have taken some piece of our souls, that we’ve slipped into a dystopia of disconnection.” (Power 2013) The results of the study unsettled deeply-held assumptions about the nature of remote-controlled warfare as a “mediated experience,” which is therefore less physically and emotionally demanding than direct deployment in the warzone (Morris 2015). For those who live in the spaces of the US military’s clandestine drone program, unfolding in the skies above Afghanistan, Iraq, Yemen and Pakistan for the past decade, whose lives are subject to

¹ Heather Linebaugh, “I worked on the US drone program. The public should know what really goes on.” *The Guardian*, 29 December 2010, <http://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2013/dec/29/drones-us-military>

intense surveillance but whose deaths remain uncounted, drones represent the brutal reality of US military force.² For the US and Western audiences however, drones seem to prompt ethical considerations about the changing nature of warfare, and specifically the corporeality of political violence. Many have questioned whether drone warfare can even be called combat at all, given that the drone warrior does not face any physical harm or potential bodily injury. The stakes of this warrior question are especially high in a militarized nation like the US, for whom the national sense of self is tied up with performances of military force (Masters 2005, 118).

Within the military, operating or piloting these drones (sometimes called UAVs – unmanned aerial vehicles – although the US Air Force now favors the term “Remotely-Piloted Aircraft”) has often been seen as a “cushy” job (Chatterjee 2015). Operators are frequently described in mocking terms as “chair-borne rangers” and there was much outcry in 2013 when Obama announced the introduction of a new combat medal to be awarded exclusively to drone pilots and “cyberwarriors” (Power 2013). Even as the study on the mental health of drone operators was publicized, many questioned whether PTSD works as a valid diagnosis, with some arguing that their inclusion in such a diagnostic category transforms it from a set of symptoms related to the “fear conditioning” that arises from confronting “mortal terror,” to something else entirely,

² Lauren Wilcox discusses the failure to account for civilian deaths in the present US drone war as signalling “a limit to the discourse of precision” that is frequently used to justify drones as somehow a more humane mode of warfare (as evidence in the discussion of “clean” and “surgical” strikes). The problem of civilian casualties is therefore presented as an epistemological problem of insufficient information or data collection rather than a political or indeed, ethical problem. See Wilcox 2015, p. 159.

seemingly related to the “moral injury” that may result from killing another human being in combat, which is apparently felt just as strongly whether carried out by remote-control or not (Morris 2015). Indeed, despite the Obama administration’s embrace of the drone as the archetypal weapon of this phase of the War on Terror, redefined “not as a boundless ‘global war on terror’ – but rather as a series of persistent, targeted efforts to dismantle specific networks of violent extremists that threaten America,” the US military is having an increasingly hard time recruiting and retaining personnel for the drone program (Obama 2013). Reports released at the beginning of this year suggest that drone pilots are quitting their missions in increasingly large numbers (Smith IV 2015). Indeed, the dropout rate is so high that it presents significant problems for the continuation of the program. The US government has tried to remedy this by offering financial incentives to attract more pilots, a curious counterpoint to austerity measures implemented elsewhere. The emerging reports of high stress and significant mental health issues amongst drone operators suggest that far from the dream of corporeal disengagement that such weapons promise, the body is affected even when it is not directly engaged in the space of political violence as it may be conventionally defined.

I begin with this brief discussion of drone warfare, which may seem an unusual starting point, because it is the drone, as the remotely piloted, precision guided face of the most technologically advanced military in the world that has come to occupy a central position in the contemporary iteration of the War on Terror. Over the past fourteen years, this US-led war has effectively stabilized and made permanent the various

political forms of a state of exception (Jabri 2006, 49 – 50). It is the drone, and the euphemistically named “extrajudicial” killings that it performs, which arguably best represents this current instantiation of the War on Terror. Immediately after 9/11, however, it was the spectacular violence of the suicide bomber that captured the imagination of the Western media and provoked expressions of outrage concerning a form of violence so apparently beyond the pale and at odds with Western values. Now, however, it is the drone, employed not by the enemy but by the US Air Force, that has become the primary object onto which political and ethical concerns about the scope and meaning of violence in liberal democratic societies is projected.

These two figures – the suicide bomber and the drone pilot – are in many ways the twin poles of the War on Terror and can be understood only in reference to one another. One entails the application of the most advanced technological might of the world’s last remaining superpower to kill the enemy body while simultaneously producing the body of the US soldier as invulnerable and at an essential distance from the warzone. The other employs the most basic technology available – the human body – to no less horrific effect. We see here something approaching a hierarchization of bodily entanglement in the practice of political violence, which distills contemporary geopolitics into these two opposing figures. These figures are also linked because not only is the potential suicide terrorist the desired victim of the drone strike, imagined as a “clean”, “precise” and “surgical” way of removing this potentiality with minimal

“collateral damage,” but also drone strikes themselves are said to fuel the anti-American sentiment that enables recruitment of further suicide terrorists.

Perhaps these two kinds of warfare are not so fundamentally opposed however. Despite the widely-held belief that drones offer a “clean” mode of warfare, the imprecision at the heart of this “precision warfare,” as revealed in the unknowable deaths of the many non-combatants or civilians that drone strikes produce, radically undermines the moral distinction between terrorist violence and the “just” violence of the US military.³ Terrorism is marked as a particular kind of “evil” because terrorists indiscriminately kill civilians. In contrast, the advanced technologies employed by the US military, not just drones but also “the datalink” and other forms of surveillance technology that must necessarily accompany it, supposedly enable “absolute discrimination between combatants and civilians.” (Wilcox 2015, 132). It is this technological capacity for discrimination that confers moral authority to US state violence. The assumption is that with more and more knowledge, recovered as multiple data-feeds now accumulating to such an extent that they exceed any human capacity to

³ These deaths are produced as unknowable in multiple ways. Firstly, the US drone program is highly classified and the government releases no official count of non-combatant deaths. Also, the outcry over the April 2015 drone strike in Pakistan that killed two Western hostages, one American and one Italian, showed the limits of the US government intelligence that fuels the selection of drone targets (Shane 2015). It is frequently said that the drone program is only as precise as the intelligence that feeds it, however, the US could not confirm the identity of the two Westerners who killed until two weeks after their deaths, suggesting the limited scope of their intelligence. The outcry over two Western deaths of course obscures the thousands of non-Westerners killed in the strikes, which by a conservative estimate, according to the Council of Foreign Relations, may be as many as 3674, and these figures do not include strikes in Iraq or Afghanistan (Zenko 2014). A report produced by the British charity Reprieve also attested to this imprecision, in November 2014 it reported that several militants targeted by the program had been killed multiple times (Ackerman 2014).

process them, warfare is becoming more and more humane. Written over and against this apparently humane violence is the figure of the terrorist, staged as a counter-modern agent of violence who fires imprecisely and unintelligently.

The distinction between state violence and terrorist violence is therefore both a technological and epistemological one. In the literature on drone warfare, both academic and media accounts, the technological aspect marking this difference has received a lot of attention. As Lauren Wilcox notes, drone warfare “waged on video screens,” captures the imagination because it seemingly “represents the Enlightenment dream of transcending the body.” (Wilcox 2015, 147) Yet we know that such appearances are deceiving, for drone warfare offers no such transcendence either for those against whom it is deployed, whose bodies are maimed, killed and injured, or for the drone operators themselves, whose various embodied responses suggest that there is something disturbing in the “voyeuristic intimacy” such practices entail (Power 2013). To the extent that the affective responses of the drone operator’s body return as the excess that cannot be integrated into the narrative of “hyper disembodiment” constituting precision warfare, the dream of transcendence is revealed as fantasy (Wilcox 2015, 148; Masters 2005, 116). Moreover, it is a particularly dangerous kind of fantasy for it is also a dream of killing without ethical or psychic consequences. The networked quality of drone warfare – whereby target selection and decision-making is dispersed into various “kill chains,” “disposition matrices,” and within which the machine, understood as a reasoning, processing and calculating actor, is effectively inserted between the killer and

the killed – sustains this ethical disconnection. Drone warfare therefore, represents not only a shift in the social relations of violence, it also has consequences for establishing moral notions of blame and guilt. Ethical sensibilities are imagined to be distinctly human notions that the machine, understood as its own kind of agent, is not necessarily subject to. If as Wilcox asserts, in drone warfare “it is the technology that is the instrument of violence, not the bodies of soldiers,” (Wilcox 2005) how then can technology be made ethically accountable for violence?

However, such ethical questions assume that one can draw a clear distinction between the human body and technology or the machine. The cyborg soldier, as the agent of drone warfare, undermines this sense of separation. Wilcox writes of the drone-human assemblage, and notes how drone operators report experiencing a proprioceptive sense of the drone as an extension of their physical body (Wilcox 2015, 141). She draws on a wealth of literature in posthumanism and cybernetics to show how drone warfare constitutes “a reconfiguration of subjectivity into the posthuman.” (Wilcox 2015, 143) Yet, the language of the posthuman, indicating a temporal moment of rupture in the moving past of the “post-”, neglects more mundane historical continuities. Namely, that the body of the combatant in political violence has long been constituted as machine-like. As Foucault notes in his discussion of military discipline in *Discipline and Punish*, the application of disciplinary techniques to the soldier’s body in eighteenth century Europe was primarily about producing the body as a political technology of war and then later as a useful, productive body whose labor power could be extracted with maximum

efficiency. Both through the creation of the army as a “body-machine” in which the soldier’s individual body is assembled “as part of a multi-segmented machine” and through the discipline of weapons training, aimed at the complete integration of the soldier’s body with “the object it manipulates,” there have been multiple attempts to mesh body and machine, transforming both as a consequence (Foucault 1995, 165, 153)

It is not only drone warfare, therefore, that constitutes a novel fusion of technology and the body. Indeed, the body of the suicide bomber is also, like the drone, a political technology that emerges out of a specific rendering of bodily matter in which it is reduced to mere object or instrument. As many have commented, when the suicide bomber’s body breaks up in the bomb explosion, limbs and body parts come to function as ballistics (Wilcox 2014). In the reduction of the suicide bomber’s body to a missile fragment, suicide bombing represents an instrumentalization of bodily matter, just as it effectively transcends notions of bodily closure and boundedness. This dissertation looks at suicide bombing alongside two other practices of bodily weaponization: dirty protest and hunger striking. I examine the conditions of possibility out of which these political technologies emerge and consider how this process of weaponization may itself alter notions about the agency of the body in political violence.

In traditional political science these kinds of bodily practices have often been narrated as “weapons of the weak” (see Scott 1985; McEvoy 2001), in that they represent

an innovative utilization of the body at the very moment that the capacity to act politically, as in the space of the prison or the military occupation, is dramatically restricted. Leila Neti captures this when she speaks of the dirty protest in Armagh Prison in 1980 (discussed in the second chapter of this dissertation). She says,

“Guns, knives and bombs can be easily detected mechanically, but what technological advancement can prevent a prisoner from smearing blood and excrement on their own cells?” (Neti 2003, 89)

Here, the weaponization of the body or of bodily matter constitutes an improvised mode of resistance that reveals the limits to the prison’s regime of subjection. The smearing of blood or excrement, read here as analogous to “guns, knives and bombs,” suggests that despite attempts to subject and dominate the prisoner’s body, something within that body remains capable of subverting this very domination. In this understanding of the subject, there is some part that cannot be touched by power and that cannot be fully governed. As Neti continues, “It is precisely this element of ungovernability that was seized on by the prisoners.” (Neti 2003, 89) In accounts of these kind of practices of political violence it is frequently this part which is written as the locus of political agency. The work of this dissertation is to consider not only how this ungovernable part is constituted as such, but also why it is frequently read as the essential ground for the operation of political agency in a broad variety of genres.

Accounts of corporeal practices of political violence as “weapons of the weak” also offer a particular theorization of embodiment, although this is not always made explicit. If the body as a political technology is perceived as that which can be consciously deployed as a last resort in a situation with limited potential for resistance, then the body, and the manipulation of bodily matter such practices entail, is primarily conceived as a conduit for the mind. Ultimately, it is from the conscious, intentional and willing mind that the lively resistive potential emanates. Such accounts rely upon and reproduce the traditional Cartesian dualism between passive body and active mind that has historically operated as the metaphysical ground for the exclusion of certain groups, people and identity forms from full subjecthood. Such groups (women, the colonized, the racialized – these are not mutually exclusive categories) have been overdetermined by their corporeality and hence read as less capable of achieving agency, rationality and sovereignty (Bordo 2003; Grosz 1994). In this project, I consider how our conception of agency in political violence, and specifically in corporeal weaponization, might shift if we examine such practices without accepting this dualism as the necessary guarantee of political agency. That is, without engaging the body as if it were the inert, passive and brute materiality of subjectivity, which can be brought into political life only through the animating intentionality of the willful, autonomous and sovereign subject.

If we expand our conception of what the body might do and be, it must also be acknowledged that bodies are not abstract entities. They are always particular and caught up in the power play of identity, marked in various ways by race, class, ethnicity, religious

identity, and gender. My research pays particular attention to the gendered, and specifically feminine body, as it appears and disappears in relations of political violence. To pay attention to the feminine body in the space of war is to engage with conditions of absence. As the scholarship on feminist international relations that has emerged over the past two decades has continually shown, discussions of war and international politics, both at the level of scholarship and of praxis, have historically been marked by the exclusion of gender (Enloe 2000, Tickner 1992, Peterson & Runyon 2014). The case of drone warfare, which some have argued signals the increasing irrelevance of the sexed body in the field of war, attests to the continued urgency of feminist engagement in parsing the consequences of new modes of weaponization. As Cristina Masters' work shows, far from transcending gender relations, we might read the cyborg soldier, as the new subject form that emerges out of drone warfare, as a significant remapping of American militarized masculinity. Examining discursive constructions of drones as "guardian angels" who watch over and protect the bodies of American soldiers engaged in combat, and as "infused with the ability to reason and think without being interrupted by emotions such as guilt or bodily limitations such as fatigue," Masters argues that the body of the human soldier has become feminized (Masters 2005, 114). It is the all too human body of the soldier, opposed to the mastery and protective capacities of the drone technology, which is now associated with the feminine qualities of vulnerability, fragility and emotionalism.

While such representations detach militarized masculinity from the bodies of American soldiers, converting it into a kind of “techno-militarized masculinity,” the gendered binary remains very much intact (Masters 2005, 119). In this binary, femininity continues to signify as passive, requiring protection and as a mode of embodiment that is inherently vulnerable to violation. Masculinity meanwhile, signifies as a kind of disembodiment, in that it may transcend the messy materiality and fragility of the human body in favor of rationality, objectivity and abstraction (Masters 2005, 122). Masters locates the detachment of militarized masculinity from the bodies of US soldiers as a post-Vietnam reconfiguration of the American self. Famously a war that produced no heroes, Masters argues that Vietnam instituted a crisis in the highly gendered narrative of US nationalism based on projections of its global strength and total economic, political and military hegemony (Masters 2005, 118). Yet is also not surprising that this shift occurs in the contemporary moment when the US military is becoming more “diverse” than ever before. While the language of diversity is frequently employed as a “corporate strategy” for managing historically produced difference while erasing its contingent conditions of emergence (Davis 1997), the developments of the past few years arguably signal something of an institutional shift for the US military. With the ending of combat exclusion ban for women in 2013 and the repeal of “Don’t Ask, Don’t Tell” in 2011, the bodies of soldiers in the US military are no longer exclusively heterosexual cis-gendered male ones. Although pervasive practices of sexual violence and the “epidemic” of military rape should give pause to any salutary or progressivist narrative of inclusion, it is surely significant that the US military’s embrace of ‘diversity’ amongst its ranks coincides with a reconstitution of American militarized masculinity. No longer tied to the

vulnerable bodies of male soldiers, militarized masculinity has been shifted onto these new technologies.

Beyond the US military, this reconstitution of masculinity but not the gender binary itself has another consequence specific to the War on Terror and the encounter with the terrorist other therein. If masculinity is now associated with technological mastery or even remapped onto the technological objects themselves, then the unsophisticated weaponry of the suicide terrorist, i.e. their own body, signifies as feminine. The terrorist subject, before we even get to the particularity of the woman who engages in “terrorist” violence, is therefore a feminized one. The feminization of the terrorist subject enables the maintenance of US hegemony as it is linked to a national performance of hegemonic masculinity (see Connell and Messerschmidt 2005). To pay attention to the body as a political technology therefore, also requires an account of how certain bodies come into view within highly gendered (and sexualized) systems of meaning. The optic of gender is also an optic of power, for, as Joan Scott writes, “gender is a primary way of signifying relations of power.” (J. W. Scott 1986, 1069). My focus on women’s engagement in practices of corporeal weaponization begins in the first instance from a place of explicit gender difference. Even the terminology of “women terrorist” introduces this difference, as “women terrorists,” they are figured as a subset of the general group “terrorist.” This in itself reveals the extent to which the category of “terrorist,” though it may appear undifferentiated, is in fact marked in very specific ways

by gender relations, either as a masculine domain of political violence or as denoting a feminized subject position in relation to technologically-advanced state violence.

Absent presences

My specific engagement with women suicide bombers, women hunger strikers and women dirty protesters forces consideration of how the question of the body as a political technology may unfold differently if we begin from the perspective of feminized bodies. Such a perspective, I argue, brings into sharp relief the particular theorizations of agency and subjectivity that are often implicitly present in accounts of corporeal weaponization. The question of agency is an important one here because to engage with feminine bodies in relations of political violence is already to start from a position that is understood as without agency. As feminist scholars have shown, in the West at least, the history of waging war has long been narrated as an exclusively masculine domain (Elshtain 1995). Women, when they do appear in narratives of war, are located within what Iris Marion Young calls “the logic of masculinist protection,” wherein they appear as helpless, passive figures onto which paternalist desires are projected (Young 2003).

With specific reference to the two geopolitical conflicts that I engage with here: the US-led War on Terror and the period of conflict in Northern Ireland known as the “Troubles,” it is clear that the maintenance of such a narrative is possible even when women participate in political violence. We can think not just of the female suicide

bombers and the women members of the IRA that I directly engage with here, but also the monstrous figure of Lynndie England, “the lady on the leash” (as per *The Rolling Stones* song). England appeared in the widely-circulated images of sexual torture at Abu Ghraib, holding hooded Iraqi male prisoners on leashes. We may also think of Margaret Thatcher, known colloquially to the IRA prisoners as “tin knickers,” the highly sexualized language reflecting perceptions of continued British intransigence in the face of Irish suffering (Ellman 1993, 105). Such presences, whether figures of “terrorist violence,” heads of state or soldiers in state militaries, remind us that the absence of femininity within the space of political violence is itself an effect of representation and not directed related to any empirical reality.

Even when women do participate in political violence, their violence is produced as spectacular. The spectacle however, though overdetermined by visibility, is also a kind of disappearance, to the extent that it obscures complex relationships of power in favor of highly dramatized and individualized images. Women’s political violence, so potentially disruptive to the narrative of feminine victimhood, continues to be staged as an anomaly or as thoroughly marginal to the real action unfolding. As many other scholars who have engaged with women participants in political violence have catalogued, such representational strategies have the effect of erasing women’s political agency. In *Mothers, Monsters, Whores*, Laura Sjoberg and Caron Gentry look at mainly Western, and specifically English language, media accounts of women terrorists in a broad range of locations, including Chechnya, Palestine and the US. They conclude that

the identification of femininity with victimhood is so deeply sedimented and widespread that despite women's participation in violent acts of murder, terrorism and sexual torture, they are generally presented as innocent victims or as tools of masculine machinations (Sjoberg and Gentry 2007). The representational tropes they catalogue in their text show the unrelentingly capacity of the Western media to reinscribe normative articulations of femininity onto the very practices, such as female suicide bombing, that might otherwise threaten to disrupt this normativity (Sjoberg and Gentry 2007, 113).

Against this absencing of feminine agency, Sjoberg and Gentry make use of Nancy Hirschmann's schema of relational autonomy to furnish "a feminist conception of responsibility," which, "acknowledges that part of behavior is response, often complex or involuntary and frequently not chosen." (Sjoberg and Gentry 2007, 16 – 17) For Sjoberg and Gentry, designations of agency are fundamentally about responsibility, which is guaranteed by a conception of "choice". They write, "all people, women included, have choices about their participation. The degree of choice is an interesting question... but the existence of a choice should be universally recognized." (Sjoberg and Gentry 2007, 19) In wrapping up the question of choice, in understanding it in more "feminist" terms as universal though always conditioned, relational and responsive, Sjoberg and Gentry also assume that they have settled the question of women's agency in political violence. Yet such a reading, in which the conscious choice of a particular individual is identified as the moment of political agency, reaches its limit when we consider women's corporeal practices of political violence. For example, the case studies

of dirty protest and hunger strike that I discuss in the second and third chapters of this dissertation, push us to consider a kind of political agency that does not necessarily follow from the intentional choice of the sovereign and (relationally) autonomous individual. When we consider the force that the body itself exerts in these practices, the conception of political agency may be detached from the clear notion of willful choice that so often guarantees it.

The specific example of the women hunger striker, as discussed in chapter three here, elucidates this well. How do we make sense of the conscious “choice” that the hunger striker makes if we consider such a subject alongside the ghost figure of the anorectic, who is so frequently interpellated in discussions of women hunger strikers? While the choice of the political prisoner to embark on a hunger strike is generally accepted as such, in the process conferring on them a certain degree of political agency even as their bodies may be physically violated through force-feeding; the anorectic subject, who is also a skilled practitioner of self-starvation, does not share the same fate. The anorectic subject is a pathological one, she is said to be suffering from a mental illness. Subject to this illness, she is at the mercy of her own psychopathology, the development of which is understood as both biological and socio-cultural. Even though she exhibits an extreme degree of self-control in suppressing her hunger, she is really not in control at all and cannot therefore be deemed an agent in any legal, medical or psychological conception of the term. Furthermore, some accounts suggest that as a result of prolonged starvation the anorectic’s brain chemistry is significantly altered and

her body may even begin to “adapt” to hunger. As such, the symptoms of starvation, which initially feel deeply uncomfortable, come to be experienced as feeling “right” somehow (Brumberg 1989, 31). As two prominent psychologists of eating disorders narrate it, anorexia can be categorized as a ‘dependence disorder’, similar to alcoholism, except that the anorectic is “addicted to starvation” rather than alcohol (Szmukler and Tatum 1984).

In chapter three I address this fusion of hunger striking and anorexia directly as they converge in the figures of Marian and Dolours Price, two sisters who were members of the IRA and who went on hunger strike in Brixton Prison in 1974. The sisters were eventually released in 1980 and 1981 respectively, reportedly suffering from anorexia. On the one hand this slippage between political practice and individual pathology can be read as an effect of a gendered economy of representation that works to depoliticize these women’s potentially disruptive practices. Yet I also want to consider how this slippage may be a productive one. For the way in which starvation reconstitutes both the body and mind suggests that any clear distinction between the two is fundamentally untenable, just as it reveals the impossibility of locating once and for all a definitive origin point that begins with a moment “conscious choice.” Even if the hunger striker makes a conscious choice to start their protest, and may indeed articulate the exact circumstances under which they will cease their protest, this becomes increasingly complicated when we consider how the starving body itself figures as a forceful agent. At some point, the starving body may become the subject-agent and the

mind may become its object. We are forced therefore, to think the political agency of this form of corporeal weaponization more expansively, precisely because we have begun from the specific experience of the Price sisters, who were at various points hailed as both dangerous political militants on hunger strike and as weak, sick girls with eating disorders.

The Price sisters' experience highlights the extent to which women's bodies, when they do engage in practices of corporeal weaponization, are always overdetermined by their gender difference. With the Price sisters it is the specifically female pathology of anorexia, with the dirty protesters in Armagh prison it is the menstrual blood, just one amongst many substances smeared on the cell walls, that dominates accounts of their protest. With the female suicide bombers discussed in chapter one, the capacity of the female body to operate as a kind of disguise frequently features in discussions of the threat they may potentially pose. Through reports of bomb belts that look like pregnant bellies or of explosives hidden in breast implants, the feminine body is recast as an "occult weaponry," which may be deployed skillfully and lethally to subvert the expectant gaze of the enemy (Aretxaga 1997, 39).

We are duped by the female body as disguise because its presence in the masculine space of political violence is an unexpected intrusion, signaling the reappearance of that which has been made invisible. In my analysis of the three case

studies included here, I follow Aretxaga in considering how such expectations may conversely constitute a specifically feminine mode of agency in political violence. Aretxaga speaks of feminine agency in terms of absent presences, as an “ironic” kind of agency that emerges out of the specific conditions of erasure that female bodies are subject to (Aretxaga 1997, 39). Marked as “not belonging” or as “out of place” in the theater of war, at the checkpoint, in the colonial prison or on the battlefield, (however increasingly complex the constitution of this may be), the movement of feminine bodies within such spaces is paradoxical. It is both highly regulated and yet women are often less restricted in their movement than men, because certain masculine bodies signify in these spaces as inherently confrontational, aggressive and suspicious. An example from the current drone war highlights this play of visibility and gender. A 2012 New York Times article on Obama’s “secret kill list,” revealed the precise calculus the administration uses to count the number of civilians killed in drone strikes. Following claims by the Head of the CIA in 2011 that “not one single civilian” had been killed by the US’s drone program, it emerged that his statement was based on the official method of collecting data on the civilian death toll, which, “in effect counts all military-age males in a strike zone as combatants... unless there is explicit intelligence posthumously proving them innocent.” (Becker and Shane 2012) Here masculinity is so tied up with the performance of violence that it is treated as if it automatically harbors destructive intent until proven otherwise. In this case, gender not only maps onto, but actively determines, the polarities of combatant/non-combatants, which are also always determinations about who must be killed and who must be protected.

Running counter to this overexposure of masculine bodies in the warzone is the invisibility of female bodies. This very invisibility may itself be skillfully deployed to undermine attempts to govern these bodies. As Aretxaga discusses in her ethnography of nationalist women in Belfast throughout the Troubles, there are countless stories of the women in Catholic areas moving ammunitions in prams and getting past military checkpoints without being searched by appealing to the soldier's sense of masculinity (Aretxaga 1997, 58). Here, the female body, and particularly the older female body, is staged as a domestic, private space that carries with it the comforting significations of nurture and kinship, such that its visual or physical violation may be experienced as shameful by the violator (Aretxaga 1997, 38). Of course, this playful manipulation of gender stereotypes to one's advantage does not displace the multiple ways that women's bodies are also especially subjected to intensive surveillance, regulation and discipline, often through sexual violence at the hands of soldiers. There are countless examples of this both in the security regime in Northern Ireland and elsewhere. But it is to ask after the very specific possibilities for agency in a space where one's presence is always already occluded. In thinking how the bodies of women who engage in political violence are rendered invisible, and precisely through this invisibility may be constituted as effective violent actors, we are prompted to consider how what is rendered marginal or absented from the dominant narrative, can exert a powerful force nonetheless.

Governing bodies

My focus on these various practices of corporeal weaponization, even in the brief discussion here concerning the corporeality of that which at first appears as an intensely disembodied kind of weaponry, i.e. drones, is an attempt to direct analytical attention to the body as an under-theorized aspect of international relations. International Relations, as a distinct academic discipline that first emerged during the fraught post-WWI peace in Europe and that came of age in the “bipolar” world of the Cold War, has long held the question of war to be its central object of study (see for example, Carr 1939; Waltz 1959; Morgenthau, 1972). However, the historical specificity of the discipline’s conception of war – as that which is fought between “Great Powers” and eventually, between nation states – has meant that the state not only features as the primary agent of violence, but it is also reified as “the pre-discursive, natural realm of international politics.” (Weber 1998, 78) As many critical international relations scholars have pointed out, the emphasis on the state as primary referent of the discipline has led to something of a conceptual blindness concerning the multiplicity of actors in global politics (Tetreault and Lipschutz 2009; Enloe 2000). It is, as Lauren Wilcox notes, “one of the deep ironies” of international relations as a discipline, and security studies as a sub-discipline, that “while war is actually inflicted on bodies, bodily violence and vulnerability, as the flipside of security, are largely ignored.” (Wilcox 2015, 2)

It is to this ironic absence that I direct this examination of the corporeal weaponization of feminine bodies. I share with much IR scholarship the emphasis on

relations of political violence as an important and urgent field of study, but in doing so I attend to how bodies are made sense of and come to work as forceful actors in these relations, shifting emphasis away from the state as the primary agent of geopolitical conflict. Of course the state, and the violence that it enacts, remains an important referent in this account. Part of the work here is to show how the state, conceived as a regime of governmentality that extends well beyond official institutions, is the overall effect of a multiplicity of practices. As such, I follow Foucault in elaborating the state as an effect rather than as a pre-given origin point (Foucault 2008, 77). The state and its interests are constantly reproduced through these practices, as in the case of a particular iteration of American “national security” that is produced through the expert knowledge of terrorism studies in chapter one, or in the “stark” image of the feeding tube inserted into the bodies of IRA prisoners in chapter three (Feldman 1991, 237).

I argue that in relation to political violence, paying attention to the body and the ways in which it becomes weaponized pushes us to consider how violence, though destructive, is also at times productive. It is, after all, a major force through which bodies are constituted, novel subject positions come into being and knowledge is produced. The optic of corporeal weaponization enables examination of what Tarak Barkawi and Shane Brighton describe as the excess of war, that is, “the capacity of organized violence to be more than kinetic exchange, to be constitutive and general, to ‘cast into motion’ subjects who are then alienated from themselves and come to know themselves and the world in new ways.” (Barkawi and Brighton 2011, 136) This

theorization of violence as productive can provoke discomfort, as if it cancels out the very real harm and pain that results from it, but such a theorization would necessarily reject any firm boundary between destruction and production. In many ways, as Barkawi and Brighton point out, this boundary is itself the effect of an Enlightenment sensibility in which peace and civility are constituted as the telos of modernity. It is part of a progress narrative in which modernity is conceived primarily “in opposition to violence.” (Barkawi and Brighton 2011, 134) This reminds us that such an opposition, which animates much of contemporary security praxis premised on liberal humanitarian dream of achieving a civil society that would be without violence altogether, is indeed a highly particular ideal.

The figure of the martyr detailed in these chapters, whether in its religious iteration or as it appears in the national-secular dream of a nation-to-come borne out of physical and spiritual sacrifice, runs very much counter to this progress narrative. In fact, it is the continued power of such an Enlightenment narrative that produces the martyr as a deeply disturbing counter-modern and pathological force. As such, the martyr reveals the limits to this discourse for his or her embrace of violence as productive is an affront to security regimes premised on a desire for peace, and yet this interruption can be managed only through violence. The constitution of these actors as pathological necessitates a logic of risk management, which, following Foucault’s articulation of biopolitics, has come to be theorized as a hallmark of advanced liberalism (see for example Beck 1992; Rose 1999). In an age of biopower, in which the health of

the population, constituted in biological terms, is taken as the ultimate end of politics, the presence of certain unruly bodies, those who “pose risks and dangers to... self-discipline and social order,” is presented as a problem upon which the “apparatuses of security” must intervene (Lipschutz and Hester 2014, 367) Because liberal politics work “through the creation of a realm of non-interference through which society, its economy, and its population can circulate and function according to their natural tendencies,” biopower relies upon subjects’ internalization of certain rationalities (Wilcox 2015, 24). As I explore in more detail with relation to the figure of *homo economicus* in chapter one, the idealized subject of liberal biopolitics is presumed to be an autonomous, self-interested, instrumentally-rational, utility-maximizing calculator. Such a subject has not only internalized the techniques of liberal governance so that he is capable of effective self-governance, but he is also easily governed ‘from a distance’ for his internalized calculus is transparent and his response to particular environmental modifications can be easily predicted.

At the same time as this subject is produced as the idealized point of biopower’s application, such subjects are pitted against “constructions of unreasonable, premodern articulations of *others* who are perceived as irrationally resisting the dissemination of neoliberal market principles and personhood.” (Nadesan 2008, 187) These subjects are positioned as particularly risky subjects against whom the governmental response is redoubled. All of the subjects discussed here, to the extent that their practices of corporeal warfare are interpreted as irrational, counter-modern and especially in the case

of suicide bombers and hunger strikers, as displaying a threatening disregard for their own self-preservation, are constituted as these kinds of others and as unruly, risky and pathological subjects. Moreover, with the specifically feminine subjects discussed throughout, this pathologization is also gendered. Female corporeality signifies as especially risky, as in the case of female suicide bombers, or as abnormal in relation to the masculine norm, as in the case of the female dirty protesters.

The governmental measures deployed to contain the behavior of such subjects, like the carceral techniques addressed here, speak to the persistent logic of risk management at the same time as they push beyond it. For such bodies, produced as so essentially risky, provoke not only biopolitical techniques of intervention, but they also reveal the extent to which biopower is necessarily supplemented by sovereign power, which is the power to take life rather than the power to make life live that supposedly characterizes biopower. As Nadesan writes, “sovereignty’s solution is the radical purge of those entities – people who belie the liberal fantasy though they are constituted in relation to it.” (Nadesan 2008, 35) Terrorists, as they are constructed through multiple discourses of risk, including terrorism studies as a mode of expert knowledge, are therefore constituted as threats to the health of the population and also as potentially ungovernable. Ungovernable, beyond the remit of liberal biopolitics, they require sovereign intervention. We see this in the drone strike, where the terrorist who may not be governed from a distance may indeed be killed from a distance, in a spectacular

display of sovereign power that destroys the body of the terrorist without any possible retribution or reciprocity.

From the perspective of the body as it engages in political violence, the logic of risk management, though it works directly on bodies, is also a logic of disembodiment. Risk management addresses the population as the object that must be securitized. However, the population is conceived as a biological aggregate and individual bodies are important only to the extent that they relate to this biological aggregate. Within this schema, individual bodies are produced as “objects of knowledge,” which may be read according to the logic of preemption (Wilcox 2015, 22). Through various technological measures, such as surveillance, data-mining and biometrics, bodies are treated as depositories of information that may be mined to reveal potential risks to security of the population (Lipschutz and Hester 2014). Yet this recognition of the body as an important target of governmental techniques at times reproduces the body as merely an inert “medium of social power.” (Wilcox 2015, 3) Even critical accounts of contemporary biopolitics offer little discussion of how the actual experience of embodiment may be radically altered through the application of these technologies or how the materiality of the body itself exerts a force that cannot be accounted for in such logics.

The first chapter of this dissertation engages with the erasure of the body of the individual suicide terrorist in terrorism studies literature, which is read as constituting a governmental practice of risk management rather than as neutral knowledge. Terrorism studies emerges out of strategic studies, a field that has historically imagined itself as an objective “policy science.” (Barkawi and Brighton 2011, 128). As such, it theorizes violence as an instrument that may be wielded by rational actors to achieve political ends. This paradigm provides a basis for understanding even the risky irrational figure of the suicide bomber as operating according to an identifiably rational strategic logic. Through a discussion of Robert Pape’s work in this chapter, I show that it is actually the leadership of the terrorist organization and not the individual suicide bomber who is identified as the rational actor. In limiting analytic attention to the leadership, the actual bodies that engage in these practices are further obscured. They figure as inert instruments, or as “human capital” that may be deployed by the organization against the enemy. Here, the terrorist organization is imagined in neoliberal terms as an “enterprise-unit”, seeking to maximize and grow their interests at every point (Foucault 2008, 225). Once again, however, in rendering the body as capital, essentially a medium that may be deployed for particular ends but without any operative force itself, the political agency of the body is evacuated.

Against this evacuation, in the second and third chapters I engage with the body, and specifically the prisoner’s body, as it emerges as a political technology in the context of the conflict in Northern Ireland during the 1970s. In this particular war on terror,

prisoners' bodies became the field upon which the struggle between the IRA and the British state was waged. These corporeal practices of resistance, such as dirty protest and hunger striking, show how the body may be "the target of political control, rationalization and discipline" yet also the point at which this political control may be reversed (Fierke 2013, 12). These practices, which make use of colonial and biopolitical tropes of incivility, unruliness and irrationality in distinctive ways, suggest that there is political potential even in that which is rendered abject by particular modes of representation. While the bodies of IRA prisoners have been centered as graphic illustrations of nationalist resistance in Republican historical and commemorative sites, even in the critical scholarly literature produced about the prison protests, these bodies are distinctly masculine. The feminine bodies that participated in these acts of corporeal resistance have been cast as simultaneously marginal to the process of historical transformation and at the same time produced as sexualized spectacles, overdetermined by the imagery of sexual difference.

Finally, a note on the historical and comparative framework that I trace throughout this dissertation. While my analysis shifts between two different wars on terror, it is marked by the repetition of familiar forms that appear again and again despite differences in history and geopolitical scale. On the one hand my analysis attempts to account for the highly specific site of the prison in Northern Ireland as an apparatus for regulating bodies, yet on the other hand I engage with the global war on terror, which is more geographically diffuse, encompassing a perceived clash between US values of

liberal democracy and the global circulation of a particular iteration of political Islam. I want to argue, however, that the movement between these two scales is not as artificial or as ‘out of place’ as it might first appear. While the prison operates as a specific geography, producing bodies and subject positions in particular ways, it cannot be detached from the general conditions of the Northern Irish ‘state of exception,’ which entailed mass surveillance, internment, detention without trial, enhanced interrogation and torture.

Such forms are deeply familiar to us as Western subjects, standing in the midst of our current biopolitical global war. While they have contemporary resonance, they also, as David Lloyd reminds us, have much longer histories as colonial techniques of government. As Lloyd argues, just as in the nineteenth century the colony frequently constituted a laboratory for state forms, which were then altered and appropriated for use in the metropolis, so too “the state of emergency that was the norm in the colonial world has morphed into the unlimited state of siege that is the global ‘war on terror.’” (Lloyd 2011, 13) The governmental techniques deployed in this state of emergency have, therefore, operated transnationally across colonies, just as they have traveled from the colonial periphery to the center. For example, the British Army interrogation centers in Northern Ireland in the 1970s functioned as experimental facilities for the use of “enhanced interrogation techniques”, including sensory deprivation, which were later deployed by the CIA in detention centers during the War on Terror (see for example McGuffin 1974). Similarly, mass internment, as a “technique of surveillance and data-

harvesting” had already been used by the British as a part of their counter-insurgency strategy in Aden, Malaya and Kenya (Lloyd 2011, 13). The continued transnational circulation of these forms bears witness to the persistent links between the local and the global and evidences the extent to which histories of colonialism inform this movement. While I do not provide a thoroughgoing historical account of this circulation here, I hope that placing discourses of rationality, civility and hygiene (as they relate to IRA prisoners) alongside the biopolitical concern with the ‘risky body’ of the suicide bomber in the contemporary War on Terror, makes apparent just how deeply engrained these colonial forms are and pushes us to consider how they continue to be mobilized in present relations of violence.

Chapter 1: Writing the Female Suicide Bomber: Suicide Bombing, Terrorism Studies and Governmentality

“The thought of security bears with it an essential risk.”⁴

“Homo economicus... appears precisely as someone manageable, someone who responds systematically to systematic modifications artificially introduced into the environment. Homo economicus is someone who is eminently governable.”⁵

This chapter addresses contemporary accounts of suicide bombing within the field of terrorism studies. I treat these accounts as practices that are meaningful only if we think them as part of a larger project of governmentality. Such a project articulates a vision of security that takes the sovereign nation-state as its privileged form and employs various techniques of government to direct subjects' conduct and manage the forms of violence that are continually reproduced within the context of the War on Terror. In the contemporary geopolitical formation of the War on Terror, governmentality is deterritorialized, encompassing what is imagined to be a “global” project of counter-terrorism that turns upon the interaction of European and American liberal democracies (and their allies) with a particular articulation of Islam. Islam here signifies as a form of religious subjectivity imagined to be radically oppositional to Western values of rationality and individual freedom. It is within this discursive terrain that the suicide

⁴ Giorgio Agamben, “On Security and Terror,” *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, 20th September 2001, translated by Soenke

Zehle, <http://www.egs.edu/faculty/giorgio-agamben/articles/on-security-and-terror/>.

⁵ Michel Foucault, *The Birth of Biopolitics: Lectures at the Collège de France 1978 - 1979*, trans. Graham Burcell (New York: Picador, 2008), p. 270.

bomber emerges as such an important figure. It is not only that the suicide bomber signals a limit or an obscene underside to Western values, I argue that much of the anxiety around suicide bombing in the West in the contemporary moment also reflects a concern with government. I use government here in Foucault's sense to articulate the desire to manage and direct the conduct of men (Foucault 2007). Foucault uses this sense of government and its related term "governmentality" to describe the mentalities present in modern forms of political power (Rose, O'Malley, and Valverde 2006, 87). In a series of Collège de France lectures given in the late 1970s (Foucault 2007; Foucault 2008), Foucault elaborated a kind of "governmental analysis" in which he addresses the various modes and techniques of government throughout different historical moments. His analysis is brought to life by his archaeological method that engages with an eclectic array of empirical materials, from the eighteenth century German "science of police" to the contemporaneous texts of the Chicago School (Foucault 2007; Foucault 2008). In this chapter, however, I focus on Foucault's later discussion of neoliberal governmentality, particularly how it produces and requires a specific kind of subject. I consider this subject "homo economicus," as Foucault refers to him, alongside the contemporary figure of the suicide bomber.

For Foucault, *homo economicus* is central to neoliberalism as a project of government. Neoliberalism is characterized by the extension of economic models, such as that of the market or the enterprise, into myriad aspects of social and political life. As scholars of neoliberal governmentality have shown, this is also accompanied by a shift from "social, political, and economic 'responsibility' to privatized institutions and

economically rationalized 'self-governing' individuals.” (Nadesan 2008, 32) Central to this is a key feature of liberal political economy: human beings as “subjects of interest,” that is to say, subjects who act on their own self-interest, and will undertake to maximize their self-interest at all times. What makes the neoliberal imagining of *homo economicus* distinct from the liberal vision of the subject, however, is the extent to which neoliberal *homo economicus* is imagined as an “entrepreneur of himself” (Foucault 2008, 226). With the advent of neoliberalism *homo economicus* is reformulated so that his talents and “innate and hereditary elements” come to be viewed as a kind of human capital that must be maximized and put to work in the service of further capital accumulation (Foucault 2008, 228).

Capital here is extended to represent vast and differentiated modes of human life, the social and genetic forms are just two that Foucault specifically discusses. As an entrepreneur of himself, neoliberal *homo economicus* is in the business of producing, with the capital that he has at his disposal, his own satisfaction. Such a subject, understood in Foucault’s terms as a kind of “enterprise-unit” (Foucault 2008, 225) seeks to produce his own satisfaction. Importantly, this understanding of *homo economicus* enables him to be governed in particular ways. As Foucault discusses in the quotation included as epigraph here, it is possible to engineer the behaviour of *homo economicus* by introducing modifications into his external environment that will change the option-set he is faced with. This works (according to neoliberal governmentality) because his behaviour is above all else predictable, unfolding as it does in line with the rational process of accumulation characteristic of the enterprise.

In this chapter I relate Foucault's figure of *homo economicus* to the suicide bomber, a subject who is popularly imagined as a supremely irrational actor. The suicide bomber's apparent desire for death suggests an appetite for destruction at odds with the process of satisfaction accumulation that characterizes the "eminently governable" *homo economicus* (Foucault 2008, 270). Appearing to reject the enterprise model of maximizing and accumulating one's own human capital above all else, the suicide bomber registers as terrifyingly unpredictable and unsettling. This is not only the result of the destruction he or she produces in terms of killing and injury for the suicide bomber is not unique in this capacity. As Karen Fierke points out, the act of sacrificing oneself and killing others in the process is not radically different from the stories of heroic militarism that abound in state militaries (Fierke 2013, 235). The suicide bomber appears unpredictable because they are seemingly impervious to neoliberal modes of government guaranteed by an economically-conceived instrumental rationality.

This concern with government partially explains the fascination that attends the figure of the suicide bomber in the West. In our contemporary moment, the act of suicide bombing has uniquely come to represent a new archetype of violence following the attacks on the World Trade Centre in 2001. The post-9/11 age is supposedly marked by a new wave of terroristic and fanatical violence associated almost exclusively with Islam. Such a narrative misses the *longue durée* of this phenomenon. If we think of suicide attacks as primarily perpetrated by non-state actors, then the first attack is usually attributed to Hezbollah in Lebanon in 1983 (Pape 2003, 15). Yet attacks in

which the perpetrator willingly sacrifices him- or herself in order to kill others have also been used as a tactic by state militaries. Furthermore, the making of oneself into a human bomb is not an intrinsically Islamic phenomenon, as evidenced in the phenomenon of LTTE suicide attacks in Sri Lanka and India. Despite this history, the suicide bomber continues to signify as irrational, nihilistic and essentially Muslim (Asad 2007). In many ways, it is this narrative that the terrorism studies accounts examined here are writing against. Many terrorism studies scholars argue that we should treat suicide bombing as a rational phenomenon, one that can be apprehended strategically, just like any other weapon of warfare (Crenshaw 1990; Sprinzak 2000; Pape 2003; Hoffman and McCormick 2004; Bloom 2005).

The work of Robert Pape, discussed in detail in this chapter, exemplifies this particular “rationalist” reading of suicide terrorism (Hafez 2006, 57). In response to the arguments that Pape and others make about the rationality of suicide bombing, I argue that these accounts reinscribe a vision of political action that privileges a certain type of subject. This subject, whose arrival onto the scene of political action is possible only to the extent that he or she is thought to exhibit a specific form of rationality, is far from a universal one. My focus in this chapter is not strictly on this universalizing impetus, but rather how the continual reinscription of this kind of subject guarantees our contemporary regime of governmentality. I argue that thinking of these terrorism studies accounts as governmental practices enables us to see how the narrative of suicide bombing as rational action serves a specific political purpose. Namely, in rewriting subjects who at first glance appear as a problem for government, it makes possible the

control and containment of these subjects within a broader project of neoliberal governmentality.

Finally, in the last part of my argument I seek to show that this project of reincorporation is not an entirely successful one. Considering the specifically gendered dimension of contemporary concerns with women's engagement in suicide bombing, I argue that women suicide bombers are often staged as posing a particular governmental problem because their feminine embodiment is represented as that which exceeds and disrupts the internalized techniques of rational control upon which good governance relies. Looking specifically at the terrorism studies accounts of female suicide bombers, I argue that the concerns they articulate regarding the superior capacity of these women to go undetected, such as with the use of fake pregnancies as disguises, produces the female suicide bomber as a uniquely risky and ungovernable subject.

Terrorism studies

In thinking terrorism studies as a governmental practice, it is important to situate it historically both inside and outside the academy. As a sub-field of security studies, terrorism studies has expanded dramatically in the last decade. With the post-9/11 identification of terrorism as *the* existential threat to Western liberal democracies in the rhetoric of the Bush administration and their allies, scholarly accounts have proliferated and the public profile of academic terrorism experts has soared. In general, terrorism

studies seeks to explain this kind of political violence with the positivist social scientific methodologies characteristic of mainstream security studies. This specifically social scientific set of values and methods – the emphasis on objectivity, the desire to measure and quantify the relevant phenomena, and the determination of patterns and correlations from the “data” – supposedly marks terrorism studies' distance from the Bush narrative. Rather than considering the moral or ethical dimensions of terrorism, many terrorism studies scholars treat terrorism as a specific tactic of violence used to advance political goals (Rapoport 2006; Crenshaw 1990; Hoffman and McCormick 2004; Jones and Smith 2009). In such accounts, the form of the terrorist violence itself is not intrinsically political, rather it is a means to an end and the ends are imagined as a specific set of political goals.

Such an instrumental understanding of terror is in line with the disciplinary conventions of strategic studies, which treat all forms of violence as instruments that can be used to achieve particular strategic or political objectives (Smith 2011; Baylis and Wirtz 2002; Freedman 2002). Viewed as an instrument that may produce a particular desired outcome, strategic studies seeks to make violence rational and therefore manageable. This has been identified by Richard K. Betts as the “essential Clausewitzian problem” that grounds strategic studies, namely, “how to make force a rational instrument of policy rather than mindless murder – how to integrate politics and war?” (Betts 1997, 8). It follows that in the rationalist world of strategic studies, different forms of violence may be subjected to various cost-benefit analyses with the hope of

determining the most efficient way of achieving a particular set of aims.

We can understand strategic studies and terrorism studies as knowledge-producing practices that are engaged in the production of what Carol Cohn calls, “techno-strategic” discourse (Cohn 1987, 690). Cohn uses the term to describe how:

“strategic theory not only depends on and changes in response to technological objects, it is also based on a kind of thinking, a way of looking at problems – formal, mathematical modeling, systems analysis, game theory, linear programming – that are part of technology itself.” (Cohn 1987, 690).

Cohn’s description of how strategic thinking is animated by a desire to render violence as a technology or tool that can itself be mastered and understood through technology resonates with much of mainstream terrorist studies. For example, with reference to suicide bombing in particular, a recent joint study by RAND and the Naval Research Laboratory sponsored by the United States Department of Homeland Security, “Predicting Suicide Attacks,” uses statistical modelling techniques to establish connections between multiple geospatial, socio-economic and demographic variables derived from data collected from suicide bomb attacks in four Israeli cities. Here we see technological thinking and methods brought to bear on the “problem” of suicide terrorism which is a priori determined to be a “threat” to the US “and elsewhere”. (Perry et al. 2013, xi)

The involvement of RAND Corporation, a non-profit organisation largely funded by the US government and a prolific producer of research on terrorism, is

significant here as it prompts an examination of the power relations of the discipline more generally. In Cohn's work she examines the civilian "defense intellectuals" who "move in and out of government, working sometimes as administrative officials or consultants, sometimes at universities and think tanks (Cohn 1987, 688). Many scholars of terrorism studies have followed a similar career trajectory, moving through institutional networks that include RAND and other think-tanks, as well as specific research institutions that are explicitly tied to a national security agenda, such as for example, the Jaffee Center for Strategic Studies in Tel Aviv, which has produced a significant amount of work on suicide bombing in particular. All this is not to say that terrorism studies scholars, because of their proximity to state counterterrorism, are never critical of state policies, they often are,⁶ but it is to say that this proximity profoundly shapes the discipline. One such result is the persistent blindness to the study of state terrorism (Blakeley 2008). Furthermore, this close relationship between state power and terrorism studies as a discipline has led some critics to dismiss it as state-led "counter-insurgency" by another name (Miller and Mills 2009; Greenwald 2012). For the purposes of this chapter, however, I trace this proximity as a primarily epistemological one and argue that it is the transmission and production of knowledge about how to govern the threat of the suicide terrorism that is significant. The work of this chapter will be to engage with the relationship between terrorism studies and political power through an analytical framework of governmentality. I argue that terrorism studies and

⁶ See for example, the 2004 'Open Letter to the American People' which was signed by over 700 security studies scholars, including Mia Bloom, Jessica Stern and David Rapoport. This letter is highly critical of the American foreign policy concerning the war in Iraq, calling it the "most misguided one since the Vietnam period" (as quoted in Horgan & Boyle, 2008, 54).

the forms of knowledge production it engages in should be understood as part of a regime of governmentality in which power is dispersed and decentred. Hence it is not enough to say that terrorism studies serves the interests of the powerful, rather I argue that the field itself is a part of a larger governmental apparatus of counterterrorism that works to ensure a specific formulation of security.

Towards a governmental analysis of terrorism studies

This analytic of governmentality is derived from Foucault's discussion of the concept in his late Collège de France lectures. In these lectures, Foucault uses governmentality in two ways. In the first instance, his discussion of governmentality encompasses a historical narrative about the shifting governing rationalities of political modernity. In the second instance, Foucault uses the concept of governmentality to refer to a conceptual apparatus or method for analysing modern forms of political government. In the historical narrative Foucault offers, he traces the various ways that the government of men or the “conduct of conduct” is negotiated at different chronological moments, concentrating specifically on the emergence of the modern bureaucratic and administrative state in Western Europe as a unique kind of authority (Foucault 2007). He does so without taking the state as a pre-existing field of analysis, instead treating it as the overall effect “of a regime of multiple governmentalities” that comes to appear as a natural and inescapable source of authority (Foucault 2008, 77).

When Foucault talks of governmentality, he is concerned with a mode of power that exceeds sovereignty. Whilst sovereignty is understood to be the possession of territory and the capacity to exercise the right to kill within it, governing is “much more than reigning or ruling” (Foucault 2007, 76). Government is concerned with man's conduct qua his relations with other men and things. Specific governmental apparatuses, knowledges and technical instruments are required to direct and guide man's conduct in these arenas. Government also encompasses more than the state as institution and engages with the “regularities of conduct, security apparatuses, and strategies of control that are dispersed across all domains of life,” (Nadesan 2008, 9). This understanding of government, as a type of power that exceeds institutions or sovereignty, opens up a new field of analysis concerned with politics at the level, not of theory or ideology, but of practice, and draws our attention to the political logic underwriting dispersed technologies of power in contemporary society.

In the historical narrative of governmentality that Foucault is tracing, he takes Europe, and specifically Germany, France and England, as his subject. Foucault attempts to delineate the intricate connections between government, population and economy, in doing so, he provides us not only with a historical account of these connections as they unfold in European history, but a mode of analysis that enables us to think these connections as they appear in the contemporary moment. Yet the extent to which Foucault's model can travel beyond his European center remains something of an open question. Many theorists have pointed to the curious and often politically suspect absence of colonialism and the Global South in Foucault's analysis even as his

work on governmentality has been taken up by several postcolonial theorists (Stoler 1995; Scott 1995; Seth 2007; Mitchell 1991). Others have pointed to an emergent regime of “global governmentality” animated by neoliberal desires for marketization and unbridled circulation wherein power is dispersed across multiple geopolitical and institutional sites (de Larrinaga and Doucet 2010, 16; Nadesan 2008, 215). Within the context of this chapter specifically, I mobilize Foucault's analytic to look at terrorism studies as it is articulated in the Western academy, although both the threat it addresses and the solutions it proposes are imagined to be global in scope.

Terrorism studies, as a discourse of the West, which purports to produce scientific knowledge, can be understood within the terms of Foucault's historical narrative as a direct descendant of the science of political economy that emerges with the category of “population” and the increasing consolidation of state functions in early eighteenth century Europe. This new kind of scientific knowledge, although it is formally external to the state, is tied from its inception to the functioning of the state and the desire to govern. As Foucault writes,

“You have a science which is, as it were tête-à-tête with the art of government, a science that is external to the art of government and that one may perfectly well found, establish, develop, and prove throughout, even though one is not governing or taking part in this art of government. But government cannot do without the consequences, the results of this science.”(Foucault 2007, 351).

If we understand terrorism studies as a form of political economy then it is not surprising that a particular kind of economic rationality is essential to its operations.

Thinking terrorism studies within Foucault's history of governmentality prompts consideration of how this knowledge-producing practice participates in, and indeed provides knowledge to ground, a particular project of governance.

Terrorism studies as a field, then, can be understood as a governmental apparatus that creates and directs subjects through a variety of techniques and knowledges. It is part of a broader project of government: counterterrorism, within which it operates as a form of expert knowledge. As such it authorizes and legitimizes a particular articulation of a problem for government and deploys technical knowledge, such as statistical analysis, to provide solutions to this problem. It works within the problem-solution set defined by US state-led counter-terrorism – namely, the attainment of a state-centered vision of security achieved through the eradication of a particular practice of political violence labelled “terrorism.” Governmentality scholars such as Nikolas Rose (2007) have used the concept of problem-solution sets to consider how contemporary expert knowledges address and produce the particular problematics of social life present in modern forms of governmentality. In the case of terrorism studies, its reiteration of the problem-solution set defined by US counterterrorism effectively naturalizes the idea that the political violence of particular non-state actors (which comes to be labelled terrorism) presents an urgent and pressing problem; one that must be addressed to ensure the security and continued existence of democratic states. Having accepted this problem as foundational to its field, terrorism studies employs various forms of social scientific knowledge to address and manage it.

We can find an example of such an approach to knowledge-production in the work of Robert Pape. In his book *Dying to Win*, Pape defines terrorism as that which, “involves the use of violence by an organization *other than a national government* to intimidate or frighten a target audience,” (Pape 2005a, 9, my emphasis). This definition is directly lifted from the US State Department’s document “Patterns of Global Terrorism 2003” (US Department of State 2004). Acknowledging that such a definition could be broadened to include the actions of states, Pape maintains that, “such a definition would distract attention from what policy makers would most like to know: how to combat the threat posed by non-state actors to the national security of the United States and our allies” (Pape 2005a, 280). In tying the value of his intellectual project to the governmental requirements of the US and their allies, Pape’s work is fairly typical of mainstream terrorism studies. For example, Martha Crenshaw’s review article on recent work in the field, which criticizes the lack of a shared definition of suicide terrorism, cautions that this lack of precision matters, “not only for analytical clarity and consistency and data collection but also for the policies of state actors” (Crenshaw 2007, 140). In more general terms, David Miller and Tom Mills’ 2009 article on the presence of terrorism expertise in the mainstream media quantitatively examines the political narratives of the top-100 most-cited “terror experts” in the English-speaking news media. They find that the majority of these experts are, “ideologically committed and practically engaged in supporting Western state power.” (Miller and Mills 2009, 414 – 5)

Terrorism studies accepts as authoritative the state's articulation of terrorism as a security problem and mobilizes the authority of the state for the purposes of establishing

the legitimacy of its intellectual project. In return the state is associated with the prestige and authority of terrorism studies as an academic field, which is itself tied to the institution of the university as a privileged domain in the production of truth and knowledge. A treatment of terrorism studies in terms of an analytics of governmentality forces us to pay attention to these mutually constitutive relations of power and authority. It also requires consideration of terrorism studies, not as mere academic exercise, but as a practice; that is, as a specific way of acting in and on the world. Furthermore, we are pressed to think about how this practice interacts with myriad others that are simultaneously at work in our contemporary regime of governmentality, one that I am calling counterterrorism, and how this “network of practices” (Rose 1999, 234) supports, reinforces and guarantees certain conceptions of security.

When thinking of these particular visions of security it is useful to mobilize Foucault’s notion of biopolitics to show how ideas of risk and threat are deployed. With the advent of the War on Terror, many theorists of security have turned to Foucault’s later work to describe a terrain in which security is imagined biopolitically and to examine the political consequences of such a security imaginary (see for example Masters and Dauphinée 2006; Dillon and Reid 2009). I argue that we can locate terrorism studies firmly within this imaginary, and that we can read it as a governmental practice that intervenes precisely because the suicide bomber is produced as a threat in biopolitical terms. For Foucault (2003, 241), biopower, like governmentality, addresses the population. Whilst biopower is the form of power that takes the population as its object for the purposes of fostering life, biopolitics is the political mode of intervening on the

population. Biopolitics therefore constitutes, “a specific area of governmental intervention,” (de Larrinaga and Doucet 2010, 8). The specificity of biopolitics is elaborated through mechanisms of security that attempt to ensure the productivity of the population, and which do so by addressing and seeking to counteract the “aleatory events” that disrupt “good” circulation and make the population less productive (Foucault 2007, 246). Biopolitical security is thus orientated towards managing risk and works through specific techniques of government that intervene to ensure life and production are optimized.

Within a biopolitics that intervenes for the purposes of securing life, death and killing are justifiable only to the extent that they also foster life. This apparent paradox haunts biopower and differentiates it from sovereign power. Whereas sovereign power is exercised through the sovereign injunction to “put to death,” biopower entails “making live and letting die,” (Foucault 2002b, 247). How then does biopower reckon with death? Historically, as Foucault discusses, the introduction of the biological conception of race explains the persistence of war, mass killing and death within an epoch defined by biopower. Race, understood biologically, introduces a break in the population and organizes who must live and who must die (Foucault 2003a, 254). The death and killing of the racial other, constituted as deviant, abnormal and inferior in biological terms, is then represented as healthier for the population as a whole. As Foucault writes,

“The fact that the other dies does not simply mean that I live in the sense that his death guarantees my safety; the death of the other, the death of the bad race, of the inferior race (or the degenerate, or the abnormal) is something that will make life in general healthier: healthier and purer.” (Foucault 2003a, 255)

For Foucault, racism is the biological rendering of a general relation of war that he traces throughout *Society Must Be Defended*. In these lectures he foregrounds the war-relation as *the* relation of political modernity and many scholars have followed his lead to theorize the persistence of war within liberal societies that are ostensibly orientated towards peace (Dillon and Reid 2009; Dillon and Neal 2008; Reid 2006). This analytic has considerable purchase as we consider the effects of our contemporary moment of war, a war without end constituted around a central antagonism in which “the very corporeal presence of the other [or enemy] is perceived as a threat,” (Jabri 2006, 52).

In a biopolitical security imaginary in which the corporeal existence of the enemy is read as a threat to the security of the population and the well-being of society as a whole, the figure of the terrorist, and specifically the suicide bomber, arrives on the scene as an enemy who must not only be expunged from the political community and disciplined, but as an enemy who must be managed biopolitically. Hence, the terrorist cannot be permitted to live, they must be killed for the good of the population and for the continuance of “our way of life,” (Bush 2001). The killing of the terrorist is, therefore, not only a necessary but a celebratory moment, as evidenced in the joyous celebrations that accompanied the killing of Osama bin Laden in 2011. But this biopolitical response incorporates not only the figure of the individual terrorist, it also

extends to the racialized populations who come to be indelibly associated with the terrorist threat and are therefore continually marked as risky within this schema. Jasbir Puar (2011, 84) draws our attention to the way in which this antagonism is transmitted not just through visual economies of racial othering, as evidenced in the images of the bearded Arab man or veiled Muslim woman, but also affectively, as in the case of the turban-wearing Sikh men who are subject to violence not just because of misrecognition but precisely because their bodies register through affective modes of resemblance as “feeling like” terrorist ones.

With this notion of biopower in mind, how then does the suicide bomber specifically appear on this biopolitical scene? In a biopolitical regime the suicide bomber is an object of terror not only because of the destruction and loss of lives that their violence entails, but also, because he or she appears to lack the will to preserve life that is so central to the workings of modern biopower. As such, the suicide terrorist is a risky subject. The apparent lack of any desire to preserve the self, which is the fundamental motor driving contemporary biopolitics and its incessant concern with life, means that the suicide terrorist’s behaviour is impossible to predict. This concern with unpredictability is manifest in the questions that strategic studies scholars ask about whether or not suicide terrorism fits into the already existing models of deterrence (Davis and Jenkins 2002; Mahnken 2003; Pape 2005a, 5). Certainly, a subject who does not desire life seems to exceed the forms of biopolitical control premised upon subjects who are imagined as self-preserving, utility-maximizing, entrepreneurial self-governors. As Foucault tells us, it is this very subject that guarantees neoliberal forms of

governmentality. This subject is easily governed because he (and it is very much a he) behaves rationally: he works efficiently, minimizing costs and maximizing benefits to achieve his own self-interests. From the perspective of governing, the content of these interests is less important than the mode of calculation itself. Assuming that social actors undertake this form of calculation makes possible the manipulation and direction of their behaviour and conduct. If “rational conduct is any conduct which is sensitive to modifications in the variables of the environment and which responds in a non-random way, in a systematic way [to these modifications],” (Foucault 2008, 269) then artificially modifying the environment in which *homo economicus* is embedded should be accompanied by a resulting change in behaviour. His conduct can be conducted, in short, he can be governed. He is in Foucault's terms “eminently governable,” (Foucault 2008, 270).

This concern with locating a governable subject is present in the terrorism studies accounts that engage with suicide bombing as a rational phenomenon and in doing so, write the suicide bomber as a rational actor in the *homo economicus* mould. This understanding of suicide bombing builds upon Martha Crenshaw's contention that terrorism is best viewed as a “collectively rational strategic choice” (Crenshaw 1990, 9). The idea that suicide bombing, despite appearing to be a highly irrational phenomenon, could also be considered a rational strategic choice emerges in discussions of suicide bomb attacks in Israel (Sprinzak 2000; Hoffman 2003). As suicide bombing came to the forefront of terrorism studies scholars' attention after 9/11, this idea has come to form what Martha Crenshaw calls “an emerging consensus” within the field, at least in the context of U.S. based terrorism studies (Crenshaw 2007, 141). I address the work of

some of the major proponents of this view including Robert Pape, Bruce Hoffman and Mia Bloom.

Robert Pape, whose work I have already briefly mentioned, is presently one of the most influential scholars of suicide terrorism.⁷ Both his 2003 article and his 2005 book are widely cited in the scholarly literature. They have also found a wider audience through his op-eds in the New York Times (Pape 2005b; Pape, O'Rourke, and McDermitt 2010), frequent media appearances ("The O'Reilly Factor" 2005) and work in Washington policy circles (*Cutting the Fuse - Robert Pape and Gov. Thomas Kean* 2010). Pape's contends that suicide bombing follows a strategic logic that is at its core, "the same as the coercive logic used by states" (Pape 2003, 346). Suicide terrorism is therefore employed strategically by terrorist organizations as a tactic against democratic states, with the ultimate aim of compelling them to leave what is understood to be a national homeland (Pape 2003, 344, 350). Furthermore, Pape argues that this strategic choice can be viewed as a rational one because, "it is simply the result of the lesson that terrorists have quite reasonably learned from their experience... Suicide terrorism pays." (Pape 2003, 355) For Pape, however, this instrumental rationality is located at the level of the terrorist organization's leadership, not at the level of the individual suicide bomber. While Pape is sure that the terrorist leaders cannot (and should not) be considered irrational fanatics motivated by fundamentalist beliefs, the same cannot be

⁷ Sjoberg and Gentry's 2008 article lists Pape as the most frequently cited scholar on suicide terrorism, according to the Social Science Citation Index (Sjoberg & Gentry 2008, 14, note 1). Further to this, he is featured in Miller and Mills' list of the 100 terror experts who appear most frequently in the news media *and* on their list of the top-98 most cited terrorism scholars, he is one of only five scholars who feature on both lists (Miller & Mills 200, 419).

said for the individuals who volunteer to become human bombs. The individual suicide bomber may in fact be behaving irrationally. Indeed Pape argues that, “suicide terrorism is an extreme form of what Thomas Schelling calls 'the rationality of irrationality,' in which an act that is irrational for individual attackers is meant to demonstrate credibility to a democratic audience that still more and greater attacks are sure to come,” (2003, 344). With this caveat Pape successfully sidesteps critics who argue that a rationalist account of suicide terrorism, in as much as it results in the death of the bomber, is contradictory within its own terms. For example, Mohammed Hafez argues that at the individual level at least, rationalist explanations fail because “[a]ny benefits that could be gained from this new situation are unrealizable for the dead bomber.” (Hafez 2006, 57) Invoking death as the ultimate horizon for any account dependent on instrumental rationality and cost-benefit analyses, Hafez points out that the suicide bomber, “has incurred the ultimate cost without attaining any benefit to himself.” (2006, 57)

The critique Hafez articulates is a trenchant one, but it is ultimately irrelevant from the perspective of Pape and other proponents of the rationalist reading. Both Pape and Crenshaw stress that the rationality (or irrationality as it may be) of the individual suicide bomber is not important from the perspective of strategic thinking. Crenshaw is firm in her argument that suicide bomb attacks are collective actions carried out by organizations, and so, “[t]he organization that recruits and directs the suicide bomber remains the most important agent” (Crenshaw 2007, 157). Further to this, Bruce Hoffman and Gordon McCormick argue that, “Although suicide attacks often appear to be the actions of deranged individuals, with rare exceptions, they are seldom the product

of individualized choice. They are almost always the product of an organizational process designed to transform otherwise normal individuals into agents of self-destruction.” (Hoffman and McCormick 2004, 255) These scholars repeatedly reiterate the necessity of viewing suicide bombing at the level of the organization because it is at this level that the phenomenon can be governed and managed. It is at this level that patterns can be determined and hence further predictions of terrorist behaviour can be achieved. As Crenshaw writes, “Individuals are motivated differently. There is no single pattern.”(Crenshaw 2007, 157) This absence of an overarching pattern is cause for concern because “Prediction of future terrorism can only be based on theories that explain past patterns.” (Crenshaw 1990, 24)

From the perspective that seeks to predict and ultimately to control and govern this phenomenon, it is necessary to recognise how it unfolds according to an instrumentally rational logic, despite appearances to the contrary. As I will show, engaging with Foucault’s description of *homo economicus*, the identification of this logic makes it possible to deploy certain modes of governmentality. It is worth noticing how the figure of the suicide bomber has been transformed in this process of identification, no longer a “deranged individual” who is motivated by incomprehensible desires, he emerges in these accounts not as a singular actor but as the representative of the organization that pursues such a strategy. In this transformation he has emerged as a particular kind of subject. The suicide terrorist, or at least the suicide terrorist who has the real political power, turns out to be a perfectly reasonable strategic thinker after all; a

subject whose thinking, because it mirrors the thinking of defence intellectuals and strategic studies scholars, can be pre-empted and predicted.

I would argue that this transformation and domestication of the suicide terrorist explains the widespread appeal of Pape's rationalist account within the discipline. It also explains why this appeal persists despite several compelling critiques of Pape's arguments, assumptions and methodology.⁸ It is ultimately a concern with government and control that animates these terrorism studies accounts of suicide bombing, for in the intellectual project of "rationalizing the irrational," as one proponent of this explanatory framework puts it (Madsen 2004), the risk of the suicide terrorist is effectively domesticated. As the suicide terrorist is transformed into a rational actor, he calls to mind Foucault's figure of *homo economicus*. For example, Pape argues that suicide terrorists have correctly determined that suicide terrorism does in fact "pay" (Pape 2003, 355). This is echoed in Hoffman and McCormick's assertion that "Terrorist organizations... like other rational actors, are looking for the highest return on their investment." (Hoffman and McCormick 2004, 252) Such descriptions of suicide terrorism in the language of political economy resonate with the neoliberal reimagining of *homo economicus* as entrepreneur (Foucault 2008, 226).

⁸ For critiques of Pape from within mainstream terrorism studies see Moghadam 2006 and Ashworth et al 2008. For a specific critique of Pape's argument from a feminist perspective see Sjoberg & Gentry 2008. Others have critiqued his treatment of specific cases, with regard to the Second Intifada see Brym & Araj 2006. Further to this, Cerwyn Moore, with reference to Pape's treatment of the conflict in Chechnya and the North Caucasus in particular, argues that Pape's methodological approach, which "seeks to develop general trends in suicide attacks through statistical analysis," tends to effectively "divorce attacks from the context in which they occurred." (Moore 2012, 1782)

For Foucault, the entrepreneur, is “for himself his own capital” (2008, 226). Accordingly, he puts this human capital to work to produce his own self-interest. The entrepreneur is the ultimate model of subjectivity within a neoliberal vision of an “economy made up of enterprise-units, [and] a society made up of enterprise-units,” (Foucault 2008, 225). In relation to the rationalist articulation of the suicide terrorist, we are presented with a terrorist entrepreneur who thinks, not only in terms of maximizing utility, but also in terms of capital – counting the bodies of individual suicide terrorists as a form of “human capital” that can be mobilized against the enemy. This is clearly evident in Hoffman and McCormick’s statement that, “[t]he bombers themselves are expendable *assets*. They are *worth* more dead than alive.” (My emphasis, Hoffman and McCormick 2004, 251) However, the language of capital turns in on itself here, as in this case it is destruction not accumulation that is the aim of the terrorist enterprise. But this is enterprise set against a backdrop of devastation, hence why suicide bombing is so often represented as a weapon of the weak that features only as a last resort. For example, Mia Bloom discusses how, “In dire conditions, the terrorist may rationally conclude that he or she can strike a blow against the state only by giving up all hope of escape. In this sense, if the terrorist is sufficiently motivated, the suicide mission appears to be a rational choice. More often than not, suicide terrorism is a tactic of last resort.” (Bloom 2011, 27) We see that despite such “dire conditions,” rationality continues to prevail. The terrorist endeavour is an enterprise nonetheless, costs must be minimized and benefits must be maximized.

This enterprise-model of suicide terrorism allows for the possibility of making predictions about, and ultimately modifying, such a form of political violence. In Foucault's understanding, *homo economicus* is “eminently governable” because he will respond in predictable ways to artificial modifications introduced into his environment (2008, 270). It follows then, that the suicide terrorist, now understood as a rational and calculating strategist, can be governed indirectly through environmental modifications. Because the rational logic of his thought process can be identified and recognised, the introduction of different variables into the environment he is faced with will accordingly result in a different outcome. This is a key feature of the mode of “government at a distance” that Nikolas Rose discusses as a hallmark of governing in “advanced liberal societies.” (Rose 1999, 49 – 50) But, governing indirectly is a fine art, it is difficult to determine which environmental alterations will pay off and which will make things worse. In other words: how to ensure that counterterrorism does not produce more terrorism? Echoing the oft-repeated refrain in contemporary American political life, this question has become an end in itself, collapsing the ethical and political concerns that might animate discussions of US counterterrorism into instrumental calculations about efficacy. Many of the proponents of the rationalist interpretation of suicide bombing are therefore very much against ground occupations as a form of ensuring security, advocating instead for demographic measures that will effectively separate populations, so that the “terrorist” population cannot enter the “target population.” For example, Robert Pape recommends, in the case of Israel, that their security may be improved by a “combined strategy: abandoning territory on the West Bank along with an actual wall

that physically separates populations”, providing intellectual support for an ongoing system of apartheid in the name of “security” (2003, 357).

In the case of female suicide bombers in particular, an interesting field of governmental intervention opens up. Lindsey O'Rourke, working from the same data set as Pape, concludes that female suicide bombers are “more likely to be in their late twenties and older than male terrorists,” (O'Rourke 2009, 707). She goes on to hypothesize that “women are motivated to commit suicide attacks due to declining marriage prospects,” (2009, 708). If intimate life is written here into the economic terms of “declining marriage prospects,” a form of representation that echoes Foucault's language of the neoliberal subject as an “entrepreneur of... [her]self” (Foucault 2008, 226) what kinds of governmental technologies that intervene at the level of intimate life might be imagined? Can we think a form of US counterterrorism policy that engages matchmaking as a technique of governing terrorism? Are the love lives of Iraqi women the next frontier for US national security? A worrying thought no doubt, but one that certainly resonates within a larger security discourse in which, “war and counterterrorism are promoted as a means of women's liberation in particular geopolitical sites,” (Clough and Willse 2011, 48). With that in mind, I turn now to examine the figure of the female suicide bomber in more detail.

Governing female suicide bombers

In the last section I showed how rationalist readings of suicide terrorism transform the figure of the suicide bomber into *homo economicus* so that he may be incorporated into a regime of governmentality. However, this is not the whole story of the suicide bomber. Despite attempts to mediate the riskiness of the suicide bomber by grasping him as a rational actor, the suicide bomber continues to be represented as exceeding governmentality in important ways. In this section I focus on how this excess is especially marked in the case of female suicide bombers, who are often represented in the terrorism studies literature as more lethal and effective as weapons precisely because their feminine embodiment enables them to escape detection. Even scholars such as Mia Bloom and Lindsey O'Rourke, who follow Pape in arguing that suicide terrorism follows a rational strategic logic, represent women suicide bombers as constituting a more deadly threat to the security of Western state interests. For example, Bloom discusses how women suicide bombers' unique capacity for disguising their bomb packs as pregnant bellies, which supposedly allows them to penetrate the crowded scene of the suicide attack without arousing suspicion, contributes to their "especially successful" attacks (Bloom 2011, 22). This argument about the special effectiveness of suicide attacks led by women is reiterated in Lindsey O'Rourke statistical analysis, which shows that, "female suicide attacks are more likely to inflict casualties and are more lethal at both the individual and team levels," (O'Rourke 2009, 689). In these concerns about the enhanced efficacy and lethality of suicide bomb attacks we see the women suicide bomber constituted as a particularly destructive kind of weapon. Furthermore, this destructiveness hinges upon their feminine embodiment, it rests upon the fact that when

they are concealing explosives they may look like “harmless expectant mothers.” (Bloom 2011, 22)

Yet, at the same time as women suicide bombers are represented as more dangerous than their male counterparts, there is a countervailing representational trope that presents them as less dangerous because of their femininity. Furthermore, these oppositional representations are often present in a single account of women suicide terrorists, as in Bloom’s most recent book *Bombshell*. Despite her assertions that female-led suicide attacks are more successful and destructive, at various points she describes how the Chechen women who participated in the Dubrovka theatre siege, despite having explosives strapped to their bodies, appeared “fragile” and “weak,” and were observed trying to “hide their tears” (Bloom 2011, 56 - 7). The work of Laura Sjoberg and Caron Gentry shows us that these kinds of descriptions of women’s political violence are widespread. Undertaking a broad survey of women’s violence in global politics, they show that media and scholarly representations often portray them as without agency in their own violence (Sjoberg and Gentry 2007, 5). Furthermore, they show how such representations maintain normative constructions of gender that cast women as the helpless victims in war and men as their masculine defenders. Within such a normative framework, women’s violence can never be considered fully political violence as such. Instead of resulting from political or ideological beliefs, “it is seen as a perversion of the private realm,” and as motivated by primarily personal reasons (Sjoberg and Gentry 2007, 130, 136).

Despite the persistence of these kinds of representations of women's suicide bomber motivations, I want to focus on the ways in which women suicide bombers are represented as especially deadly because of their increased capacity for disguise. I focus on this strand in particular because it speaks to the concern with governing that I have been tracing throughout. As terrorism studies scholars fasten upon the capacity of female-sexed bodies to escape detection by feigning pregnancies, these bodies are represented as posing a particular kind of problem for counterterrorism governmentality. Of course, such representations of the female suicide bomber are not limited to mainstream terrorism studies accounts. Even the critical literature narrates the figure of the female suicide bomber as exceptional. As Adriana Cavarero writes, "when the bomb is a woman" it is "particularly scandalous" (Cavarero 2009, 99). For Cavarero, also commenting on the recursive articulation of women suicide bombers through tropes of pregnancy and maternity, "the female body that explodes in order to rip apart innocent bodies, is always, symbolically, a maternal body." (2009, 103) It is this juxtapositioning of life and death in the spectacle of the "exploding womb" (Bloom 2011, 34) that is, in Cavarero's opinion, so "bloodcurdling." (Cavarero, 101) Cavarero argues that the pregnant woman, and specifically the foetus she is carrying, reminds us of the depth of the "human condition of vulnerability." (Cavarero 2009, 103) The foetus, or the infant more generally, represents the ultimate form of dependence, so its destruction, even if, as in the case with stories about female suicide bombers, this is often symbolic (few women are actually pregnant when they undertake their missions), suggests a new form of "horrorist" violence that is predicated upon the killing and maiming of the defenceless (Cavarero 2009, 105). Cavarero's argument is a compelling one, but I would add that it

is not only this unsettling coincidence of live-giving and destructive capacities contained in the trope of the “exploding womb” that explains the fascination attached to the women suicide bomber. Within a broader framework of counterterrorist governmentality, in which terrorism studies participates as a governmental technology, the exploding womb is troubling because it suggests a limit to its governmental powers.

In both the terrorism studies literature and media accounts much is made of the fact that women suicide bombers have often disguised their explosive belts as pregnant bellies (see for O’Rourke 2009, 690 – 1; Bloom 2011; Bloom 2005). In such representations, the cultural taboos marking the feminine and especially the maternal body as a space of privacy and inviolability are thought protect it from being subject to physical searches. Evidencing an Orientalism that pervades much of the discipline more generally, many terrorism studies scholars note that these taboos are especially prevalent in “traditional” societies where invasive searches are seen as “threatening a woman’s honour,” (O’Rourke 2009, 690). In such accounts, the gender norms that govern women’s bodies, which simultaneously cast them as objects of fascination and as mysterious spaces that cannot be fully penetrated, become a problem for counterterrorism. Feminine embodiment, signalled through the capacity to carry a baby and give birth, is employed as a form of disguise effectively hiding from view the true destructive potential that lurks beneath. But how can feminine embodiment operate as a disguise? Femininity here is paradoxically the condition of women’s exclusion from the public arena of warfare and the very condition that makes their resistance or “terrorist” activity so effective. In Begoña Aretxaga’s (1997, 38) discussion of nationalist women in

Northern Ireland, she argues that because women have historically been “erased from the public arenas of politics and war,” their presence in the public spaces of modern warfare: city streets, military checkpoints, and so on, continues to signify domesticity and passivity. As such, through their very presence “the streets cease to be a battleground that must be controlled and become an interstitial space linking domestic arenas” (Aretxaga 1997, 39). For women engaged in political violence, it is often their very invisibility within the public discourse of war that becomes the condition for their effective violent performance. As Aretxaga puts it, “The concealment of resistance that the bodies of women, with their occult weaponry, materialize is made possible ironically by the open disclosure of their presence” (Aretxaga 1997, 39).

It is this “occult weaponry” of feminine embodiment that features so heavily in accounts of women suicide bombers, telling us of fake pregnant bellies and breast implants primed to explode (Bloom 2005, 143, 211; Goldhill 2013; Robinson 2013). It is this “occult” quality that interrupts a regime of governmentality premised upon data collection and the unhindered production of knowledge about the subjects who are to be governed. The word “occult,” which refers both to the possession of supernatural or mystical qualities, and (from its Latin root *occulere*) to cover over or to conceal from view, works well here to describe how women’s bodies continue to be written as mysterious and as oppositional to a mode of rationality that is identified with the masculine mind. It also describes how the concealment afforded by the possession of a female-sexed body makes this kind political violence possible, as the violent intent is hidden right up until

the very moment that it is too late to counter. It is both this lack of rationality and propensity for concealment that is antithetical to the governmental regime I have been discussing throughout. As I have shown, such a regime requires that subjects' processes of calculation can be known and comprehended. This is possible only to extent that the subject is imagined as a rational actor in the *homo economicus* mould. In this way, modern neoliberal forms of governmentality require a transparent subject whose desires can be explained within a framework of rational utility-maximizing. This kind of subject makes governmental intervention possible because, as we have seen, the environment can be modified to produce predictable changes in behaviour. Whilst the suicide terrorist as rational strategist that Pape writes of seems to fit this vision of the subject, the same cannot be said of the woman suicide bomber and the "occult weaponry" of feminine embodiment that she so skilfully employs.

The focus on the female suicide bomber's capacity for disguise, the fact that she may look like "a harmless expectant mother," (Bloom 2011, 22) but actually constitutes a remarkably lethal weapon, suggests that there is something intrinsically unknowable, and hence unpredictable about female suicide bombers within a mode of governmentality premised upon transparency. How can one begin to govern indirectly or begin to institute environmental modifications when the target of such interventions remains fundamentally unknown? How to govern those that continually resist, by knowingly deploying their femininity and subverting its historical erasure from the domain of warfare, standard governmental interventions premised upon a regime of visibility, such

as surveillance and searches? All this is not to say that because the female suicide bomber represents a unique problem for governing, the bodies of women in the various conflict zones of the War on Terror are not subject to new forms of control. Often there is a redoubling of such efforts, for example the U.S. military attempted to address these problems with the introduction of the “Daughters of Iraq” program in Iraq which trained a small number of Iraqi women to search other women specifically (O’Rourke 2009, 718; Zavis 2008). However, from the perspective of counterterrorist governmentality this was not entirely successful. As O’Rourke tells us, such a response risks being seen as an attempt to buy loyalty from local women and in doing so may anger the local population more, creating even more potential terrorists (2009, 718). From the perspective of US counterterrorism, the overdetermination of women’s bodies with the private realm complicates the process of governing, often creating problems that cannot be anticipated in advance. Because the work of gender does not necessarily follow a rational logic, the attempted environmental modifications often end up producing undesirable outcomes that differ radically from those originally intended. For example, forms of counterterrorism that attempt to “liberate” the women of the societies in which suicide bombings occur may in fact have the opposite effect, becoming a source of grievance that leads to increased support for the organizations that employ suicide terrorism (O’Rourke 2009, 717). In these instances, in the unintended consequences that provoke further violence, we glimpse the limits of governmentality. We see how the desire to control and manage violence, to make violence subject to rational processes, is often an impossible dream of mastery.

Conclusion

Throughout this chapter I have been tracing how the suicide bomber, whilst appearing as a risky subject within a biopolitical conception of security, is then effectively reincorporated into a project of government through his identification in the terrorism studies literature as possessing the qualities of Foucault's *homo economicus*. However, the fears that circulate about the female suicide bombers' capacity for disguise suggest that terrorists cannot always be so easily governed. The terrorist may look perfectly harmless, so we may not be able to identify and know them as we would like to. As Bloom puts it, "The underlying message conveyed by female bombers is [that]... the insurgents are all around you" (2011, 24). In fact, the suicide terrorist is increasingly taking on new forms of disguise. The next frontier appears to be the use of children as suicide bombers, indicating a potentially even deadlier form of passing (Boone 2011; "Afghanistan: Taliban Should Stop Using Children as Suicide Bombers | Human Rights Watch" 2013). Such a concern with the terrorists' capacity for disguise and innovation reveals the centrality of the discourse of risk to our contemporary regime of governmentality. As the suicide bomber is constituted as a threat in biopolitical terms, he is written as a risky subject. But this subject can be recuperated through rationalist readings that identify his latent rationality and that make possible 'government from a distance.' Yet, this recuperation is not entirely successful, for the suicide terrorist may in fact have the body of a woman or a child, two kinds of bodies historically excluded from notions of rationality founded upon conceptions of Western masculinity (Cohn 1987, 689). What we have here is the essential problem of the suicide bomber as it presents itself to

counterterrorist governmentality, the suicide bomber is a risky subject so he must be governed, but also, he (or she) is risky so they cannot be governed. In this double movement, we see that the risk of the suicide terrorist persists despite all attempts to domesticate and to govern them.

Chapter 2: “Bad Stomachs” and Dirty Protest: The Armagh Prison Protest, 1980

“I found the smell in the girls’ cells far worse than that at Long Kesh, and several times found myself having to control feelings of nausea.”⁹

“What can make 30 dirty women more revolting than 400 dirty men if not the exposure of menstrual blood – an element that cannot contribute much to the fetid odors of urine and feces but can turn the stomach.”¹⁰

Introduction

On February 7th 1980 a dirty protest began at Armagh Prison in Northern Ireland. Utilizing tactics established by some three hundred men already protesting in the H-Blocks of the Maze Prison, thirty women identifying as Republican or as members of the Provisional IRA refused to change their clothes, wash themselves or “slop out” their chamber pots. The protest was in response to an unannounced and violent cell search carried out by male guards from the Maze Prison. Following a physical confrontation between the prisoners and prison guards, the prisoners were confined to their cells for twenty-three hours a day and reportedly denied access to the toilet facilities. In response they began to empty their chamber pots out of the windows and the spyholes in the cell doors. When these were boarded up, the prisoners began to “decorate” their cells by smearing excremental matter on the walls and ceilings (D’Arcy 1981, 51).

⁹ Tim Pat Coogan, “Eyewitness: Armagh,” *On the Blanket*, p 231.

¹⁰ Begona Aretxaga, “Dirty Protest: Symbolic Overdetermination and Gender in Northern Ireland Ethnic Violence,” *Ethos* 1995, 23(2): 123 – 148.

This protest continued for over a year until it was called off in order to focus attention on the (all-male) March 1981 hunger strike. Whilst the feces plastered on the cell walls of the Maze provoked many expressions of disgust and repulsion, the women's protest was remarkable for the addition of menstrual blood to the excremental matter marking the cell walls. The blood seemed to evoke a specific kind of horror. Journalist Tim Pat Coogan, whose reaction to visiting the prison is quoted in the epigraph above, reported that the smell and the filth at Armagh far outweighed that produced by the protesting men, although there were ten times more participants at the Maze (Coogan 2002, 216). The horror of the menstrual blood made the protest incomprehensible not only to the British government and the prison officers at Armagh, who wore masks covering their faces, insulating suits and rubber boots (Aretxaga 1997, 136) but also to the Republican movement that the women were a part of. The IRA Army Council was initially against the idea of the women's participating in a no-wash protest, but were later forced to support the women, as they proceeded anyway without their sanction (Weinstein 2006, 21).

Despite the feelings of horror and incomprehension that it provoked, this protest does not represent an exceptional moment of rupture. It should be understood as part of a wider protest undertaken by Republican prisoners against the British government's removal of political status. Of these protests, what happened at Long

Kesh/HMP Maze¹¹ has received the most attention, beginning with the so-called “blanketmen” who refused to wear prison uniform and served their sentences naked but for a prison-issue blanket. This protest eventually culminated in the 1981 hunger strike that left ten men dead. However, women prisoners at Armagh were not required to wear prison uniform, hence the Republican women’s protest took a different form. Instead of wearing blankets, the protesting women refused to take part in mandatory prison work or educational programs and used their own clothes to assert their political identity. Black skirts, jumpers and berets were used to fashion an IRA uniform, which was worn during military-style drills and parades in honor of their “fallen comrades” – those killed during “active service” outside the prison (Aretxaga 1997, 122; Northern Ireland Political Collection 1998). The especially brutal cell search on 7th February was in response to one such commemorative ceremony in the prison’s exercise yard that occurred during the previous weekend. (Darragh 2011, 55).

The prison protests against the removal of political status are generally narrated as transformative moments in the Northern Irish conflict. The final act of the protests, which saw the election of IRA hunger striker Bobby Sands to British Parliament as he lay dying of starvation in the Maze prison hospital, marked a significant shift in Republican

¹¹ Initially called Long Kesh Detention Center, this former Royal Air Force station in County Down was used to house male internees from 1971. It was renamed Her Majesty’s Prison Maze (HMP Maze) in 1976 with the abolishment of Special Category Status. At this time the structures known as the “H-Blocks” (because of their distinctive “H” shape) were erected to house those sentenced after the removal of political status. HMP Maze has since been closed and many prisoners have been released as part of the peace settlement. Throughout this chapter I will refer to it as Long Kesh, the Maze, HMP Maze or simply as the H-Blocks, these were all terms used at the time and ones that continue to be used in the literature, all are referring to the same place although slightly different architectural formations.

strategy towards political engagement and away from the previous focus on armed struggle. Such a shift has since been recognized as laying the initial foundations for the peace process that developed in the 1990s (McKittrick 2006). Between 1976 and 1981 however, HMP Armagh and HMP Maze were sites of intense confrontation between the IRA and the British government, primarily over the meaning and identification of Republican prisoners. The conflict turned upon the legal and moral categorization of the IRA prisoners. Were they, as the Republican movement maintained throughout the protests, political prisoners who were fighting against a repressive colonial regime of state violence? Or were they, as the British government increasingly sought to define them, violent criminals and murderers who should be subject to the same discipline as the general prison population? The British position is perhaps most famously articulated in Margaret Thatcher's assertion that, "There is no such thing as political murder, political bombings or political violence. There is only criminal murder, criminal bombings and criminal violence." (Thatcher 1981) Her words, however, performed a deliberate amnesia. The process by which many of the Republican prisoners came to be imprisoned differed significantly from that of a normal criminal trial. The unique experience of internment, interrogation and sentencing through special courts with secret evidence immediately marked the difference between the IRA prisoners and the general prison population.

This struggle for identification was also a struggle over the moral meaning of IRA violence. As the British government was all too aware when they removed it,

political status (known in legal terms as “Special Category Status”) conferred legitimacy onto the prisoners and the IRA organization in general. As such, the IRA could be interpreted as legitimate political actors waging a righteous anti-colonial war of independence and self-determination. The implicit acknowledgement of political nature of IRA violence, which Special Category Status seemingly afforded the organization, came to be deeply embarrassing for the British. As internment continued, they found themselves increasingly having to explain the presence of large numbers of political prisoners in their prisons to critical domestic and international audiences (Feldman 1991, 151). However, the solution posed in the 1975 Gardiner Report, which recommended that political status should be phased out for those sentenced after 1st March 1976, did little to remedy the problems. Instead it created a two-tier system within Northern Ireland’s prisons, wherein paramilitary prisoners sentenced before 1976 lived separately within the prison and enjoyed the “privileges” of Special Category Status, including greater freedom of association, the right to wear their own clothes and the relaxation of other aspects of “normal” prison discipline. Those sentenced after March 1976 however, were to be treated, in the lingo of the time, as “Ordinary Decent Criminals” (ODCs).

This shift in penal policy was accompanied by an “Ulsterization” of the conflict, which sought to pass security management back to the predominantly Protestant police force and their auxiliary forces, the very same police force whose brutal and often violent engagement with the Catholic minority had necessitated the intervention of the British

Army in the first place. Faced with an apparent reversal of prison policy and an accompanying re-doubling of British counter-insurgency efforts, the Republican prisoners protest immediately settled on the issue of prison uniforms. In the political imaginary of the IRA prisoners, the uniforms functioned as the defiling sign of British attempts to criminalize them. Ulsterization and criminalization, therefore, can be read not only as attempting to depoliticize Republican violence, but also as a means of denying the extent to which the British Army were themselves engaged as “armed protagonists” in the conflict. Violence had intensified since the British Army was deployed in 1969 and the Northern Irish state, which by design favored the Protestant majority in all political mechanisms, was itself an effect of the colonial policy of partition. Nonetheless, the British continued to represent the conflict as a sectarian confrontation between two warring ethnic groups. Violence in Northern Ireland was treated as further evidence of an “Irish internecine propensity to irrationality” that British colonialism had long sought to counter (McEvoy 2001, 15; O’Callaghan 2008, 144). For the IRA and the Catholic community, however, faced with the constant presence of the British Army and the mostly Protestant police force on their streets, this new counter-insurgency strategy supplied further proof of the British capacity for repression and denial.

In this context, the confrontation over political prisoner status has been read by some scholars as a struggle for existential recognition, in which Britain represented for the Republican prisoners “the absent presence whose law threatened to erase the prisoners by eliminating their political identity.” (Fierke 2013, 52; Aretxaga 1995, 132 –

3) Given this threat of erasure, there could be no possibility of Republican prisoners submitting to the disciplinary apparatus of the penal regime. Indeed, an IRA statement from March 1976 shows how high the stakes of this struggle had become,

“They [IRA prisoners] are political prisoners and any other imagined label tagged onto them by the British government will not make the slightest difference to that very basic fact... We are prepared to die for political status. Those who try to take it away must be fully prepared to pay the same price.” (quoted in McEvoy 2001, 233)

Hailing death as a horizon of possibility here, it is possible to read the dirty protest, as Begona Aretxaga does, as an attempt to force recognition without “succumbing to physical elimination.” (Aretxaga 1995, 133) This attempt was not entirely successful, however, as the eventual deaths of ten men in 1981 hunger strikes represented just such a moment of physical elimination. Attention to these dynamics of physical elimination however, illustrates the extent to which within this struggle for recognition the prisoners’ bodies emerged as symbolic sites or “political texts” upon which the broader relations of violence were transcribed (Feldman 1991, 8).

Operating alongside the broader relations of antagonism between the British state and the IRA movement is the specificity of the prison as a geography of struggle. With the introduction of internment in 1971, the relatively small prison population in Northern Ireland increased fivefold and by 1979 there were 3000 prisoners in a population of 3 million (McEvoy 2001, 16). Such a dramatic increase in numbers pushed the already existing penal estate to absolute crisis point. HMP Armagh in

particular, a crumbling Victorian structure used to house women prisoners and “borstal” boys, was in a fairly advanced state of decay (Corcoran 1999, 159 – 160). Whilst the mass imprisonment of primarily Catholic working-class men and women was rationalized as a temporary mechanism to contain violent Republicanism so that a political resolution might be sought elsewhere, the prison increasingly became the primary scene of antagonism in the conflict (McEvoy 2001, 225). In such conditions of containment, the bodies of the Republican prisoners became both sites of the intensification of penal and state power and also the medium through which this power was transformed and resisted. Allen Feldman, in his ethnography of paramilitary prisoners in Northern Ireland, discusses how the declining space of political enactment provided by the limited spatiality of the prison reinvests the prisoners’ bodies as sites of struggle (Feldman 1991, 10). In this way, Foucault’s assertion that all prison protests are “revolts at the level of the body” (Foucault 1995, 30) seems particularly resonant and his theorization of penal power worth exploring here.

In *Discipline and Punish*, Foucault elaborates how modern penal regimes are guaranteed by a “political technology of the body” that seeks to produce docile, self-regulating subjects who will participate efficiently in the mechanisms of production (Foucault 1995, 30). In the previous chapter we saw how contemporary modes of governmentality tied to state logics of counter-terrorism produce the figure of the terrorist, and particularly the suicide terrorist, over and against this “docile” subjectivity. For Foucault, docile subjects are the effects of a “micro-physics of power,” which is

directed relentlessly and in all its minute detail, towards the soul through the body, specifically through bodily habits, deportment and stylization (Foucault 1995, 26).

Foucault argued that this kind of disciplinary power is distributed throughout society and is a hallmark of political modernity. The prison, however, as an institution that aims at the total submission of its subjects, is the “exhaustive disciplinary apparatus.” (Foucault 1995, 235 – 6) While Foucault’s account has been fruitfully used to analyze the IRA prison protests, it has also been criticized for its singular focus on the ways in which disciplinary techniques address and subject the prisoner, to the exclusion of any significant elaboration of the counter-forces emanating from the captive body. (Corcoran 1999, 167; Feldman 1991, 177; Aretxaga 1995, 124) This critique of *Discipline and Punish* often engages Foucault’s own theorization of power in later texts as “agonistic,” wherein power is described as an “action upon action,” and as always “a way of acting upon an acting subject” (Foucault 1982, 789).

If we follow Foucault’s “agonistic” model of power and resistance, then an inquiry into the capacity of the subjected body to resist and reformulate the power relations that constitute it is surely necessary. But, following Foucault, such resistance cannot be understood as an expression absolute freedom. If power is understood as “productive” rather than as merely negative or repressive, then there can be no moment of complete emancipation from its reach. There is no possible future unmarked by power, as Foucault argues, “A society without power relations can only be an abstraction.” (Foucault 1982, 791) What we are left with then, are “techniques of the

self” that both refuse and redeploy the modes of governmentality directed at them. Looking at the emergence of the dirty protest in the context of agnostic power relations, we encounter the possibility of political agency even within the apparently “exhaustive” total institution of the prison. The question I pose in this chapter then is: what kind of agency does the dirty protest constitute? If we think agency as a capacity to transform and alter historical events, then the bodies and the bodily matter of these prisoners must surely be viewed as agential. In Armagh, unwashed bodies, excremental fluids and menstrual blood radically disrupted the disciplinary apparatus of prison life, initiated a major public relations crisis for the British government and revealed deep fissures in the Northern Irish feminist movement.

Further to this, as I seek to show in this chapter, the after effects of the women’s protest are still unfolding, even as the protest continues to be represented as marginal and historical agency is attributed solely to the male protesters. Nonetheless the effects that flow from these women’s unwashed bodies and excrement attest to a form of agency that emanates from bodily matter in unanticipated ways. I ask: what are the consequences of the women’s protest for our understandings of agency in processes of corporeal weaponization? What happens if we think this moment of protest alongside a theory of embodiment that does not treat the body as an inert, passive substance animated by the willful, conscious mind? If we think instead of bodies as interactive and open materialities. Not mere containers for the mind and consciousness, but as that which can, “extend the frameworks which attempt to contain them, to seep beyond their

domains of control” and in doing so, “generate what is new, surprising, unpredictable” (Grosz 1994, xi).

The possibility of this kind of reading moves us away from the standard account of the protest as a weapon of the weak. Northern Irish criminologist Kieran McEvoy reads the dirty protest as such, arguing that it is “a classic weapon of the weak,” which uses “the most basic and essential of human tools” (McEvoy 2001, 45). At issue here is the representation of the body as a tool or instrument; as a lifeless object that becomes agential only when vitalized by the intentional command of the knowing subject. McEvoy maintains that the protesting paramilitary prisoners he interviewed “were explicit about their conceptualization of their bodies and waste products as political weapons.” (McEvoy 2001, 83). From this he concludes that, “In the reduced environment of captivity where the weapons of the weak are few, *the residual control over one’s own body* becomes a crucial locus of resistance.” (McEvoy 2001, 83, my emphasis). In this chapter I examine how the identification of political agency with “control” over the body is a recursive form, one that has serious consequences for understandings of political agency, subjectivity and gender. McEvoy is not alone in this assertion, such articulations are also present in feminist accounts of the protest (see O’Keefe 2006, 546; Neti 2003, 77; Corcoran 2006, 171). This is all the more troubling given that such a conceptualization of embodiment relies upon a profoundly gendered hierarchy, in which femininity signifies as “sticky” uncontrollable corporeality, while the domain of the

mind, free and unencumbered by the messy materiality of the body, is implicitly coded masculine (Grosz 1994, 13 – 14).

One of the central contentions of this dissertation is that gender is central to conceptualizations of political agency, especially those pertaining to warfare and political violence. Yet despite the accumulation of feminist scholarship on women's participation in political violence, the traditional view of warfare as the domain where manliness truly exerts itself remains disturbingly popular (see for example Mansfield 2006; Van Creveld 2001; for a critical introduction see Hooper 2001) In such a view, woman is the necessary ground upon which expressions of virtuous manliness are staked. Women, understood as an undifferentiated group and often co-signifying with children, are represented as requiring protection from political violence and as those for whom security must be maintained (Young 2003). The overdetermination of femininity with vulnerability and victimhood makes the subject positions of those women who do actively participate in political violence incomprehensible and even impossible. Yet, as discussed in the last chapter, the erasure of women from the terrain of armed conflict may also paradoxically come to be the very condition of their agency. As we saw with female suicide bombers, such invisibility in the space of political violence can be converted into a lethal undetectability that makes their violence all the more effective. Does this paradoxical agency have traction when we look at the dirty protest in Armagh? What can this protest reveal about how political agency is delineated by embodied sexual difference?

Armagh as historical absence

“The Armagh women, however, have been almost entirely forgotten.”¹²

In responding to this provocation, it is necessary to consider the distinctiveness of the women’s dirty protest in Armagh Prison. So far my discussion has spoken in general terms about the dirty protest, however this covers over the multiplicity of the protests – there were in fact two protests at two different locations – the women’s at Armagh and the men’s in the H-Blocks. Any attempt to engage with the Armagh protest in its specificity, as several scholars who have tried to do exactly this have noted, is constituted by conditions of historical absence (Aretxaga 1997; Weinstein 2006; Scarlata 2014; Neti 2003; Lloyd 2011). One scholar, Leila Neti, describes this experience of absence in evocative terms. When consulting a text on women’s experience as family members of prisoners in Northern Ireland, Neti checks the index for “Armagh” and is directed to a certain page, when she turns to this page however, it is blank. She describes this blank page as “emblematic of the Armagh women’s struggle as a whole.” (Neti 2003, 81)

The blank page attests to this absence, for while there has been a wealth of scholarship produced on this period of prison resistance, most accounts have focused on the events in the H-Blocks and have paid scant attention to the women’s protests (Coogan 1980; Beresford 1989; Feldman 1991; McEvoy 2001). The dirty protest at Armagh is conspicuously absent from several major chronological accounts of the

¹² Laura Weinstein, “The Significance of the Armagh Dirty Protest”, *Éire-Ireland*, Fall/Winter 2006, 41 (3&4): 11 – 41, p. 13.

conflict. For example, in the CAIN (Conflict Archive on the Internet) database, a search for “Armagh protest” generates no results, and the protest features neither as a “Key Event” nor on the “Chronology of the Conflict” page (“CAIN: Chronology ” 2014; “CAIN: Key Events” 2014). The absence from CAIN, which is hosted by the University of Ulster and self-consciously positions itself as one of the major sources of archival material on the Northern Irish conflict, is particularly significant, although this absence extends well beyond CAIN. Paul Bew’s and Gordon Gillespie’s chronology of the conflict also neglects to include Armagh in its main timeline, although the protest does feature briefly in an italicized aside (Bew and Gillespie 1999, 141).

Similarly, criminologist Kieran McEvoy’s study of paramilitary imprisonment in Northern Ireland contains almost no discussion of women prisoners or Armagh prison, except for a footnote in which he describes the women’s “no-wash” protest as “in support of the men at the Maze” (McEvoy 2001, 92). Here McEvoy rather uncritically reiterates a well-worn trope that stages women’s participation in paramilitary violence, and specifically the IRA, as merely supportive or ancillary. Not only is this a designation that many of the women who participated in the protests have distinctly refuted, McEvoy’s assertion betrays a degree of ignorance for the changing gender politics of the IRA organization itself. While the history of women’s involvement in the tradition of Irish Republicanism that the prisoners lay claim to is a complex one, since

the renewal of the IRA's "armed struggle" in the early 1970s at least,¹³ women have participated as combatants in "active service units." (Weinstein 2006, 14) This marked a significant shift from the previously limited role that women played in the IRA's auxiliary organization *Cumann na mBan* (Council of Women) as nurses and cooks.

Furthermore, the literature produced by protesting prisoners in Armagh suggests that they strongly objected to attempts to mark their protest as "supportive" or as different on the basis of their gender. A participant in the Armagh protest interviewed by criminologist Mary Corcoran speaks of the Republican prisoners as "a single movement," yet at the same time acknowledges that the Armagh women nonetheless felt that they should have their own representation to the IRA Army Council. She says, "we were extremely aware of asserting our rights, our autonomy, not just falling into their [male prisoners in the H-Block] command structure as such." (Corcoran 2006, 145) Likewise, Síle Darragh and Mairead Farrell, who both served as Commanding Officers (OCs) of the IRA prisoners in Armagh, articulate their relationship to the H-Block protest as one of solidarity, but this is an active solidarity different from the passive

¹³ The use of the term "IRA" here is potentially confusing. Here and throughout this chapter, I am referring to the Provisional IRA. The Provisional IRA split from the IRA (known hereafter as the Official IRA) in December 1969. I use the term IRA because that is how the organization referred to themselves and how others in the community also refer to them, although they are sometimes called the "Provos" or "the 'RA'" in popular vernacular. The IRA (Irish Republican Army) first emerged as an anti-colonial paramilitary organization during the Irish War of Independence in 1919 and fought against British rule. By the 1960s, however, the organization favored an explicitly Marxist and non-sectarian ideology. The Provisional IRA emerged in response to this, particularly the perceived failure of the Official IRA to protect the Catholic civilian population in the North during the riots of August 1969, which saw the destruction of many Catholic business and homes and the deployment of the British Army. The Provisional IRA was initially a defensive organization but in 1971 launched offensive operations, the "armed struggle" referred to above, which sought to expel the British Army and indeed all British control from Northern Ireland through the use of force.

support McEvoy describes (Darragh 2011, 40). In her autobiography for example, Darragh describes the behind-the-scenes discussions about the prisoners' hunger strike in 1980 during the no-wash protest. In Darragh's version, Mairead Farrell (then OC of Armagh, Darragh was serving as her Adjutant at the time) and Brendan Hughes (then OC of the H-Blocks) are positioned as equally engaged in formulating this next step in the protest, with a constant flow of "comms" (communications written on cigarette papers and smuggled out of the prison during visits) passing back and forth between them and the IRA Army Council outside the prisons (Darragh 2011, 99).

Yet despite such accounts, Armagh continues to be narrated through a representational strategy that casts it as peripheral to the "real" action unfolding in the H-Blocks. We have seen how Armagh, when it does feature in these accounts, is frequently relegated to the margin, quite literally in the form of footnotes or parentheses. Yet, I would argue against this parenthesization, that Armagh, and in fact gender, is the absent presence that haunts accounts of the prison protests. In what appears to be fairly standard practice, McEvoy's uses the general term "paramilitary" throughout his book. We can only assume, however, given the almost complete effacement of women paramilitary prisoners in his text, that this general paramilitary subject is imagined as an exclusively masculine one. It is a masculinity so self-evident that it need not even speak its gender difference, hiding comfortably under the cover of an apparently undifferentiated term. This move is also repeated in Allen Feldman's account, which is arguably one of the most well-known anthropological studies of the prison protests.

Feldman also speaks in general terms of “prisoners” or “paramilitaries.” His interviews, however, are primarily conducted with male prisoners. When gender does feature in his analysis, it is in the context of the violating experience of British Army house searches in Catholic areas (Feldman 1991, 95 – 6). While such a practice is undoubtedly part of a regime of state violence that is distinctly gendered in its reach, it is concerning that gender difference automatically signifies here as femininity, domesticity and the private sphere. In such determinations we witness the re-installation of some of liberal modernity’s most cherished assumptions into the very heart of Feldman’s text, which otherwise offers a convincing critique of this same formation. Feldman’s uncritical redeployment of a naturalized, gendered division of public and private space and also his projection of the paramilitary subject as a site of gender neutrality, apparently untouched and unmarked by sexual difference, significantly limits his critical project.

Crucially though, both McEvoy and Feldman do differentiate the category of “paramilitary” in specific ways. In a research note McEvoy indicates that the interviews included in his text are “sourced by reference to the faction which they belong to.” (McEvoy 2001, 371). Similarly, Feldman’s interviewees are identified by their paramilitary affiliation as either “PIRA [Provisional IRA],” “INLA [Irish National Liberation Army]” or “UDA [Ulster Defense Association]”. In the context of Northern Ireland, these political identifications are also designations of religious or ethnic identity. The tendency of these texts to prioritize religious or ethnic difference is itself indicative of how relations of violence in the region have precluded discussions of gender

difference as an operational or meaningful identity category. This is a problem that the Northern Irish feminist movement, in its various manifestations, has long grappled with and one that continues to be relevant in the contemporary “post-conflict” period. Despite significant reductions in political violence since the Belfast Agreement in 1998, the binary of Protestant/Catholic (which maps on to the political and ideological forms Loyalist/Republican or Unionist/Nationalist) continues to be a potent and resilient mode of identification. These recalcitrant identity forms present a major stumbling block to the “peace-building” project and elicit a variety of social, economic and political responses in the service of “overcoming” them.¹⁴ However, Northern Irish feminists have critiqued the extent to which the various resources, policy initiatives and strategies deployed often have the effect of reproducing historical exclusions of gender, and specifically women’s experiences of violence, from the conflict (Deiana and Pierson 2015). This feminist critique often manifests as a demand for inclusion in policy consultations and at the peace-building table. For example, in a recent article, Northern Irish historian Margaret Ward critiques the absence of any discussion of gender in the Northern Ireland Assembly’s “Community, Sharing and Integration” policy strategy, which effectively ignores “the contribution of women to the maintenance of society during the conflict” and does not provide “any indication that women have a role in the future development of a more peaceful society.” (Ward 2013)

¹⁴ Most recently the Haass-O’Sullivan talks (so-called after their American chief negotiators Dr Richard Haass and Dr Megan O’Sullivan) which collapsed in February 2014. The Northern Irish political parties failed to reach a consensus on the issues of parades, flags and ‘dealing with the past’. See Louise Mallinder, “Dealing with Northern Ireland’s past: a guide to the Haass-O’Sullivan talks,” *Open Democracy*, 8 May 2014.

While the inclusion of women as active participants in Northern Irish political life remains an unfinished project, some feminist scholarship has expressed concern with how the women's movement often draws upon essentialized notions of femininity, and particularly ideas about the inherent "goodness" of women, as the basis of their demands for inclusion (Ashe 2008, 107). As a result, Northern Irish feminists engaged in what Fidelma Ashe calls "bridge-building feminism" have tended to ignore those political practices undertaken by women that remain violently entrenched in ethno-nationalist antagonisms (Ashe 2008, 107). Ashe argues for the necessity of a "critical genealogy" of such "abject gender practices," which unsettle both gender identity and ethno-nationalist identity, to the extent that ethno-nationalist narratives rely upon particular performances of gender (Ashe 2008, 107).

Such a critical genealogy must account for the intersectional formation of gender and ethnic identity in Northern Ireland, both of which rely upon naturalized assumptions concerning the organic, the primordial and the somatic. As an example of one such "abject gender practice," Ashe examines the 2001 Holy Cross dispute in which images of Loyalist women shouting abuse, holding sectarian banners, even hurling urine at schoolgirls and their parents as they walked through a Protestant housing estate to get to their Catholic primary school, disrupted the widely-held sense that women are essentially disposed to care and nurture children. Such a practice is "abject" in that it represents "a defiling otherness" that must be excluded, even violently expelled, in the name of maintaining femininity as a coherent, bounded category (Butler 1999, 181).

Significantly, it is not only masculinist discourse that renders these practices abject, but also some variants of Northern Irish feminism, for whom such practices endanger the fundamental claim that the addition of women will further the peace project.

The Armagh dirty protest can also be read as an “abject gender practice.” This kind of reading requires an attentiveness to the fraught politics of feminism that the protest entails, but also, following Ashe’s intersectional approach, an examination of how ethno-nationalist identities and constructions of gender are co-constitutive. Irish nationalism, like many other nationalisms, arranges its ideological and cultural reproduction along gendered lines (Jolly 1994). Women are frequently assigned to the role of cultural reproduction in the private domestic sphere, primarily through the activity of mothering (Ashe 2007, 770). The public activity of politics, ideological reproduction and indeed violent struggle is therefore the exclusive purview of men. This distribution is especially entrenched in a colonial formation, wherein British occupation is interpreted as a feminizing force on Irish manhood (Ashe 2007, 769). These are the general conditions constituting the representational scene of Irish nationalism, but such archetypes are obviously lived in various ways, with many moments of rupture, as the Armagh dirty protest attests to. Nonetheless, this representational schema affects and shapes the narration of the Armagh dirty protest in Republican collective memory in significant ways. As is the case in the academic literature on the protests, Armagh is a constitutive absence in Irish nationalist discourse. While the elision of gender difference in McEvoy’s and Feldman’s account was not immediately apparent, Republican and

nationalist narratives make gender explicit through the differing modes of suffering represented in the dual figures of the Virgin Mary and the Christ-like martyr.

Begona Aretxaga's ethnography of nationalist women in Belfast in the aftermath of the prison protests shows how the commemoration of the dirty protest through various cultural forms, perhaps most visibly the painting of murals on the gable walls of working-class housing estates in Catholic areas, is overwhelmingly represented through the masculinized imagery of Christian martyrdom. The enduring image of the male protester – naked but for a dingy blanket, long-haired, bearded, hollow-eyed and startingly gaunt – somewhat inevitably signifies as Christ-like within a Catholic framework. Through such Christological figurations and the attending notions of sacrifice and redemption, the prison protests accumulate meaning as transformative events in Republican histories of resistance (Aretxaga 1997, 98). Yet, as Aretxaga points out, this is a specifically masculinized mode of suffering that cannot accommodate images of the women dirty protesters. Instead, this masculine martyrdom has its feminine counterpart in the images of the Virgin Mary that so often also feature in the mural artwork. In contrast to the transcendent sacrifice of one's own bodily integrity represented in the figure of the blanketman, the images of the Virgin Mary direct us to the sacrifice of sons and the suffering of female relatives, particularly mothers. This model has cultural meaning not only because it is the archetype of feminine suffering in Irish Catholicism, but also because for obvious reasons, the mass internment of Catholic teenagers and young people had a devastating effect on relatives outside the prison.

Aretxaga's ethnography describes a universe of suffering in which the agonizing wait for news and information on the condition of their children and spouses in prison became a catalyst for women's political activism. Perhaps the most prominent political expression of this anxiety was the Relatives' Action Committee (RAC), who mounted both a functional and symbolic challenge to the prison/security apparatus by articulating their maternal suffering as a challenge to the purported humanity of British criminal justice. They organized transport to the prisons for visits, produced pamphlets and held rallies, during one they even dressed up as blanketmen and carried pictures of their imprisoned sons (Scarlata 2014, 139). Feminist scholars have struggled with the ambivalent politics of agency that the RAC elicits. At once a challenge to the nationalist exclusion of women from the political sphere and at the same time a faithful reproduction of motherhood as the privileged form of women's agency, the women of the RAC are simultaneously engaged in both the preservation and disruption of national and gender identities.

Such paradoxical entanglements trouble a feminist politics that requires liberation from normative gender identity as the necessary condition for political agency. Jessica Scarlata argues that the overdetermination of women's political activity with essentialized versions of maternal femininity in Northern Ireland has served as an "obstacle for women who try to act as political subjects in their own right." (Scarlata 2014, 139) But if we read nationalist iterations of femininity as purely a condition of negativity prohibiting women's political expression then we are in trouble. Such a reading, far from critiquing

the patriarchal structure that stages femininity and politics as necessarily oppositional and mutually exclusive, in fact reproduces this very structure within feminist discourse itself. Against this, the practices of women who engage in political violence in Northern Ireland offer us a very different formulation of agency, wherein gender difference figures as both repressive mechanism and as a condition of political possibility. It prompts us to consider how femininity may be the basis of exclusion from political narratives and at the same time precisely that which makes a distinct form of agency possible. I argue that the Armagh dirty protest performs this paradoxical movement of agency, for we are presented with a mode of political action that gets much of its potency from the unsettling presence of menstrual blood, a discomfiting instantiation of embodied sexual difference.

Voices from the Grave

In the postscript to Síle Darragh's (former Officer Commanding of the Republican prisoners) memoir of her time imprisoned at HMP Armagh, Darragh describes the events that prompted her to write her story. She recalls "someone saying that they had never heard the story of the protesting prisoners in Armagh Gaol" and expresses surprise that "so many people didn't know" about their protest (Darragh 2011, 143). Yet she is initially reluctant to tell her story, describing how she "kept waiting and thinking that eventually 'someone' would tell the story of the protesting prisoners of Armagh Gaol." (Darragh 2011, 143) When no such story emerges, she is moved to write and publish her own account some thirty years after the event. In a cautionary moment,

Darragh asserts that the book is “‘my’ story, a personal journey, my memories” and should not therefore be read as a comprehensive history or as a stand in for the whole protest (Darragh 2011, 143). In contrast, the foreword written by Gerry Adams (long-time Republican figurehead and former internee at Long Kesh), acknowledges that the focus on the H-Blocks has “overshadowed” the women’s protests in Armagh and argues that Darragh’s story “goes a long way towards rectifying and redressing that imbalance.” (Adams 2011, 7) The erasure of the Armagh protest from Republican collective memory is, for Adams’ “an uncomfortable fact,” that can be corrected by Darragh’s presence and the recognition that with her account, “It is our history that is being recorded here and women, not before their time, are being written into the record.” (Adams 2011, 10)

What does it mean, however, to be written into the record? If, as I began to elaborate in the previous section, the omission of the Armagh dirty protest from narrations of the conflict is not merely a matter of “overshadowing,” but rather a constitutive lack, then the protest cannot simply be reinserted into these narratives without radically altering them. By constitutive lack, I mean that Armagh, and women’s participation in the dirty protest therein, is excluded from narration in order to maintain the coherence of both a Republican history of nationalist resistance premised upon male heroism *and* a Northern Irish feminism that depends upon essentialized notions of feminine pacifism. Following Ashe’s theorization of “abject gender practices,” the Armagh dirty protest is that which must remain excluded for such discourses to appear stable. However, Adams appears to be advocating here for inclusion, for the possibility

that the women of Armagh could tell their stories (albeit thirty years later) and that these living ghosts could be laid to rest, no longer haunting presences. I would argue that we should approach Adams' restorative narrative with some caution, not only because it partakes in a teleological trajectory in which perfect knowledge of the facts may be apprehended and a definitive history ("the record") may be written, but also because Adams' triumphant reincorporation of the Armagh protest, at least Darragh's version of it (as we will see, there are others), displaces other gender ghosts.

We must read Adams' foreword, written in 2011, in the context of contemporary Sinn Féin (Adams has been the President of Sinn Féin since 1983). Formerly the political wing of the IRA, Sinn Féin has since emerged as a political party in its own right and has played a major role in the peace process and power-sharing governments that have followed. Now the second biggest electoral party in the Northern Ireland Assembly and an emerging party in the Republic of Ireland's *Oireachtas*, Sinn Féin have explicitly prioritized gender equality as an essential part of their policy agenda. For example, they are the only party to require that half of their ruling *Ard Chomairle* (National Executive) must be women (Weinstein 2006, 40). Their support for equal pay, access to subsidized childcare and condemnation of domestic violence as "the most outrageous consequence of women's unequal status within society" all evidence this commitment (Sinn Féin 2004). They are also one of the few parties in Northern Ireland that supports the legalization of abortion there.

Some feminist scholars, like Laura Weinstein, have identified the Armagh protest as “a key factor in pushing the republican movement to adopt a pro-women platform.” (Weinstein 2006) To this end, it is perhaps interesting to note that one of the most prominent and experienced members of Sinn Féin’s *Ard Chomairle*, Jennifer McCann, was herself a prisoner at Armagh and took part in the no-wash protest there in 1980. Other potential reasons for this “pro-woman” politics offered include the popularity of an Open University Women’s Studies course taken by Republican prisoners in HMP Maze during the 1980s (many of whom are now members of Sinn Féin) or the more cynical interpretation that the party has engaged in shrewd calculations of political expediency, correctly identifying that women represent a significant part of the electorate (Weinstein 2006, 39). There is of course no reason why any of these diverging causal stories need exclude the other. Whether or not the Armagh dirty protest can be singled out as a definitive causal mechanism, there can be little doubt that Sinn Féin has become one of the most progressive parties in terms of gender politics throughout Ireland. In the context of this, Adams’ faith in the capacity of the Republican narrative to be amended and for previous gender “imbalances” to be redressed is perhaps understandable.

However, the “gender-proofed” policies of Sinn Féin (Sinn Féin 2004) must be considered alongside the continuing historical erasure of the IRA’s often violent policing of gender and sexuality within their own communities. We can think, for example, of the practice of tarring and feathering in Catholic areas, which entailed a spectacle of

public degradation for women accused of being “soldier-lovers,” which was popular with the IRA in the early years of the Troubles (Feldman 2003, 64). The policing of relations between Catholic women and British soldiers evokes contemporary Sinn Féin’s, and specifically Adams’, most haunting spectral presence.¹⁵ Jean McConville was a widowed mother of ten who was abducted from her home in West Belfast and “disappeared” by the IRA in 1972. She was suspected of being an informer and had previously been kidnapped, interrogated and beaten. According to the IRA, they had twice discovered a radio transmitter in her flat, supposedly given to her by the British Army. However, her children maintain that she was disappeared because neighbors had seen her helping an injured British soldier in the street (Moloney 2010, 127 – 8). Regardless of the veracity of these accounts, it is likely that McConville was already viewed with suspicion because she was Protestant by birth, although she had converted to Catholicism to marry her husband. In December 1972, she was abducted from her flat in West Belfast by masked men as her children looked on. Several weeks later a man returned her jewelry to them, although the IRA officially denied all knowledge of her disappearance.

There were claims that McConville had abandoned her children and moved to England with a British soldier; these were apparently taken at face-value by the police at the time as her disappearance was never investigated (McDonald 2014). After the IRA

¹⁵ The language of ghost I use here is obviously a reference to Avery Gordon’s *Ghostly Matters* but also reflects a frequent representational trope in descriptions of Jean McConville’s disappearance. McConville is often explicitly referred to as a ghost in media accounts. See for example Amanda Foreman’s *Guardian* article that bears the headline: “Sinn Féin should never be able to escape Jean McConville’s ghost” and Henry McDonald’s article, “Jean McConville timeline: how a 1972 murder returned to haunt Gerry Adams.”

ceasefire in 1994 however, her children started a campaign demanding that the organization reveal what happened to her. In 1999, at a crucial point in the peace talks, the IRA acknowledged that they had “executed” McConville shortly after her abduction in 1972 because she had been an informer. They gave vague information about the location of her remains, but in 2003 her body washed up on Shelling Hill Beach in County Louth some distance from where the IRA had reported she was buried (Moloney 2010, 126).

If, as Avery Gordon describes, haunting occurs when “the people who are meant to be invisible show up without any sign of leaving,” then the discovery of McConville’s body in 2003 sets in motion this kind of haunting effect (Gordon 2008, xvi). The insistent presence of McConville’s ghost is perhaps most fully felt in April 2014 when Gerry Adams is arrested and questioned in connection with her murder. His arrest is deeply controversial, and the Northern Irish police were accused of jeopardizing the already fraught power-sharing government (Ryan and O’Hora 2014). In a moment that loops us back to the prison protests, we see the boundary between criminality and politics is once again being negotiated, long after Adams’ commitment to the peace process has afforded him ‘political status’ of the most bona fide kind in the form of “statesmanship.” (Neill and Humphries 2014) The catalyst for Adams’ arrest is the untimely intervention of a “voice from the grave,” which comes from former IRA Belfast Brigade OC Brendan Hughes (Moloney 2010). In 2001 Hughes, along with many others, was interviewed for Boston College’s *The Belfast Project*, an oral history project that

sought to record and archive the testimony of paramilitary combatants from both sides of the conflict. In the interview, which was published in 2010 after his death, he asserts that his “Brigade Commander” Gerry Adams gave the order to murder McConville and specifically, against the wishes of other members of the IRA Army Council, he instructed that her body be disappeared (Moloney 2010, 129 – 30).

The disappearance of an informer’s body after “execution” was in fact a highly unusual practice for the IRA, who generally preferred to create a public spectacle that “sent a message” to their own community about the cost of informing. In Hughes’ interview, he says that he believes McConville’s body was disappeared and not displayed because she was a woman (Moloney 2010, 128). In the various stories told about McConville after Hughes’ interview is published, much is made of her “wretched circumstances” as a widowed, impoverished mother of ten children and an “uneducated woman without means or connections to men in power.” (Moloney 2010, 124; Foreman 2010) Certainly the injunction that McConville’s body be disappeared and hidden, indeed hidden to such an extent that the IRA seemingly had little idea of where her remains were located, indicates that her gendered corpse is a unbearable reminder of a violence against motherhood, otherwise so exalted in Republican ideology. Unbearable, in that the presence of McConville’s corpse cannot be borne by a nationalist identity that historically narrates itself in the role of the protector from, and not as perpetrator of, gender violence. Even after McConville’s body is discovered, not by an effect of human agency but by the chance occurrence of a winter storm that sweeps away a large part of a

beach, she cannot be reincorporated into a history of Republican resistance as Darragh's account of the dirty protest can (McDonald 2014). Unlike Darragh, who was, by her own admission, a proud and disciplined soldier in the fight for nationalist self-determination, McConville's liminal status as a Protestant who converted to Catholicism and as a potential informer who moved between the British state and the Republican community, a sign perhaps of the extent to which the British government successfully "penetrated" the IRA, renders the coherent identity of a Republican agent of resistance fatally unstable (Darragh 2011, 48; Moloney 2010, 167).

Sara McDowell's work on historical memory in Northern Ireland shows how the commemorative strategies of contemporary Sinn Féin skillfully deploy gender at the same time as they efface it. In her work she observes the erection of a memorial in West Belfast commemorating Nora McCabe, a Catholic mother of three who was shot dead by the British Army in 1981. At the dedication of the memorial in 2000, Sinn Féin Councillor Tom Hartley asserts that, "Nora McCabe died because the British government needed to terrorize the republican and nationalist community..." (quoted in McDowell 2008, 349) Here Hartley is invoking a security regime that frequently used gendered and sexualized violence against the Catholic community. His invocation is of course correct, as the house "wreckings," the sexual harassment of women by British soldiers, the sexualized nature of women's interrogations during internment and indeed the treatment of women internees when in prison, all evidence (Aretxaga 1997). But if we think the memorialization of Nora McCabe alongside the disappearance of Jean

McConville then Hartley's naming of "pain, suffering and injustice" as that which is exclusively authored by the British state is less persuasive (McDowell 2008, 349). Setting up this relationship between the parallel figures of McConville and McCabe, however, risks an uncomfortably proximity to the rhetoric of the British government and Unionist politicians who have used McConville's disappearance to discredit Sinn Féin as legitimate political actors (Whitehead, Duffin, and Browne 2014). I hope it is clear that I am not advocating for this position. Instead I am attempting to show how such a position, which casts the other as a terrorizing force while representing itself as a space of purity, outside and beyond the operations of gender violence, is always a fiction.

At stake here is the extent to which identity, either British, Unionist or Republican, reproduces itself through an expulsion of what it is imagined to be oppositional to. Republican identity, like the other identity forms mentioned here, requires an ordering of the world in which some violence is designated as righteous while other kinds of violence are displaced onto the enemy, and come to signify as the mark of the enemy's barbarism. A feminist methodology pays attention to how gender gets deployed in these kind of orderings and how such expulsions are never wholly successful. If the Republican narrative of resistance attempts to exile past gender violence in the name of a progressivist logic of gender equality, then gender violence is also that which returns. It is, as Kristeva describes, that "something rejected from which one does not part." (Kristeva 1982, 4) In this light we can read Adams' recuperative encounter with the dirty protest at Armagh as an attempt to effect such an ordering, to

draw the boundary between the “good” gender politics of Republicans and the “bad” gender politics of their opponents. I have argued that the ghost of Jean McConville disfigures this boundary, but I also want to argue that the dirty protest at Armagh if we read it differently (to Adams) also exerts a similarly disfiguring force.

If, as I have argued, an engagement with the Armagh dirty protest that simply replaces absence with presence is not sufficient because it fails to interrogate how these states are themselves the effects of particular power relations, then the urgent question is how to read or narrate the protest without reproducing this logic? In singling the Armagh protest as a moment of rupture, how may we avoid what Allen Feldman (specifically in reference to Republicanism) has called a “sacrificial model of memory formation” in which “emblematic scenarios and bodies are made to encapsulate the prescriptive memory for an entire collective” (Feldman 2003, 62)? Such a “prescriptive memory” is always a simulation of completeness and closure where neither of these things can be found. Instead of reading Armagh as a space of absence or as overburdened with presence then, I want to treat Armagh as epistemologically generative. By this I mean that an engagement with the protest can offer us a place from which to theorize about the questions of gender, embodiment and agency that have animated this dissertation throughout. If we read Armagh from the perspective of the captive body, which is always indelibly marked by the work of identity and power relations, but never entirely reducible to them, then what happens? We are returned here, to Foucault’s cautious optimism about the agonistic relationship between the

apparatuses of captivity and discipline and the counter-forces that address them.

Armagh, and specifically the marginal figure of Pauline McLaughlin, can tell us much about the development of these counter-forces. With that in mind let us turn back to the Armagh protest.

Writing the no-wash protest

As I argued in the introductory section, the Armagh protest should be understood as both an expression of the general conflict about the political identity of the prisoners and as unfolding within conditions specific to the prison itself. While there has been much detailed work on the conditions inside the H-Blocks, there is considerably less work engaging directly with the specific dimensions of the penal regime in Armagh. One such account, from British criminologist Mary Corcoran, details women's political imprisonment in Northern Ireland from the beginning of detention in 1971 to the release of the last political prisoners during the peace negotiations in the late 1990s. She argues that women's political imprisonment in the region was "a site of converging relationships between political, penal and gendered ideologies and controls." (Corcoran 2006, xvii) While the containment of their male counterparts was premised on the threat to societal order that they supposedly presented, the detention of women was justified in paternalistic terms, as a necessary means of "protecting" young women from the influence of paramilitaries on the outside (Corcoran 2006, 5). Once detained, women political prisoners faced not only the general disciplinary apparatus of the prison connected to the colonial security state, but were also subject to what Corcoran calls, "a

highly normative ethos of gender regulation.” (Corcoran 2006, 5) This is exemplified in the welfare, educational and work programing offered at Armagh, which emphasized “traditionally gendered remedial subjects” such as dressmaking, handicrafts and typewriting (Corcoran 1999, 160). It is telling that a key part of the Republican prisoners’ protest was a refusal to take part in these activities and an accompanying demand for political education (primarily Gaelic language instruction and Irish history) to be provided. In this context, the display of excrement and menstrual blood in the women’s no-wash protest was a further defiance of “traditional” notions of “feminine propriety” upon which the gendered penal order depended (Corcoran 2006, 179).

The long duration of Corcoran’s study offers an account of the shifting institutional regimes that prevailed in the prison. She argues that one can discern a “dialectic” of resistance and punitive “re-enclosure” wherein each new phase of the women’s protest represented not only a moment of resistance to penal power but also “opened up new opportunities for the administration to apply novel and intensified forms of intervention” (Corcoran 2006, 222, 173) This is visible in the introduction of strip-searching as a prison-wide policy in 1982. Strip-searching was introduced thirteen months after the end of the 1981 hunger strikes and given that it was applied only in Armagh, the prisoners there argued that it functioned as a punitive and distinctly gendered response to the previous protests. Unlike the H-Blocks, where the resolution of the hunger strikes in 1981 and the partial attainment of the prisoners’ demands thereafter resulted in a new institutional relationship between the Republican prisoners and the prison administration, shifting from overt conflict to more “managerialist” and

pragmatic modes of governance, the punitive response directed at the women prisoners in Armagh was effectively redoubled (Corcoran 2006, 182). Furthermore, it is significant that the regulation and disciplining of the women prisoners' bodies that did occur took the form of a gendered and sexualized humiliation, namely, the strip search. The IRA prisoners argued that the renewal of random strip-searching was not mandated by the "security situation" in the prison but was rather a politically motivated tactic of governmental control in which the degradation of women's bodies functioned as an effective stand in for that which could no longer be performed on the male bodies in the Maze. Furthermore, they argued that the practice was aimed at the women prisoners in Armagh precisely because as women they were perceived to be the more "vulnerable" and "weak" margin of the political prisoner population (Corcoran 2006, 182 – 3).

Corcoran's emphasis on the dialectical quality of protest and punishment avoids totalizing either the prisoners' resistance or the domination of the penal regime, which she argues is never stable or unitary but always "engage[d] in reauthorizing and relegitimizing [its] own punitive logics." (Corcoran 2006, 102) As a consequence, her account of the no-wash protest places it in the context of the specific dynamic that arose from the prisoners' escalating non-conformity to the prison regime after the removal of Special Category Status and the prison administration's continual attempts to install "normal" discipline there. As such, unlike most other feminist academic accounts of the protest, she does not narrate the cell search of 7th February 1980 as a moment of rupture and transformation after which the protest moved from one distinctive phase to another. Corcoran argues that no such origin point is discernible. She cautions that, "The precise

origins of the ‘no-wash’ protest are obscured in the debates and counterclaims of prisoners, civil libertarians, Republican prisoner welfare organizations and the Northern Ireland Office.” (Corcoran 2006, 37)

The imprecision that Corcoran elaborates here once again brings forth the charged politics of representing and narrating the Armagh protest. For what is at stake in determinations of origins are also moral and ethical designations of blame and responsibility. The IRA prisoners and their supporters viewed the cell search by male guards on 7th February as a deliberate attempt to escalate their no-work strike and the denial of toilet facilities in the aftermath of the search as an incitement to bring about a no-wash situation in the prison. The responsibility for the dirty conditions, therefore lay squarely with the prison administration.

In her memoir, Síle Darragh writes that, “They had given male screws from the H-Blocks free reign in Armagh and these screws had created the very conditions that they were used to.” (Darragh 2011, 65). She describes in rich detail that fateful morning of 7th February, when the women were “lured” into the prison cafeteria with the promise of an unusually delicious meal (roast chicken and chips) and were greeted by a group of twenty or thirty male guards from the Maze (Darragh 2011, 56). When the governor announced that the women would be locked in the association rooms while the cell search was carried out “all hell broke loose.” (Darragh 2011, 57) After a physical confrontation between the guards and the prisoners took place, the women were subjected to extended periods of containment and isolation, first in the association

rooms and then in their cells with limited access to the toilet facilities. Some of the prisoners were then forcibly removed from their cells and brought to the governor's office for adjudication. Darragh describes the gendered violence with which this removal was achieved:

“Four male screws, dressed in their riot gear and carrying Perspex, body-length riot shields, ran in. Two each, using physical and brute force, pinned each woman either the cell wall or onto a bed using a riot shield to crush her and prevent her moving.” (Darragh 2011, 61)

The employment of male screws to immobilize and pin the women down was experienced as a deeply sexualized mode of penal intervention. After this, the women remained in their cells and the issue of leaving them to use the toilet facilities became fraught. They began to throw the contents of their chamber pots, an unfortunate concoction of “urine, faeces, sanitary towels, tampons, tissues, tea, leftover food and any other slops which had accumulated” onto the wing (Darragh 2011, 64). Over the next few days they sent out their spare clothing and toiletries to relatives and began to smear the excrement on the walls. After this step was taken, the women's no-wash protest had begun in earnest.

Because the women had been denied visits or contact with the prison welfare staff for several days after the cell search, news of the conditions in Armagh took several days to filter out. By the 9th February however, the story was picked up by the media and there were calls, primarily from Catholic clergymen and the prisoners' relatives, for a full public inquiry to investigate the events that had transpired at the prison (*Irish News*

1980d). The message coming out of the prison, voiced by representatives of the Republican movement, was that the women were being denied access to the toilets and an adequate supply of sanitary towels. As such they were being “forced” into filthy living conditions (*Irish News* 1980a). In these representations, the women, although they are often described as “girls” in the media accounts (*Irish News* 1980a), are the victims of a barbaric and repressive prison regime that sought to humiliate them by interfering with their most basic bodily functions. The British government, however, in the form of the Northern Ireland Office, sought to advance an oppositional narrative. They spent much time and effort making clear to the media and the prisoners’ relatives, who received a personal letter from the Minister for Prisons, that the prisoners’ situation was “self-inflicted” and that they were actively choosing not to use the toilets (Northern Ireland Office 1980c). The cell search, and the use of male guards (described as harmless “trade officers”), when it was acknowledged was significantly downplayed (*Irish News* 1980b). A spokesperson for the Northern Ireland Office is quoted in the *Irish Times* as saying, “there is no truth whatsoever in the allegations of brutality, the female prisoners have been able to exercise daily and may visit the washrooms and toilets.” (*Irish News* 1980c)

This disavowal highlights a continual theme in the various remainders of the protest in the state archive. For example, the Incident Report produced by the governor for the Northern Ireland Office concerning the events of 7th February is almost parodic in its insistent representation of a humane and rational punishment regime, in which the primary agents of violence are the prisoners themselves. The women are continually described as “militant” and prone to throwing plates and dangerously wielding kitchen

utensils such as spoons as weapons against male guards in full riot gear (Northern Ireland Office 1980a). The only mark of violence that bubbles through this otherwise scrupulously measured account is the “bruising” that some prisoners and prison officers mysteriously sustain. The bruising here registers as a sudden jolt of violence transcribed onto the body, which subsequently threatens to undermine the disembodied and formalized rationality of the prison report altogether. However the identities of the bodies onto which this violence has been transcribed and the agents of transcription remain obscure, as the report does not differentiate between the bruising of the prisoners and prison officers. In the absence of bodily evidence we are returned to Corcoran’s moment of imprecision, for the various different causal stories advanced all seek to attribute agency and responsibility to different actors in different measures.

The British administration continued, both publically and privately, to narrate a causal story in which they played no part in the development of the protest. In a typically self-consolidating internal document, the Deputy Director of Prison Operations writes that the no-wash protest “was not motivated by the search,” and cites “evidence from a number of sources that they [the Republican prisoners] were considering such action even before Christmas and that it was alluded to in some of their letters.” (Northern Ireland Office 1980b) The insistence that their actions had no bearing on the escalation of the protest, indeed that conditions in Armagh were totally self-inflicted, reiterated previous British responses to the H-Block conditions and even the injuries sustained by tortured detainees in the British Army interrogation centers during the early 1970s (Feldman 1991, 298 – 9). As Aretxaga notes, this representational strategy of

denial is continuously replayed in official British narrations of their engagement in Northern Ireland, in which, far from escalating conditions of violence in the region, military deployment is presented as a necessary intervention to prevent further violence (Aretxaga 1995, 134). Such a denial is of course, a familiar and much cherished colonial imagining, wherein the violence of the colonial encounter is displaced onto the colonized, who are simultaneously produced as the savage, irrationally violent others to the humane, rational and measured colonizers. There is a long history of such narrations in British colonial engagement in Ireland as David Lloyd, writing on nineteenth century British cultural productions of the Irish Famine, and Margaret O'Callaghan, discussing the partition of Ireland in 1921, both show. O'Callaghan argues that the abnegation of responsibility for the conditions of degradation and violence the Irish faced is part of a "very old repertoire of procedures" historically employed by the British in Ireland. (Lloyd 2005; O'Callaghan 2008, 144).

Yet, if the British sought to represent themselves as playing no part in the emergence of the protest in Armagh, the women prisoners were also keen to put forward their own origin story. It would be a mistake to imagine that the protesting women are not, like the British, also capable of employing representational strategies that will evoke moral sympathies. This is not to say that such representational capabilities are equally distributed, obviously the physical containment of the prisoners and the extent to which the state narrative is, by effect of power, produced as true knowledge prevents any such parity. Nonetheless, the women in Armagh are actively engaged in a politics of representation and one that suits their specific purposes. For example, a statement

narrating the women's version of events, the precise wording of which appears again and again in a variety of sources, was collectively authored by the protesting women and smuggled out of the prison. The letter references the throwing of dinner plates, explaining that this was a "purely defensive action" and describes "the savage behavior of the male screws." On the matter of leaving cells to use the toilets, the letter emphasizes that "As we had no access to toilets... we had no option other than to embark on a 'no wash' protest." (Northern Ireland Office 1980d) The phrase "no option" appears several times in the letter and we see in this repeated injunction, not only a mirror image of the British narrative strategy, but also the creation of a frame through which the women may be sympathetically represented as victims of British barbarism. Indeed, such representations of the women's victimhood abounded in the media after the protest. Their high incidence is no doubt related to the fact that the women's primary advocates outside the prison, apart from their relatives, were local Catholic clergymen.

For example, Father Denis Faul, a prominent figure in the Northern Irish Civil Rights Movement and visiting priest at the Maze throughout the H-Block protests, told one newspaper that, "The attack made on the girls was contrary to decency and civilized standards" (*Irish News* 1980d) A month after the protest began, Father Faul published a pamphlet entitled, "Beating Women in Prison," which was distributed to a variety of sources including the UN Commission on Human Rights, Amnesty International and the Office of the Holy See in the Vatican. Discussing the use of male guards during the cell search at Armagh, Father Faul says that, "the beating of women by men is revolting

to decent human and Christian feelings and is associated with the primitive animal feelings of uncivilized, drunken or perverted human beings.” (*Irish News* 1980e) In a similar vein, Father Raymond Murray, the Catholic chaplain at Armagh and the first to learn of the women’s protest, draws parallels between Armagh and Auschwitz and asks, “Who in the wide world would inflict such a dreadful punishment on women?” given that jail is “a burden altogether unsuitable” for women to bear even in enlightened punishment regimes (Murray 1998, 73 – 74).

The language of civility, decency and humanity dominated the media back and forth about the protest. There were rhetorical tussles about who exhibited the highest degree of savagery – the women in Armagh living in their own “filth” or the British who directed men to attack “the girls” in a manner “contrary to decency and civilized standards.” (*Irish News* 1980d) Once again the treatment of women emerges as a representational ground upon which the moral barbarism of the other, routed through the savage and violent treatment of helpless “girls,” is staked. The problem with this kind of language, however, is that it leaves little space to represent the women prisoners as active participants in their protest. The popular image of these poor “girls,” whilst ostensibly evoking sympathy for the women’s protest, is in tension with an accounting of the women as innovative and resistant subjects. We see this tension unravel even within a single account of the protest. In her memoir, Darragh, echoing almost exactly the joint communique sent out of the prison thirty years previously, writes that, “No-one, including us prisoners, wanted a no-wash situation in Armagh,” yet in the same paragraph articulates that: “We were not prepared to grovel. To do so would have been

seen as weak and given the screws the upper hand.” (Darragh 2011, 65) Indeed she writes that any concession to the governor in the days after the cell search would have resulted in “a mutiny within our own ranks.” (Darragh 2011, 65). Here we glimpse a different kind of subject, closer perhaps to the “militant” alluded to in the prison reports, not passive “victims,” but actively determining the course of the protest even as the regime that confines them is at its most brutal and restrictive. Outside, however, and with some degree of complicity on the part of the women themselves, this militancy get displaced onto the drama of powerless “girls” faced with the moral savagery of the British.

In employing a narrative of British savagery and barbarism, the colonial hierarchies that depend upon these narrations are not disrupted but rather legitimized through reversal (Spivak 1999, 62). Indeed the inadequacy of this reversal for any project of deconstructing the colonial binary is evidenced in the continuing shame felt by former participants and members of their community about the “dirty” aspect of the protest. Most Republican accounts refer to it as a “no-wash” protest and reject the term “dirty protest” as a British invention designed to discredit their actions. However, such discomfort with the particular dirt of the dirty protest also suggests that the legacy of the protest, even for the male prisoners who now enjoy an especially hallowed place in Republican narratives of resistance, continues to evoke strong feelings of shame and disgust for its participants.

For the women prisoners, whose protest continues to occupy a position of marginality in such narratives, the disgust is amplified further, as Begona Aretxaga notes in her interviews with former women prisoners (Aretxaga 1997, 128). In Darragh's account, for example, she describes how looking back on the protest she is able to "wholly understand" the revulsion it provoked (Darragh 2011, 95). Reflecting on the unwashed bodies and soiled sanitary towels and tampons, Darragh remarks, "even I can get the stomach-churning sense of how people felt." (Darragh 2011, 95) Furthermore, the persistence of this disgust fatally complicates the critical feminist reading of the protest that reads it as a powerful and potent "de-metaphorization" of British colonial tropes of Irish savagery (Aretxaga 1995, 135). In this reading, accusations of dirtiness, savagery and incivility, historically deployed by the British against the Irish as a means of maintaining colonial racial hierarchies, are converted into symbolic weapons through which the British regime is attacked (Neti 2003, 79). Leila Neti, for example, argues that the women's "overcoming of shame and disgust... threatened the penal institution's power to order and control the women's bodies." (Neti 2003, 88) While this is doubtless a comforting reading, one that carefully assigns agency to the protesters, although a complicated and paradoxical form of it in which conditions of degradation are transmuted into conditions of possibility, it comes undone when we consider the persistent refusal by key participants to speak of the protest as "dirty" at all, suggesting that such feelings of shame and disgust have not been entirely "overcome."

I will end this section with a moment that I think speaks to the reproduction of this shame and the ongoing silences of the Armagh protest. A few years ago at a

conference in England, I spoke with an American graduate student who presented a paper on the 1981 hunger strikes. I told them that I was going to write on the dirty protest in Armagh and would soon be going back to Belfast to do archival research on the subject. When I said this, they looked pained and instructed me that I should call it the “no-wash” protest and definitely not the “dirty” protest. This was the one thing, they said, about which the former prisoners they interviewed had been very clear. And while what this friendly graduate student told me is no doubt true and probably helpful, it is not a command that I have followed in my own work. On the one hand, this is the result of an untheorized stubbornness, which unfortunately emerged in response to instruction on the cultural sensitivities of “my own people.” It is possible for me to maintain this stubbornness even while acknowledging that it is animated by phantasmatic identifications, because as member of the supposedly apathetic and cynical “post-Troubles generation”, from a distinctly middle-class area of Belfast, which I have long since left, the differences between me and these “people” are much more significant than our shared national identity. My adherence to nationalism is perhaps a further legitimation by reversal. Beyond this, if indeed it is possible to move beyond this, I have also avoided strictly enforcing this rule because I think that attempts to contain the protest under the euphemistic sign of “no-wash,” even if it this is favored by the participants, amounts to a capitulation to a force, knowable only through its prohibitive effect, that has made, and continues to make, the “dirt” of the dirty protest unsayable.

Menstrual blood

“It had come to this then. The war in Northern Ireland, reduced within the confines of a women’s prison to searching through a blood soaked sanitary towel for smuggled tobacco. On the one side were the women prison warders, representing the British Empire. On the other were the women prisoners, representing the IRA.”¹⁶

That the dirt of the dirty protest continues to evoke feelings of disgust for the men and women who participated in it is not especially surprising given the horror and incomprehension it provoked at the time. Such reactions were especially pronounced in the response to the women’s protest. Visitors to Armagh during the protest described what they saw as “sickening and appalling” and reported embodied reactions of “nausea” (Coogan 2002, 230 & 271). It seemed as if the addition of the menstrual blood to an already “bizarre and foul” protest pushed it even further beyond the pale (*The Times* cited in Aretxaga 1995, 124). Yet just as that which disgusts and repels conversely fascinates and seduces, the presence of the menstrual blood also brought particular attention to the women’s protests and engaged sectors of the community who had not previously been moved by the H-Block protests. Unlike events at the Maze, the Armagh protest attracted the ambivalent attention of the Northern Irish feminist movement. Most notably, well-known feminist journalist Nell McCafferty brought the protest to national attention with the publication of her article in the *Irish Times* in June of 1980. The title of the article: “It is my belief that Armagh is a feminist issue,” was a deliberate provocation to the Northern Irish women’s movement, primarily the Northern Ireland Women’s Rights Association (NIWRA), who had not supported the women’s protest because of

¹⁶ Nell McCafferty, *The Armagh Women* (Dublin: Co-op Books, 1981), p. 10.

concerns that it would jeopardize their strategy of seeking women's unity across the sectarian divide (Loughran 1986, 71).

In the article, McCafferty's own disgust at the protest mingles with her insistence that it demands a feminist response, "The menstrual blood in Armagh stinks to high heaven. Shall feminists turn their noses up?" (McCafferty 1980). Her intervention addressed a movement that was already "fundamentally divided over the relevance of the National Question for the liberation of women" (Loughran 1986, 59) and instigated an exhaustive debate as to the appropriate feminist response to the Armagh women. The NIWRA, for example, continually argued that Republicanism was a "male-dominated movement" and that feminism should be concerned with the victims of violence rather than the perpetrators (Loughran 1986, 64). The women prisoners collectively responded to this in a "comm" smuggled out of the prison, in which they argued that they saw their protest as a feminist issue because the prison itself was "completely geared to male domination." (Loughran 1986, 64) They concluded with a challenge to the universal claims of the NIWRA's specific brand of "unity seeking" second-wave feminism, charging that, "If this is not a feminist issue then we feel that the word feminist needs to be redefined." (Loughran 1986, 64)

The debates over Armagh led to the development of Women Against Imperialism (WAI) a leftist, anti-imperialist organization that subsequently splintered from the NIWRA. WAI produced a voluminous literature on the protest and achieved a degree of notoriety when they held a rally outside the prison on International Women's

Day in March 1980. Eleven women from the organization were arrested that day and two of the so-called “Armagh Eleven” were eventually imprisoned for refusing to pay their court fines. Upon arrival at Armagh they immediately asked to join the protesting women and the interactions between these two women and the IRA prisoners, from whom they differed considerably in class and age, are amusingly recounted by Síle Darragh in her memoir. Darragh describes the disparity between the WAI women’s expectations of the Republican prisoners and the reality of the prisoners’ daily lives. Darragh recounts that one of the women, Margaretta D’Arcy, was particularly disappointed to find the prisoners’ conversations were not suitably revolutionary and was particularly troubled by their interest in boys, music and fashion. “She’d been to Central America, she told me, and the women caught up in the conflict in those places didn’t waste time discussing trivialities.” (Darragh 2011, 92)

We might read this encounter as suggesting a poignant limit to any “bridge-building” feminism that seeks to travel with ease across the ethno-national and class differences. D’Arcy’s insistence on the “right” way of doing feminism and her fetishism of both the IRA women and the undifferentiated “women” of Central America are indicative of the extent to which this version of anti-imperialist feminism enacts its own imperial forms. D’Arcy herself wrote a memoir several months after her release from Armagh. A playwright, her account is rich with detailed descriptions of the process of “decorating” the cell walls with feces and the “whole problem of menstruation,” although her stay was in the prison was so short that she “had a period only once while inside, which relieved my problem.” (D’Arcy, 51, 80)

The presence of the menstrual blood did not just attract feminist attention however. For the first time the issue of menstruation was brought into the political discourse of Northern Ireland. The British government, for example, found itself in the unprecedented situation of being forced to respond to queries, some from as far away as the United States, about the provision of sanitary pads in their prisons (Northern Ireland Office 1980e). The *Irish People* newspaper launched a campaign within the far-reaching Irish diaspora to send sanitary towels to the British government in response to reports that the women in Armagh were being denied access to an adequate supply of sanitary towels and tampons (Northern Ireland Office 1980f). A letter sent directly to Margaret Thatcher made a dubious appeal to Thatcher's own femininity and asked how as a woman herself she could permit such humiliation to continue (Northern Ireland Office 1980e). Menstrual blood became politicized and its politicization was not limited to the British government. Women who participated in the protest talked of how their fellow Republicans, the men on the no-wash protest at the Maze prison, whose previous knowledge of the menstrual cycle was somewhat lacking (as befits a young Catholic man growing up in the 1960s), were becoming educated on the matter so that they could better understand the women's protest and their grievances (McCafferty 1981, 58).

As feminist theorists of the women's protest have argued, the menstrual blood, which was just one substance within the multiple excreta of the Armagh protest, invites particular attention because it signals the eruption onto the political scene of a substance that is otherwise shrouded in secrecy (Aretxaga 1997, 139). Marsha Rosengarten's analysis of the marketing of "feminine hygiene" products, in which she notes the

frequent euphemistic substitution of menstrual blood for a colored liquid, indicates the extent to which this secrecy is a socially compulsory performance. The emphasis on such products' capacity to prevent "leakage," which is announced by the arrival of a horrifying stain that reveals the secret against the will of the subject, evidences the fundamental problem of menstruation. Menstrual blood is that which must be concealed to maintain one's "viability as a subject," yet, at the same time, menstrual blood is a leaky, troublesome substance that continually resists attempts to contain it (Rosengarten 2000, 92). This essential leakiness marks the specificity of menstrual blood from other types of blood or indeed from feces, a substance whose secret disposal is also a requirement for the maintenance of a social order constituted through notions of hygiene and cleanliness. It is particularly relevant to the dirty protest that such notions are, as Dipesh Chakrabarty elaborates with reference to India, themselves effects of the colonial project of modernity (Chakrabarty 2002). In the historical formation of the British colonial project, the Irish, like the Indians, have been repeatedly cast as stubbornly resistant to incorporation within any such project and are frequently placed outside its norms.

Unlike feces however, menstrual blood is a singularly sexualized and gendered substance. It is the symbolism of the menstrual blood, as an explicit and overt sign of the femininity of the Armagh protest, that has attracted the analytical attention of feminist scholars. Begona Aretxaga's excellent essay on the protest argues that the menstrual blood figures as a moment of rupture, which in turn, "provoked a movement

of social transformation.” (Aretxaga 1995, 137). For Aretxaga, the blood is an “overdetermined symbol” of the women prisoners’ embodied sexual difference, which is otherwise placed under erasure in the service of maintaining their ungendered identity as political militants (Aretxaga 1995, 125). She reads the reappearance of such a sign in political discourse as constituting the unique political agency of the women’s actions. Her reading goes against hegemonic interpretations of the women’s protest as mere mimicry of the H-Block dirty protest, which in doing so, diminish its agential effects (Aretxaga 1997, 144). Aretxaga argues that the transgressive presence of menstrual blood has material and political effects in that it “forced a public discussion about the politics of gender in Northern Ireland.” (Aretxaga 1997, 136)

The determination of the Armagh protest as moment of feminist agency, which potentially transforms gender politics, is reiterated in other critical accounts of the protest. Theresa O’Keefe, for example, reads the women’s protest as a response to the sexualized and gendered nature of the British security forces’ operations in Northern Ireland. Locating the protest within the context of the extensive searches of Catholic homes undertaken by British soldiers throughout the 1970s, which were experienced as deeply violating, and the experience of the interrogation center, in which asking for sanitary pads became an intense source of humiliation for women detainees, O’Keefe reads the dirty protest in Armagh as a triumphant reclamation of the subversive power of menstruation. For O’Keefe, the women’s dirty protest, and the smearing of menstrual blood specifically, is a distinctly gendered and embodied mode of resistance to the patriarchal and ethnic operations of state power. Menstrual blood, the material

instantiation of a shameful taboo, becomes “a weapon of resistance” directed against the British state, albeit a highly unconventional one. Against the backdrop of a security regime that trafficked in gendered forms of humiliation, the women were able to utilize their menstrual blood to effectively subvert this regime. As O’Keefe argues, the women “were no longer willing to have their own bodies used against them” (O’Keefe 2006, 546).

O’Keefe’s careful analysis of the protest outlines its important contextual and historical dimensions, however, her argument that the resistive and transformative potential of the dirty protest is best understood as a moment of “regaining control over” one’s own body (O’Keefe 2006, 549) is, I argue, problematic for feminist theorizations of embodiment. In saying that the no-wash protest constituted a triumphant moment for feminist politics because, “when the female prisoners reclaimed their menstrual blood they were, in effect, re-gaining control over their own bodies,” O’Keefe equates political agency with self-conscious and willful “control” over the body (O’Keefe 2006, 549). O’Keefe is not alone in this determination, indeed the sense that the control of bodies is *the* moment of agency appears in a variety of feminist accounts of the protest. Leila Neti speaks of the Armagh women as “effectively turn[ing] their punishment into a means of protest by *seizing control* of the filth in order to inflict it on the visual and sensory space of the guards.” (Neti 2003, 77, my emphasis) Mary Corcoran argues that the women “sought to *retain control* of their own bodies in the face of discipline, punishment and routinization.” (Corcoran 2006, 171, my emphasis) Furthermore, former prisoner and WAI Margaretta D’Arcy writes:

“‘Women must control their own bodies’ is the most important feminist slogan; and when one understands the lack of control over their bodies by the women in Armagh Jail, the reason for its importance becomes only too clear.” (D’Arcy 1981, 83)

Dualism is implicated in all of these statements. On the one hand, they are advancing an understanding of the body as that which is attacked by a punishment regime external to the subject, which seeks its total corporeal submission. At the same time however, echoing the descriptions of the dirty protest as a weapon of the weak, this same bodily matter is transformed into a “resource” that can be deployed “consciously” by the women in the name of defeating the punishment regime (O’Keefe 2006, 536). Here again, we are returned to a Foucauldian dynamic of struggle, wherein, “Power, after investing itself in the body, finds itself exposed to a counter attack in that same body.” (Foucault 1980, 56)

Certainly there can be no doubt that the prison regime in Armagh sought to regulate and control the women’s bodies. And just as penal logics identified the women’s sexual difference as the suitable terrain upon which to exercise disciplinary power, in these critical readings, the women’s bodies are also the terrain of this power’s reversal. The women were able to convert their embodied sexual difference, routed through the materiality of menstrual blood, into a powerful armory with which to attack the prison regime. However, the unlikely emergence of the dirty protest shows us that the project of controlling women’s bodies, though often incredibly violent, is necessarily doomed to fail. Indeed, despite the intensive application of penal power onto bodies

that we witness in Armagh, the body is never wholly mastered and controlled by the forces that work upon it (Grosz 1994, 10). If this were the case, then the dirty protest would never have emerged in the first place, instead there would be a prison populated only by “docile bodies” and definitely not political militants, women no less, who were intent on smearing their cell walls with their own excrement.

That failure is endemic to any project of bodily mastery is not only extremely significant to theorizations of corporeal warfare, it also illuminates how such projects of mastery are themselves betrayed by the model of corporeal closure they rely upon. Furthermore, this dynamic of failure marks attempts to control the body on behalf of hegemonic power *and* the counter-attacks that seek to address this very power alike, including the women’s own attempts to “seize control” of their bodies and regain them back from power’s grip. This suggests that despite the fact that the women’s protest was at times a self-conscious redeployment of their gendered bodily mess, the substance of which came to be endowed with intentionality and directionality,¹⁷ even their own attempts to master their bodies and to conduct the movement of their own movement, indeed to govern their own bodies (to return us to the terminology of the first chapter), will be contingent and without complete success. To speak of this contingency does not deny these women’s agency or capacity for resistance. Rather, it reminds us that such resistance, to the extent that it is supported by normative iterations of the body as a bounded, closed and inert materiality that may be effectively controlled and mastered by

¹⁷ As Aretxaga reminds us, “the prisoners knew why they were smearing their cells with excrement and under which conditions they would cease to do so.” (Aretxaga 1995, 132)

the willful intentionality located in that mystified domain of the “mind,” is necessarily limited. At issue here is how this contingency gets written out of feminist narratives that speak of the protests as wholly successful moments of bodily (re)appropriation and control.

Such readings of the protest give us a hard-worn and seductive moment of feminist triumph against patriarchal circumscriptions of the female body, but at what cost? For in identifying the “re-gaining control over [the body]” as the moment of feminist agency, we are enthralled to a notion of political agency that finds its highest expression in the knowing, sovereign subject who can attain mastery over the messiness of corporeal entanglements. I would argue that feminists should be wary of such demarcations of political agency, given the long history of excluding women, along with racialized and classed others, from this kind of agency precisely because such groups are supposedly incapable of the corporeal mastery it requires.¹⁸ It is not enough now to extend that vision of agency to include women also, so that they may be represented as successfully mastering their bodies and mastering even its most socially circumscribed matter – menstrual blood, because such accounts continue to render the body as a “fundamental passivity and transparency.” (Grosz 1994, 10) Rather, as Samantha Frost reminds us, we should think of the body as emitting “a peculiar and distinctive kind of agency, one that is neither a direct nor an incidental outgrowth of human intentionality

¹⁸ Samantha Frost writes, “the ‘others’ of modernity were constructed both as subject to the determinations of the biological or animal functions of the body and as vulnerable to a kind of behavioral determinism, a vulnerability which derived from the inability of a weak intellect to protect the volitional faculty from the solicitations, seductions, and predations of the social and cultural milieu.” (Frost 2011, 72)

but rather one with its own impetus and trajectory.” (Frost 2011, 70) With that in mind I want to turn now to look at an aspect of the protest that has not received as much attention in the feminist scholarship. The curious case of Pauline McLaughlin, a young woman from Derry who took part in the dirty protest, opens up new possibilities for imagining an embodied form of political resistance that emerges precisely at the moment when the body seems least capable of acting politically. Her case muddles the strict boundaries of activity and passivity upon which our notions of resistance so often depend.

Pauline McLaughlin

“In the prison hospital wing – again, as well appointed and staffed as one could reasonably expect – the staff all knew about Pauline but could offer no explanation for her trouble...”¹⁹

Turning to Pauline McLaughlin shifts our analytical gaze from the menstrual blood on the cell walls of Armagh and onto another excremental matter: vomit. Pauline McLaughlin’s story is both typical and highly unusual. The process by which she came to be imprisoned in Armagh reflects countless others who were interned by the British, at the same time however, the specific features of her embodied protest separate her from the other protesters in Armagh and brought her to national attention. McLaughlin was interned in October 1976 at the age of nineteen. She was arrested and interrogated in Derry and then sent to Armagh where she joined the other Republican protesting prisoners. Because her offences dated back to 1974, before the abolishment of Special

¹⁹ Coogan, *On the Blanket*, p. 275.

Category Status, there was some confusion about her status and how she should be treated. For nearly two years, pending a decision by the Northern Ireland Office, the prison staff did not know whether she should be treated as an a Special Category prisoner or as a protesting prisoner like the others on “A” wing. Finally she was tried and convicted of the murder of a British soldier in February 1978 and was sentenced to life in prison at “the pleasure of the Secretary of State” with no release date (Coogan 2002, 142). In March 1978, the Northern Ireland Office determined that she was not a Special Category prisoner. Later that month her father died and she was denied parole to attend his funeral (Coogan 2002, 142 – 3). Around this time she started to suffer from a mysterious health condition that made it difficult for her to keep food down. She began to vomit after almost every meal and lost weight rapidly.

Her weight loss was exacerbated by the determination that she was not a Special Category prisoner. As such, she was to be treated by the prison staff as a “protesting prisoner” and therefore, like the other protesting prisoners, she was disciplined for refusing to work. The punishment entailed a loss of visiting “privileges” and weekly food parcels that were typically sent in from relatives outside the prison. Dependent on the prison diet alone, her condition worsened and her vomiting became constant, so that “after each meal nothing of the prison diet remained in her stomach.” (Coogan 2002, 130) Her condition resulted in a vicious cycle that revealed both the tragedy and farce of the prison regime. On the prison diet she lost so much weight that the prison doctor declared her “unfit for punishment” and so she was able to receive food parcels again. The food parcels improved her condition because she was better able to tolerate the

food in them. As her weight subsequently increased she was then declared “fit for punishment” and barred from receiving these food parcels once again. Her weight would then again go down and “the whole process began all over again.” (Darragh 2011, 69)

When the no-wash protest started Pauline participated in it fully. In the words of one observer, “she lived in a cell smeared with her own excrement, added to which was her daily vomit.” (McCafferty 1981, 41) Unsurprisingly, her condition worsened. As Síle Darragh writes:

“She became emaciated; her eyes were sunk in the hollows of their sockets, her cheek and jaw bones became more prominent, there was a yellow pallor to her skin. It was obvious to us that the escalation of the protest, the foul, inhumane living conditions, were taking their toll on her health.” (Darragh 2011, 69)

The concern for her health and horrifying presence of her “emaciated” body prompted a wave of media coverage, which intensified as her weight dropped further. Her continued illness, with reports of her starving frame circulating outside the prison, became an increasing embarrassment to the Northern Ireland Office and was addressed several times in the House of Commons (HC Deb 1980). A month into the protest, the prison physician told her that she would likely die if she did not come off the protest. He told her that her illness was “self-inflicted” and that her death would be “her decision.” (Darragh 2011, 69) Revealing the gendered nature of the power that moves through the prison clinic, the doctor told her that “he was a strong man but even he

could not endure the conditions on ‘A’ wing.” (Coogan 2002, 131) Pauline herself is described as remaining “defiantly mute” throughout the session. (Coogan 2002, 131)

Nonetheless, she was ordered to come off the protest by the IRA leadership inside the prison. She was described as “devastated” by this command, although she eventually obeyed it (Darragh 2011, 70) She was moved to another wing where she was isolated from the other Republican prisoners. Here, her weight plummeted and by October 1980 she weighed around five stones (70 pounds) and had a heart attack (Corcoran 2006, 177). At the moment when her body was in its most weakened state her fame outside the prison was increasing. The British Socialist Feminist Conference pledged to support a campaign for her release and Lord Gifford, a Labour peer, visited her and then met with the Northern Ireland Office Minister for Prisons to try secure her release (*Londonderry Sentinel* 2011; Gifford 1980). Such efforts paid off and she was eventually released on humanitarian grounds in January 1981. At this stage she was severely ill and was taken directly to hospital. Instrumental in her release was a report from a senior British consultant that described her condition as “psychological” and as resulting from the “tension” of prison life (Gifford 1980). According to the consultant’s report her condition was not something that she had control over and it was not an eating disorder because while she actively sought food she simply couldn’t keep it down (Gifford 1981).

“Self-inflicted” or a “psychologically caused thing” (Gifford 1980), there is no doubt that Pauline McLaughlin’s body instituted a crisis of meaning that was felt both by

the British government and the media that so closely observed her. What was going on with it, with her, inside her? What was she doing? Was this, as the prison authorities asserted, some form of “self-inflicted” torture that she was skillfully manipulating to secure her release? Hence she should be regarded with suspicion rather than care or compassion? Was it an eating disorder, one we might today recognize as bulimia? Whilst bulimia was notably absent from the public discourse, her starving, emaciated body was frequently (mis)read as that of an anorexic (*An Phoblacht: Republican News* 1997; Gifford 1981). She was often compared to Marian Price, another Republican prisoner who had been released from prison earlier that year on humanitarian grounds, reportedly suffering from anorexia nervosa (Gifford 1980).

Pauline McLaughlin’s wasting body, described as like that of a “Belsen” victim (*An Phoblacht: Republican News* 1997) or as a “clothes-frame” from which clothes limply hung (Gifford 1981) revealed the ruse of a prison regime premised on rehabilitation. Her body, balancing precariously between life and death, staged the specific violence of a biopolitical security regime that takes the prison or the detention center as its key site. It is a prison security regime no longer orientated towards discipline and reform as Foucault discusses in *Discipline and Punish*, but rather one engaged in the production and reproduction of bare life. For Agamben, bare life is life stripped of its political significance (Ziarek 2008, 91), yet Pauline McLaughlin’s body and its refusal to consume or ingest the “nourishment” provided by the prison regime suggests the possibility of a distinctly embodied, even unconscious, kind of resistance. After all, she was eventually released from prison. Her case, which came to be seen as a “medical and political

disgrace” (Darragh 2011, 53), was deeply discomforting to the British colonial project which wanted to appear, as all colonial projects do even as they inflict violence of the severest kind, humane and ethical. If we read her sickness as a kind of resistance, we are left with a vision of political agency that is radically different to that articulated earlier by O’Keefe. It is a mode of agency that is not the purview of a sovereign subject who exerts mastery over her body but rather a kind of agency in which the body masters us and we are its subjects. It is a mode of agency in which the moment of bodily decline, when it is starving and approaching death, becomes perversely, the very moment of its most powerful resistance. It is the kind of resistance that Patrick Anderson discusses when he acknowledges that certain corporeal practices entail “the loss of bodily integrity,” yet can elaborate “a particular kind of loss out of which a powerful form of political subjectivity is produced and embodied” (Anderson 2010, 9).

I want to leave you finally with an image that provides a counterweight to Pauline McLaughlin’s stomach that could not bear the food provided by the prison regime. When Irish journalist Tim Pat Coogan visited Armagh Prison in 1980 he was shown around the facility by the Governor George Scott. Over lunch they discussed the prison guard that had been shot dead by the IRA just outside the prison entrance. Governor Scott, however, was not in the mood for lunch. According to Coogan, he “took only a cup of tea because he had a bad stomach.” (Coogan 2002, 223) Intended as a passing comment, perhaps it is worth lingering here on this other “bad stomach” to ask what it means when a security regime is literally sickening to all those involved. The “bad stomach,” the stomach that is staging some kind of alimentary revolt to the present

conditions the body finds itself in, indicates, as I have been saying, something important to us about the agency of the body. The insistence of the “bad stomach” makes it impossible to think of bodily matter as merely passive, we are forced to acknowledge that it is an active force exerting itself on us and on the world around us.

Chapter 3:

Unhealthy Eating: Women Hunger Strikers and the Pathologization of Protest

The previous chapter concluded with the body of Pauline McLaughlin, which I argued can be viewed as a kind of alimentary revolt against the disciplinary regime of Armagh prison. The loss of bodily integrity experienced in her vomiting disease may be read as both a nullification of her capacity for political agency, and conversely as the condition for the emergence of a very specific kind of political subjectivity. In this reading I follow Patrick Anderson who, in his account of various forms of self-starvation, argues for the political futurity of certain bodily practices that entail loss and denigration, even death (Anderson 2010, 3). In this chapter I want to think further about the fusion of political agency, pathological subjectivity and bodily disintegration that is suggested by Pauline McLaughlin's case. In doing so I turn to the figures of Dolours and Marian Price, two IRA prisoners who went on hunger strike and were subsequently force-fed in Brixton prison in 1974. They were eventually released, Marian in 1980 and Dolours in 1981, because they were reportedly suffering from anorexia nervosa. The Price sisters' hunger strike differs from the dirty protest in that it takes the complete physical annihilation of the practitioners' body as its ultimate end. Hunger strike therefore, engages death as a political mechanism in a very specific way, the likely terminal point of self-starvation is the self-destructive consumption of the body itself. In considering the multiple meanings that emerge from practices of self-starvation therefore, we are returned to the concern with governing that was discussed in the first chapter.

“Sisters of terror”

The Price sisters’ case brings us to a moment of IRA prison protest with very different contours to that of the Armagh protest. Their hunger strike took place prior to the removal of Special Category status and in an English prison. The issue of criminalization was not, therefore, at the center of their protest as it had been in the dirty protest. Similarly, the geographical shift to an English prison removes the sisters’ protest from the specifics of the Northern Irish ‘state of exception,’ which was effectively produced by British policies of mass surveillance, interrogation and detention from 1971 onwards. This geographical shift in the analysis reflects a similar shift in the strategy of the Provisional IRA, who extended their operations to the rest of the UK, primarily England, during this time period. The IRA’s controversial “British campaign” lasted from March 1973 until January 1979 and generated a great deal of anti-Irish sentiment in English urban centers, particularly in cities like Birmingham, which were both targets of IRA bomb attacks and key sites of Irish immigration.

The expansion of IRA violence to England constituted a broadening of the organization’s operations beyond the previous focus on military and security targets in Northern Ireland. It was primarily motivated by a not altogether unfounded belief that the rising death toll in Ireland had not sufficiently affected British audiences. Indeed Dolours Price, justifying her involvement in this IRA campaign, argued that a bomb in England was worth “twenty car bombs in any part of the north of Ireland.” (Sawer and Graham 2014) The IRA hoped that repeated bomb blasts in England, which had been a

part of daily life in Northern Ireland for several years, would provoke sufficient horror amongst the British public to exert pressure on the government to withdraw (Coogan 2000, 385 – 6).

This new phase of the IRA campaign kicked off in spectacular style on Thursday 8 March 1973, when three bombs exploded across London injuring over 200 people. Targets included the Old Bailey Central Criminal Court, the Ministry of Agriculture in Whitehall and the Army Recruiting Office in Scotland Yard. Several bombs were planted in other central locations although they did not explode (Harvey and Hoggart 1973). Twenty-two year old Dolours Price (who was the Officer Commanding of the whole operation), along with her younger sister Marian and eight other Irish young people were apprehended that same day at Heathrow airport as they attempted to board a flight to Dublin (Keefe 2015). From the sisters' initial arrest, the press interest in these so-called "Sisters of Terror" was intense, generating "an unprecedented journalistic hysteria" (Smith 1973; Northern Ireland Political Collection 1974, 1). Media interest reached fever pitch by the time of their ten-week trial at Winchester Castle in November, which was by all accounts, a "sensational event," with "strict security measures" enforced amidst fears of further bombings (*BBC News* 2015). Journalists fixated on the capacity of these two young women, one a trainee teacher and the other a trainee nurse, to plan and carry out such an attack. They were the first female Provisional IRA bombers to participate in such an attack. Indeed, the sisters were the first women members of the Provisional IRA altogether. From a well-known Republican family, they

had successfully campaigned to become “volunteers” in ‘active service units’ rather join the women’s ancillary organization *Cumann na mBan* in 1971. Their femininity therefore marked them as exceptional within the IRA as well as in the British press, who were more used to encountering the Irish terrorist in his long-haired, bearded masculinized form.

Press accounts of the trial reflect a gendered logic in which the sisters were presented as deadly, dangerous, but also alluring spectacles. Their physical appearance was constantly scrutinized, journalists commented on their clothes and hairstyles and much was made of the extent to which they were kitted out in “the whole boutique collection of a young girl’s wardrobe” (Smith 1973). In a November 1973 profile of the sisters in *The Observer*, the journalist expresses disbelief “that beauty could ever be so dangerous” (Smith 1973). At times the sisters’ own behavior added fodder to sensationalist accounts. In the dock they provided plenty of copy for journalists, reportedly “frequently interrupt[ing] proceedings with defiant shouts.”(Cowley 1973) In one such story, in response to the judge’s assertion that “Passing sentence on people as young as you are is repugnant to me...” Marian reportedly shouted, “Don’t worry, we absolve you.” (Smith 1973) Exhibiting not only the sisters’ famed defiance, but also performing a parodic reversal of the court’s authority to pass moral as well as legal judgement on its subjects.

However, the sisters were eventually convicted and both received double life sentences plus an additional twenty years for conspiracy charges. Upon sentencing the sisters, along with two of their co-defendants, Gerry Kelly and Hugh Feeney, immediately announced to the courtroom and assembled press their intention to begin a hunger strike. They demanded to be returned to Northern Ireland and allowed to serve their time as political prisoners. In Northern Ireland, where there were frequent (and often successful attempts) by the IRA on the outside to “break out” Republican prisoners, this demand was generally interpreted as laying the ground for an escape attempt. Amid fears of an escape, the sisters were sent to a male high security prison (HMP Brixton) as no women’s prison was deemed suitably secure.

Once in Brixton, they began their hunger strike and a regime of force-feeding commenced not long after on the nineteenth day of their protest. They were later joined on hunger strike by two further IRA prisoners also serving time in English prisons: Michael Gaughan and Frank Stagg. By 1974, therefore, there were a total of six IRA prisoners being force-fed in English prisons, a situation that neither the Conservative Home Secretary nor his Labour successor, Roy Jenkins, found particularly desirable. The prisoners’ demands to be repatriated to a Northern Irish prison were, as Jenkins writes in his memoir, “not totally unreasonable.” (Jenkins 1991, 377) Yet the atmosphere that prevailed throughout England at the time, with increasing outrage directed towards the IRA as their bombing campaign continued, did not bode well for their prospects of securing a transfer. As Jenkins writes in his memoir, he himself was

inclined to approve a move back to Northern Ireland but, “the British public was not at the time disposed to feel much compassion towards this pair of dedicated terrorists.” (Jenkins 1991, 377) Although the strike was a collective one, Jenkins’ memoir singles out the Price sisters as the “*fons et origo*” of the Irish prisoner crisis that unfolded throughout 1974. Their protest, which lasted 200 days (they were force-fed for 167 of these), was undoubtedly the most famous. The sisters reached a new level of notoriety in April 1974 when nineteen Old Masters’ paintings, including Vermeer’s *Lady Writing a Letter to her Maid*, were stolen from the Russborough estate in County Wicklow by a group claiming IRA membership (Corless 2014). The paintings were subsequently held hostage as the group attempted to negotiate with the British government for the release of the Prices. The paintings were eventually returned unharmed after the sisters’ mother Chrissie intervened. In an interview she claimed that Dolours, “who is an art student,” was particularly keen to see the safe return of the paintings (Keefe 2015).

As the sisters’ hunger strike continued, their public profile increased. Archival documents show that a broad array of actors contacted the British government on the sisters’ behalf, all keen to impress upon British ministers “the high emotion among the minority community” relating to the sisters (Northern Ireland Office 1974b). Once again, the Catholic Church was particularly active. Cardinal Conway, Primate of All Ireland, wrote a letter to British Prime Minister Harold Wilson warning that “if the sisters were to die, their death would have an incalculable effect” on Northern Irish Catholics (Northern Ireland Office 1974a). Pope John Paul was reportedly inundated

with petitions and telegrams “urging” him to intervene on behalf of the sisters. Though his senior advisors were unconcerned, “Pope Paul himself, who is by nature a great worrier, was constantly pressing them to do something.” (Northern Ireland Office 1974c) He eventually dispensed an intermediary to warn the girls about the “terrible sin of suicide” that their prolonged strike might result in (Northern Ireland Office 1974c). The sisters, however, though Catholic, were seemingly angered by this intervention. In a letter sent from prison in 1974, they deride the hypocrisy of the Catholic clergymen and compare their hunger strike to the sacrifice of the early Christians. They write, “Why don’t these so-called ‘Christians’ accept that we have our principles, just as the early Christians had their faith?” (Northern Ireland Political Collection 1974, 11) Comparing their “choice” to go on hunger strike to Christ’s “choice” to die on the cross, and referencing Gandhi, the letters gives insight into the ideological imaginings of these young self-styled revolutionaries.

A selection of these letters sent from Brixton prison throughout 1973 and 1974 were later published as a volume by supporters in Belfast. In the collection, they describe not only the trauma of repeated force-feeding but a reckoning with the possibility of their own death: “No one wants to die,” writes one of the sisters,²⁰ “but I will never surrender my principles and beliefs for a bowl of prison porridge and a criminal label.” (Northern Ireland Political Collection 1974, 10) The letters point to a

²⁰ The volume of the sisters’ prison letters “Venceremos Price sisters!” does not attribute authorship to either one of the sisters; the location and date of the letter are the only information provided. However, sometimes it is apparent which sister is writing from the content of the letters.

tension between their acceptance of death as the logical end point of their protest and their simultaneous orientation towards the future. Dolours writes, “Prison is a living death so we will probably feel a little like Rip Van Winkle when we return. But just think of all the fun we will have making up for lost time!... I am certain my future will be a rich one.” (Northern Ireland Political Collection 1974, 2) At the same time as they fantasize about their life on the outside, they also argue that, “while life is precious there are things that we hold dearer than life itself.” (Northern Ireland Political Collection 1974, 10) Such rhetoric evokes the standard “sacrificial motif” of Irish Republicanism, in which self-sacrifice, usually achieved through hunger strike, acquires transcendent meaning for both the individual as martyr and for the political collectivity (the nation) to come (Sweeney 1993, 425).

The emergence of this motif is often traced back to Patrick Pearse. Pearse was a poet, playwright and the architect of the 1916 Easter Rising. His notion of “blood sacrifice” and frequent rhetorical merging of Christian and Celtic models of suffering to forge a concept of national sacrifice (the date of the Rising - during Catholic Holy Week - was chosen to symbolize the re-birth of the Irish nation) has remained culturally potent (O’Hagan 2008). Although Pearse’s model has been as frequently critiqued as it has been embraced by the various participants in the project of Irish nationalism,²¹ the notions of endurance and suffering have retained much of their rhetorical power

²¹ See for example, the cautionary note Yeats rings in his poem *Easter 1916*, where he writes of Pearse: “Too long a sacrifice can make a stone of the heart.” (Yeats 2002)

throughout the Republican movement in the twentieth century. This is exemplified in the oft-quoted line, frequently attributed to Terence MacSwiney, the Lord Mayor of Cork, who himself died on hunger strike in 1920 at Brixton prison, the very same location as the Price sisters' 1974 strike. MacSwiney's assertion that, "The contest on our side is not one of rivalry or vengeance, but of endurance. It is not those who can inflict the most but those who can suffer the most who will conquer," has become something of a dictum, if not for Republicans themselves, then certainly for those in the business of representing them in literary and journalistic accounts (O'Hagan 2008; Coogan 2002; Fierke 2013, 112). Given its frequent repetition, we might ask what is supposedly captured in this phrase. Is it a satisfactory explanation of the mentality of the hunger striker? That is, one who suffers and endures in the name of certain principles that are held "dearer than life itself"? The tension within the sisters' published prison writings, between their projected "rich future" and acceptance of their eventual death if the strike continues, suggests that this model is lived in rather more ambivalent terms.

Nonetheless, the sisters' apparent acceptance of death as the final point of their protest both frightened and frustrated the British government (Feldman 1991, 218). Although their performance of "slow suicide" had historical precedent in Republican ideology, it was in many ways beyond the comprehension to the medical professionals charged with force-feeding the sisters. A medical advisor to the British government summed this up in his assertion that the prison doctors could "only work on the supposition that nobody wants to die." (Tweedie 1974) With the Price sisters however, this supposition was called into question, effectively signaling a limit to what could be

achieved by the “work” of the prison medical authorities. As the discussion of suicide bombing in the first chapter shows, these kinds of political subjects are figured as antithetical to modern notions of rationality, in that they appear to reject self-preservation as that which must be pursued at all costs. Those considered to be lacking this fundamental drive are represented as dangerous, irrational and potentially ungovernable, indeed pathological. As we have seen, via the extended discussion of Foucault in the first chapter, from the perspective of the modern state, irrationality is fundamentally a problem of government.

We see this familiar staging of irrationality and governance in the discussions of the Price sisters that took place amongst British parliamentarians at the time. In one particular House of Lords debate, Lord Gore-Booth describes the sisters as “tragic and misguided women,” who are incapable of grasping the extent to which they were being exploited by the Republican movement (HL Deb 1974). The Earl of Longford describes them as “very sincere but very unreasonable” (HL Deb 1974b). Unsurprisingly, the discussion about the sisters’ capacity for ‘reason’ is intrinsically tied to their gender. The sisters are in turn presented as dangerous, sincere, devoted militants who will use any form of violence, including that which may be turned against their own bodies, to further their cause; yet as feminized subjects they are also “incapable” of recognizing their own exploitation at the hands of the IRA leadership. Such figurations are undoubtedly in the service of establishing the legitimacy of British deployment in Northern Ireland, which was continually circuited through superior rationality and paternal power. While their capacity for rationality was in dispute, the sisters’ mental

state was of the utmost concern to the British government. In a statement, the Home Secretary said of the Price sisters, “I have made every possible effort not only to ensure their care, but to understand their minds.” (Jenkins 1974) Following Foucault, we see here the governmental workings of state counter-terrorism that takes the interiority, indeed the ‘soul’ of the terrorist, as its necessary object.

Such governmental concerns are clearly manifested in the intensive surveillance the sisters were subjected to in the prison. Beyond the importance of the “visual examination” as a disciplinary technique in any Foucauldian analysis of the prison, surveillance and data collection are also essential techniques engaged by the state in governing dissident or pathological subject formations. The hope is that through surveillance, material can be gathered that will promote the development and refinement of effective governmental techniques to counter the undesired conduct. A quote from Feldman’s ethnography of the 1981 hunger strike in the Maze prison brings the pervasiveness of this mode of governance to life and speaks to the ways in which the state’s managerial gaze may itself be reversed, and indeed internalized, in the practice of hunger striking.

“The way the Hunger Strike worked was that the Brits sat and recorded every move the hunger striker made, everything he said, everything he done... the doctors were doing it, the screws were doing it, the priests were doing it, and we were doing it. Everybody was into sussing it out.” (quoted in Feldman 1991, 218)

As Feldman's Maze inmate describes, this observation was often routed through the prison medical authorities, who, in the case of the Price sisters, were also responsible for their artificial feeding. The sisters' letters were monitored by prison doctors and read for clues as to their resolve or wavering, with the hope that they might give something away that would help the authorities to break the strike. At a meeting in Brixton prison, Dr Blyth the Chief Medical Officer there, is enthusiastic about the use of surveillance to help "treat" the sisters. Of their intercepted letters, Blyth says, "This is real evidence as it is in their own writing." (Treasury Solicitor's Department 1974) But what kind of evidence do the letters provide? Later in this chapter I consider how self-starvation as a practice produces the body as a specific kind of evidence and suggest that the starving body may be read as a text that is transcribed, marked and altered by violence. In this case Dr Blyth's concern seems less engaged with the sisters' bodies than with what can be revealed about their minds. The medical staff noted that the sisters often seemed depressed, yet the Consultant Forensic Psychiatrist who examined them found them to be in "sound mind." (Treasury Solicitor's Department 1974)

At stake in determinations of the Price sisters' mental states were the ever present question of ethics of medical intervention and force-feeding. If the sisters were found to be in 'sound mind' and reasonable in their assessment of the outcome of their hunger strike, which they were, then the prison medical officers were faced with a dilemma as to whether to artificially feed the prisoners or to let them die. While the law stated that the doctors had a "reasonable duty of care" towards their patients, which was interpreted by the Brixton prison doctors as a duty to "preserve life" through force-

feeding, the brutality of the force-feeding procedure made apparent the unsettling proximity of medicalized “care” to torture. The procedure for artificial feeding in UK prisons at this time entailed the women being held down by four male prison guards as a wooden clamp with metal springs was used to open their mouths. A rubber tube was then inserted into their esophagus and a liquid “complan” consisting of orange juice, cream and other liquid food stuffs was poured down it. The process often had to be repeated several times because they frequently vomited up the contents immediately afterwards (Breen 2004).

By all accounts force-feeding was a horrific ordeal. The sisters described it as “a terrifying experience” and sought a legal injunction against the Home Office to stop the feedings. The procedure took considerable toll on their bodies and by early 1974 both of the sisters’ back teeth were beginning to come loose as a result of continuous use of the mouth gag (Northern Ireland Political Collection 1974, 5). Even the medical officers who supervised the procedure “experienced emotional drain in relation to feeding the girls,” though the continued feeding was considered necessary, it was recognized as, “a repugnant and difficult situation.” (Treasury Solicitor’s Department 1974) The Home Secretary described the procedure as “distasteful and objectionable” yet defended the prison medical staff’s right to exercise clinical judgement in the matter (HC Deb 1974b).

The issue of force-feeding came to a head in May 1974. On 18th May, Marian had “become unconscious in the process of feeding,” and nearly died when the feeding tube was accidentally inserted into her lungs (Jenkins 1991, 377). After this, the sisters

“withdrew the minimal cooperation necessary for this process.” (HC Deb 1974a) The prison medical officers then decided to stop force-feeding amid fears that the increasing violence of the procedure would “break the girls’ necks” (Tweedie 1974). In the meantime, the sisters continued their hunger strike and began to lose weight rapidly, sparking very real concerns that they would die within a matter of weeks. An Intensive Care Unit was prepared for the sisters’ arrival and potential intravenous feeding should they fall into a coma (Tweedie 1974). Outside the prison there were various demonstrations on the sisters’ behalf, with the Home Secretary Roy Jenkins, on whose shoulders the decision about transfer ultimately fell, marked as a particular target (Jenkins 1991, 380). In his memoir Jenkins describes an atmosphere filled with “forebodings of menace” about the Price sisters’ deteriorating condition and potentially imminent deaths (Jenkins 1991, 378) There were grave concerns that the deaths of one or both of the sisters in custody would incite further IRA violence. These concerns carried considerable weight in a prevailing atmosphere of barely contained paranoia surrounding the “contagion” of Irish terrorism (Jenkins 1991, 377). An article in *The Sunday Times* from that May ends with a ghoulish projection of the sisters’ bodies being transferred back to Northern Ireland in coffins. The journalist warns that if this scene became reality it would potentially “set off the kamikaze IRA youth on a holocaust of destruction.” (Tweedie 1974)

Around this time, the Price sisters’ fellow hunger striker Michael Gaughan died in Pankhurst Prison. While his funeral procession through the streets of London brought five thousand onto the streets, Jenkins merely expressed “regret” for “a life so

senselessly thrown away.” (Cowley 1974; Northern Ireland Office 1974d). The stakes were much higher where the Price sisters were concerned, precisely because of their femininity. The perceived barbarity of letting two young “girls” die in custody was not lost on the British government. Barbara Castle, a prominent member of Harold Wilson’s Cabinet, expressed fear that women MPs would be particularly targeted for IRA retribution (Castle 1990, 69 – 70). As Jenkins writes in his memoir, evoking the highly gendered language that continuously circulated around the sisters, “They were the stuff of which Irish martyrs could be made: two young, slim, dark girls, devout yet dedicated to terrorism... the consequence of the death of these charismatic colleens was incalculable.” (Jenkins 1991, 378) In this reading, their youth, devotion and femininity congeal in such a way as to make their potential martyrdom completely damning to the moral authority of the British government.

Jenkins’ eventual statement on the sisters, which was released to the press on 2nd June, attempted to reassert this authority. In it he acknowledged that, “The likelihood that the sisters may end their lives must now clearly be envisaged... But after deep thought, I am clear that I must not be forced into a decision as a result of any intimidation, however harrowing the consequences.” (Jenkins 1974) It appeared that the British government was holding fast to previous refusals to transfer the sisters. With no further plans to resume force-feeding, the government was now seemingly resigned to allowing them to continue “the course of slow suicide upon which they appear to have set themselves.” (Jenkins 1974) Privately however, the Home Secretary let it be known through intermediaries that if the sisters ended their strike they would in all likelihood be

transferred back to Northern Ireland before the end of the year (Jenkins 1991, 381). The crisis came to an end on Friday 7th June 1974, when Marian and Dolours were permitted to speak to Feeney and Kelly on the telephone and it was determined that they would all collectively come off their hunger strike (Jenkins 1974, 382).

The sisters were eventually transferred to Armagh Prison in March 1975, later than initially promised, but the intervening months had seen an increasingly anti-IRA and anti-Irish climate. The British government repeatedly delayed their transfer because it did not want to appear “soft” on convicted IRA terrorists, even if they were, as in this case, young women. The IRA’s continued bombing campaign had by this stage profoundly affected social and commercial life in England, where there were bomb explosions every three days. There was a widespread and politically significant sense that England was suffering an unprecedented “contagion” of “irrational” Irish violence. The Home Secretary writes that England seemed to be absorbing “the results of generations of mutual intolerance of a degree which was inconceivable even in the most sectarian cities on this side of St George’s Channel.” (Jenkins 1991, 377) The focus on contagion did not, of course, extend to an analysis of the effect that the active deployment of increasing numbers of British troops in Northern Ireland had on the rising levels of violence. Jenkins’ also misreads the IRA’s campaign in England as sectarian. The Provisional IRA imagined itself as an anti-imperialist force “striking the heart of Empire,” and were not concerned with attacking English Protestants *per se* (Dolours Price quoted in Keefe 2015). This ideological distinction was, however, increasingly hard to sustain as civilian casualties mounted.

The British campaign had not, as the IRA had hoped, led to anything approaching the withdrawal of British troops from Northern Ireland. Rather, the governmental response, which came in the form of increased militarism and authoritarian policies, was redoubled. In the aftermath of the Birmingham pub bombings in November 1974, which produced 200 casualties and 21 deaths, all of whom were civilians, the Labour government introduced the Prevention of Terrorism Act. The Act not only extended the powers of detention for those suspected of association with Proscribed Organizations (terrorist groups) bringing England and Wales in line with the prohibitions already present in Northern Ireland, it also legislated the use of controversial Exclusion Orders. The Exclusion Orders sought to address the “contagion” of Irish violence by effectively closing the borders of the mainland British Isles and permitting the removal of anyone from Northern Ireland or the Republic of Ireland who was suspected of being a terrorist sympathizer. Such legislation was extraordinary given that Northern Ireland was constitutionally part of the United Kingdom and many of those born there held UK passports. While initially designed as a temporary measure, the Act has remained on the statute books, and was refined and extended further after the London transport bombings in July 2007.

Lurking within state-legislated counter-terrorist measures and present in the unprecedented wave of anti-Irish violence that followed in the wake of the Birmingham bombings were images of the IRA terrorist as militant, devoted and terrifyingly unconcerned with the maiming and killing of civilians. Such images were often filtered

through the deadly appeal of the Price sisters. The representational currency of the Price sisters extended even after their protest had ended. There were also further unanticipated consequences of their hunger strike. In July 1974, the Home Secretary released a statement in time for the British Medical Association's Annual Conference, in which he determined that force-feeding would no longer be standard policy in British jails. From now on, if the Prison Medical Officer could be satisfied that "the prisoner's capacity for rational judgement is unimpaired" they would not be required to artificially feed the prisoner (HC Deb 1974). A prisoner on hunger strike "should be plainly and categorically warned that the consequent and inevitable deterioration of his health may be allowed to continue without medical intervention." (HC Deb 1974) The full consequences of this policy shift would not be realized until 1981, when ten IRA hunger strikers starved to death in the Maze prison hospital. The ghoulish vignette of coffins coming out of prisons did eventually become reality, but it was the bodies of young men this time. In this way, the influence of the Price sisters on the course and development of the Republican movement lasted well beyond what their initial infamy might have suggested (Coogan 2002, 135)

If, as I have argued, the dirty protest in Armagh prison has been rendered invisible in histories of Republican prison resistance, then the Price sisters have conversely been marked by their visibility. Even after their eventual release from prison, they continued to enjoy a certain degree of celebrity in the British and Irish press. For example, there were press accounts of Dolours, who eventually married Northern Irish

actor Stephen Rea²² in 1983, living the “high life” and sipping champagne at the National Theatre in London, despite the fact that the terms of her release required her to remain in Northern Ireland (*The Sunday Times* 1988). In the context of Northern Irish Republicanism specifically, both sisters have been critical of Gerry Adams and the Sinn Féin brokered peace-deal. They are especially critical of Adams’ frequent references to Bobby Sands and other hunger strikers’ supposed posthumous support of the peace process. In a 2004 article Dolours wrote, “I often wonder who would speak for me had my circumstances in Brixton prison reached their expected conclusion. What praises would I be singing of the Good Friday Agreement?” (Price 2004) In recent years, Dolours was once again in the headlines as her involvement in Boston College’s *The Belfast Project* brought attention to Gerry Adams’ role in the disappearance of Jean McConville. After years of mental health problems and alcoholism, Dolours died in Dublin in January 2013. Her body was returned to West Belfast and the funeral was attended by hundreds (McDonald 2013).

Meanwhile Marian has also returned to the public eye in recent years after several decades of relative quietude. Her alleged involvement with the dissident Republican “Real IRA” paramilitary organization, who oppose the political settlement and seek to continue the armed struggle for a united Ireland, has captured the attention of the British

²² Rea’s most famous role was as IRA volunteer “Fergus” in Neil Jordan’s *The Crying Game*. He was also well-known for providing the voice of Gerry Adams on British TV during the Thatcher-imposed broadcasting ban. From 1988 to 1994 Sinn Féin were banned from speaking on British TV. Although members were still interviewed and video footage was shown, it was required that the audio be overdubbed by a voice actor.

government as well as the local media. She was once again imprisoned in May 2011, this time in the newly-built Maghaberry prison, when her license was revoked for participating in a Real IRA rally. She had previously been arrested in connection to the murder of two British soldiers at Massereene Barracks in County Antrim in 2009. After her family brought a court case against the British government, she was released in May 2013 again on medical grounds due to physical and mental health conditions.

Despite the continued visibility of the sisters, their dissent from Adams' political project and refusal to disavow the use of violence, which is so essential to Sinn Féin's status as legitimate political actors, means that the legacy of their hunger strike is rather more discomfiting. Their protest does not unfold within a straightforward narrative of suffering, sacrifice and redemption as the 1981 hunger strike does. Like Jean McConville, whom Dolours drove across the border to be executed in 1974, the sisters are also uncomfortable gendered presences that remain at odds with Adams' contemporary re-articulation of Republicanism. As Dolours Price elaborates in her critique of Adams' habit of haling ghosts from the past for his own political purposes, part of the problem is that the sisters lived and their hunger strike did not reach its "expected conclusion". They are not, therefore, the silent dead whose martyrdom may be called upon to legitimize the political present, but rather continued living presences who remained actively critical of the re-inscription of the history that they themselves participated in. They survived the hunger strike and were released from prison, a fate which many IRA volunteers did not meet, but at the same time, their narrative is far

from triumphant, particularly given the circumstances of the sisters' eventual release from prison.

The youngest of the sisters, Marian, was released by Royal Prerogative of Mercy in April 1980 after five years in Armagh and just one month after the beginning of the dirty protest there. At the time of her release she reportedly weighed just seventy pounds (Breen 2004). Speaking in 2004, Marian Price said that her condition was so severe that she was “basically released from prison to die” (Sanders 2013). Her older sister Dolours was released a year later and transferred directly to hospital. Both were said to be “severely ill” and suffering from anorexia nervosa, described in the parlance of the time as a “nervous wasting disease.” (Beresford, 1981) The termination of their prison sentence on such medical grounds provoked little public sympathy, despite the extent to which the campaign on their behalf, led by Cardinal O’Fiaich and Father Raymond Murray (who was the Catholic Chaplain at Armagh) successfully framed their release as a humanitarian issue.

Mirroring the critique of the women’s prison system that various Catholic clergymen advanced on behalf of the dirty protesters at Armagh, Father Murray wrote repeatedly to the Northern Ireland Office arguing that the continued imprisonment of the sisters was a sign of the essential “immorality” of a British system that showed no mercy to the weak, helpless “girls” and their suffering (Murray 1998, 81). The British

government's actions were similarly couched in these humanitarian terms. When questioned on Marian Price, Michael Allison of the Northern Ireland Office said she was released on medical advice as, "the doctors consider[ed] that further imprisonment is likely to result in death." (HC Deb 1981) The decision to release the sisters was heavily criticized by Protestant Unionist politicians who cited rumors in the House of Commons that Price had made a "remarkable recovery" and was now "touring the length and breadth of Ulster." (HC Deb 1981)

In one telling House of Commons exchange in 1975, Loyalist MP Robert Bradford expressed outrage that Marian Price, along with Pauline McLaughlin, had been released in the first place. It is the very survival of these women, denounced as "murderers and butcherers" in his account, that seems to so affront him. Lamenting that "not one of them has died" despite being released on the brink of death, Bradford calls for McLaughlin and Price to once again be detained in Armagh, arguing that their death in prison may simply be "one of the consequences of murdering and bombing." (HC Deb 1981) Once again, the sisters' failure to die, or in this case, to live above the threshold of "imminent death," was deeply troubling to the political establishment. Bradford's questioning also betrays a more general sense, especially amongst Unionist politicians, that Price's anorexia had been nothing but a cynical ploy to secure her release. (Beresford 1981). Bradford argued that in releasing Marian Price, the Northern Ireland Office was "inviting a mass resort to anorexia nervosa," and that if this continued, "we shall have some of the fittest and slimmest prisoners in the world." (HC

Deb 1981) Bradford's comments reflect widespread confusion about the nature of anorexia nervosa that characterized this historical moment. Media accounts frequently equated anorexia to the highly feminized activity of dieting, often through descriptions of it as a "slimmers' disease." (Beresford 1981) For others, however, the "self-inflicted" nature of Price's illness - "anorexia nervosa brought on by hunger strike" - automatically disqualified her from any sympathy (O'Connor 1980).

Two strange disciplines

"Women get ill instead of getting organized[.]"²³

The sense of confusion about the precise meaning of the sisters' physical ailments echoes discussions of Pauline McLaughlin's health condition, yet the Price sisters had an official medical diagnosis: anorexia nervosa. Nonetheless, we are prompted to ask what such a diagnosis might signify in the context of a lengthy hunger strike and an extended period of force-feeding. At the level of bodily function, both anorexia and hunger striking are practices of self-starvation in which the body begins to consume itself, potentially fatally. However, they differ radically in their social and political significations, one frequently understood as individual psychopathology and the other as political protest. As Maud Ellman writes, "Fasting as a protest differs so profoundly from fasting as a personal pathology that it seems almost perverse to link these two strange disciplines at all." (Ellman 1993, 1) Her book, which opens with a story of her

²³ Maud Ellman, *The Hunger Artists*, (Cambridge MA.: Harvard University Press, 1993) p. 2.

friend attending the wake of a former hunger striker who had survived the hunger strike in Armagh but later died of anorexia,²⁴ goes on to forge extensive links between these two “strange disciplines” through an examination of the multivalent politics of food refusal (Ellman 1993, 1). For Dolours and Marian Price, of course, these two strange disciplines were incontrovertibly linked. In a 2002 radio interview, Dolours explains the psychic effects of a sustained refusal to eat:

“After the hunger striking and the force-feeding... we didn’t ever have a normal relationship with food or eating, or all of that process. Because you convince yourself that if you eat you’re going to lose, or you’ve been defeated, or you’ve given in, or you have shown weakness... You have to convince yourself of that because your body is telling you it wants food and you’re telling your body, ‘No, you can’t have food. It’s for your own good, we will not win this struggle if I give you food’. There you’re setting up a very difficult mindset which has to be rock solid or you will eat food, because you know, that’s what the body does, we eat food and we live. So there was that element and then the force-feeding was very traumatic. It further alienated us from the process of sustenance or the whole process of putting food into your body.” (Harris 2002)

In less evocative terms, in a later interview Marian described how she “didn’t have a very healthy relationship with food” after her hunger strike. She mentions that the relationship was so distorted it took her years to recover anything approaching normality (Sanders, 2013).

²⁴ It would seem this story, at least as Ellman tells it, is not true. There were only three women who participated in hunger strikes at HMP Armagh – Mary Doyle, Mairead Nugent and Mairead Farrell. Doyle and Nugent are still alive and Farrell was killed in 1988 by the British Army’s SAS in Gibraltar in a controversial shoot-to-kill mission.

While anorexia nervosa is the psychiatric diagnosis that names this unhealthy or abnormal relationship to food, the Price sisters' diagnoses prompt questions about the possibility of a "healthy relationship to food" in a penal landscape in which food is used as a mode of disciplinary control (Corcoran 2006, 22). In Dolours Price's testimony we see how food becomes the ground upon which a political, psychic and embodied struggle is waged. Her refusal to consume prison food is constituted as a means of survival, but an entirely unsatisfactory method of achieving this, as Dolours' wasted body, weighing just 70 pounds upon her release from prison, attests to (Harris 2002). If the result of the Price sisters' hunger strike is the transformation of food from nourishment and sustenance to a source of trauma, defeat and weakness, it is understandable that such a reversal endures long after the strike has ended. As such, Price's account pushes us to consider the afterlife of these kinds of embodied practices. What happens when the body is self-consciously objectified, converted into weapon and a mode of struggle? With specific reference to political prisoners in Northern Ireland, Feldman discusses how "the instrumental staging and commodification of the body" emerges both from the application of political violence (in this case the prison regime of the H-Blocks) upon particular bodies, and at the same time, functions as the means by which these bodies resist (Feldman 1991, 8).

Indeed, as Feldman articulates, the conversion of the body into an instrument or artifact, though an effect of violence, is also often an essential component of the counter-violence directed towards the very political institutions that have produced it as

such. As an example, Feldman discusses the frequent comparison of the H-Block hunger strikers to guns; they were described by one IRA strategist as “human Armalites.” (Feldman 1991, footnote 16, 298). While Feldman pays attention to how this becoming weapon can “reenact political discourse and even the movement of history itself,” he does not discuss the psychic consequences of this on the individuals whose bodies are objectified in this way, partly because in the case of the H-Block hunger strikers, many of them ended up dead (Feldman 1991, 7).

In Dolours’ interview, however, we glimpse the profound and long-reaching psychic effects of corporeal weaponization. In the context of this chapter however, I am primarily interested how these psychic effects themselves reflect and reproduce the cultural, political and distinctly gendered forms of meaning that circulate around the sisters’ practices of self-starvation. Although at the level of the body the practices of hunger striking and anorexia are the same, the two moments of self-starvation are represented as radically different forms. There is a medical diagnosis for one and a political crisis arising out of the other. As the diagnosis of anorexia attaches to their later food refusal, we may ask after the political effects of fusing an explicitly gendered pathology with such a practice of resistance? Does it work to neutralize the political currency of their hunger strike and merge it into the image of the sick, starving woman?

Undoubtedly the capturing of what is happening with their bodies as anorexia nervosa locates it within explicitly feminized terms. As the Price sisters' hunger strike becomes disease the shift from politics to pathology follows a distinctly gendered logic. Anorexia nervosa is a historically feminine malady, one that, as Joan Brumberg discusses, is co-emergent with the birth of industrial capital, the ascension of the middle class and the fixing of the sexual division of labor in Victorian society (Brumberg 1989, 4). By contemporary accounting, 90% of those with the disease are female (ANRED, Statistics). However, the overdetermination of anorexia with femininity in media and clinical accounts also produces its own silences, obscuring the increasing rates of eating disorders amongst boys and men, who are frequently overlooked in the collection of statistics (Anderson 2010, 41). Nonetheless, the Price sisters' anorexia was perceived and described in highly gendered terms, hence the derisive comments about their so-called "slimmer's disease."

Furthermore, there is evidence to suggest that the co-articulation of women hunger strikers with anorexia nervosa or eating disorders is a recurring one. For example, Kim F. Hall examines responses to the 2007 student hunger strikes at Columbia University, in which one participant's own history of eating disorders was "revealed" online. This revelation led to accusations that all of the students who participated in the hunger strike were exhibiting dysfunctional eating, and as such, their protest was denounced as potentially "triggering" for those on campus with eating disorders. Such representational responses, Hall argues, ultimately "played a key role in

undermining the politics of strike” (Hall 2008, 169). We also see such a gendered mode of representation in Patrick Anderson’s discussion of the hunger strikes in Turkish prisons in 2000, when political prisoners protested the construction of new F-type prisons that were designed to limit interaction between prisoners. 816 prisoners participated in the strike and 45 eventually died, marking it as the “longest and deadliest hunger strike in modern history” (Anderson 2010, 110).

Although women participated in the Turkish prison hunger strikes, their protests were continually interpreted through the optic of their gender difference. Such interpretations persisted despite the fact that the prisoners self-consciously and explicitly sought to cut across gendered divisions and create unity in the face of the individualizing and isolationist impetus of state prison reform (Anderson 2010, 128). Nonetheless, the women were frequently (mis)read as suffering from anorexia nervosa. Speaking in *The New York Times Magazine*, clinical psychologist Sahika Huksel spoke of “an anorectic aspect” to the women’s strike. As evidence she cited the women’s “morbid fascination with watching their bodies deteriorate” and, echoing previous discussions of the Price sisters’ incapacity for rational self-reflection, Huksel argued that, “just as with normal anorexics, they reach a point where they cannot think straight, where they literally cannot see how bad off they are.” (Quoted in Anderson 2010, 129)

Taken cumulatively, it seems that women's participation in these kinds of bodily protest practices, although not as rare as sensationalized accounts would claim, is so incomprehensible that it often registers as inherently pathological. As Anderson argues, "anorexia nervosa seems to be the prior term against which women on hunger strike are defined." (Anderson 2010, 129) At stake in this signifying schema is the fixing of women hunger strikers "in terms of a historically articulated vernacular of diminished mental capacities." (Anderson 2010, 129) Here Anderson elaborates the central problem that the figure of the anorexic female hunger striker presents, for as their protest segues into disease and we witness the production of a pathological subject, they are re-written as passive, feminized victims (of disease) who cannot therefore be considered political agents.

Pathological representations also entomb the woman hunger striker within her own body in a specifically gendered way. Although hunger striking puts the physical body, through the spectacle of its autophagy, at the front and center of political action, it has also been read, at least for male strikers, as a moment of complete bodily transcendence. We see this in the multiple accounts of the 1981 IRA hunger strikers' endurance and martyrdom (Coogan 2002; O'Malley 1990). The sustained refusal of food to the point of death suggests that the most fundamental drive delimiting human existence – appetite – may be willfully overcome. Yet for the woman hunger striker, who as woman is always necessarily mired in biology and whose embodiment is always somehow "sticky," no such moment of transcendence is possible. To highlight this

disparity we may consider the narratives that circulate about the male IRA hunger strikers. Certainly it is unimaginable that Bobby Sands or any of the others who participated in the 1981 protest, all of whom no doubt evidenced a profoundly “unhealthy relationship to food”, could be described in these terms. This idea is literally unthinkable within a Republican or nationalist history of resistance in which, as we have seen, the dead hunger strikers are commemorated as Christ-like figures. The dynamics of sacrifice, redemption and transformation that follow from such figurations suggest a particular kind of political agency, one explicitly tied to a male heroics of violence. If as Allen Feldman argues, the male hunger strikers figure in the 1981 protest as “emissaries” of both the IRA prison collective and the imagined future independent and united Ireland (Feldman 1991, 238), such emissary status is seemingly denied to the feminine bodies of Marian and Dolours Price. Despite the fact that their hunger strike was, in contemporaneous terms, just as significant to Republican political development as the Maze hunger strikes, their survival, marked by an explicitly gendered pathologization, means that they can never function as emissaries of the nation to come. Indeed, their actions cannot be narrated as political as such within an identity formation that genders transformative suffering as an exclusively masculine activity.

To this end, it is worth remembering that the Price sisters are not the only IRA hunger strikers who have struggled with the psychological and physical after effects of a sustained hunger strike. Male surviving hunger strikers in Northern Ireland, generally those whose families intervened in the final stages to preserve their lives, have also had

severe health problems, primarily with their kidneys and eyesight. There have also been discussions of former hunger strikers suffering from “survivor’s syndrome,” a therapeutic term that encompasses the feelings of guilt, anger and depression that many dealt with in the years after the end of the hunger strike (O’Hagan 2008). It is also not surprising that the suffering of male former hunger strikers has been diverted into an equally gendered pathological form: alcoholism, which as David Lloyd elucidates, is Irish masculinity’s pathology *par excellence* (see Lloyd 2011, 101 - 103). It is interesting, however, that the presence of these health issues do not seem to undo the politics of the male hunger strikers’ protests in any significant way. Indeed, their sacrifice has been memorialized in ways that grant them explicitly political motivations and empower them as agents of social transformation. They are rarely, if ever, fully captured in biological or medicalized terms. In contrast, the Price sisters’ anorexia, despite the fact that it develops out of and comes chronologically after their hunger strike, seems to work retrospectively to cast doubt on their previous hunger strike by erasing their capacity to function as political agents at all. Within this gendered economy of representation their practices of self-starvation, in either instantiation, are depoliticized.

Depoliticization is a recurrent theme in accounts of anorexia and female hunger strikers. As Hall writes of the Columbia student hunger strike, the focus on anorexia in representations of the protest, “replaced a multi-racial, multi-sexed coalition with a stereotype of wasting white female bodies that *eviscerated the politics of the hunger strike.*” (Hall 2008, 179, my emphasis) In representing the students’ hunger strike, which sought

to protest the university's curricular lack concerning race and ethnicity, through the individualizing and medicalized terminology of "disordered eating," the politics of their protest were effectively "eviscerated."

In a similar vein, Mary Corcoran, writing specifically about the medical release of the Price sisters in the broader context of women political prisoners in Northern Ireland, argues that their release "had wider implications for constructing the women's protests in pathological terms." (Corcoran 2006, 48) Corcoran interprets "pathologization" as a recursive and feminized form that is frequently used to discipline women prisoners. She argues that professional expertise, filtered through the medical and psychiatric authority of the prison clinic, has historically deployed power-knowledge techniques to "construct women's penal identity through intersecting practices of correction, 'cure', moral discipline and experimentation." (Corcoran 2006, 46) For Corcoran, therefore, the female prisoner, to the extent that she appears as both transgressor of legal as well as gendered norms, is always already constituted as pathological. As such we should not be much surprised that the Price sisters appear in discourse as incapacitated and irrational subjects, for this is simply the desired effect of "penal constructions of women's irrationality and frailty" that were in circulation long before their arrival onto the scene. (Corcoran 2006, 48)

Rather than arguing such pathological constructions completely “eviscerate” political meaning, Corcoran concludes that the Price sisters’ release has more “contradictory effects.” (Corcoran 2006, 48) On the one hand, it is their anorexia that eventually secures their release from prison, which is a quite a feat given the length of time they were sentenced to serve. However, as Corcoran points out, at the collective level such a diagnosis is not a release but a recapturing. It effectively re-inscribes the Price sisters and women political prisoners in Northern Ireland more broadly, within ever “denser networks of therapeutic and punitive intervention.” (Corcoran 2006, 48) In doing so, their diagnoses ultimately enhance juridical and psychiatric authority and decision-making, which in turn re-legitimizes “clinical and correctional intrusions into their bodies and minds.” (Corcoran 2006, 48) Corcoran’s insistence on the contradictory effects of the Price sisters’ release avoids casting a diagnosis of anorexia in the context of a hunger strike as a complete evacuation of politics as Hall’s account seems to. Rather, she reads the Price sisters’ condition as itself the effect of the gendered disciplinary regime of the prison. Their diagnosis may offer a kind of emancipation, at least from the physical architecture of the prison, which of course is not inconsiderable, but this is achieved only through the ultimately disempowering logic of medicalized expertise.

However, much of Corcoran’s careful treatment of the contradictory effects of IRA women prisoners’ pathology/protest gets lost in David Lloyd’s account of IRA women prisoners. In his text *Irish Culture and Colonial Modernity* he gives a provocative reading of the colonial structures of representation that cast the Irish subject of

resistance as fundamentally pathological and ungovernable. Accounts of the “contagion” of Irish violence that emphasize its mythic or tribal roots perform this pathologization by writing it over and against “the ‘normalized’ good conduct of the citizen.” (Lloyd 2011, 119) In such a representational landscape, “resistance manifests the symptoms of aberrant pathology.” (Lloyd 2011, 119) However for Lloyd, it is this aberrant pathology that offers a model for a utopian politics-to-come, in that the Irish pathological subject represents something of the “recalcitrant difference” that has not been fully subsumed within colonial modernity. For Lloyd, these subjects offer an alternative sociality that persists even though it has been “transformed and distorted by the regulative institutions of modernity” such as the prison (Lloyd 2011, 16). Lloyd reads the blanketmen of the Maze as embodying this “recalcitrant difference” through their explicit foregrounding of the pathological, unruly, incontinent body in their protest. The dirty protest in the H-Blocks, according to Lloyd, contains within it a kind of utopian potentiality that may be put to work to transform the very colonial and capitalist structures that the prison in Northern Ireland so brutally manifests.

Of the protest in Armagh, however, he is considerably less salutary. Lloyd begins his account with an acknowledgment of the silence surrounding Armagh, speaking to the “relative occlusion” of the protest, which he describes as “one of the persistent mysteries of the literature on Northern Ireland” (Lloyd 2011, 124). In his attempt to address this silence, Lloyd is careful to engage gender as not only that which is found in the women’s prison, but it is also present in the masculine space of the H-

Blocks. He argues that the H-Block prisoners' pathological embodiment emerges from a collective experience of "corporeal feminization." (Lloyd 2011, 162) Such feminization is the result of the prisoners' experiences of sexualized vulnerability in the prison, primarily realized through the brutal searches they were frequently subjected to. The most famous of these was the combined oral and anal search, in which the same finger was used to penetrate both cavities one after the other, along with the mirror searches, wherein the prisoners were beaten and made to squat over a mirror placed on the ground for the guards to inspect their anuses (see Feldman 1991, 174).

Lloyd argues that for the male prisoners the emergent sense of their feminization, narrated through the language of "sexual assault" as in Bobby Sands' "comm" to Gerry Adams, was both literal and figural. Literal, in that the corporeal experience of sexual vulnerability opened them up to "a transformative experience of the body and to an intuition of a differently grounded sociality." (Lloyd 2011, 163) Yet, there was also a sense that to describe themselves as feminized or sexually violated was at the same time "no more than a politicized figure of speech." (Lloyd 2011, 163) The figurative quality of their feminization is obvious to the extent that, as Lloyd points out, their fellow IRA members in Armagh did not have similar access to arguments about corporeal 'feminization' as a politically meaningful claim. In Armagh, the gendered regulative and disciplinary forms that the women prisoners experienced were "an intensification rather than a transformation of the oppressive gender norms in the society at large." (Lloyd 2011, 163) From this Lloyd concludes that the women's

embodied gender difference (signified most dramatically in the menstrual blood) is “the mark of shame rather than subversion” and therefore does not have adequate political currency (Lloyd 2011, 163).

Lloyd’s attempt to engage the gender difference of the IRA prison protests is admirable and certainly more than most (male) theorists have offered. What is most relevant to the relationship between gender, pathology and protest under discussion in this chapter, however, is how he narrates the pathological body of the male dirty protest as a space of genuine resistance and utopian possibility, while the women’s dirty protest, which is already marked as pathological because of their gender difference, cannot “use the pathological body, in the way the male prisoners did, as a means to negate the prison regime” (Lloyd 2011, 124). In the H-Blocks Lloyd detects the “imprecise fragments” of a counter-modern and utopian political subject (Lloyd 2011, 165). The transformative potential of this kind of subjectivity is precisely the effect of its constitution as pathological, for it is the pathological, in the context of the colonial state of exception, that embodies “the unrestrained potentials of human life... not reduced by dominations and shattered into the functional units of a larger whole.” (Lloyd 2011, 165) However, the women’s protest in Armagh does not contain within it this same potentiality. For Lloyd this because the menstrual blood as “a signifier of an irreducible gender difference,” marks “the limit to the imagination of an alternative community grounded in the indifferent bare life of the pathological body.” (Lloyd 211, 163) The feminine body is, by effect of representation, always linked to pathology through its perceived

vulnerability and irregularity in a schema that privileges the male body as the norm. Its pathologization therefore, functions not as a negation of normativity but the fulfilment of it.

In an effort to account for the historical absence of Armagh in representations of the dirty protest, Lloyd makes feminization central to both prison regimes and both modes of protest, yet it is only the women's prison protest that is overdetermined by its gender difference. While the corporeal experience of gender and sexual difference in the H-Blocks opens up a new horizon of political possibility, in Armagh the experience of difference closes off or shuts down. As Lloyd says of the Armagh dirty protest "it could, in a very real sense, 'go nowhere'." (Lloyd 2011, 163) Elsewhere in Lloyd's text "going nowhere" is freighted with the indeterminate potentialities of the utopian "no place," which is read as a space (such as the H-Blocks) that may be glimpsed, and indeed preserved, with sufficient will and imagination. Lloyd's imagination falters, however, in his encounter with the Armagh protest. As an effect of his analysis the women's protests are once again marked as politically insufficient. As we have seen, all the political potential, routed through the paradoxical emergence of the pathological body as a sign of utopian futurity, is once again gendered masculine. This is especially problematic as elsewhere in Lloyd's account he offers a rich vision of the pathological subject, not as the antithesis of political activity, but as the condition of emergence for a previously unimagined politics to come. Though we may take issue with Lloyd's gender politics, we may still gain a great deal from his central argument that there is political

potential in that which is perceived as pathological within the dominant representational structures. Indeed as he argues with reference to the Irish colonized subject, the pathological is only constituted as such through very specific conditions of emergence.

Pathological protest

“A woman who overrides her hunger and systematically refuses to eat is in effect on hunger strike. Like the hunger striker, the anorectic is starving, she is longing to eat, she is desperate for food. Like the hunger striker, she is in protest at her conditions. Like the hunger striker, she has taken as her weapon a refusal to eat.”²⁵

In relation to the analysis of the Price sisters as pathological subjects, we can follow Lloyd’s caution and acknowledge that reading the Price sisters’ diagnosis of anorexia as simply a mode of depoliticization overlooks the extent to which anorexia itself, though apparently situated within a medicalized discourse of individual psychopathology, is also marked by political conditions of emergence. Feminist cultural critics like Susie Orbach, have for example, read anorexia as itself a kind of hunger strike, in that it stages the social violence of gender normativity – the objectification of women’s bodies and omnipresence of the male gaze – on an individual body to horrifying effect (Orbach 1986). In doing so, feminist theorists have reversed the clinical etiology of anorexia, reading it as arising from a sick culture rather than from a diseased individual. Like hysteria before it, anorexia nervosa may be interpreted as a “metaphor for our age” and as an “overdetermined crystallization of culture.” (Orbach 1986, 24; Bordo 2003, 51)

²⁵ Susie Orbach, *Hunger Strike: The Anorectic’s Struggle as a Metaphor for Our Age*, (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 1986), p. 102.

Just as in the nineteenth century hysteria channeled the dissatisfaction of upper- and middle-class European women into a specific set of symptoms, so too eating disorders are a direct response to the intensive focus on the female body as a commodity in late modern consumer culture. Here the female body is articulated as above all a beautiful object, a spectacle judged primarily on its capacity to “giv[e] pleasure to those who are placed in the position of spectator.” (Spitzack 1993, 2) As a commodity, it can, and indeed must be molded to appear a certain way: slender, toned and flab-free, signifying the possibility of self-discipline and the containment of desire at the precise historical moment that the market is in the business of producing and multiplying desire more than ever before. Furthermore, this commodification is itself internalized, as Orbach notes, “For women themselves the body has become a commodity within the marketplace... their own commodity, the object with which they negotiate the world.” (Orbach 1986, 36)

Orbach’s *Hunger Strike*, like much feminist theoretical engagement with anorexia, locates anorexia as a phenomenon specific to post-World War II affluence in the West and the growth of US-led consumer culture in the latter half of the twentieth century. As evidence, feminists cite the growing diagnoses of eating disorders throughout the 1970s, before which the disease was virtually unheard of, and note the inclusion of anorexia nervosa in the DSM-III criteria in 1980 as a significant moment (Brumberg 1989, 11). Susan Bordo likewise connects anorexia to the intensification of consumerism in the late 1970s and 1980s, in *Unbearable Weight* she offers a reading of American

advertisements from the 1980s as circulating a distinctive “gender ideology,” which both intersects and diverges from market concerns (Bordo 2003, 110). One key tenet of this gender ideology, Bordo argues, is the suppression of female appetite and the accompanying assumption that women are most gratified when feeding or nourishing others. Bordo argues that the social control of women’s hunger operates as a “practical discipline” in which “denying oneself food becomes the central micro-practice in the education of feminine self-restraint and containment of impulse.” (Bordo 2003, 130) In this Bordo draws a clear parallel between the “slenderness ideal” of the 1980s United States and the feminine conduct manuals of Victorian England.

For Bordo, the exhaustive dominance and mundanity of the “slenderness ideal” is not about feminine beauty or aesthetic perfection *per se* but reflects deeper currents of cultural desire at play. Why, asks Bordo, have we come to be so invested in slenderness as an ideal form of femininity at this precise historical juncture? For Bordo, and indeed Orbach, the idea of thinness is a stand in for fantasies of control and mastery. In a culture “characterized by gross excesses in consumption,” mastering the body’s appetites through a sustained fast may in fact constitute “an aesthetic or moral rebellion” (Bordo 2003, 153). Orbach in particular reads the suppression of appetite in anorexia, ultimately the most self-destructive manifestation of the slenderness ideal, as the anorectic expressing a “need to have something uniquely her own, something under control, something she fashions.” (Orbach 1986, 113)

It is significant that once again the feminist politics of eating disorders, just as with the feminist interpretations of the Armagh dirty protest discussed in the previous chapter, converge on the control of bodies as an important moment of agency. Both Bordo and Orbach articulate how certain cultural and political conditions rely upon the production of the feminine body as over-corporealized, fundamentally irrational and uncontrollable, at the same time as it is figured as that which requires the most intensive regulation and discipline. In such conditions, the reclamation of the female body by its “inhabitant” through various acts of bodily protest or self-mastery may be encountered as a successful reversal of disciplinary power. Bordo articulates this when she suggests that dieting and anorexia are ultimately attempts to regain “an ethic and aesthetic of self-mastery and self-transcendence” that is very “rarely made available to women.” (Bordo 2003, 178) Yet, as I discussed in the previous chapter this idea that the body’s “real” inhabitant can reclaim, through corporeal practices of social protest, a body that is “lost” depends upon a thoroughly dualist conception of the body. Here the body is read as the negative term in the mind/body binary, always passive and inert, frequently “occupied” or mastered by forces that come from without – either those of the prison regime or late modern aesthetic demands.²⁶

²⁶ As Elizabeth Grosz argues in *Volatile Bodies*, this assumption animates much second-wave feminist thought. Grosz argues that this is exemplified in the work of Andrea Dworkin, Catherine Mackinnon and Carole Pateman, for whom “the body is typically regarded as passive and reproductive but largely unproductive, an object over which struggle between its ‘inhabitant’ and others/exploiters may be possible.” (Grosz 1994, 9) This conception of the body has the effect of reducing corporeality to “a predictable, knowable transparency; its constitutive role in forming thoughts, feelings, emotions and psychic representations must be ignored[.]” (Grosz 1994, 10)

Bordo herself is elsewhere critical of such dualist interpretations of the body. In interpreting anorexia as an attempt at “self-mastery,” she does not offer a normative argument about bodily transcendence, but rather suggests that such dualism is itself essential to anorexia’s own metaphysics, which she describes as, “strikingly Augustinian, with evocations of Plato.” (Bordo 2003, 145) For the anorectic, as for Augustine, “the slimy desires of the flesh” constantly threaten the rational mind and must therefore be battled and ultimately overcome (Bordo 2003, 147). In the first-hand accounts that Bordo examines, anorectics frequently express a sense of alienation from their own bodies and view hunger as a force pressing in from the outside, not as something that emanates from within the body (Bordo 2003, 146). What marks Bordo’s thinking as different from the articulation of corporeal agency Theresa O’Keefe offered in the previous chapter therefore, is that she appears to recognize the fantasy of complete bodily control as just that – a fantasy – doomed to failure in various ways.

Similarly, for Orbach the sense of control or triumph of the will over the body that the anorectic tries to achieve through her prolonged starvation is necessarily limited. As Orbach argues, “the volitional nature of the original food refusal breaks down at a certain point, so that many an anorectic woman finds it difficult to eat[.]” (Orbach 1986, 134). Orbach is suggesting that even if there is imagined to be some origin point of intentional thought initiating the process of self-starvation, as the physical effects of starvation develop it is the starving body that becomes the active force to which the mind is “subjected”. The dualism that distinguishes the passive body from the active

mind begins to unravel under its own strain here, as the body becomes the agential subject and the mind its object. This reversal of the binary is not, however, a simple reinstallation of biological determinism, although some psychiatric accounts of anorexia have posited this.²⁷ For Orbach, even the original act of volition that sets in motion the process of self-starvation is partially determined by cultural and specifically gendered forces outside the individual's control.

If then, as Bordo and Orbach suggest, the anorectic's desire for control and mastery of a body perceived as alien and fundamentally uncontrollable is ultimately a phantasmatic projection that will always fail – how then does anorexia function as a form of social protest? Bordo and Orbach diverge significantly in their responses to this question. Despite the fact that Bordo's cultural analysis goes a long way towards depathologizing and de-individualizing anorexia so that it may be encountered as a specific historical and political formation, she also maintains that it is a site of weakness and as such cannot offer an effective critique of patriarchal culture. For Orbach however, the anorectic must be understood as a hunger striker with a political cause, performing a specific kind of protest against patriarchal cultural expectations. She argues that, "Like the suffragettes at the turn of the century in the United Kingdom or the political prisoners of the contemporary world, she [the anorectic] is giving urgent voice to her protest." (Orbach 1986, 102) Indeed, recognizing that the anorectic, like the

²⁷ See for example Szmukler and Tatum, "Anorexia Nervosa: Starvation Dependence." *British Journal of Medical Psychology* 1984, 57: 303–10.

hunger striker, starves for a “cause” is “to begin the process of humanizing her actions.” (Orbach 1986, 102). Furthermore, because Orbach’s analysis is ultimately a therapeutic one,²⁸ part of the therapeutic task is therefore to decipher this cause and to interpret the meaning of the anorectic’s protest for purposes of healing. So while the anorectic herself may not “be able to talk directly about her cause,” the therapist, at least one trained in feminist cultural analysis, “can begin to decipher her language.” (Orbach 1986, 102) In this context “The text we read is the transformation of her body and her action of food refusal.” (Orbach 1986, 102)

According to Orbach, the anorectic produces her own body as a text. As such it becomes an archival object cataloguing “the rules that circumscribe a women’s life” in late modernity (Orbach 1986, 107). Patrick Anderson extends Orbach’s argument further when he writes that anorexia is itself “an archival project of undoing and becoming, a deeply incorporated historiography of trauma.” (Anderson 2010, 32) Essential to reading anorexia as protest is therefore a recognition that self-starvation is its own kind of representational form in which the body is constituted as a text. Such an interpretation does not reverse dualism but rather sidelines it altogether, as what is cultural is corporealized and the body in turn becomes a distinct kind of meaning-making form. The anorectic’s body is therefore both a meaning-producing subject and object of analysis.

²⁸ Orbach is a psychotherapist who has worked with anorexic patients at the Women’s Therapy Centre in London.

Bordo likewise describes anorexia as a protest that is “written on the body,” which works through “embodied rather than deliberate demonstration” to “indict” the destructive ideology of feminine appetite suppression that dominates contemporary consumer culture (Bordo 2003, 159, 176). But while Orbach and Anderson consider the embodied nature of the anorectic’s protest to open up space for interpreting self-starvation as a distinct kind of political practice, for Bordo, because the anorectic’s food refusal is “not embraced as a conscious politics,” it is an ultimately insufficient form. (Bordo 2003, 159) It is this question of “conscious politics” that troubles Bordo’s account. The fact that the anorectic is largely “unaware that she is making a political statement” or may indeed be “hostile to feminism or any other critical perspectives” seems to effectively disqualify her as a political subject (Bordo 2003, 176).²⁹ In Bordo’s account, she is constituted as a passive object that seemingly embodies all the negative aspects of assumed textuality – an inert, inanimate materiality, always transcribed upon and never actively engaged in transcription. Bordo writes that, the anorectic’s perverse pursuit of the slenderness ideal becomes “so powerful as to render any other ideas or life-projects meaningless.” (Bordo 2003, 159). Furthermore, without a “feminist” or “critical” consciousness, anorectics are ultimately “in collusion with the cultural conditions that produce them.” (Bordo 2003, 177)

²⁹ In this Bordo echoes Joan Brumberg’s dismissal of anorexia in her history of the disease in which she argues, “Anorectics, not known for their sisterhood, are notoriously preoccupied with the self.” (Brumberg 1989, 37)

At stake here is not only the unarticulated sense that the anorectic may be suffering some kind of false consciousness, but also the discounting of anorexics as legitimate knowledge-producing agents. The anorectic in Bordo's schema can only be known, she is never a knowing subject. We seem to be returned here to the medical interpretation of anorexia that Bordo herself elsewhere offers a forceful critique of, in which the body is constituted as "utterly transparent and accessible to the qualified specialist" but "utterly opaque to the patient herself." (Bordo 2003, 66) As Anderson writes, Bordo "seems to reproduce the very voicelessness against which she is otherwise mobilized." (Anderson 2010, 36).

To return this lengthy discussion of feminist interpretations of anorexia to the case of the Price sisters, it is apparent that the crossing back and forth between pathology and protest that Orbach and others have argued is intrinsic to the politics of anorexia is dramatically exemplified in their self-starvation. If anorexia is the crystallization of various desires to control the body within a historical formation that constructs the thin feminine body as a specific fetish, that is, as a reified object upon which multiple strands of commodity culture congeal, we might ask after the relationship of the Price sisters to some of these cultural features. For example, how might the desire to control the body signify differently in the space of the prison, and specifically the women's prison? The women's prison, as Corcoran reminds us, is already demarcated as a regime orientated towards the creation of docility and almost total submission. Furthermore, if, as Orbach argues, the idea of complete corporeal control is

fundamentally illusory and any conception of self-starvation as a purely volitional act neglects to consider how the starving body in turn transforms the mind, does this observation extend to the hunger striker also? The feminist work on anorexia shows that the practice of food refusal is, at the level of the body itself, more complicated than a straightforward narrative of bodily transcendence might suggest. How does such an intervention alter the idea of the hunger strike as a willful, intentional act originating from the “mind” of the sovereign subject, which is so essential to various histories of resistance? What if hunger strikers were also imagined as anorectics are, as “addicted to the nothingness” that becomes the “substitute for food”? (Ellman 1993, 1) How might the boundaries of pathology and protest be irrevocably muddied if we acknowledge this possibility?

Furthermore as Irish women prisoners, the Price sisters are very much at odds with the idealized anorectic subject that emerges in the dominant feminist accounts of eating disorders, i.e. middle-class and primarily American (Malson and Ussher 2010). There is also the question of the salience of the slenderness ideal to the Price sisters’ food refusal in the first instance. As the sisters articulate in the minimal testimony that is available, their self-starvation is largely unrelated to a desire for thinness and rather more connected to the symbolism of food consumption inside the prison, especially in the context of enforced consumption via artificial feeding. While Bordo and other feminist critics argue that women’s bodies are violated by the gender ideology of late capitalism, the corporeal violation of force-feeding, often described in sexualized terms as “oral

rape,” seems to be particular to state power (Ellman quoting Sylvia Pankhurst, 1993, 33). Indeed, as Allen Feldman argues, the feeding tube is one of the starkest images of “the human body infested with the state apparatus.” (Feldman 1991, 237)

For Feldman, the death of the hunger striker in the context of Northern Ireland functions as an effective purification ritual, in which the “defiling power” of the colonial state may be stored “in the corpse of the hunger striker” to be used by the insurgent community to legitimate anti-state violence in the future (Feldman 1991, 237). It is unclear, however, how this might apply to the Price sisters, who survived their hunger strikes but continued their practices of self-starvation. For the sisters it seems there is no such moment of reversal or purification, whereby state power, so “bitterly interiorized” in the hunger striker’s body, is subsequently released and subverted through the destruction of that body (Feldman 1991, 237).³⁰ In the absence of this purification, Feldman’s schema would suggest that even after the feeding tube is removed, the structuration of the body as “contaminated” or “infested” by the prison regime and the colonial state persists. In the Price sisters’ case, it is the prison food that has come to symbolize this contamination most intensely.

³⁰ In his extended discussion of the 1981 hunger strike, Feldman argues that in the context of criminalization, the death of the hunger striker purifies and renews Republican violence. The hunger striker serves as a “new empowering origin point” after which follows a new and qualitatively different kind of violence, which can no longer be denoted as criminal (see Feldman 1991, 237).

This interpretation of the Price sisters' self-starvation once again demonstrates that it cannot be captured fully within a simple dichotomy of politics versus pathology that operates as if these two terms are mutually exclusive. In this section I have considered how self-starvation produces the body as distinctive sort of text and how food itself is, in Ellman's words, "metaphorically omnivorous," capable of signifying a wide range of meanings and transfiguring a variety of thoughts and feelings (Ellman 1991, 44). Given this polyvalence, the case of the Price sisters' brings to life Karen Fierke's assertion that hunger strikes are essentially "struggles for meaning" in which political meaning accrues to the starving body as it circulates within various representational economies (Fierke 2013, 131). We have seen here how the Price sisters' starving bodies signify as political weapons, as bearers of disease or as archetypes of feminine frailty. In the next section I examine how self-starvation also functions as performance, paying attention to its spectacular quality and what this reveals about the politics of corporeal weaponization, as it relates to specifically feminine bodies.

Starvation as spectacle

"Self-starvation is above all a performance. Like Hamlet's mouse-trap, it is staged to trick the consciences of its viewers, forcing them to recognize that they are implicated in the spectacle that they behold."³¹

We have at the center of this "struggle for meaning" the production of difference: the Price sisters' two practices of self-starvation, a political crisis arising out of the first and a

³¹ Ellman, *The Hunger Artists*, p. 17.

diagnosis for the second. Gender difference is also fundamental to this struggle, despite Karin Fierke's assertion that it is the act itself, not the identity of the actor that is important in the performance of "political self-sacrifice." (Fierke 2013, 233) It is apparent that this is simply not the case with the Price sisters and indeed female hunger strikers more generally. With the Price sisters, the interpretation of their acts of starvation is irrevocably tied to their gender identity. As we have seen, the sisters were constituted as spectacles from their first appearance in the media and in public discourse. They were sensationalized in terms of their national and gender identity, as evidenced in the imagery of deadly, determined and "charismatic colleens" (Jenkins 1991, 378).

Beyond this, theorists of self-starvation, such as Maud Ellman and Patrick Anderson, have theorized that specularity is intrinsic to the practice of self-starvation itself. Furthermore, it is this specularity that partially accounts for the power of self-starvation as a political practice. Just as the performance of starvation produces the body as a political artifact, wherein as Patrick Anderson's notes, the starving body may be "objectified as a visual commodity," it also asserts a moment of subjectivity. The subject of starvation returns the gaze of the audience, calling upon them, such that their response is an essential part of the performance (Anderson 2010, 40). This suggests that although self-starvation is frequently imagined as a highly individualized performance, it actually "depends upon the other as a spectator in order to be read as representative of anything at all." (Ellman 1993, 17)

For Ellman, the spectacle of hunger reveals something fundamental about the process of subjectivation itself – that is, the process by which subject and object emerge as distinct aspects. She writes of how self-starvation, whether presented in the hunger striker’s or the anorectic’s emaciated bodies, effectively “deranges the distinction between self and other.” (Ellman 1993, 54). Writing about photographs of the Irish Famine, David Lloyd reaches a similar conclusion. He argues that the appalling spectacle of a starving body, frequently described in paradoxical terms as a walking skeleton, “forces the viewer to the very threshold of humanity, to the sill that divides the human and the nonhuman, or, rather to the boundary that marks the division between the human and the nonhuman within the human.” (Lloyd 2005, 163)

This notion, that the spectacle of starvation pushes the spectator towards a moment of jarring (non)recognition, is also repeated in the literature on anorexia. Susie Orbach for example, speaks of the “discomforting fascination and repulsion” one may experience when viewing the anorectic’s “cadaverous body.” (Orbach 1986, 18) The starving body, even as it is lives, is tainted by death, denoted as the “skeletal” or “cadaverous” and fundamentally repellent. The mark of death disgusts and inspires “a simultaneous desire to retreat” and to “move in closer,” with the simultaneity of these two desires consequently rendering one “immobile.” (Orbach 1996, 98). Significantly, the violation of profound metaphysical boundaries that this spectacle provokes, has for Lloyd at least, distinct ethical consequences, evoking fundamental questions of identification and responsibility.

In apprehending the centrality of “the non-human within the human,” as Lloyd describes it, the spectator experiences both a failure of recognition – this person is like a person, yet not a person – and at the same time, a feeling of the “vertigo of dissolving and merging with that other” (Lloyd 2005, 163). In this moment, “the observer confronts the precariousness of subjecthood itself.” (Lloyd 2005, 163). The distinctions of self/other, which an ethics of blame and responsibility turn upon, are no longer tenable. As Feldman notes, the agency of the hunger strike as a violent performance is achieved through the dissolution, but also the purposive reinscription of these boundaries of self and other. In the context of the prison, where the demand is to “incorporate the panoptic presence of the Other as a form of compliance and subjugation,” the corporeal performance of hunger strike stages the “abuse and violence of the Other in the eviscerated flesh of the dying protester.” (Feldman 1991, 236) Indeed, the hunger strike’s potency as a political weapon depends upon the extent to which the political or institutional regime that allows the hunger striker to starve under its apparently total dominion can be indicted as blame-worthy or as morally responsible for this destructive violence that at first appears self-inflicted. The hunger striker’s body becomes the ground upon which the violence of the prison regime is incorporated and also powerfully reversed. Here as Feldman notes, “the subject and object of violent enactment” are fused within a single body (Feldman 1991, 236).

While Lloyd and Feldman assert that the spectacular quality of self-starvation accounts for its political agency, Ellman rings a note of caution. Spectacles, as she reminds us, may be alluring but they also work to “mystify the true relationships of

power,” by displacing violence onto individuals “rather than the social forces that they represent.” (Ellman 1993, 102) In her account of self-starvation, Ellman seems to value the practice more cheaply than Feldman, especially its capacity to reverse and protest the conditions out of which it emerges. Indeed, there is something to be said for Ellman’s caution, for Feldman’s own theorization comes from his examination of the 1981 hunger strikes, which, as we have seen, are already granted political agency, in that they are constantly cited as transformative moments in both nationalist histories of resistance and in the Northern Irish conflict more generally. Throughout this chapter, I have been considering why the same cannot be said for the Price sisters’ hunger strike, despite the fact that it too generated a great deal of attention at the time. On the one hand, the apparent resolution of the sisters’ protest, and the particulars of this resolution – the Labour government’s refusal to back down over the issue of transferring the sisters was widely supported, whereas Thatcher’s refusal to cede to the demands of the 1981 hunger strike was increasingly viewed by an international audience as inhumane³² – was simply less effective in transferring moral responsibility for the violence to the British government. Yet, the unresolved nature of the Price sisters’ strike, which continued in private and under the sign of female pathology, in contrast to the Christological martyrdom of the 1981 strikers, works to further undo their political agency.

³² Evaluations that themselves seem inherently gendered – as female politicians and female hunger strikers are seemingly held to different standards than their male counterparts and adjudicated differently.

Conclusion

We need to do more work therefore, to untangle the political agency that emerges out of the sisters' practices of starvation. I would suggest that any agency emerges out of the precise configuration of femininity and specularity that their fast circulates within and directly addresses. We have seen that food refusal in the context of the prison and a regime of force-feeding may in fact attest to a desire for control in a space where there is little available, but I also want to argue that starving may be a means of undoing the regime of visibility that the sisters were subjected to. They were subjected to this both as politically violent women in the context of the British media, which constantly produced them as spectacles and as women prisoners, targets of intensive discipline and surveillance. If, as Patrick Anderson's asserts, self-starvation is a distinct political form because it "becomes itself through disappearance", such that as the starving body shrinks it becomes paradoxically more powerful, for the Price sisters, their starvation, understood as a mode of disappearance, may represent a refusal of the enforced visibility experienced in the prison (Anderson 2010, 11 – 12).

In Carole Spitzack's discussion of anorexia as a spectacle, she argues, borrowing from Butler, that femininity is itself constituted through a socially compulsory public performance. Its operation depends on the surveillance of the male gaze, which comes to be internalized by feminine subjects in a regime of compulsory heteronormativity. As Spitzack writes,

“A woman's body takes on a decidedly public character, and judgements of her attractiveness are based, at least in part, on her finesse in giving pleasure to those

who are placed in the position of observer. Female identity is thus contingent on a division in identity: a woman embodies the positions of spectator and spectacle simultaneously.” (Spitzack 1993, 2)

What is interesting about anorexia, Spitzack notes, is that it stages this surveillance on the anorectic’s body in its most “grotesque” form (Spitzack 1993, 3). Against the production of femininity as spectacle, the anorectic’s drastically underweight and emaciated frame offers “a spectacle stripped of pleasure for the public spectator.” (Spitzack, 3) In a culture marked by an injunction to govern one’s body with the utmost precision, within which the female body is specifically marked for the deployment of such governmental techniques, the anorectic’s starving body, “appear[s] to invert the equation between body surveillance and attractiveness.” (Spitzack 1993, 3)

We can think Spitzack’s insights in relation to the Price sisters, who were continually represented within the terms of the male gaze, either through discussions of their girlhood or their apparently obvious (and incongruous) interest in clothes and hairstyles. The sisters were also subjected to the highly gendered regulative regime of the women’s prison. In this context, their starvation, even their anorexia, may be read not as an individual pathology but as a more confrontational gesture. In rendering female beauty grotesque within a representational landscape that continually marked them as feminine spectacles, we may discern in their starvation an indictment of such demands for a performance of normative femininity. We can think again about the journalist at the sisters’ trial in 1973 who expressed disbelief “that beauty could ever be so dangerous” (Smith 1973). In starving themselves, in producing their bodies as

cadaverous, in such a way as to provoke what Lloyd describes as “vertigo” in the spectator, the real danger of feminine beauty is laid bare to devastating effect. Furthermore, I would argue that this kind performance is effective (and affecting) whether or not it is embraced by the sisters as “conscious politics” or not (Bordo 2003, 159).

Finally, starvation, as Patrick Anderson points out, always beckons death. The starving body decomposes and disappears before the eyes of the audience that looks upon it, but many theorists have noted that this disappearance is paradoxical. Susie Orbach writes of the anorectic, that “her invisibility screams out.” (Orbach 1986, 30) For Malson and Ussher, “The anorexic body is a body that *appears* to disappear.” (Malson and Ussher 2010, 51, my emphasis). Feldman and Ellman both note this also, for Ellman the more the hunger striker’s body decays “the more its rhetoricity appear[s]” (Ellman 1993, 72). For Feldman it is at the moment of disappearance, namely death, that the hunger striker attains the “highest condition of visibility” (Feldman 1991, 251). For Anderson this paradox speaks to the capacity of self-starvation to radically disrupt relations of absence and presence and reveals the functioning of subjectivation itself. While I have already discussed the ways in which starvation disrupts the distinct positions of subject and object with ethical consequences, this disruption of absence and presence as settled forms is also significant with specific relation to the Price sisters’ imprisonment.

In performing this paradox of disappearance, the Price sisters are disrupting the regime of visibility endemic to the prison and the colonial state, which, as we have seen, was continually engaged in surveillance and examination of both their bodies and minds. In this context, a mode of political violence “that becomes itself through disappearance” has currency as a protest (Anderson 2010, 11). It may indeed signal a mode of resisting what Spitzack refers to as the “enforced visibility” of feminine bodies (Spitzack 1993, 9 – 10). The Price sisters were arguably subjected to this “enforced visibility” in its most extreme form, both in the prison, the clinic and in the media. If we consider therefore, the performative function of the Price sisters’ self-starvation, without heed to concerns about “conscious politics,” we may encounter a mode of political agency quite different from the accounts that privilege the sovereign, autonomous and rational subject that is so frequently suggested as the necessary ground for political action. Indeed, it is not the moment of bodily control that marks political agency, but the moment of bodily decay and perhaps even death. Most importantly, political agency is not constituted with reference to political presence, and so we might begin to think again about the transformative effect of corporeal practices of political violence performed with, on and by women’s bodies, even when they are rendered marginal in the dominant historical accountings.

Epilogue: The inextricable

“The attacker’s body is literally weaponized. Shards of bone become human shrapnel. The body of the bomber and the bodies of his or her victims become inextricable; it is impossible to separate one from the other.”³³

“They did not want the terrorists mixed in with their loved ones... The families said, ‘These people were criminals and did not deserve to be with them.’ The families asked for the remains of the hijackers to be separated out and kept someplace else.”³⁴

“The blunt reality is that no matter how fastidious their efforts, the scientists will never fully sort the victims from the hijackers. The fragments are too small, too ruined and too scattered for bodies to be restored in their entirety.”³⁵

In the quotation included above, Stuart Murray describes the aftermath of a suicide bomb attack. He articulates the merging together of bodies and body parts entailed in the bomb blast as an unsettling meshing of bodily fragments and “human shrapnel”. In this, he follows Jacqueline Rose, who argues that much of what is shocking about the suicide bomb attack is the form of “deadly embrace” it constitutes – the uneasy intimacy produced in the violent crossing of bodily boundaries (Rose 2004). As Murray writes, in the aftermath of the bomb, “It is impossible to separate one from the other” (Murray 2006, 207). This impossibility has an ethical quality, as the vital distinction between the victims’ and the perpetrators’ bodies is also negated in this deadly embrace. It is the negation of such a distinction that, as we glimpse from the Newsweek article, is experienced as an injury and as an unbearable violation by the relatives. In the case of 9/11, despite the best scientific efforts, even the painstaking work of forensic biologists cannot restore the bodily integrity of the victims. Bodily integrity is linked here, as I

³³ Stuart J. Murray, “Thanatopolitics,” p. 207.

³⁴ Robert Shaler, Head of New York City’s Department of Forensic Biology after 9/11, speaking to Newsweek in 2009, Eve Conant, “Terror: The Remains of the 9/11 Hijackers,” *Newsweek*, 2 January 2009.

³⁵ Conant, “Terror: The Remains of the 9/11 Hijackers.”

have being saying elsewhere in this dissertation, to the desire to erect and maintain a firm distinction between self and other. This desire, as it is expressed in the contemporary War on Terror, unfolds within a political project that seeks to demarcate “us” from “them” – the innocent Western victims whose lives are mourned from the terrorists who so heartlessly kill and main the innocent.

Yet just as it is impossible to separate out the fragments of those who detonated the bomb and those others who died in the blast, it is impossible to draw up a clear boundary between us and them. “It is impossible to separate one from the other.” (Murray 2006, 207) This impossibility may be experienced as traumatic, and it is certainly violent, entailing loss, pain, injury, grief and death, but the merging of bodies and subjects that confounds easy moral distinctions may also be thought as a generative space. For in this moment the sovereign self-present subject founded on a model of bodily closure is thrown into crisis. This crisis pushes us in the “West” to consider our own responsibility in the production of death and killing. As Derrida, speaking in New York not long after the attacks on the World Trade Center, reminds us, the “Western world [has] itself, in the course of ancient as well as very recent history, invented the word, the techniques and the ‘politics’ of terrorism.” (Derrida 2013, 115) For many, this crisis is a difficult thing to think and my interpretation of its violence as also productive is surely distasteful. Yet, acknowledging that violence, which kills and violates, can also at the same time produce new modes of subjectivity and gesture towards a different, perhaps less violent, future requires one to sit with the structure of both/and rather than either/or.

This 'sitting with' is no easy thing to pull off. Much of this dissertation has been an attempt to engage with a series of apparently "inextricable" binaries: presence/absence; masculinity/femininity; mind/body; self/other; civilized/savage, which guarantee the particular productions of politically violent women I examine here. These binaries may be considered inextricable in both senses of the term. They are impossible to separate, in that one term cannot be disentangled from the other shadow term upon which it relies for meaning. In the second sense of the inextricable, they are also inescapable; they creep back in, they return, even as I spend time working to disrupt and unravel them. As such, these binaries mark the dissertation in particular ways.

To begin with, we may think the inextricability of absence and presence as it relates to the gendered agency of women who participate in practices of political violence. I have articulated, along with other feminist scholars like Begona Arextaga, that women's agency in political violence is made possible precisely through the absenting of femininity from the zone of conflict. In the case of Armagh this is a historical absence that is maintained by various commemorative practices and even critical works of scholarship. In these sites, the visibility attached to the bodies of the male dirty protesters and indeed their presentation as agents of radical political change, depends upon the unarticulated, though constitutive, negation of the women's protest as a historically significant event. Furthermore, attempts, like those of Gerry Adams, to incorporate the Armagh protest into historical memory without addressing the structures that produced it as marginal in the first instance, are necessarily limited.

Likewise, with the female suicide bombers, their potency as weapons is read, both by professional terrorism experts, and, frequently, by the organizations themselves, as arising specifically out of their undetectability. They are thought to engage feminine embodiment – pregnant bellies, breast implants – as a kind of disguise. Furthermore, this disguise is successful precisely because they are, as women, always already cast as interlopers in the field of combat. The perception of feminine passivity allows them to successfully dissimulate and occlude their “true” destructive intent. In the case of the Price sisters, even their visibility in media accounts as “charismatic colleens,” which produces them as spectacles, is a form of invisibility. As hunger strikers and then as anorexics, their bodies “appear to disappear” and in that moment confound the deeply entrenched belief that political agency must be circuited through physical presence (Malson and Ussher 2010, 51). Arguably, they become more powerful as actors as their bodies disintegrate and disappear. However, such power is circumscribed as their protest segues into psychopathology. As Mary Corcoran reminds us, their diagnosis, though it secures their eventual release from prison, reaffirms rather than repudiates the highly regulative regime of the women’s prison (Corcoran 2006, 48).

Just as what is absented inevitably returns, haunts, and indelibly marks presence in various ways, the femininity that is excluded from the space of political violence is a constitutive absence. It is an absence that, when encountered, profoundly alters our notion of presence. In a similar way, this dissertation traces another inextricable binary. I suggest that theorizations about the body in political violence, particularly in relation to the distinct forms of corporeal weaponization that I attend to here, write political agency

in terms of the active, intentional, conscious choice of a sovereign subject. This subject is figured as agentive only to the extent that they can transcend the corporeal. Here, the body is the brute, passive and inert materiality opposed to the vital mind. That this is the foundational metaphysical division guaranteeing much of Enlightenment thought has been discussed at length elsewhere (see for example Bordo 2003; Grosz 1994). I have sought to show, however, with direct reference to certain moments of opposition within the prison regime, such as through the figure of Pauline McLaughlin, that a rejection of this division is necessary if we want to think seriously about the ways in which the body exerts its own kind of force or operates with its own kind of agency.

The question of this dissertation remains one of thinking what other kinds of politics, agency and subjectivity might be possible if we move away from these binaries. However, at the same time as this dissertation seeks to unravel and disrupt these binaries to a certain extent it remains caught up in them. The power of this question, therefore, might be further elaborated than as it is done here. For now, these binaries are question marks that I can answer only with further questions. Another question mark remains over the selection of cases contained here. Beyond the argument about gender, corporeal weaponization and my attempts to theorize from these cases an agentive subject aside from its frequent sovereign instantiation, I have also tried to answer this question by pointing to the connection between certain forms of political exceptionality that arise in response to these violent practices.

Such forms, as I argue in the introduction, traverse the history of various colonies, and indeed appear again and again in different postcolonial settings. Yet it is worth noting the ambivalent status of Northern Ireland, and indeed Ireland in general – “the nation that is not one” – as a postcolony in the first instance (Aretxaga 1997, 14 – 5). Apart from the revisionist histories that dispute the idea that Ireland was ever a colony as such (for a critical discussion see O’Callaghan 2008), there is also the uncomfortable proximity between Ireland and England. If part of the colonial relationship is supposedly marked by a distance – geographical, epistemological and even ontological – that must be travelled between the colony and the metropole, then the location of Ireland, just fifty miles apart from mainland UK at its closest point, is discomfiting. Of course this geographic proximity does not cancel out the material, religious and cultural differences that postcolonial scholars of Ireland trace, and the racialization throughout the nineteenth century that furnished the Irish with the mark of racial difference (see Lloyd 1993; Lloyd 2005). It does, however, beg the question of what it means to be a colony right in the very heart of Empire, nestled inside Europe? How might consideration of the ambivalence of Irish colonialism work to disrupt the notions of intractable distance and difference that colonial relations themselves depend upon? I do not address this here, but it certainly invites further work, especially in relation to the particularity of these colonial relations as they play out in the two war on terrors under discussion in this project.

There is, however, another way to answer this question about case selection. The intellectual answers circle around a certain lack, they point towards the mystical

foundations of my own work of authority (Derrida 1992). Simply put, the War on Terror and the Troubles in Northern Ireland are the violent formations that have defined me as a historical subject. The signing of the Belfast Agreement in 1998 and the planes flying into the Twin Towers in 2001 were the significant historical events of my teens. They were “historical events” because even as they occurred there was sense of them as moments inside history, as monumental events unfolding in the present that would define the future. The aftermath of 9/11 was, of course, as shocking as the event itself. As the War on Terror ramped up in my late teens I was struck by the circulating discourse that indexed terrorist violence to a radically different subjectivity. It is no new insight to point to the ways in which War on Terror rhetoric cast “the terrorists” as inhuman, completely other, and marked by the word “evil,” with all the theological weight that carries. Even theology was largely rendered irrelevant by the repetition of an undifferentiated and Orientalist version of Islam. While the “us” versus “them” logic was often civilizational, it was also, importantly, about how violence was wielded – “they” value life so cheaply that they martyr themselves without a second thought; while “we” mourn the loss of every single American life and use violence only as a force for good. Here too, there is a sense of the productivity of violence.

Yet, the war on terror in Northern Ireland, which was supposedly over by 2001, evidences the unsustainability of this discourse. The “terrorists,” far from radically Other subjects, were now legitimate political actors, signing peace agreements and sitting in government. These “men of violence,” and it is very much men in this narration, whose presence was at one point considered so horrifying that their voices were banned

from British TV broadcasts, had since turned their back on violence to focus on achieving a political settlement. As the US launched new wars in Afghanistan and then Iraq, the end of the conflict in Northern Ireland was held up as a shining example of the possibilities of finding a “political solution” even in a space of intractable conflict. As the story was often told, the ever-benign British were finally successful in getting the “warring” parties, who hated each other with such irrational force, to sit around the table and talk to one another. While this story works by way of the necessary exclusion of the British as a military force in the conflict, a side-effect of this emphasis on the political nature of the resolution was the damning indictment of the efficacy of British counterinsurgency efforts in the region. If British militarism in Northern Ireland was always, conversely, justified in terms of its capacity to produce peace, it had failed completely; it was politics, not violence that won out in the end.

I came at the War on Terror, therefore, through an understanding of politics and violence that was intrinsic to growing up in Northern Ireland. What are the particularities of this way of coming to? I think above all, it provides an orientation to the inextricability of politics and violence. I did not grow up during the worst years of violence in Northern Ireland, I knew them only through historical space. The peace settlement was in 1998, when I was eleven. The settlement, which was voted on via referendum in May 1998, as I turned twelve, was often cast, especially by those campaigning for a ‘yes’ vote in the referendum, as a gift to the children and to future generations of the nation to come. The generational narrative built upon a sense that it was possible to begin anew and to “break with the past” once and for all. The sentiment

of hope that the peace settlement mobilized gestured towards a brighter future, one supposedly unmarked by violence and suffering.

That hopeful future has since arrived. Breaking with the past has often, as I show in the case of Jean McConville in chapter two, come with its own violent displacements. Certainly there is no doubt that the quality of life people enjoy now in Northern Ireland is unimaginable to previous generations. Belfast, the city that I love more than anything else in the world, has changed at such a rapid pace that parts of it are now virtually unrecognizable. From military curfews that shut down the main retail area of the city center at six o'clock every night to bright shiny new shopping centers and countless restaurants and bars, Belfast today is not only marked by a lack of violence but also by an emergent affluence, on a scale never before known here. It prompts consideration of another, perhaps more insidious form of violence that "peace" has brought with it. What does it mean that this rebirth and rebuilding is tied to the full participation of Belfast in the wonders of global capital? The structural violence this position implies suggests that the resolution of one war has merely been at the expense of a perpetual war elsewhere.

Yet, if "peace" implies the absence of war, then the place of Northern Ireland in this category remains tenuous. The continuation of war is evidenced not only by the high suicide rates, low wages, high unemployment and high levels of income inequality seen here, a war that the Conservative government's decimation of welfare services in the region is sure to exacerbate. It is also apparent in the low-level of sectarian conflict

Northern Ireland experiences. There is a constant hum of violence – riots, shootings, police helicopters, “security threats”, bomb scares – that sometimes goes unnoticed, and other times is front and center. The relationship one has to this violence is of course determined by one’s positionality and primarily by one’s class position. In Belfast and elsewhere, the areas most brutalized by violence are often the most economically and socially disadvantaged.

By way of example, this summer I was home over the Twelfth of July for the first time in many years. The Twelfth is the biggest celebration in the year for many in the Protestant community, when the Orange Order (a Protestant fraternal organization) hold parades commemorating the Battle of the Boyne. The Battle is celebrated because the Protestant King William of Orange (“King Billy” as he colloquially known) defeated the Catholic King James there in 1690. In the weeks surrounding this “celebration” there were riots and clashes between the marchers and those in the nationalist communities, whose neighborhoods they insist on parading through, almost every night. Yet, on my side of town, because most of the middle-class residents of South Belfast choose to take their holidays abroad then to avoid such violence, everything was eerily quiet. The only sinister sign was the black smoke from the bonfires coming across the city and the acrid smell of burning tires that filled the streets and came in through the open windows.

The development of “peace” in Belfast then, is strange and complicated story. Such complication is only to be expected given the deeply entrenched cartographies that

map histories of death and violence onto almost every street. Violence, even with peace, is never far away; it bubbles quietly but constantly beneath the surface. The question that Northern Ireland struggles with, often marked by the euphemistic catch-all: “legacy issues,” is how to move forward from this space of violence and live together without further re-enacting the losses that now mark us? I have no answers for this question. But part of the inextricability of this question seems to be that it is founded on the assumption that violence is something that can be moved past, that it is something we can break from once and for all and that peace, although it is not clear what this really constitutes, must be pursued at all costs.

Perhaps the reality is that violence is a constant presence, marking politics, changing only in intensity and quality but never going away for good. If we accept this as a possibility, what does it do to our ethical commitments? Spivak, speaking of the relation between ethics and knowledge, describes ethics as an “interruption of the epistemological.” (Spivak 2004, 83) It is the moment at which we stop trying to know the other as an object of knowledge. I go through this articulation of my own position here to show how we may also think this epistemological interruption in relation to the ethics of violence specifically. Such an ethics surely requires that we encounter violence not as an object of knowledge, but as the thing that may know us. An ethics of violence cannot apprehend it as the opposite of politics, as liberal notions of progress might have us imagine, but rather must encounter it as that which is profoundly inextricable from the very operation of politics itself.

Bibliography

Ackerman, Spencer. 2014. "41 Men Targeted but 1,147 People Killed: US Drone Strikes - the Facts on the Ground." *The Guardian*, November 24.

<http://www.theguardian.com/us-news/2014/nov/24/-sp-us-drone-strikes-kill-1147>.

Adams, Gerry. 2011. "Foreword." In *"John Lennon's Dead": Stories of Protest, Hunger Strikes and Resistance*, 7–10. Belfast: Beyond the Pale.

Agamben, Giorgio. 2001. "On Security and Terror."

<http://www.egs.edu/faculty/giorgio-agamben/articles/on-security-and-terror/>

Ahmed, Sara. 2004. *The Cultural Politics of Emotion*. New York: Routledge.

Anderson, Patrick. 2010. *So Much Wasted: Performance and the Morbidity of Resistance*.

Durham, NC.: Duke University Press.

An Phoblacht: Republican News. 1997. "From New Zealand to an Irish Prison Cell,"

September 4. <http://republican-news.org/archive/1997/September04/04nz.html>

Aretxaga, Begona. 1995. "Dirty Protest: Symbolic Overdetermination and Gender in Northern Ireland." *Ethos* 23 (2): 123–48.

———. 1997. *Shattering Silence: Women, Nationalism and Political Subjectivity in Northern Ireland*. Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press.

Asad, Talal. 2007. *On Suicide Bombing*. New York: Columbia University Press.

Ashworth, Scott, Joshua D. Clinton, Adam Meirowitz, and Kristopher W. Ramsay. 2008. "Design, Inference, and the Strategic Logic of Suicide Terrorism." *American Political Science Review* 102 (2): 269–73.

Ashe, Fidelma. 2007. "Gendering Ethno-Nationalist Conflict in Northern Ireland: A Comparative Analysis of Nationalist Women's Political Protests." *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 30 (5): 766–86.

———. 2008. "The Virgin Mary Connection: Reflecting on Feminism and Northern Irish Politics." In *Intervening in Northern Ireland: Critically Re-Thinking Representations of the Conflict*, 95–110. New York: Routledge.

Atran, Scott. 2006. "The Moral Logic and Growth of Suicide Terrorism." *The Washington Quarterly* 29 (2): 127–47.

Barkawi, Tarak, and Shane Brighton. 2011. "Powers of War: Fighting, Knowledge and Critique." *International Political Sociology* 5: 126–43.

Baylis, John, and James Wirtz. 2002. "Introduction." In *Strategy in the Contemporary World: An Introduction*, edited by John Baylis, James Wirtz, Eliot Cohen, and Colin S. Gray. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

BBC News. 2015. "IRA Gang Convicted of London Bombings," sec. 14 November 1973. Accessed April 3.

http://news.bbc.co.uk/onthisday/hi/dates/stories/november/14/newsid_4724000/4724181.stm

Beck, Ulrich. 1992. *Risk Society: Towards a New Modernity*. London: Sage Publications.

Becker, Jo, and Scott Shane. 2012. "Secret 'Kill List' Proves a Test of Obama's Principles and Will." *The New York Times*, May 29.

<http://www.nytimes.com/2012/05/29/world/obamas-leadership-in-war-on-al-qaeda.html>

Beresford, David. 1981. "Dolours Price Freed to Unionist Jibes." *The Guardian*, April.

<http://static.guim.co.uk/sys-images/Guardian/Pix/pictures/2014/5/5/1399287729788/Dolours-Price-released-fr-001.jpg?guni=Article:in%20body%20link>

———. 1989. *Ten Men Dead*. New York: Atlantic Monthly Press.

Betts, Richard K. 1997. "Should Strategic Studies Survive?" *World Politics* 50 (October): 7–33.

Bew, Paul, and Gordon Gillespie. 1999. *Northern Ireland: A Chronology of the Troubles 1968 - 1999*. Lanham, Maryland: Scarecrow Press.

Blakeley, Ruth. 2008. "The Elephant in the Room: A Response to John Horgan and Michael J Boyle." *Critical Studies on Terrorism* 1 (2): 151–65.

Bloom, Mia. 2005. *Dying to Kill: The Allure of Suicide Terror*. New York: Columbia University Press.

———. 2011. *Bombshell: The Many Faces of Women Terrorists*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press.

Boone, Jon. 2011. "Groomed for Suicide: How Taliban Recruits Children for Mass Murder." *The Guardian*, May 17.

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2011/may/17/groomed-suicide-taliban-recruits-afghan-children-murder>

Booth, Ken. 2008. "The Human Faces of Terror: Reflections in a Cracked Looking-Glass." *Critical Studies on Terrorism* 1 (1): 65–79.

Bordo, Susan. 2003. *Unbearable Weight: Feminism, Western Culture and the Body*. Tenth anniversary edition. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Brym, Robert J., and Bader Araj. 2006. "Suicide Bombing as Strategy and Interaction: The Case of the Second Intifada." *Social Forces* 84 (4): 1969–86.

Brumberg, Joan Jacobs. 1989. *Fasting Girls: The History of Anorexia*. New York: Plume Books.

Butler, Judith. 1999. *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity*. Second. New York: Routledge.

"CAIN: Chronology of the Conflict 1980." 2014. Accessed December 13.

<http://cain.ulst.ac.uk/othelem/chron/ch80.htm>

"CAIN: Key Events of the Northern Ireland Conflict." 2014. Accessed December 13.

<http://cain.ulst.ac.uk/events/index.html>

Carr, E.H. 1939. *The Twenty Years' Crisis 1919 - 1939: An Introduction to the Study of International Relations*. London: Macmillan.

Castle, Barbara. 1990. *The Castle Diaries: 1964 - 1976*. London: Macmillan.

Cavarero, Adriana. 2009. *Horrorism: Naming Contemporary Violence*. Translated by William McCuaig. New York: Columbia University Press.

Chakrabarty, Dipesh. 2002. *Habitations of Modernity*. Chicago, IL. University of Chicago Press.

Chatterjee, Pratap. 2015. "A Chilling New Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder: Why Drone Pilots Are Quitting in Record Numbers." *Salon.com*, March 6.

http://www.salon.com/2015/03/06/a_chilling_new_post_traumatic_stress_disorder_w_hy_drone_pilots_are_quitting_in_record_numbers_partner/

Clough, Patricia Ticineto, and Craig Willse. 2011. "Human Security/National Security." In *Beyond Biopolitics: Essays on the Governance of Life and Death*. Durham: Duke University Press.

Cohn, Carol. 1987. "Sex and Death in the Rational World of Defense Intellectuals." *Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society* 12 (4): 687–718.

Coogan, Tim Pat. 2000. *The IRA*. London: Harper Collins.

———. 2002. *On The Blanket: The Inside Story of the IRA Prisoners' "Dirty" Protest*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan.

Conant, Eve. 2009. "Terror: The Remains of the 9/11 Hijackers." *Newsweek*, January 2.

<http://www.newsweek.com/terror-remains-911-hijackers-78327>

Connell, R.W., and James W. Messerschmidt. 2005. "Hegemonic Masculinity: Rethinking the Concept." *Gender & Society* 19 (6): 829–59.

Corcoran, Mary. 1999. "Mapping Carceral Space: Territorialisation, Resistance and Control in Northern Ireland's Women's Prisons." In *Ireland in Proximity: History, Gender, Space*, edited by Scott Brewster, Virginia Crossman, Fiona Becket, and David Alderson. New York: Routledge.

———. 2006. *Out of Order: The Political Imprisonment of Women in Northern Ireland, 1972 - 98*. Portland, OR: Willan Publishing.

Corless, Damian. 2014. "No Regrets for Renegade IRA Art Robber Rose Dugdale." *Irish Independent*, April 5. <http://www.independent.ie/lifestyle/no-regrets-for-renegade-ira-art-robber-rose-dugdale-30238446.html>

Cowley, Martin. 1973. "Life Sentences For Winchester Eight: Prisoners Start Campaign." *The Irish Times*, November 16.

———. 1974. "5000 Walk with Body of Gaughan in London." *The Irish Times*, June 8.

Crenshaw, Martha. 1990. "The Logic of Terrorism: Terrorist Behavior as a Product of Strategic Choice." In *Origins of Terrorism: Psychologies, Ideologies and States of Mind*, edited by Walter Reich. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

———. 2007. "Explaining Suicide Terrorism: A Review Essay." *Security Studies* 16 (1): 133–62.

Cutting the Fuse - Robert Pape and Gov. Thomas Kean. 2010.

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ETXcGg6uuhs>

Dao, James. 2013. "Drone Pilots Are Found to Get Stress Disorders Much as Those in Combat Do." *The New York Times*, February 22.

<http://www.nytimes.com/2013/02/23/us/drone-pilots-found-to-get-stress-disorders-much-as-those-in-combat-do.html>

D'Arcy, Margaretta. 1981. *Tell Them Everything*. London: Pluto Press.

Darragh, Síle. 2011. *"John Lennon"'s Dead': Stories of Protest, Hunger Strikes and Resistance*. Belfast: Beyond the Pale.

Davis, Angela. 1997. "Gender, Class and Multiculturalism: Rethinking 'Race' Politics." In *Mapping Multiculturalism*, 40–48. Minneapolis, MN.: University of Minnesota Press.

Davis, Paul K., and Brian Michael Jenkins. 2002. "Deterrence and Influence in Counterterrorism: A Component in the War on Al Qaeda." RAND National Defense Research Institute.

Dean, Mitchell. 2010. *Governmentality: Power and Rule in Modern Society*. Los Angeles: Sage.

Deiana, Maria, and Claire Pierson. 2015. "Northern Ireland's Incomplete Peace: Young Feminists Speak out." *Open Democracy* 50.50, January 5.

<https://www.opendemocracy.net/5050/maria-deiana-claire-pierson/northern-ireland%E2%80%99s-incomplete-peace-young-feminists-speak-out>

De Larrinaga, Miguel, and Marc G. Doucet. 2010. "Introduction: The Global Governmentalization of Security and the Securitization of Global Governance." In *Security and Global Governmentality: Globalization, Governance and the State*, edited by Miguel de Larrinaga and Marc G. Doucet. New York: Routledge.

Derrida, Jacques. 1992. "Force of Law: The 'Mystical Foundation of Authority.'" In *Deconstruction and the Possibility of Justice*, edited by Drucilla Cornell, Michel Rosenfeld, and David Carlson. New York: Routledge.

———. 2013. "Autoimmunity: Real and Symbolic Suicides." In *Philosophy in a Time of Terror: Dialogues with Jurgen Habermas and Jacques Derrida*, 85–136. Chicago, IL.: University of Chicago Press.

Dillon, Michael, and Andrew W. Neal, eds. 2008. *Foucault on Politics, Security and War*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan.

Dillon, Michael, and Julian Reid. 2009. *The Liberal Way of War: Killing to Make Life Live*. New York: Routledge.

Ellman, Maud. 1993. *The Hunger Artists: Starving, Writing and Imprisonment*. Cambridge, MA.: Harvard University Press.

Elshtain, Jean Bethke. 1995. *Women and War*. 2nd ed. Chicago, IL.: University of Chicago Press.

Enloe, Cynthia. 2000. *Bananas, Beaches and Bases: Making Feminist Sense of International Relations*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Euben, Roxanne L. 2002. "Killing (For) Politics: Jihad, Martyrdom, and Political Action." *Political Theory* 30 (1): 4–35.

Feldman, Allen. 1991. *Formations of Violence: The Narrative of the Body and Political Terror in Northern Ireland*. Chicago, IL.; University of Chicago Press.

———. 2003. "Political Terror and the Technologies of Memory: Excuse, Sacrifice, Commodification, and Actuarial Moralities." *Radical History Review* 85: 58–73.

Fierke, K. M. 2013. *Political Self-Sacrifice: Agency, Body and Emotion in International Relations*. New York: Cambridge University Press.

Foreman, Amanda. 2010. "Sinn Fein Should Never Be Able to Escape Jean McConville's Ghost." *The Guardian*, December 4.

<http://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2010/dec/05/amanda-foreman-jean-mcconville-ira>

Foucault, Michel. 1980. *Power/Knowledge: Selected Interviews and Other Writings 1972 - 1977*. Edited by Colin Gordon. New York: Pantheon.

———. 1982. "The Subject and Power." *Critical Inquiry* 8 (4): 777–95.

———. 1988. "Power, Moral Value and the Intellectual." *History of the Present* 4: 1–2; 11–13.

———. 1995. *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison*. Translated by Alan Sheridan. New York: Vintage Books.

———. 1996. "Truth and Juridical Forms." Translated by Lawrence Williams and Catherine Merlen. *Social Identities* 2 (3): 327–41.

———. 2003a. "Governmentality." In *The Essential Foucault: Selections from the Essential Works of Foucault, 1954 - 1984*, edited by Paul Rabinow and Nikolas Rose, 229–45. New York: New Press.

———. 2003b. *Society Must Be Defended: Lectures at the Collège de France 1975 - 1976*. New York: Picador.

———. 2007. *Security, Territory, Population: Lectures at the College de France, 1977 - 1978*.

Translated by Graham Burcell. New York: Palgrave MacMillan.

———. 2008. *The Birth of Biopolitics: Lectures at the Collège de France 1978 - 1979*. Translated by Graham Burcell. New York: Picador.

Freedman, Lawrence. 2002. "Conclusion: The Future of Strategic Studies." In *Strategy in the Contemporary World: An Introduction*, edited by John Baylis, James Wirtz, Eliot Cohen, and Colin S. Gray. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Frost, Samantha. 2011. "The Implication of the New Materialisms for Feminist Epistemology." In *Feminist Epistemology and Philosophy of Science: Power in Knowledge*, edited by H. E. Grasswick. New York: Springer.

Gifford, Tony. 1981. Tony Gifford on Pauline McLaughlin release. Radio. British Universities Film & Video Council.

<http://bufvc.ac.uk/tvandradio/lbc/index.php/segment/0009800497003>

Goldhill, Olivia. 2013. "Breast Implant Explosives Could Be Used in Terrorist Attack." *The Telegraph*, August 16. <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/uknews/terrorism-in-the-uk/10247069/Breast-implant-explosives-could-be-used-in-terrorist-attack.html>.

Gordon, Avery F. 2008. *Ghostly Matters: Haunting and the Sociological Imagination*. Second. Minneapolis, MN.: University of Minnesota Press.

Gordon, Colin. 1987. "The Soul of the Citizen: Max Weber and Michel Foucault on Rationality and Governmentality." In *Max Weber, Rationality and Modernity*, edited by Scott Lash and Sam Whimster. London: Allen & Unwin.

Greenwald, Glen. 2012. "The Sham 'terrorism Expert' Industry." *Salon.com*. August 15.
http://www.salon.com/2012/08/15/the_sham_terrorism_expert_industry/

Grosz, Elizabeth. 1994. *Volatile Bodies: Toward a Corporeal Feminism*. Bloomington, IN.: Indiana University Press.

Hafez, Mohammed M. 2006. "Dying to Be Martyrs: The Symbolic Dimension of Suicide Terrorism." In *Root Causes of Suicide Terrorism: The Globalization of Martyrdom*, edited by Ami Pedahzur. London: Routledge.

Hall, Kim F. 2008. "'Use Words. Not Your Body': The Hunger That Has No Name." *Women & Performance: A Journal of Feminist Theory* 18 (2): 169–80.

Harris, Lorelei. 2002. "The Chaplain's Diary." Ireland: RTE Radio 1.
<http://www.rte.ie/radio1/doconone/2009/1001/646193-chaplain/>

Harvey, Simon, and Simon Hoggart. 1973. "Ten Held after Provo Bombs Blast London." *The Guardian*, March 9.

<http://www.theguardian.com/theguardian/2009/mar/09/archive-1973-london-ira-bombs/print>

HC Deb. 1974. "Prisoners (Artificial Feeding)." Vol 877 cc451 -5. Hansard.

———. 1974a. "Price Sisters," Vol 874 cc599 - 602. Hansard.

———. 1974b. "Northern Ireland" Vol 352 cc8 - 112. Hansard

———. 1980. "Pauline McLaughlin" Vol 995 cc345-6W. Hansard.

———. 1981. "Northern Ireland (Parole)." Vol. 998 cc121 – 8. Hansard.

Hoffman, Bruce. 2003. "The Logic of Suicide Terrorism." *The Atlantic*, June.

Hoffman, Bruce, and Gordon H. McCormick. 2004. "Terrorism, Signaling, and Suicide Attack." *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism* 27: 243–81.

Hooper, Charlotte. 2000. *Manly States: Masculinities, International Relations and Gender Politics*. New York: Columbia University Press.

Horgan, J., and M. Boyle. 2008. "A Case Against 'Critical Terrorism Studies.'" *Critical Studies on Terrorism* 1 (1): 51–64.

Human Rights Watch, “Afghanistan: Taliban Should Stop Using Children as Suicide Bombers | Human Rights Watch.” 2013. Accessed March 27.

<http://www.hrw.org/news/2011/08/31/afghanistan-taliban-should-stop-using-children-suicide-bombers>.

Irish News. 1980a. “Deprived Prisoners’ Claim Denied,” February 8.

———. 1980b. “Big Male Officers’ in Women’s Jail Clash,” February 9.

———. 1980c. “Women in Jail Set for H-Block Type Situation,” February 13.

———. 1980d. “Call for Inquiry into Armagh Jail Conditions,” February 15.

———. 1980e. “Men Squads Beat Women Prisoners - Father Faul,” March 7.

Jabri, Vivienne. 2006. “War, Security and the Liberal State.” *Security Dialogue* 37 (1): 47–64.

Jenkins, Roy. 1974. ““After Deep Thought, I Am Clear That I Must Not Be Forced into a Decision as a Result of Any Intimidation, However Harrowing the Consequences.””

The Sunday Times, June 2.

———. 1991. *A Life at the Centre*. London: Macmillan.

Jolly, Margaret. 1994. “Motherlands? Some Notes on Women and Nationalism in India and Africa.” *Australian Journal of Anthropology* 5 (1 - 2): 41–59.

Jones, David Martin, and M.L.R. Smith. 2009. "We're All Terrorists Now: Critical - or Hypocritical - Studies 'on' Terrorism?." *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism* 32: 292–302.

Keefe, Patrick Radden. 2015. "Where The Bodies Are Buried." *The New Yorker*, March 16. <http://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2015/03/16/where-the-bodies-are-buried>

Kristeva, Julia. 1982. *Powers of Horror: An Essay on Abjection*. Translated by Leon S. Roudiez. New York: Columbia University Press.

Linebaugh, Heather. 2010. "I Worked on the US Drone Program. The Public Should Know What Really Goes on." *The Guardian*, December 29.

<http://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2013/dec/29/drones-us-military>

Lipschutz, Ronnie D., and Rebecca J. Hester. 2014. "We Are the Borg! Human Assimilation into a Cellular Society." In *Ubervveillance and the Social Implications of Microchip Implants*, edited by M. G. Michael and Katina Michael, 366–84. Hershey, PA.: Information Science Reference.

Lloyd, David. 1993. *Anomalous States: Irish Writing and the Post-Colonial Moment*. Durham, NC.: Duke University Press.

———. 2005. "The Indigent Sublime: Specters of Irish Hunger." *Representations* 92: 152–85.

———. 2011. *Irish Culture and Colonial Modernity 1800 - 2000: The Transformation of Oral Space*. New York: Cambridge University Press.

Londonderry Sentinel. 2011. "Bishop's Attitude to Strike Seen as 'Unhelpful,'" January 20. <http://www.londonderrysentinel.co.uk/news/local-news/bishop-s-attitude-to-strike-seen-as-unhelpful-1-2362273>.

Loughran, Christina. 1986. "Armagh and Feminist Strategy: Campaigns around Republican Prisoners in Jail." *Feminist Review* 23: 59–79.

Madsen, Julian. 2004. "Rationalizing the Irrational." *Strategic Insights* III (8). <http://citeseerx.ist.psu.edu/viewdoc/download?rep=rep1&type=pdf&doi=10.1.1.181.1170>.

Mahnken, Thomas G. 2003. "The Future of Strategic Studies." *Journal of Strategic Studies* 26 (1): x – xviii.

Mallinder, Louise. 2014. "Dealing with Northern Ireland's past: a guide to the Haass-O'Sullivan talks," *Open Democracy*, 8 May.

Malson, Helen M., and Jane M. Ussher. 2010. "Beyond This Mortal Coil: Femininity, Death and Discursive Constructions of the Anorexic Body." *Mortality: Promoting the Interdisciplinary Study of Death and Dying* 2 (1): 43–61

Mansfield, Harvey C. 2006. *Manliness*. New Haven, CT.: Yale University Press.

Masters, Cristina. 2005. "Bodies of Technology." *International Feminist Journal of Politics* 7 (1): 112–32.

Masters, Cristina, and Elizabeth Dauphinée, eds. 2006. *The Logics of Biopower and the War on Terror: Living, Dying, Surviving*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan.

McCafferty, Nell. 1980. "It Is My Belief That Armagh Is a Feminist Issue." *Irish Times*, June 17.

———. 1981. *The Armagh Women*. Dublin: Co-op Books.

McDonald, Ashleigh. 2014. "Marian Price: Old Bailey Bomber Walks Free from Court after Receiving Suspended Sentence for Terror Offences." *The Belfast Telegraph*, January 7. <http://www.belfasttelegraph.co.uk/news/northern-ireland/marian-price-old-bailey-bomber-walks-free-from-court-after-receiving-suspended-sentence-for-terror-offences-29895467.html>.

McDonald, Henry. 2013. "Stephen Rea Carries Dolours Price's Coffin at Funeral in Belfast." *The Guardian*, January 28.

<http://www.theguardian.com/uk/2013/jan/28/stephen-rea-dolours-price-funeral>

———. 2014. "Jean McConville Timeline: How a 1972 Murder Returned to Haunt Gerry Adams." *The Guardian*, May 3.

<http://www.theguardian.com/politics/2014/may/03/jean-mcconville-timeline-murder-gerry-adams>

McDowell, Sara. 2008. "Commemorating Dead 'Men': Gendering the Past and Present in Post-Conflict Northern Ireland." *Gender, Place and Culture* 15 (4): 335–54.

McEvoy, Kieran. 2001. *Paramilitary Imprisonment in Northern Ireland: Resistance, Management and Release*. New York: Oxford University Press.

McGuffin, John. 1974. *The Guinea Pigs*. London: Penguin Books.

McKittrick, David. 2006. "Remembering Bobby Sands." *The Independent*, May 5.

<http://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/this-britain/remembering-bobby-sands-476884.html>

Miller, David, and Tom Mills. 2009. "The Terror Experts and the Mainstream Media: The Expert Nexus and Its Dominance in the News Media." *Critical Studies on Terrorism* 2 (3): 414–37.

Mitchell, Timothy. 1991. *Colonising Egypt*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Moghadam, Assaf. 2006a. "Suicide Terrorism, Occupation, and the Globalization of Martyrdom: A Critique of Dying to Win." *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism* 29: 707–29.

- Moore, Cerwyn. 2012. "Suicide Bombing: Chechnya, the North Caucasus and Martyrdom." *Europe-Asia Studies* 64 (9): 1780–1807.
- Moloney, Ed. 2010. *Voices from the Grave: Two Men's War in Ireland*. New York: Public Affairs.
- Morgenthau, Hans J. 1972. *Politics Among Nations: The Struggle for Power and Peace*. New York: Knopf.
- Morris, David. 2015. "Can Drone Operators Get PTSD?" *Foreign Policy*, June 2. <http://foreignpolicy.com/2015/06/02/can-drone-operators-get-ptsd/>
- Murray, Raymond. 1998. *Hard Time: Armagh Gaol 1971 - 1986*. Dublin: Mercier Press.
- Murray, Stuart J. 2006. "Thanatopolitics: On the Use of Death for Mobilizing Political Life." *Polygraph: An International Journal of Politics and Culture* 18: 191–215.
- Nadesan, Majia Holder. 2008. *Governmentality, Biopower and Everyday Life*. London: Routledge.

Neti, Leila. 2003. "Blood and Dirt: Politics of Women's Protest in Armagh Prison, Northern Ireland." In *Violence and the Body: Race, Gender and the State*, edited by Arturo J. Aldama. Bloomington, IN.: Indiana University Press.

Northern Ireland Political Collection. 1974. "Venceremos Sisters: Prison Writings of the Price Sisters." Cathal Brugha Cumann. P4474. Linen Hall Library.

———. 1998. "Liberty & Strength: Accompany Armagh – A Memento of Your Evening at the Re-Union of Women Republican Ex-P.O.W.'s." 1998. P8925. Linen Hall Library.

Northern Ireland Office. 1974a. "Letter to Prime Minister from Cardinal Conway." CJ4/711. The National Archives.

———. 1974b. "Letter to Irish Ambassador to UK from NIO." CJ4/711. The National Archives.

———. 1974c. "TELEGRAM: 'Pope and Price Sisters.'" CJ4/ 711. The National Archives.

———. 1974d. "Speech Notes on Price Sisters and Other Hunger Strikers." The National Archives.

———. 1980a. "Incident Report." NIO/12/179A. Public Records Office of Northern Ireland (PRONI).

———. 1980b. "Search of the Thirty-Three Protesting Prisoners in Armagh Prison and Its Aftermath." NIO/12/179A. Public Records Office of Northern Ireland (PRONI).

———. 1980c. “Draft Letter to Parents/Next-of-Kin of Armagh Protesters.”

NIO/12/179A. Public Records Office of Northern Ireland (PRONI).

———. 1980d. “Letter Found after Visit between Prisoner BLANK and a BLANK on 18.8.80.” NIO/12/179A. Public Records Office of Northern Ireland (PRONI).

———. 1980e. “Letter to Mrs Thatcher.” NIO/12/179A. Public Records Office of Northern Ireland (PRONI).

———. 1980f. “Letter from British Embassy.” NIO/12/179A. Public Records Office of Northern Ireland (PRONI).

———. 1980g. “Letter to Mrs Thatcher from BLANK AUTHOR from USA.” NIO/12/179A. Public Records Office of Northern Ireland (PRONI).

Obama, Barak. 2013. “Remarks by the President at the National Defense University.”

National Defense University, Fort McNair, Washington D.C., May 23.

<https://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/2013/05/23/remarks-president-national-defense-university>

O’Callaghan, Margaret. 2008. “Genealogies of Partition: History, History-Writing and the ‘Troubles’ in Ireland.” In *Intervening in Northern Ireland: Critically Re-Thinking Representations of the Conflict*, 141–56. New York: Routledge.

O’Connor, Fionnuala. 1980. “Price Sister’s Release Affronts Order Lobby.” *The Irish Times*, May 7.

O'Hagan, Sean. 2008. "Hunger: The Real Maze Men Speak." *The Guardian*, October 18.
<http://www.theguardian.com/film/2008/oct/19/northernireland>.

O'Keefe, Theresa. 2006. "Menstrual Blood as a Weapon of Resistance." *International Feminist Journal of Politics* 8 (4): 535–56.

O'Malley, Pdraig. 1990. *Biting at the Grave: The Irish Hunger Strikes and the Politics of Despair*. Boston: Beacon Press.

Orbach, Susie. 1986. *Hunger Strike: The Anorectic's Struggle as a Metaphor for Our Age*. New York: Norton & Co.

O'Rourke, Lindsey A. 2009. "What's Special about Female Suicide Terrorism?" *Security Studies* 18: 681–718.

Parry, Gareth. 1981. "Bobby Sands Joins Long Line of Hunger Strikers." *The Guardian*, May 6. <http://www.theguardian.com/theguardian/2014/may/06/bobby-sands-hunger-strikers-ira>

Perry, Walter L., Claude Berrebi, Brown Ryan Andrew, John Hollywood, Amber Jaycocks, Parisa Roshan, Thomas Sullivan, and Lisa Miyashiro. 2013. "Predicting Suicide Attacks: Integrating Spatial, Temporal and Social Features of Terrorist Attack Targets." RAND Corporation. <http://www.rand.org/pubs/monographs/MG1246.html>

Peterson, V. Spike, and Ann Sisson Runyon. 1992. *Global Gender Issues in the New Millennium*. New York: Cambridge University Press.

Power, Matthew. 2013. "Confessions of a Drone Warrior." *GQ*, October 23.

<http://www.gq.com/news-politics/big-issues/201311/drone-uav-pilot-assassination?currentPage=4>

Price, Dolours. 2004. "The UnHung Hero." *The Blanket: A Journal of Protest and Dissent*, August. <http://indiamond6.ulib.iupui.edu:81/unhunghero.html>

Puar, Jasbir. 2011. "'The Turban Is Not a Hat': Queer Diaspora and Practices of Profiling." In *Beyond Biopolitics: Essays on the Governance of Life and Death*, edited by Patricia Ticineto Clough and Craig Willse. Durham: Duke University Press.

Rapoport, David C. 2006. "Modern Terror: History and Special Features." In *The Politics of Terrorism: A Survey*, edited by Andrew T. H. Tan, First Edition. New York: Routledge.

Reid, Julian. 2006. *The Biopolitics of the War on Terror: Life Struggles, Liberal Modernity, and the Defence of Logistical Societies*. New York: University of Manchester.

Robinson, Martin. 2013. "Women Suicide Bombers Hide Explosives in Their BREAST IMPLANTS as Terror Experts Fear Al-Qaida Will Target Flights out of Heathrow." *The Daily Mail*, August 16. <http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-2395532/Al-Qaida->

[Heathrow-terror-experts-fear-women-suicide-bombers-hide-explosives-BREAST-IMPLANTS.html](#).

Rose, Nikolas. 1999. *Powers of Freedom: Reframing Political Thought*. New York: Cambridge University Press.

———. 2007. *The Politics of Life Itself*. Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press.

Rose, Nikolas, Pat O'Malley, and Mariana Valverde. 2006. "Governmentality." *Annual Review of Law and Social Science* 2: 83–104.

Rose, Jacqueline. 2004. "Deadly Embrace." *London Review of Books*, November 4.

Rosengarten, Marsha. 2000. "Thinking Menstrual Blood." *Australian Feminist Studies* 15 (31): 91–101.

Sanders, Andrew. 2013. "Dolours Price, Boston College and the Myth of the 'Price Sisters.'" *The United States of America and Northern Ireland*. January 24.

<http://usaandni.com/blog/dolours-price-boston-college-and-the-myth-of-the-price-sisters#.VTGDbyAlnB4>.

Sawer, Patrick, and Bob Graham. 2014. "Old Bailey Bomber Dolours Price Accused Gerry Adams of Being behind the Abductions of 'The Disappeared.'" *The Telegraph*, May 2. <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/uknews/northernireland/10803439/Old-Bailey->

[bomber-Dolours-Price-accused-Gerry-Adams-of-being-behind-the-abductions-of-The-Disappeared.html](#)

Scarlata, Jessica. 2014. *Rethinking Occupied Ireland: Gender and Incarceration in Contemporary Irish Film*. Syracuse, NY.: Syracuse University Press.

Scott, David. 1995. "Colonial Governmentality." *Social Text* 43: 191–220.

Scott, James C. 1985. *Weapons of the Weak: Everyday Forms of Peasant Resistance*. New Haven, CT.: Yale University Press.

Scott, Joan W. 1986. "Gender: A Useful Category of Historical Analysis." *The American Historical Review* 91 (5): 1053–75.

Seth, Sanjay. 2007. *Subject Lessons: The Western Education of Colonial India*. Durham: Duke University Press.

Shane, Scott. 2015. "Drone Strikes Reveal Uncomfortable Truth: U.S. Is Often Unsure About Who Will Die." *The New York Times*, April 23.

<http://www.nytimes.com/2015/04/24/world/asia/drone-strikes-reveal-uncomfortable-truth-us-is-often-unsure-about-who-will-die.html>

Sinn Fein. 2004. "Women in an Ireland of Equals."

<http://www.sinnfein.ie/contents/16429>

Sjoberg, Laura, and Caron E. Gentry. 2007. *Mothers, Monsters, Whores: Women's Violence in Global Politics*. London: Zed Books.

———. 2008. "Profiling Terror: Gender, Strategic Logic and Emotion in the Study of Suicide Terrorism." *Austrian Journal of Political Science*, 1–16.

Smith, Colin. 1973. "The Sisters in Terror." *The Observer*, November 18.

<http://static.guim.co.uk/sys-images/Guardian/Pix/pictures/2014/5/5/1399288037365/Observer-profile-of-Dolou-002.jpg?guni=Article:in%20body%20link>.

Smith IV, Jack. 2015. "U.S. Air Forces Doubles Drone Pilot Incentive to Pay to Keep Them from Quitting Altogether." *New York Observer*, January 20.

<http://observer.com/2015/01/u-s-air-force-doubles-drone-pilot-incentive-pay-to-keep-them-from-quitting-altogether/>

Smith, M.L.R. 2011. "Strategic Theory: What It Is... and Just as Importantly, What It Isn't." *E-International Relations*, April. http://www.e-ir.info/2011/04/28/strategic-theory-what-it-is%E2%80%A6and-just-as-importantly-what-it-isn%E2%80%99t/#_edn7

Spivak, Gayatri Chakravorty. 1999. *A Critique of Postcolonial Reason: Towards a History of the Vanishing Present*. Cambridge, MA.: Harvard University Press.

———. 2004. "Terror: A Speech after 9-11." *boundary 2* 31 (2): 81–111.

Spitzack, Carole. 1993. "The Spectacle of Anorexia Nervosa." *Text and Performance Quarterly* 13 (1): 1–20.

Sprinzak, Ehud. 2000. "Rational Fanatics." *Foreign Policy*, October, 66–73.

Stoler, Ann Laura. 1995. *Race and the Education of Desire: Foucault's History of Sexuality and the Colonial Order of Things*. Durham: Duke University Press.

Sweeney, George. 1993. "Irish Hunger Strikes and the Cult of Self-Sacrifice." *Journal of Contemporary History* 28: 421–37.

Szmukler, George I., and Digby Tatum. 1984. "Anorexia Nervosa: Starvation Dependence." *British Journal of Medical Psychology* 57: 303–10.

Tetreault, Mary Ann, and Ronnie Lipschutz. 2009. *Global Politics as If People Mattered*. Lanham, Maryland: Rowman & Littlefield.

Thatcher, Margaret. 1981. "Speech in Belfast." Margaret Thatcher Foundation.

<http://www.margaretthatcher.org/document/104589>

"The O'Reilly Factor." 2005. News Talk-Show. Fox News.

The Sunday Times. 1988. "High Life for IRA Bomber," August 28, England edition.

Tickner, J. Ann. 1992. *Gender in International Relations: Feminist Perspectives on Achieving Global Security*. New York: Columbia University Press.

Treasury Solicitor's Department. 1974a. "A Report on the Meeting Held in Brixton Prison Boardroom, Re: Artificial Feeding." TS 8422. The National Archives.

———. 1974b. "Letter from Home Office to Treasury Solicitor's Department Re: Marion and Dolours Price." The National Archives.

Tweedie, Jill. 1974. "Hunger-Strike Dilemma." *The Sunday Times*, June 2.

US Department of State. 2004. "Patterns of Global Terrorism 2003."

<http://www.state.gov/documents/organization/31912.pdf>.

Van Creveld, Martin. 2001. *Men, Women and War*. London: Cassell.

Ward, Margaret. 2013. "Excluded and Silenced: Women in Northern Ireland after the Peace Process." *Open Democracy 50.50*, December 2.

<https://www.opendemocracy.net/5050/margaret-ward/excluded-and-silenced-women-in-northern-ireland-after-peace-process>.

Waltz, Kenneth N. 1959. *Man, the State, and War: A Theoretical Analysis*. New York: Columbia University Press.

Weber, Cynthia. 1998. "Performative States." *Millennium - Journal of International Studies* 27 (1): 77–95.

Weinstein, Laura. 2006. "The Significance of the Armagh Dirty Protest." *Eire-Ireland* 41 (3 & 4): 11–41.

Whitehead, Tom, Claire Duffin, and Mick Browne. 2014. "Freed Gerry Adams: The IRA Has Gone, the Past Is Past." *The Daily Telegraph*, May 4.

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/uknews/northernireland/10808288/Freed-Gerry-Adams-the-IRA-has-gone-the-past-is-past.html>.

Wilcox, Lauren. 2014. "Explosive Bodies and Bounded States: Abjection and the Embodied Practice of Suicide Bombing." *International Feminist Journal of Politics* 16 (1): 66–85.

———. 2015. *Bodies of Violence: Theorizing Embodied Subjects in International Relations*. New York: Oxford University Press.

Yeats, W. B. 2002. "Easter 1916." In *20th Century Irish Poems*. London: Faber and Faber.

Young, Iris Marion. 2003. "The Logic of Masculinist Protection: Reflections on the Current Security State." *Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society* 29 (1): 1–25.

Zavis, Alexandra. 2008. "Daughters of Iraq: Women Take on a Security Role," June 4.

[http://www.latimes.com/news/nationworld/world/la-fg-daughters4-](http://www.latimes.com/news/nationworld/world/la-fg-daughters4-2008jun04,0,7497772.story)

[2008jun04,0,7497772.story](http://www.latimes.com/news/nationworld/world/la-fg-daughters4-2008jun04,0,7497772.story)

Zenko, Micah. 2014. "America's 500th Drone Strike." Council for Foreign Relations.

Politics, Power, and Preventive Action. November 21.

<http://blogs.cfr.org/zenko/2014/11/21/americas-500th-drone-strike/>

Ziarek, Ewa Plonowska. 2008. "Bare Life on Strike: Notes on the Biopolitics of Race and Gender." *South Atlantic Quarterly* 107 (1): 90–105.